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HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REVIEWS

SOCIETY, ECONOMY, AND POLITICS IN RESTORATION ITALY: TOWARDS A REGIONAL SYNTHESIS

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ABSTRACT. *Recent scholarship on the Restoration period in Italy (1815–60) has put the accent on regional diversity and on particular developments within the different pre-unification states. In particular, recent studies on the Kingdom of Sardinia have added much to our view of the Piedmontese nobility's peculiar character and ability to maintain its identity through time. Equally, detailed studies of the economy of nineteenth-century Tuscany have emphasized the importance of banking and silk manufacturing, whilst studies of governmental policies in the Papal State have shed new light over a particular administrative monarchy's attempt at pursuing a policy of reconciliation between modernization and conservatism. Whilst these studies have shown the significance of regional developments during the Restoration, other studies have argued that the process of 'inventing' the Italian nation-state has led to a conscious obliteration of regional administrative and juridical traditions and have shown the way to the construction of an up-to-date regional synthesis of a historical period which is much more than a simple prelude to the unification of the country.*

In recent years, scholars of nineteenth-century Italy have increasingly turned their attention to the study of the Restoration period (1815–60) as a crucial time of change which anticipated many features of the Liberal era. Central to their study is the idea – supported by most revisionist Italian historians – of continuity between forms of government from the time of Napoleon to the time of unification. After the collapse of the Napoleonic regimes, the Restoration governments largely maintained the bureaucratic apparatus installed during the French *decennio* (1806–15) creating a type of hybrid institution called 'administrative monarchy'; throughout the Restoration, the administrative monarchies faced problems of legitimacy largely similar to the ones faced by the Piedmontese administration after unification. Therefore, the study of the Restoration period is crucial in understanding the deep roots of the post-unification crisis of the Liberal state and in providing historians with important insights on the origins of those issues of conflict which the Piedmontese administration inherited from pre-unification governments.[1]

One of the most important results of the recent flood of studies on Restoration Italy has been the re-evaluation of the regional governments of the Italian peninsula, an issue

[1] The revisionist historiography's point on continuity between administrative monarchies and Liberal state is explored in L. Riall, *The Italian Risorgimento: state, society, and national unification* (London, 1994); and J. Davis, 'Economy, society, and the state', in J. Davis, ed., *Italy in the nineteenth century* (New York, 2000).

strongly related to the questioning of previous assumptions over the process of 'invention' of the Italian nation in 1859–61.[2] Indeed, regional diversity has become the lens through which revisionist historians have constructed an alternative view of the formation of the Italian nation-state; a view which – unlike previous teleological explanations – identifies the key factor of the success of the national programme in the administrative monarchies' inability to cope with the particular socio-economic and political features of the Restoration states and create their basis of support among different strata of the population. Starting from this important assumption, revisionist scholars have engaged in an impressive, painstaking project of clarifying the details of the process which led to the collapse of administrative monarchies and have now come to a very sophisticated understanding of the mechanisms of government in several pre-unification states. Parallel to this effort, other projects have focused on the study of the economic and social features of particular areas of the peninsula during the Restoration period and have produced important – even though very circumscribed – regional studies.[3]

Since the beginning of the 1980s, Italian scholars have presented their findings in two particularly important series: the *Storia d'Italia Einaudi. Le regioni*, whose focus is mainly – but not only – on post-unification Italian regions, and the *Storia d'Italia UTET*, several volumes of which consist in the most up-to-date scholarly syntheses of the history of particular pre-unification states. In the past ten to twenty years, the most important historians working on certain areas have each released either seminal articles in the *Storia d'Italia Einaudi. Le regioni* or a volume in the *Storia d'Italia UTET*.[4] The impression that one has from these syntheses of the state of the art of research on Restoration governments – mostly read by a restricted circle of scholars – is one of both extreme complexity and diversity. Largely for this reason, revisionist regional studies have gone mostly unnoticed by the wider public; this, in turn, has prompted some scholars to provide easily accessible syntheses – though perhaps too short and more useful to non-specialists – of some of the latest trends in Italian historiography: Piero Bevilacqua's *Breve storia dell'Italia meridionale* and Marco Meriggi's companion volume *Breve storia dell'Italia settentrionale* are the best examples.[5]

However, we still lack – in face of a continuously increasing body of literature on several aspects of life in pre-unification states – the kind of detailed regional synthesis on up-to-date scholarship on Restoration governments which would be useful to scholars and students alike. Virtually all the scholarly syntheses on nineteenth-century Italy –

[2] The idea of 'invention' of the Italian nation is the subject of R. Martucci, *L'invenzione dell'Italia unita, 1855–1864* (Florence, 1999).

[3] The influence of regional studies is clear in some of the most recent syntheses of the Risorgimento era, such as: G. Pescosolido, 'L'economia e la vita materiale', and M. Meriggi, 'Società, istituzioni e ceti dirigenti', both in G. Sabbatucci and V. Vidotto, eds., *Storia d'Italia*, 1: *Le premesse dell 'unità* (Rome and Bari, 1994); and the various essays in Davis, ed., *Italy in the nineteenth century*. Two recent attempts at assessing the specific importance of regionalism in Italian history are R. Mainardi, *L'Italia delle regioni: il nord e la Padania* (Milan, 1998); and C. Levy, ed., *Italian regionalism: history, identity, and politics* (Oxford, 1996).

[4] Among the most recent volumes in the *Storia d'Italia UTET*, see N. Nada and P. Notario, *Il Piemonte sabaudo: dal periodo Napoleonico al Risorgimento* (Turin, 1993); R. P. Coppini, *Il Granducato di Toscana: dagli 'anni francesi' all'unità* (Turin, 1993); M. Meriggi, *Il Regno Lombardo-Veneto* (Turin, 1987); and V. D'Alessandro and G. Giarrizzo, *La Sicilia dal Vespro all'unità d'Italia* (Turin, 1989).

[5] P. Bevilacqua, *Breve storia dell'Italia meridionale dall'Ottocento a oggi* (Rome, 1997); M. Meriggi, *Breve storia dell'Italia settentrionale dall'Ottocento a oggi* (Rome, 1996).

apart from Harry Hearder's outdated *Italy in the age of Risorgimento*[6] – put little emphasis on the diversity and complexity of pre-unification Italian states. They either produce broad generalizations on economic, social, and political features of different Restoration governments or treat these same features in bits and pieces which fall under different categories or topics. The end result is that much of the richness of political and cultural life and much of the peculiarities related to the economy and society of different Restoration states is lost.[7] At the same time, one has the impression that the small emphasis on regional diversity has the effect of continuing the old bias which viewed the Restoration period as little more than a prelude to unification; this is regardless of the fact that, before 1860, Italians were accustomed to think about themselves as Piedmontese, Lombards, Tuscans, etc., and that their affiliation to different political entities influenced every aspect of their daily life.[8] Therefore, a regional synthesis of Restoration Italy stressing the important distinctions between the different pre-unification states in the peninsula would be a highly important task in terms of correcting the bias of previous historiography. At the same time, a regional synthesis would give one the opportunity to include the findings of recent scholarship within a framework that would reflect the paramount importance given by revisionist scholars to regional diversity in the process of formation of the Italian nation-state. In view of a future study which will produce such a regional synthesis, I will conduct the review of the latest scholarship on three major independent states which characterized the post-1815 political map of the peninsula: the Kingdom of Sardinia, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, and the Papal State. The analysis of recent works on the history of specific Restoration states will serve as point of departure for the final discussion on the significance of regionalism in the context of the creation of the Italian nation, a theme which is increasingly pervasive in the latest Italian historiography.

I

One of the most important questions that have troubled Italian scholars researching on the Restoration concerns the reasons for the success of the Piedmontese monarchy in unifying the country in 1861. Most of the scholarship on the Kingdom of Sardinia has focused on the anomalies of Piedmontese institutions in order to explain the role played by them in the creation of the Italian nation-state. Unlike other Restoration states, the Piedmontese monarchy did not revoke the liberal constitution (*Statuto Albertino*) issued in the wake of the 1848 Revolution and allowed the existence of a parliament whose members belonged to the wealthiest aristocratic and bourgeois families of the kingdom.[9] Moreover, from 1852 Count Cavour – a liberal aristocrat interested in promoting economic and social progress – was the leader of a parliamentary majority assured by 'the *connubio*, or marriage between centre-left and centre-right', and was able to implement a wide-ranging programme of economic, social, and political reforms.[10] By

[6] H. Hearder, *Italy in the age of the Risorgimento, 1790–1870* (London, 1983).

[7] This is certainly the case in recent syntheses such as A. Scirocco, *In difesa del Risorgimento* (Bologna, 1998); and G. Pécout, *Naissance de l'Italie contemporaine (1770–1922)* (Paris, 1997).

[8] See for example M. Clark, *The Italian Risorgimento* (London, 1998).

[9] See M. Meriggi, 'L'unificazione nazionale in Italia e in Germania', in A. M. Banti et al., *Storia contemporanea* (Rome, 1997), pp. 133–4.

[10] A. L. Cardoza, 'Cavour and Piedmont', in Davis, ed., *Italy in the nineteenth century*, p. 120. See also R. P. Coppini, 'Il Piemonte sabaudo e l'unificazione (1847–1861)', in Sabbatucci and Vidotto, eds., *Storia d'Italia*, pp. 367–82; and Pécout, *Naissance*, pp. 149–59.

1859, the difference between the Kingdom of Sardinia, 'renewed by ... a bold economic policy, enriched by the support of political exiles, and capable of playing a role in European diplomacy', and the other Restoration states, void of political legitimacy and economically stagnating, was all too apparent.[11]

If this is a familiar story, Anthony Cardoza's prize-winning work on the Piedmontese nobility[12] enriches it with little-known details and helps to explain the reasons for the Kingdom of Sardinia's role in the making of the Italian nation through sustained analysis of the peculiar characteristics of the upper strata of Piedmontese society. Cardoza's focus is on the persistence of defining characteristics of the noble status throughout the nineteenth century and especially during the crucial transition of the region's aristocracy from Piedmontese to Italian nobility; he contends that – far from being overshadowed and swallowed by the economic and social power of the rising bourgeoisie – the Piedmontese nobility continued to be a relatively closed caste, with little relation or contact with the *nouveaux riches*, and yet still extremely influential until the aftermath of the First World War.

Cardoza starts his analysis searching for the roots of the distinctive characteristics of the Piedmontese nobility. Piedmontese nobles were the inheritors of a long-standing martial tradition of service to the state and to the House of Savoy in particular; according to Cardoza, this unique factor gave them 'a high degree of cohesion and continuity that helped them adjust to the loss of privileged status and enhanced their role in the unification of the Italian peninsula'.[13] At the beginning of the Restoration period, with their power only slightly shaken by the upheavals of the French *decennio*, the Piedmontese nobility maintained a clear dominance of all the high offices in the Savoy administration; political dominance in turn enhanced social exclusivity and a wide gulf of privileges divided the titled aristocracy from the bourgeoisie.[14]

Yet, by the 1840s the conditions that guaranteed the nobility's power were changing. Whilst the middle classes were increasingly pressing the issue of political representation, the nobility itself was divided between a conservative and a moderate group; interestingly, the ranks of moderate aristocrats – who shared liberal views reflected in the commitment to build political alliances with the middle classes – were filled with cadets such as Camillo Cavour and Massimo d'Azeglio 'whose difficult position ... contributed both to their impatience with the traditional conventions and to their relative openness to innovation'.[15] Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, moderate aristocrats and wealthy bourgeois worked side by side promoting educational, cultural, and charitable initiatives in which Cavour played often a leading role; aristocratic–bourgeois collaboration found a social expression in voluntary association, such as Cavour's *Società del Whist* – which was open to all gentlemen regardless of their title[16] – and the *Associazione Agraria Subalpina* – founded in 1842 to promote agricultural progress among nobles and bourgeois alike. From this perspective, the culmination of the 'Indian summer' of Piedmontese nobility was Carlo Alberto's issue of the 1848 *Statuto*, which 'explicitly proclaimed the equality of all citizens before the law regardless of their

[11] Mainardi, *L'Italia delle regioni*, p. 48; see also Scirocco, *In difesa del Risorgimento*, pp. 114–27.
[12] A. L. Cardoza, *Aristocrats in bourgeois Italy: the Piedmontese nobility, 1861–1930* (Cambridge, 1997). [13] Ibid., p. 6. [14] Ibid., pp. 33–42.
[15] Ibid., p. 45. Elsewhere, Cardoza elaborates on his idea of Cavour as representative of Piedmontese moderate aristocrats' particular blend of noble values and bourgeois attitudes; see Cardoza, 'Cavour', pp. 114–15. [16] Cardoza, *Aristocrats*, pp. 155–61.

title of rank', thereby effectively putting an end to aristocratic monopoly of the Kingdom's high offices.[17]

The nobility's prestige and proximity to the king ensured that aristocrats continued to have a prominent role in the public and political life of the Kingdom of Sardinia. Even though in the Chamber of Deputies noblemen were a small minority, they dominated the Senate; more to the point, moderate aristocrats – such as Cavour and d'Azeglio – were often leaders of parliamentary majorities which gathered the support of both noble and bourgeois reformers cutting across class differences. The 1852 *connubio* was an alliance between centre-right and centre-left in support of 'civil and political progress' which gave origin to such a parliamentary majority; the result was 'a significant blow to aristocratic political pretensions by making it considerably difficult for the nobility to build and lead a genuinely conservative party'.[18] Cavour comes out of Cardoza's account as a moderate aristocrat who 'shared many of the prejudices of his class' and yet was the master-mind behind the limitation of aristocratic leadership in the new parliamentary order.[19] Thereafter, moderate aristocrats led the political and military struggle for the unification of Italy with virtually no opposition and were rewarded accordingly; after 1861, they contributed 'a disproportionately large share of the titled deputies and officials who served in Italian political life', thereby effectively keeping a privileged position over the nobilities of other former Restoration states.[20]

Throughout this time, the Piedmontese nobility succeeded in maintaining its distinct traditional identity by keeping a strictly closed access to its ranks; even though its moderate members sought political and social alliances with the middle class, they never allowed intermarriage, since neither side was interested in the possibility. Challenging recent revisionist interpretations according to which the Italian nobilities rapidly declined or were assimilated into heterogeneous upper classes of landed proprietors,[21] Cardoza argues persuasively that the Piedmontese nobility restricted contact with the middle class to the public sphere keeping a high level of endogamy within its circles. As long as they could enjoy enough wealth to continue to have a high standard of living – thanks to the profits coming from the capitalist transformation of their country estates – Piedmontese noblemen did not need to mingle with the middle class; only the disruption of the basis of aristocratic wealth in the aftermath of the First World War altered permanently the relationship between the two classes.[22]

Cardoza warns us that, even though the Piedmontese nobility had a number of peculiar characteristics, its ability to retain influence and power and a persistent social distinctiveness in the face of enormous upheaval and political transformation might have been far from being the exception among Italian regional aristocracies. Remarkably, the only other recent detailed study of a regional Italian nobility –

[17] Ibid., pp. 49–52. Roberto Martucci argues that, even though hailed as an important step in the formation of the liberal state, in 1848 the *Statuto* gave voting rights only to 77,366 male adult citizens out of more than a million; see Martucci, *L'invenzione*, p. 377.

[18] Cardoza, *Aristocrats*, p. 62.

[19] Ibid., p. 61. In his recent biography of Cavour, Luciano Cafagna substantially agrees with Cardoza's interpretation though, like most Italian historians, he sees the 1852 *connubio* as the first example of *trasformismo*; see L. Cafagna, *Cavour* (Bologna, 1999), pp. 168–71.

[20] Cardoza, *Arisocrats*, p. 65.

[21] See the special issue of *Meridiana*, 16 (1994), on *Nobiltà*, edited by Alberto Banti, and the interesting comparative study by M. Malatesta, *Le aristocrazie terriere nell'Europa contemporanea* (Bari and Rome, 1999).

[22] Malatesta, *Le aristocrazie*, pp. 162–3.

Giovanni Montroni's *Gli uomini del Re*[23] – shares many of the findings of Cardoza's work, though in a different context. Much like their Piedmontese counterpart, Neapolitan nobles defined the degree of their influence and power by their proximity to the king; however, the Neapolitan aristocracy managed to retain its wealth and political prominence at the local level even in the face of defeat, after the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies ceased to exist with the unification of the Italian peninsula. Also, long after 1861, Neapolitan noblemen continued a distinctive life-style, centred on the figure of the *rentier* and on the cult of family history and tradition, and with little or no intermarriage with other social groups and a distinctive form of sociability.[24] Apart from the obvious points of similarity which could form the basis of a fascinating comparative study between two regional aristocracies – the Piedmontese and the Neapolitan – in the wake of Italian unification, one can only speculate if studies on the nobilities of other Restoration states would yield a similar picture of continuity and strength through time.[25]

II

One of the most important pre-unification states which has catalyzed the attention of recent scholarship is the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Since the eighteenth century – apart from the period of the French *decennio* – Tuscany was under the direct rule of a collateral branch of the Habsburg, the Habsburg-Lorraine; although far from being a model of liberalism, the rule of the two Grand Dukes Ferdinand III and Leopold II – between 1815 and 1860 – was characterized by moderation and an unusual degree of economic freedom. This was accompanied by a series of reforms which, even though still following the eighteenth-century model of enlightened absolutism, did much to boost Tuscan economy and create the basis for a strong bourgeoisie.[26] Beginning in the 1830s, Leopold II engaged in a large project of reclamation of the malaria-infested regions of Maremma and at the same time promoted the expansion of specialized industries at Prato (silk) and at the Elba island (iron). However, the factor that really hit the contemporaries' imagination was Leopold's unconditional enthusiasm for the construction of railways; the first projects were laid out in the 1830s, but the first railway – the famous Leopolda, connecting Florence to Livorno – was inaugurated only in 1848. Supported only nominally by the state, railway construction soon became the focus of free competition between powerful entrepreneurs and of unlimited speculation which reached its peak in the 1850s; however, already by 1850, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany had 119 kilometres of railways against the Kingdom of Sardinia's 91 kilometres.[27]

Two recent studies by Alessandro Volpi and Roberto Tolaini treat different aspects of the economic life of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany before 1860 and help understand

[23] G. Montroni, *Gli uomini del Re: la nobiltà napoletana nell'Ottocento* (Rome, 1996).

[24] Ibid., pp. xxii–xxvi. See also D. L. Caglioti, *Associazionismo e sociabilità d'elite a Napoli nel XIX secolo* (Naples, 1996).

[25] Though only concerned with the period after unification, G. C. Jocteau, *Nobili e nobiltà nell'Italia unita* (Rome and Bari, 1997), provides the most recent synthesis of the characteristics of the Italian nobility with a strong emphasis on regional differences.

[26] See F. Pesendorfer, 'La Toscana dei Lorena', *Storia e Dossier*, 86 (1994), pp. 84–95. See also Coppini, *Il Granducato di Toscana*; and Z. Ciufoletti and R. Rombai, eds., *La Toscana dei Lorena: riforme, territorio e società* (Florence, 1989).

[27] See A. Giuntini, *Leopoldo e il treno: le ferrovie nel Granducato di Toscana, 1824–1864* (Naples, 1991); see also A. Schram, *Railways and the formation of the Italian state in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 36–7.

better the context in which economic reforms and railway expansion took place. Alessandro Volpi's *Banchieri e mercato finanziario in Toscana*[28] is a model work of business history and it details the complex birth of a financial market in pre-unification Tuscany. Volpi's focus is on bankers – a long-standing Tuscan tradition – and on their achievements in creating national and international networks of clientele, the first step toward the creation of large and unified credit institutions. This was especially the case of the Fenzi, a Florentine family of financial operators, who were instrumental in the creation of the first public bank – the *Cassa di Sconto* – in Florence, in 1826. At the end of the eighteenth century, Francesco Fenzi, the founder of the dynasty, had lent a consistent sum to the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo; thereafter, the family fortunes had continued to rise in connection to the financing of both private and public initiatives.[29] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Fenzi family tied an alliance with the Hall family – who were large hay producers – and in the 1820s they acquired the monopoly of the Tuscan straw hat market in England. At the same time, they continued their activity of financing public initiatives and in 1849 they became the main stockholders in the company that built the railway Leopolda.[30] In the next thirty to forty years, the Fenzi spread their network throughout Europe; by 1860, their agents were present in all the most important markets of central and northern Italy and in several cities in England, France, and Germany. Through their network of financial activities and their willingness to invest in common financial operations with both Tuscan and international banks, the Fenzi lay the ground for the creation of large credit institutions and for a unified financial market in Tuscany in the period before the 1860 annexation to the Kingdom of Italy.[31]

A large section of Volpi's study, *Banchieri e mercato finanziaro in Toscana*, deals with the controversial issue of the involvement of the Tuscan landed elite in banking activities and financial operations. Throughout his book, Volpi maintains that 'it is difficult to determine the reasons that kept the entire propertied class mostly distant from banking and financial circuits'; still, he treats extensively the important figure of Cosimo Ridolfi – a liberal landowner turned industrial entrepreneur – whom he considers the most notable exception amidst a general apathy of the Tuscan landed elite in financial matters.[32] Besides being a noble landed proprietor, Cosimo Ridolfi was an important public figure, being in charge of the Grand Duchy's mint and president of the prestigious *Accademia dei Georgofili*; he was well known for his theoretical studies on agriculture and he was one of the founders of the largest public Florentine bank – the *Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze* – in 1829.[33] Ridolfi's involvement in such a diverse range of economic activities enhanced his financial skills and convinced him of the necessity of a credit institution that would have funded the increasing development of the Tuscan railway system together with other important industrial activities. In 1846, Ridolfi, together with a group of foremost bankers and landed aristocrats, founded the *Società generale delle imprese industriali*, of which he became president. Modelled after similar institutions of industrial credit in France and Belgium, the *Società* was instrumental in the rapid expansion of the Tuscan railway system at the end of the 1840s; however, the

[28] A. Volpi, *Banchieri e mercato finanziario in Toscana, 1801–1860* (Florence, 1997).
[29] Ibid., pp. 134–6. [30] Ibid., pp. 151–5. See also Giuntini, *Leopoldo e il treno*, passim.
[31] Volpi, *Banchieri*, pp. 198–9.
[32] Ibid., pp. 20–1. Unlike Volpi, Maria Malatesta considers Ridolfi the foremost representative of a general widespread involvement of the Tuscan landed elite in financial activities; see Malatesta, *Le aristocrazie*, pp. 122–3. [33] Volpi, *Banchieri*, pp. 203–4.

Società's most ambitious project – the financing a unified railway system in central Italy – collapsed in the wake of the post-1848 authoritarian restoration.[34] The failure prompted Ridolfi to convert the *Società* from an institution of industrial credit to a purely banking institution; in 1856, the *Società generale* was replaced by the *Istituto Toscano di Credito Mobiliare*. The *Istituto* contributed immensely to the ideas both of a unified Tuscan financial market and of a national Tuscan bank; both ideas were at the origin of the founding of the *Banca Nazionale Toscana* and of the Florence Stock Exchange in 1857.[35]

If Volpi's study is largely concerned with the activities of the Florentine financial elite and its ties to the Grand Duchy's public institutions, Tolaini's work gives us a glimpse of the economic activity of industrial entrepreneurs in provincial Tuscany.[36] Tolaini's study is about a particular family of industrialists – the Scoti of Pescia – who achieved economic and social prosperity through silk manufacturing during the later part of the Restoration (1840–60). So far, most of the Italian historians' work on the silk industry has focused on the manufactures of Piedmont and Lombardy and their early ties with the international market in order to prove the existence of 'proto-industrial' activities and accumulation of capital in northern Italy before unification;[37] Luciano Cafagna's studies have been particularly persuasive in explaining the reasons for northern Italy's nineteenth-century economic transformation with the profit of the revenues generated by the export of silk textiles in the world market.[38] Though not questioning the importance of the northern Italian silk industry, Tolaini's study does much to broaden our views by showing the successful story of a family of Tuscan silk manufacturers which was capable of commanding the attention of the international market not unlike the silk producers of Piedmont and Lombardy. Tolaini argues that the story of the Scoti is just one of many successful stories of innovative nineteenth-century Tuscan entrepreneurs and that – as such – it helps in reconstructing a more complex picture of the region's economy than the one simply dominated by the landed elite and the financial aristocracy.[39]

The founder of the Scoti dynasty – Francesco Maria Scoti – started the family business in the mid-eighteenth century, at a time when Tuscan silk manufacturing was strongly centralized and dependent on the needs of the Florentine industry and market; therefore, throughout the eighteenth century, the Scoti did much to tighten their links with the powerful Florentine silk merchants, whom they supplied with their product

[34] Ibid., pp. 219–40. Among the original founders of the *Società* was Andrea Corsini, who belonged to one of the most important families of the Florentine aristocracy and who later married the banker Pietro Bastogi's daughter; see A. Moroni, *Antica gente e subiti guadagni: patrimoni aristocratici fiorentini nell'800* (Florence, 1997), pp. 285–7.

[35] Volpi, *Banchieri*, pp. 241–5, 290–313.

[36] R. Tolaini, *Filande e mercato nell'industria serica italiana: Gli Scoti di Pescia (1750–1860)* (Florence, 1997).

[37] Ibid., pp. 114–24. See also A. Dewerpe, *L'industrie aux champs: essai sur la proto-industrialisation en Italie du Nord* (Rome, 1985); G. Chicco, *La seta in Piemonte, 1650–1800: un sistema industriale di antico regime* (Milan, 1995); and G. Federico, *Il filo d'oro: l'industria mondiale della seta dalla restaurazione alla grande crisi* (Venice, 1994).

[38] See L. Cafagna, *Dualismo e sviluppo nella storia d'Italia* (Venice, 1989); see also V. Zamagni, *An economic history of Italy, 1860–1990* (Oxford, 1993).

[39] Tolaini, *Filande*, pp. 25–31. Together with silk, another important industrial sector of nineteenth-century Tuscany was paper; see R. Sabbatini, *Di bianco lin candida prole: la manifattura della carta in età moderna e il caso toscano* (Milan, 1990).

from their headquarters in Pescia.[40] Towards the end of the eighteenth century, influenced by the success of the Piedmontese example, the Scoti introduced a series of technical innovations on their spinning mill which greatly improved the quality of silk production; however, the family did not take advantage of these improvements to enter the international market until the 1820s.[41] In the early nineteenth century, a series of factors – among which the expansion of silk consumption, the decline of the Florentine market, and the 1819 legislation on the freedom of export – contributed to convince the silk producers of provincial Tuscany to look for international markets. Meanwhile, the Scoti had separated after the death of the dynasty's founder; the branch residing in Pescia created the *Rocco Scoti* firm and in 1825 its director Carlo Scoti started the construction of a new and much larger spinning mill – *la Gran Filanda* – in order to be able to enter international competition. Although the *Gran Filanda* was active from 1826, construction was protracted until 1829. The debt contracted during the four year period, together with changing market conditions, finally forced Carlo Scoti and his brothers to dissolve the *Rocco Scoti* in 1830.[42]

In 1836, the Scoti entered a fruitful partnership with the Frenchmen Jean and Gustave Mejean and constituted a new society, the *Fratelli Scoti e C.*, whose interests became focused almost exclusively on northern Italian and international markets; at the same time, the contact with foreign investors helped the Scoti to reach the technological level which they needed in their equipment in order to be able to compete with other European silk manufacturers.[43] Thanks to technological innovation and emphasis on foreign investors – especially French, English, and Swiss – from the mid-1830s to 1860 the *Fratelli Scoti e C.* continued to grow and became the most important centre of manufacturing and marketing of silk in Restoration Tuscany; by 1856/7, the *Fratelli Scoti e C.* alone controlled one third of all the silk produced in the region. In 1853, the firm changed its name to *Scoti, Mejean e C.* and moved to Florence, where it continued to operate successfully until 1885, the year in which it was finally dissolved.[44]

Altogether, the works by Volpi and Tolaini enrich considerably our view of the economics and society of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany during the Restoration; they succeed in giving us a much more detailed and accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the region's financial market and of its most important private industrial sector in the years preceding unification. These developments are particularly significant when analysed in light of the persistence of strong regional identity which continued to characterize Tuscany even after the Grand Duchy had ceased to exist and was replaced by the Kingdom of Italy. The transfer of the Italian capital from Turin to Florence, where it stayed for five years (1865–70), boosted Tuscan regional identity for the last time; significantly, this period saw the flourishing of regional commercial and industrial activities which had started long before unification and which blossomed in the renewed centrality of Florence and of its Tuscan hinterland.[45] Not only private enterprises with a strong regional characterization – such as the Scoti's silk production firm – prospered, but also the creation of unified Tuscan institutions – such as the one originated by the 1867 fusion of the *Banca Toscana di Credito* with the *Società industriale*

[40] Ibid., pp. 45–7. [41] Ibid., pp. 75–83. See also Chicco, *La seta*, pp. 73–4.
[42] Tolaini, *Filande*, pp. 143–7, 166–76, 208–9. [43] Ibid., pp. 221–53.
[44] Ibid., pp. 267–8, 315–46, 363–4.
[45] On the transfer of the capital from Turin to Florence, see S. B. Frandsen, 'Le città italiane fra tradizione municipalistica e gerarchia nazionale durante il Risorgimento', *Meridiana*, 33 (1998), pp. 102–3.

italiana – found its fulfilment in the renewed emphasis on regional government.[46] Only after the capital was moved to Rome in 1870 did Tuscany's economic and financial activities start to stagnate; this was especially the case with the landed elites' interest in financial operations which – according to Maria Malatesta – reached its peak in the late 1860s, during the years when Florence served as the capital, and decreased only in the 1870s, after the new transfer of the capital to Rome.[47]

III

Unlike the case of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, little recent scholarship has turned its attention to the Papal State; few revisionist Italian historians have ventured into the analysis of the economy and society of Rome and of the territories stretching from Latium to Emilia which were under direct control of the Pope throughout the Restoration. Branded by the former historiography as a model of obscurantism, the Papal State has been incorporated only relatively recently into the new wave of studies on the administrative monarchies.[48] Even though characterized by the presence of the Papacy as a source of centralized absolutist institutions, in 1815, the Papal State was – in the words of Gilles Pécout – 'a model of administrative heterogeneity'.[49] In 1816, under the leadership of Pius VII's Secretary of State, Cardinal Ercole Consalvi, the Papal State implemented an administrative reform – the *Motu Proprio* – which was inspired by the French model; the reform reorganized the administration of the state creating provincial and city councils with equal participation of religious authorities and laymen and suppressed baronial jurisdiction, but it also abolished the *Code Napoléon*. Given the fact that, still well into the nineteenth century, the power and influence of the Roman nobility were immense, the suppression of baronial jurisdiction was a particularly progressive achievement, as it was the participation of both clerics and laymen to the councils. However, the *Motu Proprio* contained in itself the characteristic blend of conservatism and progressivism of the reforms of all the administrative monarchies and, for this reason, historians have been inclined to pass a judgement either praising it or condemning it altogether.[50]

Gabriella Santoncini's new study of the *Motu Proprio*, with its emphasis on the role of law and criminal justice, breaks new ground in terms of understanding the extent to which the administrative reform was intended by Cardinal Consalvi and his collaborators as a progressive initiative and the reasons why it failed to deliver its promises.[51] Santoncini, whose study is supported by detailed analysis of the Vatican

[46] See A. Volpi, 'La Banca toscana di credito per l'industria e il commercio nel sistema creditizio toscano', *Società e Storia*, 48 (1990), pp. 378–9. [47] See Malatesta, *Le aristocrazie*, pp. 123–4.

[48] The two best general studies on the Papal States during the Restoration are A. Caravale and A. Caracciolo, *Lo stato pontificio da Martino V a Pio IX* (Turin, 1978); and A. J. Reinermann, *Austria and the Papacy in the age of Metternich* (2 vols., Washington, DC, 1979–89). See also F. Bartoccini, *Roma nell'Ottocento: il tramonto della città santa. Nascita di una capitale* (Bologna, 1985); and M. Sanfilippo, *Roma medievale e moderna* (Rome, 1992). [49] Pécout, *Naissance*, p. 74.

[50] On the *Motu Proprio*, compare the two divergent interpretations in D. Laven, 'The age of Restoration', in Davis, ed., *Italy*, p. 56; and Hearder, *Risorgimento*, pp. 102–3. On the Roman nobility in the nineteenth century, see G. Pescosolido, *Terra e nobiltà. I Borghese: secoli XVIII e XIX* (Rome, 1979); Sanfilippo, *Roma*, pp. 109–20; and Jocteau, *Nobili*, pp. 231–51.

[51] G. Santoncini, *Sovranità e giustizia nella Restaurazione pontificia: la riforma dell'amministrazione della giustizia criminale nei lavori preparatori del Motu Proprio del 1816* (Turin, 1996).

sources in conjunction with works written primarily by legal historians, focuses her attention on the post-1814 debate between two groups of cardinals in the Papal government: the conservative *zelanti*, who opted for maintaining as much as possible of the old structure of the Papal State, and the *novatori*, who were keen on reforming the administration, freeing it from the last remnants of feudalism and juridical inconsistency. Amidst the debate, Cardinal Consalvi looked for collaborators for his project of reform and initially found one of the most important in Vincenzo Bartolucci, an ecclesiastical lawyer who had been in charge of the juridical system during the period of French occupation and respected and admired French law.[52] Together with the *novatori*, Bartolucci pushed Cardinal Consalvi to implement a kind of reform which was the closest possible to the French model and which established the administrative and juridical uniformity of the Papal State. However, according to the *zelanti*, administrative and juridical uniformity were subordinated to the objective of political unity of the state; this would have been achieved through centralization of the governmental institutions, which in turn would have given Rome a definitive supremacy over the provinces. Understanding that Consalvi looked for support among the *zelanti*, Bartolucci distanced himself from the reform project and joined the opposition, since he was less than keen on the idea of political hegemony of Rome over the provinces.[53]

The principles of administrative and juridical uniformity played an important part in the making of the *Motu Proprio* and were at the origin of important initiatives, such as the one of separating administrative and juridical authorities, which would have constituted a radical break from the forms of government typical of the *ancien régime*. However, the final version of the Reform – issued on 6 July 1816 – reflected the need to compromise between the more progressive characteristics of the French model and the particular features of the Papal State, most of all the undisputable authority and sovereignty of the Pope over his subjects.[54] Therefore, the principles of administrative and juridical uniformity were conservatively interpreted as guidelines for the enhancement of centralization of the institutions and supremacy of the Roman government over the peripheral areas. Together with this, the conservative interpretation provided for superimposition of – rather than separation between – administrative and juridical functions in all the governmental authorities residing in Rome and the provinces. Even though hailed as 'Napoleonic' by the *zelanti*, Cardinal Consalvi's reform did not achieve the objective of fully reproducing the French model and ended up restoring much of the absolutist character of the old Papal State with only a few important innovations.[55]

In the long term, the *Motu Proprio* guaranteed the stability of the Papal State for a few years and even during the Revolutionary biennium of 1820–1. In 1823, following the rise of Leo XII to the Papal throne, Cardinal Consalvi was dismissed and a new period of reaction began; also, in 1827, a new administrative reform decreased even further the importance of the provinces, dividing the entire Papal territory in six large *legazioni* and thirteen smaller *delegazioni*.[56] Recent research has shown the real extent of the impact of Papal reforms in the provinces through the analysis of governmental policies in Bologna during the Restoration and has argued for the Papal authorities' inefficiency in dealing

[52] Ibid., pp. 10–20. See also P. Alvazzi Del Frate, *Le istituzioni giudiziarie degli stati romani nel periodo napoleonico, 1808–1814* (Rome, 1990), pp. 90–102.
[53] Santoncini, *Sovranità*, pp. 20–30. [54] Ibid., pp. 109–12. [55] Ibid., pp. 144–5.
[56] Pécout, *Naissance*, pp. 74–82.

with crime and punishment in the second most important city after Rome.[57] The provinces' resentment toward the supremacy of the Roman government, which had become a key factor in Papal administration since Cardinal Consalvi's reform, finally exploded in 1830–1, when revolution broke out in Bologna and spread quickly to the Marches and Umbria, and then again in 1848–9, when revolution was widespread throughout the Papal State. Research on the rural communities of Latium has suggested that the attitudes of peasants – who formed the majority of the population – toward Papal authority changed radically and turned increasingly negative after the failed experience of the 1849 Roman Republic.[58] Certainly, after 1849, the Papacy underwent a deep crisis of legitimacy, and the model of administrative monarchy devised by Cardinal Consalvi in order to retain Papal absolutism fell apart both in the provinces and in the Roman hinterland; it was only a matter of time before another revolution broke out and shook the foundations of the Papal administrative and juridical system.

IV

The implications of regional analysis in the study of the Restoration are far-reaching and force historians to adjust their view of pre-unification Italy in order to give increasing space to regional diversity in their thematic and chronological syntheses. At the same time, the continuous process of discovery of new details in the economic and social life of nineteenth-century Italian regions continues to refine our view of the Restoration governments and questions even further previous teleological explanations of the Risorgimento as an inevitable victory of progressive Italian nationalism over the conservative regionalism of pre-unification states.[59] Increasingly, the focus of revisionist Italian historians is on the 'invention' of the Italian nation, an expression which recalls Eric Hobsbawm's 'invention of tradition' and which stresses the idea of the manufacturing of the Italian national myth.[60] For example, according to Alberto Banti, the Italian nation was initially just an ideological and rhetorical construction to which the intellectuals of the Risorgimento gave substance through the use of well-chosen symbols. These symbols were connected in the popular imagination with the Christian concepts of sacrifice and martyrdom, the noble ideas of honour and courage, and the family-related images of the mother-country and the community of brothers; therefore, the symbolic power of familiar images contributed immensely to the creation of an Italian national community which did not exist for the majority of the population.[61]

[57] See S. C. Hughes, *Crime, disorder, and the Risorgimento: the politics of policing in Bologna* (Cambridge, 1994).

[58] See F. Rizzi, *La coccarda e le campane: comunità rurali e repubblica romana nel Lazio, 1848–1849* (Milan, 1989); and A. de Clementi, *Vivere nel Latifondo: le comunità della campagna laziale fra '700 e '800* (Milan, 1989). On the Revolutions of 1830–1 and 1848–9 in the Papal States, see Hearder, *Risorgimento*, pp. 106–18; A. De Francesco, 'Ideologie e movimenti politici', in Sabbatucci and Vidotto, eds., *Storia d'Italia*, pp. 306–26; and A. Scirocco, *L'Italia del Risorgimento* (Bologna, 1993).

[59] On these points, see Riall, *The Italian Risorgimento*, pp. 80–2; G. Galasso and L. Mascilli Migliorini, *L'Italia moderna e l'unità nazionale* (Turin, 1998), pp. 407–88; and P. Ginsborg, 'Risorgimento in discussione', *Passato e Presente*, 41 (1997), pp. 15–43.

[60] See E. J. Hobsbawm, 'Inventing traditions', in E. J. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger, eds., *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge, 1983); see also U. Levra, *Fare gli italiani: memoria e celebrazione del Risorgimento* (Turin, 1992).

[61] Banti explicitely links his work to Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalisms* (London, 1983); see A. M. Banti, *La nazione nel Risorgimento: parentela,*

Still, the real Italian nation was brought into being by a complex political and military operation which – disguised by the myth of spontaneous national insurgence – utilized every possible means to achieve the objective of creating a unified Kingdom of Italy under the House of Savoy. In particular, in regard to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies – as Roberto Martucci explains in his book – the tactics used to achieve national unification came close to the implementation of a brutal and undeclared war of conquest, as the cases of the horrifying siege of Gaeta and the subsequent treatment of the ex-Bourbon soldiers testify.[62]

Once unification was completed, the new Italian Kingdom incorporated within itself a territory characterized by the diversity of different regional traditions of law and administration; most of these regional traditions were fairly old and complex and yet they were erased by centralizing reforms which – much as in the case of the reforms of the Restoration states – sought to achieve administrative and political uniformity subordinating the peripheries to the centre. Giovanna Farrell-Vinay's book on charitable organizations in Italy from the Restoration to the Liberal era tells the story of a highly diversified regional tradition which functioned in different ways in each pre-unification state and which was reorganized and redrawn according to the programmes of administrative unification of the governments of Liberal Italy.[63] Farrell-Vinay starts her study from the analysis of the charity systems of the Restoration states, stressing the fact that administrative and juridical traditions varied enormously from region to region. In Piedmont, in Tuscany, and in the Duchies of Parma and Modena, charitable organizations were autonomous, but under the control of the state in regard to financial matters. In Lombardy, charity institutions were administered directly by the state, while in the Papal State they were controlled exclusively by the church.[64] The most complex charity system was the one adopted by the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, where charitable organizations were required either to give money to provincial hospital councils (*Consigli provinciali degli ospizi*) or to contribute to the local charity administrations (*Amministrazioni locali di beneficenza*); however, still in 1860, a large part of the charity initiatives in the South was controlled or influenced by the church.[65]

During the first phase of unification, the Piedmontese model was simply extended to Lombardy with the 1859 Rattazzi Law amidst the protests of the population. However, in 1859–60, in the central and southern regions, the provisional governors – confronted with a mosaic of different traditions of charitable organizations – acted differently from place to place; whilst Ricasoli did not touch the charity system in Tuscany, Farini adopted the Rattazzi Law in Emilia. The most dramatic experiments were attempted by the provisional governors of Romagna, the Marches, and Umbria, who attempted a reform of the Papal charity system by centralizing it and subtracting it from the control of the church; in the southern provinces, instead, the provisional governors only reduced the funding of church-controlled charitable organizations and fought

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santità e onore alle origini dell'Italia unita (Turin, 2000), pp. ix–xii. Recently, Maura O'Connor has argued that English travellers helped nineenth-century Italian nationalists narrate the Italian national myth and link it to its Roman past; see M. O'Connor, *The romance of Italy and the English political imagination* (London, 1998), pp. 22–55.

[62] See Martucci, *L'invenzione*, pp. 189–243. See also E. Dal Lago, 'Rethinking the Bourbon Kingdom', *Modern Italy*, 6 (2001), pp. 69–78.

[63] G. Farrell-Vinay, *Povertà e politica nell'Italia dell'Ottocento: le opere pie nello stato liberale* (Turin, 1997). [64] Ibid., pp. 29–44, 61–5. [65] Ibid., pp. 95–124.

corruption in the provincial councils by forcibly removing selected officials.[66] During this period, the debate on decentralization of the new kingdom's institutions and on respect for traditional administrative autonomy of the former states was very much alive. In 1861, a committee, headed by Farini and Minghetti, prepared a series of projects of laws which guaranteed administrative unity and preserved limited local autonomy. One of the projects devised by Minghetti in 1861 was a proposal of decentralization of the financial control of the charitable organizations by making them dependent on regional institutions rather than on the central government. In the debates on local autonomy, the fate of the southern provinces was a particularly delicate subject; still in 1861, Nicola De Luca, a provincial governor of Campania, advised the Piedmontese government to not dismantle completely the Bourbon charity system, but rather keep the provincial councils.[67]

However, the proposals for decentralization vanished in the wake of the emergency due to the spread of brigandage in the South. Minghetti's 1861 plan was dismissed and substituted by a law issued on 3 August 1862, which extended the 1859 Rattazzi Law to the rest of the kingdom with the exception of the South, where it was adopted in January 1863. Together with other similar measures, the law accelerated the process of administrative unification and centralization through the implementation of Piemontese legislation in the territories of former pre-unification states; even though it gave limited autonomy to the charitable organizations, the law subordinated them to the financial control of the central government and also abolished the provincial councils in the South.[68] In practice, the law not only cancelled regional traditions of charitable institutions, but also exempted the state from the responsibility of public programmes of assistance and contributed to the general resentment of the lower classes against the Liberal governments. When such resentment exploded in widespread violence – as in the case of the brigandage – the Italian state continued the old Piedmontese tradition of implementing military force, rather than improving the system of public assistance. Only in 1890, after several debates in parliament and a nine-year inquiry on the inefficiency and corruption of the charitable organizations, a new legislation was enacted; the reform devised by Francesco Crispi partially decentralized the charity system and placed it under a much stricter control to prevent abuses. However, it was only with the 1904 Giolitti Law that the administrative structure in charge of coordinating the system of charity organizations in the various regions of the Italian kingdom was substantially empowered at the local level.[69]

Giovanna Farrell-Vinay's book is an excellent example of the kind of studies that the Italian historiography needs in order accurately to reflect the state of the art of the studies on the Restoration and the making of the Italian nation. Farrell-Vinay's attention to the regional traditions of charitable organizations and her analysis of their contribution to the story of the creation of the Italian charity system is a model for all

[66] Ibid., pp. 65–79, 125–35.

[67] Ibid., pp. 90–4, 152–8.

[68] Ibid., pp. 159–84. For a general view of the South at the time of unification, see L. Riall, 'Garibaldi and the South', in Davis, ed., *Italy*, pp. 142–53. On brigandage, see J. Dickie, *Darkest Italy: the nation and the Stereotypes of the Mezzogiorno, 1860–1900* (London, 1999); G. De Matteo, *Brigantaggio e Risorgimento: legittimisti e briganti tra i Borbone e i Savoia* (Naples, 2000); and J. Davis, *Conflict and control: law and order in nineteenth-century Italy* (London, 1988).

[69] Farrell-Vinay, *Povertà*, pp. 237–78, 278–324. For a general picture of the period, see C. Duggan, 'Politics in the era of Depretis and Crispi, 1870–1896', in Davis, ed., *Italy*, pp. 154–80; and R. Romanelli, *Il Comando impossibile: stato e società nell'Italia liberale* (Bologna, 1995).

future surveys of the birth of Italian institutions. Similar studies, clearly linking the inheritance of the Restoration systems of government to the policies of the Liberal state and detailing the reasons for the demise of the former and the adoption of the latter, are needed in regard to many different topics related to the creation of the Italian administration. Italian historians should approach with the same open-mindedness of Farrell-Vinay's study the birth of the national systems of education, health, and national bureaucracy clearly stressing the points of continuity and disruption from the Restoration period to the Liberal era and giving much room to the importance of the inheritance of regional traditions stretching back in time long before 1861. Farrell-Vinay's book shows better than any other study how the regional analysis of the Restoration period is intimately connected to the peculiar process which led to the creation of the Italian nation-state and its sudden crisis of legitimacy, and how a regional synthesis of the recent scholarship on pre-unification states would enhance greatly our understanding of that process.