

NEW OBSERVATIONS ON ITALIAN UNITY

1865

The last work of M. Proudhon was sent to us for publication in *Le Messager de Paris*, a political journal, but one whose financial specialty makes completely independent by freeing it from any system or any party.

We said, when inserting in the columns of this newspaper the *New Observations on Italian Unity*, what a great honor it was for us, this proximity of a pen so erudite and so eloquent on the subjects that it takes up, and we considered ourselves fortunate that it continued to be exercised in this circumstance on the most important of all those contained in the policy agenda.

The victories of Magenta and Solferino, and twelve hundred millions in Italian loans subscribed in France, give us, we added, the right to think that nothing that concerns Italy is foreign to us, and when the author of the *Economic Contradictions* once again makes an act of controversy in the discussion of unification, we believe that there can only be honor and profit in recording it.

The best way to pay homage to an illustrious deceased person is, in our eyes, to give the public the last expression of his thoughts.

It is this duty that we fulfill today, with the assistance of the honorable publisher of P.-J. Proudhon.

CHAROLAIS.

NEW OBSERVATIONS
ON ITALIAN UNITY

To the Editor-in-Chief of the MESSAGER DE PARIS.

Paris, December 10, 1864.

Monsieur Editor,

Since it has pleased certain journalists, among whom it is enough for me to cite Mr. de Girardin, to call upon me, with regard to Italian unity, the animosity of liberal opinion, will you allow me, in your turn, to come and throw into the impartiality of your columns a few words of justification? I will not abuse your kindness. And first of all, I regret to say it, but I have to say that I have no desire to engage, on any question whatsoever, in a controversy with Mr. de Girardin. Neither my leisure nor my strength allows me to do so. If I could, moreover, I wouldn't want to. More than once, in recent years, I have made to Mr. de Girardin what I would happily call, with the fencing instructors, *un appel du pied*, a discrete appeal: he has not responded. I had, with several of my friends, to address to him, regarding the abuse he made of his newspaper towards political adversaries deprived of organs, legitimate remonstrances: he did not accept them. Mr. de Girardin grants the publicity of *La Presse* to his people and at his hours, not to mention that one must bow to him much too low. And then, will I admit it? I don't know to what extent it is permissible to take Mr. de Girardin's opinion on Italian unity seriously: later I will say why. Let us add, finally, that I have reason to believe that Mr. de Girardin, after reading these lines, will be careful not to attempt a reply. Here, you will agree, Mr. Editor, are more reasons than are necessary for a gallant man to declare that in trying to justify, once and for all, against Mr. de Girardin and others, his colleagues, a long-matured opinion, he renounces all controversy.

Mr. de Girardin treats as a *sally* an article written by me, almost two years ago, against the unification of Italy. Others, with even more petulance than M. de Girardin, accuse me of *capucinade*. As for responding to my objections, no one, neither in *La Presse*, nor in *L'Opinion nationale*, nor in *Le Charivari*, nor in *Le Temps*, nor in *Le Siècle*, nor elsewhere, ever thought of it. Under the law of 1852, the so-called independent press strangles you: this is how it understands and practices freedom. Well, let M. de Girardin and others, who undoubtedly only seek the truth, allow me to ask them, on this serious subject of a unitary Italy, a few very simple questions, which their political science will not, I like to believe, be embarrassed to answer. If they resolve them in the manner that one has the right to expect from honorable publicists, they will have rendered an eminent service to the cause they defend, and I promise them for my part to convert to unity. If, on the contrary, as happens too often, these gentlemen only know how to dance and cavort around the bush, they will find it good that I stick to my jokes.

Mr. de Girardin and his colleagues are accustomed to treating politics from a bird's eye view. Nothing matches the roundness and sublimity of their designs. The sharpest, most irreconcilable differences, of territories, of races, of traditions, of interests, appear to them, at the height where they place themselves, like those indecisive shadows that we see on the globe of the moon. So nothing bothers them; they carve up States or districts, they penalize people, they make constitutions, *ad libitum*. They would not have been more embarrassed, if they had wanted, to make Italy a confederated republic, than they were to make it a unitary monarchy: this is how these geniuses conduct state affairs! I am more down to earth, and that is why I have never been able to find agreement with Mr. de Girardin.

Politics, art or science, I leave the definition to others, is made up, in my opinion, of five main elements: *Geography*, *Ethnography*, *History*, *Political economy*, and the *Right of Peoples*.

This means that at all times, to make good policy, we must scrupulously take into account the configuration of the territory, its excesses and its constraints, the climate, the character of the inhabitants, their past, the state of their civilization, of their relationships with other peoples. We must, I say, not stick to abstract theories, but consider in themselves the realities, treating populations as living, intelligent and free communities, not as numbers. Now here, summarized in a few articles, is what troubled me with the Italian question, when after Solferino it was a question of making Italy a great power, like the five which that the sovereignty of Modern Europe.

I. Geography.

Any agglomeration of men, included in a clearly circumscribed territory, and able to live an independent life there, is predestined to autonomy. Small or large, it is what we call a power or sovereignty, a state. In the political group, as well as in the individual, liberty accepts as obstacles only those imposed by territorial necessities, in other words, by the constraints of the neighborhood. The more independence there will be between the various fractions of a country, island, peninsula, continent, etc., the more for this reason there will be, by the nature of things, liberty between cities and their inhabitants; and this liberty, being, as it were, indigenous, spontaneous, will only disappear through a foreign cause, war or force. The more, on the contrary, the different parts of a territory are dependent on each other and command each other, the more there will be a tendency towards autocracy, which will only be definitively defeated by an artificial division of the country, imitated from the natural division of freer States. This is the principle according to which the great unitary monarchies were originally formed, on the one hand, and the republics or federations on the other. Now, as the movement of civilization is in the direction of liberty, it follows that where the independence of the individual and the group encounters the fewest obstacles, there manifests progress in its greatest development; there, on the contrary, where the mass of a whole dominates the parts, there too we find immobility, delay. So that, the geography of a people being given, we can, as Herder showed, predict their history.

At a glance, just by inspecting the world map, you judge that the center of the civilizing movement, the great center of history, will not be Thebes, Babylon, Nineveh, Persepolis, Ecbatane, nor, later, Vienna, Moscow, Krakow, Paris, Lyon or Madrid. Civilization was able to arise in these great valleys of the Nile, the Ganges, the Euphrates, the Danube, the Volga, the Rhine or the Rhône; it was able to develop there for centuries; it may even be that, under the influence of political institutions and armies, it seems in the end to settle there. These, however, are not its natural and definitive residences. The center of civilization, during the two great periods of paganism and the Middle Ages, could not be continental: this role belonged to the Mediterranean basin. It must have been, in the first place, the ISLES, as the Orientals called Greece; it was this sea of beauty, symbolized in Aphrodite, on which abutted as many independent States as the navigator traveling the coasts could count of rivers, ports, gulfs and valleys. Start from the mouth of the Nile, and go around the Mediterranean, going up through Syria: everywhere, at any given moment, you only encounter free countries. Liberty is a gift of the sea, because the sea, cutting up the map and making the cities independent, pushes back into the distance, into the highlands, with the great dominations, servitude. Asia Minor, almost entirely, is a cluster of small states that have their summits in the mountains, at the sources of the rivers, and their bases in the sea. Cross the Bosphorus, and you find the same configuration, symbol of a same destiny, for Greece, from Byzantine to Corfu. The independence of States,

their federation by the sea: this is liberty according to the order of nature; this is ancient civilization; this is Greece.

Where, on the other hand, do these enormous and fabulous empires extend, whose apocalyptic history continues to amuse children and scholars, without teaching almost anything to either? On the massifs crossed by the great rivers, there are signs here of dependence rather than liberty. This is Egypt, with its unique river, with its hidden sources; Assyria, sitting on the Tigris and the Euphrates, absorbing, far and wide, into its sphere of attraction, a host of small States that nature would have wanted free; this is Persia, which succeeds it, and which, again and more than ever, threatens maritime liberties, until the day when it will be overcome by Alexander. Xerxes has the Hellespont beaten with rods: a striking allegory of the king of kings, the oriental despot, who undertook to do violence to Aphrodite, goddess of the Sea and Liberty.

And notice this again: civilizing progress, the services rendered to the world, are above all in inverse proportion to the immensity of empires. — What have we learned from Babylon? What did the Chaldeans and the Magi leave us? Very little, but Judea, Phoenicia, the Greek cities of Asia, scattered along the sea, Greece and its islands, have given us everything: philosophy, sciences, arts, letters, politics, industry, religion, laws, liberty. Egypt, this grandmother of the human race, can still claim the title of first teacher; but she cannot advance. She invented navigation, but it was the Phoenicians and the Greeks who made the voyages of discovery. The expeditions of her fabulous heroes are only races against the savages infesting the cultivated fields, who are hunted like bands of monkeys or flocks of sparrows. When the general movement is pronounced, old and impotent Egypt belongs to the first occupant: just like Assyria and Persia, it is the proof that every great monarchy is predestined to dissolution, that life is in the division and sharing, and that the democracy of nations is the law of humanity.

What I have just observed in Greece and the Orient, we will find again in Italy and in the rest of Europe.

La Presse, vaguely feeling the importance of these geographical considerations, and wanting to support the idea of a unitary Italy on the authority of a great name, cited a fragment from the *Memorial of Saint Helena*, in which Napoleon I gives his fellow exiles a lesson in political geography. The great captain takes, with the compass, the dimensions of the Peninsula; calculates, as a surveyor, distances, surface area; includes mountain ranges, rivers, cities, etc. His whole geography is that of a schoolmaster doubled as a soldier. What he saw best was the semicircle of the Alps, forming a natural bastion for defense from the inside. Napoleon was unitary: it's quite simple. Army leader, conqueror, heir to Caesar and Charlemagne, how could he not have been a centralizer? Because the Peninsula is entirely between the Alps and the sea, it is said that it must form a single State: it is as if we concluded from the roundness of the globe to the omniarchy of the earth. What there is of the marvelous in Italy, not only Napoleon has seen it: namely, that all the parts of which it is composed are as independent of each other, despite their contiguity, as if they had been thrown across the Ocean, which means precisely that instead of calling for unity, they are loathe to do so.

Two things, I repeat, determine the formation of large States: territorial dependence or conquest; a necessity of nature, not invincible however, or the force of arms. As for political reason, it rejects with all its strength such an assemblage. Why then, I ask you, unite Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica under the same government? What need do these islands have of each other or of the opposite continent, for their police, their agriculture, their industry? Trade alone could motivate annexation; but commerce, of all things the most necessary after labor, is then the one that most readily dispenses with centralization. Don't we have free trade?... But here's the

saddest part. Italy is a long peninsula, divided along its length by a continuous chain of mountains, from which extend, on both sides, to the sea, a multitude of valleys, separated by as many ridges and perfectly independent. It looks like the skeleton of an immense cetacean. The most original and decidedly federalist constitution in the world, since as close as these small divisions are to each other and within reach of helping each other, they are independent, free from any mutual hindrance.

We understand, to a certain extent, that ancient Gaul, fallen under the sword of Caesar and forced to undergo Roman centralization, kept the form that the conquest had left on it. The central cities needing a way out, and unification seemed here a forced consequence of general existence. Paris needed Rouen and Le Havre; Lyon, Marseille; Toulouse, Bordeaux; Orléans, Nantes, and so on. There, the great arteries regulate the movement and control each other: this is how, for example, the Saône and the Seine could hardly be separated, and how whoever owned the line of Mâcon, Châlon, Besançon, Gray, had to end up owning the line, attached to the previous one, from Dijon, Auxerre, Sens, Montereau, Melun.

But nothing similar exists in Italy, with the possible exception of the Po basin, of which it is not impossible to make a federal junction line. There, every city of any importance derives its liberty and autonomy directly from the sea, and does not need, for its foreign affairs, the transit of any other: Venice, Ravenna, Rimini, Ancona, Bari, Otranto, Taranto, Reggio, on the Adriatic; Naples, Rome, CivitaVecchia, Florence (on the Arno), Genoa, on the Mediterranean. From this point of view, we could create sixty sovereignties in Italy: this is how it lived, moreover, for long centuries, before the Roman conquest. Then, when the fall of the Western Empire occurred, Italy did not do as Gaul did; it did not preserve this false unity that conquest had imposed on it; it returned to its natural constitution, and it was on this constitution of Italy, as on a geared machine, that the entire Middle Ages rolled, from the year 476 to the year 1530: everything that, for more than a thousand years, made us the thought, life and liberty of the world. Following the example and under the inspiration of Italy, other confederations were formed: the Teutonic Hanse, the United Provinces, between the Scheldt, the Meuse and the Rhine; finally Switzerland, which, relegated to the peaks of the Alps, can be considered as a truncated federation, from which the sea has gradually withdrawn. The aim of these federations is easy to discover: it is to resist the influence of the monarchical massifs: the Gallic massif, which soon became the kingdom of France; the Germanic massif; the Slavic and Muscovite massif, to the attraction of which modern society seems, for a time, to have abandoned itself.

There is therefore here positively a law: a law of nature, which pertains in all times and all countries; an inviolable law, which imposes itself on nations and dominates governments from above. Does M. de Girardin recognize this law? To deny it would be to award oneself a patent of blindness. How then does it not take up more space in his rantings about Italy? Is this an oversight on his part? Omission would be more unforgivable than negation. By what means does he hope, in his unitary Italy, to ward off the incessant action of nature, to repress its indomitable influence?

— Other times, other ideas, another system; M. de Girardin will perhaps say. — But we cannot change the eternal; and because we invented the railway, does Mr. de Girardin imagine that we have at the same time abolished the river, this moving path, and the Ocean? Now, it is a question here of liberty, which M. de Girardin pretends to worship alone among all the gods, and which he affects to believe possible under all regimes; of liberty, I say, which, before finding weapons in these instruments of human labor, wanted to create a whole system of fortresses in the division of continents and seas. It is a question of civilization as a whole, which has only

advanced to this day, and will only advance for a long time to come, through the dissolution of the great empires and the alliances between free States; it is a question of federalist thinking, which, despite the most deplorable errors, announces itself at all points in Europe and the globe as the last word of our constitutions, and before which we wanted to throw, in the creation of the kingdom of Italy, a new obstacle. But what, once again, do the people of Italy expect from this unity? Unity is modern servitude, reasoned, mutual, constitutional servitude. What compensation is that for ancient independence?

Every day we hear about *natural borders*. While waiting for us to explain what we mean by these two words, *natural borders*, I will say that the best, the safest, the most natural border, is the one that guarantees to the populations that it separates the most complete liberty, the most absolute self-government. Borders like these are found everywhere in Italy. Why do we insist on only seeing them in the Alps and the sea?

II. Ethnography.

Religion and morality, science and law, have always taken care to unite men and bring nations together: this is true unity, an entirely spiritual unity, outside and above wills and interests. I dare say that the duty of politics, in agreement with nature, is to separate, on the contrary, from the point of view of interests and material inevitabilities, everything that can be separated. As much as anyone else, more than many others who talk about them without knowing them, I bow to the principle of *nationality* as well as that of the family: this is precisely why I protest against the large political units, which do not appear to me to be anything other than confiscations of nationalities.

Can the people of Sicily, for example, truly be called Italian? — No, the Sicilians are Greeks whom Roman domination forced, like so many others, to learn Latin; Greeks, moreover, a little mixed with Saracen and Carthaginian blood. The same is true of Calabria, which was formerly called Magna Graecia, Western Greece, Hesperia, and later the second Sicily. According to the most ancient traditions, the first to inhabit Sicily were the *Sicanians*, of Iberian or Pyrenean origin, who came along the southeast coast, — to whom were then added the *Sicilians* or *Sicules*, of Dalmatian origin, coming along the opposite coast, northeast. The Greeks arrived last. But Sicilian civilization was Greek. The language, literature, politics, everything was Greek; Greek influence is still found in current customs. This is the reason, more than sufficient, that made me say that Sicily was Greek. Of Italic influences, you will only find the language, inoculated by force. How then, since 1859, has the kingdom of the Two Sicilies suddenly become Italianized? Is the fairly recent analogy of dialects enough to conclude that there is racial unity? Is it enough that imperial absolutism imposed its language on the vanquished, a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago, for us to deduce today the consequence of political unification? Let us allege, in favor of Victor-Emmanuel, the right of conquest. Very well. But nationality? A lie! What does the good faith of M. de Girardin say about it?

Since we wanted a kingdom of Italy, at least that the dynasty should be Italian. How did we choose Victor-Emmanuel? Heir to the ancient house of Maurienne, Allobroge or Savoyard by origin, Victor-Emmanuel has nothing Italian about him at all. He is king of Italy in the same way that Maximilian is emperor of Mexico, a prince of foreign importation. By what right did Victor-Emmanuel sell Savoy and Nice to France? By what title did he acquire the kingship of Italy? M. de Girardin never wrote at the head of one of his books: *Property or royalty is theft*. Well! How is it that at this time the more sensitive of the two of us about this usurpation of Italy is me?

And Garibaldi, native of Nice, currently a French subject, whatever he says, Garibaldi, who is sometimes for the republic, sometimes for the kingdom; Garibaldi, host, companion, accomplice or pensioner of Victor-Emmanuel, who owes him the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, is Garibaldi Italian himself? And if he's not Italian, what is this adventurer getting involved in? Because finally, according to everything we know of his life, it is impossible to give him any other qualification. Garibaldi is no more Italian than Victor-Emmanuel: he is of the Ligurian race, formerly spread along the entire maritime border, from Barcelona to Genoa. The political revolutions have cut up Liguria and attached its sections partly to Piedmont, which is also not Italy, partly to France, partly to Spain. However, there existed in the Middle Ages, I cannot at this moment say at what time, a sort of Ligurian kingdom, extending from Spain to France, even near Italy, of which Montpellier was the capital. It was a last effort of the Ligurian nationality. But, because the Ligurians have been erased from the map of States for centuries, does it follow that the men of this race have the right to make and unmake kingdoms, to speak in the name of foreign nationalities, to arbitrarily erase the latter, to give empire to the former, to resist the natural progress of civilization, to upset politics and history? What! Your Italian unity was cobbled together by a Ligurian soldier, for the benefit of a Savoyard prince, against all geography and nationality, and you want me to bow to this work of Machiavellianism and force! Look for other heroes and better reasons; because, I tell you, neither Victor-Emmanuel nor Garibaldi impress me.

I leave aside Sardinia and Corsica. — I cannot help but say a word about Lombardy.

Lombardy alone forms a notable part of the Peninsula, today the richest and most civilized. There at least we can believe ourselves in the middle of Italy. Would we have nothing to say, however, about this nationality? I ask the question not for the pleasure of quibbling, but because it will reveal to us the true character of the peninsular population.

Everyone knows that, long before the Roman conquest, the country currently called Lombardy was called *Cisalpine Gaul*; that from an almost immemorial time it had received numerous Gallic colonies; that these colonies extended on both banks of the Po, from which Cisalpine Gaul again took the names of *Transpadane Gaul* and *Cispadane Gaul*. Can we say, from this, that Cisalpine Gaul, from an ethnographic point of view, was truly Italian? When Napoleon I united Lombardy with his empire, which he made into the kingdom of Italy with Milan as its capital, he was certainly more right, from the point of view of nationality, than Victor-Emmanuel annexing Sicily and Naples to Piedmont. Because finally we can to a certain point, we Gauls, regard Virgil and Livy as compatriots, while Theocritus, Archimedes, Dion, Hiero, whose names are all Greek, are certainly not cousins of the *Taurini* Germans.

Undoubtedly Italy had its *aborigines*; they must have existed, there are probably still real Italiotes. But in the end we don't know them; they were not talked about; they form an imperceptible minority, and it is impossible to determine their role in the group of nationalities that occupied the Peninsula. With the Sicanes, the Siculians, the Dalmatians, the Greeks or Pelasgians (Thessalians, Arcadians, etc.), the Gauls or Celts, who early invaded and populated it, Italy also received, in prehistorical times, Egyptians, Semites, Greeks from Asia (Meonians from Lydia, later called *Tuscians*, or sacrificers, the Tuscans), Phrygians, Germans, Phoenicians or Carthaginians; as in later centuries, it saw the arrival of the Barbarians, Heruli, Ostrogoths, Lombards, Franks, Saracens and Normans. During a period of twenty-five or thirty centuries, colonies came from all sides, like a flood, into the valleys of Italy. Thus, from before the time of Abraham, the Semites, descended from the mountains of Armenia, crossed the plains of Chaldea, and flooded the valleys of Syria and Palestine. A curious effect of its geographical

configuration, and which from the beginning highlights the originality of its history, Italy is populated, by the sea and the passes of the Alps, with all kinds of nations. The settlers go up the rivers; they advance from the edges of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic towards the ridges, chasing before them the more or less barbaric aborigines of the Apennines and the Alps (Orobii, mountain people), who, after having been, by the rights of the natives, the first owners of the Peninsula, are eclipsed in its history.

We cannot say of Italy, like Gaul, Germany, Scandinavia, Muscovy, etc., that there exists a core of indigenous population, forming its nationality. In Italy, there are populations of all origins, of all characteristics: at base, there is no Italian race. Italian nationality is a fiction.

And here is the country of which a few men were pleased to make a highly centralized state, a unitary kingdom, a homogeneous people! It is for such confusion that we dare to invoke in turn the principle of nationalities and that of natural borders! As if unity were not, from the point of view of the races, denationalization! Do we believe, however, that the secret force, inherent in the soil and its inhabitants, which once diversified and maintained the peoples of the Peninsula in their respective characters; which made the religious Etruscan, the grave Sabinus, father of the warlike Samnite and a host of other small peoples, the opulent and municipalist Cisalpin; who, from the fusion of these characters, composed the patricial and legal Roman; do we believe that this force, which thirty centuries of revolutions and oppression have not exhausted, since it is, like the earth and the races, immortal, ceases to act in the face of good pleasure and constitutional formulas? Will destinies be changed because Italy of a hundred doors and a hundred faces has been ordered to behave as if it had only half a dozen, given that six doors and six faces are more than sufficient for the unity?

Suppose that someone should use with us, we French, unitary people par excellence, this language:

With Brest, Cherbourg and Toulon, with Calais, Boulogne, Le Havre, Saint-Nazaire, Bordeaux, Ces and Marseille, you have everything you need for your commercial and war fleets. Ten well-placed ports are enough for France: what good is this stretch of coastline on the Mediterranean and the Ocean, and these innumerable outlets that scatter the labor, multiply the costs and seem to invite the enemy? In a large centralized, military State, with large monopolies, the condition of which is above all to be well fortified, well closed, well monitored, well exploited, logic and sound economics prescribe the suppression of any divergent expansion and block unnecessary communications.

Such a speech would seem ridiculous to us. We would consider ourselves offended if someone wanted to restrict our outlets through these strange barriers. Such is in fact our inconsistency that, while making centralization our first law, we consider as one of the riches of France and the greatest advantage of its position the extent of its coasts and the multitude of its ports. However, it is a conclusion of this kind that the partisans of Italian unity must reach. One day, if the state of war continues between the powers, Italy will recognize that the sea that surrounds it, and should ensure its liberties, is the greatest danger threatening it. There, much more than in France, the incompatibility between the territorial constitution and the political system is blatant, absolute. Made as it is, open to all winds, divided by nations, opposed by attractions, Italy, for the new end that is proposed to it, is absurd. Either the spirit of independence, immanent, indomitable down to its smallest parts, will kill unity in it; or else, to preserve this impossible unity, it will be necessary to surround the Peninsula with a wall of force, by raising on its coasts a wall pierced by only five or six gates, and which, starting from the foot

of the Corniche, would extend up to Reggio, to then return, via Taranto, Ancona and Venice, to Isonzo.

III. Historical considerations.

The constitution of a State is not only based on its territory and its inhabitants, it is also determined by tradition. As it is the expression of national genius, it is at the same time that of history. Everyone is aware of these ideas. Each of us knows that peoples have their lives like individuals; that this collective existence is an evolution whose rings generate each other, and exclude any solution of continuity and any arbitrariness. Before therefore deciding that Italy, freed from Austria, the Papacy and the Bourbons, would form a single parliamentary, military, unitary monarchy, under the scepter freshly converted to liberalism of the House of Savoy, it seemed appropriate to investigate what the law of historical evolution was here. Before imposing a new political regulation on twenty-five million men, suddenly awakened, it would have been good to ask them first how they had lived until then. Why hasn't anything been done about it?

No doubt, the leaders of Paris and Turin, fearing the judgment of history on their ambition, wanted to avoid it by sidestepping the question. They thought, with M. de Girardin, that the fact would be more powerful than the idea; that it was necessary above all to proceed with the execution, and that, once Italy was executed, there would be no return from a *fait accompli*. But now, after five years, Italian unity, undermined by Cavour, Garibaldi and others, is less advanced than on the first day; she sticks out her tongue and shows the ropes; Mr. de Girardin himself, the father of the famous maxim of the *fait accompli*, interpreting the convention of September 15, proves to the Italians that their unity is placed between disarmament and bankruptcy, which means abdication or dishonor. Must I now explain to M. de Girardin, who until now does not seem to have suspected it, that the fact accomplished, however big it may be, is nothing, serves no purpose, means nothing, as soon as it is accomplished against history itself, and that his is precisely the case with Italian unity?

Italy is anti-unitary, first of all by its geographical constitution: we demonstrated this in the first paragraph. It is so, secondly, by the primordial diversity of its population, a diversity that is such that we cannot find in this country the first nucleus of what we commonly call elsewhere *nationality*. I add, thirdly, that Italy is still anti-unitary due to the divergence of its history and the problem of political constitution that it raises. Moreover, this persistent antipathy of Italy is of all things the most logical that we can conceive. History being given *a priori* by the population and the territory, and these in turn by the geographical configuration, we must expect that the principle posed by nature at the origin of the continents, embodied later in the races, will infallibly become the very principle of the State. Spirit and matter advance together.

I will not spend much on historical scholarship. The history of Italy is unlike any other: its general characteristics are evident at first glance. It is just a matter of opening your eyes.

I divide the entire history of the Italic Peninsula into four parts: the first, which extends from the origins to the Roman conquest, around 445 BC; — the second, which goes from the reduction of Italy to a Roman province, 445 BC, until the fall of the Western Empire, 476 AD; — the third, which covers the entire Middle Ages, 476 to 1830; — the fourth finally, which is the modern age.

During the first era, Italy, divided into a hundred different nations, obeying its nature, posited its fundamental idea, which was its municipalism. It gives birth to the right of citizenship. But the higher destinies of civilization, represented in turn by the Orient, Greece, Carthage and

Rome, itself lead it; it fades away for a time, after having contributed with all its powers, with all its ideas, with all its liberties, with all its forces, to the constitution of the empire, in which is summed up, in the century of Augustus, general civilization. What then was the part of the Italian cities in this constitution, which became that of humanity? It is not difficult to say: it is the *droit de cité*, the right of the city, as they said in Rome, following the example of all of Italy, and as all people who become enthusiastic about this right will repeat; the *right of the citizen*, as we said in 89, or more simply the RIGHT; the Right, which Rome boasted of having taught the world, which the ancient East barely suspected, which Greece had no time to develop and define; Right is the authentic product, collected by victorious Rome, of old Italy.

With Right, the spiritual unity of the human race is inaugurated, symbolized at the same time, on one side by the empire, on the other by the Church and the papacy. Then, this unity revealed, the empire, that is to say the material support that had served to make it prevail, imperial fatalism in turn vanished; nationalities reappear; Italy returns to its ancient constitution: this is the second era of Italian history.

So begins the great epic for Italy. The problem is to merge municipal freedoms with legal unity; in more concrete terms, to give independent nationalities and free cities a protectorate that protects them all, and yet cannot undertake anything against any. It is the problem of universal and federative liberty that is revealed, and which Italy's mission is to try to achieve with the help of the ideas of the time: 1. the Church, represented by the Pope, and 2. the emperor, who became a Christian, an external bishop, right arm of the Holy Father, and consecrated by him. The alliance of the two powers, spiritual and temporal, in other words the pact of Charlemagne: this is the basis on which Italy will try, for more than a thousand years, to establish peace and liberty for humankind.

But the alliance of the two powers is contradictory. Pope and emperor are in perpetual contradiction: both usurpers, the first aspiring to the caliphate, to the absorption of the temporal in the spiritual; the second throwing himself into schism, creating antipopes, dividing the Church, putting his hand on the censor, much more, claiming loudly the domination of the cities. The problem therefore remains insoluble, and the mission of Italy would come to naught if, while Christianity pursues a chimerical ideal, it does not unwittingly create for itself a higher destiny, both outside of imperial omnipotence, tending towards tyranny, and pontifical absolutism, which became idolatry and anti-Christ. Now, it is here that the political genius of Italy shines in all its brilliance. Opposing sometimes the emperor to the pope, sometimes the pope to the emperor, alternately Guelf or Ghibelline; furthermore finding, either in the Eastern Emperor, to whom a large number of cities are attached, or in the kingdom (France or Italy), new counterweights, Italy, by its opportune initiative, by its decisive influence, through the brilliance of its examples, saved Christian society from this double absolutism whose principle, sanctified by religion, was rooted in the depths of conscience. It wore out the papacy and the empire, one by the other; it has contained, devoured its kings; and when, exhausted by such a long struggle, overwhelmed by the ambition of princes and the imbecility of the people, it was put out of action, the danger was over; the ancient corporate name, pope-emperor, was abrogated; the *Renaissance*, the great revolution of the fifteenth century, was accomplished, and the *Reformation* the great revolution of the sixteenth century, prepared by his own hands, took place. Since the capture of Florence in 1530, which put an end to what we can boldly call Italian hegemony, Italy has been resting. The rudder of progress passed from it hands first to those of Spain, then of Germany, of France. Where is it today? What is the governing nation at this

time?... Italy is waiting for its destiny to be revealed to it, and we have not known what to answer: Constitutional monarchy, unitary kingdom! *Risum teneatis*.

Italy presents itself to the current generation in the perpetuity and in the oppositions of its history; it asserts itself simultaneously as municipal or federal, Roman or unitary; imperial, here with the Emperor of Constantinople, there with the Germanic Emperor; papal with Bellarmine, and anti-papal with the councils; feudal, episcopal, royal, noble, Guelf and Ghibelline, rustic and bourgeois, reformer and orthodox. And it asks you, all of you tribunes and makers, saber-rattlers and doctrinaires, who control opinion and lead the movement, what you ultimately want it to be, what you yourselves are.

Come on! Monsieur de Girardin, the man of a hundred thousand ideas, what do you think? Will Italy be a kingdom? Mazzini would have liked to be able to say no. Garibaldi, the former soldier of the republic, Garibaldi, making like a seesaw, has said yes. What is your opinion? You are, you say, for a *fait accompli*. Well, the *fait accompli*, when it is a question of kingdoms, is nothing less than certain in Italy. Since the ancient Brutus, Italy has devoured its kingdoms. Everyone knows what horror the name of king inspired in Rome. Without going back further than the end of the Western Empire, Italy swallowed up all its monarchical formations one after the other:

Kingdom of the Heruli,	476 — 493;
Kingdom of the Ostrogoths,	493 — 554;
Kingdom of the Lombards,	368 — 774;
Kingdom of the Franks,	774 — 887;
Feudal kings,	888 — 951.
You can join the kingdom of Napoleon I,	1804—1815.

You will tell me that these kingships perish one by another, by the rivalry of princes and the agitation of the people. Without doubt, the weapons are barbaric, but the thought is Italian: always, in these royal catastrophes, you will encounter indigenous action, often even that of the Pope. The curse of the Church weighs on royalty. At only one point does the kingdom seem to hold; that is in Naples. Indication of a different nationality and another influence. And yet look again: since the Norman conquest, around 1016, if the kingdom has been maintained, the dynasty has changed many times: Normans, Angevins, Aragonese, Germans, Hungarians, Spaniards, the kings are from all countries, except the Two Sicilies. Do you think this promises much for the former king of Cyprus and Jerusalem, Victor-Emmanuel?

Encouraged by its godfathers, Italy asks for Rome as its capital. Do you believe this wish from Italy is perfectly thought out, perfectly authentic? Take whatever side you want, and you will see that you are wrong. Rome is nothing more than a tomb, a sepulchral chapel. We generally agree to recognize this. Everything that once made it the eternal city, the equal of the world, *urbi et orbi*, religion, empire, papacy, all that is dead, says Mr. Petruccelli della Gattina very well, and nothing can resurrect it. Rome is razed to the ground, at the level of Memphis, Nineveh and Babylon. Rome, capital of a modern state, is a senseless idealism, the dream of a shadow. And yet, remove Rome from the minds of Italians, immediately the ideas of unity, centralization, empire, kingdom disappear; we must, willy-nilly, stick to the federation. This is because, as I have the honor to tell you, unity in Italy is a pure idealism, which can only be sustained as long as we give it Rome, another idealism, for expression. What a service, exclaims Mr. Petruccelli della Gattina, we would render to unitary Italy if we rid it of this old Rome, if we

blew up Saint Peter's and all the monuments! He does not realize that, with Rome destroyed, the united mirage would vanish. Such are the prestige and necessities of history.

Italy remained Catholic, I suppose. A nation only changes its beliefs under the impetus of an internal revolution; and neither the renaissance, nor the reformation, nor the philosophy of the 18th century, nor German philosophy, nor the French revolution, seems up to this moment to have been able to make the Italians lose their faith. There are in Italy atheists, libertines, deists, a few Protestants perhaps: individuals are what they can; the society remained Catholic. Is it also papist? Judging by the clamor raised against him by the temporal power, we would lean towards the negative; thinking about it, we remain in doubt.

In Italy, more than anywhere else, the difficulty of reconciling religious conscience with the political constitution is extreme. We can perfectly imagine, in France, Austria, Bavaria, Belgium, Poland, Spain, etc., the State and the Church separated, delimited and living together; in Italy, it is something else. Here, Catholicism is more than a religion of the state or of the majority of Italians; it is the mother Church and mistress of all the Catholic Churches on the globe, the center and summit of Orthodox Christianity spread throughout the earth. However, Italy has no desire to abdicate the honor of the sovereign pontiff, a scandal, if you like, of philosophical reason and reason of state, but the main glory of Italy.

From there recognition in the Roman pontiff of a power superior to that of the bishops, archbishops and cardinals of other countries; necessity, therefore, between the Church and the State, of a conciliation or pact other than a simple concordat. This is a question of practice against which there is no point in raging and kicking.

Catholicism is in the majority in Italy; the papacy is its representative; its auxiliaries are Catholics from all countries: we must therefore deal with it. The rare philosophers that Italy possesses, such as Mr. Petruccelli della Gattina, would like to see the people with them, the papacy to the devil. To their great confusion, they are not followed.

To bring about a revolution in the beliefs of Italy is a power that has not been given to its thinkers: that is the state of things. Neither the saber of Victor-Emmanuel nor the words of Mr. de Cavour were capable of cutting this more than Gordian knot. A civil constitution for the clergy had been proposed, I was told, in recent years to the parliament of Turin. People declaimed endlessly against the temporal power, but when it was time to vote, there was no one to be found. One day, a member of parliament, who had been more determined than the others, presented himself for communion in his parish. The priest, recognizing him as one of the most violent enemies of the Holy See, refused him the sacrament. What does the excommunicate do? He summons his pastor before the civil judge!... Can this representative of the people call himself an enemy of the papacy? For a long time we will not admit among our neighbors that, in a constitutional State whose first principle is tolerance, the law is atheistic; Italy will not consent to repudiate its pontificate for a long time: it would no longer believe itself to be Christian. But the pontificate only exists with a large share of temporal power. Is M. de Girardin able, in his system of unity, to make these two things agree?

I have heard Ferrari maintain that, just as Italy, in spite of all its corruptions, has not ceased to be Christian and Papist, so it has not ceased to be imperial; always Ghibelline, therefore, and always Guelf, one does not go without the other. And Ferrari's opinion seems well-founded: the same day that Emperor Francis Joseph let go of Lombardy, Emperor Napoleon III was carried in triumph, proclaimed liberator. It is because in fact, whoever says empire, in Italy, says, since Charlemagne, protectorate, a power that, balanced by the pontificate, limited by municipal franchises, exercises no authority over the cities, has not the right to impose on them either law

or contribution, but is bound by his title to defend them against their civil wars and attacks from abroad. This is, I told you, what we call the pact of Charlemagne. Today, as a thousand years ago, Italy seems imbued with this singular idea: a power that protects it but does not command it. Without that there would be no Italy. But the more the Italians feel the need for this protectorate, the more they distrust it, knowing full well that in politics the one who protects is the master.

Why don't they protect themselves, you will say; why do they not free themselves, why do they not defend themselves? This is also what they thought they were doing by appointing Victor-Emmanuel king and decreeing unity; but in which they admitted to having been mistaken when they signed the convention of September 45, and when, on the advice of Mr. de Girardin, they disarmed. Instead of waging war, Italy, either because it does not feel strong enough or because it judges that it costs too much, retreats in the face of bankruptcy. What faith in its unity! Would M. de Girardin have any means of resolving this very Italian difficulty?

Thus, by its traditions and its ideas, as by its geography and its races, Italy is in permanent contradiction with unity, constantly pitting one against the other, in the interest of its franchises, empire, kingdom, papacy, and seeking above the clouds, in this eternal antagonism, an impossible synthesis. First of all. Italy values its regional and municipal liberties; it is federalist and does not hide it. For this purpose it appeals in turn to the empire, and the empire wants to be its master; to the papacy, and the papacy betrays it; to the kingdom, and the kingdom, an autocracy in disguise, is repugnant to it. To consolidate its autonomy, Italy asks for Rome; but what is Rome without the papacy? A whitened tomb. In its impatience, it would go so far as to abjure the religion of its fathers: *No popery*, it exclaims with its good friends the English; and it doesn't have the courage.

However, there was no shortage of examples. Italy saw the reformation pass, and it laughed at this comedy constantly ending in marriages: see Luther; see Henry VIII; see Landgrave Philip of Hesse; see John of Leiden.

The French revolution came. After the fall of the first Napoleon and the restorations that followed, we see the formation of the carbonari societies in Italy. It is the Jacobinism of 93, with its one and indivisible republic, its Robespierre-style deism, *Dio e popolo*, which becomes ultramontane. Counterfeiting and anachronism. The Jacobins made themselves, under the first empire, counts and barons; under the restoration, actors of liberalism; after 1830 and 1848, conservatives and reactionaries. Italy did better than that: its Ghibellines and Guelphs were a hundred pikes above our deplorable Jacobins. Now Jacobinism is over: Mazzini has no influence in Italy.

Disgusted with Jacobinism and Carbonarism as much as with its Ghibellines and Guelphs, Italy, since 1859, has declared itself, under the auspices of Garibaldi, liberal, doctrinaire, that is to say constitutional-monarchical and bourgeois. Here it is in full swing. Counterfeiting and anachronism. When it comes to political doctrinairism and shifts, the Italians know more than us. Let them see their authors again and reread their annals! Certainly, the constitutional monarchy has left better memories in France than the triumvirate of Robespierre, Saint-Just and Couthon; but we can say that we are no longer there and that we are unlikely to return. Now, if the constitutional monarchy, worn out among us in thirty-three years, suits the French character so little, can we say that it suits the Italian character better? Would M. de Girardin, who was once Louis-Philippe's intimate advisor, dare to answer for this?

Italy is looking for itself and cannot find itself. Tossed between its republics, its emperors, its popes and its kings, not having been able to unravel the enigma of its ancient federations, it agitates in helpless despair. At times it seems that it is going to seize again, as in the past, the

revolutionary banner, and lead the people to final emancipation. Last hallucination, which finally exposes the historical contradiction of Italian unity. Not content with patronizing, in his adopted country, the constitutional monarchy, Garibaldi, leader of the action party, made an alliance with all the aristocracies of Europe. Garibaldi is a supporter of the Polish restoration; he conspires with Kossuth and the Magyars; he courts the lords of England. In truth, the illustrious red shirt is not of his time. When Czar Alexander II, expropriating the nobles, gave the peasants liberty, property and jurisdiction; when Emperor Franz Joseph, finally following the path opened by the famous Congress of Vienna, made Austria a representative and federalist empire; when the working classes of England march to the conquest of their political rights and the destruction of monopolies, to extend a hand to the aristocracies, as Garibaldi does, is this not to mistake both the Revolution and nationalities ?

Pushed out of its way by its dictators, its journalists, its heroes and its pedants, unfortunate Italy is slowly being consumed; it does even worse, it has become, in the hands of its political stockbrokers, an instrument of counter-revolution; and all of us, as many as we are, suffer from its errors and faults.

IV. Political and economic question.

If it is obvious, immediately obvious, that Italy is anti-unitarian: first, by its geographical constitution; second, by the original division of its nationalities; third by the complicated problem of its history; if it is certain that this triple incompatibility is the expression of a triple law, law of nature, law of life, law of the spirit, we wonder what interest, what pretext, the leaders of the latest Italian movement have had to push their fellow nationals to a policy that contradicts traditions, liberty and nature. Where does this conspiracy, so new in Italy, come from, a conspiracy of arbitrariness against independence, against the soil, against the blood, against the spirit of the Italians?

After searching for a long time, this is what I discovered. Someone said to me:

You are preaching to the converted. Italians, we are all, as much as you, republicans and federalists; we make fun of the emperors and the king as much as of Rome and its pope. But it is not about all that, and you are not even asking the right question. We wanted unity as a war machine and instrument of guarantee. We wanted it, and we rejected the federation: 1. because with the federation we despaired of expelling our princes, which we nevertheless wanted to get rid of; 2. because, even if we had succeeded in driving them out, the federation, in our opinion, would have brought them back; 3. because, with the princes restored, the Pope at the head, the Italian federation would no longer have been what we want it to be; 4. because in the absence of the fallen princes, whose re-establishment it was for us to prevent, we could still see Murat's son return to Naples, any Bonaparte to Florence, and because Italy does not want Bonapartes and Murats any more than it does Bourbons and Hapsburgs; 5. because, as long as Italy is not free as far as the Adriatic, Italy will not be able to federalize itself, and the only way it has to free itself is to group its forces in such a way as to stand up to both Austria on one side and Imperial France on the other.

This is the idea that Italian patriots cherish in the depths of their hearts, an idea that the constitutionalist bourgeoisie has taken it upon itself to spread, and from which the Sardinian dynasty benefits in the meantime. And this is what I responded to from the beginning: Lies and mystification. It is neither against emperors, nor against princes, nor against the papacy, that this

Piedmontese intrigue was hatched: it is against yourselves, O Italians! poor fools, and I will prove it.

As a general thesis, we cannot admit that any interest, however great it may be, could go so far as to violate the very nature of things. Well, this is precisely the case here: the application of political unity to Italy is such a radical impossibility that it does not even allow the hypothesis. It is understandable that France in 1814 hesitated, after the fall of Napoleon, between the republic and the monarchy; that it said to itself that, to put an end to it as soon as the invasion took place, the return to legitimate royalty was the safest option. France had been governed by kings for fourteen hundred years; since Caesar's conquest, it had counted twenty centuries of unitary rule, and we have seen that its ethnographic and territorial constitution lends itself to centralization much better than that of the Peninsula. Here, things are no longer the same: unity is the denaturation of an entire country, the denationalization of ten peoples; it is the arbitrary transformation of twenty-five million souls, despite the soil, the races, the ideas. How the false liberalism of our time has conceived such a project is quite simple: what these liberals want is something other than what the Republicans are looking for. But that sincere patriots allowed themselves to be taken in by this Machiavellianism is what cannot be surprise me enough. Did the doctor ever claim that to cure his patient he first needed to do an autopsy? Italy unifying under the scepter of a king in order to become free again reminds us of the story of Eson's daughters cooking their father in order to rejuvenate him. It is that of our so-called republican and at the same time dynastic opposition; everyone has been able to judge for eighteen months what benefit liberty has derived among us from its oath to the Emperor.

In this case, I add that the allegations of the partisans of unity are all false. It is false that in 1860 the federal principle was linked, in Italy, either to the maintenance or to the return of the princes, while unity would be essentially contrary to them. What is unitary in Italy, as we have proven from history, is, with Catholicism and the papacy, the empire, the kingdom, the principate; what is federalist is the cities, it is the republic. How could the people of Italy be made to believe that after Solferino white had become black and black white? To maintain that the federation would be more favorable to the excluded princes than the constitutional-monarchical unity, was to assert a double falsity, namely that the federation has been conservative and immovable for a thousand years, and that it was going to become so again; while the Church, the empire, the kingdom, unity, in a word, would show itself, as always, reforming, progressive, revolutionary.

It is said that without unity the expulsion of the king of Naples, that of the dukes of Tuscany, Parma and Modena, later the forfeiture of the pope as prince temporal, were impossible. To which I replied that, if we understood it from the point of view of individuals, this was right: Italy, which formerly had five or six princes, now has only one; but that, if we reasoned from the point of view of principles, it was completely wrong, the new unity being of a much different value, both as authority and as centralization, than the five or six little heads of State by the grace of God. They therefore lied when they argued, in favor of the new kingdom, the dismissal of the old majesties. The mere fact of the division of Italy into six principalities constituted a first federalism, a sort of democracy of cities, which the unitary kingdom is in the process of making disappear.

Finally, it is false that the need to group the forces of Italy into one hand should come before all other considerations. I have shown the illusion of this calculation, first by showing, through famous examples, that confederations can deploy as much warlike force as monarchies; then by showing that, even if the unification of Italy were feasible, the two emperors, both as heads of

military states and as rival protectors of catholicity represented by the pope, would remain opposed to it; that they would always agree to prevent it: the object of their antagonism beyond the Alps being in no way the independence of the Italian masses, but their own influence over them. Was I wrong in this assessment? So what is the Treaty of Villafranca? What was the French occupation of Rome? What is Napoleon III's protest against the conquest of Naples? Finally, what is this convention of September 45, by which the king of Italy, — the unitary king, do you understand? — threatened with bankruptcy, obliges himself to stand guard for the Holy Father in place of the French? And has the prospect of a Muratist dynasty in Naples, of another Bonapartist in Florence or elsewhere, vanished in unity? So what does the marriage of Prince Napoleon to a Piedmontese princess mean? So this is how this proud unit is reduced! This is what the million soldiers demanded by Garibaldi were supposed to be used for! It was enough for Napoleon III to say a word in the ear of his good friend Victor-Emmanuel to make this friend a devoted and faithful soldier of the Holy Father! Whether the Escobars of the French press now quibble as much as they want about the meaning of the convention of September 45, it is no less true that it has exposed the impossibility of an Italy which, between France and Austria, would like to make itself unitary and, consequently, its impotence. Abdication or bankruptcy! the imperial government shouts to it through the mouth of M. de Girardin. And in either case, shame, continues M. Petruccelli della Gattina sadly. To which I will only allow myself to add, by way of *amen*: Whose fault is it?

If the apparent reasons, more or less official, that have been given for the unification of Italy, are obviously false, there must exist others that we have not dared to speak, and which we will not have any difficulty in discovering, according to the fatal logic of intrigue and charlatanism. The unity of Italy was desired, desired at all costs, contrary to its geographical constitution, contrary to the character and wishes of its populations, contrary to the data of its history, contrary, finally, to all the conditions of a sound policy: we have just proven it. At least this unity was desired by high considerations of social economy? No, since what is antipathetic to liberty, contrary to good exploitation of the territory, incompatible with the data of history, the tendency of peoples and the necessities of politics, cannot in any case be a good economy. Look instead.

Italy was, like France, like all modern nations, bitten by the tarantula of stock trading. What the Italian bourgeoisie wanted, like those it took as guides and models, was to *make money*, a lot of money; it was, an unholy dream, to discount its natural riches in the shortest possible time, without concern for future generations, as we ourselves have been doing, especially since 1830, and even more so since 1852; as all people do today, under the instigation of Jewish-British molochism.

In one of his letters to Mr. de Girardin, Mr. Petruccelli della Gattina, unitarian it seems, out of pure human respect, but federalist through his historical knowledge and his ardent patriotism, makes this strange enumeration of the parties in Italy; I quote from *La Presse* of November 13:

“We are,” he said, “in Italy, federalists,	2
“Republicans,	not 23
“Party of action,	zero
“Everything else, a government camarilla.”	

Thus, according to Mr. Petruccelli della Gattina, who moreover was willing to join in, and who thinks it is bad that I didn't do the same, the unity party in Italy is a *governmental camarilla*. We know in France what that means. Governmental camarilla is business politics; it is, since it

must be called by its name, *corruption*. UNITY therefore, centralization, big salaries, sinecures, monopolies, privileges, concessions, bribes, big and lucrative deals, freed from all *hazard* by the intervention of the men of the power: these are all things that hold. To the members of the camarilla, don't say that you weren't warned. In short, Mr. Petrutcelli della Gatina revealed to us the secret of Italian unity. The stench had long since risen from Turin to Paris.

Whoever says political unity or centralization, in fact, says world of big business;

Says centralization of capital;

Says centralization of credit at 7, 8, 9 and 10 percent;

Says centralization of mortgages, subjugation of property, reconstitution of large estates, fiefs and majorats;

Says alienation and coalition of railways;

Says hoarding of state loans;

Says industrial and mercantile feudalism;

Says increase in taxes, multiplication of employments, development of public debt;

Says cheap sale of national properties;

Says alliance of the bourgeoisie of the centralized State with all the landed, financial and speculator aristocracies of the globe.

It is indeed a question here of the Cisalpine Gauls, and the Tuscans, and the Romans, and the Neapolitans or Silicians, and the Piedmontese themselves! In Italy we only want Italians, just as in France we only want French people, that is to say people who are not from their country. However, these denationalized people are divided for the camarilla into two groups: one, the smallest, composed of capitalists-entrepreneurs-proprietors, of all languages and all origins, relying for their exploitation on strong political centralization; the other, an innumerable group, more especially indigenous, but without capital or property, made up of the entire mass of wage-earners of the country, all the more surely excluded from the benefits of public wealth as they are held by their unitary infatuation and as their forfeiture was, so to speak, decreed by universal suffrage itself.

Italian unity has not had five years of existence; it was only yesterday that centralizing mercantilism was inoculated on the Peninsula; and already the Italian debt has reached five billion, as rapid in its peaceful growth as the war debt of North America. This army of a million men before which Garibaldi was to make the forces of Austria flee exists only on paper; we give it up for lack of being able to arm and feed it: what would it be like if we still had to cover the costs of one or two campaigns? Venice is not reconquered: we refer for this object to the logic of the time, protector of nationalities. Rome will remain with the Pope until further notice, according to the convention of September 15, unless the French Emperor allows this convention to be made into a new ambush. The central government is going to make a first move that will cost it a hundred million; in the meantime, existing legislation will be repealed on the right or left, always in the interest of holy unity, in order to establish uniform morals everywhere. Isn't it also necessary that the deputies of Italy do their parliamentary apprenticeship; that after having established political unity in their country, they organize administrative and judicial unity, while waiting to be free to consummate their work by the creation of a capital city? A capital in a country whose sea is the true center; which consequently cannot admit any, precisely because there is room for sixty! This has been, in recent times, the great concern of Italian statesmen!

Positive reason cries out in vain to these empiricists that industrial and mercantile centralization, the obligatory corollary of political centralization, is incompatible with liberty, cheapness and wealth; that the more sovereignty is divided among a people, the more likely it is

that property and rent are themselves divided; that works and services, land and taxes, will be all the better distributed as the government approaches a reasoned anarchy: they don't want to see anything, hear anything. Looting and waste, exploitation and parasitism, this is for the general economy; — lies, corruption and the *bascule*, if necessary doctrinaire shootings, that's it for the government: such are the new morals and institutions that we brought, with unity, to the Italians. And when, after the most atrocious of disappointments, the hearts of this people bleed; when indignation and shame suffocate them, MM. Petruccelli della Gattina and de Girardin are there to tell them, pressing the knife to their throat: "Disarmament or bankruptcy!" And on whom are these clever people trying to place the responsibility for this terrible dilemma? On the opponents of unity. It is not enough that the Italians are victims of the most detestable of policies, they must remain convinced until the end of its excellence; Anyone who wanted to spare them the bitterness must always be regarded by them as an enemy.

Mr. de Girardin opposes to me the authority of Sismondi and Gouvion-Saint-Cyr. Why not that of Dante and Machiavelli? They too, for the salvation of their country, tended towards unity: the second even went so far as to wish for the conquest of Italy by a foreign sovereign. Why not again the opinion of Alexandre Dumas Sr., a man who prides himself on having written *twelve hundred volumes* — when did he find the time to think? — the third pen of our contemporary literature, of which *La Presse* is currently publishing the tenth volume against the Naples dynasty. No one among the readers of *La Presse* would have been able to make to MM. of Girardin and A. Dumas these two simple observations, that, to judge the policy that best serves Italy in 1864, it was not enough to be called Dante, Machiavelli, Sismondi or Gouvion-Saint-Cyr; it was necessary to be able to embrace the whole of Italian history at a glance, and to live in 1864; — as for the royalty of Naples, that what had made this dynasty so abominable was the abuse of the monarchical principle, in other words the excess of unity, and that consequently there was reason to conclude, not for the transfer of the Neapolitan monarchy from the house of Bourbon to that of Savoy, but for the abolition of royalty itself.

Do you understand now, Mr. Editor, that Mr. de Girardin's opinion regarding Italy is suspect to me, and that the way in which he uses it towards me could well have no other aim than to weaken the odiousness of this cruel word escaped from his indifferentism: *Disarmament or bankruptcy*?

V. European Right. — Conclusion.

Well, you will tell me, since, according to you, Italy cannot in any way become unitary; since neither its territory, nor its races, nor its past, nor its well-understood policy, nor its economic interests, allow it, declare yourself what it must be, what it must do. Your critique of unity, so detailed at length, makes it a duty for you. Because, finally, when Napoleon III came to call the Italians to arms, whatever his ulterior motives, they could not honorably reject the proposal made to them. They would have fallen short in the esteem of the people. They spoke of emancipation, of emancipation as far as the Adriatic, an expression that seemed to imply the creation of a new State, adequate for the entire Peninsula. They had to march, seize the opportunity that fortune offered. Italy became unitary through the ambition of a few and the leading of the rest: let us only blame it on fate. The unanimity of popular movements, the harmony of revolutions, the analogy of ideas, have done everything here. Speak then, and, without accusing others or apologizing further, say what you would have liked; finally give your solution. It is never too late to speak the right and the truth, even when faced with a *fait accompli*.

I will speak, certainly, and in a few words, without circumlocutions or ambiguities, not as would be appropriate for an assembly responsible for constituting such a large country, but as a foreigner who only sees the principles can do.

I. — Italy, freed from Austria, knowing itself perfectly, had first of all one thing to do: before sovereignly deciding its destiny, it was to consult the state of European public right, European tendencies. It didn't care; it acted in the individualism of its fantasy: that is its first, its very great fault.

II. — If Italy had understood that more than ever it had to walk in unison with the people, if necessary to serve as a model and guide for them, it would have seen, something which is now striking the eyes of the most rebellious, on the one hand, that Europe has been in continuous progress towards political and economic liberties since 1789 and 1815; on the other hand, that this progress has as its expression, in what concerns the organization of States, first, and provisionally, constitutional monarchy, then soon federal democracy; with regard to the public economy, the intimate union of labor and capital, in other words the abolition of aristocracy and wage labor.

III. — Italy would therefore have said to itself that the solution to its historical problem was indicated by the state of governments and the aspirations of the people; that this solution could be summed up in this formula: a confederation, no longer simply fortuitous and natural, but reasoned and sworn, where the cities would regain their independence, their franchises, their traditions, in a word their entire sovereignty; as for federal protection, it only had to take it within its bosom, within the power of federal law and the terms of the pact. It had seen that these emperors, these popes, these kings, who made so much noise in its annals and who still pursue it with their shadow, existed in it only as symbolisms; that political reality is not in these personifications, and that the only way to achieve true unity, true guarantees, is to begin by eliminating these idolatrous creations of the old ages.

IV. — Whether in these new conditions Italy continued to give asylum to the Roman Pontiff, even less for itself than for the service of the Catholic world, was a matter that concerned only itself, which, led by a Rossi, a Gioberti, could, achieving something much more important than a Concordat or a new Protestantism, singularly advance the transformation of Christianity.

V.— Nothing could be easier, I dare say, than to put this plan into execution: all they had to do, as I said one day, was to catch the words spoken at Villafranca on the fly, and to then exercise, in the interest of the universal federation, the moral pressure that was used with so much success for the benefit of the House of Savoy and its false unity. If Italy had known how to accomplish this great work, it once again would have become *ipso facto*, as in the Middle Ages, the center of the European movement, and acquired a glory greater than that which we ourselves conquered through the Revolution. Who knows what else Italy can do? We have unified it: it will be, I hope, like powder, which, the more it is compressed, the more explosive force it has.

Yes, and I do not speak here only in my personal name, I speak for all those who, like me, without compromise and with an inflexible heart, seek in the laws of nature, of political economy and of history, the conditions of liberty. Your centralized Italy makes us pity and annoys us; it is unsympathetic to us, reactionary, and we do not want it at any price. Rather see it a hundred years still Austrian, Bourbonian, Papist, Muratist and whatever you like: it would at least have preserved its frames.

Will you maintain to me now, as a final argument, that Italy, after a lethargy of more than three centuries, consumed in such a long dissolution, no longer has the energy necessary to assert its federalism, and that everything that it was capable in 1859 of allowing itself to be constituted,

under the protection of France, into a monarchy of the middle ground? Well, then, let there be no more talk of Italy. Let it be removed from powers and nationalities alike. Italy has lived. Let the two emperors who fought for it come to an agreement and share it between them: that is the best that can happen to it. The federation will come by itself, and, if Italy can do nothing for itself, it will at least not have any betrayal to reproach itself for.

END.

Working translation by Shawn P. Wilbur; last revised March 5, 2024.