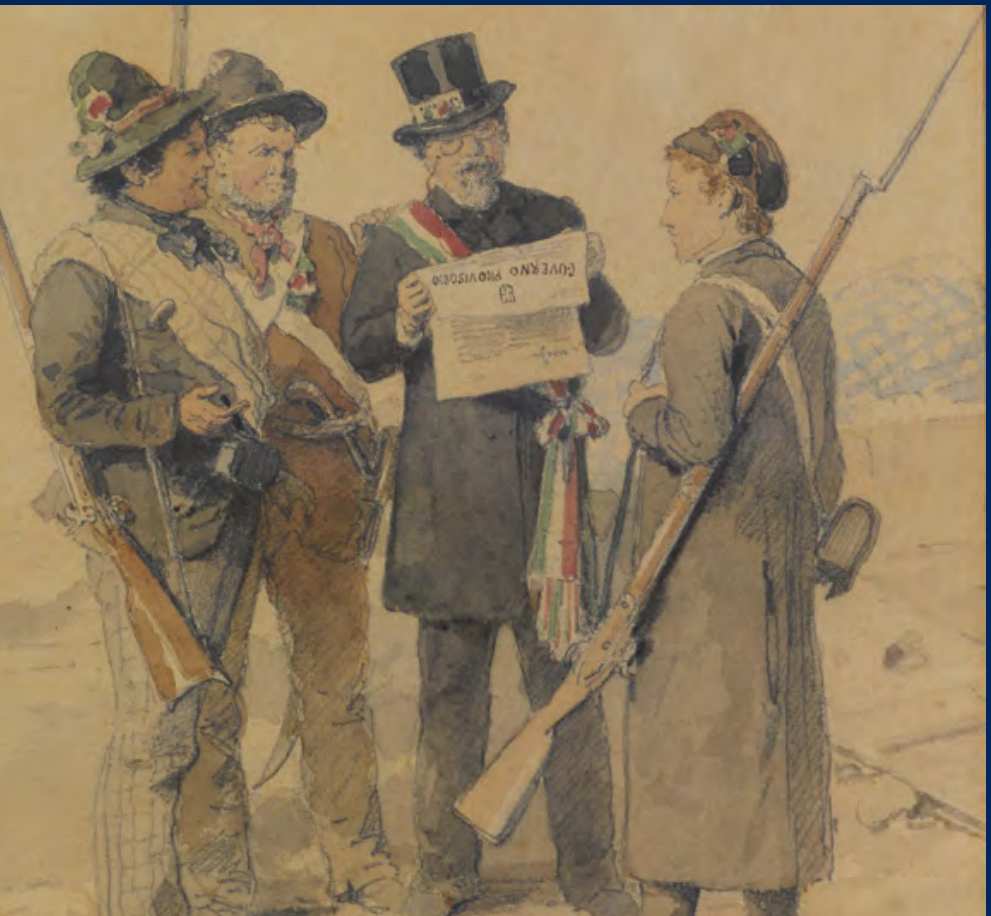
Giulia Delogu, Alessandro Bonvini,
Cecilia Carnino, Daniele Di Bartolomeo (eds.)

Governing Consensus

The Political Use of Knowledge in Italy



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Governing Consensus

The Political Use of Knowledge in Italy

edited by

Giulia Delogu, Alessandro Bonvini,
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Introduction*

1. *Government by consensus*

This volume originated from a series of questions regarding the transformations that shaped the Atlantic world between the 18th and 19th centuries.[1] Specifically, the case studies collected here, in dialogue with the research initiatives of the members of the 2022 PRIN project *Governing Consensus*, seek to answer the question: how did people navigate the political landscapes that emerged from the revolutionary period?

At the heart of this work is an attempt to unveil the mechanisms of "government by consensus", a concept that has become essential in political systems increasingly characterised by constitutional and democratic aspirations, which require the political class to engage in dialogue with citizens, who are called upon to legitimise the ruling classes through their approval. Alongside consensus is knowledge, and it is on this pairing that the research group outlined its premises and invited authors to reflect. While international historiography has focused primarily on the categories of celebrity and charisma as mechanisms of governance and legitimation in the late 18th and 19th centuries, this volume encourages a rediscovery of the political role of knowledge, which anticipated today's notion of "expertise". To accomplish this, we've chosen to focus on the Italian peninsula, understood as a crossroads of transnational stimuli and a vibrant laboratory of change. This setting allows us to test hypotheses that future projects may extend to other geographical areas through a comparative lens. Knowledge is interpreted broadly, encompassing traditional disciplines such as history, philosophy, law, economics, literature, rhetoric, geography and medicine, as well as a wide range of emerging fields like administrative science or statistics, and of

* We would like to thank Clorinda Donato and her Center (California State University Long Beach) for translating our volume; specifically for the introduction we thank Manuel Romero.

1. *Governare il consenso. Il ruolo politico dei saperi in Italia (1789-1870) / Governing Consensus: The Political Role of Knowledge in Italy (1789-1870)*. PRIN 2022. CUP H53D23000140006, coordinated by Giulia Delogu (PI), Alessandro Bonvini, Cecilia Carnino and Daniele Di Bartolomeo.

course the cross-fertilisation between these various domains, which often yields the most innovative and effective proposals.[2]

Many threads conceptually and methodologically link the scattered cases between the "two centuries armed against each other" and across different corners of the Italian landscape. Chief among them is a focus not only on the vertical dimension of the transfer of knowledge – typical of teacher-student relationships and formal education in schools and universities – but also on the horizontal dimension. This horizontal exchange shaped the public sphere in the 18th and 19th centuries, enabling equal exchanges and hybridisations aimed at moving beyond the instruction of "subjects", and by that time increasingly directed toward the formation of "citizens". A second common feature that the project and volume aim to highlight is the importance of studying both practices and perceptions. The possession of knowledge was not only an actual resource for better state administration but also a message to be leveraged to convince citizens that effective governance was taking place.

This latter perspective, the most unexpected and least explored, opens new possible horizons of analysis for an even more complete understanding of the political use of knowledge. In the turmoil of the revolutionary age, the idea of expertise could become a powerful weapon for winning citizens' consensus and thus power, comparable to military victories. Amid profound political and institutional discontinuities, with continuous changes of government, the possession of knowledge remained an element of strong continuity. Thus, officials of questionable loyalty but solid expertise found themselves passing unscathed through vastly different regimes.[3] It was various forms of knowledge (whether mathematical, legal or medical, to name just a few) that guaranteed them positions, even at the highest levels, in various administrations, according to the conception (or perhaps we should say aspiration) that was then becoming established of an equivalence between expertise and good governance.

It seems no coincidence that Napoleon himself, after an initial rise as a military man, began in the early 1800s to increasingly favour a representation of himself as a man of science and administration, as a form of legitimation both within and beyond the territories under his control. It was not so much his abilities on the battlefield, but rather the knowledge drawn from books and papers, that made him "deserving" of the people's approval. In short, demonstrating mastery of knowledge and presenting oneself as competent might not translate into actual good governance but could nevertheless facilitate forms of personal advancement and legitimation and, ultimately, "government by consensus", according to what we would now call the birth of propagandistic rhetoric surrounding technocracy.

2. See, for example, the case study presented in: Giulia Delogu, "Medicina e storia: l'uso del passato nella sanità pubblica tra Sette e Ottocento", *Annali ISIG*, 50/1 (2024), pp. 17-40.

3. Livio Antonielli, *I prefetti dell'Italia napoleonica: Repubblica e Regno d'Italia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1983; Marco Meriggi, *Amministrazione e classi sociali nel Lombardo-Veneto, 1814-1848*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1983; Tommaso Scaramella, *Dall'erudizione all'amministrazione. Il vicentino Agostino Vivorio e le reti sociali dei saperi (1743-1822)*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2025; Giulia Delogu, *"Meriti dei padri" o "doti dei figli"? I regolamenti del Collegio Ghislieri tra saperi e politica (1767-1862)*, Como-Pavia, Ibis, 2025.

2. *The Italian peninsula as a political laboratory*

The historiography has long explored treatises dedicated to the education of princes and, more generally, politicians in the early modern age.[4] Detailed studies have been conducted on specific professions and political roles,[5] even within the context of specific states. Numerous works have been published on the role of written communication in the transmission and circulation of knowledge.[6] In this regard, essays on the Enlightenment's cultural projects are especially significant.[7] Concerning the watershed moment of 1789, scholars have particularly emphasised the revolutionaries' efforts to transform subjects into citizens and achieve social regeneration through a national education project[8] and the participation of the French people in civic ceremonies.[9] At the same time, researchers have noted the "formative" role played by the disruptive events of the Revolution, not only for the elites but also for the rest of society,[10] during which "traditional" skills and knowledge were mobilised to confront unsettling changes, generating new approaches and meanings.[11] Scholarship on the Revolution has highlighted the connection between revolutionaries' reflections on knowledge and education and the emergence of an extensive public debate on transparency – specifically, on efforts to bridge the gap between citizens and their representatives through formal systems of mutual accountability, where deputies monitored citizens and citizens in turn scrutinised their representatives.[12]

Confronted with this complex landscape, historians have focused primarily on the role played by major political and military figures and by the processes

4. Gian Paolo Brizzi, *La formazione della classe dirigente nei Sei-Settecento*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1976.

5. Arianna Arisi Rota, "Dalle virtù alle competenze: formare alla diplomazia e alla politica", in *Formare alle professioni. Diplomatici e politici*, ed. by A. Arisi Rota, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2009, pp. 7-14; Pierre Karila-Cohen, *Monsieur le préfet, incarner l'état dans la France du XIX siècle*, Champ Vallon, Ceyzérieu, 2021; Gaïd Andro, *Une génération au service de l'État. Les procureurs généraux syndics de la Révolution française (1780-1830)*, Paris, Société des Etudes Robespierristes, 2015.

6. *I periodici settecenteschi come luogo di comunicazione dei saperi. Prospettive storiografiche, letterarie e linguistiche*, ed. by Fabio Forner, Franz Meier and Sabine Schwarze, Berlin, Peter Lang, 2022; *Le partage des savoirs (XVIIIème-XIXème siècles)*, ed. by Lise Andries, Lyon, PUL, 2003.

7. *Savoir et pouvoir au siècle des Lumières*, ed. by Jan Borm, Bertrand Cottret and Monique Cottret, Paris, Les Éditions de Paris-M. Chaleil, 2011.

8. Bronislaw Baczko, *Une éducation pour la démocratie. Textes et projets de l'époque révolutionnaire*, Geneva, Droz, 2000; *Cultura e lavoro intellettuale: istituzioni, saperi e professioni nel decennio francese*, ed. by Anna Maria Rao, Naples, Giannini, 2009.

9. Mona Ozouf, *La fête révolutionnaire*, Paris, Gallimard, 1976.

10. Haim Burstin, *Rivoluzionari. Antropologia politica della Rivoluzione francese*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2016.

11. Timothy Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary: The Deputies of the French National Assembly and the Emergence of a Revolutionary Culture (1789-1790)*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1996.

12. Luca Scuccimarra, "Sorvegliare e punire. Rivoluzione francese e forme di controllo", *Il Pensiero Politico*, 29 (2007), pp. 434-462.

through which knowledge and skills were mediated and disseminated.[13] However, they have largely overlooked the multitude of "minor" political and administrative actors who were responsible for transmitting knowledge and applying it to practical purpose in various regions.

Regarding the Italian case study,[14] scholarly attention has focused primarily on the pre-Revolutionary period and the post-Unification era, with less attention given to the political laboratory that Italy represented before unification. Contrary to the case of France, the common foundation for reorganising knowledge – which was essential for developing figures with the necessary skills to govern by consensus – remains largely understudied.[15] Specific research has been dedicated to the education of the ruling classes, including investigations into the evolution of universities[16] and cultural institutions. Detailed studies have been conducted on individual professions within specific state entities.[17] Beginning with the "cultural turn"[18] in the long 19th century, scholars have examined political participation and mobilisation by interpreting the political dynamism of pre-Unification Italy through the framework of conflict.[19]

In the face of this complex landscape, we still lack an analysis aimed at understanding the forms, timing and tools involved in building a new culture of governance – beyond the study of prominent political figures, foundational texts or a few specific cases of local or central administration. The question remains unresolved regarding the construction of a body of knowledge capable of providing the necessary competencies to citizens, military personnel, diplomats, officials and politicians to govern consensus: that is, to move as key actors in the public sphere of the late 18th and 19th centuries.

3. *Agents, texts, places and events*

To reconstruct the landscape of the political use of knowledge and its transformation into useful skills for government officials, local functionaries,

13. David A. Bell, *Men on Horseback: The Power of Charisma in the Age of Revolution*, New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020 (It. trans: *Il culto dei capi. Carisma e potere nell'età delle rivoluzioni*, Rome, Viella, 2023).

14. *Istituzioni e cultura in età napoleonica*, ed. by Elena Brambilla, Carlo Capra and Aurora Scotti, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2008.

15. Aurélien Lignereux, *Les impériaux: administrer et habiter l'Europe de Napoléon*, Paris, Fayard, 2019.

16. *Storia delle Università in Italia*, ed. by Gian Paolo Brizzi, Piero Del Negro and Andrea Romano, Catania, Sicania, 2007.

17. *Formazione alla politica, politica della formazione a Venezia in Età moderna*, ed. by Andrea Caracausi and Antonio Conzato, Rome, Viella, 2013.

18. *Il Risorgimento*, ed. by Alberto Maria Banti and Paul Ginsborg, Turin, Einaudi, 2007.

19. Salvatore Lupo, *L'unificazione italiana. Mezzogiorno, rivoluzione, guerra civile*, Rome, Donzelli, 2011; Paolo Macry, *Unità a Mezzogiorno. Come l'Italia ha messo assieme i pezzi*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2012; Carmine Pinto, *La guerra per il Mezzogiorno. Italiani, borbonici e briganti (1860-1870)*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2019.

professionals and citizens alike, this volume adopts multiple levels of analysis and combines perspectives from intellectual and cultural history with those from political, institutional and legal history. The dialogue between various specialists allows for the presentation of a broad and diverse gallery of case studies that explore different types of knowledge (medical, cartographic-geographical, statistical-economic, policing, artistic, legal, historical-literary and linguistic). The contributors highlight the permeability between disciplines characteristic of the period examined here, which also facilitated the emergence of new types of experts.

In their richness and diversity of stimuli and perspectives, necessary to account for the complex transitional period spanning from the Age of Revolutions to the Restoration, the case studies presented here investigate the political use of knowledge and governance by consensus through four specific research axes: agents, texts, places and events.

Central to each essay is the focus on agents, that is, on those who enacted change or who were besieged by it: from sovereigns to the people, from citizens broadly defined to politicians, even including specific figures who were redefining their identities within this new political landscape, such as military personnel, civil servants, jurists, doctors, teachers, artists and writers/translators. The close examination of the individual trajectories of certain agents – ranging from lesser-studied figures to key protagonists like Rasori, Romagnosi, Cagnazzi, La Farina, Cavour and Minghetti – enables a deeper understanding of the dissemination of knowledge and, most crucially, its political and social impact. The goal is to verify through concrete cases how successfully the knowledge-competence pairing served as a legitimising force in the public sphere, and how individual agents navigated the emerging politics of government by consensus in a rapidly changing society. The volume investigates both "educators" and "the educated", demonstrating how training and the reputation of "competence" influenced the ability to govern consensus and consequently maintain (or lose) power or positions. Regarding the emergence of the competent politician (and civil servant), this volume explores both the selection and training processes of those destined for positions of power, as well as how politicians and officials translated their expertise into good governance through concrete action.

Agents are created in the specific places where they circulate knowledge. Indeed, particular locations such as capital cities – epicentres of cultural policy and stages for public events and exhibitions – as well as universities, academies and libraries, served as crossroads where networks of knowledge circulation would meet and where various agents would engage in dialogue and, most importantly, take action. The dimension of place allows us to investigate how knowledge was concretely reconfigured and translated into practical skills. Educational institutions (from universities to academies) are essential for understanding how knowledge was transmitted (including the linguistic shift from Latin to Italian), developing into competencies for future citizens who were called upon to play an increasingly active role in emerging societies. Alongside educational institutions, there were specialised centres dedicated to managing, disseminating and applying technical knowledge, such as the Bureau de l'Armée d'Italie or the Osservatorio

reale di Brera in Milan. In these places, technical-specialised knowledge underwent processes of standardisation, affecting both the competencies of those who worked there and the circulation of cultural tools aimed at forming a class of administrative experts who were preparing to enter the revolutionary, Napoleonic and Restoration bureaucracies alike.

The production and circulation of texts and images constitutes yet another fundamental research focus of this volume. We aimed to study the development of new technical knowledge and the political repurposing of more traditional knowledge, combining content analysis with the study of political, economic and cultural contexts of production and the reconstruction of circulation networks. In various political-institutional settings, from republican-democratic administrations to pre-Unification monarchies, there was a proliferation of works concerning knowledge deemed essential for good governance. This included collections of representative texts in the field of administrative science, which also incorporated Italian translations of foreign works. These texts reflect the conviction that knowledge should be accessible to all participants in the political arena and that the greater dissemination of information was necessary to enhance the ability of public officials to effectively manage the consensus of the emerging popular masses. Hence the growing effort to engage new audiences (consider, for example, the explosion of the biography genre or political iconography). Publishers and printers also served as interpreters for these audiences, acting as privileged interlocutors of power and managers of knowledge essential to the state.

Public opinion is certainly central to this volume's final line of inquiry, that of media events (or "paper events"). These were events that exhibited widespread communicative resonance, appearing in texts while also sparking the production of news and reflections. Such events allow us to measure the spread of new knowledge within the public sphere and to test its capacity to become a shared body of knowledge, useful for decision-making and for navigating unfolding events. The events of the Age of Revolutions and the Risorgimento are studied not only as instances where acquired knowledge was put to the test by being translated into practical skills, but also as moments that prompted further reconsideration of educational models. News stories, as well as cultural manifestations and events, including pseudo-scientific performances, were experiences in which new identities and models of action were forged. This took into account the emergence of the people as both material and symbolic actors in politics, who learned models of action and identity, establishing themselves as significant players in the political arena. This represented an epoch-making transformation that forced governments to reckon with new subjects and, more generally, with the need to seek consensus.

4. *Knowledge and politics in the long 19th century*

This volume adopts a longue-durée chronological framework that spans the so-called "long 19th century". During this period, the Italian peninsula was not only at the heart of epoch-making transformations that permanently reshaped the face of the Old Continent but also played a central role in the circulation of

knowledge that helped connect, link and in some ways homogenise the cultures, institutions and societies of the pre-Unification states.[20]

The terminus a quo (starting point) is situated in the Age of Revolutions. The revolutionary upheaval posed unprecedented challenges to those holding political power. Education and training became tools for developing the necessary skills to act in the public sphere and guide government choices in economic, technical and scientific fields, imposing a professionalisation of state apparatuses at all levels. Giulio Talini, beginning with the competition announced by the Accademia dei Georgofili in Florence in 1791, demonstrates the reformist approach adopted by the grand ducal leadership regarding the free trade of raw materials. Valentina De Santi, on the other hand, illustrates the centrality acquired by French military cartography as a fundamental – and not merely auxiliary – discipline for understanding, measuring and organising the territory of the Kingdom of Italy. What emerged was an incipient accumulation of competencies that facilitated the development of transnational professional paths, as explained by Paolo Conte regarding the integration of Italian physicians in exile into the healthcare personnel of Napoleonic France. In addition to responding to new political demands, knowledge also constituted a passe-partout (master key) for managing consensus in a society bearing unprecedented constitutional, democratic and participatory aspirations. For example, the success of the pseudo-scientist Charles Rouy in early 19th-century Milan, analysed by Elisa Baccini, was the result of growing public interest in non-specialised, and at times eccentric, forms of knowledge. Similarly, Marcello Dinacci interprets the commercial boom in institutional iconography through the lens of modern political communication and the politicisation of visual art.

After 1815, the success of the Restoration did not imply a wholesale return to the ancien régime. The changes introduced during the Napoleonic decade had greatly altered administrations and society, permeating the mindset of monarchs, state officials and ordinary citizens. Institutions were improved through the recruitment of qualified personnel, the standardisation of management procedures and the advocacy of specific competencies, resulting in formalised approaches to acquiring, cataloguing and transmitting data and information. Marco E. Omes, for instance, argues that the smallpox vaccination program – which involved scholars of Giandomenico Romagnosi's caliber – was conducted according to advanced experimental standards, drawing from different disciplines and laying the groundwork for more generalised programs aimed at the medicalisation of society. Everywhere, sovereigns had to reckon with the weight of the revolution, which extended beyond the political sphere to become a myth with strong attractive and mobilising power, as demonstrated by the circulation of Napoleon's biographies published by a new generation of intellectuals, writers and translators and examined in Giacomo Girardi's chapter.

The *annus mirabilis* of 1848 marked a fundamental break with the past. As authorities confronted the rise of the national-patriotic movement, elites

20. Cristopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2004.

and liberal groups exerted pressure on their respective governments, nurturing experiences of intellectual exchange that were acquiring a distinctly Italian character. Emilio Scaramuzza, for example, uses Giuseppe La Farina's biography to explore how policing knowledge evolved between the Springtime of the Peoples and the Expedition of the Thousand to address the pro-unification demands of Sicilian society. Political and national revolution accelerated a process of reorganising knowledge that marked every stage of the kingdom's unification. Even more than before, governing consensus meant integrating, rationalising and indeed "nationalising" a body of formal and informal knowledge that outlined the contours of a community that now perceived itself as a unified entity. In this sense, Maria Stella Chiaruttini investigates the debate surrounding the creation of the central bank as an expression of a centralised, top-down state vision determined to definitively eliminate the local interests of pre-Unification institutions. Claudia Bussolino traces the course of language policies that replaced Latin with Italian as the primary language for academic learning and as a tool of symbolic representation for the entire university system. Finally, Francesco Guarino frames the publication of French, English, American and German literary works by constitutionalist Attilio Brunialti as an attempt to promote an educational model that was interdisciplinary in its premises but national and nationalising in its educational aims. With the old monarchies collapsed and the peninsula unified under a single flag, for the ruling classes of the Historical Right, government by consensus became the essential condition for the country's future development.

Giulio Talini

"Complete and Unrestricted Freedom of Trade"?: Political Economy, Experts and the Science of Government in the 1791 Competition of the Accademia dei Georgofili*

1. *Introduction*

On 7 February 1791, the Accademia dei Georgofili (Academy of Georgofili) of Florence decided "by a vote of 8 to 7" to announce a competition that would take place the following year. The question – presented by Vice-President and auditor Giovanni Neri and subsequently approved by the "Counsellor of Finance and State", Luigi Schmidweiller – addressed a pressing political issue in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany:

> Whether in a state with the potential for population growth and increased domestic production, the most advantageous and sure way to achieve the above-mentioned goals is to shape legislation in support of manufacturing by imposing certain restrictions on the trade of raw materials or to allow these materials to circulate with the complete and unrestricted freedom of natural trade.[1]

Proposed against the backdrop of instability triggered by news of the French Revolution, the counter-revolutionary "Viva Maria" revolts of the previous year and the decline of the Grand Duchy's silk and wool exports, the Academy's announcement of a competition was bound to generate interest. At the time, the Tuscan government was in the process of drawing up a new customs tariff, contending with diverging and often irreconcilable visions of trade policy.[2] It is no coincidence, then, that numerous government officials, *philosophes*, producers and landowners – fully reflecting the eclectic character of the Tuscan elites already noted by Furio Diaz – rushed to offer their responses to the Georgofili, the government and the public through translations, pamphlets, treatises and manuscripts.[3] Far from being a purely academic exercise, the heated political debate

* My gratitude to Manuel Romero for his translation of this essay.

1. Archivio dell'Accademia dei Georgofili (hereafter AAG), *Verbali adunanze ordinarie*, B4, cc. 1-2.

2. Vieri Becagli, "La tariffa doganale del 1791 e il dibattito sulla libertà del commercio", in *La Toscana nell'età rivoluzionaria e napoleonica*, ed. by Ivan Tognarini, Naples, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1985, pp. 279-292. Cf. also *infra*.

3. On political economy and the Enlightenment in late 18th-century Tuscany, cf. at least Furio Diaz, *Francesco Maria Gianni dalla burocrazia alla politica sotto Pietro Leopoldo di Toscana*, Milan-Naples, Ricciardi, 1966, pp. vii-xxii; Mario Mirri, "La fisiocrazia in Toscana: un tema da riprendere", in *Studi di storia medievale e moderna per Ernesto Sestan*, 2 vols, Florence,

that followed – one that has yet to receive adequate attention from historians – marked a moment of synthesis and a partial transcendence of the languages, theories and transnational models of political economy characteristic of the Leopoldine era. In fact, the Academy's competition provided both renowned and lesser-known intellectuals and administrators, such as Francesco Maria Gianni, Matteo Biffi Tolomei and Giovanni Fabbroni, with the opportunity to explore the foundations of "scientific" expertise in the economic sphere and to affirm the political and authoritative status of practical knowledge.[4]

And that's not all: while the diverse and composite Third Estate in revolutionary France – with figures like Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès – demanded and secured a more influential constitutional role ("devenir quelque chose"), Grand Duke Ferdinand III of Habsburg and the Tuscan financial administration discovered in the Georgofili, the enlightened civil society, public opinion and "science of commerce" sources of political legitimacy that aligned with the orderly regulation of absolutism, thus providing an alternative to the principle of popular sovereignty.[5] Ultimately, this case study exemplifies both the continuities and the ruptures in the relationship between state-related knowledge and political decision-making in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany as it straddled the transition from the ancien régime to the revolutionary era.[6]

Olschki, 1980, vol. I, pp. 703-709; Furio Diaz, "La Reggenza", in *Il Granducato di Toscana dalla Reggenza agli anni rivoluzionari*, ed. by Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, Furio Diaz and Carlo Mangio, Turin, UTET, 1997, pp. 175-238; Corey Tazzara, *The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World, 1574-1790*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017; *Florence after the Medici: Tuscan Enlightenment, 1737-1790*, ed. by Paula Findlen, Corey Tazzara and Jacob Soll, London-New York, Routledge, 2020; Giulio Talini, "Giovanni Maria Lampredi and the Neutrality of Small States in Eighteenth-Century Europe", *Intellectual History Review*, 33/2 (2023), pp. 227-248. On the transnational circulation of economic ideas, cf. Antonella Alimento, "Introduzione", in *Modelli d'oltre confine. Prospettive economiche e sociali negli antichi Stati italiani*, ed. by Antonella Alimento, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2009, pp. ix-xlii. On the reforms in the Grand Duchy, cf. Mario Mirri, "Dalla storia dei 'lumi' e delle 'riforme' alla storia degli 'antichi stati italiani'", in *Pompeo Neri. Atti del Colloquio di Studi di Castelfiorentino*, ed. by Marcello Verga and Aldo Fratoianni, Castelfiorentino, Società Storica della Valdelsa, 1992, pp. 401-540. On the 18th-century political economy, cf. especially Simone Meyssonnier, *La Balance et l'Horloge. La genèse de la pensée libérale en France au XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Éditions de la Passion, 1989; Jean-Claude Perrot, *Une histoire intellectuelle de l'économie politique, XVII^e-XVIII^e siècles*, Paris, EHESS Éditions, 1992.

4. Giovanni Biondi, "L'Accademia dei Georgofili e le rivolte popolari del 1790", *Rassegna Storica Toscana*, 22/1 (1976), pp. 47-76; Becagli, *La tariffa doganale del 1791*; Renato Pasta, *Scienza politica e rivoluzione. L'opera di Giovanni Fabbroni (1752-1822) intellettuale e funzionario al servizio dei Lorena*, Florence, Olschki, 1989, pp. 336-383; Cecilia Carnino, *Lusso e benessere nell'Italia del Settecento*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2014, pp. 130-131. For a historically appropriate use of the word "expertise", cf. Eric H. Ash, "By Any Other Name: Early Modern Expertise and the Problem of Anachronism", *History and Technology*, 35/1 (2019), pp. 3-30.

5. Carlo Mangio, "Rivoluzione e riformismo a confronto: la nascita del mito leopoldino in Toscana", *Studi Storici*, 4 (1989), pp. 947-967.

6. Lothar Schilling, Jakob Vogel, "State-Related Knowledge: Conceptual Reflections on the Rise of the Modern State", in *Transnational Cultures of Expertise: Circulating State-*

2. *Reforms, revolutions and counter-revolutions: the Accademia dei Georgofili and the question of free trade in 1791*

By 1791, the Accademia dei Georgofili had long been assimilated into the state apparatus. Founded on 4 June 1753 by Abbot Ubaldo Montelatici, Giovanni Lami and Giovanni Targioni Tozzetti, and with the approval of the President of the Regency Council, Emmanuel de Nay de Richecourt, the Academy initially emerged as a "spontaneous expression of civil society", dedicated to the empirical study of agronomy. However, its early independence from political authority gradually eroded, beginning with the accession of Pietro Leopoldo, who arrived in Florence on 13 September 1765.

The shift away from the early Georgofili's broadly egalitarian and anarchic approach to self-governance began in January 1767, when Francesco Orsini von Rosenberg – a close adviser to the Grand Duke – was named "Member, Prince, Leader and Perpetual Protector of the Georgofili".[7] However, the complete bureaucratisation of the Academy – an integral part of Leopoldine physiocratic reformism – culminated on 22 October 1783, when the new statutes of the "Real Società Economica" of Florence amended appointments and powers in an extremely top-down manner by placing the selection of the President (a lifetime position) entirely in the hands of the Grand Duke.[8] It is no surprise, then, that the Academy's members increasingly aligned themselves with the interests of large estate owners and the grain free-trade ideology championed by Angelo Tavanti,

Related Knowledge in the 18th and 19th Centuries, ed. by Lothar Schilling and Jakob Vogel, Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter, 2019, pp. 1-20.

7. For information about the Accademia dei Georgofili in the 18th century, cf. Eric W. Cochrane, *Tradition and Enlightenment in the Tuscan Academies (1690-1800)*, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1961; Renato Pasta, "L'Accademia dei Georgofili e la riforma dell'agricoltura", *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 105 (1993), pp. 484-501; Vieri Becagli, "The Georgofili of Florence, 1753-1783: From 'Perfect Anarchy' to Royal Academy", in *The Rise of Economic Societies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Koen Stapelbroek and Jani Marjanen, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, pp. 96-129. On the early years, cf. Ubaldo Montelatici, "Memorie dell'Accademia de' Georgofili scritte da me D. Ubaldo Montelatici Institutore e Segretario della detta Accademia", *Atti dei Georgofili*, 5/3 (1906), pp. 411-444. For the 19th century, cf. Vieri Becagli, "L'Accademia economico-agraria dei Georgofili nell'età della Restaurazione", in *Associazionismo economico e diffusione dell'economia politica nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*, ed. by Massimo M. Augello and Marco E. L. Guidi, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2000, pp. 131-156.

8. *Atti della Real Società Economica di Firenze, ossia de' Georgofili*, Florence, Pagani e Compagni, 1791, pp. 56-68. The President would choose the treasurer and select three candidates for the vice-presidency to present to the Academy. Membership was divided into ordinary members (limited to no more than 50), honorary members – both groups holding voting rights – and corresponding members. In addition, the Georgofili elected a secretary and five deputies, whose duties were to maintain the garden and promote scholarly research. Cf. also Franco Venturi, *Settecento riformatore,* 7 vols, Turin, Einaudi, 1969-1990, vol. V, t. I, p. 408; Michele Simonetto, "Accademie agrarie italiane del XVIII secolo. Profili storici, dimensione sociale (I)", *Società e Storia*, 124 (2009), pp. 268-271. For a list of Academy members since 1753, cf. Marco Tabarrini, *Degli studi e delle vicende della Reale Accademia dei Georgofili nel primo secolo di sua esistenza*, Florence, Cellini, 1856.

Director of Finance, a disciple of François Quesnay and the proponent of the customs tariff introduced on 30 August 1781, which liberalised the import and export of grains.[9] Notably, during the summer of 1787, while discussing the *Idea de la ley agraria española* by the Valencian Manuel Sisternes y Feliu – a follower of Pedro Rodríguez de Campomanes – the Academy's delegates (including Luigi Tramontani, Jacopo Ambrogio Tartini, Andrea Zucchini, Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni and Bernardo Lessi) lauded the work for its unequivocal advocacy of "property security", "cultural freedom" and the "freedom to trade products". However, in their opinion, Sisternes had failed to understand the harmful effects of common lands on public agriculture. In their view, common lands should be completely abolished and divided among the oligarchy of the wealthiest landowners (the "opulenti"), who alone possessed the financial capacity to supply both the fixed and variable capital necessary for cultivation and, thereby, to "make the lands yield a profit" and generate a net product (*produit net*).[10]

The relative social and cultural cohesion of the Georgofili, along with the Academy's complete subordination to the grand ducal government, should not, however, lead us to overlook the tensions between free trade advocates and neo-Colbertist factions that still plagued the institution on the eve of the ancien régime's fall. The narrow margin by which the proposed question on the free trade of raw materials was approved on 7 February 1791 – with 8 votes in favour and 7 against – is a clear indication of how divisive the issue was among its members. Furthermore, as evidenced by the catalogue of the Georgofili library compiled on 27 January 1790, the selected topic went far beyond the usual disputes over rural taxation, agricultural education, vagrancy, agronomic experiments, livestock management and road networks that had been addressed in previous competitions and explored further in the readings undertaken by the members of the Academy.[11]

On the other hand, considering the Academy's subordination to the grand ducal government and the fact that the competition had been explicitly approved by the Counsellor of Finance and State, Schmidweiller – and, by extension, the Regency under Antonio Serristori[12] – it is highly likely that the 7 February

9. Diaz, *Francesco Maria Gianni*, p. 199; Mario Mirri, *La lotta politica in Toscana intorno alle riforme annonarie (1764-1775)*, Pisa, Pacini, 1972; Vieri Becagli, *Un unico territorio gabellabile. La riforma doganale leopoldina*, Florence, Università degli Studi di Firenze, 1983.

10. Georges Weulersse, *Le mouvement physiocratique en France (de 1756 à 1770)*, Paris, Alcan, 1910, pp. 244-279; Franco Venturi, "Economisti e riformatori spagnoli e italiani nel '700", *Rivista Storica Italiana*, 74 (1962), pp. 549-550; Liana Vardi, *The Physiocrats and the World of the Enlightenment*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 52-82. Cf. also Manuel Sisternes y Feliu, *Idea de la ley agraria española*, Valencia, Monfort, 1786, reviewed in *Novelle letterarie*, 23 March 1787. On the reception of physiocracy in Tuscany through translation, cf. Antonella Alimento, "La réception des idées physiocratiques à travers les traductions: le cas toscan et vénitien", *Économies et Sociétés*, 22-23/1-2 (1995), pp. 297-313.

11. *Catalogo dei libri d'attenenza della R. Accademia dei Georgofili*, 27 January 1790, AAG, b. 172, n. 2. Cf. also Becagli, *L'Accademia economico-agraria dei Georgofili nell'età della Restaurazione*, pp. 133-134.

12. Antonio Serristori led the Regency until 7 March 1791, when Ferdinand III, the successor to Pietro Leopoldo, arrived in Florence. Cf. Antonio Zobi, *Storia civile della Toscana*

resolution was driven by the political intent to complement the customs reform process with a public debate, thereby retroactively legitimising government decisions with the endorsement of experts.

This last hypothesis is by no means far-fetched. In fact, the legislative process for the new tariff proceeded swiftly and was already finalised by 19 October, seven months before the Academy announced the competition's winner. Moreover, the essays submitted to the Georgofili did not echo any administrative documents or political disputes among officials and ministers, who were preoccupied with more pressing problems. In reality, the stance of the Commission tasked with the customs reform – composed of Customs Directors Vincenzo Mugnai, Camillo Rossi and Isidoro Pistolesi, along with Councillors Bartolomeo Martini, Giuseppe Gavard and Schmidweiller – was primarily shaped by long-standing tensions between agrarian and manufacturing interests, which had also influenced the 21 July 1788 approval of a tariff system aimed at achieving the "legitimate freedom" advocated by Aldobrando Paolini. That very notion of "legitimate freedom" was the position of the influential Senator Francesco Maria Gianni, former Provveditore dell'Arte della Seta (Superintendent of the Silk Merchants' Guild), who had championed high tariffs on "foreign" textiles and strict export bans on raw materials such as wool, untreated hides, rag pulp and silk cocoons.[13] Despite the meagre harvests and rising prices of raw silk lamented by the capital's silk producers, Pietro Leopoldo's relocation to Vienna enabled critics of this policy to challenge its foundations, thereby reopening the debate within the government.

Secondly, the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary upheavals in Europe and Tuscany raised the stakes for the Grand Duchy's future trade policy.[14] The Customs Commission could not afford to ignore this reality. As early as June 1790, while Paris was in turmoil with what the philosopher and University of Pisa professor Giovanni Maria Lampredi described as "a mass of angry men bent on destruction", the popular riots of the "Viva Maria" movement had targeted not only Pietro Leopoldo's attempted Jansenist shift in the name of Catholic orthodoxy, but also the physiocratic-inspired free trade policies and their social and economic repercussions amid a period of manufacturing decline and rising unemployment.[15]

dal 1737 al 1848, 5 vols, Florence, Molini, 1850-1852, vol. II, pp. 474, 559; Alessandra Contini, "Istituzioni e politica nell'età delle riforme", in *Storia della Toscana. 2. Dal Settecento a oggi*, ed. by Elena Fasano Guarini, Giuseppe Petralia and Paolo Pezzino, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2004, pp. 16-17.

13. Aldobrando Paolini, *Della legittima libertà del commercio*, 2 vols, Florence, Pagani, 1785, vol. I, p. 102; Giuseppe Gavard, *Memoria per Sua Altezza Reale*, 24 July 1788, Archivio di Stato di Firenze (hereafter ASFI), *Segreteria di gabinetto*, f. 67, n. 1, cc. 5-8; *Gazzetta toscana*, 26 July 1788. Cf. also Abele Morena, "La protezione dell'agricoltura nella riforma doganale leopoldina (1786-1789)", *Giornale degli Economisti*, 18 (1899), pp. 240-259; Diaz, *Francesco Maria Gianni*, pp. 65-82.

14. Luigi Dal Pane, *La finanza toscana dagli inizi del XVIII secolo alla caduta del Granducato*, Milan, Banca Commerciale Italiana, 1965, pp. 182-183.

15. Lampredi to Spina, 19 November 1789, in Paolo Commanducci, "Giovanni Maria Lampredi: un giurista al crepuscolo dell'ancien régime", *Annali della Facoltà di Giurisprudenza dell'Università di Genova*, 15/2 (1976), p. 562; Gabriele Turi, *Viva Maria. Riforme, rivoluzione*

While the protective measures against revolutionary France would soon severely test the long-standing international neutrality of both the Grand Duchy and the free port of Livorno, the violent backlash from the "common people" against the Leopoldine economic reforms forced the authorities to seek compromise and exercise caution.[16]

Although it explicitly drew on Tavanti's tariff from a decade earlier, the tariff of 19 October 1791 could not fully implement the Commission's predominantly free-trade agenda, as it had to be balanced against the underlying rationale of the protectionist measures enacted in 1788 at Gianni's behest.[17] Despite clashing with Gianni,[18] the drafters of the decree explained in their final report that, given the uncertainty and turmoil of the times, the best course of action was partial liberalisation – one that would benefit silkworm farmers without placing an excessive burden on urban textile manufacturers.[19] Yet, even this pragmatic and cautious approach failed to soften the intensity of the ideological battle that followed.

3. *The economic expert and the "particular case"*

Excluding parallel publications and responses, the competition announced by the Accademia dei Georgofili attracted no fewer than eleven essays in Italian and Latin, which were catalogued and archived by the Academy's secretaries, Marco Lastri and Alessandro Rivani. At least within the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and parts of the Italian peninsula, news of such a timely debate spread quickly. The Pisan *Giornale de' letterati* and the Florentine *Gazzetta Universale* followed the discussion closely. The Venetian economist from the Accademia di Padova, Francesco Mengotti, submitted his own dissertation to the Georgofili, and the Società Patriottica di Milano promptly added Mengotti's work to its library.[20] Besides, the issues raised by the Georgofili were not merely about brisk trade and laissez-faire policies but also touched on fundamental questions about Tuscany's economic identity as an agricultural or manufacturing region, the origins of public wealth and economic epistemology.

e insorgenze in Toscana, 1790-1799, Bologna, il Mulino, 1999. The "Viva Maria" uprising forced Gianni to flee to Bologna. Cf. Diaz, *Francesco Maria Gianni*, p. 342.

16. Carlo Mangio, "I non facili rapporti diplomatici tra Granducato di Toscana e Francia rivoluzionaria (1792-1799)", *Rassegna Storica Toscana*, 43/2 (1997), pp. 161-198.

17. *Tariffe delle gabelle toscane*, Florence, Cambiagi, 1791.

18. Luigi Schmidweiller, Bartolomeo Martini, Giuseppe Gavard, Vincenzo Mugnai, Camillo Rossi, Isidoro Pistolesi, *Repliche alle osservazioni S. E. il Sig. Senatore Gianni, sopra il progetto di tariffa generale*, 2 September 1791, ASFI, *Capirotti Dogane*, f. 24. But even Gavard was convinced of the positive impact of the 21 July 1788 reform, arguing that in 1788 cloth sales in Florence had increased by 50% compared to 1787. Cf. Gavard to Pontenani, 24 March 1789, ASFI, *Segreteria di gabinetto*, f. 67, n. 24, cc. 387-389v, 398.

19. Untitled essay, ASFI, *Capirotti Dogane*, f. 24.

20. *Giornale de' letterati*, 83 (1791), pp. 304-307; *Gazzetta Universale*, 3 September 1791, 17 July 1792.

An exceptional account of the start of the competition can be found in the *Efemeridi* by Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni, Director of the Uffizi, an advocate of Tuscan physiocracy alongside Giovan Francesco Pagnini and Ferdinando Paoletti, as well as an ordinary member of the Georgofili since 4 May 1767.[21] On 21 June 1791, the scholar noted the Academy's announcement and observed that "in recent days, a pamphlet in octavo has been mysteriously circulating […] authored by Senator Francesco Gianni". Unapologetic about his own political views, Pelli Bencivenni further commented that "Gianni's reasoning, like that of all Colbertists, has always struck me as false and illusory" – given that the Grand Duchy, historically and structurally, was a land devoted to agriculture, which, in his view, could still serve as a promising testing ground for physiocratic theories.[22]

The *Efemeridi* referenced the *Memorie da servire alla dissertazione per l'Accademia dei Georgofili*, a work that Gianni had evidently circulated while simultaneously lobbying the commission tasked with revising the customs tariff.[23] In his succinct essay, the senator – who had been at odds with the Georgofili since Pietro Leopoldo's promotion of the practice of long-term land leases[24] – did not deviate from the positions he had defended for decades. Since demographic growth and the economic strength of nations did not stem from the land but "from the use of capital and the application of human intellectual and manual labour", the crucial role of silk and wool in the history of Tuscan trade since the age of Italian city-republics and the Renaissance period refuted those who arbitrarily compared the Grand Duchy with France, the quintessential agricultural economy.[25] In matters of governance, he insisted, economic history should not be subordinated to the abstract theorising (*theorein*) of economists.[26] Accusing his

21. Giuseppe Sarchiani, "Elogio del direttor Pelli", in *Atti della Imperiale Società Economica di Firenze, ossia de' Georgofili*, Florence, Stamperia del Giglio, 1812, pp. 59-60; Tabarrini, *Degli studi e delle vicende*, p. 68; Mario Mirri, "Fisiocrazia e riforme. Il caso della Toscana e il ruolo di Ferdinando Paoletti", in *Governare il mondo. L'economia come linguaggio della politica nell'Europa del Settecento*, ed. by Manuela Albertone, Milan, Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, 2009, pp. 364-368.

22. Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni, *Efemeridi*, s. II, vol. XIX, p. 4149v.

23. Francesco Maria Gianni, *Memorie da servire alla dissertazione per l'Accademia dei Georgofili di Firenze dalla medesima al concorso dell'anno 1791*; Francesco Maria Gianni, *Scritti di pubblica economia storico-economici e storico-politici*, 2 vols, Florence, Niccolai, 1848-1849, vol. II, pp. 59-112.

24. Giorgio Giorgetti, "Per una storia delle allivellazioni leopoldine. II. Orientamenti generali e contrasti d'indirizzo nel primo periodo di attuazione (1770-1780)", *Studi Storici*, 7/3 (1966), pp. 515-584.

25. Gianni, *Memorie*, pp. 4-6, 9-10. On the concept of population in 18th-century political economy, cf. Michel Foucault, *Sécurité, territoire, population: cours au Collège de France, 1977-1978*, Paris, Gallimard, 2004; Christiane Théré, Jean-Marc Rohrbasser, "L'entrée en usage du mot 'population' au milieu du XVIIIe siècle", in *Le cercle de Vincent de Gournay. Savoirs économiques et pratiques administratives en France au milieu du XVIIIe siècle*, ed. by Loïc Charles, Frédéric Lefebvre and Christiane Théré, Paris, INED, 2011, pp. 133-163.

26. Arnaud Orain, *Les savoirs perdus de l'économie. Contribution à l'équilibre du vivant*, Paris, Gallimard, 2023, pp. 17-123.

opponents of dogmatism (*esprit de système*) and abstract thinking, Gianni argued that "the elegant theories found in numerous books written by contenders for university professorships, rather than for governments, cannot be blindly applied to our specific case". Since Tuscany truly had a dual vocation – both agricultural and manufacturing – he called for an eclectic approach: free grain trade should be balanced with protectionist regulations on the circulation of "raw materials" essential to the urban textile industry. Had the Georgofili truly understood the "circumstances" of the Grand Duchy – vulnerable to the "dominance of fashion" of "large nations" – they would have launched a competition to determine "how to sustain and employ the craftsmen who made a living from the fabrication of such goods".[27]

Gianni's argument found a more complete and sophisticated expression in the two essays written by his friend and cousin, Matteo Biffi Tolomei, an aristocratic landowner with estates in Mugello, Val di Chiana and the Pisa region who was regarded as an "exemplary representative of that class of landowners who controlled […] not only the practical implementation of reforms but also the very terms of the theoretical debate".[28] By blending agronomic, financial and entrepreneurial knowledge with the principles of physiocracy and the "new science of commerce" advocated by John Cary, Jean-François Melon, Vincent de Gournay and Antonio Genovesi, the works *Sentimento imparziale per la Toscana sopra la seta, e la lana* and *Esame del commercio attivo toscano* reintroduced the core of Gianni's vision: the free trade of foodstuffs coupled with protectionism for the manufacturing of wool and silk.[29] Compared to the senator, however, Biffi Tolomei – especially in his *Esame del commercio attivo toscano* – devoted multiple pages to defining the duties and methodology of the figure of the expert, who was at the service of the prince and the public good. To resolve issues like those raised by the Georgofili, the "public economist" had to base his qualified opinion on an "abstract formula" that was universally valid, and then adapt it to the empirical analysis of "particular cases". Using that formula and experimental observation, he could then "derive the equation" that provided a solution for any situation. In particular, the "general formula" proposed by Biffi Tolomei held that the effects of

27. Gianni, *Memorie*, pp. 12-18. Drawing on official data collected in 1757, Gian Rinaldo Carli calculated that Tuscany's agricultural exports amounted to 372,000 scudi, while manufactured goods accounted for 1,267,000 scudi. Cf. Gian Rinaldo Carli, *Delle opere del Signor Commendatore Don Gian Rinaldo Conte Carli*, 19 vols, Milan, Imperial Monistero di S. Ambrogio Maggiore, 1784-1794, vol. I, pp. 337-338.

28. Vieri Becagli, "Un proprietario toscano tra libertà e vincoli. Matteo Biffi Tolomei, il *Confronto* e le *Riflessioni*", *Studi e Ricerche*, 2 (1983), p. 358.

29. Matteo Biffi Tolomei, *Sentimento imparziale per la Toscana sopra la seta, e la lana tanto come prodotti che come manifatture […]*, Italy, n.p., 1791; Matteo Biffi Tolomei, *Esame del commercio attivo toscano e dei mezzi di estenderlo per ottenere l'aumento della popolazione*, Florence, Allegrini, 1792, also in AAG, b. 108, n. 21A. Biffi Tolomei sent the treatise to Pietro Verri. Cf. Biffi Tolomei to Verri, n.d. [1793-1794], in Becagli, *Un proprietario toscano*, pp. 400-402. Cf. also Matteo Biffi Tolomei, *Confronto della ricchezza dei paesi che godono la libertà del commercio frumentario con quella dei paesi vincolati prendendo per esempio la Toscana*, n.l., n.p., 1793.

the restrictions on free trade were not consistent. They could be either beneficial or harmful depending on the historical and economic context.[30] From this principle, he concluded that while "the free trade of grain was inherently in Tuscany's interest", the loosening of the restrictions on the raw materials vital to the already fragile and outdated manufacturing sector that had been "established in the country" risked exposing too many skilled artisans to the brutal competition of international markets.[31] The model to follow, therefore, was that of an industrialised, modern Great Britain, which continued to prohibit the export of raw wool.[32]

4. *"Freedom does not harm"*

An agronomist, chemist and cosmopolitan economist, the Florentine Giovanni Fabbroni – an ordinary member of the Academy since 5 February 1783 and organizer of the Reale Museo di Fisica e Storia Naturale – refuted the arguments put forward by Gianni and Biffi Tolomei with his *Lettera sugli effetti del libero commercio delle materie sode, o gregge*, which he presented to the Georgofili on 13 July 1791. Renato Pasta rightly described this document as "one of the clearest expressions of Italian liberalism at the close of the century".[33] Fabbroni's *Lettera* – accompanied by a "letter from a landowner in Valdarno on the same subject" by Pelli Bencivenni – and the *Esatta idea del libro che ha per titolo "Sentimento imparziale per la Toscana sopra la seta e la lana"*, marked the high point of a more organised political and cultural offensive. Inspired more by the grand ducal tradition than by the liberal model of the Le Chapelier Law (*Loi Le Chapelier*) of 14 June 1791, the initiative offered a new generation of free trade advocates the chance to confront the theoretical limitations of physiocracy as well as the language and doctrines of Adam Smith.[34] Fabbroni, who was already close to Giovanni Neri, the Vice-President of the Georgofili, benefited from the invaluable editorial and practical support of Vittorio Fossombroni of Arezzo, then serving as editor for the press. Their collaboration began in 1789 with the publication of a pamphlet that was a "loose translation from the Spanish" of the *Cartas sobre los*

30. Biffi Tolomei, *Esame del commercio attivo toscano*, pp. 7-9.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 160-161, 279-280.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204. Cf. also Sophus A. Reinert, *Translating Empire: Emulation and the Origins of Political Economy*, Cambridge, MA-London, Harvard University Press, 2011, pp. 13-72.

33. Giovanni Fabbroni, *Lettera sugli effetti del libero commercio delle materie sode, o gregge, alla quale è premessa altra lettera di un possessor del Valdarno sull'istesso argomento*, Florence, Tofani, 1791; Giovanni Fabbroni, *Lettera di Diego Lopez all'autore delle lettere spagnole, ossia esatta idea del libro che ha per titolo "Sentimento imparziale per la Toscana sopra la seta e la lana"*, Florence, Tofani, 1791. Cf. also Pasta, *Scienza, politica e rivoluzione*, p. 372. On Fabbroni's election to the Academy, cf. Fabbroni to Gilkens, n.d. [26 February 1783], *American Philosophical Society*, *Fabbroni Papers*, BF113, n. 1.

34. Gabriella Gioli, "The Knowledge of Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations' in Italy in the Eighteenth Century", in *Adam Smith Across Nations: Translations and Receptions of "The Wealth of Nations"*, ed. by Cheng-chung Lai, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 156-157.

asuntos más exquisitos de la economía-política by Valentín de Foronda, a thinker who had moved from "physiocratic liberalism" to "radical liberalism".[35]

It should not surprise us, then, that Fabbroni chose to complement his own essay for the Academy – and his rebuttal of Biffi Tolomei – with three additional translations of excerpts from Foronda's *Cartas*: the first focused on commercial practice, the second on manufacturing and the third on grains.[36] Even though he eliminated the many references to Smith found in the original – in order to "preserve" the hierarchical primacy of agriculture as promoted by Victor Riqueti de Mirabeau, Quesnay and Paul-Pierre Le Mercier de la Rivière – Fabbroni found in Foronda a solid basis for extending the principle of free trade to raw materials and manufactured goods, thereby calling into question the *raison d'être* of customs duties, which stifled competitiveness and technological innovation.[37]

This is the point of fracture and critique of the grand ducal customs policy that the *Lettera* developed to demonstrate the direct benefits of a single universal cosmopolitan market. Here, Fabbroni's commitment to the free trade of raw materials was not simply out of deference to physiocratic principles such as the single tax and the unproductiveness of manufacturing, which he never fully embraced.[38] If anything, the ideas expressed in the *Lettera* emerged from a clear geopolitical assessment: in a world dominated by global imperial powers on the path to industrialisation, a small state like Tuscany could only secure an independent position in international trade by specialising in the cultivation and supply of wheat, silk and raw wool.[39] The guild regulations and the *Arti* of Medieval Florence, which Gianni had stubbornly defended, belonged to the past. If a modernising strategy could enable the Grand Duchy to survive in the era of Karl Polanyi's "great transformation", then the expert in "social art" – as taught by Sallustio Bandini – needed to disseminate the latest advances in administrative science to both the public and the court, thereby extending the message of absolute freedom of initiative and commerce beyond the border of Livorno's free port: "freedom does not harm, it does not damage; in fact, it brings benefits and inspires".[40] In practical terms, a system of unmitigated

35. Valentín de Foronda, *Cartas sobre lo asuntos más exquisitos de la economía-politica*, 2 vols, Madrid, Manuel Gonzalez, 1789; Valentín de Foronda, *Della prosperità nazionale, dell'equilibrio del commercio e istituzione delle dogane. Lettere due*, Florence, Tofani, 1789; Fossombroni to Fabbroni, 1 July 1789, in Vittorio Fossombroni, *Scritti di pubblica economia del conte Vittorio Fossombroni*, ed. by Abele Morena, 2 vols, Arezzo, Castaldi, 1896, vol. I, pp. 5-6. Cf. also José Antonio Maravall, "Las tendencias de reforma politica en el siglo XVIII español", *Revista de Occidente*, 52 (1967), pp. 53-82; Venturi, *Economisti e riformatori spagnoli e italiani*, p. 552.

36. Valentín de Foronda, *Dei premi d'incoraggiamento che si retribuiscono alla mercatura, dei privilegi esclusivi che si accordano alle manifatture e della libertà che si concede al commercio dei grani. Lettere tre. Traduzione libera dallo spagnolo*, Florence, Tofani, 1791; AAG, *Verbali adunanze ordinarie*, B4, c. 5.

37. Foronda, *Cartas*, vol. II, pp. 104-105; Foronda, *Dei premi d'incoraggiamento*, p. 39.

38. Pasta, *Scienza, politica e rivoluzione*, pp. 352-353.

39. Fabbroni, *Lettera*, p. 12.

40. Sallustio Bandini, *Discorso economico sopra la Maremma di Siena* (1737), Florence, Cambiagi, 1775; Fabbroni, *Lettera*, p. 41. Cf. also Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (1944), Boston, Beacon Press, 2001.

competition would have boosted mulberry cultivation, thus spurring technological advancements along and even benefiting the national textile industry, which would no longer be forced to "import from neighbouring countries" what it could not produce domestically.[41]

More academic and less influenced by the political battles of the Grand Duchy, Francesco Mengotti's *Ragionamento* mounted a systematic attack on Gianni and his supporters, who were accused of stoking the harmful "jealousy of trade" that David Hume had already decried in 1758.[42] A member of the Accademia di Padova and the winner in 1786 of a competition announced by the Parisian Académie Royale des Inscriptions with the work *Del commercio de' Romani dalla prima guerra punica a Costantino*, the Venetian Mengotti dismissed both Colbertism and the imperative for brisk trade as irrational, aggressive, and counterproductive.[43] Drawing on the vocabulary of Adam Smith, he argued that all branches of the state's economy are equally important and "inherently interdependent" when it comes to generating public wealth, and he maintained that "free competition" – unjustly rejected by the Romans, Spaniards, Portuguese and the French under Louis XIV – was the most effective, peaceful and cost-efficient way to boost the "accumulation of capital".[44] Unrestricted competition, he concluded, was the driving force behind technological innovation and an increase in "total output". And from this growth in "total output", he argued, came the inflow of money and the "true wealth" of a nation.[45]

5. *Conclusion: experts and the public sphere between the ancien régime and the Age of Revolutions*

On 13 June 1792, it was the "foreigner" Mengotti who was awarded first prize by the Accademia dei Georgofili. The rationale behind the deputies' decision, drawn up by Luigi Tramontani, stated that the *Ragionamento* "fully convinced us that the most secure and advantageous means of increasing the population […] is to legislate in such a way that allows goods [to circulate] in complete and

41. Fabbroni, *Lettera*, pp. 46-53.

42. Francesco Mengotti, *Ragionamento del Sig. Francesco Mengotti dell'Accademia di Padova presentato alla Real Società Economica Fiorentina*, Florence, Pagani e Compagni, 1792; Francesco Mengotti, *Il Colbertismo. Dissertazione coronata dalla Reale Società Economica Fiorentina li 13 giugno 1792*, Venice, Bettinelli, 1792. For information about the pamphlet, cf. Oscar Nuccio, "Nota per una storia dell'industrialismo: il contributo di F. Mengotti (1749-1830)", *Rivista di politica economica*, 10 (1979), pp. 1146-1149. On the "jealousy of trade", cf. David Hume, *Essays and Treatises*, London-Edinburgh, Millar, Kincaid and Donaldson, 1758, p. 187; Istvan Hont, *Jealousy of Trade: International Competition and the Nation-State in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge, MA, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.

43. Mengotti, *Ragionamento*, pp. 155-156. Cf. also Aris Della Fontana, "In the Mirror of Rome: Commerce, Conquest, and Civilization Between Venice, Spain, and France (1781-1800)", in *Histories of Trade as Histories of Civilisation*, ed. by Antonella Alimento and Aris Della Fontana, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, pp. 309-340.

44. Mengotti, *Ragionamento*, pp. 29-39, 109.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

unrestricted freedom of trade".[46] And yet, despite the strong opposition of Fabbroni, who was also a deputy, the Georgofili still awarded an honourable mention (*accessit*) to Biffi Tolomei. His *Esame del commercio attivo toscano* had correctly emphasised the need for "discretion" and "prudence" in implementing free trade, especially in a period of revolutionary upheaval.[47] At first glance, Mengotti's victory and Biffi Tolomei's honourable mention might seem contradictory, but in reality they revealed the Georgofili's intent to intellectually validate the cautious liberalisation outlined in the customs tariff of 19 October 1791. Implicitly, by praising the competent, enlightened reformism of the Grand Duchy – as opposed to the extremes of both revolutionary and counter-revolutionary radicalism – the Academy embraced the legacy of the late Pietro Leopoldo, whom Biffi Tolomei described as an "enlightened mind", and propagated his memory and emerging myth.[48]

However, the competition had enduring consequences. On one hand, by summarising the transnational flows and ideological clashes of preceding decades, Mengotti's arguments – as well as those belonging to Fabbroni, which were more specifically attuned to the case of Tuscany – laid the groundwork for what would become the Smithian and liberal culture of 19th-century Tuscany. In July 1819, Fossombroni, a trusted advisor of Ferdinand III during the Restoration, put these plans into practice by authorising the free export of raw silk and cocoons, along with wheat and wool.[49] On the other hand, the resolution of the 1791-1792 dispute showed that, in the burgeoning revolutionary era, institutions of the ancien régime like the Accademia dei Georgofili and skilled administrators like Fabbroni – who was destined for a brilliant career within the Napoleonic civil service – could, through public discourse, endorse government economic policies by bridging bodies of knowledge from the past with those from the present. Most notably, the figure of the expert mindful of the "particular case" and territorial specificity was set in contrast with another figure – one who, destined for great success, championed the unyielding, universal axioms of economic science.[50] Disillusioned by Robespierre's Reign of Terror and the ensuing democratic and republican experiments in Italy, in the autumn of 1797 Pelli Bencivenni summed up the spirit of the times to come by declaring, "I now believe that the best government is the one that is best administered".[51]

46. *Voto dei deputati letto dal socio Luigi Tramontani nell'adunanza del dì 13 giugno 1792*, 13 June 1792, AAG, b. 108, n. 21; Pelli Bencivenni, *Efemeridi*, s. II, vol. XX, pp. 4551v-4552.

47. The honourable mention (*accessit*) was awarded by the Academy to the contestant whose work came closest to the winner in terms of quality and originality.

48. Biffi Tolomei, *Esame del commercio attivo toscano*, p. 158. On the Leopoldine myth, cf. Carlo Mangio, "Rivoluzione e riformismo a confronto: la nascita del mito leopoldino in Toscana", *Studi Storici*, 30/4 (1989), pp. 947-967. Pietro Leopoldo, who ascended to the imperial throne on 30 September 1790, died in Vienna on 1 March 1792.

49. Fossombroni, *Scritti di pubblica economia*, vol. I, p. lxxxv.

50. Eric H. Ash, *Power, Knowledge, and Expertise in Elizabethan England*, London-Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, pp. 8-11; Orain, *Les savoirs perdus*, pp. 259-261.

51. Edgardo Donati, *La Toscana ai tempi di Ferdinando III (1791-1824)*, Naples, ESI, 1999, p. 38; Marco Meriggi, *Gli stati italiani prima dell'Unità. Una storia istituzionale*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2002, pp. 17-46.

Elisa Baccini

From Revolutionary Magician to Government-Funded Inventor: The Milanese Life of a Self-Proclaimed Astronomer*

In this essay I reconstruct the steps undertaken by Charles Rouy in his search for public legitimacy, using cultural policies put into place by the Kingdom of Italy's Napoleonic government. The setting is Milan. Already on its way to becoming the intellectual capital of the peninsula due to its growing journalistic and publishing activity, Milan offered its extremely dynamic community a variety of opportunities clustered around the governmental and military institutions that made up the city's hub. There, the French presence fuelled the demand for products, goods and services that were familiar to them; Milanese society's burgeoning Frenchification would prove a fertile landscape for those, French and Italian alike, who knew how to profit from its growth. Rouy constitutes a representative example, enacting any number of schemes poised to elevate his position to that of a stable fixture in the firmament of the Milanese press during this period. As an inventor, so-called astronomer and professor, he was skilled at taking advantage of the growing interest in the sciences; indeed, in his own way, he became a figure that symbolised the changing relationship between science and politics at the point of transition between the 18th and 19th centuries. Despite the ruinous public display of his experiments (his actual skills being limited to mechanical arts), his ability to alter his public persona and exploit the resources available enabled him to occupy a significant role in the field we would refer to today as popular astronomy.

Born in the French Ardennes in 1770 into a family of popular extraction, Rouy was a *sans-culotte* and a member of the revolutionary section des Lombards (named after the street) in Paris during the Revolution. Adhering to the most extreme fringes, he published pamphlets of political complaints,[1] debuting on the revolutionary editorial scene with *L'almanach historique*.[2] Published in 1793, his *Le magicien Républicain* is significant for its interpretation of his political

* I would like to acknowledge and thank Jaclyn Taylor for translating this essay.

1. Henri Rouy, "La curieuse vie de Charles Rouy (1770-1848)", *Annales Sedanaises d'histoire et d'archéologie*, 16 (1953), pp. 17-22. This is a brief article from a typewritten journal that is only available on Gallica.fr. The sources for the article are not cited.

2. Charles Rouy, *L'almanach historique*, Paris, Janet, 1792. Information was taken from Henri Welschinger, *Les almanachs de la Révolution*, Paris, Libraire des bibliophiles, 1884, p. 227.

past, and is of great interest for its syncretic view of astrology, magic and republicanism. Moreover, the second edition would reveal its truly innovative stance in the section titled, "An authentic account of everything that happened during the trials and execution of Louis XVI known as Capet […] Written by citizen Rouy, the elder, eyewitness".[3] It is a text that is certainly worth exploring in depth and which presents us with Rouy's desire to place himself at the centre of events that he perceived to be pivotal.

Rouy's output in those years reflected a culture enthralled by the union between the rationality of philosophes, *sans-culottes* radicalism and faith in the divine arts. The period was primed for a degree of pseudoscience, which Rouy would build up over the years, allowing him to brush off his identity as a republican magician. In fact, at the outset of 1800 Rouy had established a popular sideshow in Paris of the invisible woman, using Robertson's phantasmagoria as a model,[4] which he then brought to London until early 1806. Upon his return from London, Rouy was no longer a *sans-culotte* oracle but "a French artist" who had invented a "new astronomical mechanism unknown to Europe", to use his own introduction of himself to the Minister of the Interior of the First French Empire.[5] In these months a "Spectacle Uranographique" was advertised in the Paris papers,[6] which demonstrates a paradigm shift for Rouy's public identity, from an at-times esoteric sideshow inspired by Robertson to a kind of performance more intent on scientific understanding, but which nonetheless turned science into spectacle. With a form of representation in which scientific knowledge was spectacularised, thanks in part to the realisation of the aforementioned uranographic mechanism, Rouy sought to establish himself as an inventor and to escape the spectre of charlatanism. After a year of Parisian shows spanning the period from the end of 1806 to the beginning of 1807, Rouy then announced to the public his intention to leave Paris.[7]

1. *Arrival in Milan: performance and pedagogy*

Before establishing himself in Italy, Rouy had passed through Lyon, where he had taken his uranographic show and launched a teaching enterprise, or had at least tried to, with an "Elementary Course in Cosmography or Astronomical Geography".[8] An *affiche* presented a course of 12 lessons, meant to respond to the desire that "several science enthusiasts had shared with him". It consisted of

3. Charles Rouy, *Le magicien Républicain*, Paris, n.p., 1794, pp. 109-130.

4. Cf. (with related bibliography) Gilles Chabaud, "Se faire peur avec le passé: la terreur et la banalisation du spectacle des fantasmagories (1792-1800)", in *L'ennemie intime*, ed. by Frédéric Chauvaud, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011, pp. 47-59.

5. Archives Nationales, Paris, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine (henceforth ANP), F/1dII/R/9, Ministry of the Interior, Minister's Office. Special Matters, dossier "Rouy, Charles", "Paris le 13 Nivôse an 13 [3 January 1806] A son excellence Monseigneur le ministre de l'Intérieur".

6. *Journal de l'Empire*, 15 February 1806, p. 1.

7. This is the announcement that appears in the *Journal de Paris*, n. 318, 14 December 1806, p. 2334.

8. *Petites affiches de Lyon*, n. 102, 23 December 1807, p. 2.

the comprehensive explanation of the general system of the world, the celestial sphere and the terrestrial sphere. Rouy therefore combined the rhetorical skills honed over years of performance with his astronomical knowledge in a more traditional educational context, which he would continue to develop further. His arrival in September of 1808 in Milan and its kingdom, both rich with prospects, prompted Rouy to announce to the citizenry in print his imminent intention to give demonstrations of "Uranography".[9] He intended to do so with the assistance of a machine, which he described as both ingenious and simple, so simple that it would allow anyone to understand the system of the universe, the laws that ruled it and their effects. He introduced himself to the Kingdom by highlighting his numerous successes in Paris, Lyon and Geneva, promising to issue a new announcement of his performances as soon as he had procured a suitable venue for his presentations. The next day he immediately reported having obtained permission from the Royal Directorate of the Theatres of Milan to use the Teatro Carcano for the following four evenings (from October 4-7).[10] However, by the fifth night he had to suspend the performances to repair the mechanism, but above all to overcome the difficulty of rendering the desired effect in such a large theatre. He promised to procure a more apt location for these kinds of "educational recreations",[11] a promise soon kept, because on 9 October the show would continue in the foyer of the Canobbiana.[12]

The Milanese press appeared to be divided regarding what Rouy had, significantly, called educational recreations: the *Corriere milanese*, for example, offered a favourable review in which Rouy's clarity and precision of explanation were emphasised, having placed astronomy even within the grasp of those with little education. Rouy was also applauded for finding a way to make learning fun for the public.[13] The *Giornale italiano* instead dealt a harsher judgement, and though conceding that Rouy had illustrative skills, criticised him for erroneously presenting his performance as a show when it was more of a cosmographical demonstration. The "show pretext", the journalist wrote, must have bored and disappointed those idlers who had flocked to attend with the "hope of seeing stupendous new things merely perceived through the senses".[14] Thus, despite the initial difficulties of finding the right setup, the "uranographic" experience was satisfying from an instructional point of view, though less so as a form of mere entertainment.

This may have also been the reason why Rouy decided to mount "one of the most ingenious and surprising physics shows, that of the so-called Invisible Woman, invented by him" in Milan.[15] This self-styled "inventor" hoped that the experiment he had successfully carried out in the major cities of Europe would be

9. *Giornale italiano*, n. 276, 2 October 1808, p. 1114.
10. *Ibid.*, n. 277, 3 October 1808, p. 1118.
11. *Ibid.*, n. 279, 5 October 1808, p. 1122.
12. *Ibid.*, n. 283, 9 October 1808, p. 1138.
13. *Corriere milanese*, n. 126, 19 October 1808, p. 1012.
14. *Giornale italiano*, n. 305, 31 October 1808, p. 1226.
15. *Ibid.*, n. 297, 23 October 1808, p. 1194.

appreciated and attended in Milan as well, demonstrated, as before, in the foyer of the Canobbiana. The moderate success the show enjoyed with the public was quickly dampened, however, by a pamphlet that circulated that very October of 1808 from the publisher Silvestri, namely the *Spiegazione della donna invisible del sig. Rouy* (*The Explanation of Mr. Rouy's Invisible Woman*).[16] The booklet consisted of the reprint of a letter sent by an anonymous N. N. to the physicist Nicholson in January of 1807. It referenced the shows Mr. Charles (as Rouy was called in London) had held in the English capital. The letter, which predated the Milanese shows, was replete with notes that explained the few precautions taken in Milan to avoid revealing the trick. These boiled down to the simple order to avoid touching the mechanism.[17] The booklet concluded by criticising Rouy for taking the Milanese for "spinach heads", given that the tube carrying his invisible woman's voice had been placed under bricks that had quite obviously been freshly laid.[18]

The release of the booklet was followed by a write-up of the experiment in the *Giornale Italiano*, which relayed the editor's direct experience, analogous to that of the anonymous author N. N. in revealing the "traces of the tube used to conduct the sound".[19] Thus, not only was the experiment's method revealed, but also the haste and lack of care with which the acoustic contraption had been implemented. Nevertheless, the machinery succeeded in "stirring up public curiosity". Finally, the author claimed that for the purposes of a "curiosity show", it was a typical and logical practice to assert falsehoods, as Rouy had done in this particular case, stating that only an English scientist had managed to unravel the trick behind his experiment. But that only provoked scholars, such as the anonymous N. N.

In the *Risposta alla spiegazione della donna invisibile* (*Response to the Explanation of the Invisible Woman*), which appeared on November 8, again in the *Giornale italiano*, Rouy attempted to clear his name, claiming that he was "neither a magician nor an extraordinary man" but rather the "author of a discovery in physics" presented intentionally together with his illusions to render it more pleasant and appealing to spectators.[20] In reality, however, the whole affair had evidently harmed Rouy, who announced the final performance of the uranographical and invisible woman show a month later.[21] Rouy paid a price for putting on his pseudo-scientific shows using a sensationalist publicity strategy, above all for presenting himself in a dishonest manner to the Milanese public, without considering the knowledge of its scientific community, which participated actively in the social life of the Kingdom's capital.[22] There was nothing left for

16. *Spiegazione della donna invisibile del sig. Rouy*, Milan, Editor Giovanni Silvestri, 1808.

17. *Ibid.*, note 1, p. 6.

18. *Ibid.*, note 2, p. 7.

19. *Giornale italiano*, n. 303, 29 October 1808, p. 1218.

20. *Ibid.*, n. 313, 8 November 1808, p. 1258.

21. *Giornale italiano*, n. 341, 6 December 1808, p. 1370.

22. Among other things, Giuseppe Galetti of Treviso would declare he had invented a machine for the invisible woman show in 1801 in the *Corriere milanese*, n. 144, 30 November 1808, p. 1156.

Rouy to do but retreat into one of those industries of high demand in Milan during the French years, and soon he announced the opening of a French and Italian school directed by him, but which in fact was run by the teacher and his young lover, Mademoiselle De Bar.[23]

Despite the bungle brought on by his desire to present the invisible woman to the Milanese public, Rouy took up a new enterprise, with the school becoming his base of operations; there he reestablished his uranographical show, while continuing to present his experiment with the invisible woman.[24] Rouy zig-zagged along a dual track, between the search for respectability through his skills as a tutor, professor of astronomy and inventor of the uranographical mechanism, and the search for celebrity by turning his pseudo-scientific experiments into spectacle.[25]

2. *Tapping into a new passion for astronomy: the Great Comet of 1811*

After a couple of years of silence in the press, during which he remained active in the school, in June of 1811 Rouy approached the government of the Kingdom of Italy, offering the French translation of a *cantica* that Cavaliere Luigi Rossi had written on the occasion of Napoleon's son's baptism. He wrote, in fact, directly to the Minister of the Interior, Luigi Vaccari, that it seemed necessary to him to translate the *cantica* into French, and he boldly asked the minister to place his translation in front of Rossi's text, if he found the translation worthy.[26] The minister would forward the request to the general director of public education for the Kingdom, Giovanni Scopoli, who, after having the translation corrected, had initially declared he was not opposed to having it printed,[27] later agreeing to fund it by publishing it through the Royal Press.[28] Rouy subsequently requested an audience with the viceroy so as to personally present him with the volume,[29] and

23. *Giornale italiano*, n. 4, 4 January 1809, p. 16. The same would appear in *Corriere delle dame*, n. 1, 3 January 1809, p. 4. On this topic, see my essay "French Migrant Women as Educators in Napoleonic Northern Italy", in *Gender and Migration in Historical Perspective: Institutions, Labour and Social Networks, 16th to 20th Centuries*, ed. by Beatrice Zucca Micheletto, London, Palgrave-Macmillan, 2022, pp. 355-384.

24. *Giornale italiano*, n. 53, 22 February 1809, p. 212. From February to April 1809 within the *Giornale*, nearly twenty announcements for the uranographical show would appear.

25. He got to the point of proposing two "pyrotechnic experiences, one with an explosive barrel, […] the other with a fireship intent on setting fire to a naval fleet": *Corriere milanese*, n. 209, 14 October 1809, p. 996.

26. Archivio di Stato di Milano (henceforth ASMi), Autografi, cart. n. 154, fasc. n. 13 "Rouy Carlo", letter in French dated 5 July 1811.

27. *Ibid.*, letter by Scopoli to Vaccari of 9 July 1811.

28. *Ibid.*, undated: "From the Royal Press the following items have been received for use by Sir Charles rouì [sic] on behalf of the General Directorate of Public Instruction: No. 500 Canto del Cavaliere Rossi for the baptism of the King of Rome, in royal Colla paper covered with cerulean paper. No. 20 of the above in tissue paper covered with paper from France".

29. *Ibid.*, undated note in French: "Charles Rouy […] humbly beseeches his Royal and Imperial Highness to grant the honour of allowing him to pay homage with the aforementioned copy".

it was upon this occasion that he spoke to him about his mechanism. Rouy showed that he understood the behavioural norms of the elite, in an approach that, while subtle, was in keeping with the typical mode of ingratiating oneself with political authorities in the ancien régime.

As it turned out, 1811 would be the year of Rouy's "lucky star" – or, rather than a star, a comet. That year, in fact, a large comet, called by some the *comète Napoléon*,[30] could be spotted in skies throughout the world for more than a year, and was even visible to the naked eye for more than 260 days. October of 1811, in particular, was the period of its greatest visibility, and this heralded in a never-before-seen fascination with astronomy, which Rouy opportunistically funnelled toward his uranographical mechanism, now restored to its former glory with some *ad hoc* modifications. In fact, although Rouy had suspended his little shows in 1809, in 1811 the new "spettacolo uranografico" had at its centre the "demonstration of the comet now visible in Europe".[31] It essentially dealt with "uranographical and cosmetographical" demonstrations,[32] in which he would explain to refined dilettantes, the ideal target audience for his shows, the reasons for the comet's visibility, which thrilled all of Europe. It was the moment to exploit this new-found interest, and the success and respectability Rouy sought would materialise thanks to that very portable uranographical mechanism which, in essence, replicated the revolution of the planets around the sun.

The moment was favourable: the translation of Luigi Rossi's *cantica* had brought Rouy closer to the government. Meanwhile, the general interest in astronomy, generated by the comet's passing, was the base from which he might try to obtain recognition and reward. In any case, Rouy had been introduced by the Minister of the Interior to the viceroy, to whom he had, on that occasion, given one of his new portable astronomical models.[33] This immediately sparked the interest of the government, as did his illustration of the possible uses that could be made of his device in an educational setting, such as the secondary schools of the Kingdom. From the experience Rouy had garnered through his astronomy course in Lyon, and even more so through his work in the Milanese school, he realised how advantageous it was to focus his efforts on the educational sector, primed to expand in keeping with Napoleonic policies, and to relinquish the transformation of the science of astronomy into a spectacle. This would accord him public legitimacy, further confirmed by "the inventor's patent that I requested he grant me", that he had requested from the minister, as well as a response to proceed with the "fabrication of my mechanism for secondary and other public

30. *Fire in the Sky: Comets and Meteors, the Decisive Centuries, in British Art and Science*, ed. by Roberta J. M. Olson and Jay M. Pasachoff, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998; Jean-Michel Faidit, *Napoléon et la comète impériale*, Toulon, Les Presses du Midi, 2019.

31. *Corriere milanese*, n. 253, 22 October 1811, p. 1012, appearing also in the *Giornale italiano*, n. 300, 27 October 1811, p. 1200.

32. This is what the performances were called starting from the announcement in the *Giornale italiano*, n. 305, 1 November 1811, p. 1120, which was identical to the one in n. 262 of the *Corriere milanese*, 1 November 1811, p. 1048.

33. ASMi, Autografi, cart. 154, fasc. 13 "Rouy Carlo", certificate dated 1812.

schools".[34] Obtaining a patent would legitimise Rouy as the inventor of a machine that now had many competitors. Producing one for every secondary school would give him a sizeable government contract. Rouy threatened that his departure for Turin and the success or failure of his invention would depend on that decision.[35]

Patent or not, in May of 1812 the government ordered the machines. Riding the wave of this recognition, Rouy's "new invention" was now publicised for private use as well, not to mention its appearance as décor in museums and private studies alike.[36] Rouy's business ambitions meant that by June those interested in purchasing one of his portable machines would have to place their names on a list. The list of subscribers would appear four months later at the opening of "a cosmographical booklet", and six months after their request, subscribers would be able to pick up one of the machines at Rouy's home in Milan, where those who were interested could also see a model of the mechanism.[37]

Just a few years prior, the pro-government *Giornale italiano* had been the site of conflict between Rouy and the Milanese intelligentsia, and now its pages presented Rouy to that same audience as an inventor recognised by the viceroy. In the meantime, with a notable media campaign, Rouy had had the insight to address the female public. Carolina Lattanzi, director of the widely-distributed *Corriere delle dame*, made the new invention known to her female readership and their gentlemen companions.[38] As an "unsophisticated admirer of virtue wherever it is found", and moved "by spontaneous impulse", Lattanzi described with particular richness the portable uranographical machine that she had been able to admire at Rouy's home that very morning, along with "more than two dozen of these little machines destined by our Government for the Secondary Schools of the Kingdom". The rhetoric of the letter focused on the ease with which even she as a woman (she speaks in fact of "my small mind"), "being neither astronomer nor mathematician", had come to understand celestial phenomena thanks to the machine.[39]

3. *The astronomers of Brera*

In the interest of exposing a few yet-to-be clarified points, it behooves us to ask whether it was merely the comet that provoked such interest and, above all, what had motivated the viceroy and his government to finance a Frenchman who had previously made a scandal of himself. We may glean insight from one of the meetings Rouy had with the viceroy, during which he mentioned that his uranographical mechanism was admired by astronomers from the Royal Observatory of Brera in Milan and recognised for its "superior simplicity compared to all others of this type

34. *Ibid.*, letter dated 5 March 1812 to Minister Vaccari.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Giornale italiano*, n. 132, 11 May 1812, p. 528.
37. *Ibid.* The price was 140 Italian lire, paid upon receipt.
38. *Corriere delle dame*, n. XXX, 25 July 1812, pp. 237-238.
39. *Ibid.*

which had been made".[40] For this reason, Minister Vaccari, in February 1812, that is, before the machine was gifted to the viceroy, wrote to these astronomers asking them to give him their sincere opinion about the true merits of the machine, its utility and its innovative features;[41] he had, in fact, intuited the viceroy's potential interest therein, but was aware of the risk of going out on a limb for a type of machine that was certainly not a novelty.

In signing along with the Observatory's director, Angelo Cesaris, the Brera astronomers presented the minister with a detailed report listing the merits and defects of the machine.[42] They noted that the number of daily rotations within the entire revolutionary cycle was not in sync with the year, not to mention additional inaccuracies related to the proportions of distance and size, but that they were acceptable in a machine of such a small size. The movements of the eclipses and the lunar phases were what they felt held the greatest interest, along with the rotation of the sun upon its own axis, but they noted that these reflected evident approximations. Besides, the materials that made the mechanism portable and economical raised some doubts among the observers, in particular the silk thread that Rouy had assured them was resistant even to numerous stresses. The question of materials prompted the astronomers to compare it with the many similar machines already present in Lombardy alone, citing the planetarium at the University of Pavia, a clock-like device constructed by Amicino Ravizza of Cremona, and the machine created by Giovanni Alberici, a priest from Bergamo, all of which were of course more expensive.[43]

The price, in fact, was the mechanism's true advantage: the astronomers had written clearly to the minister that the main merits of the machine were that it was simple and economical, "combined with a satisfactory representation of some of the principal phenomena of the solar system". The machine had undeniable utility in an academic and didactic setting, representing in that sense something new with respect to horizontal planetariums. Let us remember that on 2 March of that year, Rouy had gifted the mechanism to the viceroy, and on 5 March he had asked the government if it was interested in some machines for secondary schools and in granting him a patent. In a tight spot, Vaccari wrote once again to the astronomers, after Rouy had informed him about having exhibited a modified machine to them. The minister requested a supplemental report to the one submitted the previous February, inviting them to tell him about its true value in all frankness,[44] trusting their expert ability to evaluate the machine's utility. Their opinion on the price was

40. Archivio Storico dell'Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera-Archivio Amministrativo Vecchio (henceforth ASOB-AAV), cart. 20, fasc. 81, "Istrumento uranografico portatile costruito da Carlo Rouy", letter from 17 February 1812, Milan. On the topic of the Brera Astronomical Observatory, cf. Agnese Mandrino, "L'Osservatorio astronomico di Brera: tra storia e ricerca", in *Annali di Storia delle università italiane*, fasc. 1, 2021, pp. 209-219. I wish to acknowledge Agnese Mandrino, director of the Archivio Storico dell'Osservatorio Astronomico di Brera, for the documents cited above, which she made available to me.

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*, draft from 21 February 1812.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, letter by Vaccari of 12 March 1812.

important, given that Rouy had requested 150 lire for each one. Upon the second inspection of the modified machine that Rouy had brought to Brera to demonstrate the additions and improvements, a report followed, signed this time by another Brera astronomer, the celebrated Barnaba Oriani. The experts confirmed what was in the first report, finding that Rouy, "with his talent, correct scientific principles and effort had managed to make this machine simple, portable, economical and altogether satisfactory for the representation of phenomena", even with small modifications. The machine did not possess the perfection of other similar devices but, given its price, it was practical and useful for secondary schools and educational establishments.[45]

Yet 150 lire seemed excessive to them, given the great quantity of machines that the government would be commissioning, especially in light of the modest materials used in its construction. They thus proposed a price of 100 lire, admitting, however, that it would be best to ask what an adequate price might be from an expert machinist.[46] The experts Vaccari rapidly consulted recognised that it was necessary to lower Rouy's quote a little, so that the machine could be sold at a price of 140 lire. At the time, this would have been the equivalent to a median monthly salary,[47] which for the total of 25 machines commissioned would have brought the government to spend a sizeable amount, and this in fact bore directly on the finances of individual schools.[48]

Returning to the request for the astronomers' expertise: these activities represented the crux of the matter. First, Rouy had turned to the astronomers in Brera, asking for their opinion and referring to them by name when communicating with the viceroy and minister. These references to Brera astronomers must have been crucial for receiving the commission because there had been less-than-illustrious precedents. In fact, in 1796 when General Bonaparte found himself in Milan as the head of the Italian army, the Directory advised him that in order to establish friendly relations with the savants of Lombardy he should turn directly to the astronomer Barnaba Oriani, known across Europe for his work on Uranus. Bonaparte followed the recommendation, writing him a private letter, later published in newspapers of the time, which is often cited regarding the cultural policies of those years.[49] Oriani responded publicly, speaking candidly to Napoleon and asking him to support letters and science more substantively, rather

45. *Ibid.*, 13 March 1812.

46. In the *Giornale italiano*, n. 132, 11 May 1812, p. 528, we read that the machine had been analysed by Morosi, royal mechanic, and Megele, machinist, both from the Royal Observatory of Brera.

47. It was therefore a matter of affordability for the upper-middle class, if we consider that the monthly stipend for a colonel of the royal guard was 400 lire while a soldier earned 4 lire per day.

48. Such can be inferred from the delivery note given to the head of the secondary school of Bergamo: Archivio Storico del Liceo Sarpi, Bergamo, 7 September 1812, available at https://www.fisicaalmuseo.it/strumenti/meccanismo-uranografico-di-rouy/.

49. Cf. the section "L'Istituto nazionale e le accademie" in *Istituzioni e cultura in età napoleonica*, ed. by Elena Brambilla, Carlo Capra and Aurora Scotti, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2008.

than merely formally. Oriani had understood perfectly the propagandist objectives of Bonaparte's operation, aimed precisely at using knowledge, broadly conceived, for a political return and to gain consensus among the cultural elite. Despite these disagreements, Napoleon held great esteem for Oriani throughout his entire life, and the French government lent support to the Brera Observatory, which as a result enjoyed a particularly fertile period.[50]

Consequently, playing the "Oriani card" for Rouy meant offering proof of undeniable trustworthiness, employed and recognised across the whole Kingdom. It was used by the government itself when, with the propagandist purpose of exalting the funding for the mechanism in secondary schools, it had the *Giornale italiano* insert the astronomers' report.[51] This was done unbeknownst to the astronomers themselves, as Cesaris quickly wrote to Vaccari; most importantly, the excerpt had been compiled "so officiously in favour of himself that it does not let our true feeling be known and compromises it".[52] They then begged him to publish the report in its entirety, highlighting everything that had been omitted from the excerpt. In fact, comparing the original with the published version, all critical comments had been cut. For example, the portions about the limited accuracy of certain phenomena and the fact that the machine was not original had been discussed. Vaccari's secretary recognised that the astronomers' observations were reasonable and rushed to request the article be corrected, publishing it with the justification that the previous version merely contained extracts, and that in order to disseminate among the public the astronomers' critiques, he believed it opportune to publish their reports in full.[53]

But the news that Rouy's mechanism had been approved by the government thanks to Oriani and the obliging opinions of other Brera astronomers had already spread across the Kingdom. Suffice it to say that in the July 1812 edition of *Corriere delle Dame* cited above, Lattanzi began by praising Rouy, saying, "The Astronomers and Oriani, whose name has been admired throughout Europe, […] describe this little machine as happily demonstrating the principle phenomena of the physical world".[54] Rouy had evidently benefited from the political use of public funding in the scientific arena to drive the viceroy's and his ministers' consensus. Such use seized upon the greater public's new-found affinity for astronomy. In August of 1812, Rouy was about to publish a small book of instructions, which, preceded by a brief dissertation on astronomy, would have been called *Saggio di Cosmografia e Descrizione ed uso del meccanismo uranografico* (*An Essay on Cosmography and the Description and Use of the Uranographical Mechanism*).[55] And he asked Vaccari to fund its publication through the Royal Press; or at least to assure him a

50. Cf. Elio Antonello, "Bonaparte and the Astronomers of Brera Observatory", in *arXiv*, n. 1405.6841 (2014).

51. *Giornale italiano*, n. 149, 28 May 1812, p. 594.

52. ASOB-AAV, cart. 20, fasc. 81, a copy of the letter by Cesaris to the secretary of the Minister of the Interior, dated 5 June 1812.

53. *Giornale italiano*, n. 160, 8 June 1812, pp. 639-640.

54. *Corriere delle dame*, n. XXX, 25 July 1812, p. 237.

55. Milan, Pirotta, 1812.

sizeable commission from the general direction of public education, in light of the fact that it had been Scopoli who had had his work reviewed and recognised as useful for educational institutions.[56] It mattered little whether the minister conceded the financing because the seal of respectability given by the purchase of the machines and their public appraisal by the celebrated Brera astronomers were sufficient to imbue Rouy's operation with trust. In fact, a few months later *Il Poligrafo* would publish a review of the *Saggio* in which the numerous acknowledgements of Brera's astronomers were emphasised, followed by the adoption of the machines in secondary schools and subscriptions to acquire them on the part of illustrious and notable people, as amply demonstrated by a list of subscribers featured before the frontispiece,[57] which the article's author highlighted.[58]

Although the Great Comet had disappeared from European skies that January, its beneficial trail followed Rouy for all of 1812. But the new year brought little fortune to the so-called professor of astronomy, who soon fell back on his prior tactics of showmanship in a tour of Bologna, where he brought his uranographical show in April of 1813.[59] Soon after, he requested compensation from the viceroy, in the name of progress in the sciences and the arts, as well as for the one-time necessity of helping his lieutenant son, who had nearly been mortally wounded during the Russian campaign.[60] If it had not been for this situation, he would have gladly settled for the viceroy's tributes, but finding himself without fortune, and sustained only by the insufficient profits of his school, Rouy asked the viceroy to consider his petition, which was not accepted.[61] The reason could lie in the viceroy's desire to distance himself from a petulant and compromising individual, or in the diminishing interest in educational astronomy on the part of the Kingdom of Italy's government. Rouy made a final attempt to maintain an active profile in the city, advertising to the public an evening conversation in French at his new home, without mentioning either the French-Italian school, which his lover De Bar had handled for him until at least August of that year, nor the successes, now past, of his uranographical mechanism.[62] Contingencies were key: the government's willingness to take advantage of the astronomy mania by making itself the protector of astronomical knowledge was a political move with the goal of broadening consensus for a practice inaugurated by Bonaparte himself through his rapport with Oriani and Brera. By 1813, the policies of the Kingdom reflected other priorities, in light of the international crisis set off within Napoleonic domains by the same Russian campaign that had damaged Rouy's own stability as well.

56. ASMi, Autografi, cart. 154, fasc. 13 "Rouy Carlo", Milan, 22 August 1812.

57. Rouy, *Saggio di Cosmografia*, n.p.

58. *Il Poligrafo*, year II, n. XLVI, 15 November 1812, p. 734.

59. Archiginnasio di Bologna, Fondo teatri e spettacoli, Bologna, Teatro Felicini, n. VII.20.46, "uranografical show of the phenomena of the Universe by Charles Rouy with attachment", 30 April 1813.

60. ASMi, Autografi, cart. 154, fasc. 13 "Rouy Carlo", Milan, 18 June 1813.

61. *Ibid.*, 25 June 1813: "In the official record the plaintiff being sufficiently compensated by the purchase made by the government of 25 uranographical machines".

62. *Giornale italiano*, n. 294, 21 October 1813, p. 1180.

4. *Epilogue: the mechanism's validation in 1816*

Rouy's own Italian story ended with the fall of the Kingdom and was summarised by his daughter Hersilie many years later.[63] For Hersilie, her mother and father were the ones who ran the school for youths, and as she remembered it, Italian scholars were to be credited with the success of the uranographical mechanism. This success made Rouy decide to return to his homeland, where he was introduced to King Louis XVIII in January of 1816. It had been hidden from her, however, that when her father had arrived in Italy with De Bar he was still married to his first wife. Rouy left De Bar, who had really run the school, after he met Hersilie's mother, a hired helper. He would later marry her in Italy, making him a bigamist. Leaving aside the nonetheless interesting private consequences and forgeries of Charles Rouy's life, the republican ex-magician would put the certificates of esteem received during his Milanese years to ingenious use once he returned to France. By the summer of 1814, in fact, he had written to the general director of French education to present his mechanism to him, which "was adopted by all the secondary schools and other educational establishments in the Kingdom of Italy following reviews by the astronomers in Brera".[64] He asked for a meeting and stated rather prematurely that he hoped to see it adopted in secondary schools in France, his homeland, as it had been in Italy.[65] The much-awaited patent arrived in 1816,[66] which led Rouy to dedicate his work, *Panorama céleste, ou description et usage du mécanisme uranographique* (*Celestial Panorama, or Description and Use of the Uranographical Mechanism*), to the king the following year.[67]

In the incipit of the *Panorama*, Rouy inserted the list of subscribers to the *Saggio* of 1812, without removing the deceased – for example, one can read the name of the Milanese ex-Minister of Finance Giuseppe Prina, whose tragic death is noted – and the enemies, among whom we find Madame Drely, another French teacher active in Milan, friend and protector of De Bar, who had called him "a cheat, without honour and without sensitivity".[68] In sum, Rouy had no difficulty bending reality to his favour, ignoring that he had publicly hated, in a non-opportunistic tone, the monarchs of France, and presented himself as the inventor of a mechanical model of the solar system. Sure enough, models of the mechanism, which would later be called the Uranorama, were placed in royal science institutes in Paris, among them the exemplar which can still be found in

63. Hersilie Rouy, *Mémoires d'une aliénée*, Paris, Ollendorff, 1883, p. 2. On Rouy's life, a case of being forcibly committed to an asylum, cf. Yannick Ripa, *L'affaire Rouy. Une femme contre l'asile au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Tallandier, 2010.

64. ANP, F/1dII/R/9, dossier "Rouy, Charles", Paris, letter 4 June 1814.

65. *Ibid*.

66. *Bulletin des lois du Royaume Français*, vol. II, 7th set, 2nd half of the year 1816, n. 23, p. 75: "Mr. Rouy Charles residing in Paris, rue de Grammont n. 27, to whom was delivered, last 14 June, the certificate for his request of an inventor's patent of 15 years for one so-called uranographical machine".

67. *Panorama céleste, ou description et usage du mécanisme uranographique*, Paris, Le Normant, 1817.

68. ASMi, Studi p.m., cart. 440, 27 May 1814.

the Musée des Arts et Métiers in Paris, built in Italy but dedicated and given to Louis XVIII. Thanks to the mechanism, Rouy obtained a bonus from the king;[69] and, above all, it was the mechanism which assured his eternal notoriety, aided by the information that was subsequently written about Rouy in biographical dictionaries of the time.[70]

In this affair, it does not seem important to qualify whether Rouy was a charlatan who merely called himself an inventor, astronomer and professor of astronomy. In fact, although Rouy had exaggerated his education and abilities, straddling the politics of the Kingdom of Italy and a general interest for astronomy and abusing the real skills of astronomers in Brera, the merits of his uranographical mechanism were evident. This last point was the expression of a new scientific material culture and spoke to the interest in unspecialised knowledge to be placed within the grasp of the many. It was therefore more important to sift through the elements that made Rouy an exemplary case for breaking down the mechanisms that enabled the Kingdom of Italy to use knowledge at a specific moment in its political history, and to search for new forms of knowledge as instruments to control consensus. The viceroy and his ministers had understood the blowback their images might suffer from using the mechanism in a scholastic environment, yet they were more committed to replicating Bonaparte and the Directory's methods. If in 1796 their attentions were directed to the savants of Lombardy, more than ten years later, in the wake of the expansion of a public intrigued by the sciences, in this particular case, astronomy, they sought the broader approval of notables in Lombardy: an upper-middle class that could access the magazines of the time, and which was interested, albeit ephemerally, in the Comet of 1811 and had enrolled their children in the Kingdom's schools, above all its new secondary schools.

Orienting himself within the new political panorama created by the Revolution, Rouy had found a configuration of events that was favourable to him, whether in Napoleonic Milan or during the Bourbon Restoration. From a broader perspective, therefore, Rouy's trajectory shows on the one hand the transfer of knowledge between the 18th and 19th centuries, and on the other, how the fecundity of the historic moment, characterised by a growing political use of knowledge, represented a determining factor in the success of those who, capable of seizing the moment, were able to use their particular abilities to obtain roles and responsibilities which in other contexts had been unreachable.

69. ANP, O/3/815, Maison du Roi. Distinctions honorifiques sous la Restauration (1815-1830), "ROUY (Charles), inventeur du mécanisme uranographique. Paris. Demande le cordon de Saint-Michel", dossier n. 50, 1817.

70. For example: *Biographie nouvelle des contemporains: ou Dictionnaire historique*, vol. XVIII, Paris, Libraire Historique, 1825, pp. 269-270.

Valentina De Santi

Measuring Theatres of War and Uniforming Space in the Napoleonic Era: The Cartographic Projects of Simon Pierre Brossier, Ingénieur Géographe*

1. *Maps as instruments of power and governance*

> European-style maps worked on the basis of a totalising classification, and led their bureaucratic producers and consumers towards policies with revolutionary consequences. Ever since John Harrison's 1761 invention of the chronometer, which made possible the precise calculation of longitudes, the entire planet's curved surface had been subjected to a geometrical grid which squared off empty seas and unexplored regions in measured boxes. The task of, as it were, "filling in" the boxes was to be accomplished by explorers, surveyors and military forces […] Triangulation by triangulation, war by war, treaty by treaty, the alignment of map and power proceeded.[1]

In this quote, Benedict Anderson described the role of modern western cartography in shaping borders and establishing a nationalist ideology in Siam between the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th. Anderson's contribution joins a rich trove of scholarly literature that has been developing over half a century to explain how maps, whose grammar is determined by technical, cultural and social factors alike, become closely connected mechanisms to every sort of political ambition.[2]

The "European-style maps" that Anderson was referring to were historically and socially shaped mechanisms, expressions of power that had been gradually spreading throughout the modern Western world since at least the 1700s, undergoing a period of profound transformation during the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods. The outbreak of the revolutionary wars ushered in an almost twenty-year period characterised by a concatenation of bellicose events and

* My gratitude to Alessandra Balzani for her translation of this chapter.

1. Benedict Anderson, *Comunità immaginate. Origini e fortuna dei nazionalismi*, Bari, Laterza, 2018, pp. 161-162 (English 1st ed. 1983).

2. Edoardo Boria, *Cartografia e potere: segni e rappresentazioni negli atlanti italiani del Novecento*, Turin, Utet, 2007, pp. 7-50; Brian Harley, "Maps, Knowledge and Power", in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, ed. by Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1988; Clude Raffestin, "Carte e potere o dalla duplicazione alla sostituzione", in *Cartografia e istituzioni in età moderna*, Atti del Convegno (Genova, Imperia, Albenga, Savona, La Spezia, 3-8 novembre 1986), Rome, Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali – Genoa, Società Ligure di Storia Patria, 1987, vol. I, pp. 23-31.

governmental change in Europe, accompanied by the reconfiguration of traditional 18th-century geographical knowledge. Military geography and engineers played a major role in this transformative process.[3]

The revolutionary years constituted a period of dramatic delegitimisation of the role of *ingénieurs géographes* and the Dépôt de la Guerre, which governed topographical operations and archives preserving all documentation generated, due to their acute and long-standing rivalries with the Corps of Engineers. The incessant wars, in addition to the French expansion and control over other European regions, highlighted the shortcomings associated with the lack of a service dedicated to scouting territories and designing new maps necessary to carry out war operations. This included updating the topographic knowledge of countries that were occupied or soon to be occupied.[4] The corps of *ingénieurs géographes* had been dismantled in 1791, with all topographic services chaotically redistributed among the following institutions between 1792 and 1795: the Agence des Cartes (Mapping Agency, established in 1794 by the Committee of Public Safety), the Dépôt de la Guerre (albeit by now understaffed) and the Cabinet Topographique du Gouvernement. From 1795, the Dépôt and its highest-ranking officials made an effort to legitimise cartography as a key source of knowledge for governing French territories, even in times of peace.

It behooves us to consider Simon Pierre Brossier's vision in order to glean an understanding of the intense effort invested in acquiring territorial knowledge and the subsequent classification and ordering of the geographic and cartographic information that he and others assembled over the years.[5]

Brossier was born in Versailles in 1756. He worked in a wide array of capacities over the course of his career, from cadastral surveyor in Corsica to colonel of the corps of *ingénieurs géographes* in 1800. As member of the corps of *ingénieurs géographes* he took part in many topographical campaigns: between 1778 and 1781 he was in the Vosges mountains to mark the boundary between Lorraine and Alsace; in 1782 he was assigned to General Destaing's service to take part in the Jamaica expedition; between 1789 and 1792 he was in the

3. Within the vast literature available, see Anne Godlewska, *La science géographique en France de Cassini à Humboldt. Une mutation hésitant*, Pau, Puppa, 2023 (1st ed. 1999), pp. 181-226; Massimo Quaini, "Un grande laboratorio geografico: la montagna alpina fra Sette e Ottocento. Il ruolo della topografia militare", in *Approcci geo-storici e governo del territorio. Vol. 2. Scenari nazionali e internazionali*, ed. by Elena Dai Pra, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2014, pp. 451-466; Valerio Vladimiro, "Dalla cartografia di corte alla cartografia dei militari: aspetti culturali, tecnici e istituzionali", in *Cartografia e istituzioni in età moderna*, vol. I, pp. 59-78.

4. Berthaut, *Les Ingénieurs géographes*, vol. I, pp. 121-160; Patrice Bret, "Le Dépôt général de la Guerre et la formation scientifique des ingénieurs-géographes militaires en France (1789-1830)", in *Annales of science*, 48 (1991), pp. 113-157.

5. This research started from the biographical entry dedicated to Brossier in the *Dizionario Storico di Cartografi Italiani*, a biographical and bibliographical collection of essays on the history of Italian cartography. On the project, see especially the monographic issue of the journal *Geostorie*, 12/2-3 (2004). Brossier's section is found in "Cartografi in Liguria (sec. XIV-XIX)", in *Dizionario Storico dei Cartografi Italiani*, ed. by Massimo Quaini and Luisa Rossi, Genoa, Brigati, 2007, pp. 162-163.

Pyrenees to mark the border there; between 1796 and 1799 he worked in the western Alps; between 1800 and 1813 he was in northern Italy as director of the Bureau Topographique de l'Armée d'Italie; and, finally, in 1814 he was involved in the effort to establish the northern borders of France.[6] Although he was granted retirement in 1817, with the implementation of the project to create the new map of France he was appointed special director of all functions necessary to complete it, thus retaining a central role in the cartographic production of his time.[7] He died at his home in Paris on 5 April 1832.

The following pages will focus on the work that Brossier did during his service in the northern regions of Italy to identify and examine some of the strategies employed in the process of developing the field of military geography.[8] The vast scope of his work lay at the heart of the process of reorganising topography as a tool in the service of warfare and the establishment of the governing apparatus of the modern Western state.

2. *Cassini's "European" map*

After returning from his mission with the Army of the Pyrenees, Brossier was first employed in the Agence des Cartes. Then, from August of 1794, he was "tasked with the general direction of the military topographical-historical bureau, established that year by the Committee of Public Safety".[9] These assignments prove that the experience he had gained during previous topographical campaigns was very highly regarded from as early as 1778. He started obtaining various promotions in rank and directive roles from 1796, as his success was acknowledged by his superiors. The same service records found in the personnel file note the following as the most relevant assignments of his career: "marking the boundary between France and Piedmont" between 1796 and 1799, and the direction of the Bureau Topographique de l'Armée d'Italie from 1800 until the fall of the Napoleonic Empire.[10]

Following the Peace of Paris (15 May 1796), which ended hostilities between the First French Republic and the Kingdom of Sardinia, Brossier was appointed member of the commission to demarcate the border between the two powers.

6. Brossier's professional career was culled from his service file, kept at the *Service Historique de la Défense/Département de l'Armée de Terre* (henceforth SHD/DAT), 8Yd 2319, *Pension militaire de retraite n° 7387*.

7. SHD/DAT, 8Yd 2319, *A son Excellence le ministre de la Guerre*, 6 November 1820.

8. Henri Berthaut's work on the *ingénieurs géographes* – a major source present in any study on the history of cartography – mentions the key role played by those who worked for the French army in the many battlegrounds during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. See Henri Berthaut, *Les Ingénieurs géographes militaires 1624-1831*, Paris, Imprimerie du service géographique, 1902, vol. I.

9. SHD/DAT, 8Yd 2319, *Notions demandées par le Directeur Andreossy, auxquelles chaque officier topographe voudra bien répondre en marge*, le 28 thermidor an X (16 August 1802).

10. SHD/DAT, 8Yd 2319, *État des services de Monsieur Brossier Simon Pierre, Colonel au Corps Royal des Ingénieurs Géographes*, 29 July 1814.

With the resumption of hostilities in January 1800, he was assigned to one of the commissions charged with surveying the borders of the Alps. As a member of these commissions – in 1806 he was tasked with marking the border between Italy and Tyrol[11] – Brossier carried out surveys and drew up plans, participating in the definition of the borders that were being drawn (and redrawn) with the succession of wars and treaties.[12] In January 1799 he was part of the French-Sabaud commission and signed the *Mémoire sur le projet d'une nouvelle limite avec le Piémont* (*Project for a New Border with Piedmont*), where he presented his considerations in establishing the line of the border by posing three questions:

> Part One. Since Piedmont is not part of France, what is the most advantageous border that can be established from the military and political perspective? Part Two. Since Piedmont is divided, which provinces is France interested in conquering? Part Three. Once Piedmont is part of France, what must be taken under advisement with regard to the Helvetic Republic, the Cisalpine Republic and the Ligurian Republic?[13]

Brossier's thoughts were in line with the doctrine of natural boundaries that was popular during the reign of Louis XIV, which was referred to in a number of the reports written in those years.[14] While referencing the doctrine of natural boundaries may be contradictory, as it was often rejected in favour of revolutionary geopolitical strategies during the Napoleonic period, Brossier's considerations on delineating Piedmont's boundaries indicate that he conceptualised borders (and frontiers) as the expression of a spatial order that was neither fixed nor natural. Instead, these delimitations "do not constitute an invariant element in geographical description".[15]

11. Elena Dai Prà, Valentina De Santi, *L'occhio militare sul paesaggio. Il Trentino dei topografi napoleonici (1796-1813)*, Milan, Unicopli, 2023, pp. 48-50.

12. SHD/DAT, 1M 1207, *Alpes (notes descriptives sur tous les cols et passages des) qui communiquent de France au Piémont depuis le Col Ferret jusqu'au col des trois-évêques*, Brossier, pluviôse an 8 (February 1800); SHD/DAT, 1M 1383, *Mémoire sur un projet de rectification de frontières entre le royaume d'Italie et le Tyrol*, Brossier, 1 March 1806.

13. SHD/DAT, 1M 1362, *Mémoire sur le projet d'une nouvelle limite avec le Piémont*, Brossier, le 21 nivôse an VII (10 January 1799).

14. Paola Sereno, "Ordinare lo spazio, governare il territorio: confine e frontiera come categorie geografiche", in *Confini e frontiere nell'età moderna. Un confronto disciplinare*, ed. by Alessandro Pastore, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2007, pp. 45-64: 46. On the concepts of border and frontier within the fields of geography and history, see *Ai confini dell'Unità d'Italia. Territorio, amministrazione, opinione pubblica*, ed. by Luigi Blanco, Trento, Fondazione Museo Storico Trentino, 2015; Edoardo Boria, "Gli ambigui intrecci della geografia e della cartografia con il potere: il caso del concetto di confine naturale nell'Italia liberale", in *Geotema*, 58 (2018), pp. 60-69; Paul Guichonnet, Claude Raffestin, *Géographie des frontières*, Vendôme, Presses Universitaires de France, 1974; Daniel Nordman, *Frontières de France. De l'espace au territoire XVI^e^-XIX^e^ siècle*, Paris, Gallimard, 1998; Maria Luisa Sturani, *Dividere, governare e rappresentare il territorio in uno stato di antico regime. La costruzione della maglia amministrativa nel Piemonte sabaudo (XVI-XVIII sec.)*, Alessandria, Edizione dell'Orso, 2021.

15. On the doctrine of natural boundaries during the Napoleonic era, see: Marc Belissa, "La question des frontières naturelles pendant la Révolution et l'Empire", in *Frontières et espaces frontaliers du Léman à la Meuse. Recompositions et échanges de 1789 à 1814*,

The definition of borders and the topographic work conducted in potential war zones or in areas already occupied were intertwined with the goal of creating a "universal cartography" by developing trigonometrical networks in the occupied territories, to be connected with those belonging to Cassini's Map, the first ever complete map of a large European kingdom.[16] From 1795, the Dépôt de la Guerre promoted important operations of geodesic triangulation in bordering territories – particularly in Alsace, Belgium, the Netherlands and Savoy, the latter being renamed the Department of Mont-Blanc in 1792.

As a member on the French-Piemontese commission created in 1796 to mark the border, Brossier was tasked with supervising the work carried out by the geodesic commissions and establishing relationships with the savants who conducted them. One of these intellectuals was Nicolas-Antoine Nouet, a leading figure in the field of French astronomy at the time and member of the future Commission of the Sciences and the Arts during the French invasion of Egypt, who would later participate in the work conducted on establishing the border in the Alps.[17] In April 1800, Brossier was nominated to lead the Bureau Topographique de l'Armée de Reserve, and after the battle of Marengo – which marked the end of the second Italian campaign – he became the director of the Bureau Topographique de l'Armée d'Italie. Brossier became insistent on promoting the creation of a general geodesic map of the northern Italian peninsula. In April of 1801 he wrote to the vice-director of the Dépôt, "Why not do what we're doing on the banks of the Rhine in Italy? Why not link the maps of these beautiful regions with those of Bourcet, Cassinet and Weis? I will develop my plan in greater detail and I can already assure you that we have the necessary means to considerably shorten the time required for this project".[18]

Although no official decision was ever made with regard to this project, the topographical operations Brossier directed in northern Italy constituted the potential pieces of a cartographic puzzle that continued to expand and evolve. In many of the letters addressed to directors and vice-directors of the Dépôt, he

ed. by Claude Mazauric and Jean-Paul Rothiot, Nancy, Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 2007, pp. 117-128; Isabelle Laboulais, "Dessiner la frontière, tracer la limite: retour sur les travaux des géographes du roi au XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siècles", in *Frontières et espaces frontaliers*, pp. 31-44; Jacob Nicolas, "Les Alpes et les frontières naturelles à l'époque révolutionnaire 1792-1802", in *La Révolution française: la guerre et la frontière*, ed. by Monique Cubells, Paris, Éditions du C.T.H.S., 2000, pp. 220-234.

16. On this cartographic project, see Monique Pelletier, *Les cartes de Cassini. La science au service de l'État et des provinces*, Paris, Edition du CTHS, 2019 (new edition); Monique Pelletier, "Carte de France", in *Cartography in the European Enlightenment*, ed. by Matthew H. Edney and Mary Sponberg Pedley, IV, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2019, pp. 239-244.

17. Berthaut, *Les Ingénieurs géographes*, vol. I, pp. 164-166; Patrice Bret, "L'astronome Nicolas-Antoine Nouet (1740-1811), membre de l'Institut d'Égypte, directeur de la Carte de Savoie", in *Les scientifiques et la montagne*, ed. by CTHS, Paris, Éditions du CTHS, 1993, pp. 119-147.

18. SHD/DAT, 3M 366, n° 127, *A l'Adjuvant Commandant Hastrel, adjoint au Directeur du Dépôt Général de la Guerre*, Milan, le 18 germinal an 9 (8 April 1801).

listed the available documents and explained the steps required to complete his project. In a letter from 25 June 1801, he clearly delineated his idea to adjutant commander Hastrel.[19]

As for the territories in Lombardy, he proposed reusing the maps produced by the Teresian cadastre in the Duchy of Milan in the early 18th century; he therefore sought access to the Cisalpine census archives to consult the cadastral maps available there. Brossier also referenced the *Carta degli Astronomi della Lombardia Austriaca* (*Astronomers' Map of Austrian Lombardy*), which had been created between 1788 and 1796 by the Brera observatory astronomers. In fact, in 1771 a new project was initiated to create a new general map of the territories belonging to the Duchy of Milan based on cadastral maps. This project was completed in 1791, but the engraved bronze plates for the new maps were brought to Vienna by the Austrians before the arrival of the French.[20] Still, Brossier wanted to highlight the reliability of trigonometric measurements: "the essential elements of this map were entrusted to the experts and astronomers of the Brera Academy in Milan, whose members, such as the citizens Oriani, Cesaris, and Mascheroni, enjoy a well-deserved reputation".[21]

As for the territories in the Venetian region, Brossier remarked that Gustav Tibell – another leading figure in topography at the time – had met with Vincenzo Chiminello in Padua, who had provided him with the substantial elements of the "Map of the Polesine of Rovigo". Brossier himself wanted to meet with Lorenzo Mascheroni's brother in Brescia to acquire the data on the network of triangles calculated between Bergamo and Brescia.[22]

Lastly, for the Piedmontese territories, Brossier stated that many documents relative to the areas between the rivers Adda and Ticino were part of the Milanese cadastre (mentioned above), while the area between the rivers Ticino and Sesia, which constituted the new border of the Cisalpine Republic after the treaty of Lunéville, could be covered by using the cadastral maps created by the Kingdom of Sardinia.[23] Brossier believed that it would only be a matter of checking the maps that already

19. SHD/DAT, 3M 366, n° 161, *A l'Adjuvant Commandant Hastrel,* Milan, le 6 messidor an 9 (19 June 1801).

20. Andrea Cantile, "Lineamenti di storia della cartografia italiana", vol. II, *Dal Seicento al Novecento*, Rome, Geoweb, 2013, pp. 291-296; Massimo Quaini, "La cartografia a grande scala: dall'astronomo al topografo militare", in *L'Europa delle carte*, ed. by Marica Milanesi, Milan, Mazzotta, 1990, pp. 36-41; Mario Signori, "La cartografia lombarda tra tradizione ed esigenze amministrative", in *L'immagine interessata. Territorio e cartografia in Lombardia tra 500 e 800*, Milan, Archivio di Stato di Milano, 1984, pp. 57-68.

21. SHD/DAT, 3M 366, n° 161, *A l'Adjuvant Commandant Hastrel,* Milan, le 6 messidor an 9 (21 June 1801).

22. For an introduction to the cartographic projects in the Venetian territories, see: Vladimiro Valerio, *Cartografi veneti. Mappe, uomini e istituzioni per l'immagine e il governo del territorio*, Padua, Editoriale Programma, 2007; Massimo Rossi, *Kriegskarte 1796-1805. Il ducato di Venezia nella carta di Anton von Zach*, Treviso, Edizioni Fondazione Benetton Studi Ricerche, 2005.

23. To learn more about the history of cartography in this area, see: Rinaldo Comba, Paola Sereno, *Rappresentare uno Stato. Carte e cartografi degli stati sabaudi dal XVI al XVIII secolo*, Turin-London-Venice, Umberto Allemandi & C., 2002.

existed, adapting them to the agreed-upon scale, and filling in the mountains that had been completely omitted. The trigonometrical base was already available thanks to the work of Giovanni Battista Beccaria, which was perfectly in line with Oriani's and Cassini's:[24] "As you can see, it is only a matter of assembling things to have a chain of triangles that runs from Paris to the Adriatic Sea".[25]

3. *Paris, Milan, Turin: networks of repositories and topographic services in transformation*

Brossier's proposal was inspired by his topographic operations on behalf of the Bureau Topographique de l'Armée d'Italie, whose main mission was to create the *Carte du pays entre l'Adda et l'Adige* (*Map of the States between the Adige and Adda Rivers*). In January 1801, following the battle of Marengo, the order came to conduct a new survey mission of the territories that had once belonged to the Venetian state, which the Department of War complained about as lacking in topographic documentation of that region. Section heads Martinel, Tibell, Legrand and Chabrier were tasked with scouring these areas to proceed with "collecting any map, chart, account or property register that you might run across in all the municipalities where you will be working", as the order from above was to create the most accurate military mapping possible.[26] The land campaign directed by Brossier gave way to the *Reconnaissance militaire du pays vénitien compris entre l'Adige et la Piave exécuté pendant la campagne de l'an VIIII par les ingénieurs géographes de l'Armée d'Italie*, which from 1802 was followed by many other military accounts and maps in compliance with the order to extend the operation of the *Map of the States between the Adige and Adda Rivers* to the entire territory of the Napoleonic Italian Republic, known as the Kingdom of Italy from 1804.[27] As director, Brossier also managed all the other topographic initiatives initiated in Liguria and Piedmont at the same time.

The campaigns of land exploration were just one part of Brossier's job. His other tasks included archival searches, diplomatic missions and political relations that led him deep inside the "old" centres of Sabaud and Milanese topographic knowledge. He also travelled to many other regions in northern

24. For a general understanding of the geodesic work carried out in the Italian states before Unification (18th century), see: Cantile, *Lineamenti*, pp. 285-342; Attilio Mori, *La cartografia ufficiale in Italia e l'Istituto geografico militare*, Rome, Istituto geografico militare, 1922; Marco Petrella, *Academies of Sciences in the Italian States*, ed. by Matthew H. Edney and Mary Sponberg Pedley, IV, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2019, pp. 13-18.

25. SHD/DAT, 3M 366, n° 161, *A l'Adjuvant Commandant Hastrel*, Milan, le 6 messidor an 9 (25 June 1801).

26. SHD/DAT, 3M 366, n° 62, *Aux chefs de section*, Turin, le 27 nivôse an 9 (17 January 1801).

27. SHD/DAT, 6M M13 B4 n° 102, *Reconnaissance militaire du pays vénitien compris entre l'Adige et la Piave exécutée pendant la campagne de l'an VIIII par les ingénieurs géographes de l'Armée d'Italie*, Brossier, 1801.

Italy, where he had the chance to enter into contact with local astronomers, topographers and functionaries with whom he exchanged ideas and opinions as well as cartographic documents and tools. This experience led him to act in favour of the Milanese and Piedmontese topographic centres taking shape or reorganising at the time, following the model of the Parisian Dépôt de la Guerre and the corps of *ingénieurs géographes*.

It is in this context that, in August 1801, Brossier told Hastrel, Vice-Director of the Parisian Dépôt, that he was willing to be included in the restructuring of the Piedmontese topographical service.[28] In addition to what has emerged from famous studies on the *Carte des champs des batailles* (*Map of Battlegrounds*), a project that began in 1802 under the direction of Joseph-François de Martinel, to this day it is not clear what occurred within the Ufficio di Topografia Reale of Piedmont during the revolutionary and imperial periods. The same could be said for the project to create a general map of Piedmont.[29] In September 1801, Brossier was working at the Piedmontese archives to check the existing documents and make sure that they would be accessible to the French Department of War.[30] Some months later, in February 1802, Brossier was told to return to Turin to identify the documents deemed useful to create the map of Piedmont, and to bring them to France. On 25 May 1802, Brossier wrote a report on that mission while back in Paris.[31]

28. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *L'Adjuvant Commandant Brossier, Directeur du Bureau Topographique. A l'Adjuvant Commandant Hastrel, adjoint au Directeur du Dépôt Général de la Guerre à Paris*, 3 fructidor an 9 (21 August 1801).

29. *Cultura figurativa e architettonica negli Stati del Re di Sardegna. 1773-1861* (exhibition catalogue), ed. by Enrico Castelnuovo and Marco Rosci, Turin, Piedmont, 1980, vol. I, pp. 181-282; Massimo Quaini, "Quando i 'geografi' sanno essere rivoluzionari. L'avventura dell'ingegnere geografo Joseph-François de Martinel (1763-1829)", in *Officina cartografica. Materiali di studio*, ed. by Carlo Alberto Gemignani, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2017, pp. 99-118; Isabella Massabò Ricci, Marco Carassi, "Amministrazione dello spazio statale e cartografia nello Stato sabaudo", in *Cartografia e istituzioni*, vol. I, pp. 272-314; Valeria Pansini, *L'œil du topographe et la science de la guerre. Travail scientifique et perception militaire (1760-1820)*, Doctoral dissertation, EHESS, 2002; Paola Sereno, "'Li ingegneri topograffici di Sua Maestà'. La formazione del cartografo militare negli Stati Sabaudi e l'istituzione dell'Ufficio di Topografia Reale", in *Rappresentare uno Stato. Carte e cartografi degli stati sabaudi dal XVI al XVIII secolo*, ed. by Rinaldo Comba and Paola Sereno, Turin-London-Venice, Allemandi, 2002, pp. 61-102. On the creation of the figure of military cartographer in the Savoy state, and the institution of an Office of Royal Topography, see *Rappresentare uno Stato*, ed. by Comba and Sereno, vol. I, pp. 61-82; Paola Sereno, "L'Ufficio di Topografia reale sabaudo. Origine, organizzazione, attività", *L'Universo*, 1/2022, pp. 4-34.

30. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *Le directeur de la topographie française dans la République cisalpine au Général Adreossi Directeur du Dépôt général*, Turin, le 26 vendémiaire an X (18 October 1801).

31. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *Le Directeur du Dépôt de la Guerre au Général Jourdan, administrateur général du Piémont*, le 23 pluviôse an X (23 February 1802); SHD/DAT, 3M 245, *Rapport au Général Andreossy sur les travaux topographiques exécutés ou à exécuter en Piémont et sur le nombres des positions et les droits des ingénieurs piémontais*, Brossier, le 5 prail an 10 (15 May 1802).

In February 1801, the cabinet of the Italian topographical bureau[32] was created at the "maison Somaglia" in Borgo Manforte (Milan), and Brossier took part in the reorganisation of the Deposito Generale della Guerra of the Cisalpine Republic, founded in 1797. He also participated in the institutionalisation of the Cisalpine topographic corps, which became official in 1802. The initiatives to create a topographic corps for the new Cisalpine government had already started in July 1801, when Gustav Tibell was called to Milan to establish it.[33] Tibell was already section head of the French topographic bureau, and in letters exchanged with Brossier he emphasised how the process to institutionalise the Cisalpine service followed the French model and the orders of the French Dépôt. The model lacked the corps of *ingénieurs géographes*, which had been dismantled in 1791, but Brossier now wanted to bring it back with a new structure following the Milanese example. In the 25 June 1801 letter addressed to Hastrel that we have already cited, in which he introduced the project of a general map of northern Italy, Brossier called for a revamping of the *ingénieurs géographes*, pointing out that the small emerging state of the Cisalpine Republic was aware of its importance and was creating a new unit.

> First, you must know that the Cisalpine government is currently developing its military organisation, and that they are determined to create a topographical institution which will employ 20 officers. I will refrain from emphasising how a small and emerging state is doing what the French Powerhouse hasn't yet been able to do, due to reasons that prudence obliges me to refrain from stating. You know them as well as I do. The Piedmontese government still has a topographic corps, a considerably valuable vestige of an institution that had been carefully nurtured during the rule of its Kings.[34]

Brossier was closely following the organisation and work of this division. Indeed, from June 1802 the *Map of the States between the Adige and Adda Rivers* was extended to the entire territory of the Napoleonic Italian Republic. This decision meant that the French and Cisalpine topographers had to collaborate and were mainly tasked with measuring the area between the Adda and Sesia rivers under the general command of Brossier, who discovered in Tibell a willing and capable interlocuter who could apply the instructions received so that operations would follow the same method that the topographers had created.[35] As director, Brossier wrote monthly reports detailing the work done by every topographer under his command. In March 1802, for example, he wrote a *Rapport secret présentant les ingénieurs géographes admis, proposés nommes ainsi que les secrétaires* (*Secret*

32. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *L'adjuvant commandant provisoire Directeur du Bureau Topographique au Général Charpentier chef de l'État Major*, 11 fructidor an 9 (29 August 1801); SHD/DAT, 3M 366, *Au citoyen Pérault, agent en chef des transports militaires*, Milan, le 6 ventôse an 9 (28 February 1801).

33. Massimo Rossi, *Pittore, disegnatore e vedutista nell'Italia napoleonica. Il caso del trevigiano Basilio Lasinio (1766-1832)*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Genoa, 2010-2011.

34. SHD/DAT, 3M 366, n° 161, *A l'Adjuvant Commandant Hastrel*, Milan, le 6 messidor an 9 (34 June 1801).

35. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *Le directeur du Bureau topographique de l'Adige et l'Adda au Général Sanson, directeur du Dépôt de la Guerre*, le 1 nivoise an 11 (22 December 1802); SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *Rapport Particulier au Général Sanson Directeur du Dépôt général de la Guerre*, Brossier, Milan, le 30 frimaire an 11 (21 December 1802).

Report on the Ingénieurs Géographes *Admitted, the List of Names Proposed as well as Those of the Secretaries*).[36] Every topographer working to complete the *Map of the States between the Adige and Adda Rivers* was categorised according to "'theory'; 'practice and use of instruments'; 'accuracy of drawing'; 'general instruction'; and 'zeal'". Even in Turin, where Brossier was busy scouring the archives, he had identified a group of Piedmontese topographers in the interest of finding out which ones had the adequate competences to be integrated into the French military topographical service.[37]

He was looking to standardise his topographic survey, not only through evaluation of the qualifications of the topographers (which often came from civilian institutions themselves),[38] but also by using more technically advanced tools. In September 1802, the French minister of war wrote to his Cisalpine counterpart to emphasise that

> The Theodolite is not as precise as the repeating circle of Borda, and it would be important for you to provide citizen Oriani with one. Germany and Russia have already resorted to our artists to obtain similar instruments, which are the only ones allowed if we want results that are consistent with the current state of knowledge.[39]

Once again, the astronomer Barnaba Oriani is referenced here. He was the one to whom they wanted to entrust the calculations for establishing the main trigonometric network, for he was considered to be the only expert capable of connecting his triangulation to Beccaria's in Piedmont, to Chiminello's in the Venetian States, to Boscovich's in Romagna, and to the one that was being created at that time in the Helvetic Republic, as the minister had stated in his letter.

The Cisalpine government's decision to initiate the map creation process for the entire territory that was taken up shortly after the debates will not be addressed here. They wanted to expand the maps that had been completed in 1788 by the Brera astronomers of Lombardy only.[40] To conclude this reflection, let us circle back to Brossier's project to create a map of northern Italy. After returning from Turin upon the completion of his work there, he scoured the Cisalpine archives as well, checking the cartographic documents that were available to evaluate whether or not to compare them with those found in the Sabaud archives, stating: "Let me reiterate that it will only be necessary to adapt all those documents to the same scale and then incorporate them within the trigonometrical points we have established".[41]

36. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, *Rapport secret présentant les ingénieurs géographes admis, proposés nommes ainsi que les secrétaires*, Brossier, Milan, 24 ventôse an 10 (15 March 1802).

37. SHD/DAT, 3M 245, *Projet de classement des topographes piémontaises*, le 16 prial an 10 (5 June 1802).

38. Patrice Bret, "Engineers and Topographical Survey", in *Cartography in the European Enlightenment*, ed. by Matthew H. Edney and Mary Sponberg Pedley, IV, Chicago-London, The University of Chicago Press, 2019, pp. 383-393.

39. SHD/DAT, 3M 373, an XI, 7 vendémiaires an 11 (29 September 1802).

40. Mario Signori, "L'attività cartografica del deposito della guerra e del corpo degli ingegneri topografi nella Repubblica e nel Regno d'Italia", in *Cartografia e Istituzioni in età moderna*, vol. II, pp. 495-525.

41. SHD/DAT, 3M 375, Milan, le 13 Brumaire an 10 (4 November 1801).

4. *Conclusion*

The military map that Brossier proposed relied on some key steps: acquiring the existing cadastral maps, reducing the scale, connecting the documents to the known geodesic locations, verifying the calculations and carrying out the necessary topographical measurements to finish the map, especially with regard to the proper indication of elevation. The method recommended by Brossier, who had also conducted the operations between the Alps and the river Isonzo, posited the combination of cadastral and military topographies.[42] In 1817, he was placed in charge of directing operations to create the new map of France. In volume III of *Mémorial Topographique*, edited in 1825, he mentioned this project in *Notice sur la nouvelle carte de France* (*Note on the New Map of France*). Already retired, he nonetheless held a position that we can consider as the culminating point of his career. In the first few lines, he wrote:

> A military map is the projection of a land surface on a horizontal plane, presented in such a way as to simulate what a geographical elevation of the same surface would do. Or rather, it is a depiction of nature itself, reproduced in its forms and colours, but reduced to the dimensions of an adopted scale. The general cadastre of a State is divided into two perfectly distinct parts. The goal of the first is to estimate the extent of the lands and evaluate their production; the second consists of drawing up plans for all of the properties as the prerogative of the surveyor or engineer. Both operations can only be accurate if they follow the parameters provided by geodesy. Therefore, a well-executed general cadastre is likely to offer excellent [sic] documents for the preparation of a military map, and a military map must contain the elements [sic] necessary to facilitate the assembly of the work of a cadastre and to correct it as needed.[43]

Contrary to the seemingly simple nature of the initiatives reviewed in this article, the topographical operations managed by Brossier as director of the Italian bureau reveal the design of heterogeneous topographical knowledge that was constructed by collecting "ancient" documents and traditions and infusing them with new skills acquired through technical innovation, new exploration and the hybridisation of skill sets, generating a complex system of networks and flows that had to be reworked.[44] Through the years, Brossier worked in Paris, Milan and Turin, thus exploring vast areas of northeastern Italy. Through the documentation

42. On the potential relationship between cadastre topography and Carte d'État-Major, see: Nicolas Verdier, "Courte histoire d'un échec: le mariage de l'armée et du cadastre dans le premier quart du XIX^{e} siècle", *Bulletin du Comité Français de Cartographie*, 238 (2018), pp. 11-23.

43. Simon-Pierre Brossier, "Notice sur la nouvelle carte de France", in *Mémorial Topographique et Militaire rédigé au Dépôt Général de la Guerre*, vol. III – année 1825, Paris, Imprimerie de Guiraudet, 1826, p. 2.

44. "Reti cartografiche. Circolazione di carte, cartografi, idee e tecniche", ed. by Annalisa D'Ascenzo, Carlo Alberto Gemignani, Anna Guarducci, Paola Pressenda and Maria Luisa Sturani, in *Geotema*, 71, a. XXVII (2023); Paola Pressenda, Maria Luisa Sturani, "Reti attraverso i confini: circolazione interstatale di cartografi e saperi cartografici in età moderna. Una proposta di ricerca", in *Officina cartografica. Materiali di studio*, ed. by Carlo Alberto Gemignani, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2017, pp. 58-70.

produced in his many roles – letters, reports, instruction manuals, essays, cartographies and surveys – initiatives and projects emerged that legitimised topography as a governmental knowledge bank to be drawn from for war and civil administration alike. The *ingénieurs géographes* designed projects that merged competence and purpose, and they were tasked with creating large-scale topographic maps that had the goal of achieving a "universal geodesic network" that could connect central and northern Italy to France (and in keeping with France's imperialistic ambitions, even the rest of Europe).

Furthermore, thanks to the cataloguing and statistical descriptions collected from the reports that accompanied the explorations and cartographic expressions, the military geography of these years was configured as all-encompassing knowledge.[45] By reconstructing in part the career of Simon Pierre Brossier, one of the major players in the renewal of topographical services between the late 18th and early 19th centuries, it has been possible to highlight his participation in the reorganisation of French and European topography through his support of the activities of the documentation collection and storage and topographical corps that were established in northern Italy. They brought about a quantum leap in the quality of maps as instruments of knowledge and control of the territory.

45. The military engineers authored a vast corpus of texts, such as reports and topographic dictionaries, that contributed to the establishment of modern statistics and to the work of Napoleonic prefects. See especially: Marie-Nöe Bourguet, "Dal diverso all'uniforme: le pratiche descrittive nella statistica dipartimentale napoleonica", *Quaderni storici*, 55 (1984), pp. 193-230; Marie-Nöel Bourguet, "L'inchiesta e il territorio: la statistica dipartimentale nel periodo napoleonico", in Chabrol De Volvic, *Statistica del Dipartimento di Montenotte*, ed. by Giovanni Assereto, Savona, Sabatelli, 1994, pp. 39-63.

Paolo Conte

Knowledge Beyond Borders: The Case of Italian Doctors in Napoleonic France*

1. *Introduction*

In March 1816, the Minister of the Interior, Vincent-Marie de Vaublanc, wrote to his colleague in the Office of Foreign Affairs, Armand-Emmanuel de Richelieu, urging him to approach the government in Rome to request payment for expenses incurred by the veterinary school in Lyon for two citizens of the Papal States, Carocci and Menicucci. Exactly five years earlier, these two individuals had attended lectures at the French school, received their degrees and returned home. Their stay in Lyon was part of a scientific exchange program promoted by the previous imperial government to foster the dissemination of new medical skills throughout the départements of the peninsula. Their studies had been made possible through the financial support of the prefectures of their home regions: "one was funded by the former département of Rome and the other by the former département of Trasimène".[1] However, at the time, particularly for areas as geographically distant as the southern départements of the peninsula, the payment process was prone to delays. As a result, it was only in January 1814 that the prefects of Rome, Camille de Tournon, and Trasimène, Antoine Roederer, were instructed "to transfer these funds to the school's account". Nevertheless, shortly afterward, "unfolding events" (that is, the collapse of the Empire and the subsequent dismantling of the prefectures throughout the peninsula, which ceased to be French départements) prevented the payment from being made. As a result, the veterinary school's accountant never received the money owed, neither that spring nor at any later time.

For this very reason, the newly restored Bourbon government in France asked the reinstated papal government in Rome to take responsibility for the outstanding debt - especially considering that the two students had since returned home, allowing those territories to benefit from the medical expertise they had acquired abroad. However, Rome's reaction was far from positive. Just a few weeks later, the French chargé d'affaires, Pierre Blacas, relayed the reply he had

* We wish to recognise Manuel Romero for his translation of this essay.

1. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (henceforth AMAE), Affaires diverses politiques, Rome, cart. 1, Letter from Minister Viénot de Vaublanc to Minister Richelieu (Paris, 18 March 1816).

received from Cardinal Ercole Consalvi, emphasising that it was so "terse and unhelpful" that there was little hope of resolving the issue favourably:[2]

> The undersigned, having presented Your Excellency's note to His Holiness, has been instructed to respond that the Papal Government has no obligation to pay such a debt. It has not succeeded the former French government, which occupied Rome, but has instead regained possession of its territories, which had been taken from it. Consequently, it does not assume any financial obligations incurred by the government that had invaded it. If Carocci and Menicucci received an education, that is a personal benefit to them, but this does not impose any duty on the Papal Government to cover the costs of their training, especially since it was not the one that sent them to Lyon in the first place.[3]

Although a relatively minor incident in and of itself, it reveals the profound impact that the institutional changes brought about by the fall of the Empire had on scientific exchanges between France and the various states of the "Italian sphere". By 1816, the governments of the Restoration were no longer interested in sponsoring periods of study abroad that had been designed to train scientific personnel for work back home, nor were they willing to seek mediated solutions to address issues they had inherited from the previous administration. Earlier, Napoleonic policy exhibited altogether different aims. In fact, for the first fifteen years of the century, the French administrative and military presence on the peninsula had fostered a spirit of exchange on both sides of the Alps – a trend that was evident not only in the political and commercial sphere but also in the realm of scientific knowledge.

In this regard, medicine, in particular, was one of the most affected disciplines. On one hand – as illustrated by the example already mentioned – the French authorities actively welcomed young Italian students to France, aiming to enhance their training at the country's top local schools and, in turn, to spread the modern techniques they had acquired during their studies abroad. On the other hand – and this is the case that we will mainly focus on in this essay – France had, from the very start of the century, become home to men who were forced into exile for political reasons but who soon proved invaluable to their new communities thanks to their scientific expertise. Although this expertise sometimes sparked conflict and feelings of jealousy, it eventually played a crucial role in helping these exiles integrate into their new country.[4] In fact, since the Consular Period, several exiled physicians in southeastern French cities had managed to win the support of the local population, even laying the groundwork for an important national law in 1803 that reorganised the practice of medicine by making use of foreign professionals. Meanwhile, in Paris, the younger exiles continued their education by attending lectures at the most prestigious medical schools of the time, while the more experienced physicians advanced their careers by introducing innovative

2. AMAE, Affaires diverses politiques, Rome, cart. 1, Letter from Ambassador Blacas to Minister Richelieu (Rome, 2 May 1816).

3. AMAE, Affaires diverses politiques, Rome, cart. 1, Letter from Cardinal Consalvi to Ambassador Blacas (Rome, 27 April 1816).

4. For information about political exile during that period, see Anna Maria Rao, *Esuli. L'emigrazione politica italiana in Francia (1792-1802)*, Naples, Guida, 1992.

healthcare techniques. As Fabio D'Angelo has noted, political exile thus came to be seen "not only as a time of hardship and separation from one's homeland, but also as an opportunity for education and professional growth".[5]

By analysing documents related to Italian doctors kept in the F/8 (*Police sanitaire*) collection at the Archives Nationales de France, this study delves into the nature and impact of a cross-Alpine exchange of knowledge that was driven by political factors. These factors were not only imposed "from above", that is, through the cultural strategies elaborated during the Napoleonic period, but they were also generated "from below" through the forced exile of individuals following their participation in the revolutionary events of the Three-Year Republican Period (1796-1799). Therefore, this research seeks to explore how, first under the Consulate and later during the Empire, this circulation of knowledge reshaped the concept of the "Italian sphere", which especially during the years of its contact with Napoleonic France, took on characteristics and boundaries that were markedly different – and much broader – than those rigidly defined by national borders.[6] In short, this relocation allowed many men from the peninsula to showcase their medical expertise in a new national context, and the subsequent scientific exchanges ultimately influenced the spread of knowledge on both sides of the Alps.

2. *Exiles in Bourg-en-Bresse at the dawn of the century*

As is well known, beginning in the spring of 1800 many of the Italian refugees who had fled to France following the collapse of the "Sister Republics" the previous year were directed to Bourg-en-Bresse, where a recruitment centre was established for the Italian Legion, a unit meant to support renewed military operations on the southern front.[7] Less widely known, however, is that even after France's victorious return to the Italian peninsula, confirmed following the battle of Marengo on 14 June, several of these men prolonged their stay in the département of Ain. Many were doctors who had originally travelled to Bourg-en-Bresse with the intention of joining the Italian Legion as medical inspectors. However, when their qualifications were not recognised within the corps, they chose to stay in France rather than cross the Alps as ordinary soldiers. This group was largely composed of southerners, many of whom had studied medicine in Naples in the early 1790s. There, they attended the lectures of Domenico Cirillo, a prominent figure who inspired the

5. Fabio D'Angelo, *Dal Regno di Napoli alla Francia. Viaggi ed esilio tra Sette e Ottocento*, Naples, Libreria Dante & Descartes, 2018, pp. 32-33.

6. On the regulation of science in Napoleonic Italy (particularly in the Kingdom of Italy), cf. *Istituzioni e cultura in età napoleonica*, ed. by Elena Brambilla, Carlo Capra and Aurora Scotti, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2008, pp. 253-340.

7. Katia Visconti, "A Patriotic School: The Recruitment of the Italian Legion in France, 1799-1800", in *Republics at War, 1776-1840: Revolutions, Conflicts and Geopolitics in Europe and in the Atlantic World*, ed. by Pierre Serna, Antonino De Francesco and Judith Miller, New York, Palgrave, 2013, pp. 149-164.

kingdom's youngest generation of scholars to engage in politics – before he was sent to the gallows by the Bourbons for his role in the Republic of 1799.[8] These medical professionals soon found economic independence in southeastern France, allowing them to forgo governmental assistance and evade consular orders instructing them to leave. While they faced considerable hostility from French doctors, who immediately saw them as unwelcome competitors, local residents took a far more favourable view, pleased to have access to medical professionals who were proving their worth in the community.

Thus, even the local prefect could not deny that the accusations levelled against these Italian doctors were not backed up by evidence and were driven, for the most part, by the jealousy of the local doctors. On the one hand, he acknowledged that "the health officers of the city of Bourg are strongly advocating for the removal of these doctors, whom they accuse of ignorance and quackery". On the other, he also noted that "a great number of patients treated by these foreign doctors praise their skills and are demanding that they be allowed to remain in France". In his view, between the two opposing accounts, the only reasonable choice was to accept the latter, which he believed carried "greater weight in the scales of justice than the claims of the health officers, whose protest, it is fair to suspect, was driven by jealousy and professional rivalry".[9]

These cases are incredibly important because they demonstrate how, thanks to the scientific expertise they had acquired years earlier at home, those who emigrated to France for political reasons were not only frequently invited to stay by the local population but were also a valuable asset to their host country – far, in fact, from being merely a source of disorder, as some claimed.

A similar situation also unfolded in the neighbouring département of Mont-Blanc, where the Neapolitan Matteo Vasta had settled with his compatriot Agostino Pecchia – like him, a republican exile, but a professor of mathematics by profession. The two had taken refuge in the small town of La Chambre in the spring of 1800 after health issues prevented them from reaching Bourg-en-Bresse to enlist in the Italian Legion. In the summer of 1801, when the subprefecture of the département was tasked with evaluating their conduct in response to their request for residency, officials gathered the necessary information and could only speak highly of them, recognising the positive contributions they had made to the area. Vasta, in particular, received glowing praise. Authorities reported that "his extensive knowledge in the field of medicine has made him widely sought

8. On the presence of Neapolitan doctors in France during the first two decades of the century, see Fabio D'Angelo, "Les hommes de science napolitains en exil en France, des passeurs scientifiques et politiques (1799-1820)", *Revue d'histoire du XIX^e siècle*, 53 (2016), pp. 39-57; Fabio D'Angelo, "Ingegneri napoletani a Parigi", in *La circolazione dei saperi scientifici tra Napoli e l'Europa nel XVIII secolo*, ed. by Roberto Mazzola, Naples, Diogene, 2013, pp. 57-77. On Cirillo's role in Naples during the revolutionary years, cf. Roberto Zaugg, Andrea Graf, "Guerres napoléoniennes, savoirs médicaux, anthropologie raciale. Le médecin militaire Antonio Savaresi entre Égypte, Caraïbes et Italie", *Histoire, médecine et santé*, 10 (2016), pp. 17-43.

9. Archives Nationales de France (henceforth ANF), F/7, cart. 7809, dr. 5, Report from the Prefect of Ain to Minister Fouché (Bourg-en-Bresse, n.d.).

after, and not a day goes by without humanity benefiting from the care he so generously provides". They further noted that "even the most serious illnesses yield to his treatments, and both the poor and the wealthy benefit from his aid". Thus, his activities in the region were considered not only formally permissible, given that the order to leave, which he evaded, had not been issued on the basis of his political views (in fact, they were described as being fully "in favour of the government"), but also practically essential. Removing him would deprive the local community of the medical expertise and care that only a professional of his calibre could provide. So, the author of the report did not hide his hope of "keeping in the arrondissement a man who has become indispensable due to his knowledge," emphasising that "the continuation of his stay in this region […] is being urgently requested by all the inhabitants of his canton".[10]

Among the physicians working in the département of Ain was the Apulian Francesco Pavoni. Born in Noci in 1770, he earned his medical degree from the University of Naples, where he practised medicine throughout the latter half of the 1790s, including during the republican period of 1799. According to one of his later accounts, during those turbulent months, he provided "the services that humanity compelled him to give to the French sick or wounded".[11] It was precisely his medical work during this violent republican period that forced him to flee to France when the Bourbon monarchy was restored in Naples. Once in France, he was sent to Dijon upon the formation of the Italian Legion. However, his prolonged stay across the Alps was far from profitless, as he managed to earn widespread recognition in civilian life and achieve a degree of financial stability. For this reason, with a sense of satisfaction, he applied for residency, emphasising that he had long since "settled in Bourg, where his work and challenging surgeries had earned him the trust [of the community] and secured his livelihood without becoming a burden on the government".[12]

Thus, despite some initial difficulties and a hostile reception from local doctors, Pavoni's experience working in France was far from unpleasant. On the contrary, it immediately offered him a promising new future. Especially for someone like him – coming from the Kingdom of Naples, where Bourbon repression in the early years of the century made returning home impossible – living in a country that provided political and economic stability naturally led him to consider making his stay permanent. In fact, by 1801, he had already taken the civic oath before the Municipality of Bourg-en-Bresse, formally declaring his intention to "acquire the status of a French citizen". The following year, he finally attained the long-awaited reunion with his family, successfully bringing his wife and children to France – loved ones he had been forced to leave behind in Naples during his hurried escape in the summer of 1799. Then, in 1803, he formally petitioned the consular government to recognise the degree he had earned in Italy so he could continue practising

10. ANF, F/7, cart. 7809, dr. 5, Letter from the Secretary of the Prefecture to the Prefect of Mont-Blanc (Chambéry, 7 Thermidor, Year IX: 26 August 1801).

11. ANF, F/8, cart. 162, dr. Pavoni.

12. ANF, F/7, cart. 7809, dr. 5, Letter from Pavoni to Minister Fouché (Bourg-en-Bresse, n.d.).

medicine, given that a new law passed that March required him to "be affiliated with one of the three existing medical schools in order to hold the title of doctor, as the one he obtained from the University of Naples was not valid in France".[13]

At this point, it behooves us to examine this law more closely, as it had a significant impact on the fates of those who, like Pavoni and others, were relying entirely on their scientific expertise to turn what had begun as exile into a stable and fulfilling professional career.

3. *The law of 1803 and its impact on Italian healthcare professionals*

On 19 Ventôse, Year XI (10 March 1803), at the initiative of the First Consul, Paris officially approved the *Loi relative à l'exercice de la médecine*, a law aimed at regulating the practice of medicine in France. To this end, the law also addressed the more specific issue of foreign healthcare professionals – men who had indeed proven themselves to be useful and qualified in those early years of the century but who had obtained their credentials abroad. This fact alone would lead to heated disputes with local doctors. The law stipulated that, starting in September of that year, "no one may enter the profession of physician, surgeon or health officer without undergoing an examination and being formally admitted as prescribed by this law". At the same time, Article 4 allowed the government, after due evaluation of credentials submitted by petitioners, "to grant a foreign-trained physician or surgeon who graduated from a foreign university the right to practice medicine or surgery within the Republic".[14]

As part of Napoleon's broader policy to establish a more structured regulation of the medical profession, a decision was made – in consideration of both the growing number of foreign practitioners and the skills they had demonstrated – to allow foreign doctors to enter the French healthcare system. This was to be done by granting government institutions the authority to recognise medical qualifications obtained abroad.[15] This approach offered a dual advantage: it maintained state control over who could enter the profession while also preventing potential conflicts with local practitioners, whose objections would be rendered meaningless in the face of official authorisation. Napoleon's administration aimed to make the presence of foreign doctors beneficial, both by acknowledging their expertise and by ensuring oversight of their qualifications and professional conduct in France. More broadly, this reflected Napoleon's ongoing policy of welcoming skilled and potentially valuable foreign professionals, but always on the condition that their residency in France was tied to their work.[16]

13. ANF, F/8, cart. 162, dr. Pavoni.

14. *Bulletin des Lois*, n. 156, "Loi relative à l'exercice de la médecine", 19 Ventôse, Year XI (10 March 1803).

15. For the medium- to long-term consequences of that law in France, see Jacques Léonard, *Les médecins de l'Ouest au XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Champion, 1978.

16. Pierre Moulinier, *Les étudiants étrangers à Paris au XIX^e siècle. Migrations et formation des élites*, Rennes, Pur, 2012.

In practice, this regulation allowed Italian physicians to establish their careers in France. At this point, those who did not wish to take the necessary medical exams at French universities in order to practice in their new country of residence had to secure prior government authorisation. This authorisation certified the validity and equivalency of their foreign medical degree, enabling them to continue practising medicine. As a result, particularly in the final months of the Consulate, the Ministry of the Interior was inundated with requests for the recognition of foreign degrees – which at this point had become indispensable for practising medicine in France.

It should be noted that while medical qualifications and university credentials were certainly the primary concern in these applications, one's recent political history could also work to an applicant's advantage. For instance, in February 1804 the Neapolitan Pasquale Fasini successfully had his degree from the Naples School of Medicine recognised in Strasbourg, partly due to the fact that he had "taken refuge in France after the Revolution of 1799". In the summer of the following year – when the Empire had already been declared – the Piedmontese Gioacchino Selicorni sought exemption from the required exams, deliberately mentioning that "as a surgeon, since the first arrival of the French in Piedmont, I have treated and cared for a great number of soldiers of all ranks who fell ill while travelling, particularly during the time of the Battle of Marengo".[17] A similar case was that of the Calabrian Giovanni Bianchi: originally from Catanzaro but a graduate of the Salerno School of Medicine, he applied for the authorisation to practice medicine from the city of Tours, arguing that he had "particular rights to this privilege due to his extensive knowledge and experience in the field of medicine, […] which he had successfully applied in the service of the French armies in Italy".[18]

Another Calabrian doctor who had studied in Salerno before arriving in France as part of the 1799 wave of exiles was Antonio Pitaro. After initially staying in Marseille and Lyon, he eventually settled in Paris. Though it took a few more years, in October 1808 he was granted the right to "practice medicine within the territory of the French Empire" by a decree issued by Napoleon from Erfurt, where he was then meeting with Tsar Alexander I of Russia. In this case, several factors played a key role in securing the decision: Pitaro's publication on galvanism, which had been printed in Paris three years earlier,[19] his numerous affiliations with French scientific societies[20] and, perhaps most importantly, his connections within political and military circles. It was no coincidence that the application of Antonio Pitaro, a member of the Masonic lodge *Les élèves de*

17. ANF, F/8, cart. 155, dr. Pascal Fasini; cart. 165, dr. Joachim Selicorni.

18. ANF, F/8, cart. 150, dr. Bianchi.

19. Antonio Pitaro, *Parallèle physico-chimique entre le calorique, la lumière, l'électricité, le magnétisme, le galvanisme animal et le galvanisme métallique, ou Introduction à la théorologie galvanique*, Paris, Giguet-Michaud, 1805.

20. According to the title page of his work, Pitaro was a "Member of the [following] Societies: Galvanique, Recherches physiques, Médicale d'Emulation, Médecine pratique, the Société Impériale d'Agriculture de la Seine, and other learned societies".

Minerve since 1803,[21] was backed by influential figures in French public life, such as General André Masséna and Senator Louis Rigal, who both took a keen interest in his professional future and spoke highly of him.[22]

In short, the political activities that years ago had forced these men into exile in France were still, in many ways, seen as credentials in their favour. Of course, by the early years of the new century, these past activities needed to be accompanied – if not outright replaced – first and foremost by official documentation proving their scientific qualifications, as well as by evidence of their integration into local society, demonstrating their acceptance of the new Napoleonic order. Nevertheless, the fact is that for both the individual refugees who had successfully established medical careers in France and the local institutions eager to benefit from the skilled professionals in their midst, this past political militancy was hardly seen as an obstacle to their medical practice. If anything, it remained a valuable asset.

Beyond the civilian sphere, Italian doctors also had a strong presence in the military. Apart from serving in various campaigns across Europe, they were primarily stationed in frontier regions and coastal cities where military headquarters and field hospitals were gradually established. In fact, a career as a military doctor offered several advantages. On one hand, it allowed them to work within French institutions, effectively resolving any salary-related issues from the outset. On the other, it provided an opportunity to serve in the army, not as ordinary soldiers, but in positions of greater responsibility – roles that, among other things, allowed them to put their years of study and hands-on experience to meaningful use.

This was the case for the Piedmontese pharmacist Domenico Pittarelli and the surgeon Giuseppe Salvaggio from the Kingdom of Italy. Pittarelli, with the support of his compatriot in Paris Roata – who, in 1809, wrote to the Minister of War, Henri-Jacques Clarke, recommending him as "infinitely more useful to the Army as a pharmacist than as a mere soldier" – successfully leveraged his credentials and was assigned to the hospital in La Rochelle, where three years later he applied for and obtained "the position of apothecaire in a military hospital of the Empire".[23] Salvaggio, stationed in Châlons-sur-Marne, was granted the right to practice surgery in July 1813, thanks largely to his military background. In his application, he highlighted that "during the Spanish Revolution, he served that power as a senior surgeon".[24]

In short, the 1803 law – designed to reform the practice of medicine without precluding the contributions of foreign professionals already working in France – further solidified the presence of Italian doctors in the country. This was especially true for those who had also demonstrated political alignment with France.

21. D'Angelo, *Dal Regno di Napoli alla Francia*, p. 147.
22. ANF, F/8, cart. 162, dr. Pitaro.
23. Archives du Ministere de la Guerre, Shat, 3/YG, dr. 27476.
24. ANF, F/8, cart. 165, dr. Joseph Salvaggio.

4. *From training in Paris to the proposal of new medical techniques*

While Italian doctors in France were primarily active in the provincial areas of the country, Paris nevertheless played a central role in this context. Indeed, at the time, the city had become the undisputed epicentre of continental Europe – not only politically, but also culturally and scientifically.[25] In the early years of the century, many Italian refugees who had initially settled in southeastern cities like Marseille, Grenoble and Chambéry eventually gravitated toward the capital. During the Napoleonic era, Paris continued to attract a steady influx of Italians eager to take advantage of the city's professional opportunities and vibrant scientific scene.

Thus, the most prestigious institutions in Paris served a dual purpose. On one hand, they were known as places where one could advance one's medical education by learning the most cutting-edge techniques of the time. On the other, they provided a stage where emigrants could showcase the expertise they had acquired in their home countries. For instance, as early as the spring of 1800, the Piedmontese exile Michele Buniva became fully integrated into French society in Paris after first establishing himself in the country's border areas. After being "hired by the Lycée de Grenoble" and later recognised as a member of Lyon's "Sociétés Savantes", he secured a teaching position at the prestigious veterinary school of Maison d'Alfort, where he was granted "permission to teach courses".[26] At another renowned scientific institution, the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, the Apulian scholar Matteo Tondi secured a position as an assistant naturalist. This role, which he later carried out working alongside some of the era's most prominent mineralogists, such as Déodat de Dolomieu and René Just Haüy, would allow him to legally remain in Paris.[27] A similar path was taken by the Neapolitan Nicola Basti, one of the republican exiles of 1799. Quick to take advantage of his stay in Paris, he pursued scientific endeavours, attending lectures at the institute for deaf-mutes led by Abbé Cucurron Sicard. There, he applied and was granted admission "with the hope of spreading this method in Italy, where it is still largely unknown".[28]

At the same time, building on the positive contributions of exiles who had arrived at the turn of the century, a less politically-driven wave of emigration was also taking shape in Paris. In the years that followed, individuals crossed the Alps with the specific goal of refining their skills. For instance, Ignazio Cristini from Cuneo, after earning his license to practice surgery at the University of Turin, decided to move to the French capital, where he "resumed his surgical studies". Over the next two years he attended "all the courses offered by the medical school,

25. Philip Mansel, *Paris, capitale de l'Europe, 1814-1852*, Paris, Perrin, 2013; Bruno Belhoste, *Paris savant: parcours et rencontres au temps des Lumières*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2011; Antoine Lilti, *Le Monde des salons. Sociabilité et mondanité à Paris au XVIII siècle*, Paris, Fayard, 2005.

26. ANF, F/7, cart. 10843/D, dr. Michel Buniva.

27. ANF, F/7, cart. 3327, dr. Tondy.

28. ANF, F/7, cart. 10843/A, dr. Nicolas Basti.

as well as several private lessons, including those taught by citizens Boyer and Tillage, professors at the same institution, along with courses on childbirth, women's diseases and paediatric illnesses".[29] A similar story can be told of Domenico Gagliardi from Naples. Although his family had supported the Republican cause in 1799, he arrived in Paris only in 1804 to "complete his studies".[30] Likewise, Gianni Bigeschi from Pistoia was "sent to Paris by his government in the autumn of 1807 to improve his skills in the practices of childbirth".[31]

This case is particularly noteworthy because it illustrates how the institutional changes of that period continued to impact, for better or for worse, the careers of these individuals. Bigeschi had arrived in Paris with a scholarship funded by the Kingdom of Etruria, aimed at enabling younger generations to learn new medical practices. However, in a sudden – and somewhat paradoxical – turn of events, his funding was suspended during his stay in Paris following Tuscany's annexation to the French Empire in the spring of 1808. Despite now technically being a "new French citizen", Bigeschi was forced to relinquish the funds he needed to continue his studies in Paris. Aware of the Empire's interest in promoting the circulation of new scientific knowledge within its peninsular départements, he quickly petitioned the Minister of the Interior, Emmanuel Crétet. Writing in the third person, he urged the reinstatement of his funding so that he could continue his education in what had now, at least formally, become his new homeland.

> The former Tuscan government had allocated him 88 francs per month to cover the costs of his stay in France, which was intended to last two years. However, following the political changes in Tuscany, these payments were suspended. In this situation, the petitioner humbly appeals to Your Excellency to issue the necessary orders to resume the payment of the allocated sum, without which he will be forced to abandon his studies – causing his homeland to lose the benefits of expertise in an art that remains largely unknown in Tuscany. He dares to hope all the more that Your Excellency will grant him this favour, given that Tuscany has now come under the fortunate rule of His Majesty the Emperor, whose unwavering commitment is to the advancement of useful sciences and the betterment of humanity.[32]

Moreover, in Paris, the youngest doctors who attended courses taught by the era's leading scientists had the opportunity to interact with both senior colleagues – who had arrived in France years before to receive medical training and had since established themselves through their professional expertise – and other emigrants specialising in the sciences who were in the capital only temporarily to protect their professional interests in the Italian départements. Among the latter was the Turinese pharmacist Giambattista Farinassi, who, in the summer of 1810, spent a few weeks at the Parisian home of his compatriot Roata while advocating before the Ministry of the Interior. His petition, submitted on behalf of pharmacists from the Po département who were dissatisfied with the French government's partial

29. ANF, F/8, cart. 151, dr. Ignace Christini.
30. ANF, F/7, cart. 6474, Information about the Neapolitan refugees.
31. ANF, F/8, cart. 150, dr. Jean Bigeschi.
32. ANF, F/8, cart. 150, dr. Jean Bigeschi, Bigeschi's Petition to Minister Crétet (Paris, 14 April 1808).

liberalisation of the means of entry into the profession, formally requested the "reinstatement of the exclusive right to practice pharmacy, limited to a specific number of pharmacists proportional to the population of each city".[33] Among those who had settled in France more permanently was Antonio Adamucci from Apulia. His training in France had taken place decades earlier, between 1786 and 1792, when he travelled to Paris at the expense of the Neapolitan government "to further advance his studies in medicine and surgery". After a brief return to his country, he later worked for the Bourbon government in Toulon, where, "having been of service to the French at that time, he did not return to his country and instead committed himself to France".[34] In the 1780s, Giuseppe Nicolò Forlenza from Basilicata also travelled to Paris for educational purposes. He soon specialised in ophthalmology and became one of the most successful Italian doctors in Napoleonic France, where he remained until his death in 1833.[35]

However, Forlenza struggled to consolidate his position during the consular period, when resistance to his innovative techniques impeded the progress of his career. A clear example of this was the negative evaluation he received in September 1800 from the directors of the École de Médecine in Paris, when he submitted a proposal to establish a "facility dedicated exclusively to the treatment of eye diseases". In his proposal, he requested to be named the facility's director and argued that such an institution would avoid "the shortcomings of other hospitals where various illnesses are indiscriminately grouped together". At stake was a new conception of the field of ophthalmology, because while Forlenza advocated for a specialised approach to treatment in this field, the scientists of the École de Médecine considered it unnecessary, believing that it would be better to dedicate new medical facilities "to the study of diseases that were less well-known than those affecting the eyes". In their view, a facility like the one proposed by the Italian physician "would have no real practical value".[36] As a result, the Italian ophthalmologist had no choice but to go out into the communities of northern France to provide care. This, however, provided him with the opportunity not only to test his scientific techniques, but also to offer direct assistance to patients who could not afford medical treatment.

5. *In conclusion*

The fact that individuals like Forlenza chose to extend their stay in France even during the period of the Restoration highlights the continued presence of a medical community that had long since established itself in the country. This trend, however, is not particularly surprising, as it involved professionals who, thanks to

33. ANF, F/8, cart. 155, dr. Jean Philippe Farinassi.

34. ANF, F/7, cart. 6474, Information about the Neapolitan refugees.

35. ANF, MC/ET/LXII, cart. 902, *Inventaire après décès de Joseph-Nicolas-Léonard-Blaise Forlenze* (12 August 1833).

36. ANF, F/15, cart. 150, Excerpt from the records of the deliberations of the Paris School of Medicine (Paris, 29 Fructidor, Year VIII: 17 September 1800).

their work in their "new" country of residence, had already attained a certain level of professional stability. After 1815, while the end of Napoleon's rule in Italy did little to boost scientific exchange between France and the various Italian states (as seen in the case of Carocci and Menicucci explored at the beginning of this essay), a significant number of medical practitioners already in France further cemented their presence there, aided by the substantial naturalisation efforts carried out by the Paris government.[37]

A particularly revealing case is that of the exiled physician Giuseppe Pennesi from Le Marche. After graduating from the University of Rome and aiding the French with the republicanisation of the city in 1798 as a health officer, he worked as a doctor in Nice during the Napoleonic era. In 1815, not only was he granted the right to continue practising medicine – thanks to the 1803 law that allowed the French government to accept foreign medical degrees –, but he also chose to relocate to Marseilles rather than remain in Nice, which had just been restored to the House of Savoy.[38] In Marseille, where he had built a "good reputation", he was officially granted French citizenship in 1817.[39]

In short, for Pennesi and many other Italian doctors, as well as for France's new ruling class, previous collaboration with the republican army was something they could finally put behind them. It was now far more important to showcase the scientific and professional expertise they had consistently displayed over the previous fifteen years. In other words, it was much better, for the men who had been working for many years in the territories of the hexagon, to secure their right to continue residing in the land beyond the Alps, and, for the restored institutions of the monarchy navigating a new geopolitical order after the fall of the Empire, to retain these medical professionals who were technically considered "foreign" once again, but who had long proved themselves to be well-integrated and valuable members of society.

37. For further information, see Paolo Conte, *Da esuli a francesi. Gli italiani in Francia durante l'età napoleonica (e oltre)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2024, pp. 327-363.

38. ANF, F/8, cart. 162, dr. Joseph Pennesi.

39. ANF, BB/11, cart. 128/A, dr. 8663.

Marcello Dinacci

The Faces of Power: Imagery as a Consensus-Building Tool*

From 1789 onward, political iconography played a major role in the European and Italian public sphere. This essay aims to study the evolution of the art world involved in producing portraits of rulers in Italy during the first Age of Revolution. Indeed, between 1789 and 1830 a process of deep reflection began on the role of the artist and the dynamics of managing consensus, in which visuals played an increasingly essential role. The intent here is thus to demonstrate how, through certain editorial practices, many typographers and artists were able to capitalise on their knowledge within this adverse political climate. Therefore, without the need to become *éngagés* like Jacques-Louis David, or Giuseppe Ceracchi in the Italian case,[1] the publishing industry progressively emerged as a privileged interlocutor for power. The first consequence of this process included overcoming the typically subordinate patronage-seeking relationship within the ancien régime. The image factory thus became an agent that was, if not political, at least capable of affirming authority and producing propaganda.

Examining portraiture is relevant for two reasons: first, portraits constitute how political personalities represent themselves; second, artists' particular stroke styles make it easier to recognise their authorship. The high percentage of signatures found at the bottom of engravings lies in sharp contrast with Italian political iconography in those years.

Attention should be paid, therefore, to printers and artists as specialists in the art of engraving and, consequently, as possessing increasingly important knowledge for state apparatuses, rather than seeing them as mere political instruments. The portrait itself makes it easy to determine who arranged the commission, since the client was typically the individual depicted in the work or the very publisher who assumed responsibility of the work destined for sale.[2]

* Our thanks to Jaclyn Taylor for translating this essay.

1. For Ceracchi the politician, see Renzo De Felice, *Italia giacobina*, Naples, Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1965, pp. 59-130. On the Ceracchi *affaire*, see Anna Maria Rao, *Esuli. L'emigrazione politica italiana in Francia, 1792-1802*, Naples, Guida, 1992, pp. 481-515. For a panorama comparing the man and the artist, see *Giuseppe Ceracchi: scultore giacobino 1751-1801*, Rome, Artemide, 1989.

2. Cyril Lécosse, "Portraits en série et reproduction mécanique des traits à l'âge des Lumières et sous la Révolution: entre idéal démocratique et stratégies commerciales", *Perspective*, 2 (2019), pp. 203-216.

In those years, Italy was a laboratory for editorial and iconological practices sourced from other European spaces and, in the case of portraiture, from Revolutionary France.[3] The need to show the new faces of politics was already a prevailing trend under the Directory; the perspective during those years was that not only political power should be recognisable, but so should its adversary. Thus, whether revolutionary or reactionary, politicans turned to artists for their portraits. At the same time, editors published the faces of democratic "fanatics" and the "monstrous" sovereigns of the ancien régime. Italy offers even more opportunities for study, owing to territorial differences. In nearly all cases, it is evident that the same artists and editors were working for one political faction or another across the Jacobin period of 1796-1799, the Napoleonic period and in times of war and peace in the early 19th century. This study focuses on two exemplary cases: Giuseppe Longhi, for his images of sovereigns in Milan, and the Lavy brothers in Turin, for their depictions on coins and commemorative medals.

In analysing these individuals, an effort has been made to highlight the watershed moment that the revolutionary period ushered in with regard to how visual propaganda concerning political "celebrities" was constructed.[4] Visual manipulation in those years constituted a fundamental skill, and political protagonists quickly understood its potential to engage the public. The personalities of the engraving and editorial world are an additional subject of research; though considered secondary in the historiography, they played a fundamental role when one considers their aforementioned public reach[5] and the post-1789 phenomenon of "découverte de la politique".[6]

1. *Portraiture in Europe at the end of the 18th century: issues and editorial developments*

Before confronting the question at the centre of this study, it is necessary to contextualise the issue and some sources. Artistic knowledge in the service of power is an interpretive category dating back to the very first figurative depictions in human history. Nevertheless, beginning in the 18th century there was reflection on the practice of art and its importance to the development of the individual,[7] and

3. Marcello Dinacci, *Iconopolitica. La battaglia delle immagini nelle rivoluzioni d'Italia (1789-1800)*, Rome, Viella, 2025; Christan-Marc Bosséno, Christophe Dhoyen, Michel Vovelle, *Immagini della libertà. L'Italia in rivoluzione, 1789-1799*, Rome, Editori Riuniti, 1988.

4. Antoine Lilti, *Figures publiques. L'invention de la célébrité (1750-1850)*, Paris, Fayard, 2014.

5. Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003; Pascal Verhoest, "Seventeenth-Century Pamphlets as Constituents of a Public Communications Space: A Historical Critique of Public Sphere Theory", *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36/1 (2019), pp. 47-62.

6. Michel Vovelle, *La découverte de la politique: géopolitique de la revolution française*, Paris, La Découverte, 1993.

7. Cf. "Image", in *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, Paris, 1766, vol. VIII, pp. 460-461; Jean-Baptiste Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la*

the process of freeing artists from relying on patronage had also begun. The French Revolution cut a new path: *academiés* and salons were swiftly reformed and in some cases closed if institutions clung to lingering dynamics of the ancien régime and limited the expressive freedom of artists.[8] Jacques-Louis David constitutes an exemplary case in this regard, and his life can be used as a touchstone of the political relevance that could be acquired from artistic knowledge during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Age.[9]

The historic question posed here does not find its roots in the production of monumental canvases worthy of art history textbooks, but rather in the productive undergrowth where, though great art by extension, it had considerable impact on Italian political communication in those years.[10] The loss of the patronage system in the modern age pushed many artists – one thinks not only of the aforementioned David, but also of Andrea Appiani in Italy – toward iconographic production that was no longer elitist. Still, attributing this change to a cause-effect relationship risks oversimplification, and it is therefore necessary to mention the principal actors during this change: editors and printers. In Italy above all they were the ones who quickly grasped the "émergence du politique"[11] in contemporary society and connected it to artists' needs and to increasingly efficient print production. Thus, they became actors in the political debate, because they were able to create a space in which to manoeuvre and profit from the relationship between information and rulers.

The case of Italy is also interesting for another reason: political values were subordinate to commercial value. Printers and artists profited from remaining anonymous (a topic we will return to later) by working for both sides of the political panorama.[12] This is not a negligible point, for it reveals, below the surface, the shift that was under way in those years as the field of illustration became aware of the value and mediatic power of its knowledge, which it now made available to the highest bidder.

In any event, within the nebula of expressive forms to consider when analysing the image as political practice in the Age of Revolution, portraiture in the form of etchings rather than canvases constitutes the focus of this study.

poésie et sur la peinture, 2 vols, Paris, chez Jean Mariette, 1719. For the case of Italy, see Girolamo Bocalosi, *Istituzioni democratiche per la rigenerazione del popolo italiano*, Milan, presso Raffaele Netti in Strada Nuova, 1797; Giovanni Antonio Ranza, in *L'Amico del Popolo*, Milan, II trimester, 11-12, 21 piovoso anno VI.

8. *Aux Armes Aux Arts ! Les Arts de la Révolutions, 1789-1799*, ed. by Philippe Bordes and Michel Régis, Paris, A. Biro, 1988.

9. Édouard Pommier, *L'art de la Liberté. Doctrines et débats de la Révolution française*, Paris, Gallimard, 1991.

10. Hubertus Kohle, Rolf Reichardt, *Visualizing the Revolution: Politics and Pictorial Arts in Late Eighteenth-Century France*, London, Reaktion Books, 2008.

11. Antoine De Baeque, *La caricature révolutionnaire*, Paris, Presses du CNRS, 1988, p. 15.

12. Christian-Marc Bosséno, "La guerre des estampes. Circulation des images et des thèmes iconographiques dans l'Italie des années 1789-1799", *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome*, 102/2 (1990), pp. 367-400.

Among them, indeed, were those visual documents through which even the masses could "discover" the protagonists of political events. Beyond loose-leaf prints and newspapers, portraits also circulated through the material medium of coins, which played a key role in guaranteeing the productive life of the country. Coins represented a piece of the state circulating throughout its territory; for this reason, the face depicted on the coin became the public face of the State and therefore, undoubtedly, the most familiar symbolic representation to citizens, second only to religious symbols.[13]

Portraits were unique with respect to other works of the time: nearly all were signed by the artists, unlike illustrated narratives, allegorical scenes or caricatures. In many cases, anonymity was a solution to avoid tying one's name to a given faction or, in the case of caricatures, to an art form considered vulgar. Generally speaking, it is easier to discover who illustrated and produced coins, owing to connections with mints of state, whether royal or national.

During the 18th century the use of pantographs[14] and physiognotraces[15] contributed to the significant progress made in the production of portraits. Across the first years of the 19th century these practices would continue to develop alongside technical advances in etching, beginning with the shift from xylography and chalcography to lithography, which arrived in Italy from Germany in 1804.

Desmoulins had already begun to insert engraved portraits into his own newspaper in 1789, with the intention of showing the faces of the most well-known individuals in France.[16] The same occurred at the beginning of the 19th century, when the most active among the French publishers of the period included portraits of the most important protagonists of the revolutionary period alongside constitutional texts within the third volume of the *Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française*.[17] These editions were widely circulated in Italy as well and, in many cases, were translated and printed in Italian,

13. Rebecca L. Spang, "Money, Art, and Representation: The Look and Sound of Money", in *A Cultural History of Money in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. by Christine A. Desan, London, Bloomsbury, 2021, pp. 121-142.

14. Barbara Maria Stafford, Frances Terpak, *Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen*, cat. exp. (Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2001-2002), Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2001, pp. 274-281.

15. Guillaume Mazeau, "La machine à tirer le portrait. Les usages du physionotraces sous la Révolution française", in *Corps et machines à l'âge industriel*, ed. by Laurence Guignard, Pascal Raggi and Étienne Thévenin, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2011, pp. 189-201.

16. Pierre Retat, "Forme et discours d'un journal révolutionnaire. Les Révolutions de Paris en 1789", in *L'Instrument périodique. La fonction de la presse au XVIIIe siècle*, ed. by Claude Labrousse and Pierre Retat, Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1985, pp. 139-178.

17. Here, reference is made to the third volume published in Paris by Jean-Daniel Auber beginning in 1798. Cf. Stéphane Roy, "Un panthéon des 'personnages qui ont éminemment marqué dans la Révolution soit en bien, soit en mal'. Les portraits des Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française", in *La Révolution par la gravure. Les Tableaux historiques de la Révolution française, une entreprise éditoriale d'information et sa diffusion en Europe (1791-1817)*, ed. by Alain Chevalier and Claudette Hould, exposition catalogue presented at the Musée de la Révolution française (Vizille) from 21 June to 4 November 2002, Paris, Réunion des musées nationaux, 2002, pp. 50-75.

though there was a certain predilection for the most famous: Marat, Lafayette, Louis XVI and Robespierre.

It was not until after Louis XVI's death that a change in the production of French Revolution imagery can be noted within Italy; until that point a web of censorship had functioned with some efficacy.[18] Censorship is a double-edged sword, however, and led to portraits of Louis XVI and his family being banned in Italy during the three-year Jacobin period. A decidedly unique production resulted: that of *portraits cachées ou séditieux* (hidden or seditious portraits).[19] Initially widespread in France, they found a lucrative market in Italy, thanks primarily to printers in Rome and print studios belonging to the Remondini family.[20]

The second half of the 18th century was the most profitable period for these typographers from Bassano del Grappa, who entered into open competition with the Venetian printers. The Remondinis had always been somewhat adverse to the Revolution, and their presses printed the bulk of counter-revolutionary materials during those years; they also imported and translated English and German engravings. The Zatta brothers – Giacomo and Antonio – and Gaetano Zancon, all operating in Venice and linked by education to the Remondinis, had been their principal competitors for some time. The latter remained aligned with the democrats at least until the Treaty of Campo Formio, which would produce an irreparable breach with the Venetian typographers and artists. This fracture would have significant repercussions on pro-Revolutionary print production.[21] Correspondence between the Remondinis and engravers and artists of the time is a source of incredible interest for reconstructing the social history of the latter during the Age of Revolution.[22]

Despite the scepticism of the Venetian editorial world, Bonaparte's presence in Italy guided and increased artistic production in Europe during that period.[23] The first engraved portrait of the young general was made by Giuseppe Longhi in 1796, based on Gros's early sketches for the painting celebrating Bonaparte's

18. Edoardo Tortarolo, *L'invenzione della libertà di stampa. Censura e scrittori nel Settecento*, Rome, Carocci, 2011; Patrizia Delpiano, *Liberi di scrivere. La battaglia per la stampa nell'età dei lumi*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2015.

19. A topic on which very little has been written. Hidden and seditious portraits represent a sector of loyalist production in which it was possible by carefully looking to make out the profiles of the sovereigns Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette among depictions of plants, decorative objects, etc. A typical title: *Quattro ritatti nascosti di singolare somiglianza degli infelici Re e Regina di Francia con appresso del Re e della Regina d'Inghilterra*, Rome, Agapito Franzetti at Tor Sanguigna, n.d., Civica Raccolta di Stampe "Achille Bertarelli" di Milano (henceforth RBM), A. S., p. 2-35.

20. Mario Infelise, *Remondini: un editore del Settecento*, Milan, Electa, 1990.

21. Michel Vovelle, *Il triennio rivoluzionario italiano visto dalla Francia 1796-1799*, Naples, Guida, 1999, pp. 33-41.

22. Biblioteca Civica di Bassano del Grappa (henceforth BCBG), *Epistolario Remondini*. Cf. Vittoria Gosen, *Incidere per i Remondini. Lavoro, denaro e vita nelle lettere degli incisori a un grande editore del '700*, Bassano del Grappa, Tassotti, 1999.

23. Achille Bertarelli, *Iconografia napoleonica, 1796-1799: ritratti di Bonaparte incisi in Italia ed all'estero da originali italiani con cinque tavole in rame*, Milan, Tip. Umberto Allegretti, 1903.

victory at Arcole.[24] The attention Bonaparte paid to artists on multiple occasions can be documented in his correspondence beginning with the Italian campaign: he financed Gros after Lodi,[25] as well as Longhi for the aforementioned portrait,[26] even restoring Antonio Canova's pension in 1800.[27] But this is still not quite the moment to analyse consensus-building strategies using imagery put into effect by Napoleon Bonaparte and his entourage in his roles as general, consul and emperor.[28] Early on, other generals copied the Corsican's iconography, circulating any number of engravings of their own faces. Longhi's case is one of the most interesting to follow, as it highlights both the opportunities and the artistic developments that characterised the Milanese context at that time.

2. *Giuseppe Longhi: master engraver of Napoleonic Milan*

Giuseppe Longhi, born in Monza in 1766, was on the path to a career in religion, but despite his father's seeming disapproval, he exited the seminary in 1786 after finishing his literary and classical studies. Four years later, in 1790, he was given a residency at the Academy of Brera, where he quickly embedded himself into a network of Milanese artists that would accompany him for his entire career, starting with Andrea Appiani and Faustino Anderloni. He quickly distinguished himself with his portraiture, so much so that "there was perhaps not a single occasion in Milan, from the departure of friends or relatives, to marriages between the well-off, in which he was not called upon to paint their portraits",[29] owing to some of his technical innovations. The turning point in his career came with the arrival of French troops to Milan, when "the demand for portraits increased to the point that he was forced to work day and night to satisfy all the commissions he was receiving",[30] so

24. Cf. Fernando Mazzocca, *L'ideale classico: arte in Italia tra neoclassicismo e romanticismo*, Milan, Neri Pozza, 2002.

25. Episode cited in Christian-Marc Bosséno, "'Je me vis dans l'histoire'. Bonaparte de Lodi à Arcole, généalogie d'une image de légende", *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 313 (1998), pp. 449-465: 452.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 457.

27. In a letter written from Milan dated 19 Thermidor Year V (using the Republican calendar), Bonaparte informed Canova of having given "the order that your pension be paid to you in full", thus confirming the annuity that the artist had been receiving from the Republic of Venice. BCBG, *Epistolario canoviano*, vol. V, letter from 6 August 1797, cited in Fernando Mazzocca, "Napoleone da liberatore a imperatore. L'immagine del sovrano e la promozione delle arti tra la prima campagna d'Italia e il Regno Italico", in *Napoleone e Milano tra realtà e mito. L'immagine di Napoleone da liberatore a imperatore*, ed. by Fernando Mazzocca, Milan, Skira, 2021, pp. 17-37: 17.

28. Recent studies have shown that during festive celebrations, the emperor's portrait was far from a spontaneous presence; in many cases, it was carefully staged. Marco Emanuele Omes *La festa di Napoleone. Sovranità, legittimità e sacralità nell'Europa napoleonica, 1799-1815*, Rome, Viella, 2023, in particular the chapter "I mille volti di Napoleone", pp. 111-149.

29. Francesco Longhena, *Notizie biografiche di Giuseppe Longhi raccolte e pubblicate da Francesco Longhena*, Milan, Regia Stamperia, 1831, p. 19.

30. *Ibid.*

much so that his biographer, Francesco Longhena, spoke of earnings of over 20,000 francs in the first year of the Republican regime.

Word of his reputation quickly reached Antoine-Jean Gros, who commissioned the engraved version of the portrait of General Bonaparte at the Battle of Arcole.[31] The creation of this portrait echoed widely throughout Europe, securing Longhi's definitive consecration within the Italian art world to the extent that he was nominated to lead the school of engraving at the Accademia di Brera at the mere age of thirty-two, following the tragic death of his master, Vincenzo Vangelisti. Soon his engraving was reprinted in Venice and Rome, where it was obtained and copied by one of the most active engravers within revolutionary circles: Tommaso Piroli.[32] The print published by Piroli is nearly an exact copy of Longhi's original and shows Gros's signature, followed by that of the Roman engraver, suggesting a commission similar to Longhi's – though no documentation of such an arrangement has been found.

Nonetheless, it was not the first portrait of Bonaparte made by Longhi. A previous drawing enjoyed an equally vast circulation in Italy during the three-year Jacobin period, helping us better understand the propagandistic function of portraiture in those years (see Figure 1). During the Italian Campaign of 1796, in fact, Longhi perceived Bonaparte's commercial potential and quickly delivered the profile of the young Corsican general to printers that historians still agree is the first portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte.[33] Unlike early paintings by his friend Appiani,[34] Longhi's engravings were quickly circulated as reproductions and renderings, forging ahead to define a new space for etched portraits. The Bonaparte affair in the 18th century is emblematic of how artists appropriated attempts by the powerful to exert control over media and, in this particular case, visual media.

Italian political iconography turned the young face of the general leading the *Armée d'Italie* into a votive image akin to religious ones produced for the masses. By 1797 it was already possible to find his image in an etching produced by Giuseppe Tonelli from Andrea Appiani's illustration entitled *La Pace e L'Amore sostengono un medaglione con il ritratto di Napoleone*.[35] A relevant detail is the presence of a banner with the letters "R. C.", referring to the Cisalpine Republic, which had

31. The official documents, with invitations and recommendations, are in: Archivio di Stato di Milano (henceforth ASMi), *Atti di Governo – Studi Parte Antica*, bb. 197-198.

32. RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. m. 46-47. On the Roman scene and the participation of Piroli in the Roman Republic of 1798-1799: *Quando Roma parlava francese. Feste e monumenti della prima Repubblica romana (1798-1799) nelle collezioni del Museo Napoleonico*, ed. by Marco Pupillo, Rome, Gangemi, 2016.

33. There has long been a debate surrounding a portrait created in 1785 and depicting a very young Bonaparte. Olivier Ihl, "Le premier portrait de Buonaparte. Sur l'histoire d'un 'faux'", *Circé. Histoire, Savoirs, Sociétés*, 7/2 (2015), online at http://www.revue-circe.uvsq.fr/le-premier-portrait-de-buonaparte-sur-lhistoire-dun-faux/. The first theory of its fraudulence appears in Pascal Dupuy, "Un faux portrait de Napoléon à la Malmaison", *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*, 35 (1914), pp. 121-136.

34. Francesco Leone, "I ritratti di Napoleone dipinti da Andrea Appiani. Un inedito e alcune precisazioni", *MDCCC 1800*, 12 (2023), pp. 233-244.

35. RBM, Ri. m. 46-18; Ri. m. 47-56.

Figure 1. Giuseppe Longhi, *Bozza ritratto Napoleone Bonaparte*, Milan, 1796, Wikipedia.

only recently been established within the territory of Lombardy. The portrait was thus connected with political events and assumed the role of sanctifying what was depicted. It was the lengthy siege of Mantua in 1796 that crystallised, in Italian iconography, the symbolic substitution of saints with portraits of generals, and in particular of Bonaparte. In the first few weeks of summer that same year, a variety of engravings were given to printers in which Bonaparte's face dominated not only maps and landscapes of the city but also broadsheets containing patriotic songs. The latter were put up for sale by the Milanese press belonging to brothers Carlo

Figure 2. *Chanson du Ça ira*/*Translation of Ça ira*, Milan, 1796, RBM, Ritratti, Ri. m. 46-4.

and Giuseppe Bolzani[36] and are among two of the most interesting documents with regard to mass political communication found in the entire three-year period

36. In 1788 they are listed as printers with Bottega in Porta Nuova, Contrada S. Margherita. Cf. *Elenco de' Stampatori e Librai esistenti in Milano, che, a tenore dell'Avviso de' 30 Aprile 1788 si sono notificati a questa R.I.P* (ASMi, *Commercio*, p.a., 244). Cited in Stefano Locatelli, *Edizioni teatrali nella Milano del Settecento. Per un dizionario bio-bibliografico dei librai e degli stampatori milanesi e annali tipografici dei testi drammatici pubblicati a Milano nel XVIII secolo*, Milan, I.S.U. Università Cattolica, 2007, p. 270.

(see Figure 2).[37] They contain written, visual and oral language, and in both cases portraits of Bonaparte are placed in the centre; though they lack any indication of authorship, they are in fact copies of Longhi's original.

To demonstrate the wide circulation of Longhi's portrait, it is even possible to find a copy within an etching printed by Gaetano Zancon, one of the most important printers in pro-revolutionary Venice during the two-year period from 1796 to 1797.[38] The illustrated allegorical vignette dated "25 Fiorile an V della R.F." (a spring date using the French Republican calendar) shows the lion of Saint Mark, submissive and bridled by the allegory of Liberty/Italian Democracy. Above, in the space canonically occupied by saints in modern votives, two cherubs appear supporting an oval containing the portrait of the general, with the Italianised caption "Buonaparte". In this case as well, Longhi goes unmentioned, but judging from the profile and the wardrobe, it is clearly a copy of the engraver from Brianza's work.

Despite the anonymous copies, Giuseppe Longhi built a position of relevance for himself on the political stage of late 18th-century Milan by producing a variety of well-known portraits, which earned for him some prestigious assignments as well.[39] In November of 1801 he was named among the elders of the Consulte de Lyon called together by the then-first Consul of the French Republic in order to discuss the organisation of the Cisalpine Republic, which within the first months of 1802 was proclaimed the Italian Republic. Returning to Milan in 1806, following a sojourn in Paris, he carried out two commissions that forever elevated his rank to that of privileged engraver with political power: the etching in French and Italian of the portrait of Napoleon I, King of Italy,[40] and the print of Andrea Appiani's *Fasti napoleonici* (*Napoleonic Fanfares*).[41] In the final years of the Napoleonic presence in Italy, he began to withdraw from political activity, participating in various editorial initiatives whose principal focus was portraiture. He became the primary contributor to the work *Ritratti e delle Vite di 60 illustri italiani* (*Portraits and Lives of 60 Famous Italians*), promoted by the editor Nicolò Bettoni and published in Padua in 1812, and he participated in the successive edition of 1820.[42]

The relevance he had already garnered in communicating power in Milan is demonstrated by the commission for a portrait of Austrian emperor Francis I that he received in 1816, once Lombardy and the Veneto were restored to his possession.[43]

37. *La resa di Mantova operata dal Generale Bonaparte. Canzone patriottica da cantarsi all'Albero della Libertà nella solennizzazione di sì fata vittoria*, RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. m. 46-3; *Chanson du Ça ira / Traduzione del Ça ira*, RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. m. 46-4.

38. RBM, A. S., m. 2-70.

39. Also related to powerful figures from the Italian Republic like Vice President Francesco Melzi, produced in 1802. RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. p. 235-14.

40. RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. m. 47-12. This was also quickly copied by Gaspare Cagnoni (RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. p. 207-18).

41. *Mito e storia nei "Fasti di Napoleone" di Andrea Appiani. La traduzione grafica di un ciclo pittorico scomparso*, ed. by Maria Elisa Tittoni, Rome, Leonardo Arte, 1986.

42. Initially, he engraved Napoleon with the iron crown and the viceroys of Italy, Eugène de Beauharnais and wife Augusta of Bavaria. Next, he dedicated himself to preeminent Italian figures of the past, from Michelangelo to the Doge Dandolo, and did not turn his nose up at protagonists from the Atlantic scene, like George Washington.

43. RBM, *Ritratti*, Ri. m. 59-9.

In this case, the print also enjoyed wide circulation within the territories of the Empire, but above all it depicted the upending of the relationship between power and artistic knowledge. Beyond creating a portrait of the new sovereign, Longhi remained fully in charge at the Academy of Brera until his death in 1830.

In the final years of his life he dedicated himself to compiling art treatises and participating in the ongoing debate about the status of engraving as an art form.[44] The most important of his works was the posthumously published *La calcografia propriamente detta ossia L'arte d'incidere in rame coll'acquaforte, col bulino e colla punta* (*Correct Chalcography, or: The Art of Engraving in Copper with Etching, Burin, and Drypoint*),[45] dedicated to the Empress of Austria, Caroline Augusta of Bavaria. The text discusses the moral legacy of engraving as an art form, its relationship with "great art" and its increasingly central role in press circulation. For Longhi, in fact, engraving was to be considered a "commercial art", which had no need "of commissions from others […] nor does it need the favour of rich citizens in order to function" as painting and sculpture did, but rather "takes upon itself the very work it judges most opportune". In order to profit, it was necessary to form relationships with "merchants who are motivated by their profits" and engaged in selling the prints that enjoy continental circulation, as Longhi was well aware, to such a degree that he could not merely refer to "one or a few cities, but to Europe in its entirety".[46] This circulation allowed for a democratisation of artistic knowledge, since it was no longer sympathy toward an artist or friendships that created fortune, but the artist's ability: "the greater or lesser sale of his works is a more reliable gauge of than his greater or lesser ability".[47] The conclusion of the chapter that defines engraving as a "liberal" art, "useful and commercial",[48] discusses a major gap in authors' rights, contributing to an ongoing debate in Italy about the intellectual property of works of art, for which it was always worth signing one's own prints, "since if the work is good, the creators run the risk of being cheated out of the honour they deserve; and if it is bad, others run the risk of being wrongly blamed for it".[49]

3. *The Lavy case: state art in Piedmont*

The second case study concerns the principal medium by which portraits were disseminated in 18th- and 19th- century Italy: coins and commemorative medals. The case of the Lavy family is the focus of our study. Since the mid-1700s, Carlo and Lorenzo Lavy oversaw the State of Turin's mint and the forging of official

44. Elena Bertinelli, Marco Fragonara, "Giuseppe Longhi e il dibattito sull'incisione agli inizi dell'Ottocento", *Rassegna di Studi e di Notizie*, 20 (1996), pp. 127-139.

45. Giuseppe Longhi, *La calcografia propriamente detta ossia L'arte d'incidere in rame coll'acqua-forte, col bulino e colla punta. Ragionamenti letti nelle adunanze dell'I. R. Istituto di scienze, lettere ed arti del Regno Lombardo-Veneto*, Milan, Stamperia Reale, 1830.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

48. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Figure 3. Lavy, Appiani, *Moneta restaurazione Repubblica cisalpina*, Turin, 1800, Wikipedia.

metals for the Kingdom of Sardinia.[50] In this case, much like our previous case, the extended revolutionary period obliged the second generation of the Lavy family to partially reinvent their own livelihood during various political upheavals.[51]

Carlo Michele Lavy and his brother Amedeo were born in 1765 and 1777, respectively, and were placed among the personnel of the Royal Mint of Turin quite early.[52] Carlo, the firstborn, also assumed the role of director from his father, Lorenzo, who died in 1789.[53] After having worked on some likenesses of the sovereign, Charles Emmanuel IV, upon the arrival of the French both brothers took the side of the Revolution, though with differing degrees of participation. Carlo Michele created a series of medals celebrating Napoleonic victories using Andrea Appiani's sketches.[54] He also collaborated with Appiani and his brother on minting the coin commemorating the restoration of the Cisalpine Republic in 1800 (see Figure 3).[55] The two sides showed Napoleon Bonaparte's profile with their inscription and, on the other side, a symbolic representation drawn by Appiani of Hercules helping the Cisalpine get back on its feet.

50. On minting coins in Turin: *Memorie di Torino: medaglie, gettoni e distintivi, 1706-1970*, ed. by Serafina Pennestrì, 2 vols, Rome, Istituto poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Libreria dello Stato, 2006.

51. *Cultura figurativa e architettonica negli Stati del re di Sardegna 1773-1861*, ed. by Enrico Castelnuovo and Marco Rosci, Turin, Stamperia artistica nazionale, 1980.

52. Giuseppe Assandria, "Una famiglia torinese di artisti. I Lavy", *Atti della Società piemontese di archeologia e belle arti*, 7 (1916), pp. 209-274; Alessandro Baudi di Vesme, *Schede Vesme. L'arte piemontese dal XVI al XVIII secolo*, vol. II, Turin, Società piemontese di archeologia e belle arti, 1966, pp. 610-623.

53. Assandria, *Una famiglia torinese di artisti*, p. 233.

54. In particular, the battles of Millesimo, Castiglione, Mantua and the storming of Trieste. Cf. *1797 Bonaparte a Verona*, ed. by Gian Paolo Marchi and Paola Marini, catalogue of the show held in Verona in 1997-1998, Venice, Marsilio, 1997.

55. https://www.lombardiabeniculturali.it/opere-arte/schede/M0250--00651/.

An important detail on this coin is the presence of the inscription "Lavy" at the base of Bonaparte's profile. The Lavy brothers tied the name of their own family to one of the most important commemorative medals of this phase of the Napoleonic consulate and aligned themselves with Longhi's theory of avoiding anonymous production, a practice which had predominated in 18th-century Italy.[56] The choice derived from the awareness of their role as interlocutors, rather than as instruments of the powerful, as they would demonstrate in the years that followed. Carlo Michele remained tied to the democratic faction until his death in 1813, having already ceded his role at the mint to his younger brother Amedeo in 1808.

The path Amedeo Lavy's life took is even better for describing the change in status that artists experienced during the period of the early Revolutionary Age. Like his brother, he worked at the Royal Mint of Turin, but he cultivated a passion for wax portraits, creating some for friends and family.[57] During the three-year Jacobin period he dedicated himself, alongside his brother, to some pro-Republican productions, except in 1799 when they miniated some portraits for the Savoyard state, and for General Suvorov. This was quickly followed by other French commissions, such as the one for General Masséna, and one of the most important coins minted within the peninsula during those years: the Marengo. This was a 20-franc gold coin minted in 1801 to celebrate the homonymous battle and, most importantly, it was the first coin to follow the decimal system, which would ultimately standardise the monetary production of the states within France's orbit.[58] That same year, Amedeo was admitted to the Accademia Subalpina di Storia e Belle Arti (Subalpine Academy of History and Fine Arts), in recognition of the importance he had already achieved. Nonetheless, he long complained about difficult relations with French institutions and the degree of subordination the Italian art world suffered with respect to France, enough that he would say, "not being a native Frenchman damaged me a great deal".[59]

In any case, the ability to move more freely within territories under French influence permitted him to travel quite a bit, primarily to Rome and Paris, where he established fruitful connections with the most important artists of the time, from David to Canova,[60] allowing him to receive a variety of commissions. In

56. Lodovica Braida, *L'autore assente. L'anonimato nell'editoria italiana del Settecento*, Bari-Roma, Laterza, 2019.

57. Baudi di Vesme, *Schede Vesme*, p. 610. Much of the information about the life of Amedeo Lavy is taken from an autobiographical manuscript contained in Giuseppe Assandria, *Una famiglia torinese di artisti*, Turin, Fratelli Bocca, 1916.

58. Cf. Aubin-Louis Millin, *Histoire métallique de Napoléon ou recueil des médailles et des monnaies qui ont été frappées depuis la première campagne de l'armée d'Italie jusqu'à son abdication en 1815*, London, J. Millinger, 1819; Stéphane Desrousseaux, *La monnaie en circulation en France sous Napoléon*, Paris, Éd. les Chevau-légers, 2012.

59. Baudi di Vesme, *Schede Vesme*, p. 611.

60. Vittorio Natale, "Ritratto di Canova eseguito da Amedeo Lavy", in *Arte di corte a Torino da Carlo Emanuele III a Carlo Felice*, ed. by Sandra Pinto, Turin, Editore Cassa di Risparmio di Torino, 1987, pp. 264-265.

Figure 4. Amedeo Lavy, *Moneta rientro Vittorio Emanuele I*, Turin, 1814, Wikipedia.

particular, after 1805 he was primarily occupied with busts and portraits in bas relief for friends, for the by-then Emperor Napoleon I, and even Pope Pius VII.[61]

The degree to which he participated in political art during the Napoleonic period would lead one to imagine his purging from the mint and the academic world once the Savoys were restored to power in 1814, as had happened during the first restoration in 1800.[62] However, quite to the contrary, in his manuscript he noted that, once restored, "H.M. King Victor Emmanuel immediately called upon me to make a portrait of him"[63] and his commemorative coin (Figure 4). Added to this commission were other celebratory medals for the king's restoration and the annexation of the Duchy of Genoa.[64] Amedeo Lavy stopped producing sculptures once and for all, returning to his family's business full time, which he himself described as more lucrative. Through this work for Victor Emmanuel and Charles Felix in 1821, he strengthened the relationship between his family and the Savoy state, though it was already clear that the balance was no longer tilted in the government's favour and that Lavy's abilities were nearly indispensable to whomever wished to mint coins in Piedmont. In 1822, he became professor of minting at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Torino (Turin Academy of Fine Arts),[65] and three years later he withdrew from political life and from Turin, while continuing to create medals, wax busts and portraits almost until his death at the age of nearly 87 in 1864.

61. Baudi di Vesme, *Schede Vesme*, pp. 611-612.

62. For a list of individuals pushed out of the academy, see Archivio di Stato di Torino, *Cerimoniali*, Cariche di Corte, Mazzo 1 d'addizione, 4 February 1800.

63. Baudi di Vesme, *Schede Vesme*, p. 612.

64. For an overview of Amedeo Lavy's output, visit https://numismatica-italiana.lamoneta.it/zecchieri/Amedeo%20Lavy.

65. ASTo, Sezione Corte, Materie economiche, Istruzione pubblica, *Accademia di Belle Arti e istituti relativi*, mazzo 1.

4. *Conclusion*

The reason engraved portraiture enjoyed such a large market can be explained by the new governing class's need to define itself as a legitimate power and literally introduce its own face. And yet, it should come as no surprise that revolutionaries would seek continuity and, in the particular case of generals, take inspiration from the monarchic symbolism of the ancién regime. The gap between it and the Age of Revolution is not particularly striking in this instance. Rather, the cases presented show that the real break is seen in the upheaval – or, at the very least, the reconfiguring – of the commission dynamic between artists and established powers. The commercial role of the press highlighted by Longhi in his treatise opens up a new path for political representation. The production of satire is the most flourishing sector, on its rise at the peak of the 1800s.[66] To understand this phenomenon, however, other artistic forms of expression should be considered in which the demand for individual liberty and intellectual property by those working in illustration can be seen. It is a perspective which upends the accusations of iconoclasm and artistic sterility often levelled against the revolutionary period at the turn of the 19th century.[67]

Within this landscape of transformation, when it came to managing consensus during the first phase of the Age of Revolutions, iconography played a central role since it was one of the privileged channels – if not an inescapable element – of public communication with subaltern and popular classes. This process relied broadly on the role of artists, elevating their social status. What followed set artists on the road to emancipation and to realising they were no longer instruments in the service of power, but owners of a repertoire of knowledge to be used for their own social, economic and political improvement. Italian artists and printers quickly appropriated this experience, introducing themselves as protagonists in the public sphere of both Europe and the Italian peninsula.

66. Bertrand Tillier, *Dérégler l'art moderne. De la caricature au caricatural*, Vanves, Editions Hazan, 2021.

67. *Iconoclasme et révolutions. De 1789 à nos jours*, ed. by Emmanuel Fureix, Ceyzérieu, Champ Vallon, 2014.

Marco Emanuele Omes

Health and Numbers: Smallpox Vaccination as Governmental Knowledge in Post-Napoleonic Italy*

1. *Doctors, arithmetic, political economy: a debate in the wake of Napoleon's fall*

In 1816, the essay *Della scoperta del vaccino politicamente considerata* was published in Pavia. Its author, Dr. Mauro Rusconi, was a former artillery captain in the Cisalpine army who earned a medical degree in 1806 and later became a teaching assistant in physiology and comparative anatomy under the guidance of Antonio Scarpa.[1] The work stands out as rather eclectic, not only within Rusconi's own body of research – he was best known for his studies in animal embryology – but also in relation to contemporary literature on smallpox vaccination. Rather than examining vaccination from a medical perspective, Rusconi chose to explore through the lens of political economy whether the vaccine's discovery would lead to population growth.[2] His call to set aside "any prejudice, whether in favour of or against this opinion", stated outright in the dedication to the reader, only thinly veiled his true aim: to refute, once and for all, the idea that the spread of Jennerian vaccination (a smallpox vaccination technique developed by Edward Jenner) contributed directly to demographic growth. This belief, whether explicitly stated or implied, had played a key role in the first fifteen years of the 19th century in legitimising the rise of vaccination as a pillar of a sweeping initiative to medicalise society. For this project to be fully realised, strong support from public authorities was required. Vaccination, therefore, needed to be framed as beneficial not only to individual and collective health but also to the interests of the state.

Rusconi clarified that his work was not intended to discredit vaccination, whose effectiveness in preventing smallpox he affirmed. Rather, his aim was to atone for his past pro-French leanings, not so much by attacking one of the key legacies of the Napoleonic political era, which had in any case been preserved through Austrian legislation,[3] but rather by challenging the late-18th-

* I would like to acknowledge Manuel Romero for translating this essay.

1. Maria Carla Garbarino, "Rusconi, Mauro", in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. LXXXIX (2017).

2. Mauro Rusconi, *Della scoperta del vaccino politicamente considerata*, Pavia, presso gli eredi di Pietro Galeazzi, 1816, p. 4.

3. Marco Emanuele Omes, "La vaccinazione antivaiolosa tra l'Età napoleonica e la Restaurazione: eredità, modelli, traiettorie di continuità e discontinuità", in *L'esperienza*

century philanthropic rhetoric of unbridled optimism and inevitable progress. According to Rusconi, this rhetoric was typical of those "philosophers living on the other side of the Alps" (the French) who were so eager to see population growth that they were willing to go to extreme lengths, including condemning the celibacy of priests and soldiers and unjustifiably expanding the reach of medical science. In their view, medicine should no longer focus solely on treating individual patients but should instead operate on society as a whole, working in close coordination with government authorities.[4] In short, Rusconi's essay, acknowledging the growing dominance of statistical and quantitative reasoning in the knowledge base of those engaged in both science and public affairs,[5] sought to curb the role that medicine could play in the development of the state without the involvement of other disciplines more easily "controllable" by the authorities themselves.

Indeed, the essay appeared to be a scholarly work – which was also evident from Rusconi's choice of a printer specialised in scientific and philosophical publications – whose primary aim was to challenge a widely accepted assumption in vaccination literature: the direct link between vaccination and population growth over the short, medium and long term. This connection was often supported by simple deductions that were frequently repeated in administrative and ministerial reports. For instance, since smallpox was typically fatal in one case out of seven, it was estimated that around 15% of vaccinated individuals were saved from near-certain death, given the highly contagious nature of the disease.[6] Less frequently, the correlation was based on complex probabilistic calculations that used mortality tables to estimate the likelihood of surviving or dying from smallpox at different ages, with or without inoculation. These analyses determined the benefits of vaccination in terms of increased life expectancy and the expansion of each age cohort.[7] The most systematic effort in this regard was

napoleonica in Italia: un bilancio storiografico, ed. by Stefano Levati, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2023, pp. 23-42.

4. Rusconi, *Della scoperta del vaccino*, pp. 81-82 and 103.

5. In 1816, the Habsburgs introduced courses on General European Statistics and Statistics of the Austrian Monarchy in the universities of the Kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia: Giovanni Favero, Ugo Trivellato, "La Statistica nell'Università di Padova: un percorso emblematico dalla Restaurazione all'età repubblicana", *Rivista di storia economica*, 27/1 (2011), pp. 21-59. For information about the role of this discipline in Habsburg public administration, see Wolfgang Göderle, "De l'empire des Habsbourg à l'État des fonctionnaires, Beamtenstaat (1815-1914)", *Histoire & Mesure*, 35/2 (2020), pp. 73-104.

6. Antonio Miglietta, the perpetual secretary of the Vaccination Institute of Naples, estimated that between 1808 and 1817, 280,033 children were vaccinated in the Kingdom, compared to 1,872,156 births. Believing smallpox to be nearly universal and fatal in 17% of cases, he calculated that 47,489 lives had been saved. At the same time, he suggested that a vast number – 270,769 children (representing 17% of those who remained unvaccinated during the decade) – had "likely […] perished from smallpox": *Cenni statistici su lo stato dell'esercizio vaccinico nel Regno di Napoli… estratti dal I° volume della Biblioteca vaccinica*, Naples, s.n., 1818.

7. On the emergence of political arithmetic in 18th-century England, see Peter Buck, "People Who Counted: Political Arithmetic in the Eighteenth Century", *Isis*, 73/1 (1982), pp. 28-45. For useful context on the evolution of a quantitative approach to medical and public

conducted in 1806 by the French mathematician Emmanuel-Étienne Duvillard de Durand. He estimated that, with the universal vaccination of all newborns in the country, annual deaths among individuals aged 0 to 18 could be reduced by a minimum of 7% and a maximum of 32%, with the greatest impact observed at around four years of age. This would have led to a 12.5% increase in *naissances civiles* – the point at which one "is born for the state", meaning the beginning of adulthood (16 years), when individuals become useful to society – and a projected population increase from 28 million to 48 million over 134 years.[8] The complexity of Duvillard's calculations, at least for those unfamiliar with probabilistic analysis and political arithmetic, was such that even Sacco – who relied almost exclusively on this study for Chapter XI of his famous *Trattato di vaccinazione* – was careful not to reproduce the mathematical operations and tables or verify the results. Instead, he was content to accept and repeat the findings without question, asserting that if the Kingdom of Italy followed the same trends projected for France, its population would grow from 7 to 12 million in just over a century.[9]

Rather than directly challenging such optimistic projections, or openly confronting a "towering figure" like Sacco, Rusconi took a different approach. He analysed infant mortality trends in Pavia and its suburb, Borgo Ticino, comparing data from the 1801-1806 period (before vaccination was introduced in the city) with the years from 1807-1815. He then compared his findings with those of Dr. Robert Watt, a professor at the University of Glasgow, who had conducted a similar study on the Scottish town between 1783 and 1813. In both cases, a decline in infant mortality was observed only in the urban area, while in the surrounding peri-urban zones – where the poorest populations were concentrated – mortality rates had even increased ever so slightly. Rusconi therefore concluded that vaccination could at most act as a catalyst for an already ongoing population increase but was not the driving force behind it. Instead, population growth depended primarily on the ability to materially support larger families. Otherwise, as seen in Borgo Ticino, children spared from smallpox would simply become a reserve of "excess offspring", ultimately doomed to perish once the balance between population and available resources could no longer be sustained. Guided by the ideas of Scottish economist James Steuart – whose mercantilist and protectionist teachings had been introduced

health issues, see *The Road to Medical Statistics*, ed. by Eileen Magnello and Anne Hardy, Amsterdam-New York, Rodopi, 2002; *Body Counts: Medical Quantification in Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, ed. by Gérard Jorland, Annick Opinel and George Weisz, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.

8. Emmanuel-Étienne Duvillard de Durand, *Analyse et tableaux de l'influence de la petite vérole sur la mortalité*, Paris, de l'Imprimerie Nationale, 1806. Regarding this scientist – who was far more focused on formulating a law of mortality than on capturing historical and demographic realities – and the limitations of his method, see Werner G. Jonckheere, "La table de mortalité de Duvillard", *Population*, 20/5 (1965), pp. 865-874; Giorgio Israel, "'Administrer c'est calculer': due matematici sociali nel declino dell'Età dei Lumi", *Bollettino di Storia delle Scienze Matematiche*, 16/2 (1996), pp. 241-314.

9. Luigi Sacco, *Trattato di vaccinazione*, Milan, dalla tipografia Mussi, 1809, pp. 167-171.

(and notably reinterpreted) at the University of Pavia by Giovanni Tamassia in the early 19th century[10] – Rusconi summarised his perspective in the following way. Since the size of a state's population depended on its available resources, never the other way around, and since vaccination could in no way alter the "economic-political state" (except by further driving down wages due to the increased availability of unskilled labour), neither Jenner's method nor any public health regulation could, in and of itself, drive population growth. True demographic growth, Rusconi argued, could only be achieved through strong government intervention aimed at developing new industries, which would reduce the proportion of agricultural products exported in exchange for finished goods and allow more resources to be used to sustain a growing population. This did not imply the need to abolish the inoculation campaigns promoted by Napoleonic governments but rather a significant reassessment of the ambitions and responsibilities of "public health policy writers". They were urged to refrain from addressing issues related to broader societal dynamics – matters reserved exclusively "for those who govern the State" – and instead focus on factors that directly affected individual health, such as ignorance, moral corruption and behaviours harmful to personal well-being.[11]

It may seem paradoxical that such views were espoused by a medical professional, but it is hardly surprising that they sparked heated debate among his own colleagues. The person who took it upon himself to dismantle Rusconi's work was the physician Enrico Acerbi, a contributor to the journal *Biblioteca Italiana*, who in the pages of the renowned periodical laid out his criticisms in three main points. First, he acknowledged that child mortality was "proportional to the prosperity and care provided by parents" – a factor that even Duvillard had completely overlooked in his probabilistic calculations. Nonetheless, he refused to accept that this was the only factor at play, or that the relationship between population and resources depended solely on how plentiful those resources were. Among the causes capable of upsetting the proper balance between population and resources, Acerbi listed "the type of land, the state of war or peace, public health policy, the morality of the people, and the ratio between urban dwellers and farmers, as well as between idle consumers and useful individuals".[12] In other words, he not only highlighted issues of resource distribution, the decline of agriculture and the reckless extravagance of luxury – reviving debates that had been popular since the late Enlightenment[13] – but also emphasised the impact of public health interventions on a state's economic and

10. Cecilia Carnino, "Giovanni Tamassia and the Early Italian Reception of Steuart's 'Principles of Political Economy'", in *The Economic Thought of James Steuart: First Economist of the Scottish Enlightenment*, ed. by José M. Menudo, Abingdon, Routledge, 2020, pp. 241-257.

11. Rusconi, *Della scoperta del vaccino*, pp. 52-53.

12. Enrico Acerbi, "Della scoperta del vaccino politicamente considerata, di Mauro Rusconi", *Biblioteca Italiana ossia Giornale di letteratura scienze ed arti*, vol. III, July-August-September 1816, pp. 126-140.

13. Cecilia Carnino, *Lusso e benessere nell'Italia del Settecento*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2014.

political landscape, thereby challenging not only Rusconi but also Thomas Robert Malthus.[14] In his view, both erred in believing that a drop in smallpox mortality could only lead to fewer marriages (and thus fewer future births) or to higher mortality among children and the elderly – the most vulnerable groups – due to other diseases and malnutrition.[15] In line with criticisms levelled at the British economist nearly thirty years later by the French hygienist François Mélier, Acerbi turned "public health policy" into a vital instrument of governance.[16] In doing so, he anticipated the development of a discourse on "public or political" medicine as a key empirical social science,[17] closely tied to political economy in its study of how two crucial elements for the state – population and resources – come into being, are allocated and eventually consumed.[18]

Secondly, although he acknowledged that up to that point no "accurate, well-reasoned calculations" existed to quantify precisely the impact of vaccination campaigns on demographic trends, Acerbi stressed a highly significant point. Drawing on data from a mid-18th-century dissertation defended at the University of Montpellier,[19] which demonstrated that "the probability of life increases up to a certain age as the years advance", he argued that if one of the most common causes of infant mortality (smallpox) were eliminated or at least substantially reduced, then life expectancy would improve not only in the period immediately after birth but also, as a consequence, in subsequent years.[20] Naturally, it was difficult to determine exactly to what extent, or over what timeframe, this might boost the population.[21] Nevertheless, this line of reasoning was critically important, as it

14. Regarding Malthus's views on public health policy and, conversely, how his ideas were received by medical professionals, see *Malthus, Medicine, & Morality: "Malthusianism" after 1798*, ed. by Brian Dolan, Amsterdam-Atlanta, Rodopi, 2000. Unfortunately, this volume does not consider the Italian context.

15. Acerbi was familiar with the famous *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798, later republished in a significantly expanded edition in 1803) through its French translation, *Essai sur le principe de population*, Paris, chez J. J. Paschoud, 1809. He specifically referred to vol. III, pp. 80-81 and 224. It is worth noting that Malthus, aware of the controversies surrounding his work, added an appendix as early as 1806 in which he defended his views while also openly supporting the increased use of vaccination (ibid., pp. 251-252).

16. *Politica e salute. Dalla polizia medica all'igiene*, ed. by Claudia Pancino, Bologna, Clueb, 2003.

17. Luc Berlivet, "L'exploitation statistique du social. Administrations, associations savantes et débats publics", in *Histoire des sciences et des savoirs*, ed. by Dominique Pestre, vol. II, Paris, Seuil, 2015, pp. 411-433.

18. William Coleman, "Medicine against Malthus: François Mélier on the Relation between Subsistence and Mortality (1843)", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 54/1 (1980), pp. 23-42.

19. Joseph Galtier, *De prognosi medica ex necrologis eruenda*, Monspelii, apud Augustinum-F. Rochard, 1762, p. 3. According to the author's calculations, average life expectancy rose from birth until about age 5 (reaching a peak of 38 years) before gradually declining to 30 years and 9 months by the time a person fully entered adulthood at age 20.

20. Acerbi, *Della scoperta*, p. 138.

21. Vaccination's role in reducing overall mortality rates in Europe during the early decades of the 19th century (and its subsequent effect on the population growth observed during that period) was demonstrated by Alexander J. Mercer, "Smallpox and Epidemiological-

revealed that even in Italy, after the Napoleonic era, people were growing more confident in identifying specific factors that could undermine life expectancy and in measuring their impact. This reflected a cultural climate characterised by a growing awareness that the laws of human mortality could not only be understood through the collaborative efforts of medicine, mathematical analysis and economics, but also altered for the good of humanity through the tools of public health policy.[22]

It is hardly surprising that this optimism and political-health program – which was based on a genuine epistemological revolution, namely the contested rise of a doctrine on the efficient causality of death[23] – would place smallpox vaccination at its centre, given the high hopes it had sparked from the moment it was empirically and theoretically codified. Nor is it surprising that the third critique Acerbi raised against Rusconi concerned the danger of shaking the public's faith in Jenner's vaccine innovation. Acerbi's rebuke exposed a sensitive point in vaccination policies and their accompanying triumphalist rhetoric. To combat vaccine hesitancy, efforts had always focused on downplaying the risks of inoculation[24] while using statistical data to "objectively" prove that any degree of hesitancy was unwarranted.[25] From that perspective, even a legitimate scientific critique like Rusconi's risked being "misinterpreted by the people, which is always fond of its superstitions", reigniting "its complaints regarding this sound public health policy initiative".[26] This was especially likely if the study's conclusions were oversimplified to the point of distortion (e.g., if vaccination did not lead to population growth, then it must not save lives). This is what prompted the harsh and unequivocal dismissal of Rusconi's essay.

The only one to speak out (albeit in vain) against this effort to silence any voice daring to depart from the prevailing triumphalist narrative on the social benefits of vaccination was an anonymous author who was almost certainly

Demographic Change in Europe: The Role of Vaccination", *Population Studies*, 39/2 (1985), pp. 287-307.

22. Anne M. Fagot, "Probabilities and Causes: On Life Tables, Causes of Death, and Etiological Diagnoses", in *Probabilistic Thinking, Thermodynamics and the Interaction of the History and Philosophy of Science*, ed. by Jaakko Hintikka, David Gruender and Evandro Agazzi, vol. II, Dordrecht-Boston-London, D. Reidel, 1981, pp. 41-104; Michael Donnelly, "William Farr and Quantification in Nineteenth-Century English Public Health", in *Body Counts*, pp. 251-265.

23. On this vision, counterbalanced by the persistent multi-causal approach to disease and death throughout the 19th-century, see: Margaret Pelling, "Contagion/Germ Theory/ Specificity", in *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, ed. by William F. Bynum and Roy Porter, London, Routledge, 1993, pp. 309-334.

24. Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, "Biopouvoir et désinhibitions modernes: la fabrication du consentement technologique au tournant des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles", *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 60/4 (2013), pp. 122-138.

25. Regarding the limitations of communication strategies that rely on statistical data in the context of public health, see Giulia Delogu, "Conflicting Narratives: Health (Dis)information in Eighteenth-century Italy", *Past & Present*, 257 (2022), supplement 16, pp. 294-317.

26. Acerbi, *Della scoperta*, p. 139.

Rusconi himself.[27] The claim that his arguments had been misinterpreted and the addition of new economic and political references – including entire passages from Melchiorre Gioia's *Nuovo prospetto delle scienze economiche*, which were meant to show that one of Italy's most distinguished intellectuals also shared the methodological approach of the much-maligned British economists – had absolutely no effect.[28] In a new and very brief note, Acerbi declined to respond to this rebuttal so as not to draw any further attention to Rusconi's work.[29] This signalled a complete refusal to acknowledge the legitimacy of the debate, fuelled by the fear that a scientific dispute of this kind might undermine public support for vaccination, both as a state-run health program among the governments of the Restoration (some of which, at that time, appeared determined to break decisively, if only temporarily, with the legacy of the Napoleonic era),[30] and as a preventative measure the general public found useful for warding off smallpox. Indeed, both aspects went hand in hand. Because there was no universal legal requirement for vaccination in any of the pre-Unification Italian states – except for the Principality of Lucca and Piombino between 1806 and 1814 – it was crucial to downplay any problem that might undermine the reassuring narrative needed to ensure the broadest possible acceptance of vaccine inoculation. At the same time, the days were long gone when, even in the latter half of the 18th century, the notion that officials might guide social behaviour through biopolitical means was absent from physicians' cultural frame of reference, leaving it instead to the "public" (understood in its various forms) to exercise critical judgment in deciding whether or not to adopt heavily debated medical practices such as variolation.[31]

27. *Lettera di un anonimo al dott. Mauro Rusconi sull'estratto che i compilatori della Biblioteca Italiana hanno dato dell'opuscolo da lui medesimo pubblicato*, Pavia, presso Fusi e Comp. success. Galeazzi, 1816, p. 28. The pamphlet was attributed to Rusconi himself by Serafino Biffi, *Sulla vita scientifica e sulle opere di anatomia fisiologica comparata del dott. Mauro Rusconi*, Milan, presso la Società degli editori degli Annali Universali delle Scienze e dell'Industria, 1853, p. 138.

28. *Lettera di un anonimo*, pp. 11-12. Two key maxims were specifically cited: "an increase in births is not a good omen, unless new sources of income emerge"; "nature tends to restore the population to its usual level, as higher birth rates compensate for higher mortality". Both maxims referred to the districts of the Kingdom of Italy where rice cultivation was practised (*Nuovo prospetto delle scienze economiche*, vol. I, Milan, presso Gio. Pirotta, 1815, pp. 260-261). The aim was to show that vaccination would have the opposite effect of unhealthy air: it would lead to an increase in births and marriages without actually raising the overall population level, as this growth would be offset by a proportional rise in deaths.

29. *Biblioteca Italiana ossia Giornale di letteratura scienze ed arti*, vol. IV, October-November-December 1816, p. 170.

30. For information about the Kingdom of Sardinia, see Dino Carpanetto, *Il pregiudizio sconfitto. La vaccinazione in Piemonte nell'età francese, 1800-1814*, Pinerolo, Società di Studi Buniviani, pp. 126-128. Regarding the Papal States, see Marco Emanuele Omes, "'Una principale mira de' magistrati?' La vaccinazione antivaiolosa nello Stato Pontificio (1801-1841)", *Archivio della Società romana di storia patria*, 144 (2021), pp. 267-293.

31. Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, "La médecine et le 'tribunal du public' au XVIII^{e} siècle", *Hermès*, 73/3 (2015), pp. 21-30.

Vaccination represented a leap forward not only because it posed fewer and less severe risks than inoculating patients with live smallpox but also because public institutions had agreed to coordinate the large-scale adoption of Jenner's method after having first endorsed its therapeutic efficacy through public trials and official announcements. In other words, public institutions had assumed responsibility for verifying the effectiveness of this preventative technique and the competence of those who were charged with administering vaccines, for example by confirming the credentials of vaccinators employed by municipalities or the state. Through these measures, they effectively conferred on vaccination a far greater degree of legitimacy and relieved the "public" (at least partially) of the burden of deciding whether to accept inoculation.[32] It is no coincidence that under Napoleonic rule, vaccination campaigns generally succeeded most where they were carried out carefully and systematically – paying healthcare workers adequately, enlisting local dignitaries and clergy to lead by example, and keeping the population well-informed. The same approach would bear fruit in the decades that followed.[33] Since it was crucial for proponents of Jenner's method to maintain the authorities' staunch support, they emphasised how financial, administrative and logistical support would translate into tangible benefits for the state like population growth or, at the very least, an expansion of the workforce thanks to increased life expectancy.

2. *The revival of the debate: political economists and vaccination*

The debate that we have just reconstructed quietly simmered for about fifteen years. Around the late 1810s and early 1820s, every state on the Italian peninsula either reintroduced or refined laws on smallpox prevention, along with systems for organising and monitoring vaccination campaigns that closely resembled those in use during the French era. In doing so, they implicitly reaffirmed the strong link between protecting the population from disease, trusting in its potential growth and recognising government interest and responsibility for public health. The debate only resurfaced in the 1830s, in tandem with a notable resurgence of smallpox epidemics in the five-year period between 1829 and 1834 – as if presenting reassuring calculations once again could mask the shortcomings of both central and local administrations in implementing preventative measures and dispel any emerging doubts before they could take hold. Compared to fifteen years earlier, however, the key figures in the debate had changed: doctors were replaced by political economists, who seized the opportunity mainly to distance themselves from the ideas of their French counterparts – often by grossly distorting those ideas.

32. The lack of strong engagement from public authorities in promoting smallpox inoculation, on the other hand, often led to the practice being perceived as a health risk: Serge Boarini, "L'inoculation de la petite vérole à Lyon: de la condamnation à l'acceptation (1779-1811)", *Revue d'histoire des sciences*, 71/1 (2018), pp. 25-48.

33. Alexander Grab, "The Napoleonic State and Public Health Policies: Smallpox Vaccination in Napoleonic Italy (1800-1814)", *Società e storia*, 145 (2014), pp. 487-511.

In so doing, they pointed to an "Italian path" for the moral and material development of the states of the peninsula, of which vaccination naturally formed a part.

In early 1831, the *Annali Universali di Statistica* published a paper by Luca De Samuele Cagnazzi, a former professor of statistics and political economy at the University of Naples during French rule and an official in the Ministry of the Interior of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies until October 1821, when he was dismissed from all his positions because of his support for the short-lived constitutional regime.[34] In his paper, the Apulian economist challenged Malthus, arguing that human beings do not multiply solely in proportion to available resources but also "in proportion to the free exercise of their own faculties", which in turn depended on a well-ordered society and good governance.[35] These elements, he maintained, are essential for fostering industriousness and thus for boosting the production of necessary goods. His perspective aligned with a vision of political economy as a discipline grounded in the study of aggregated statistical data, yet also empirically aimed at improving the political and administrative organisation of the state and promoting anything that could contribute to the overall progress of humanity. In this framework, economics, morality and politics were closely intertwined. It was therefore the duty of rulers to remove any "physical, political and moral obstacles" that hindered the industriousness of their subjects, as economic productivity – and thus population growth –depended on it.[36] Among these duties, in addition to regulating contracts, managing capital investment and supporting manufacturing, were measures such as reclaiming unhealthy lands and implementing policies to ensure the workforce's survival, including vaccination.

According to Cagnazzi, the effect of inoculation campaigns on demographic trends was indirect but hardly insignificant, unlike what he claimed some of the "greatest living economists" from abroad had too "hastily" asserted. Drawing on mortality tables that were based on Duvillard's model and published the following year,[37] he estimated that in the mainland provinces of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, half of every 100,000 newborns died by age 8, whereas in the capital, half of every 10,000 newborns survived to age 21, thanks to more widespread smallpox vaccination. If that same approach had only been extended to the rest of the Mezzogiorno, it would, he argued, have produced a significant "annual increase in labour" – namely, a cohort of 14- to 21-year-olds able to work in productive sectors – while also generating enough additional resources to support children aged

34. Luca De Samuele Cagnazzi, "La vaccinazione giova o no all'aumento della popolazione?", *Annali Universali di Statistica*, vol. XXVII, January-February-March 1831, pp. 153-164. For information about this individual, see Paola Scavizzi, "Cagnazzi De Samuele, Luca", in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, 16 (1973).

35. De Samuele Cagnazzi., *La vaccinazione giova*, p. 160.

36. Giovanni Carano-Donvito, "Luca De Samuele Cagnazzi e il problema dell'aumento delle popolazioni", *Rivista internazionale di scienze sociali e discipline ausiliarie*, 2/9 (1928), pp. 277-310; Biagio Salvemini, *Economia politica e arretratezza meridionale nell'età del Risorgimento: Luca De Samuele Cagnazzi e la diffusione dello smithianesimo nel Regno di Napoli*, Lecce, Miella, 1981.

37. Luca De Samuele Cagnazzi, "Tavole di mortalità in Napoli e nelle provincie", *Atti dell'Accademia Pontaniana*, vol. I, 1832, pp. 109-129.

8 to 14 who might otherwise have succumbed prematurely to smallpox.[38] In short, as Acerbi had pointed out, the fundamental point was this: contrary to the views of British economists and their French disciples, it seemed possible – at least in theory – to periodically restore the balance between population and resources by allowing both to grow proportionally, starting with the former. This, in turn, gave government authorities greater freedom (and responsibility) to intervene. In the end, it hardly mattered that the arithmetic-political calculations were unreliable and that the statistical picture was at times only loosely aligned with reality; for example, some provinces in the 1820s had higher smallpox immunisation rates than Naples, undermining the explanation for the differences in mortality between the capital and the rest of the Kingdom.[39] From the Apulian economist's perspective, what truly mattered was having articulated a population-growth doctrine that – by leveraging vaccination – could knit together economics, politics and morality as inherently interwoven realms where government action took shape.

This explains why the renowned Gian Domenico Romagnosi, who at that time was both a contributor and the editor in chief of the *Annali Universali di Statistica*, had not only accepted the article for publication in the Milan-based journal but also, in the text's accompanying editorial commentary, had tempered his negative "methodological" judgments about Cagnazzi's work with more generous remarks about his "true and sound views".[40] On the one hand, Romagnosi disputed the piece's central thesis, arguing that its author had made a glaring error by assuming that the estimate of those "saved from smallpox", drawn from official Neapolitan statistics (cf. notes 5 and 36), could be taken as the "intrinsic growth" of the population – overlooking the fact that people remained vulnerable to a host of other diseases and causes of early mortality. In Romagnosi's view, therefore, the very question of a direct correlation between vaccination and demographic growth was misguided because too many variables were at play. This complexity made it impossible to formulate an elegant, abstract formula that provided a definitive answer to the problem or to argue that the "administration of the vaccine" was the sole factor responsible for spurring demographic growth. On the other hand, however, he believed that it was the "absolute duty of the State's leadership" to combat epidemic scourges, "which one could not confront with private individual efforts [alone]". This is why he appreciated Cagnazzi's critiques of foreign economists and even intensified them, going so far as to (unfairly) label Malthus and Jean-Baptiste Say "apostles of the plague",[41] accusing them of blindly extending their laissez-faire

38. De Samuele Cagnazzi, *La vaccinazione giova*, pp. 158 and 163.

39. In areas like Principato Citra and Terra di Lavoro, the proportion of immune individuals relative to the total population was even higher than in the province of Naples. Yet, these areas recorded higher infant mortality rates: *Biblioteca Vaccinica*, vol. XV, 1831, p. 108; Mario Luigi Rotondo, *Saggio politico su la popolazione, e le pubbliche contribuzioni del Regno delle Due Sicilie al di qua del Faro*, Naples, dalla Tipografia Flautina, 1834, p. 25.

40. Gian Domenico Romagnosi, "Osservazioni", *Annali Universali di Statistica*, vol. XXVII, January-February-March 1831, pp. 164-169.

41. Romagnosi was particularly critical of Say, citing his *Catéchisme d'économie politique*, 3rd ed., Paris, chez Aimé-André, 1826, in particular p. 253: "[…] preventive measures, such as vaccination, have no impact on the number of human beings". However, even

principles into public health policy in the name of immutable natural laws.[42] In other words, for Romagnosi this set of issues was the perfect ground to bear out his distinctive view of economics: far from crystallising as a mere speculative science of wealth production, it emerged as a form of applied governmental knowledge (deeply intertwined with morality, law, statistics and politics) devoted to fostering a harmonious civil order rooted in an ongoing "civilizing process" of which vaccination itself was a clear expression.[43]

The two case studies explored in this essay confirm that, in the post-Napoleonic era, different fields of knowledge came together to guide government action under principles such as efficiency, public utility, an ethic of responsibility toward the governed and the strengthening of the state.[44] More importantly, they reveal a growing interconnectedness of those same fields of knowledge, signalling an increasing awareness of the demographic (population trends), socio-economic (resource availability or shifts in the size of the age group of "producers") and political (the creation of a narrative sanctioned by the authorities and the willingness of the governed to accept it) implications of public health measures like vaccination, and vice versa. It is no surprise, then, to come across doctors talking about arithmetic and political economy, and intellectuals who, seeking to promote the development of statistics and economics, also discussed smallpox inoculation campaigns. Acerbi and Cagnazzi were clearly less reluctant than Rusconi to cross disciplinary boundaries – not to mention Romagnosi, who made his ability to engage with the most diverse fields the hallmark of his civic and publishing endeavours. Even the physician from Pavia, despite criticising the invasiveness of "public health policy", ended up trying to demonstrate its limitations through arithmetic and economic reasoning. After all, boundaries between areas of knowledge have never been "natural" or impermeable. Indeed, they were expanding and being redefined at the time, which allowed experts to connect different research fields and engage with savants, high-ranking officials and rulers in order to build intellectual consensus around their ideas – consensus

Say acknowledged that vaccination played a valuable role in preserving a larger proportion of young adults, who were essential for the development of productive activities. His stance was not so different from those of Acerbi and Cagnazzi, and was also shared by Romagnosi, who believed that population – one of the three "external fundamentals of state power", alongside territory and government – should not only be considered in quantitative terms but also in qualitative terms (such as the age distribution and physical robustness of individuals): Giuseppe Parenti, "La teoria della popolazione secondo il Romagnosi", *Rivista internazionale di scienze sociali*, series III, 6/6 (1935), pp. 701-730.

42. For a discussion on the relationship between public health interests and individual rights, see Matthew Ramsey, "Public Health in France", in *The History of Public Health and the Modern State*, ed. by Dorothy Porter, Amsterdam-Atlanta, Rodopi, 1994, pp. 45-118, in particular pp. 56-57.

43. For a selection from the extensive bibliography on this subject, see Robertino Ghiringhelli, "Gian Domenico Romagnosi", in *Il contributo italiano alla storia del pensiero. Economia*, Rome, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2012, pp. 402-406.

44. Olivier Ihl, Martine Kaluszynski, "Pour une sociologie historique des sciences de gouvernement", *Revue française d'administration publique*, 102 (2002), pp. 229-243.

that could then be converted into tangible political action.[45] Thus, vaccinators found themselves defending, with statistical data in hand, the outcomes of the Napoleonic experience and promising additional demographic and economic benefits for the Restoration states if they maintained that political and public-health legacy. Economists, for their part, kept returning to the link between vaccination and population growth, honing their vision of the role and aims of their discipline as a cornerstone of rational yet ethically grounded public administration.

45. Silvana Patriarca, *Numbers and Nationhood: Writing Statistics in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 49-50.

Emilio Scaramuzza

From the Newspaper *L'Alba* to the Rise of the Kingdom of Italy: Giuseppe La Farina Between Criticism, Political Reflection and Government Practice (1847-1861)*

Giuseppe La Farina was one of the most influential political figures of the Italian Risorgimento, from the 1840s through Italy's unification.[1] He shared a common trajectory with many in his generation: he began by participating in democratic and republican circles, later experienced exile and returned to politics with a more mature perspective during the period 1848-1849. In the final stage of his life, he gradually adopted more conservative positions.[2] Despite the many roles he held, some scholars have noted that his greatest success was as a journalist and writer, even though historians have often overlooked this aspect of his career.[3] That success, however, was not without its share of criticism from his contemporaries.[4]

A particularly significant moment in his career as a journalist was his tenure as editor of *L'Alba*[5] in Florence, a position he held from the newspaper's founding in June 1847 until early 1848, when La Farina returned to Sicily to take an active role in the revolutionary government. The newspaper's political stance – shaped by contributions from prominent figures such as Michele Amari, Filippo De Boni, Atto Vannucci and Giuseppe Mazzoni – was both democratic and "neo-

* My gratitude to Manuel Romero for translating this chapter.

1. Overall, the bibliography on La Farina is quite extensive and rather dated, although there is no shortage of recent contributions, some of which will be cited in the following pages. For a summary, the reader should certainly consult Antonino Checco, "Giuseppe La Farina", in *DBI*, vol. LXIII (2004), pp. 50-56.

2. Cf. Mario Isnenghi, *Garibaldi fu ferito. Il mito, le favole*, Rome, Donzelli, 2010, p. 29. Regarding La Farina's political trajectory, see the harsh but not unfounded assessment by Ferdinando Petruccelli della Gattina, *I moribondi del Palazzo Carignano*, Milan, Perelli, 1862, p. 142.

3. Gianvito Resta, "Giuseppe La Farina scrittore", in *Giuseppe La Farina*, ed. by Placido Crupi and Marina di Patti, Pungitopo, 1989, p. 107, who in turn draws on the opinion of British historian Denis Mack Smith. Cf. *Cavour and Garibaldi, 1860: A Study in Political Conflict*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986.

4. Exemplary in this regard is *Ire politiche d'oltre tomba* (Florence, Polizzi, 1869), hastily written by Agostino Bertani shortly after the posthumous publication of La Farina's *Epistolario raccolto e pubblicato da Ausonio Franchi* (Milan, Treves, 1869).

5. Franco Della Peruta, *Il giornalismo italiano del Risorgimento. Dal 1847 all'Unità*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2011, pp. 32-34, which one should also reference for the evolution of the newspaper's political stance.

Ghibelline".[6] It is hardly surprising, then, that many of La Farina's articles for the Florentine daily contained sharp critiques of Bourbon misrule – which had forced him into exile in Tuscany in 1841 after his early journalistic work in his hometown of Messina – and of the institutions that upheld Bourbon authority, chief among them the police. About its very name, he wrote,

> to many, it instils fear; to even more, it provokes disgust; and this is a fact that no honest man can deny […] Where does this hatred, this antipathy, this aversion come from? Why is it that an institution meant to prevent crime, ensure public order and protect the lives and property of citizens, rather than earning love and respect, provokes universal disapproval and hatred? The answer is simple: because while all other civil institutions have progressed, the police have not only remained stagnant but have regressed. In the heart of the 19th century, it still wields a power reminiscent of the worst abuses of the Inquisition, minus the pyres, some forms of corporal punishment, and the impiety of religious authority.[7]

The conclusion of La Farina's argument was unmistakably clear: "The police must be reformed, and its reform will be of immense benefit to those who are governed and those who govern".[8] I would like to begin with these lines to briefly outline, following La Farina's political trajectory, a particular example of how public consensus was built (and rebuilt) in mid-19th-century Sicily during the years surrounding Italian Unification. The crux of this discussion, or rather its interpretive key, is the relationship between the issue of public order and how it was perceived by public opinion – an opinion mediated by the daily press and by institutions. Thus, this is not an attempt to reconstruct in detail the political activities of La Farina throughout his long career, first as a writer and political activist, then as head of the Società Nazionale Italiana.[9] Instead, the aim is to identify the strategies employed – particularly during the pivotal moments of 1848-1849 and, above all, 1860-1861 – to shape public opinion with a specific image of reality. This perspective reinforced a specific policy – initially democratic, later firmly moderate – in which security played a pivotal role. These were the years when, across Europe, policing knowledge and practices were gradually redefined with a view toward the greater professionalisation of the police force.[10] In Italy as well, state administrative structures underwent a profound reconsideration, keeping pace with the progress of unification and the evolution of a broader and more multifaceted public opinion.[11] In the specific context of Sicily, in the years surrounding Unification, public opinion

6. Walter Maturi, *Intepretazioni del Risorgimento. Lezioni di storia della storiografia*, Turin, Einaudi, 1962, p. 253, which one should reference for an analysis of the works of La Farina, whose value "is that of a political journalist more than that of a historian".

7. Giuseppe La Farina, *Scritti politici. Raccolti e pubblicati da Ausonio Franchi*, Milan, Tipografia Già Domenico Salvi e C., 1870, vol. I, p. 8.

8. *Ibid*., p. 9.

9. Raymond Grew, *A Sterner Plan for Italian Unity: The Italian National Society in the Risorgimento*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963.

10. Vincent Millot, "Mais que font les historiens de la police?", in *Métier de police. Être policier en Europe, XVIII^e^-XX^e^ siècle*, ed. by Jean-Marc Berlière, Catherine Denys, Dominique Kalifa and Vincent Millot, Rennes, PUR, 2008, pp. 31-34.

11. For an in-depth analysis of the concept of public opinion, see Francesco Benigno, *Parole nel tempo. Un lessico per pensare la storia*, Rome, Viella, 2013, pp. 203-220.

took shape as both the product and litmus test of the region's governance practices and politics. Through the lens of public opinion, particularly as represented in the press, we can attempt to reassess the issue of security.

The relationship between political order and public order is a well-known theme in historiography, as is its 19th-century articulation, which emerged in parallel with the formation of nation-states.[12] However, less attention has been given to how society perceives insecurity, a topic not easily understood through the concept of "public spirit" inherited from the ancien régime.[13] This need for order, on multiple levels, became increasingly evident towards the end of the early modern period, ultimately emerging as a critical issue in the wake of globally significant revolutionary events, such as the French Revolution and the Revolutions of 1848. These upheavals reshaped the social foundations of public consensus, making the demand for order even more pressing amid the divisions in the following political landscape.[14] As a broader "public sphere" took shape (to quote Jürgen Habermas), one that was no longer merely "a product of censorship internalised by society",[15] the demand for security grew in parallel. This need was widespread, transcending borders and political divisions, and found expression in newspapers and pamphlets, becoming a tangible part of political discourse[16] – a realm in which La Farina particularly excelled.

In this sense, public opinion can function as a form of governance,[17] or rather, as an attribute of a specific form of governance, which is closely tied to public order management in many ways. First, consider the relationship – and mutual influence – between the state (and its government) and society, which is evident in the administration's communication strategies, particularly in the period following Italian Unification, as well as in the feedback (positive or, more often, critical) from opposition newspapers on "sensitive" issues like security. Second, there is the media's representation of public order maintenance and, consequently, the evolution of policing knowledge. Finally, public opinion exerts influence both on the broader society and on the institutions themselves. This form of governance is significant for two reasons: on one hand, it reveals the security policies pursued by governments, and on the other, it highlights the strategies authorities use to shape and influence the public.

12. Cf. David H. Bayley, "The Police and Political Development in Europe", in *The Formation of the National States in Western Europe*, ed. by Charles Tilly, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1975, pp. 328-379.

13. Marieke Stein, "Esprit public", in *Publictionnaire. Dictionnaire encyclopédique et critique des publics*, published online on 15 June 2017 at http://publictionnaire.humanum.fr/notice/esprit-public/.

14. Christopher Clark, *Revolutionary Spring: Fighting for a New World. 1848-1849*, London, Allen Lane, 2023, p. 473.

15. Paolo Napoli, *Naissance de la police moderne. Pouvoir, normes, société*, Paris, La Découverte, 2003, p. 141.

16. Allan Silver, "The Demand for Order in Civil Society: A Review of Some Themes in the History of Urban Crime, Police, and Riot", in *The Police: Six Essays*, ed. by David J. Bordua, New York, Wiley, 1967, pp. 1-24.

17. Napoli, *Naissance de la police*, p. 141.

As has rightly been observed, the polysemy of the term "police" was still evident in the early 19th century's "multifaceted perspective on policing",[18] a legacy of the ancien régime. These multiple meanings influenced, in various ways and on different levels, the strategies used by the authorities to maintain public consensus and support both the political and social order. This unfolded, on one hand, through the operations of "high policing" – or political policing[19] – which frequently became a target of criticism from liberals and democrats, initially including Giuseppe La Farina. On the other hand, it was also evident in the different communication strategies used to shape public perception of the police as an institution. The Revolutions of 1848 marked a turning point across Europe.[20] And although we cannot yet refer to a "policed society"[21] when talking about Italy as a whole and Sicily in particular, in the strict sense of the term, the trajectory was already set. The uprisings that materialised across the Italian peninsula beginning with the so-called "springtime of the peoples" aimed, among other things, to dismantle the "privileged relationship between police and sovereignty"[22] that had been firmly established during the years of the Restoration. The goal was to rebalance administrative structures and adapt them to the new institutional framework. However, what remained unchanged was the nature of policing as a tool and the government's attitude toward public opinion and political or criminal subversion. In reality, the events of 1848-1849 and 1860 were milestones in a much longer process of building policing, military and administrative knowledge that emphasised the centrality of information as a key instrument for managing both public and political order.

18. Catherine Denys, "De la résistance de la multifonctionalité de la police. Les catégories policières entre ancien et nouveau régime à travers l'exemple des territoires belges (1750-1815)", in *Gli spazi della polizia. Un'indagine sul definirsi degli oggetti di interesse poliziesco*, ed. by Livio Antonielli, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2013, p. 166. Regarding the practical implications of this issue, see as an example the definition found in Nicola Comerci, *Corso di diritto amministrativo per lo Regno delle due Sicilie*, vol. I, Naples, Tipografia dello stabilimento dell'Ateneo, 1836, p. 498.

19. Cf. Clive Emsley, Barbara Weinberger, *Policing Western Europe: Politics, Professionalism, and Public Order 1850-1940*, New York, Westport, 1991, p. X; Clive Emsley, "Political Police and the European Nation-State in the Nineteenth Century", in *The Policing of Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Mark Mazower, Providence-Oxford, 1997, pp. 1-25. For an overview of the Italian context, see the extensive dossier edited by Simona Mori, "Un confronto sui sistemi di polizia politica nell'Italia preunitaria", *Società e storia*, 176 (2022). For information on this topic, see also Robert J. Goldstein, *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe*, London, Canberra, Croom Helm, 1983, and Jean-Louis Loubet Del Bayle, *Polizia e politica. Un approccio sociologico*, Turin, L'Harmattan Italia, 2008, pp. 99-103.

20. John Breuilly, "Connected or Comparable Revolutions?", in *1848–A European Revolution? International Ideas and National Memories of 1848*, ed. by Axel Körner, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2000, pp. 31-49.

21. Clive Emsley, *Policing and Its Context 1750-1870*, London, Basingstoke Macmillan, 1983, p. 5.

22. Laura Di Fiore, "Politica e sicurezza nel Regno delle Due Sicilie (1816-1860)", *Società e storia*, 176 (2022), p. 323.

1. *From the Revolutions of 1848 to Unification*

In February 1848, just a few weeks after the outbreak of the Sicilian revolution, La Farina returned to Messina. Soon afterward, he joined the newly elected Sicilian Parliament, ascending to increasingly important government posts, first as head of the Ministry of Education and then as head of the Ministry of War. In this latter role, he became embroiled in a storm of controversy over the conduct of military operations, which by late summer were taking a turn for the worse.

From a military standpoint, after the initial enthusiasm of the first few months, the outcome of the clash with the Neapolitan army had become all too obvious: by relying on volunteer forces more adept at insurgency than open-field combat,[23] the Sicilian government had failed to assemble an effective military force in time. The heroic defence and eventual fall of Messina would add nothing to the political debate (nor, later, to historical memory), apart from yet another point of contention over the conduct of the war.[24]

Debates over public security were at times even more heated, precisely because of the extraordinary circumstances the island was facing.[25] The proliferation of multiple police forces with similar responsibilities and powers, coupled with the lack of coordination and governmental inconsistency, exacerbated the situation. The administration's inability to establish a fully operational and functional system for maintaining public order only further deepened the crisis.[26] On one side stood figures such as the republican Pasquale Calvi, who, during his brief tenure at the Ministry of the Interior,[27] had proposed the establishment of a municipal guard. On the other were those like Mariano Stabile, representing Parliament's more moderate (and in this specific case pro-British) faction, which was determined to disband the guard as soon as possible, mainly because of its perceived makeup: according to the prevailing narrative, its members came from Palermo's criminal underworld.[28] This criticism was

23. Jacopo Lorenzini, *L'elmo di Scipio. Storie del Risorgimento in uniforme*, Rome, Salerno, 2020, pp. 51-54. On the urban insurrections, see also Giuseppe Barone, *Città in guerra. Sicilia 1820-1821*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2022.

24. Piero Pieri, *Storia militare del Risorgimento*, Turin, Einaudi, 1962, pp. 521-526.

25. Cf. *Il governo dell'emergenza. Poteri straordinari e di guerra in Europa tra XVI e XX secolo*, ed. by Francesco Benigno and Luca Scuccimarra, Rome, Viella, 2007; Roberto Martucci, *Emergenza e tutela dell'ordine pubblico nell'Italia liberale. Regime eccezionale e leggi per la repressione dei reati di brigantaggio (1861-1865)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1980, and, for a theoretical framework, see Giorgio Agamben, *Stato di eccezione*, Turin, Bollati, Boringhieri, 2003. For the specific case of Sicily, see Giovanna Fiume, *La crisi sociale del 1848 in Sicilia*, Messina, EDAS, 1982.

26. Fabrizio La Manna, *Popolo, classi culte e pubblica sicurezza. La gestione della violenza rivoluzionaria nella Sicilia del 1848*, Messina, Il Grano, 2020, pp. 113-114.

27. Antonino Recupero, "La Sicilia all'opposizione (1848-74)", in *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'Unità a oggi. La Sicilia*, ed. by Maurice Aymard and Giuseppe Giarrizzo, Turin, Einaudi, 1987, pp. 45-46.

28. La Manna, *Popolo, classi culte e pubblica sicurezza*, p. 114.

common at the time. In the Sicilian context, it echoed a famous expression from the Paris prefect of police in 1848, Marc Caussidière, who strongly defended the need during a revolutionary period to create "order from disorder".[29] That the newly re-formed police units included certain individuals of "disorder" – taken from prisons or otherwise recruited from what were considered the "dangerous classes" of society[30] – is beyond dispute. What should arouse at least some suspicion is how frequently this accusation resurfaced in political disputes, both in 1848 and 1860, and later still, wielded by both the right and left to target their adversaries.

The dissolution of Palermo's municipal guard – viewed by moderates as Calvi's "praetorian guard" – and the withdrawal of popular "squads" effectively revealed new scenarios and opportunities,[31] not only in the area of security but especially in the political realm, for the National Guard, which soon adopted a markedly conservative stance.[32] La Farina himself would play a role in the debates that continued over the following years, repeatedly criticising the organization and composition of the public security force promoted by Calvi. However, he did not absolve the National Guard of its responsibilities in the final stages of the Sicilian revolution.[33] At its core, this was a clash between two opposing visions of the Risorgimento: one democratic and popular, the other aristocratic and bourgeois. Even so, La Farina's stance in 1848 remained something of a middle course – arguably pragmatic – when compared to the evolution of his thinking in later years, particularly concerning policing. After all, the course taken by the National Guard could hardly have appealed to someone still committed to democratic principles.[34] On the other hand, the role assumed by that institution in the spring of 1849 reflected the bourgeoisie's pronounced desire for order and, in many respects, represented the foreseeable outcome of a political culture

29. *Marc Caussidière a ses concitoyens*, Paris, imprimerie d'Edouard Bautruche, 1 June 1848, p. 5.

30. Dominique Kalifa, *Les bas-fonds. Histoire d'un imaginaire*, Paris, Seuil, 2013, pp. 107-142.

31. Fabrizio La Manna, "Patrioti e 'uomini di poco culta moralità'. Le squadre nella rivoluzione siciliana del 1848", *Società e storia*, 171 (2021), pp. 55-86. For a comparison with the events that occurred elsewhere on the island, see Rosa Gioffrè, "L'ordine pubblico nella rivoluzione messinese del Quarantotto: squadre rivoluzionarie e Guardia nazionale", in *Per una ricognizione degli "stati d'eccezione". Emergenze, ordine pubblico e apparati di polizia in Europa: le esperienze nazionali (secc. XVII-XX)*, ed. by Enza Pelleriti, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2016, pp. 239-250.

32. Enrico Francia, *Le Baionette intelligenti. La guardia nazionale nell'Italia liberale (1848-1876)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1999, pp. 39-41. The extensive legislation passed in 1848-1849, including measures regarding public security, would be partially reinstated following Garibaldi's landing at Marsala in 1860.

33. Giuseppe La Farina, *Istoria documentata della rivoluzione siciliana e delle sue relazioni co' governi italiani e stranieri (1848-1849)*, 2 vols, Capolago, Tipografia elvetica, 1850-1851, vol. II, p. 62.

34. Franco Della Peruta, *I democratici e la rivoluzione italiana. Dibattiti ideali e contrasti politici all'indomani del 1848*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2004, p. 49.

still in formation.[35] From this perspective, the Revolutions of 1848 represented a crucial turning point for La Farina, marking the intersection of new liberal demands on policing and the need to impose order and balance on the political system inaugurated by the revolution – regardless of whether one viewed that system through a regionalist or nationalist lens, a point of division among Sicily's political class. The debates, compromises and lessons learned in those months thus became an indispensable part of the broader skill set and knowledge base that defined the diverse community of exiles in the aftermath of 1848.

The years between 1849 and the Second War of Independence in 1859 were, for many, a time of reassessment. During his stay in France, La Farina resumed writing, and working, among other things, on a *Storia della rivoluzione siciliana*. This work would ignite a series of disputes with Calvi and other key figures of the failed revolution. At the same time, it marked the beginning of a gradual ideological shift, which would lead La Farina to move away from his republican and democratic roots in favour of increasingly conservative positions. A few years later, after settling in Turin, he grew close to Daniele Manin. In 1857, the two co-founded the Italian National Society, with La Farina becoming its first secretary, thus bringing him into Count Cavour's political orbit.[36] His ties to the prime minister of Sardinia made him deeply unpopular among many of his former comrades in arms, particularly Giuseppe Garibaldi, who would later never forgive him for his conduct following the War of 1859. At that time, Garibaldi, preparing to cross the papal border near Cattolica with his volunteers, was halted by the Sardinian government. Even more controversial was La Farina's unwavering support for Cavour's political strategy, particularly his vote to cede Savoy and Nice – Garibaldi's birthplace – to France. As Agostino Bertani would later argue in Parliament, this decision constituted a failure on military, political and symbolic grounds.[37] By then, however, events had reached a decisive turning point.

On 29 May 1860, as the Milanese deputy delivered a scathing indictment of the government in the chamber of Palazzo Carignano, Garibaldi's Redshirts had already been fighting for two days in Palermo against the Neapolitan army. Before long, the Garibaldini would emerge as the sole masters of the battlefield. The same dynamics – and particularly the age-old issue of public order – that had played out in 1848 were once again coming to the fore. In early June, shortly after the liberation of Sicily's capital, Giuseppe La Farina returned to the island, this time as Cavour's envoy.

35. This perspective is somewhat at odds with Emsley, *Policing and Its Context*, p. 7. For La Farina's assessment of the limited role of the press in supporting the Sicilian revolution of 1848, see the passage cited by Pina Travagliante, *Nella crisi del 1848: cultura economica e dibattito politico nella Sicilia degli anni Quaranta e Cinquanta*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2001, p. 13.

36. Rosario Romeo, *Cavour e il suo tempo*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2011, vol. III, *1854-1861*, pp. 283-285. On La Farina's rift with his former mentor Mazzini, see Jean-Yves Frétigné, *Giuseppe Mazzini. Père de l'unité italienne*, Paris, Fayard, 2006, pp. 365-367.

37. Agostino Bertani, *Discorsi parlamentari, pubblicati per deliberazione della Camera dei Deputati*, Rome, Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, 1913, p. 5.

2. *"When our carabinieri come": La Farina and the events of 1860-1861 in Sicily*

This famous phrase comes from a dialogue in *The Leopard* (*Il Gattopardo*) between the Prince of Salina and Cavalier Aimone Chevalley di Monterzuolo, set during a particularly delicate moment in Sicilian history, immediately following the end of Garibaldi's dictatorship.[38] Indeed, within eight months, the island had witnessed the creation of a revolutionary yet "disciplined" state structure,[39] one that was free – or at least this was the intention of its new rulers – of the excesses of the Revolutions of 1848 and aimed at pursuing a clear, tangible, and achievable political goal: Italian unification. Above all, two closely connected issues dominated Sicilian political debate during those months: the annexation of the island to the Kingdom of Sardinia, and the issue of public order. In the press, political circles and institutional settings, these two themes were interconnected. According to pro-Cavour moderates, the absence of one would prevent the achievement of the other. Thus, the credibility and capability first of Garibaldi's dictatorial government (between May and December 1860) and later of the early unified Italian governments would be tested in their handling of public security.[40]

In all of this, La Farina played a dual role. Initially, as Cavour's agent in Sicily, he operated behind the scenes to mobilise public opinion through the press. This strategy materialised in the founding of the newspaper *l'Annessione* (*The Annexation*), whose very title revealed the moderates' objectives. In its early issues, the newspaper's editors repeatedly criticised the Bourbon government and its burdensome legacy.[41] However, a shift in direction was imminent. The presumed arrival of Mazzini on the island sparked new controversies that were promptly countered by the *Giornale Officiale di Sicilia*, controlled by Garibaldi's supporters, and by the *Precursore*, a newspaper influenced by Francesco Crispi, who at the time served as the dictator's secretary of state.[42]

Believing the time had finally come to take action, La Farina organised popular demonstrations against Garibaldi's government. This not only provoked

38. Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard*, New York, The Life Books, 1961, p. 173. The complete citation of the passage, concerning the dire state of public order in Sicily, is as follows: "What an inept police those Bourbons had. Very soon, when our Carabinieri come, they'll put an end to all this". Cf. Marco Meriggi, "La politica e le nuove istituzioni", *Le carte e la Storia*, 17 (2011), pp. 23-32.

39. Carmine Pinto, "La rivoluzione disciplinata del 1860. Cambio di regime ed élite politiche nel Mezzogiorno italiano", *Contemporanea*, 16 (2013), pp. 39-68.

40. On this point, refer to Emilio Scaramuzza, *L'ordine nella libertà. Politica, polizia e criminalità in Sicilia (1860-1862)*, Rome, Viella, 2023, pp. 25 ff.

41. A few days after the departure of the last Neapolitan soldier from Palermo, it was reported ironically in the paper that: "The staunch defenders of order, legitimacy, and justice have finally left us, all departing heavily laden with glory and plunder" (*L'Annessione*, 22 June 1860).

42. Regarding the 1860 confrontation between Crispi and La Farina, see Roberto Martucci, "'L'heure du berger est passée'. Il fallimento della missione di Giuseppe La Farina nella Palermo di Crispi e Garibaldi (6 giugno-7 luglio 1860)", in *Francesco Crispi*, ed. by Marcello Saija, Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino, 2019, pp. 161-182. Cf. also Christopher Duggan, *Creare la nazione. Vita di Francesco Crispi*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2000, pp. 229-235.

political conflict – the first act of which had already played out in Palermo's Civic Council – but also disputes regarding the lack of security on the island and in its capital. During these disturbances, police headquarters were targeted and attacked without police officers or public security leadership doing (or being able to do) anything to prevent it. The street protests and political manoeuvers he orchestrated quickly led, in early July 1860, to Giuseppe La Farina's expulsion from the island and a complete reorganisation of Palermo's police apparatus.[43] The conflict subsequently continued in the newspapers, in a role-playing dynamic where *l'Annessione*, which was forced to moderate its editorial position, was counterbalanced in the Kingdom of Sardinia by *l'Espero*, which was extremely critical of Garibaldi's government.[44] The driving element of this discourse, alongside the urgent call for annexation (as mentioned earlier), was the issue of public order.[45] Cavour's supporters emphasised the incompetence of Sicilian leadership to position themselves as a political alternative.

With the liberation of the South, the outcome of the Sicilian and Neapolitan plebiscites effectively handed power to the moderates, who established transitional governments in Naples and Palermo, each led by a lieutenant.[46] La Farina therefore returned to the island as the right-hand man of Massimo Cordero di Montezemolo, a stubborn Piedmontese official who was entirely unfamiliar with the lay of the land in Sicily. On New Year's Eve of 1861, in his capacity as the new Secretary of Public Security, La Farina issued approximately ten arrest warrants against the most prominent democratic leaders in Palermo. However, the carabinieri did not fully carry out this delicate mission, and the operation was unsuccessful. In the following days, opposition newspapers publicly denounced the incident. For weeks now, democratic dailies had been attacking La Farina, accusing him of mishandling public security in Sicily. The New Year's Eve episode thus provided evidence of the entirely arbitrary use of police power (which was itself the subject of a controversial reform effort) by the moderates.[47]

Between late December 1860 and January 1861, security concerns ranked secondary only to the electoral debate for the renewal of Parliament in Turin, which, for the first time, would include deputies elected from Southern Italy and Sicily. Despite appeals for calm, in Palermo "thefts and homicides" were "always

43. Lucy Riall, *Sicily and the Unification of Italy: Liberal Policy and Local Power, 1859-1866*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 85 ff.

44. For a brief history of the moderate newspaper, see again Della Peruta, *Il giornalismo italiano del Risorgimento*, pp. 197-199.

45. This represented a veritable "dialogue of the deaf" in which "one portrayed the municipalities as being in a state of semi-anarchy […] the other claimed the opposite, and each, as usual, cited facts to support their own argument" (Michele Amari, *Carteggio. Raccolto e postillato a cura di Alessandro D'Ancona*, 2 vols, Turin, Roux Frassati e C., 1896, vol. II, p. 97).

46. Cf. Elena Gaetana Faraci, *L'unificazione amministrativa del Mezzogiorno. Le Luogotenenze da Cavour a Ricasoli*, Rome, Carocci, 2015.

47. Giorgio Asproni, *Diario politico 1855-1876*, vol. III, *1861-1863*, ed. by Bruno Josto Anedda, Carlino Sole and Tito Orrù, Milan, Giuffré, 1980, pp. 2 ff.

the order of the day".[48] On the island, democrats now drew comparisons with the recent Garibaldian past to demonstrate the incompetence and bad faith of the "Piedmontese", who furthermore were guilty of having reintroduced criminal elements into the police force. Thus, the common refrain from 1848 regained favour, capturing the attention of a significant portion of public opinion ahead of the elections. Indeed, Cavour's partisans were associated with the criminal underworld, extending the criminal paradigm to the political arena – another typical theme in contemporary debates about the management of public order. The Sardinian prime minister was also held responsible, by the left-wing press, for the short-sighted decisions of his Sicilian agents.

The elections of January 1861 cemented Cavour's triumph at the national level, but not in Sicily, where democrats were stronger. The events of early January and the second dismissal of La Farina, who was forced to resign following the failure of his attempted coup de main, had certainly influenced the voters' choices, along with other factors. Resistance to military conscription and social unrest in both cities and rural areas, the ongoing economic crisis, the controversial decisions of the lieutenant government, its opposition to elements of the National Guard in the Sicilian capital and the persistence of questionable public order management practices had all intensified tensions on the island to the advantage of the opposition forces.[49]

In the summer of 1861, the ongoing political struggle escalated significantly when several democratic figures were attacked, particularly in Palermo. Moreover, it became difficult to keep track of the violent crimes, robberies and assaults taking place in the Sicilian capital, even in broad daylight. The opposition therefore found it relatively easy, at least on the island, to diffuse an increasingly lacklustre image of public order. The political objective was to delegitimise the new administration, portraying it as incapable of addressing the demands of ordinary people for greater security of property and persons. This representation of reality, if not entirely accurate, was at least plausible, as evidenced by the correspondence from government agents. It is no coincidence that letters sent from the island by Diomede Pantaleoni, a deputy from Macerata, to the new Italian prime minister Bettino Ricasoli during that same summer of 1861 contained news and polemical topics taken directly from democratic newspapers.[50] This served as an indicator of a broader phenomenon, wherein the incidents reported by newspapers – including official publications[51] – reached both public opinion, helping to inform (and thus shape) it and the political class, both central and local.

48. *Il Diritto*, 2 January 1861, n. 2.

49. Scaramuzza, *L'ordine nella libertà*, pp. 184-186.

50. Cf. *Il Precursore*, 31 August 1861, n. 208, which reported, for Palermo alone, "29 violent crimes in 27 days". Cf. also *Il Diritto*, 4 September 1861, n. 245. For an interpretation of this report given by the deputy from Macerata, see Riccardo Piccioni, *Diomede Pantaleoni*, Rome, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 2003, pp. 189-190.

51. Since the end of 1860, the *Giornale Officiale di Sicilia* had been publishing a "Cronaca quotidiana della sicurezza pubblica" ("Daily Chronicle of Public Safety"). In January 1861, the editorial staff took care to publish a brief report of the most common crimes in tabular form,

The mobilisation of provincial elites behind one political project or another represented another building block in the construction of consensus. Firm advocates of the need for greater order in both urban and rural areas, they pushed for the establishment of as many carabinieri stations as possible, even in the smallest municipalities, as they distrusted locally recruited police forces. This is also a recurring refrain in newspaper accounts and official correspondence, reflecting the belief – shared even by the character born from the pen of Tomasi di Lampedusa – that only the arrival of the Piedmontese carabinieri could improve public order in Sicily. The phrase "when our carabinieri come" therefore represents a key element in constructing a new understanding of order in unified Italy, where the image mattered more than actual presence, or rather where the public's perception of the police force, mediated by the periodical press and other forms of mass communication, formed the starting point for developing a new security paradigm. Needless to say, in pamphlets written at that time the emphasis on the carabinieri's role compared to other corps (clearly compromised by the presence of borderline elements) was very significant in the first years after Unification, along with other recurring themes connected to the progressive emergence of new criminal phenomena[52] and the fragmentation of the political landscape.

With the transfer of power from the Garibaldians to the "Piedmontese", institutions such as the National Guard and the police were quickly reorganised. The political struggle therefore shifted to the security front, not so much about practices and knowledge specifically connected to the management of public order, but rather regarding different ways of understanding public security, in the face of growing tensions with society and at least a segment of local public opinion.[53] These tensions would initially erupt in 1862 during the Aspromonte expedition and then again in subsequent years, leading not only to the entirely instrumental association between political opponents and criminal elements, but also to the supposed convergence between the opposite poles – reactionary and democratic – of the political spectrum.

3. *Some concluding remarks*

After leaving the island in January 1861, La Farina was elected to Parliament in his district of Messina. However, Cavour's death, which occurred a few months later, in June 1861, would deprive him of his most important supporter, limiting his role in the following two years. Giuseppe La Farina would pass away at only 48 years of age in 1863, one year after the Aspromonte expedition.[54] This crisis

indicating the (positive) numerical difference compared to the Garibaldian period. As time went on, this comparison was abandoned.

52. Francesco Benigno, "Rethinking the Origins of the Sicilian Mafia: A New Interpretation", *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés*, 22/1 (2018), pp. 107-130.

53. Giancarlo Poidomani, *Senza la Sicilia l'Italia non è nazione. La Destra storica e la costruzione dello Stato (1861-1876)*, Acireale-Rome, Bonanno, 2008, pp. 140-141.

54. For an assessment of La Farina's conduct in the aftermath of the Aspromonte expedition, see "Un ministro in erba", *L'Unitario*, 17 October 1862, quoted in Magda Pollari

would contribute to changing the Italian landscape, altering the political balance between democrats and moderates in Sicily as well.

Throughout this period, the press played a significant objective role as an instrument for building consensus (or more often, forms of dissent). That being so, it is not redundant to return, in closing, to this matter, connecting it to the moments of transition and their impact on information policies and the practices of governing society and territory, particularly those related to policing.[55] On the other hand, one must question what was (or rather what is, since this remains a relevant issue today) the degree of mutual influence between the government and public opinion, and between the police and journalism. From this point of view, a different approach to sources would be necessary, particularly printed sources – which should be studied as a subject in its own right – so as not to relegate the question of the relationship between the police and the public solely to the level of social relations, or to everyday interactions.[56]

Let us return to the theme of consensus-building. The case study presented here of a protagonist (at times perhaps also an antagonist) of change can be summarised in three distinct phases: the period of criticism (often developed through the press) of an "old" institutional model no longer shared (or shareable); the revolutionary moment, when these terms were rediscussed and when one confronted the inherent difficulties in governing and the lack of consensus behind a political project not yet fully defined, which was the case in Sicily in 1848; and, finally, the synthesis, which in this case coincided with 1860, the *annus mirabilis* of the Risorgimento, when La Farina's actions (who by then had moved to positions far from the democratic sphere in which he had been educated) benefited from the experience gained from past endeavours. In this final phase, his political activity was aimed at maintaining popular support, acquired or to be acquired, through public opinion (or at least a significant portion of it) and popular mobilisation; the latter activated through paid agents and managed, once in government, only through the police. Between the late 1850s and the beginning of the next decade, public opinion, conveniently "enlightened" and directed by newspapers, committees and "parties", had become a powerful means of political pressure.[57] And what issues could arouse more interest in the interplay of roles at the local level, but also on a national scale, than crime and the measures adopted to contain it? On these specific issues, one can therefore measure not only the pulse of a period of institutional crisis in which public security

Maglietta, "'L'Unitario' giornale politico amministrativo pei comuni dell'Italia centrale (maggio-novembre 1862)", in *Il giornalismo italiano dal 1861 al 1870*, Turin, Edizioni 35° parallelo, 1966, p. 138.

55. Cf. Emsley, Weinberger, *Policing Western Europe*, p. VIII.

56. The topic of information, and news reporting, through newspapers is addressed in the contributions of Adeline Wrona, "Ecrire pour informer", Alain Vaillant, "La polémique", and Anne-Claude Ambroise Rendu, "Les faits divers", in *La civilisation du journal. Histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au XIX^e^ siècle*, ed. by Dominique Kalifa, Philippe Régnier, Marie-Eve Thérenty and Alain Vaillant, Paris, Nouveau Monde, 2011, pp. 717-743, 969-978 and 979-997, where, however, the theme of communication about police and public security, as such, remains largely unexplored.

57. *Epistolario di Giuseppe La Farina*, p. 370, letter to Giuseppe Clementi, 19 July 1860.

became a central element of political discourse at multiple levels, but also the very development of police practices and institutions, as well as their rapid adaptation to the realities of a unified Italy.

Giuseppe La Farina, like the most prominent figures of his generation, understood the importance of the police as a tool and the role of information in mobilising public opinion and the community. The police, understood in the broadest sense as both an institution and as a political element, serves as an excellent lens through which to re-examine the 19th-century evolution of the "consensual" model. As La Farina wrote in 1847,

> Times change, and with them, needs and institutions […] Remove arbitrary power from the police, define and establish their powers, restore to them their proper character as guardians of life and property; do not have them punish crimes when you have an honest and intelligent judicial system and [legal] code; do not tolerate a permanent affront to the law through extraordinary and summary procedures; preserve the sanctity of the home; do not entrust citizens' security to those who need to contrive offences and invent criminals to survive, or to foolish people who do not know how to listen and willingly slander the free voice of thought; do not confuse loyal and sincere defenders of truth with individuals hungry for tumult and disorder; cover your ears to that eternal and childish suspicion which makes government burdensome to the people and the people hostile to government. Only then will the police regain public opinion; they will become stronger because they are supported by the consent of good citizens, more respected because they are more in harmony with our civilisation.[58]

In this excerpt lies the entire "philosophy" of the time, which, as we have seen, La Farina himself would betray in his clash with the Garibaldinians. What is certain is that, when examined from the perspective of building consensus around the political project of Unification and the formation of new institutions, Sicily emerges not only as the political training ground for a new ruling class – one that would repeatedly govern the country in the latter half of the 19th century – but also as the laboratory where governmental practices and institutions underwent a progressive reconfiguration across multiple phases and revolutionary experiences.

58. La Farina, *Scritti politici*, p. 9.

Giacomo Girardi

The Construction of Memory: Napoleon's Lives and Italy's History During the Restoration*

1. *Writing lives*

The long 19th century was heavily marked by the myth of Napoleon. The black legend of Bonaparte that had originated and enjoyed enduring success in England, Germany, Spain and even France itself[1] did not last very long in Italy, at least not at the literary level. It was soon replaced by a morbid-like curiosity toward the life, personality, romantic entanglements and weaknesses of the Emperor. Whether the product of myth or legend,[2] Napoleon became a phenomenon in Italy – in literature and poetry, art and music, and in the military and political arena. His image was carefully honed to appeal to the bourgeoisie and populace, conservatives and revolutionaries, and men and women, young and old alike.[3] The myth of Napoleon first burst onto the scene between 1820 and 1821, in conjunction with two pivotal moments: the Emperor's death, and the outbreak of multiple revolutionary uprisings.[4] Political events and historical tradition had become intertwined many years prior, following Napoleon's double exile when the first biographies about him began to circulate. Upon his death, Napoleon became the person about whom the greatest number of biographies would be written in the entire 19th century, outpacing the most renowned heroes

* My thanks to Alessandra Balzani for her translation of this chapter.

1. Jean Tulard, *L'anti-Napoléon: la légende noire de l'Empereur*, Paris, Gallimard, 2013 (orig. Paris, Juillard, 1965).

2. On the "myth", read Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, *Il mito dell'eroe. Italia e Francia nell'età della Restaurazione*, Naples, Guida, 2003 (orig. 1984), and Sylvain Pagé, *Le mythe napoléonien. De Las Cases à Victor Hugo*, Paris, CNRS, 2013. On the "legend", see Sudhir Hazareesingh, *The Legend of Napoleon*, London, Granta Books, 2004, and *La légende napoléonienne*, under the direction of Jacques-Olivier Boudon, Paris, SPM, 2022.

3. In Arianna Arisi Rota, *Il cappello dell'imperatore. Storia, memoria e mito di Napoleone Bonaparte attraverso due secoli di storia dei suoi oggetti*, Rome, Donzelli, 2022, Arisi Rota discusses the topic of a veritable Napoleon-mania that spread between the 19th and 20th centuries. On the enduring power of visual and material culture in the making of Napoleonic memory, see *Napoleonic Objects and Their Afterlives: Art, Culture and Heritage, 1821-Present*, ed. by Matilda Greig and Nicole Cochrane, London, Bloomsbury, 2025.

4. Maria Pia Casalena, *Biografie. La scrittura delle vite in Italia tra politica, società e cultura (1796-1915)*, Milan, Bruno Mondadori, 2012, p. 15.

of Italy. To place this into perspective, between 1861 and 1915 the Italian hero par excellence, Giuseppe Garibaldi, was the subject of 68 biographies, a notable number, yet one that pales in comparison to the 250 biographies written about Napoleon in the same period.[5] Even the political sphere rapidly embraced the Emperor, inserting him into the roster of Italian greats and transforming him into a true role-model. Thus, his persona entered into both the clandestine and government "laboratories" as a figure to be contemplated with admiration or to be avoided at all costs. At the end of the 19th century, Francesco Crispi – who was the most influential politician in the country at the time – stated that Napoleon embodied the best qualities of the "Italian mind", alongside Enrico Dandolo, Galileo Galilei, Christopher Columbus and Eugene of Savoy.[6] Crispi also declared that the Emperor was the only one who could compare with Garibaldi. During the twenty-year run of Fascism, it was Mussolini's turn to engage with Bonaparte's legacy, appropriating his image to identify him as a predecessor of the Italian Duce's political and military genius.[7]

In the world of publishing, texts about the life and adventures of the Emperor achieved extraordinary success and continued for several years after his death, mirroring the public's interest in biographies as well as important political, social and cultural matters. The popularity of books about Napoleon coincided with the flourishing of "the writing of lives", which became so prominent in the 19th century that between 1815 and 1861 some 2,500 biographies were published.[8] Moreover, between the 18th and 19th centuries the perception of biography underwent a transformation, becoming an active tool for shaping debates on contemporary politics. While today, the biographical approach enjoys diminished esteem among Italian historians who, with few exceptions, tend to relegate it to a secondary role,[9] in the 19th century the opposite was true; biographies held sway over other genres, and their authors were often regarded more as political actors than as historians.

5. The numbers regarding Garibaldi can be found in *ibid.*, p. 26, while the numbers related to Napoleon were calculated by the author of this essay.

6. Christopher Duggan, *Creare la nazione. Vita di Francesco Crispi*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2000, pp. 490-491. See also the English version, *Francesco Crispi 1818-1901: From Nation to Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002.

7. Alessandro Campi, *L'ombra lunga di Napoleone. Da Mussolini a Berlusconi*, Venice, Marsilio, 2007, p. 19; Luigi Mascilli Migliorini, "Napoleone e il racconto storico dell'Italia unita", in *Da Brumaio ai Cento giorni. Cultura di governo e dissenso politico nell'Europa di Bonaparte*, ed. by Antonino De Francesco, Milan, Guerini e Associati, 2007, pp. 29-38, esp. pp. 37-38.

8. Casalena, *Biografie*, p. 13.

9. Though it is difficult to summarise the research on this topic, information may be gleaned from *Biografia e storiografia*, ed. by Alceo Riosa, Milan, Angeli, 1983; Regina Pozzi, Gabriele Turi, Giuseppe Pignatelli, Luisa Passerini, "La biografia: un genere storiografico in trasformazione", *Contemporanea*, 2 (1999), pp. 287-306. On the international front, see: "AHR Roundtable: Historians and Biography", *The American Historical Review*, 114/3 (2009), pp. 573-661, and Melanie Nolan, *Biography: An Historiography*, Basingstoke, Routledge, 2023.

This was not a new phenomenon, as in the 18th century several biographies of great men were published to public acclaim in response to similar objectives. One notable example is Voltaire's highly influential *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, through which the author wanted "to set before posterity not only the portrait of one man's actions but that of the spirit of mankind in general, in the most enlightened of all ages".[10] It is true, however, that the genre of biography had not been favoured at the end of the ancien régime. In Milan, the capital of Italian publishing, biographies of some famous French revolutionary leaders such as Robespierre and Toussaint Louverture began to appear as early as 1796,[11] together with the biographies of the so-called Legitimist martyrs of the Revolution, like the young Louis XVII.[12] However, judging from the number of volumes published and their cultural impact, nothing particularly significant had appeared.[13] The Restoration brought forth a renewed interest in biographies, influenced by two major factors: first, a staggering demand for more history books that was nourished by a more highly-educated audience than in previous years, thanks to the Napoleonic reforms; and second, the new need to assimilate, through the lives of the past, the innovations and cultural-political transformations that were in full swing. It is within this context that biographies evolved from mere historical narrative to a source of knowledge at the ready for those who looked to the past as a means of orienting their decisions in the present.

2. *The phases of the myth*

Italy's interest in Napoleon was keen from the very beginning, heightened by the Emperor's exile on Elba, an island only a few miles off the Tuscan coast. Different phases marked the spread of the myth with respect to its characteristics and the personalities involved. The first phase could already be detected in 1814, when the first pamphlets dedicated to Napoleon began to circulate. Several of them were written by foreign authors and quickly translated into Italian, such as Chateaubriand's text on Bonaparte and the Bourbons or the *Historie du 18 brumaire et de Bonaparte* (*History of the 18th Brumaire and of Bonaparte*), written by French monarchist journalist Jean-Pierre Gallais, which rapidly achieved third-edition status,[14] or British notary Lewis Goldsmith's *The Secret History of the Bonaparte's*

10. *The Works of Voltaire: A Contemporary Version*, William F. Fleming, New York, E. R. DuMont, 1901, 21 vols, vol. XII, part. I, "Introduction".

11. *Storia della vita e congiura di Massimiliano Robespierre*, Milan, Agnelli, 1802; *Vita privata politica e militare di Toussaint-Louverture, scritta da un uomo del suo colore*, Milan, Stamperia italiana e francese in S. Zeno n. 534, 1802.

12. *Storia della vita, prigionia, patimenti, e morte del piccolo Delfino di Francia sotto il nome di Luigi XVII*, Milan, Carlo Vismara ditta di Pietro Agnelli, 1800.

13. *Tra Rivoluzione e Risorgimento. Repertorio delle opere stampate a Milano (1796-1848)*, ed. by Francesco Dendena, Giacomo Girardi and Emilio Scaramuzza, Rome, Officina Libraria, 2024.

14. Milan, Destefanis, 1814; Milan, Sonzogno and company, 1814; Venice, Fracasso, 1814.

Cabinet and the Court of Saint-Cloud, a manifesto against Bonapartism.[15] The year 1814 also saw the publication of *Bonapartiana*, a biographical collection of questionable anecdotes about Napoleon[16] and the *Brevissima narrazione della vita di Napoleone Bonaparte* (*A Very Brief Account of the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte*), authored by a certain Illevir, a seemingly Latin name that was in all likelihood Italian, since it appears to be an anagram of the surname Rivelli.[17]Additional publications in 1814 included *Memorie segrete sulla vita pubblica e privata non che sul carattere personale di Napoleone Bonaparte* (*Secret Memories of the Public and Private Life and the Personal Character of Napoleon Bonaparte*) and *Vita di Napoleone Bonaparte compilata sulle opere pubblicate durante il suo impero* (*Life of Napoleon Bonaparte Based on What Was Published During His Empire*).[18] These texts were often written to mark a special occasion, albeit in a clumsy and confusing manner, and were rich in details that straddled reality and fantasy. Together, they can be taken as an indication of how writers at the time were trying to recount the life of Napoleon to provide readers with an overall narrative of life that would only be fully achieved following his death.

In 1821, the news of Napoleon's death spread throughout Europe,[19] kickstarting the second phase of the elaboration of the Napoleonic myth. This period has been widely studied, even in recent years, and is traditionally viewed as the period of the myth's origin. Lore about the Emperor was rife, thanks to the distribution of translations of texts such as *Manoscritto venuto da S. Elena* (*Manuscript Transmitted from Saint Helena*), which first appeared in Italian with the false imprint of Constantinople. It was later printed again in Naples between 1820 and 1821.[20] These were the years of the odes written by the likes of Lord Byron, Alessandro Manzoni, Pietro Custodi and others. Often distributed clandestinely, they created the myth that would become a "central theme in the cultural and artistic life of the Romantic period" in only a few short years.[21]

In the early 1820s, the most successful biography of Napoleon, which focused on the Russian Campaign, was authored by Philippe-Paul de Ségur. It was finally printed in Florence, at Prato, by two publishers in Livorno in

15. Italy, 1814.

16. Verona, Pietro Bisesti, 1814.

17. Florence, Alessandri e figli, 1814; Lodi, Pallavicini, 1814; Bologna, Tip. de' Franceschi, 1814.

18. Padua, Bettoni, 1814; Milan, Silvestri, 1814.

19. Thierry Lentz, *Bonaparte n'est plus! Le monde apprend la mort de Napoléon. Juillet-septembre 1821*, Paris, Perrin, 2019; Vittorio Criscuolo, *Ei fu. La morte di Napoleone*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2021, p. 81-103.

20. Constantinople [i.e. Mendrisio], presso Meemud-bey [i.e. Landi], 1817; Naples, Tipografia del Giornale Enciclopedico, 1820, and Naples, Agnello Nobile, 1820.

21. Criscuolo, *Ei fu*, pp. 139-173; Matteo Palumbo, *"Ei fu". Vita letteraria di Napoleone da Foscolo a Gadda*, Rome, Salerno Editrice, 2021. See also Gianluca Albergoni, "L'ombra di Napoleone. Stendhal e il gruppo del Conciliatore", *Revue Stendhal*, *Milanese*, 2 (2021), pp. 229-271. This article centers on the political and cultural conflict that took place in Milan after the fall of Napoleon, particularly within high society circles, and foregrounds the figure of Stendhal and his *Vie de Napoléon*.

1825.[22] It was then that a new trend took hold: publishing responses to books. The new practice provoked a fiery public debate about the now-legendary Emperor. In 1825 Gaspard Gougaud, who self-exiled to Saint Helena with Napoleon, published *Examen critique de l'ouvrage de M. le comte P. de Ségur* (*Critical Examination of Count P. de Ségur's Work*).[23] The climax of responses was reached in 1827, with the beginning of a third phase, that of a truly militant political history. The publication of Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon Bonaparte* achieved unparalleled success, despite the many critiques.[24] It was an incredibly important political manifesto, between fiction and historical reconstruction, and became the first in Europe to shape the black legend of Napoleon. Several counter-responses appeared in the wake of Scott's text, some more critical than others, evolving alongside memoirs and accounts of the protagonists of Napoleon's exile, from Emmanuel de Las Cases to François Carlo Antonmarchi. The main response to Scott was penned by none other than Louis Bonaparte,[25] but authors such as the liberal Leonard Gallois,[26] the Orleanist Jean-Baptiste Capefigue,[27] the military man Antoine-Henri Jomini,[28] the republican supporter of Bonaparte Laurence de l'Ardèche[29] and the public official Jacques Norvins[30] were translated in the same period.

22. Philippe-Paul de Ségur, *Istoria di Napoleone e della Grande Armata nell'anno 1812 del generale conte di Segur*, Florence, Ducci, 1825, 2 vols; Prato, Vestri, 1825; Livorno, Pozzolini, 1825; Livorno, Vignozzi, 1825.

23. Gaspard Gourgaud, *Napoleone e la grande armata in Russia ossia Esame critico dell'opera del sig. conte di Segur*, Italy, 1825, 2 vols.

24. Walter Scott, *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, Edinburgh, Cadell, Longman's, 1827, 9 vols. The French translation: *Vie de Napoléon Buonaparte*, Paris, Treutttel & Würtz, 1827, 9 vols. The Italian translation: *Vita di Napoleone Buonaparte […] prima versione italiana dall'inglese di Vittorio Pecchioli*, Florence, tipografia Coen & co., 1827-1828, 20 vols. There are other Tuscan editions, and one from Lugano. Despite its wide distribution, the text received a cold reception in France and in Anglophone countries, so much so that in 1834 Henry Lee wrote: "The general impression, that an impartial and accurate biography of the Emperor Napoleone does not exist, and that Sir Walter Scott, in his *Life of Napoleone Bonaparte* did injustice to his subject, rises an endeavour to supply that defect and repair that injustice". In Henry Lee, *The Life of the Emperor Napoleon*, London, Thomas and William Boone, 1832, vol. I, p. III.

25. Luigi Bonaparte, *Risposta a sir Walter Scott sulla vita di Napoleone*, Florence, Coen, 1829; Livorno, Vignozzi, 1829; Lugano, Veladini, 1829.

26. Leonard-Charles Gallois, *Storia di Napoleone compilata sulle di lui proprie memorie*, Lugano, Ruggia, 1828, 2 vols.

27. Jean Baptiste Capefigue, *L'Europa durante il consolato e l'impero di Napoleone*, Florence, Galileiana, 1840-1845, 10 vols, and Milan, Turati, 1840-1844, 3 vols.

28. Antoine-Henry Jomini, *Vita politica e militare di Napoleone raccontata da lui medesimo al Tribunale di Cesare, Alessandro e Federigo*, Livorno, Vignozzi, 1829, 4 vols; Livorno, at Bertani, Antonelli e C., 1829-1830, 12 vols; Florence, presso Celli & Ronchi, 1829, 12 vols.

29. Paul-Mathieu Laurent, *Storia di Napoleone, illustrata da Orazio Vernet, voltata in italiano da Antonio Lissoni e da esso cresciuta delle imprese militari delle soldatesche italiane*, Turin, per Alessandro Fontana, 1839.

30. Jacques Norvins, *Storia di Napoleone, del sig. di Norvins, prima edizione italiana con note e tavole*, Bastia, presso i fratelli Fabiani, 1833.

3. *Biography and memory: Jacques Norvins and Laurent de l'Ardèche*

Two of the main biographies that contributed to the diffusion of the Napoleonic myth came out during the third phase. Destined to achieve wide circulation that extended even beyond the borders of France were Jacques Norvins' *Histoire de Napoléon* (*History of Napoleon*) and Laurent de l'Ardèche's *Histoire de l'Empereur Napoléon* (*History of the Emperor Napoleon*).[31] The incredible success of these works stands in stark contrast to the relative neglect they have received from modern scholars, who have analysed the myth primarily from other perspectives, privileging the masterpieces of European literature, memoirs and the historiography of the second half of the 19th century.[32] On the other hand, the analysis of works such as those by Norvins and Laurent de l'Ardèche allows us not only to trace the success of the biographical genre, but also to observe the renewal of historical knowledge, which goes hand in hand with references to contemporaneity.[33] The two personalities presented here, a high-ranking conservative official and a democrat with Sansimonian sympathies, bore witness to how the myth circulated along widely divergent tracks that might never intersect, despite their common aim, which was that of proposing to contemporary politics a new order and way of managing consensus.

The *Histoire de Napoléon* by Jacques Norvins was published in 1827-1828 as a response to the critical biography written by Walter Scott and stands as a celebration of Napoleon's role in the history of France and Europe. Norvins himself recalled reading about the publication of Walter Scott's biography of Napoleon in the newspaper, noting that Scott had been unfairly critical of the French even in 1822.[34] Norvins wanted to provide a response as rich in detail as Scott's more recent outrageous attack on the memory of Napoleon and the pride of the French.

Norvins had been one of the most loyal followers of Napoleon. Born in 1769 into a wealthy family with ties in finance, he had left France in 1792 only to return five years later, ending up in jail. He was freed by Bonaparte thanks to the intervention of Madame de Staël, after which he embarked on a high-profile career in French public institutions that culminated in 1810 with his nomination as Director General of the Police of the former Papal States. Together with the biography by Ardèche, Norvins' *Histoire de Napoléon* is the most famous text of Napoleonic propaganda relayed through historical narrative, and was capable of reaching a vast audience thanks to its many foldout plates of engravings, battle maps and illustrations created by incredibly talented artists such as Raffet and Vernet. The second and third editions appeared in 1829, followed by the

31. Paris, Dupont, 1827, 4 vols; Paris, Dubochet et Ce, 1839.

32. Mascilli Migliorini, *Il mito dell'eroe*.

33. On this topic, from the perspective of historical repetition, see the works by Daniele Di Bartolomeo, *Le due repubbliche. Pensare la Rivoluzione nella Francia del 1848*, Rome, Viella, 2024, and, in collaboration with Francesco Benigno, *Napoleone deve morire. L'idea di ripetizione storica nella Rivoluzione francese*, Rome, Salerno Editrice, 2020.

34. Norvins, *Storia di Napoleone*, vol. I, pp. VI-VII.

fourth in 1833. The twenty-first – and last – edition came out posthumously in 1868, as Norvins had died in 1854. The Spanish translation of his *Histoire* came out in Paris in 1827 and was published again in Barcelona in 1833. German translations followed in Leipzig (1839) and Stuttgart (1841), but the text was never translated into English. The Italian translation process was very surprising, as it started in 1833 in Bastia (Corsica), where the Fabiani brothers published the first Italian translation. In 1834 it was printed by Pedone and Muratori in Palermo, while in 1839 the complete edition in one volume was released by the Swiss Tipografia Elvetica in Capolago, alongside the second edition of the Bastia translation. In 1845, it was printed by Pilloni in Florence, and in 1852 various Milanese editions started to circulate, which dominated the literary market throughout the second half of the 19th century under the aegis of Sonzogno, who put out five more editions between 1893 and 1910, with notes and additions by Palmiro Premoli.

Laurent de l'Ardèche published his biography of Napoleon in a different political context, with the first edition coming out in 1839.[35] The house of Bourbon had fallen almost ten years prior, and Louis Philippe I sat on the throne of France. The new monarch had a brand new approach to Napoleon and his legacy compared with previous rulers. He completed the Arc de Triomphe, restored the statue of the Emperor standing out against the sky atop the Vendôme column, and ensured that Napoleon's remains would return to Paris. Once again, Napoleon's status went from usurper to symbol of redemption for France. In this propitious climate, Laurent de l'Ardèche seized the moment to write a biography of the Emperor. He was a man of many talents: journalist, lawyer and writer. He was already known for his Saint-Simonianism and left-leaning republican sympathies. In 1828, he wrote in defence of Robespierre, highlighting that he was a deeply intelligent and uncompromising patriot.[36] From Robespierre to Napoleon was but a short step, and de l'Ardèche followed the idealised narrative of *Le Mémorial de Saint'Hélène* (*The Memorial of Saint Helena*) in his biography of the Emperor, whom he depicted as a universal hero, champion of the legacy of the French Revolution. His text was very successful, appearing in translation in Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Italy. In 1839, the Turinese publisher Fontana released a successful edition that included the same illustrations as the French one, translated and edited by Antonio Lissoni.[37]

Translating in those years did not simply entail a good rendition of the source text in Italian[38] but included the addition of several appendices such as notes, introductions and previously unreleased texts that had the function of integrating

35. Nathalie Coilly, "Le journal de Laurent de l'Ardèche", *Revue de la BNF*, 31/1 (2009), pp. 56-65.

36. The text was printed under a pseudonym: *Réfutation de l'histoire de France de l'abbé de Montgaillard, publiée par M. Uranelt de Leuze*, Paris, Delaforest, 1828.

37. Laurent, *Storia di Napoleone*.

38. Maria Pia Casalena, *Tradurre nell'Italia del Risorgimento. Le culture straniere e le idee di nazione*, Rome, Carocci, 2021.

what was missing in the source text.[39] And so, through the figure of Napoleon, the Italian translators, who in many cases had directly experienced the revolutionary and Napoleonic era, found themselves actively engaging in politics through their translations in the Restoration period. Such was the case for some of the translators who are discussed in the following pages, though so many more would be worthy of consideration, beginning with Bartolomeo Bertolini, a figure Antonio Trampus recently studied.[40] Bartolini, a Napoleonic veteran of the Russian campaign, tried his hand at a true "redetermination of memory" in the Trieste of the Restoration, mixing reality with invention and creating a vivid narrative of that glorious period. His writing enjoyed overwhelming success, resonating beyond the mid-19th century, and was even lauded by Alessandro Manzoni. In 1864, Bartolini dedicated a book of his memoirs to King Victor Emmanuel II, who recognised the gesture as a confirmation of the perpetuation of the myth of Napoleon beyond the traditional timeframe of the Risorgimento. His success continued into the 20th century thanks to the publishing house Mondadori, which printed a new edition of his account of the Russian campaign in 1940, destined to reverberate with what Italian soldiers would soon be experiencing on the gelid Russian steppes.[41]

4. *The missing publication of Giacomo Breganze*

Among the most significant translations of Napoleon's biographies, let us mention *Note e supplementi* (*Notes and Appendices*) by Giacomo Breganze.[42] In the 1820s, he edited the translation of *Histoire de Napoléon* by Jacques Norvins, adding a section dedicated to the history of Italy. Although Breganze was a lesser-known intellectual, his unpublished work represents a committed translation in the shape of a political reflection and analysis of Norvins' text. Born to a wealthy family of Vicenza in 1773, he graduated in Padua and in 1797 entered the local democratic government, inspired by the French revolutionary movement. He became one of the party's most radical members and moved to Milan after the Treaty of Campo Formio, where he connected with Ugo Foscolo and Melchiorre Gioia. The three of them founded *Il Monitore Italiano*, a political journal that attracted many staunch patriots and that would be directed by Breganze himself. Despite his scepticism toward Napoleon and French politics – considered too

39. Cecilia Carnino, "Traduzioni e saperi di governo nell'Italia napoleonica. Testi e peritesti", and Stefano Poggi, "Educare al *Code Napoléon*. Manuali e traduzioni giuridiche nell'Italia napoleonica", both found in *Il Risorgimento*, 71/2 (2024), pp. 33-54 and pp. 77-95.

40. Antonio Trampus, "I veterani napoleonici e la risemantizzazione della memoria tra Otto e Novecento. Il 'militare' e l'opera di Bartolomeo Bertolini attraverso Manzoni e il fascismo", in *Il "militare" nelle Italie di Napoleone. Società, cultura, istituzioni*, ed. by Paola Bianchi, Rome, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2024, pp. 109-119.

41. Bartolomeo Bertolini, *La campagna di Russia 1812-1815*, Milan, Mondadori, 1940.

42. This forthcoming text, which I have edited, will appear in the series "Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie" in 2026. On Breganze, see the first chapter of Giacomo Girardi, *La patria e lo Stato: la famiglia Breganze nella storia d'Italia, 1796-1922*, Milan, Biblion, 2025, pp. 21-105.

divisive for the Italian people – Breganze's career flourished in high-profile roles within public institutions, even including a brief stint as Minister of Police in the Cisalpine Republic in 1799. He later served as General Commissioner of Police and, in 1808, he was nominated Judge of the Court of Appeals in Ancona and Brescia. Eventually, he acknowledged that French hegemony was far preferable to that of Austria, becoming a loyal supporter of Napoleon's policies and even playing an interesting role in the escape of viceroy Eugène de Beauharnais from Milan in 1814. After the fall of the Kingdom of Italy that same year, he retired from political life and opened a legal practice. He continued to write until his death in 1835.[43]

Four out of five volumes of Breganze's manuscript include his translation of Norvins' text. The *Note e supplementi* (*Notes and Appendices*) can be found in the fourth volume, an original contribution that focuses solely on the events taking place in Italy. He began with a *Conto-reso del traduttore* (*Translator's Report*) in which he made several interesting annotations to his translation, delineating his approach to translation and his goals: being faithful to the original while intervening, nonetheless, on passages that might be difficult for an Italian audience to comprehend. His process was meticulous yet free, as he was the one to decide where to change the source text by editing out parts or omitting and correcting elements to "Italianise" the text, not only linguistically but politically, too. Thus, under the pretence of correcting and integrating Norvins' work, Breganze added his appendices to fill in the gaps concerning what had occurred in Italy.

While Norvins' biography was written in response to Scott's, Breganze's was created in response to Federico Coraccini, the mysterious author of the *Storia dell'Amministrazione del Regno d'Italia durante il dominio francese* (*History of the Administration of the Kingdom of Italy During French Rule*), published in Lugano in 1823.[44] Breganze enacted a heated attack against Coraccini, whose real name was Giuseppe Valeriani, a former Jacobin. His volume criticised Napoleon's rule in Italy, portraying the Emperor and all the political figures involved in the government in those years in a negative way. Valeriani compared the Kingdom of Italy to the pre-Napoleonic period of the peninsula, when in his opinion it was ruled by reform-minded sovereigns such as Joseph II and Leopold II and was generally characterised by good governance, such as that of the king of Naples, a sovereign with excellent qualities who ruled over extraordinary lands. These were intolerable positions for a man like Breganze, who had dedicated his political life to cultivating the principles of the French Revolution on the assumption that it could serve as the starting point for a comprehensive renewal of Italy. Although he acknowledged some merit in Valeriani's text due to its use of archival sources, Breganze considered the work to be flawed and mendacious, full of misleading passages steeped in "poison". He believed that Valeriani wanted to weave a web

43. On the "Jacobin generation" between the two centuries, see Luca Addante, *Le Colonne della Democrazia. Giacobinismo e società segrete alle radici del Risorgimento*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2024. The volume contains several references to Breganze.

44. Federico Coraccini [Giuseppe Valeriani], *Storia dell'amministrazione del Regno d'Italia durante il dominio francese*, Lugano, Veladini, 1823.

of mostly unwarranted accusations toward anyone who had held a prominent position between 1796 and 1814, thus condemning the entire Napoleonic ruling class to which Breganze had once belonged.

While we will not delve into the Valeriani controversy, we must recognise the profound meaning of Breganze's manuscript, which is rich in anecdotes and detailed analyses about important individuals, such as Francesco Melzi d'Eril – the vice-president of the Napoleonic Italian Republic –, general Alessandro Trivulzio and some French officers. He also reflected on several social, economic, cultural and political matters, providing an overview of secret societies, monetary policy and investigating Napoleon's approach toward Italy.

This last effort of the old revolutionary Breganze, which would not be published for 100 years, was discovered by his descendants at the end of the 19th century, and then again in the 1930s. Unfortunately, none of them decided to publish it.[45] Despite its manuscript form, the text remained an important point of reference for a specific type of patriotism that for a very long time would mark not only the history of his family, but in some ways, even a substantial part of Italian history between the 18th and 20th centuries. This form of patriotism was the legacy of the French Revolution – perfected or twisted depending on the circumstances of the following years – but kept alive through the tireless efforts of successive generations of biographers, and thus destined to reach the 20th century.

5. *Antonio Lissoni and military pride*

After 1814, on a peninsula that had been handed back over to its ancient sovereigns, it was not always easy to publish texts about Napoleon. Censors tried to prevent books from spreading ideas among the population that might be dangerous to the public order. Under the tight scrutiny of the Austrian rulers, the publishing houses in the Lombardy-Veneto area had been left behind when it came to spreading the Napoleonic myth, with the sole exception of Milan, where the works of Walter Scott, Alexandre Dumas *père*, Pierre Paganel and Louis-Vincent-Joseph le Blond de Saint-Hilaire, among others, appeared in translation.[46] Instead, the publishing houses in Tuscany and Turin, capital city of the Kingdom of Sardinia, where the publisher Fontana was active, bucked the trend. Fontana had understood that the public clamoured after texts about Napoleon and saw the potential for profit. Between 1839 and 1846, Fontana published one or more pamphlets on Napoleonic history every week, with his colleagues soon following suit.[47]

45. Nicola, a nephew, published a new edition of Giacomo Breganze's pamphlet *Sulla libertà dei mari: considerazioni di Giacomo Breganze di Vicenza*, with a "Preface" and the "Author's biography", Milan, Pirotta, 1857. See Girardi, *La patria e lo Stato*, pp. 7-19.

46. Giampietro Berti, *Censura e circolazione delle idee nel Veneto della Restaurazione*, Venice, Deputazione Editrice, 1989.

47. Andrea Merlotti, "Una lunga assenza. Piemonte napoleonico e storiografia subalpina fra Otto e Novecento", in *L'esperienza napoleonica in Italia. Un bilancio storiografico*, ed. by Stefano Levati, Milan, Angeli, 2023, pp. 203-220.

In 1839, it would be Fontana who published *Storia di Napoleone* (*History of Napoleon*) by Laurent de l'Ardèche and translated by Antonio Lissoni with illustrations by Vernet.[48] Lissoni is not well known today, but at the start of the 19th century he was renowned for his prolific work as translator, writer and historian, not to mention for being the embodiment of the Napoleonic war veteran. After the Napoleonic campaigns, he had to reinvent himself and saw in literature a promising pathway to fame and money. Although his written output is negligible as far as literary quality is concerned, it is useful to analyse how it perpetuated the widespread archetype of a citizen shouldering a rifle to defend his homeland and the tenets of the revolution, taking the first steps toward the development of national awareness. A few of his volumes can be studied from this perspective, including *Gl'italiani in Catalogna* (*Italians in Catalunya*), published with the false imprint of London in 1814. Written in epistolary form, it promotes the image of Italians in arms – Lissoni himself, to be exact, described on the cover page as an "ufficiale di cavalleria italiano" ("Italian cavalry officer"). It was a polemical response to the common stereotype that Italians were not cut out for war. The Napoleonic period had shown, instead, that Italians were second to none when it came to honouring military duties, as proven by the brave soldiers involved in the Russian and Spanish campaigns. Lissoni was one of many former officers under Napoleon who started to create an Italian "military memory", alongside other figures as Cesare de Laugier, who wrote many successful texts on the Russian and Spanish campaigns to defend the bravery of Italian soldiers.[49] Lissoni, de Laugier, Bartolomeo Bertolini, Carlo Zucchi, Giuseppe Lechi and others got to live long lives, marking the period of Risorgimento with their presence, armed with both rifle and pen. They influenced the emerging concept of the nation, which they tied directly to the Napoleonic era.

Lissoni also argued with several French authors, such as Honoré de Balzac, who was guilty of portraying Italian soldiers in a negative way in his novella *Les Marana* (*The Maranas*).[50] Lissoni's most renowned accomplishment was translating Laurent de l'Ardèche's work, and his was not a mere transposition of the popular volume into the Italian but rather an act of appropriation of the text by adding some paragraphs dedicated to the endeavours of Italian soldiers, deemed to have been neglected in the original. The myth of Napoleon went hand in hand with the awareness that part of its history belonged to Italy. Lissoni's addenda became a separate volume, titled *Compendio della storia militare italiana dal 1792 al 1815* (*Summary of Italian Military History from 1792 to 1815*), which was published at the same time as another successful biography: *Histoire populaire, anecdotique et pittoresque de Napoléon et de la Grande Armée* (*History of Napoleon and the Grande Armée: Popular, Anecdotal and Picturesque Accounts*)

48. Laurent, *Storia di Napoleone*.

49. Among his many books, see the thirteen volumes [C. De Laugier], *Fasti e vicende degl'italiani dal 1801 al 1815 o Memorie di un'uffiziale per servire alla storia militare italiana*, Florence, n.p., 1829-1838.

50. Antonio Lissoni, *Difesa dell'onore dell'armi italiane oltraggiato dal Signor di Balzac* […], Milan, Pogliani, 1837.

by Émile Marco de Saint-Hilaire, illustrated by Jules David.[51] Lissoni translated this text into Italian as well, and from the title it demonstrated an attempt to spread the myth of Napoleon not only in middle-class circles – which had been the goal of publishing the correspondence between Napoleon and Joséphine de Beauharnais[52] – but also in lower-class circles where the cult of Napoleon had never stopped blooming. It was no coincidence that the police at the time often ran across pieces of furniture like chalk busts or simple lithographic prints depicting Bonaparte and his endeavours.[53]

6. *Napoleon, the first soldier of Italy*

Historians and biographers of the time wanted to preserve two main elements, as demonstrated by Lissoni's case: on one hand, the idea of the Italian nation taking up arms as an index of its population finally reaching political maturity; and, on the other hand, the attempt to prove that there was an unbreakable connection between Napoleon and Italy. As we have seen, the bulk of Napoleon's biographies were published not just as translations of the French originals, but as texts that were in large part original, within which the figure of Napoleon took on a central importance in the history of Italy. If the Emperor's actions had greatly benefited Italians, it was true that, in return, Italians had contributed to the construction of his glory. It is not surprising that Italian memorialists took to writing their own works on the life of Napoleon, at the same time translating from the French while also introducing original texts.

Another case to analyse in this regard involves Marco Malagoli Vecchi from Modena. The little we know about his life comes from the publisher Gasparo Barbèra, who was his accountant for a brief period. Barbèra described Malagoli as an "excessive show-off" and a "penniless comedian".[54] Malagoli presented himself as a lover of books with a military past, a "soldier in the cavalry of the Italian army", which was useful for proving his claim of being a veteran, someone who had experienced firsthand the things he wrote about. Between 1844 and 1855, he published the *Ristretto della vita e dei fatti di Napoleone* (*Short Summary of the Life and Actions of Napoleon*) and a new translation of Norvins' biography with his original notes.[55] It was not the first time he had done something of the sort, as the Italian translation of *Napoléon et ses contemporains* (*Napoleon*

51. Turin, Fontana, 1844.

52. *Lettere di Napoleone a Giuseppina durante la prima guerra d'Italia, il Consolato e l'Impero e lettere di Giuseppina a Napoleone ed a sua figlia. Prima versione italiana di Antonio Lissoni*, Milan, per G. Truffi e comp., 1834, 2 vols.

53. On this topic, from the perspective of material culture, see the first chapter in Enrico Francia, *Oggetti risorgimentali. Una storia materiale della politica nel primo Ottocento*, Rome, Carocci, 2021.

54. Gasparo Barbèra, *Memorie di un editore pubblicate dai figli*, Florence, Barbèra, 1883, pp. 41-45.

55. Marco Malagoli Vecchi, *Ristretto della vita e dei fatti di Napoleone*, Florence, a spese di G. Raggi, 1844, and Jacques Norvins, *Storia di Napoleone del Signor di Norvins nuova*

and His Contemporaries) by Laurent Augustin Pelletier de Chambure, published in 1836-1837, reads on the title page "popularized by M.M.V"., an acronym that can be attributed to Marco Malagoli Vecchi.[56] Like Lissoni, Malagoli had every intention of taking advantage of the success of the Napoleonic myth to gain personal benefit, both in fame and profit, which he desperately needed. The construction of the Napoleonic myth therefore followed a bumpy path from time to time, and its primary objective was not always the glorification of the Emperor.

The last scholar we will discuss came from a very different background. Giacomo Lombroso was born in 1794 and was therefore very young during the Napoleonic period. His family was Jewish, but he converted to Catholicism and worked as a merchant before turning to literature.[57] A few texts on Napoleon have emerged among the many he wrote. Lombroso wrote in an original way about the Emperor, including biographies of the generals who gained recognition between 1796 and 1815. His main project, *Gallerie* (*Galleries*), emerged from this effort. It consisted of a series of biographies of prominent officials through which Lombroso drew a comprehensive history of the Napoleonic wars. In 1840 *Vite dei primarj marescialli e generali francesi, italiani, polacchi, tedeschi, russi, inglesi, prussiani e spagnuoli che ebbero parte nelle guerre napoleoniche* (*Lives of the Most Important Marshals and Generals from France, Italy, Poland, Germany, Russia, England, Prussia and Spain Who Took Part in the Napoleonic Wars*) was published, followed by a volume in 1843 dedicated to the Italian officers: *Vite dei primarj generali ed ufficiali italiani* (*Lives of the Most Important Generals and Officials of Italy*). In 1848 he published *Vite dei primarj marescialli, ammiragli e generali che si distinsero nelle guerre napoleoniche in Europa, in Africa, in Asia, in America e nei marittimi conflitti accaduti nelle varie parti del globo* (*Lives of the Most Important Marshals, Admirals and Generals Who Distinguished Themselves in the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, Africa, Asia, America and in Naval Warfare in Various Places Throughout the World*). Finally, in 1852, the capstone of these biographies was published: *Vita guerriera, politica e privata di Napoleone* (*The Life of Napoleon in War, Politics and Private Life*).[58] It was not Lombroso's first biography of Napoleon, as he had written *Vita privata di Napoleone* (*A Private Life of Napoleon*) in 1839, offering an intimate portrait rather than a celebration of Napoleon the military hero.[59] It was in fact a highly political text, celebrating

edizione italiana corredata di note e della giunta d'importanti documenti per cura del bibliofilo Marco Malagoli Vecchj, Florence, Pillori, 1845.

56. Auguste de Chambure, *Napoleone e i suoi contemporanei. Serie d'incisioni in rame rappresentanti varii tratti d'eroismo, di clemenza, di generosità, di popolarità, col testo, pubblicata da Augusto de Chambure, ed ora volgarizzata da M.M.V.*, Florence, per V. Batelli e figli, 1836, 2 vols. A second edition appeared the following year.

57. Gadi Luzzatto Voghera, *Il prezzo dell'eguaglianza. Il dibattito sull'emancipazione degli ebrei in Italia 1781-1848*, Milan, Angeli, 1998, p. 91, and Gianluca Albergoni, *I mestieri delle lettere tra istituzioni e mercato. Vivere e scrivere a Milano nella prima metà dell'Ottocento*, Milan, Angeli, 2006, p. 142.

58. All volumes were published by Borroni e Scotti in Milan, in the years 1840, 1843, 1848 and 1852.

59. Milan, Manini, 1839.

Napoleon as a hero who had saved the Revolution in France to bring order and modernity to Italy, thus promoting a new sense of national pride. Napoleon was therefore to be thanked if Italy had experienced a brief period of unity, which was subsequently destroyed by the Congress of Vienna.[60]

In conclusion, during the Restoration there was no way of limiting the diffusion of the myth of Napoleon, which manifested in many different ways. Napoleon was both a literary and political hero, whose myth circulated in bookstores and private homes, becoming increasingly widespread thanks to the work of Italian translators and authors who were his contemporaries. He was perceived as the first unifier of the peninsula in the modern period, with Italians sharing his hopes and concerns. The choice of translating certain texts over others almost always coincided with how closely the political affiliations of the translator aligned with those of the source author, though at times it was simply a product of chance. In the latter case, the "Italian appendices" to the translations are even more significant, as they convey the perspective of men who dedicated themselves to the task of writing. Though motivated by a variety of ambitions and perspectives, taken together, the texts authored by Breganze, Lissoni, Malagoli Vecchi and Lombroso create an overview of how in those years the Italian process of inventing the myth of Napoleon was established through these literary works. Although long neglected by scholars, they were enormously successful as catalysts, comparable in some ways to the works of Stendhal and Manzoni in their ability to perpetuate the Napoleonic myth.[61]

60. Casalena, *Biografie*, pp. 239-244.

61. Matilda Greig, *Dead Men Telling Tales: Napoleonic War Veterans and the Military Memoir Industry, 1808-1914*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2021.

Maria Stella Chiaruttini

A Bank Made in the Image and Likeness of Italians: The Role of Competent Politicians Between Theory, Practice and Risorgimento Rhetoric*

1. *The ideal of the competent politician and a less-than-ideal banking system*

On 17 March 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed. While politically much of the peninsula had been unified, the work of creating a national community and a single market corresponding to the borders of the new state was just beginning. One of the primary symbols of this unity – representing both loyalty to the House of Savoy and the privileged economic relationships between fellow citizens – was the national currency, the lira, inherited from Piedmont.[1] From the outset, many hoped for the creation of another "economic and financial symbol of national unity":[2] the transformation of Banca Nazionale – the Piedmontese bank of issue – into Banca d'Italia, the nation's "central" bank, the only one authorised to issue banknotes convertible to lira for the bearer. The unity of coinage would thus correspond with that of paper currency representing its equivalent value, a symbol made even more powerful considering that, for fiscal reasons, starting in 1866 and almost without interruption, Italy would have to abolish or limit the conversion of banknotes into cash. These notes would therefore effectively circulate as a surrogate for the national currency.

The creation of a central bank in Italy could have occurred through the establishment of a new bank (whether private, public or semi-public) or through the merger of existing issuing banks inherited from the former states of the peninsula. In practice, the Right-wing governments encouraged the expansion of branches of Banca Nazionale throughout the peninsula and its take-over of three smaller banks (Banca delle Quattro Legazioni, Banca Parmense and Stabilimento Mercantile di Venezia). Between 1862 and 1865, they also unsuccessfully promoted Banca Nazionale's merger with Banca Nazionale Toscana to create

* My sincere gratitude to Manuel Romero for translating this essay.

1. On the complexities surrounding the adoption of the lira as a national currency, see Maria Stella Chiaruttini, "The Lira: Token of National (Dis)union, 1814-1874", in *EUI Working Papers*, HEC 2018-01, Florence, European University Institute, 2018.

2. Gerolamo Boccardo, *L'economia nazionale e le banche. Alcune osservazioni intorno al nuovo progetto di legge per l'ordinamento degli istituti di emissione*, Rome, Forzani e c., 1888, p. 10.

Banca d'Italia. Similarly, original plans to suppress or drastically reduce the operations of Banco di Napoli and Banco di Sicilia, two public banks inherited from the Bourbons, quickly failed due to local opposition. With the capture of Rome – and its issuing bank, Banca Romana – and the Left's rise to power, the project of creating a central bank stalled until 1893, when, amid widespread financial crisis and political corruption, Banca Romana was liquidated and Banca d'Italia was created through the merger of Banca Nazionale with Banca Nazionale Toscana and Banca Toscana di Credito. However, Banco di Napoli and Banco di Sicilia continued to issue paper currency, and only in 1926 did Banca d'Italia acquire a monopoly on currency issuance.[3]

The question of whether there should be one or multiple issuing banks was a long-debated theoretical issue among economists throughout the 19th century. However, it was also a deeply political matter as it concerned the role of the state in the economy and, particularly in Italy, the relative importance of different regions. To speak of a "single bank" and "monopoly" or of "banking plurality" and "freedom of issuance" in Italy also meant discussing how liberal and unified the newly established national liberal state truly was. The issue was both highly technical and profoundly political, sparking intense public debate. It involved creating and managing consensus regarding the importance of the state, private capital, northern finance and regional autonomies within a unified Italy. This debate engaged numerous experts, businessmen and politicians. In this essay, I will focus on four emblematic figures – prominent patriots and statesmen of the Risorgimento – who, as ministers, played decisive roles in shaping the country's banking policies. Cavour helped establish Banca Nazionale, which he envisioned as the sole issuing bank for a unified Italy. In 1866, Scialoja introduced "forced circulation", declaring Banca Nazionale's banknotes inconvertible, giving it a privileged status over all other banks, and effectively imposing on the nation the financial dominance of a private bank controlled mainly by northern capitalists. Cordova, who had attempted to found a national bank in Sicily as early as 1848, chaired the parliamentary commission investigating forced circulation that in 1868 essentially equated the privilege granted to Banca Nazionale with a financial coup against the nation. Finally, in 1874, Minghetti authored Italy's first comprehensive banking law, which revoked Banca Nazionale's exclusive privilege and granted it to a consortium of all issuing banks, ushering in an era of oligopolistic plurality that would last, despite later reforms, until 1926.

These four figures from Italy's national pantheon are primarily known as politicians rather than experts, yet their political careers were largely built on their financial expertise. In fact, their objective competence in economic matters soon became a defining feature of their political persona, shaping the idealised image of the Risorgimento statesman. Although they held different views – both in theory and practice – on the role of a national bank, in building the country's financial architecture, they embodied an ideal type of statesman and citizen that helped

3. Sergio Cardarelli, "La questione bancaria in Italia dal 1860 al 1892", in *Ricerche per la storia della Banca d'Italia*, 12 vols, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 1990, vol. I, pp. 105-180.

legitimise and shape the identity of the newly unified nation. When we examine how they were portrayed, some common traits emerge: a strong intellectual curiosity that extended to economics, a selfless passion for politics, experience in political journalism that preceded or accompanied their political commitment to building consensus and, above all, the "Italianness" of their approach to economics – one that blended ingenuity, morality and common sense free from rigid dogmatism. Their economic expertise made them the ideal representatives of their time, an era that, in Scialoja's words, was "eminently *economic*", in which "*politics has become almost entirely economics*" (emphasis in original). In this context, a newly unified Italy sought to assert its material, moral and intellectual prestige on the world stage.[4]

On one hand, the celebration of these competent ministers reflects a desire to morally unify Italy by encouraging identification with "model Italians". On the other, the debates surrounding their actions reveal just how difficult it was to reconcile competing material interests within a truly national market. When individual ministers were praised, their ability to bridge theory and practice was portrayed as a distinctly "Italian" strength – something that legitimised them. But when it came to evaluating the banking system they helped create, the tone often shifted. In 1888, the economist Boccardo attributed Italy's failure to establish a central bank primarily to the nature of Italians themselves, to their constant avoidance of "absolute and definitive solutions", their "tendency toward amicable compromises and middle-of-the-road solutions", their "even-tempered way of thinking and acting" – in short, to their "accommodating and somewhat Machiavellian nature" that risked transforming "eclecticism" into "syncretism" and "moderation" into "sceptical indifference".[5] In practice, then, a split often emerged between the perceived excellence of the individual and the value of their policies, with their work frequently seen as science giving way to the demands of politics. Depending on the critic, this yielding was condemned either as a repudiation of the principle of freedom in favour of privilege, or as a failure to stand firm against the centrifugal forces of regionalism, which undermined efforts to unify Italy's political and banking structures. Thus, in public debate, the banking system – built on a compromise between theory and practice – became a metaphor for a liberal state shadowed by the spectre of banking absolutism, a national unity strained by regional rivalries and a country free from foreign rule but internally undermined by political and financial opportunism.[6] In this paradoxical dialectic, the competent minister came to embody the highest ideals of a unified Italy, while his policies revealed its deepest vulnerabilities.

4. Achille Loria, "Nel centenario di Antonio Scialoja", *Nuova Antologia*, 199/1130 (1919), p. 361.

5. Boccardo, *Economia nazionale*, pp. 11-12.

6. Maria Stella Chiaruttini, "The Bank of Naples and the Struggle for Regional Power in Risorgimento Italy", *Modern Italy*, 26/3 (2020), pp. 313-330; Maria Stella Chiaruttini, "Fatta l'Italia, bisogna fare… le banche italiane. La formazione dello stato unitario nella parabola delle banche di emissione", *Storia e problemi contemporanei*, 94 (2025), pp. 17-35.

2. *Cavour: father of the nation, father of the nation's bank*

The overlap between the roles of politician and expert, scholar and manager of political and economic affairs, and shaper of public opinion through the press is especially evident in the figure of Cavour. His work clearly shows how the creation of a nation-state was closely intertwined with the founding of a national bank.

Cavour's deep interest in both political and economic matters – first as a young intellectual, and soon after as a businessman – is well known. In the years following Italy's Unification, biographers portrayed Cavour's technical expertise as a defining characteristic that set this clear-eyed and pragmatic "father of the nation" apart from figures like Garibaldi and Mazzini. In 1892, Domenico Zanichelli edited and published a selection of Cavour's writings, leaving us a distinctive portrait of him. We first encounter the familiar trope – one that we will see attributed to other competent political figures – of a "vast and sharp mind", an "active and brilliant imagination" and an "exceptional aptitude for practical studies". "He is an economist of the liberal school", who, "from 1835 to 1846, devoted himself entirely to economic and social issues", as he was deeply convinced that the cause of Italian independence could only be secured through the establishment of political freedom, which was inextricably tied to economic liberty. But in writing about economics,

> Cavour is always, at his core, a political man, without necessarily ever becoming an empiricist. He's incapable of getting lost in vague abstractions; utopia has no appeal for him; scientific data […] is adapted to practical necessities […]. In short, he is ever the practical man, but in the distinctly Italian sense of the word – that is, a man who always thinks with his own mind, […] who, even with regard to the most daring scientific concepts, never loses his sense of reality.

It was precisely in this pragmatic pursuit of a "happy medium" that he revealed "the true Italian character of his intellect and spirit". An "economist", "financier" and "man of numbers", even when discussing the free trade of grain in 1845 in the Geneva journal *Bibliothèque universelle*, Cavour already appeared as a "statesman, ruler, creator of States, tamer of revolutions, helmsman with an infallible eye and steady hand who, through the most terrible storms, will know how to guide the ship entrusted to him to a safe and glorious port".[7] Even before he became Italy's "helmsman", however, Cavour focused on shaping public opinion by founding, with Cesare Balbo in 1847, *Il Risorgimento*, a newspaper with the goal of "spreading sound economic doctrines" in the belief that political resurgence was inseparable from economic resurgence.[8] Unlike men such as Minghetti, Cavour lacked only one quality to be a true man of letters, namely, "culture and practise". His "clean, precise, and sometimes incisive style", was

7. Domenico Zanichelli, *Gli scritti del Conte di Cavour*, 2 vols, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1892, vol. I, pp. XXXIII, XLVII-XLIX, L.

8. Camillo Cavour, "Influenza delle riforme sulle condizioni economiche dell'Italia", *Il Risorgimento*, 1 (1847), 15 December 1847.

clear and logical but "not elegant", and risked discrediting him in the eyes of future generations.[9]

Zanichelli's description is indeed flattering but also not far from the truth, as demonstrated by one of Cavour's earliest writings concerning credit reform in Piedmont. This was an epistolary exchange between "experts". While praising the distinguished lawyer Giacomo Giovanetti for his legal study on water utilisation in agriculture, Cavour asked for his enlightened opinion regarding the creation of a credit institution that would benefit agriculture.[10] In 1837, Cavour had already unsuccessfully attempted to secure government support for an issuing bank project proposed by his close friend Émile de la Rüe and other Genoese bankers. Now, after the government had finally sanctioned the establishment of an issuing bank in Genoa (partly through his good offices), he was again being consulted about a similar project in Turin.[11] The eminently practical nature of the free-trade advocate Cavour immediately emerged in his desire to adapt a similar credit institution to serve agricultural needs rather than solely commercial ones, and in his deliberation over whether a public bank would be preferable to a private one.[12] These aspirations, however, quickly gave way to action. As a matter of fact, he became one of the main promoters of Banca di Torino, founded in 1847 on the commercial model of Banca di Genova – an institution which he subtly accused, in the columns of *Il Risorgimento*, of prioritising the interests of high finance over those of the state and commerce in general.[13] His role as an advocate for banking development proceeded in parallel with his political rise. During the crisis of 1848-1849, it was Cavour who proposed granting legal tender status to the notes of Banca di Genova in exchange for a loan to the government, and he negotiated the merger of this bank with Banca di Torino to form Banca Nazionale.[14]

Once appointed as Minister of Agriculture and Commerce, Minister of Finance and finally President of the Council, Cavour sought in every way to strengthen the position of the new bank, which he envisioned as playing a key role in supporting the country's economic and military efforts, much like the Banque de France and Bank of England did in their respective nations. For Cavour, creating a powerful issuing institution was an essential step in transforming Piedmont (and a future Italy) into a modern state. In these efforts, Cavour was portrayed as an advocate for a "single bank" system and for private speculators holding

9. Zanichelli, *Scritti*, pp. VII, LII.

10. Cavour to Giovanetti, Turin, 7 [*recte*: 9] January 1844, in *Camillo Cavour. Epistolario*, ed. by Carlo Pischedda et al., 21 vols, Bologna-Florence, Zanichelli-Olschki, 1962-2012, vol. III, pp. 7-10.

11. Cavour to Émile De la Rüe [1837], *ibid.*, vol. I, p. 283; Cavour to Hippolyte De la Rüe [Turin], 29 December 1843, *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 485; Carlo Decugis, *Banca e credito nel decennio cavouriano*, Milan, Unicopli, 1979, pp. 55-58.

12. Cavour to Giovanetti.

13. Camillo Cavour, "Il banco di Genova", *Il Risorgimento*, 27 (1848), 29 January 1848.

14. *Banche, governo e parlamento negli Stati sardi. Fonti documentarie, 1843-1861*, ed. by Ernesto Rossi and Gian Paolo Nitti, 3 vols, Turin, Fondazione Einaudi, 1968, vol. I, pp. 174, 181-192, 235-271.

a monopoly on currency issuance. This was considered a politically dangerous position, his critics charged, as it would create an institution capable of dictating terms to the government – one that only ministers like Cavour, who maintained good personal relationships with its directors, could keep in check. It was also a position that, by restricting banking freedom, would harm the economy, promote credit inequalities and clash with the free-market principles he himself had espoused as an economist before becoming a statesman.

In reality, Cavour's vision for the banking system was flexible and shaped by considerations of political expediency. That being so, he supported the establishment of another issuing bank (the modest Banque de Savoie) to appease the Savoyards, tried to promote yet another bank in Sardinia and did not hesitate to raise the spectre of banking competition to soften the stance of Banca Nazionale.[15] In Milan, however, he encouraged the opening of a branch of Banca Nazionale even before Lombardy was formally annexed, at the expense of the local issuing bank that the Austrian government had just authorised after years of negotiation.[16] After the Bourbons were ousted, he strongly pushed for a southern expansion of Banca Nazionale to replace the two Bourbon public banks, a measure that the Right initially strove to implement after his death, triggering political uproar. Yet even in this, he was no ideological purist; he considered transforming Banco di Napoli into a Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (a kind of public development fund) or into a major bank with private participation to support agriculture in particular.[17] This pragmatism would be held against him after his death by economists firmly committed to free trade. As late as 1877, Cavour was still being portrayed as an opportunist or as a victim of the disastrous theory "*of practical exceptions to scientific principles*" (emphasis in original) because of his support for Banca Nazionale as a pillar of the Risorgimento state and his tolerance for the existence of smaller banks incapable of real competition.[18] Politically, Cavour embodied the Risorgimento of the happy medium[19] and, at the same time, the centralising, pro-Savoyard principle. His premature death consecrated him as a tutelary deity of the nation, rendering him untouchable and subject to criticism only as an inconsistent economist and supporter of that Banca Nazionale which reflected the authoritarian, monarchic, Piedmont-centred Italy he had helped to create, but which could not be so openly attacked.

15. Maria Stella Chiaruttini, "The Risorgimento and the Southern Question: A Financial History", PhD diss., Florence, European University Institute, 2019, pp. 105-170.

16. Silvia Conca Messina, "Il progetto della banca di sconto e di emissione del Regno Lombardo-Veneto. Problemi, proposte e trattative, 1853-1859", *Società e storia*, 116 (2007), pp. 321-355.

17. Cavour to Nigra, 4 February 1861, in *Cavour. Epistolario*, vol. XVIII/1, p. 339; Adriano Nisco, *Ricordi biografici di Niccola Nisco*, Naples, Stabilimento tipografico Pierro e Veraldi, 1902, p. 183.

18. Tullio Martello, "La questione dei banchi in Italia", *L'Economista*, 168 (1877).

19. Zanichelli, *Scritti*, p. XXXVIII.

3. *Scialoja: a forced supporter of forced circulation*

1 May 1866. With tears in his eyes, the Minister of Finance, Antonio Scialoja of Naples, signed the decree on "forced circulation", which made banknotes issued by Banca Nazionale non-convertible paper currency to finance the government. To some, it was an unavoidable step given the dire state of public finances and the Italian markets on the eve of the Third War of Independence. To others, it was a disastrous decision forced through by Banca Nazionale to bail out a few struggling northern banks and secure the de facto monopoly it had failed to obtain through Parliament.

Scialoja was another renowned patriot whose reputation was built on his achievements as an economist. The hagiographic account written by fellow economist and senator Achille Loria underscored, as in the case of Cavour, the "Italianness" of Scialoja's genius. As a young man, he "quickly demonstrated an intellectual precocity typical of the South", and in his most important economic treatise, published when he was only 23, he "dressed sound English doctrines in an essentially Italian style, marrying the impeccable rigidity of British theories with the high and lively sense of humanity characteristic of our thinkers". Like Cavour of *Il Risorgimento*, Scialoja also believed that with economic progress "*politics has become almost entirely economics*" (emphasis in original). In 1846, he arrived in Turin to hold a professorship in political economy – abolished by Carlo Felice and recently restored by Carlo Alberto – becoming "a herald to Piedmontese minds of a science previously unknown to them". As Minister of Agriculture and Commerce in the constitutional Neapolitan government of 1848, he was arrested in 1849, and we find him writing and teaching economics to his fellow prisoners, transforming even his jail "into a scholarly cell and a chair of science".[20] Exiled to Turin and unable to reclaim his professorship, which had meanwhile passed to another exile and future Minister of Finance, the Sicilian Francesco Ferrara, he received several assignments from Cavour, including defending his economic policies through a series of pamphlets, the most famous of which contested the Bourbons' reputation as good fiscal administrators.[21] In 1860, he then became one of Cavour's men in Naples, first as Minister of Finance in Garibaldi's dictatorial government and later as advisor to Lieutenant Farini.

Easily moved to emotion and horrified by the financial misconduct of that period in Naples, he repeatedly and emphatically begged Cavour – who initially considered him "the only one capable of managing the Finances"[22] – to allow him to resign from his thankless position. Instead, he had to stay and, contrary to his own convictions, carry forward Cavour's plan to expand Banca Nazionale "from Susa to Marsala".[23] Scialoja, like many liberals, wanted "to

20. Loria, *Scialoja*, pp. 358-364.

21. Maria Stella Chiaruttini, "'Robbery Made the Kingdom of Italy, Misery Will Unmake It': Fiscal Conflicts and Italian Nation-Building", *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 62/2 (2021), pp. 383-385.

22. Cavour to Farini [1 November 1860], in *Cavour. Epistolario*, vol. XVII/5, p. 2547.

23. Cavour to Nigra.

dismantle those outdated structures [of the Bourbon banks] and replace them with new ones".[24] However, he was not convinced of the theoretical necessity of a single bank of issue, especially in a country like Italy where the economic differences between regions were still considerable. One solution might have been to standardise the various regional banks and perhaps organise them into a national federalised system, laying the groundwork for a subsequent merger, especially since Neapolitan commerce was pushing to establish its own issuing bank in opposition to Banca Nazionale. However, faced with Cavour's resolve, he resigned himself to not bringing "any of [his] theoretical biases into this matter" and to "carry on like a practical man, not disparaging plans in the slightest that do not align well with abstract principles, but which might draw strength from special circumstances", even at the cost of "*depersonalis[ing]*" himself (emphasis in original) and incurring the wrath of his fellow citizens, along with accusations of "Piedmontism".[25]

After holding various political positions in the newly-formed Kingdom of Italy, Scialoja became Minister of Finance in 1866. In that role, "with anguish in his heart and, quite literally, in tears", he ushered in Italy's era of paper money, which would remain inconvertible for decades to come.[26] The move to forced circulation marked a deep rupture in Italian history, not just economically, but symbolically. One of the most important symbols of a nation-state's unity and power is its currency. With forced currency, Italy proved to the world that it did not possess or could not attract enough gold and silver to support the internal circulation of convertible paper money. Italy would never go bankrupt, but to satisfy the Treasury's needs, Italians had to accept being paid in pieces of paper rather than in ringing lire coins – paper notes that until 1874 were issued by a private bank of northern capitalists. In a certain sense, forced currency cemented monetary unity, but it did so to the advantage of a private association of capitalists, triggering backlash from other regional banks and from those who wanted a state-issued note. For some, Scialoja's decision was inevitable, and in making it, the minister proved to be both consistent with the principles of economic science and heroic in resisting for as long as he could before decreeing the inconvertibility of paper currency. For others, however, it revealed the true nature of the state being built – based on regional privileges and a form of disruptive profiteering reminiscent of "Borgian times" (in the words of Garibaldi) that would explode into other scandals linked to northern finance, such as those of the *Regìa tabacchi* (tobacco monopoly). This apocalyptic vision was reinforced by the Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry on forced currency, which in 1868 condemned forced currency as an unnecessary and harmful measure extorted by Banca Nazionale by exploiting momentary financial tensions in a genuine conspiracy against the state. Many judged the Commission's work as partisan, but it helped strengthen regionalist currents

24. Scialoja to Cavour, Naples, 8 November 1860, *ibid.*, vol. XVII/5, p. 2620.

25. Scialoja to Cavour, 17 and 27 December 1860, *ibid.*, vol. XVII/6, pp. 2981-2982, 3058-3060.

26. Loria, *Scialoja*, p. 368.

opposed to the monopoly on currency issuance and to the Piedmontisation of the banking system.[27] As minister, Scialoja was exonerated in unflattering terms as "a victim of circumstance, and entangled in the formidable web of interests spun by *political profiteering* [emphasis in original] around the Public Treasury", whose interests he should have protected.[28]

4. *Cordova: a martyr of post-Risorgimento profiteering*

On a sweltering 2 August 1868, Deputy Filippo Cordova, who was seriously ill, struggled to reach the Chamber at Palazzo Vecchio to discuss restrictive measures related to forced circulation. Along the way, he explained to his companion how "serious nations […] create a state bank and don't loaf about for eight years quibbling over theories *about the singularity and plurality of banks*" (emphasis in original). But as soon as he arrived, he collapsed and had to be taken home again. Though too sick to continue presiding over the Commission of Inquiry on forced currency, he continued following its work and supporting the creation of state-issued paper money until his last breath. He passed away on 16 September, and his funeral was "immediately followed by that of the inquiry into forced currency".[29] Cordova, who already as Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce in 1861-1862 and 1866-1867 had to confront the growing corruption that was infecting the Italian economy and Italian politics, "was destined to die in harness, impeding the advance of profiteering, which like a poisonous parasite threatened to sap Italy's national vitality".[30]

If Cavour was seen as the quintessential patron of Banca Nazionale and Scialoja was accused of being its foolish servant, then Cordova died as the tragic hero struggling in vain to redeem an Italy "of prose" that did not seem to measure up to the Italy "of poetry". As if to compensate for Cordova's less prestigious political pedigree compared to that of Cavour and Minghetti, his hagiographies portray his intellectual gifts in even more impressive terms. In a biographical profile written by his nephew, Senator Vincenzo Cordova, we are told that "[f]rom birth he was hailed as a miracle of precocity; still in swaddling clothes, he spoke clearly; by age seven, he was writing poetry", and that at the University of Catania, "the miracles of his intellect [were] still remembered as legendary". Ferdinando Petruccelli della Gattina flattered him as "*the most well-rounded mind in Italy*" (emphasis in original), a judgment shared by Quintino Sella.[31] Giuseppe La Farina

27. *Ibid.*, p. 368; Achille Plebano, Adolfo Sanguinetti, *La questione delle banche ed il servizio di tesoreria*, Florence, Regia Tipografia, 1869, pp. 204-247; Arianna Arisi Rota, *1869: il Risorgimento alla deriva. Affari e politica nel caso Lobbia*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2015.

28. *Filippo Cordova. I discorsi parlamentari e gli scritti editi ed inediti preceduti dai ricordi della sua vita*, ed. by Vincenzo Cordova, 4 vols., Rome, Forzani e C., 1889-1893, vol. I, p. 245.

29. *Cordova. Discorsi*, vol. I, pp. 256-268.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 230.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 194, 273.

remembered him as being endowed "with a powerful mind, an indomitable will, a prodigious memory and an inexhaustible eloquence".[32]

With degrees in geology and law, in 1848 he found himself as Finance Minister managing the dramatic financial situation of revolutionary Sicily. He was forced to issue state paper money and proposed a banking reform that, if implemented, would have significantly accelerated the island's financial progress. Only a few years earlier, in fact, the Bourbon government had established two public banks of deposit similar to the one in Naples (the future Banco di Napoli) to replace the municipal banks of Palermo and Messina, both dating as far back as the Renaissance. These two banks, however, did not yet offer commercial credit, something they would only begin to do very cautiously just before Garibaldi's landing and after having been merged in 1850 into a single institution (later renamed Banco di Sicilia following Italian Unification). With his plan, Cordova rejected the Bourbon "government banker" model. An absolute government, in fact, could not inspire confidence due to its non-transparent management of private savings and paper currency issuance and could only gain public trust by prioritising deposit security at the expense of monetary and credit expansion. However, he also rejected the model emerging in Piedmont of a discount and issuing bank that was entirely private, proposing instead the establishment of a large joint-stock bank with mixed public and private capital. Similar to the major Western issuing banks and the future Banca Nazionale, it would have issued paper money, discounted bills of exchange, granted advances on securities, handled government funds and opened branches in the main administrative centres of the island. It would have also offered loans on merchandise and mortgages, and even operated as a savings bank, providing all major credit services to an island almost entirely lacking banking institutions.[33] The desperate fiscal and political situation never allowed this project to be realised, but if such a bank had already existed, the experience of Piedmont, propped up in 1848-1849 with credit from Banca di Genova, demonstrated how beneficial it could have been for government finances. Furthermore, had it actually been established and maintained, it would have created a much more serious obstacle to Banca Nazionale's expansion in Sicily than the weak Banco di Sicilia, giving Sicilians much more bargaining power in designing the banking architecture of unified Italy.[34]

After Sicily's failed secession and Cordova's forced exile to Piedmont, he became, like Scialoja, one of Cavour's men. Cavour, who was just beginning his rise to power, was regarded by Cordova as "the most distinguished economist in Italy".[35] While Cavour respected him in turn, he initially used Cordova as

32. Giuseppe La Farina, *Documenti della Guerra Santa d'Italia*, 2 vols, Capolago, Tipografia Elvetica, 1850-1851, vol. II, p. 32.

33. *Le assemblee del Risorgimento: Sicilia*, 4 vols, Rome, Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, 1911, vol. II, pp. 405-410, 609-612, 615-622.

34. Chiaruttini, *Risorgimento*; Maria Stella Chiaruttini, "Woe to the Vanquished? State, 'Foreign' Banking and Financial Development in Southern Italy in the Nineteenth Century", *Financial History Review*, 27/3 (2020), pp. 340-360.

35. *Cordova. Discorsi*, vol. I, p. 71.

an "expert" rather than a politician, contributing to the ambivalent and perhaps at times opportunistic loyalty to the Right that would characterise Cordova's political commitment. Having previously founded a newspaper in Sicily, Cordova became involved in the editorial staff of *Il Risorgimento*, the pro-Cavour *Il Parlamento*, and *Il Cimento*. He also secured a teaching position in administrative law at the Istituto Superiore di Commercio in Turin and became director of the General Statistics Office of the Sardinian States (an experience that would lead him to establish the Statistics Division and manage the first national census in unified Italy).[36] Only in 1860, when Sicily risked falling into the hands of democrats or autonomists, did Cavour need to make Cordova one of his main political emissaries, declaring him "the only Sicilian capable of administering the island's finances" and erecting a barrier against the democrats' wasteful spending.[37] In 1861, Cavour briefly considered him for Minister of Finance, hoping he would be less "weak" and more "industrious" than Scialoja.[38] After Cavour's death, Cordova twice became Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce under Ricasoli. In this role, he followed Cavour's policy of promoting the establishment of branches of Banca Nazionale in the South at the expense of southern banks. This was no longer about founding a powerful local multi-purpose bank as he had envisioned in 1848, nor about promoting the creation of a new Italian note-issuing bank with public participation. Instead, he resorted to the easier, if not optimal, solution of facilitating the replacement of the old Bourbon banks, whose existence he considered "completely incompatible with the organisation of credit in the southern provinces", with an entirely private bank like Banca Nazionale.[39] In the end, however, the proposal stalled, and the southern banks survived.

A skilled financier, Cordova was not guided by some fixed doctrine in his banking policy. Like Cavour, he flexibly adapted to the present circumstances. In Sicily, which lacked specialised banks, he advocated for a versatile, multi-function institution that could simultaneously provide strong economic support to the newly-formed liberal government while avoiding the risks of both a government-run bank and an entirely private one. Following Unification, he chose to sacrifice the principle of a government-held bank in favour of an existing private institution and the representation of Sicilian interests in favour of an institution predominantly controlled by Liguria and Piedmont. In doing so, however, he contributed to the rise of the very bank that he would later accuse of deceiving the country. He lent his considerable authority to the narrative put forward by the Commission of Inquiry and, consequently, to the supporters of Banco di Napoli and Banco di

36. *Ibid.*, p. 12, *passim*; Giuseppe Monsagrati, "Cordova, Filippo", *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. XXIX (1983).

37. Cavour to Vittorio Emanuele II, 29 November 1860, in *Cavour. Epistolario*, vol. XVII/6, p. 2808; Chiaruttini, *Risorgimento*, pp. 177-180.

38. Cavour to Farini, 4 February 1861, in *Cavour. Epistolario*, vol. XVIII/1, p. 336.

39. Cordova to the Minister of Finance, Turin, 29 November 1861, in Archivio centrale dello stato/Ministero dell'agricoltura, industria e commercio/Direzione generale del credito e della previdenza/Industrie, banche e società/432/2230.

Sicilia (the very banks he had tried to dispose of when he was minister) against the despotic Banca Nazionale. Cordova died in harness, becoming a martyr for the crusade against Banca Nazionale, despite having actually facilitated the concentration of power in the hands of northern bankers.

5. *Minghetti: the art of consolidating uncertainty*

After Cavour, Minghetti was likely the most prominent politician of the Right. He served repeatedly as Minister (of the Interior, Finance, Agriculture, Industry and Commerce), and was President of the Council in 1863-1864 and again in 1873-1876, guiding Italy to its long-sought balanced budget in 1876. As Prime Minister, he advocated for the establishment of Banca d'Italia as early as 1863 and then implemented the first systematic reform of issuing banks in 1874. Like Cavour, his interest in banking-related matters began as a private citizen, not as a politician, with the founding of the Cassa di Risparmio di Bologna in 1837 and later, in 1855 (and still in Bologna), the Banca delle Quattro Legazioni, which was incorporated into Banca Nazionale in 1861. Regarding his involvement in managing the Banca delle Quattro Legazioni, Minghetti appears to have been neither particularly competent nor entirely free from self-interest, though these unflattering details remained confined to bank archives rather than public debate.[40] Officially, Minghetti embodied the ideal of the competent politician even more than Cavour, his genius ranging from Renaissance art to Darwinism, from Latin (which he taught to Queen Margherita) to Leibniz. He was "exceptionally knowledgeable about history, astronomy, philosophy, and art, deeply versed in every social science, and highly skilled in business", and as a "[s]cholar and statesman, he was an artist in all that he did". Judged "the most perfect orator in Italy", he surpassed Cavour not only in eloquence but in writing (both as a scholar and journalist).[41] In keeping with the familiar topos, he was "the personification of Italian genius". "Scientist, artist, man of letters, soldier in his country's battles, and politician, Marco Minghetti was a splendid manifestation of the Italian homeland's spirit".[42] Even in his economic writings, he aimed to discuss science in a beautiful Italian style, and his approach to economics was distinctly Italian.[43] His main treatise on public economics, as early as 1859, "reclaimed for Italy its primacy in economic sciences". As the jurist Giuseppe Saredo commented in his review of the treatise,

40. Giorgio Porisini, *Condizioni monetarie e investimenti nel Bolognese. La Banca delle Quattro Legazioni*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1969.

41. Ruggiero Bonghi, "Marco Minghetti", *Nuova Antologia*, 90 (1886), pp. 609, 612-613; Associazione della Stampa, *Commemorazione di Marco Minghetti*, Rome, Stabilimento Tipografico Italiano, 1887, pp. 8, 16.

42. Marco Minghetti, *Discorsi parlamentari*, 8 vols, Rome, Tipografia della Camera dei Deputati, 1888-1890, vol. VIII, p. 509.

43. Marco Minghetti, *Della economia pubblica e delle sue attinenze colla morale e col diritto*, Florence, Le Monnier, 1859, pp. XI-XII.

> How remarkable! Political economy was born in our country: it crossed mountains and seas and quickly found followers and altars among all civilised peoples: yet Italy, who was its mother, completely neglected it. Now finally, by God's grace, thanks to the energetic efforts of Francesco Ferrara and Marco Minghetti, the science has returned to dwell in its native land.[44]

Much like Cavour, to whom he was often seen as an heir,[45] Minghetti – both as a scholar and a statesman – embodied the Italian gift for striking a balanced middle path.

> Italian thinkers […] possessed this special characteristic of never exaggerating a single principle to the detriment of others […]. Our great thinkers […] took into account factual circumstances, established expectations, and existing interests, and therefore never drew extreme conclusions from any single principle. They knew how to simultaneously combine theories from the idealist school with those of the historical school.[46]

This accommodating tendency would characterise all of Minghetti's banking policy. Although administratively he advocated for greater local autonomy, in banking matters he preferred a single central bank as a political solution, avoiding taking a firm stance as an economist.[47] However, due to "political and moral necessities" rather than purely economic ones, over the course of a decade he shifted from promoting Banca Nazionale and the creation of Banca d'Italia to institutionalising a banking oligopoly in response to growing public hostility toward Banca Nazionale. In 1874, he restricted the right to issuing banknotes to existing issuing banks and grouped them into a consortium responsible for issuing inconvertible paper currency on behalf of the state, thus removing Banca Nazionale's monopoly.[48] The position of other issuing banks was further strengthened by allowing them to open branches throughout Italy. While the law only aimed to regulate the issuance market during the period of forced circulation, it would remain in effect even after its brief abolition in 1883. Minghetti reformed an "empirical system born by chance" but did so by reconciling "the most disparate opinions prevailing in parliament, making concessions to various parties, but overall merely sanctioning the status quo": the public banks of the South coexisted with the private ones of north-central Italy; Banca Nazionale was weakened but remained by far the most important bank; and pre-existing regional interests were preserved, but no new institutions were granted the freedom to issue currency. In short, it was a system that represented "the negation of every system, worthy of being classified in a new chapter to be added to the pathology of credit".[49]

The hopes of free-trade economists for the "doctrine" and "patriotism" of Minghetti – who devised "economic expedients rather than reforms that follow

44. Giuseppe Saredo, *Marco Minghetti*, Turin, UTET, 1861, p. 36.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 91.

46. Minghetti, 28 March 1878, in *Atti del Parlamento Italiano. Discussioni della Camera dei Deputati*, XIII legislatura, II sessione, 10 vols, Rome, Eredi Botta, 1878-1880, vol. I, p. 104.

47. Minghetti, *Discorsi*, vol. III, pp. 461-463; *ibid.*, vol. V, pp. 106-127.

48. *Ibid.*, vol. V, p. 462.

49. Camillo Supino, *Storia della circolazione bancaria in Italia dal 1860 al 1894*, Turin, Fratelli Bocca, 1895, pp. 48, 51, 130.

science" – were thus bitterly frustrated. And not only that. Forced circulation and the work of the Commission of Inquiry had solidified the image of a state that needed to be saved from the tyranny of Banca Nazionale's monopoly. So, did Minghetti's law, by protecting smaller banks, actually save the nation? No, because in public discourse the narrative persisted of a nation adrift, in which empirical anarchy, parochialism and centralising and authoritarian impulses coexisted. Free traders renamed the new system a "*banking polygamy of the State*", an "*oligarchy of* blue-blooded *banks*" and a "confederated monopoly", with the consortium being a "*phantom and a fiction*" (emphasis in original) commissioned by "Italian authoritarians" who attempted "with the appearance of freedom to bring the regime of arbitrariness closer to the homeland". It reflected a parliament that was a "battlefield of personal parties", which, "in the shadow of the intellectual laziness of Italians", passed a law "that seems to have been deliberately made […] to trample science and exalt empiricism" with the applause of "the contemptible press, which trades in slander and sells praise to the highest bidder".[50] But the law also disappointed all those who hoped to combat regionalist tendencies with a central bank and encouraged dangerous relationships between competing banks and politicians that would explode in the Banca Romana scandal in the early 1890s. At that point, the image of the nation would still be one of corruption, but the narrative that the cause of all evils was banking plurality and the only remedy was monopoly would prevail.[51] And once again, the solution of 1893 would be a compromise.

6. *Conclusion*

In the 19th century, an era marked by rapid economic transformations, the image of the competent politician emerged. In Italy, competence was essential not only to build a new liberal and economically competitive nation-state, but also to promote a new secular and meritocratic ideal of the citizen-politician. The foremost model of this ideal was Cavour, who was not just the "father of the nation" but also the "father" of competent ministers. Indeed, in the political trajectories and descriptions of many other Risorgimento-era politicians, one can see Cavour's influence, in a sort of genealogy of competence that helped frame these individuals as both experts and patriots. Competence was especially critical in the banking sector – not only to meet the credit needs of the new state, but also to integrate regional economic interests and establish a unified currency. The four "competent ministers" discussed in this essay (though many more could be included) played a pivotal role in the painstaking process of creating a central bank in Italy. Cavour, even in his banking policies, embodied the rise of the political Right, which saw centralisation as the most reliable path to unify a

50. Martello, "Questione"; Tullio Martello, "La questione dei banchi in Italia. Continuazione", *L'Economista*, 169 (1877), 29 July 1877.

51. "La situazione a proposito delle banche di emissione", *L'Economista*, 977 (1893), 22 January 1893; "La legge bancaria", *L'Economista d'Italia*, 12 (1893), 26 March 1893.

deeply fragmented country. Scialoja, by contrast, more attuned to the realities of the South, favoured a gradual transition toward unified currency issuance. Yet, faced with the emergency of unification in Southern Italy and, later, the Third War of Independence, he ultimately chose to further cement Banca Nazionale's dominance. Cordova, like Cavour, advocated for a strong bank to support the state but came to oppose Banca Nazionale insofar as the balance of power seemed to be shifting from the state to private capital. Minghetti, finally, presided over the decline of the Right as a governing force and was compelled to pass a law that repudiated Cavour's centralising vision, while still managing to alienate staunch advocates of fully decentralised currency issuance.

These politicians' expertise was expressed through their essay writing, journalism, political actions and at times their entrepreneurial activities. In such roles, they not only managed political consensus but also allowed themselves to become symbols of it, embodying a new ideal of the intellectual, patriot and politician – one that was truly Italian. Cavour thus became the great Piedmontese statesman who rose to prominence thanks to his economic expertise. Minghetti, the versatile Bolognese intellectual, knew how to reconcile art and finance, bringing Italy to a balanced budget and reorganising its system of currency issuance. Scialoja and Cordova, exiles from the South, offered their political and economic talents to Piedmont and Italy – talents for which they had been persecuted by the Bourbons. Ideally, regardless of their region of origin, they all embodied not only the national genius of Italy but also the distinctly "Italian" virtue of moderation and the reconciliation of theory and practice.

In reality, however, their policies were often accused of being empirical and overly arbitrary or accommodating. The banking system they helped shape came to be seen as an "Italian" hybrid in the most negative sense. Their virtues as model Italians in fact seemed to forge a state perpetually far from realising the ideals of the Risorgimento: either too authoritarian, for denying the freedom to issue currency; too servile, being dominated by Banca Nazionale; or too easily manipulated by local interests. These figures of the competent politician helped craft a shared national identity, but conflicting material interests would continue to fuel divisive narratives around their policies, despite their undeniable practical success in reconciling the irreconcilable, even at the cost of inconsistencies and compromises.

Claudia Bussolino

Language Policies in Italian Universities: Retracing the Casati Law*

1. *Language and university: premises to a diachronic process*

The history of language policies has only become a discrete strand of historical reflection in the field of Italian linguistics over the past few decades. This new area of research seeks to identify, compare and interpret the collective set of proposals enacted by Italian public institutions to regulate the use of the language or languages spoken within the national borders.[1] When it comes to the Italian language, there have not been many studies focusing on the pre-Unification period, even though many transformative changes had already taken place. It is important to understand if those who wielded political power within the various legal systems of the peninsula at the time encouraged or hindered these changes in the interest of regulating them.

The change from Latin to Italian at the university level that took place between the 18th and 19th centuries is one of the significant innovations that has not yet been studied systematically. It happened gradually, in stages: first, Italian became the language of instruction in the classroom and during the exams conferring degrees; later, it became the official language of the documents exchanged among universities for institutional intercommunication; and lastly it became the language of textbooks. This study seeks to delineate a brief, yet structured analysis of how this linguistic change affected each phase by referencing sources from the universities of Turin, Pavia and Padua. Starting in 1859, when Italian became the official language of universities by law, we will retrace the major steps that led to this important change, showing how in the 1700s "la questione della lingua", or Italy's fraught language question, emerged under various guises in the dynamics of university renewal, whose priority was that of moulding followers who would identify with the dominant political ideology while at the same time shaping a well-educated, productive ruling class that could keep up with rapidly-evolving scientific theories. During the three years of Jacobin rule (1796-1799, known in Italian as the *triennio repubblicano*), the shift to Italian became a political matter that opened up new horizons that would persist even during the Restoration.

* I wish to thank Alessandra Balzani for translating this essay.

1. Lucilla Pizzoli, *La politica linguistica in Italia. Dall'unificazione nazionale al dibattito sull'internazionalizzazione*, Rome, Carocci, 2018, p. 21.

2. *The Casati Law and the situation in the 1850s*

After Unification in 1861, Italian became the official language of instructors and students, as well as the language of self-representation of academic institutions. It is important to emphasise that this milestone was the culmination of an almost century-long process, punctuated by turning points and setbacks. A number of different perspectives on the topic were aired. By reconstructing them, the outline of the history of the university "language question" emerges, which is difficult to reconstruct through documentation.[2] There was, however, a very clear conclusion to this process: the Casati law, whose historical trajectory from Turin during the Risorgimento back to Pavia during the Restoration is traced throughout this chapter.[3]

Royal Decree no. 3725 of the Kingdom of Sardinia, also known as the Casati law, was proclaimed on 13 November 1859. It was applied to the new territories under Savoy rule on 18 November 1861. Article 168 of this decree determined the language that should be used at the university[4] in the following terms:

> The Italian language is the official language of instruction and examination in all university institutions, with the exception of the Department of Theology, where nothing is to be changed, together with some subjects in the Departments of Law and Literature. The universities in the province of Chambery are also excluded, as the official language there is French. However, students from provinces where French is in use, as well as foreign students, will be given the opportunity to use French or Italian, as well as Latin, in both the written and oral exams that they take in any Italian university.[5]

The year 1859 may be considered a culminating point because Italian was legitimately and unequivocally declared the official language, bringing about a

2. The limited space dedicated to the matter of language use at the university in Françoise Waquet's *Le Latin ou l'empire d'un signe (XVI^{e}-XX^{e} siècle)*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1998, pp. 38-39 demonstrates that the topic is generally underdeveloped, and not only in the Italian context.

3. For a general overview of the connection between university space and the Casati law, please refer to Ilaria Porciani, Mauro Moretti, "La creazione del sistema universitario nella nuova Italia", in *Storia delle Università in Italia*, ed. by Gian Paolo Brizzi, Piero Del Negro and Andrea Romano, vol. I, Messina, Sicania, 2007, pp. 323-379 (especially pp. 323-331).

4. The Universities of Turin, Pavia, Genoa and Cagliari continued to be part of the Kingdom of Sardinia after the Peace of Zurich (10 November 1859). The system of higher education also included the Scientific-Literary Academy of Milan and the Institutes of Chambéry. The University of Sassari was closed in 1847.

5. *Legge sul riordinamento della Pubblica Istruzione*, Turin, Tipographer Sebastiano Franco and Sons, 1859, pp. 22-23. ("Salve fatte le eccezioni per la Facoltà di Teologia per la quale nulla è innovato, e per alcune materie delle Facoltà di Giurisprudenza e di Lettere, la lingua italiana è la lingua ufficiale dell'insegnamento e degli esami in tutti gli stabilimenti universitarii, meno nelle scuole universitarie di Ciamberì dove la lingua ufficiale è la francese. Tuttavia sarà fatta facoltà agli Studenti delle provincie dove è in uso la lingua francese ed agli stranieri di valersi della stessa lingua francese, ed a questi ultimi anche della lingua latina, negli esami scritti ed orali che subissero in qualche stabilimento universitario italiano"). For an updated overview of the matter, see Antonio Gaudio, "La legge Casati. Una ricognizione storiografica", *Annali di storia dell'educazione e delle istituzioni scolastiche*, 26 (2019), pp. 63-71.

sort of "de facto monolingualism",[6] albeit with some exceptions. References to Latin and French did not survive in the implementation decree that was made official some fifty years later, in 1909, though their use early on offered proof of a time in university history where language use was not homogeneous for a long transitional period.

The exceptional cases included in the Casati law were not referenced in any official document published by the University of Turin during the years immediately preceding[7] or following[8] its proclamation.

Among the universities impacted by the law of 1859, the University of Pavia offered more explicit references to language in the document titled *Prospetti degli studi dell'Imperial Regia Università di Pavia* (*Prospectus of Studies at the Imperial Royal University of Pavia*). It was published in 1857-1858,[9] during the second-to-last year of Austrian rule over the region before it became part of the House of Savoy.[10] This document contains relevant information for Political-Legal Studies (as the Law School was called), where Latin was indicated as the language of instruction for canon law.[11] Similarly, in the Department of Philosophical Studies (which did not correspond to the Department of Literature at the University of Turin, but did include literature courses), all classes had to be taught in Italian, except for Latin Philology. No information can be gleaned about theology because only the University of Padua offered courses in this area of study in the Lombardy-Venetian territories.[12] We also note that the Casati law eliminated the use of Latin in Pavia, where it had prevailed. That same law also struck down the use of Latin in medical, surgical and pharmaceutical studies, with Italian prevailing as an exception in the three areas of human anatomy, physiology, medicine and pathology, and clinical

6. Cf. Pizzoli, *La politica linguistica in Italia*, p. 168.

7. Various academic calendars of the University of Turin and other schools in the surrounding area, dating from 1829 to 1857, have been digitised by the Historical Archive of the University of Turin (https://asut.unito.it/mostre/collections/show/6; the online resources cited from here forward were consulted on 28 September 2024).

8. It refers to *Annuari della Istruzione pubblica del Regno d'Italia* (https://asut.unito.it/mostre/items/browse/page/1?collection=5) available for the years 1857-1872.

9. The years 1835-1859 are partially available through the online portal Digital Library Pavia (https://www.bibliotecadigitale.unipv.eu/handle/20.500.12460/128488?sort_by=2&order=ASC&offset=0).

10. The Austrian system in effect at the time also included a course in German language and literature, from 1824 ("prosody, German versification, and the history of German literature are taught in German", p. 21). This course was taught by Francesco De Fiori from Gorizia, and in the 1850s he also accommodated Italian by providing for the translation into German of some excerpts from Manzoni's *Promessi sposi* (cf. Claudia Bussolino, Barbara Rodà, "La letteratura italiana all'Università di Pavia durante la Restaurazione", in *Almum Studium Papiense. Storia dell'Università di Pavia*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/2, *Dalla Restaurazione alla Grande Guerra*, Milan, Cisalpino, 2017, pp. 955-956).

11. A reminder that Latin is the main object of this discipline, the *Corpus Iuris Canonici.*

12. On the final elimination of the Department of Theology at the University of Pavia in 1797, see Xenio Toscani, "La Facoltà teologica di Pavia dalla soppressione alla mancata riapertura nella Restaurazione", in *Il giansenismo e l'Università di Pavia. Studi in ricordo di Pietro Stella*, ed. by Simona Negruzzo, Milan, Cisalpino, 2012, pp. 133-149.

and specialised medical treatment. The use of Latin in clinical teaching proves that the difference in language use in the medical context was not due to a preference for Italian in practical courses and Latin in theoretical ones, whereas such an orientation (with a series of courses aimed at up-to-date professional knowledge) could explain the absence of Latin from the Pavia Mathematical Studio, which trained engineers, architects[13] and land surveyors.[14]

The *Prospetto* from Pavia dated 1857-1858 is also relevant because it contains precise instructions about textbooks.[15] Only the School of Mathematics adopted no book or pamphlet in Latin, while Political-Legal Studies required the use of texts in Latin even for courses that were taught in Italian (such as Political Science and Natural Law).[16] Medical, surgical and pharmaceutical studies also required several textbooks in Latin, including a *Pharmacopoeia* in Latin printed in Vienna, which was used in pharmaceutical chemistry. Similar texts in Latin were used for pharmacology, the knowledge of pharmaceutical products, the specialised treatment of severe and chronic diseases, and the compound course that brought together medicinal science, the knowledge of pharmaceutical products, the art of creating recipes and dietetics. In the course Philosophical Studies, the textbook situation was more straightforward, as texts in Latin were required only for the pertinent subject of Latin philology. It should be remembered that the explicit adoption of textbooks approved by the education authority was, for Pavia, a choice rooted in its time, and was politically relevant. It was oriented toward avoiding content that was contrary to authority, while being far more concretely aimed at ensuring that up-to-date knowledge, useful for the education of a well-prepared ruling class, was handed down.[17] Even with the exceptions just reviewed, the wide

13. A course on military architecture was the first to be held in Italian in the *Studium* of Pavia in the mid-17th century. It was the first case ever to be documented in that location (see Alessandra Ferraresi, "La cattedra di architettura militare e geometria pratica all'Università di Pavia e il suo primo docente, Giovanni Battista Drusiani. Alcune note", in Gian Carlo Angelozzi, Maria Teresa Guerrini, Giuseppe Olmi (eds.), *Università e formazione dei ceti dirigenti. Per Gian Paolo Brizzi, pellegrino dei saperi*, Bologna, Bononia University Press, 2015, pp. 254-277).

14. Cf. Alessandra Ferraresi, "La Facoltà matematica", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/2, *Dalla Restaurazione alla Grande Guerra*, pp. 961-982.

15. The guidelines for textbooks were already provided in a document from Pavia that precedes the *Prospetti*: the series of *Orari*, of which the oldest model is from 1768 (the documents are partially available from the portal Digital Library Pavia: https://www.bibliotecadigitale.unipv.eu/handle/20.500.12460/107663).

16. The course on Natural Law that year was divided into "private" (with the adoption of the Italian translation of the book *Natural Private Law* by Franz von Zeiller, printed in Milan in 1818) and "public" (which used *Positiones de jure Civitatis in usum Auditorii Vindobonensis* by Karl Anton Martini, printed in Vienna in 1773). For more detailed information on the topics studied, refer to Valeria Belloni, "La Facoltà politico-legale", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/2, *Dalla Restaurazione alla Grande Guerra*, pp. 777-804. The textbooks translated into Italian for the university were referenced in all four "Studies" that were active at the University of Pavia during the Restoration.

17. It should be noted that by the end of 1857 there was a trend toward freedom of teaching, as the ministerial authorities could only ask teachers to read the contents of the

choice of Italian, and of books in Italian, in the last years of Austrian Lombardy can be framed in this context.

The analysis of this transitional period implies sifting through documents in a way that has never been done before.[18] To become acquainted with such an obscure area of research, we can start from the very Minister of Education[19] responsible for the Casati law of 1859: Gabrio Casati.

3. *The theses defended by Gabrio Casati (1820-1821)*

Gabrio Casati was born in 1798 to a noble family in Lombardy.[20] He was educated at home by private tutors, as was common for a person of his background. He graduated from the University of Pavia, a university with a long history, founded in 1361. It was the only university in Lombardy until 1863, when the Polytechnic University of Milan was established. Casati completed two degrees, graduating on 7 August 1820 in Law (both civil and canon, as was customary at the time) and on 12 August 1821 in Mathematics.

It is possible to track down the list of theses defended as stipulated by the rules of the University of Pavia in the form of public manifestos in 1771.[21] His

lectures (see Alessandra Ferraresi, "Gli anni Cinquanta e la seconda Restaurazione. Tensioni crescenti e prodromi di trasformazione", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/2, *Dalla Restaurazione alla Grande Guerra*, p. 772. The guidelines for the regulation of textbooks are also present in other essays within the same volume and in the previous one, Dario Mantovani [ed.], *Almum Studium Papiense. Storia dell'Università di Pavia*, vol. II/1, *L'età austriaca e napoleonica*, Milan, Cisalpino, 2015; see these essays for the previous bibliography).

18. This is due to a lack of convergence in the current state of research between studies on the history of universities and those on the history of language use, with a few exceptions (limited to the University of Padua and little else). The overall reference study for the history of 18th-century Italian is still the volume edited by Tina Matarrese (*History of the Italian Language: The Eighteenth Century*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1993), which, while discussing the use of Italian in the history of lower education, does not address the situation at the university level. A research path in this direction should include the rereading of documents already identified in the context of other research (institutional history, history of disciplines) and the identification of new archival sources.

19. Casati was minister from 18 October 1859 to 15 January 1860. He was succeeded by Terenzio Mamiani (*Annuario d'Istruzione pubblica per l'anno 1859-60*, Turin, Stamperia Reale, 1860, p. 14).

20. The biographical entry referenced here (authored by Luigi Ambrosoli as "Casati, Gabrio", in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. XXI, Rome, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1978) does not mention Casati's university curriculum. It is, however, referenced in documents from his time, like the pamphlet *Cenni biografici di s.e. il signor conte Gabrio Casati già Presidente del Senato (estratti dal Libro d'oro dei nostri tempi)*, Borgomanero, Tipography Gernia, 1872, p. 1. With regard to Casati, it is particularly useful to read Antonio Maria Orecchia, *Gabrio Casati: patrizio milanese, patriota italiano*, Milan, Guerini, 2007.

21. Archivio di Stato di Pavia, Fondo Università, *Giurisprudenza*, cart. 649 e *Matematica*, cart. 215. See also Maria Carla Zorzoli, *Le tesi legali all'Università di Pavia nell'età delle riforme (1772-1796)*, Milan, Cisalpino, 1980. With regard to Pavia, in addition to the study

three theses of Law – one for Public Law,[22] one for Political Sciences[23] and one for Canonical Law[24] – were written in Latin, while the language of the two theses of Mathematics, both on sublime calculation[25] (mathematical analysis) were in Italian. In the university of Austrian Lombardy-Veneto, in the 1820s, public defence of theses was allowed in different languages, depending on the department. There is an additional document in the archival record of Casati's Law theses, which corresponds to a modern graduation certificate, and it is written in Italian, proving that while in the academic context the most solemn moments of university life still informed by traditional practice involved the use of Latin, the language of bureaucracy was Italian.

The printing of public manifestos of theses completed in Pavia was official practice between the 1770s and 1850s, with each department changing the practice at its own pace.[26] For Law, Latin was retained until this document underwent a radical formal transformation in the 1830s: that is, until the printed manifesto was replaced by a 10-20 page pamphlet, in which the theses to be discussed became simple topics over which the graduating student needed to demonstrate mastery of three or four for each subject in their curriculum.[27] The only subjects indicated in Latin remained those pertaining to canon law, confirming at a different level and bearing witness to the language practice of an earlier period, indicated in the

cited above, there are studies on the theses for the Department of Medicine at the University of Pavia (Valentina Cani, *Dalla cattedra all'officina. Studiare medicina a Pavia nella seconda metà del Settecento*, Milan, Cisalpino, 2015); and on the theses for the Department of Theology (Simona Negruzzo, "Tesi teologiche della facoltà asburgica", in *Il giansenismo e l'Università di Pavia*, ed. by Negruzzo, pp. 59-78). However, none of these studies reviews the documents from the university during the Restoration. For that, see the collection of images *Almum Studium Papiense*, vol. II/2.

22. "Nisi maxima urgeat Reipublicae necessitas, Civem minime cogendum ut in Patria invitus maneat, defendimus" ("Unless the utmost necessity of the Republic demands it, we hold that no citizen should be compelled to remain in their homeland against their will").

23. "Rei publicae maxime interest, vulgum ignorantiae non damnari" ("It is of the highest importance to the Republic that the common people not be condemned for their ignorance").

24. "Consuetudines in Ecclesia, nisi a primis Ecclesiae saeculis originem ducant, non adeo facile laudamus" ("We do not readily praise customs in the Church unless they originate from the earliest centuries of the Church").

25. "L'accusa che vien fatta al Calcolo del La-Grangia d'inesattezza nella determinazione dei limiti della funzione primitiva a più variabili indipendenti è insussistente" ("The accusation of inaccuracy made against the calculation of La Grange, in determining the limits of the primitive function with several independent variables is unfounded"); "Il progresso delle matematiche scienze rende vicina l'epoca in cui verificar si debba la sentenzia del Leibnitzio 'che saravvi un tempo in cui i tribunali verranno retti dalle matematiche'" ("The progress of mathematical sciences brings us closer to the time when Leibniz's verdict must be verified: 'there will come a time when the courts will be governed by mathematics'").

26. The theses in Latin that were printed before the 18th century at the University of Bologna have been found (cf. Maria Teresa Guerrini, "Norma e prassi nell'esame di laurea in diritto a Bologna, 1450-1800", *Storicamente*, 3 [2007]).

27. For example, the title pages of Agostino Depretis's discussions (20 June 1835) those of Giuseppe Zanardelli (6 September 1848) and Benedetto Cairoli (17 June 1850) are published in *Almum Studium Papiense*, vol. II/2 (pp. 804, 831 and 1022).

Prospectus of 1857-1858. As far as Mathematics was concerned, the practice of printing theses became established during the Restoration: the situation was the opposite of legal studies because it was not possible to find graduation manifestos in Latin.[28] Mathematical theses, however – as we shall see – were not the first theses written in Italian.

4. *The turning point under Jacobin rule*

At the University of Pavia, there were other theses printed and defended in Italian during the Jacobin rule of 1796-1799. At the time, Giovanni Rasori was chancellor of the university, and he was highly praised by his students. He was a man of many talents: a doctor, journalist, university professor and chancellor, soldier, Jacobin-leaning politician, anti-Austrian conspirator and romantic prisoner.[29] He was an incredibly significant individual in academia at the time, as he was nominated rector of the National College[30] and professor of medical pathology between 1796-1797 and 1798-1799.

The practice of printing these so-called theses (also called "positiones" or "propositiones") was not new, since it had started in 1771 with the reforms promoted by Empress Maria Theresa. In the 1770s, the University of Pavia underwent several changes. As chancellor, Giovanni Rasori decided to print the "proposal topics" in Italian, signalling yet another period of deep changes within the university even from a democratic perspective, consistent with the political climate of the time. The fundamental factors of this period can be traced back to a document titled *Rapporto sullo stato dell'Università di Pavia, letto nella pubblica sessione della Società d'istruzione il giorno 4 fiorile dell'anno V dal cittadino Rasori, socio corrispondente, professore e Rettore dell'Università e del Collegio Nazionale* (*Report on the state of the University of Pavia, Read in the Public Meeting of the Society for Education on 4 Floréal year V [23 April 1797] from the Citizen Rasori, Corresponding Member, Professor and Rector of the University and the National College*), where the matter of language was clearly discussed:[31]

28. On the theses for Mathematics, cf. Riccardo Rosso, "Il calcolo delle probabilità nell'Università di Pavia tra la fine del XVIII e l'inizio del XX secolo", *Bollettino della Società Pavese di Storia Patria*, 120 (2020), pp. 129-168.

29. Giulia Delogu, "Comunicazione, politica e medicina in Giovanni Rasori: una scienza della parola", in *Sette e Ottocento a Pavia: le radici della modernità (1764-1815)*, ed. by Carla Riccardi, Conference Proceedings (Pavia, 8 and 22 November 2018; 27 February; 7 and 21 March 2019), Novara, Interlinea, 2020, p. 153. On the role of Rasori at the University of Pavia, see Delogu, *"Compagno delle vostre fatiche". Giovanni Rasori maestro di virtù nella Pavia del triennio repubblicano (1796-1799)*, Milan, Cisalpino, 2015.

30. The Collegio Ghislieri of Pavia was known at the time as Collegio Nazionale.

31. Quoted in Giorgio Cosmacini, *Scienza medica e giacobinismo in Italia. L'impresa politico-culturale di Giovanni Rasori*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 1982, p. 89. In the pamphlet (probably printed in Milan, but with no reference to publishing), Rasori stated the need for a reform of the university because "una pubblica educazione espressamente adattata a un popolo

> Citizens! I invite you to discuss and publicly defend your theses in Italian. I believe that in this way, I am not only fulfilling the wish expressed to me by the majority of you, but that I am also contributing, as far as I can, to the cultivation and exercising of our language, that is now so necessary. Barbarous Italy has servilely used, especially for public purposes, a dead language, when it could not yet boast of having a language for the living, at least a rich and cultured one. Now the times of barbarism have passed, and happily for us also those of Teutonic pedantry. You are lucky to grow up in the dawn of the Republic! When the sovereign people will entrust you to defend their interests in public and establish the elements of their happiness, you won't speak in front of them in vulgar Latin, obscure to even Cicero and Virgil. You will speak in our language, as good as any other living language to be used in the grandest oratory lectures and the deepest philosophical inquiries.

The use of Italian can be interpreted as a need to modernise the university and to spread knowledge to a far greater degree than what was contained within the framework of Muratori's notion of public happiness that was typical of the university reforms of twenty years earlier.[32]

It is also important to note that the most famous document associated with Rasori (and the three years of Jacobin influence within universities) was written in Italian.[33] It was the calendar for year V (1796-1797), modelled on the French 10-day week, where each day was dedicated to famous individuals in the sciences and literary arts who could be of inspiration for students. The calendar for year V was an official document used in academic communication. It replaced earlier Latin calendars, which marked the days when the university was open, as well as Catholic holidays. Rasori's calendar did not last long; it was too modern for an academic community that had refused to cut all ties with religious tradition even during French domination. The calendars created after Rasori's resumed the traditional format but were in Italian.[34]

The highly innovative trend of using Italian to write and defend theses during the Jacobin years was limited to the field of Medicine. In the case of Legal Studies, seemingly, no thesis in Italian was ever proposed or printed, which denotes a slower political progress in the Department of Law as opposed to Medicine at the University of Pavia. There are no archival entries for theses in Medicine from later years in Pavia, either in Latin or Italian.

The three years of Jacobin rule were a turning point for the University of Pavia, but it is possible to find documents proving a positive inclination toward expanding the use of Italian even at the University of Turin. The city was under

schiavo non potrà mai esser quella che convenga a un popolo libero" ("a public education that has been adapted for an enslaved population will never be good enough for a free people").

32. Cf. Carlo Capra, "La Lombardia austriaca. Il contesto politico e istituzionale", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/1, *L'età austriaca e napoleonica*, p. 8.

33. For a detailed analysis of the calendar, see Giulia Delogu, "I 'semi della virtù'. Giovanni Rasori e il calendario dell'anno V", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/1, *L'età austriaca e napoleonica*, pp. 471-474.

34. Cf. the calendar for the year 1803-1804, published in Alessandra Ferraresi, "Tra Repubblica e Regno. I nuovi ordinamenti", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/1, *L'età austriaca e napoleonica*, p. 490.

the authority of the French Republic until 1802, when it became a French region "beyond the Alps". The overall political trend in Turinese academia was more conservative, certainly not willing to bend to French influence.[35] In the late 1790s Gian Francesco Galeani Napione, who became famous for his successful book titled *Dell'uso e dei pregi della lingua italiana* (*On the Uses and Merits of the Italian Language*),[36] published the memoir *Del modo di riordinare la regia Università degli studi* (*On Restructuring the Royal University*), where he proposed the use of Italian in academia as a collective goal.[37]

> It seems, therefore, that the practice of using the vernacular language should now be extended to teaching in all university departments. Lest we move too quickly, clashing with well entrenched views, we might allow the Treatises on Sacred Sciences and Roman Jurisprudence to be printed in Latin out of respect for our brilliant professors. However, teaching should be neither done completely in Italian.

Galeani Napione's text included important suggestions about other university procedures as well, such as teaching assignments and textbooks. His proposal anticipated what would come to pass several decades later.[38]

5. *The university reforms of the 1770s and how they were received*

Despite Giovanni Rasori's harsh criticism of the politics of the late-18th-century university, in 1773 the university system had already taken its first steps toward adopting Italian. The text *Memoria istruttiva* (*Teaching Memoir*), which appeared alongside the *Piano scientifico per l'Università di Pavia* (*Scientific Plan for the University of Pavia*), was published after a long period of editing

35. To learn more about Galeani Napione's stance on language, cf. Claudio Marazzini, "Galeani Napione di fronte alla 'Proposta' di Monti: le 'fatali conseguenze della divisione dell'Italia'", in *Unità e dintorni Questioni linguistiche nel secolo che fece l'Italia*, Vercelli, Mercurio, 2013, pp. 39-52.

36. "Uno dei testi fondamentali del dibattito linguistico del Settecento in Italia" ("One of the fundamental texts for the debate on language in Italy in the 1700s") and "il più rilevante contributo alla questione della lingua scritto da un autore piemontese" ("the most relevant contribution to the language dilemma written by a Piedmontese author"): Claudio Marazzini, Clemente Damiano di Priocca, Galeani Napione. "Sull'edizione definitiva del trattato 'Dell'uso e dei pregi della lingua italiana', *Lingua e Stile*, 2 (2022), p. 187.

37. Gian Francesco Galeani Napione, *Del modo di riordinare la Regia Università degli Studi*, ed. by Paola Bianchi, Turin, Deputazione Subalpina di Storia Patria, 1993, p. 127 ("Pare adunque che questa pratica di far uso della lingua volgare si dovrebbe si dovrebbe ora estendere almeno quanto all'insegnamento alle facoltà tutte. Forse per adattarsi al genio de' Professori e per non urtar la corrente tutto ad un tratto e gli inveterati pregiudizi si potrebbe permettere che si stampassero in Latino i Trattati di Scienze Sacre e di Giurisprudenza Romana. L'insegnamento dovrebbe essere però né più ne meno in lingua Italiana").

38. For an overview of the regulations of the University of Turin, see Marina Roggero, *Il sapere e la virtù. Stato, università e professioni nel Piemonte tra Settecento ed Ottocento*, Turin, Centro Studi Storia Università–Deputazione Subalpina di Storia Patria, 1987; and Patrizia Delpiano, *Il trono e la cattedra. Istruzione e formazione dell'élite nel Piemonte del Settecento*, Turin, Centro Studi Storia Università–Deputazione Subalpina di Storia Patria, 1997.

and brainstorming by functionaries from Austria and Lombardy.[39] The document established six new disciplinary fields: "in the Schools of Anatomy, Obstetrics, Surgery, Moral Philosophy, Mathematics and Experimental Physics, Italian will replace Latin, in order to expand accessibility to People of all Social Classes".[40] Rasori highlighted the social significance of his anti-elitist decision, whose goal was to render higher education more accessible. Over the course of the next 30 years, only the Department of Law would retain Latin, albeit not without some resistance from faculty.

Another significant source comes from the Law School at the University of Pavia, where Domenico Alfeno Vario taught Civil Law in the 1780s. Following chancellor Kaunitz's involvement, Vario moved to Pavia from Naples, where he had been a private tutor and published several texts on history and law yet had not been able to obtain a teaching position. As a professor, his relationship with Austrian institutions was tense – not so much for his politics, but usually because he was unwilling to passively follow guidelines that came from higher-ups, even in terms of pedagogy. His approach with new topics was experimental, as he wanted to adopt the most effective methods to teach his students. On 18 February 1783, he wrote a letter to Governor Johann Joseph Maria von Wilczek to justify his decision to use Italian even though it was not included in the academic regulation. He had observed that students were not fluent enough in Latin.[41] The governor was not moved by his claims. On 28 November of the same year, Vario wrote to Pietro Tamburini, a professor in the Department of Theology, pointing out that teaching in Italian was a practice adopted by other colleagues of his, adding yet another layer to the issue.

These letters open a window onto another rather complicated aspect of the question to be considered in the analysis of the new linguistic legislation at the time. What was eventually done in practice often operated at the margins of what the political authority had established.[42] The more sources are found and studied,

39. Cf. Maria Gigliola di Renzo Villata, "1765-1771: gli anni decisivi per la riforma. Dall'incubazione ai risultati", in *Almum Studium Papiense*, ed. by Dario Mantovani, vol. II/1, *L'età austriaca e napoleonica*, pp. 83-114.

40. *Statuti e Ordinamenti della Università di Pavia dall'anno 1361 all'anno 1859, raccolti e pubblicati nell'XI centenario dell'Ateneo*, Pavia, Tipography Cooperativa, 1925, p. 252. The *Avvertimenti generali* (General Notice) that precedes the *Memoria* (*Memoir*) focuses on the desirable co-existence of Italian and Latin in the "giornale sui malati" ("journal on the sick") that was to be kept by students (p. 219).

41. Quoted in Dario Mantovani, "Domenico Alfeno Vario professore di Diritto civile a Pavia (1780-1789): l'immedesimazione polemica nell'antico. Versione accresciuta sulla base di ulteriori documenti", in *Formare il giurista. Esperienze nell'area lombarda tra Sette e Ottocento*, ed. by Maria Gigliola di Renzo Villata, Milan, Giuffrè, 2004, pp. 222-223. As for this extremely thorough "work of legal micro-history", see the letter referenced within. In confronting Wilczek, Vario highlighted the early but ample space given to Italian at the University of Naples after the reforms enacted by Celestino Galiani and until the time of Antonio Genovesi.

42. It is referenced as an example in Elisa Baccini, *L'impero culturale di Napoleone in Italia: stampa, teatro, scuola secondo il modello francese*, Rome, Carocci, 2023, p. 168.

such as letters or journals from professors and students, the more accurately we will be able to trace the linguistic history of universities, especially when it comes to dissenting parties.

The years between 1760 and 1780 were quite important, as several reforms taking place at other Italian universities reached their conclusion, the most important being in Turin and Padua.[43] Such developments were documented in *Costituzioni di sua Maestà per l'Università di Torino* (*His Majesty's Charter for the University of Turin*), published in 1772, and the *Raccolta di leggi e di provide istituzioni per la disciplina dello Studio di Padova* (*Collection of Laws and the Institutions That Provide Instruction at the University of Padua*), published in 1762.

In the text of *His Majesty's Charter for the University of Turin*, the second section of Chapter 5, titled "Delle lezioni de' professori dell'Università" ("On University Professors' Lectures") contains references to the Italian language, allowed in only two circumstances: in courses of surgery and Italian rhetoric. It was far less than what was allowed in the text *Memoria istruttiva* from the University of Pavia, although the presence of a university chair entirely dedicated to the Italian language was very significant. In Pavia, the only courses in Rhetoric were for Latin and Ancient Greek.[44] Comparing this with *His Majesty's Charter for the University of Turin* from 1729, the 1770s evidently marked a change in procedures. The only political/linguistic directive in the older text can be found toward the end, where it stated that anyone who wished to enrol at the university needed to demonstrate knowledge of Latin.[45] However, it would be inaccurate to perceive the university space at the beginning of the 18th century as totally devoid of Italian and therefore so different from how it would be in the last few decades of the century. It was most evident that the language chosen for the publication of *His Majesty's Charter* (the same as for the text from 1772) was two-fold, as the text was produced both in Italian and French, but not in Latin.[46]

The case of the University of Turin was essentially more linguistically complex than that of Pavia, given the presence of French,[47] which, it is worth

43. Emanuela Verzella, "La crisi dell'assetto corporativo e le riforme universitarie", in *Storia delle Università in Italia*, ed. by Gian Paolo Brizzi, Piero Del Negro and Andrea Romano, vol. I, Messina, Sicania, 2007, pp. 157-191.

44. For information on this university chair at the University of Pavia, see Duccio Tongiorgi, *L'eloquenza in cattedra: la cultura letteraria nell'Università di Pavia dalle riforme teresiane alla Repubblica italiana, 1769-1805*, Milan, Cisalpino, 1997.

45. *Costituzioni di Sua Maestà per l'Università di Torino – Constitutions de Sa Majestè porr l'Universitè de Turin*, Turin, Accademia Reale–G.B. Chais Printer, 1729, p. 88.

46. For Piedmont, Duke Emanuele Filiberto's desire that Italian be used exclusively in the legal and bureaucratic spheres had advanced significantly in the second half of the 16th century. It proposed the exclusive use of Italian in the legal and bureaucratic spheres. Compared to this, the situation at the university level appears to have been even more conservative. It was noted in Claudio Marazzini, "Questioni linguistiche e politiche per la lingua", in *Manuale di linguistica italiana*, ed. by Sergio Lubello, Berlin-Boston, de Gruyter, 2016, pp. 633-654 by identifying "the most interesting moments of the linguistic policy of some Italian states pre-Unification".

47. Various guidelines on the use of French in Italian universities at the beginning of the 19th century can now be found in Baccini, *L'impero culturale di Napoleone in Italia*.

mentioning at the end of this essay, was also included in the first draft of the Casati law, though only as a minor concession catering to foreign students.[48] In conclusion, if we were to compare Turin with the University of Padua,[49] the perception of different languages in the academic space of Turin suggests a more multifaceted context. The solemnity of Latin was preserved in public lessons, but we can imagine that students might have formulated questions in an "Italianised Latin".[50] Alternatively, the "private/public" lectures that were offered to bolster the official lectures also took place in the university classrooms. In these spaces, students were allowed to use not only Italian, but also Paduan, resulting in a more localised and informal setting.[51]

The case of the University of Padua shows even more dramatically how universities in the 18th century were forced to confront this linguistic dilemma. Even if coming to terms with changing language was difficult, it was done to better adapt to the reality of evolving knowledge. Previously, the various subjects of study were linked to textbooks whose contents dated back centuries. If universities wanted to train a successful and capable ruling class, they had to let go of outdated practices. The transition to Italian also shifted pedagogical knowledge in a more dynamic direction by enabling a more open relationship between students and professors. Ultimately, the implicit outcome of the more well-defined professionalisation of the faculty was achieved.

48. Further research is needed to better evaluate this aspect of the transition from Latin to Italian in the classroom, i.e., the extent to which the presence of foreign students was affected by limited linguistic accessibility.

49. The matter of language at the University of Padua in the 18th century has been studied in depth, and more extensively than for any other university, by Piero Del Negro, "'Pura favella latina', 'latino ordinario', 'buono e pulito italiano', e 'italiano anzi padovano'. I 'vari linguaggi' della didattica universitaria nella Padova del Settecento", *Annali di Storia delle Università Italiane*, 3 (1999), pp. 121-141, referred to in this essay. We also recognise Del Negro's equally rare attempt to expand this investigation to a European level: "Le lingue della didattica e della ricerca: dal latino alle lingue nazionali", in *Le università napoleoniche: uno spartiacque nella storia italiana ed europea dell'istruzione superiore*, ed. by Luigi Pepe and Piero Del Negro, International Conference Proceedings (Padua-Bologna, 13-15 September 2006), Bologna, Clueb, 2006, pp. 71-92.

50. Del Negro, "'Pura favella latina', 'latino ordinario', 'buono e pulito italiano', e 'italiano anzi padovano'", p. 124.

51. The site of the University of Padua in this case is significant: consider, for example, that even in the sphere of law, more space was granted to the local language in the Republic of Venice, in comparison with other areas of the peninsula (cf. Lorenzo Tomasin, *Il volgare e la legge. Storia linguistica del diritto veneziano. Secc. XIII-XVIII*, Padua, Esedra, 2001).

Francesco Guarino

A "Library" for the New State: Attilio Brunialti and the *Biblioteca di scienze politiche**

1. *Introduction*

Beginning in 1848, with the concession of the Albertine Statute, the demand to govern by consent had finally become obligatory in Italy: Article 3 of the Statute, establishing the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, had transformed absolute monarchy into a constitutional monarchy, solidifying the principle of representation within the Kingdom of Sardinia.[1] While until that moment the absolute sovereign, chosen by God, had not found it necessary to seek the consent of his own subjects in order to govern them,[2] with the Unification and inauguration of the first Italian Parliament, divine legitimacy was now finally accompanied by *national* legitimacy:[3] Victor Emmanuel II had officially become the "King of Italy by the grace of God and the will of the Nation".[4]

From the 1880s onward, coinciding with Francesco Crispi's administrative reforms, a new science of public law conceived "as the direct and immediate consequence of the notion of a liberal state" emerged.[5] The renewed discipline was supported academically above all thanks to the works of jurist Vittorio Emanuele Orlando (Palermo, 1860-1952), and in particular as a result of the publication of *Principi di diritto costituzionale* (Florence, 1889)[6] and *Principi di diritto amministrativo* (Florence, 1891).[7] In this scientific setting, the study of foreign

* My gratitude to Jaclyn Taylor for her translation of this chapter.

1. In the sense of Article 2 of the Statute: "The state is governed by a representative monarchical government. The throne is hereditary according to Salic law".

2. At least from a strictly legal-formal point of view.

3. But not yet the legitimacy that was truly of the people.

4. This formula was adopted on 17 March 1861 by the Italian Parliament, which had been inaugurated on 18 February of that same year.

5. "Thus, the new science of public law came to be understood as a corollary to the notion of a national liberal state, which Orlando would describe as a state of law and at the same time as a legally sovereign person […]": Giulio Cianferotti, "Lo Stato nazionale e la nuova scienza del diritto pubblico", in *Il Contributo italiano alla storia del Pensiero: Diritto*, Rome, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 2012.

6. Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, *Principii di diritto costituzionale*, Florence, Barbera, 1889.

7. Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, *Principii di diritto amministrativo*, Florence, Barbera, 1891. See Giulio Cianferotti, *Il pensiero di Vittorio Emanuele Orlando e la giuspubblicistica*

governments that had already considered the large-scale participation of a nation and its people in political life quickly gained special prominence: the Statute, conceded by Charles Albert in light of the liberal and democratic uprisings agitating the European continent in 1848, borrowed considerably from the French constitutional tradition,[8] and, to a lesser extent, from that of Belgium and England.

The consideration of foreign liberal models, which had been carried out primarily in scientific studies of the French, English and American governments, placed itself within a well-integrated process of knowledge circulation that had always characterised European culture, and in particular Italy, where it had taken on a unique importance within legal settings prior to Unification, considering the political fragmentation of the peninsula and the presence of numerous legal systems.[9] The organisation of individual pre-Unification states in fact would have been difficult to understand fully if not for the comprehensive study of all Italian legal systems, which, by influencing one another through doctrine and jurisprudence, had allowed a national legal discipline to emerge even before Unification.[10]

In this political and scientific context, jurist and scholar Attilio Brunialti (2 April 1849, Vicenza - 2 December 1920, Rome) represents a case study of notable interest. Brunialti, in distributing works of liberal writing through his *Biblioteca di Scienze politiche*, promoted the development of a discipline of national administration, as well as the appearance in Italian society of an authentic civic awareness. Through the distribution, often for the first time in Italy, of the most important works of liberal thought from the United States, France, England and Germany, these works became accessible to all participants in political contests, rather than being restricted to an exclusive circle of scholarly language connoisseurs. It could be argued that his scientific and didactic commitment represented an attempt to encourage a government by consent within Italy, and a hope that all participants in the complex representative process already under way, including average citizens, could develop political awareness. Indeed, as Porciani has stressed, Brunialti, within the introduction of his *Biblioteca*,

> had already reiterated his intention to influence "general political culture" and "that of the many whom had already been called to exercise direct political action, in Government and in Parliament", and to promote a "more dynamic and intelligent participation of citizens" necessary for the proper function of a representative government, which he considered "the most suitable for guaranteeing liberty and justice for all, assuring the greater good for the greatest number, and for obtaining the true and enduring greatness of the State".[11]

italiana tra Ottocento e Novecento, Milan, Giuffré, 1980.

8. Especially from the French Charter of 1814 in the version modified in France in 1830 and in Belgium the following year. See Maria Rosa Di Simone, *Istituzioni e fonti normative in Italia dall'antico regime al fascismo*, Turin, Giappichelli, 2007, p. 157.

9. Roberto Mazzola (ed.), *La circolazione dei saperi scientifici tra Napoli e l'Europa nel XVIII secolo*, Naples, Diogene Edizioni, 2013.

10. For a deeper look at judicial systems before Unification, see Di Simone, *Istituzioni e fonti normative in Italia*.

11. Ilaria Porciani, quoting Attilio Brunialti's *Le scienze politiche nello Stato moderno*, Turin, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1884, p. 9, in the entry "Brunialti, Attilio", in *Il contributo italiano alla storia del Pensiero: Diritto*.

Brunialti was a student of Luigi Luzzatti at the University of Padua, where he graduated with a law degree in 1870, going on to work as an independent tutor and then professor of constitutional law in Rome, Pavia and finally Turin.[12] Brunialti carried out the duty of vice-librarian for the Chamber of Deputies from 1874 to 1876, subsequently becoming a deputy of the Kingdom of Italy for nine legislative terms, and then State Councillor after 1893.[13] An eclectic and versatile scholar, he dedicated himself to many disciplines, demonstrating a particular interest in political science, law, geography (he collaborated with the *Bollettino della Società geografica italiana*, or the *Bulletin of the Italian Geographic Society*) and statistics.[14] As a deputy in the 18th Legislature of the Kingdom of Italy (23 November 1892-8 May 1895), he was among the first signatories, along with Simone Cuccia and Edoardo Daneo, to a draft law "on ballot list elections".

Among his principal works in political and legal settings, the following titles are worthy of note: *Libertà e democrazia. Studi sulla rappresentanza delle minorità* (*Liberty and Democracy: Studies on the Representation of Minorities*, Milan, 1871); *Le moderne evoluzioni del governo costituzionale. Saggi e letture* (*The Modern Evolutions of Constitutional Government: Essays and Lectures*, Milan, 1881); *Formazione e revisione delle constituzioni moderne* (*Development and Revision of Modern Constitutions*, Turin, 1894); *Il diritto costituzionale e la politica nella scienza e nelle istituzioni* (*Constitutional Law and Politics in Science and Institutions*, Turin, 1896-1900, 2 vols); and *Il diritto amministrativo italiano e comparato nella scienza e nelle istituzioni* (*Italian and Comparative Administrative Law in Science and Institutions*, Turin, 1912-1914, 2 vols). Testifying to his peculiar interest in geography, though often motivated by his interest in politics, is *Trento e Trieste. Dal Brennero alle rive dell'Adriatico* (*Trento to Trieste: From Brenner to the Shores of the Adriatic*, Turin, 1916), which contained over 1,000 photoengravings of views from Trentino and Friuli-Venezia Giulia, as well as numerous photographic tables and maps.

Attilio Brunialti owes his academic fame primarily to his *Biblioteca di Scienze politiche*, over which he was director: it is a collection in three series, published from 1884 to 1915, of representative texts of Italian and comparative public law, with particular reference to constitutional, parliamentary and international law. To highlight the importance of this work within the Italian scientific landscape of the period, it is enough to mention that Brunialti's *Biblioteca* contains masterpieces of liberal writing such as *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville, *Der Rechtsstaat* by Rudolf von Gneist, *A Treatise upon the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament* by Thomas Erskine May, *Das Staatsrecht des Deutschen Reichs* by Paul Laband and *Völkerrecht und Landesrecht* by Heinrich Triepel. In those same years, Brunialti dedicated himself to the Italian

12. Giovanni Cazzetta, "Brunialti, Attilio", in *Dizionario Biografico dei Giuristi Italiani (XII-XX secolo)*, ed. by Italo Birocchi, Ennio Cortese, Antonello Mattone and Marco Nicola Miletti, vol. I, Bologna, il Mulino, 2013, pp. 349-351.

13. *Ibid*.

14. *Ibid*.

translation of *Nouvelle Géographie universelle* (*New Universal Geography*) by Elisée Reclus (1830-1905); he considered a commitment to geography practical to the development of colonialism in Italian.[15]

In a notable essay from 2020, Italo Birocchi called judicial translations in 19th-century Italy a means for building the Italian legal discipline.[16] Brunialti's translations, even if "they were not always faithful or irreproachable",[17] signalled the irreversible development of a new legal field and, specifically, the discipline of public law: the consecration of administrative science, for example, was attributed to the publication in the late 1890s within the *Biblioteca di Scienze politiche* of a work translated as *La Scienza della pubblica amministrazione secondo L. Von Stein. Compendio del Trattato e del Manuale di Scienza della pubblica amminstrazione ad uso degli Italiani* (*The Science of Public Administration According to L. Von Stein: Summary of the Treatise and of the Manual of the Science of Public Administration for the Use of Italians*), which would signal "the symbolic recognition that the discipline enjoyed in Italy".[18] In France, unlike Italy, Von Stein had not been translated, since the distribution of his work had been met with political and cultural distrust.[19] As in other circumstances – much will be said *infra* about his translation of Pierre Paul Leroy-Beaulieu's (1843-1916) *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes* (*On the Colonisation of Modern Peoples*) – Brunialti, who translated this foreign work, also wrote an introduction expressing agreement with the conclusions of its author, who assigned to the Science of Administration the objective of defining the principles and limits of state action with regard to the preservation and progress of society.[20]

The *Biblioteca* established itself within the broader framework of legal periodicals that were characteristic in Italy in the second half of the 19th century. The *Biblioteca* established a bridge between legal, political, social and economic disciplines, making the journal a unique venue in Italy for the circulation of knowledge. Brunialti himself even authored some works published within the *Biblioteca*, including: *Le scienze politiche nello Stato moderno* (*Political Science in the Modern State*, in vol. I, Turin, 1884, pp. 9-94); *La libertà nello Stato moderno* (*Liberty in the Modern State*, in vol. V, Turin, 1890); *Unione e combinazione tra gli*

15. *Ibid*.

16. Italo Birocchi, "Traduzioni e cultura giuridica nell'Italia dell'800", in *Justement traduire. Les enjeux de la traduction juridique (histoire du droit, droit comparé)*, ed. by Marie Bassano and Wanda Mastor, Toulouse, Presses de l'Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, 2020, pp. 31 ff.

17. Ilaria Porciani, "Brunialti, Attilio" in *Il contributo italiano alla storia del Pensiero: Diritto*.

18. Andrea Rapini, "Una scienza per la 'felicità dei cittadini': la traiettoria di Giovanni Vacchielli (1866/1940)", in *Alla ricerca del metodo nel diritto pubblico: Vittorio Emanuele Orlando reloaded*, ed. by Fulvio Cortese, Corrado Caruso and Stefano Rossi, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2020.

19. Rapini, "Una scienza per la 'felicità dei cittadini'".

20. Lorenz Von Stein, "La Scienza della pubblica amministrazione secondo L. Von Stein, Compendio del Trattato e del Manuale di scienza della pubblica amministrazione ad uso degli italiani", in *Biblioteca di Scienze Politiche*, Turin, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1897, LXVI; Rapini, "Una scienza per la 'felicità dei cittadini'".

stati. Gli stati composti e lo Stato federale (*Union and Combination Between States: Federal and Composite States*, in vol. VI, Turin, 1891); *Lo Stato e la Chiesa in Italia* (*State and Church in Italy*, in vol. VIII, Turin, 1892); *Formazione e revisione delle costituzioni moderne* (*Development and Revision of Modern Constitutions*, in vol. I, Turin, 1897). In the interest of offering a more technical legal perspective, the *Biblioteca* partially dropped the sociological tone that had linked it to political and administrative science beginning with the third series.

The question of legal methodology set Brunialti apart from Vittorio Emanuele Orlando and the "Orlandian turn". As has been highlighted, "for Brunialti, legal circumstances could not be separated from political circumstances, and therefore constitutional law represented a political science unto itself".[21] In other words, "constitutional law remained a science that was largely political and, in any case, the centrality of politics required an openness to all disciplines and methods of observation".[22] It could be claimed that, for Attilio Brunialti, the complex relationship between constitutional law and politics took on a teleological nature, in the sense that the former was necessarily to be considered essential to the rule of the latter, and therefore, perhaps, also to government by consent. On this point, Giovanni Cazzetta has claimed that "the representation of a constitutional right as inseparable from politics is corroborated in Brunialti's writing by the objective of guiding politics scientifically".[23]

The methodological direction of Attilio Brunialti has largely been associated in the literature with that of Giuseppe Saredo (1832-1902), Saverio Scolari (1832-1893) and Luigi Palma (1837-1899).[24] It was, moreover, a direction that could be called classical in that it followed the exegetical approach originally established among the jurists beyond the Alps, who made use of "comparative analyses, research on historical tradition, and considerations of the customs and culture of society".[25] In this sense, the resultant derogatory attitude concerning tradition, if anything, appeared to be Orlando's scientific approach; fascinated by German jurisprudence of the time, and in particular by Pandectists, he attempted to abstractly and categorically systematise constitutional and administrative law, giving them a dogmatic imprint that was markedly statist and detached from history, politics, the economy and natural law.[26]

As D'Amelio has underscored, Brunialti belonged to a movement of public law scholars destined for extinction in the face of renewed legal speculation in the German mould, for which his Sicilian colleague had become the principal interpreter.[27] In Brunialti's works, it is possible to glimpse a reading

21. Porciani, "Brunialti, Attilio".

22. *Ibid*.

23. Cazzetta, "Brunialti, Attilio", p. 350.

24. Mario Caravale, *Storia del diritto nell'Europa Moderna e contemporanea*, Rome-Bari, Laterza, 2012, ch. VI.

25. *Ibid*.

26. *Ibid*.

27. Giuliana D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. XIV, Rome, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1972, pp. 636 ff.

of constitutional law that could be defined as not fully conforming to law in practice, given how anchored it was by historical, political, philosophical and moral research, which is to say it was an interpretation of constitutional law as both a political and legal science. [28]

Beyond his methodology, Brunialti distinguished himself from Vittorio Emanuele Orlando on the matter of the plebiscitary foundation of unified Italy.[29] While Orlando located the legal establishment of the Italian state within the (unilateral) legal proclamation by the Kingdom of Sardinia of 17 March 1861 – which officially established the Kingdom of Italy[30] – and recognised within that same law the essential function of an innovative, state-like individual,[31] Brunialti attributed its foundational character to the vote of the plebiscite carrying out the process of unification. Therefore, according to him, the consensual genesis of the state relied upon their agreement, and thus on the consent of the people (or at least of the nation).[32]

Luigi Lacché argued convincingly, however, that regardless of their disagreement over the unification process, Orlando and Brunialti were both within the minority, and in open opposition to the prevalent doctrine "that instead institutionalised the canon of continuity (…) and consolidation for 'annexations' that followed", a doctrine that was represented by Santi Romano (1875-1947) and Oreste Ranelletti (1868-1956).[33] Note that on this matter the former even went so far as to doubt the legal character of Brunialti's ideas.[34]

According to Dionisio Anzilotti (1867-1950), a distinguished scholar of international law who analysed the question from a different perspective, the plebiscites could have assumed legal significance, if anything, as a manifestation of the will of states that no longer existed, unable as a result to legitimise the charter which then came into effect. Anzilotti's internationalist view, according to which Brunialti "was mistaking a political fact for a legal one", would inevitably end up completely denying the role of the people and subjects in the complex plebiscitary process.[35] Recently, Attilio Brunialti's theory of the plebiscitary

28. Attilio Brunialti, *Il diritto costituzionale e la politica nella scienza e nelle istituzioni*, vol. I, Turin, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1896, p. 35; D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio".

29. On this specific point, see Mario Riberi, *La creazione giuridica del Regno d'Italia*, Turin, Giappichelli, 2020, pp. 1 ff.

30. With the proclamation of the same law, Victor Emmanuel II assumed the title of King of Italy.

31. Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, "Regno d'Italia (Formazione del)", in *Nuovo Digesto italiano*, X (1937-1939), Turin, p. 314; Riberi, *La creazione giuridica del Regno d'Italia*, p. 12.

32. Attilio Brunialti, "La costituzione italiana e i plebisciti", *Nuova Antologia*, 37 (1883), pp. 322 ff.

33. Luigi Lacché, "Opinione pubblica nazionale e appello al popolo", in *I plebisciti del 1860 e il governo sabaudo*, ed. by Gian Savino Pene Vidari, Turin, Deputazione subalpina di storia patria, 2016, p. 163; Riberi, *La creazione giuridica del Regno d'Italia*, p. 13.

34. Santi Romano, "I caratteri giuridici della formazione del Regno d'Italia", *Rivista di diritto internazionale*, 6/3 (1912), p. 14 of the excerpt; D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", pp. 636 ff.

35. Dionisio Anzilotti, "La formazione del Regno d'Italia nei riguardi del diritto internazionale", *Rivista di diritto internazionale*, 6/1 (1912), p. 26; D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", pp. 636 ff.

foundation of the state has been taken up instead by Mario Dogliani,[36] who has identified two historical moments of note within the Albertine Statute. The first is within the pact with the people and the nation (1849), the second within the plebiscitary referendums of 1860.[37]

In addition, Brunialti demonstrated a unique interest in the study of English institutions and their parliamentary system, challenging the perspectives of some of his contemporaries who favoured promoting the government's role in balancing institutions and producing legislation. As noted elsewhere, Brunialti's fascination with the English constitution was a constant among many scholars of constitutional law and political scientists in the early modern period (beginning with Montesquieu himself), and this traditional approach also influenced the thought of Italian constitutionalists.

In order to observe the scientific influence of Brunialti, whether in Italy or abroad, it is perhaps worthwhile to start with his encyclopedic entry by Giuliana D'Amelio in the fourteenth volume of the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (*Biographical Dictionary of the Italians*),[38] where it is stated, perhaps a little too bluntly, that

> at the distance of over half a century, Brunialti's commitment to the scholarship of public law appears quite limited by its cultural setting, eclectic and superficial, as well as its political setting, significantly accommodating shifting alliances (Brunialti continued to vote with the majority even after Crispi's rise to power), to an extent that forces us to re-evaluate within his work a minor aspect that was however singularly important and fortunate: that of promoting the scientific heritage of other languages, above all German and English.[39]

Another encyclopaedic entry appeared more recently within *Il contributo italiano alla storia del Pensiero: Diritto* (*Italian Contributions to the History of Thought: Law*).[40] The author, Ilaria Porciani, had already focused on Brunialti in an article published in the latter half of the 1980s;[41] Cazzetta had also taken up Brunialti as a topic, first dedicating his own thesis to him in 1983, then producing two publications about him within the prestigious *Quaderni fiorentini per la storia del pensiero giuridico moderno* (*Florentine Journal for the History of Modern Juridical Doctrines*), and even a biography in the *Dizionario Biografico dei Giuristi Italiani* (*Biographical Dictionary of Italian Jurists*).[42] Public law

36. Mario Dogliani, "Un peccato originale del costituzionalismo italiano: incertezze e silenzi sulla novazione dello Statuto dopo i plebisciti", in *I plebisciti del 1860 e il governo sabaudo*, pp. 394-395.

37. Riberi, *La creazione giuridica del Regno d'Italia*, p. 11.

38. D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", pp. 636 ff.

39. *Ibid*.

40. Porciani, "Brunialti, Attilio".

41. Ilaria Porciani, "Attilio Brunialti e la 'Biblioteca di scienze politiche'. Per una ricerca su intellettuali e Stato dal trasformismo all'età giolittiana", in *I giuristi e la crisi dello Stato liberale in Italia fra Otto e Novecento*, ed. by Aldo Mazzacane, Naples, Liguori Editore, 1986, pp. 191-229.

42. Giovanni Cazzetta, "Una costituzione 'sperimentale' per una società ideale. I modelli giuridico-politici di Attilio Brunialti", *Quaderni fiorentini per la storia del pensiero giuridico*

periodicals had already begun welcoming contributions about Brunialti in 1913;[43] his special relationship with administrative science was studied in an article appearing in 1976 within the *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico* (*Public Law Quarterly Review*).[44] Among the oldest biographical works on Brunialti is one by Sebastiano Rumor (1862-1929), who placed him among the most influential writers from Vicenza in the 18th and 19th centuries.[45]

To demonstrate his rich scientific production in the settings of constitutional and parliamentary law, drawing from a brief review of contributions present in the Parliament's bibliography – accessible on the history portal of the Chamber of Deputies –, there are a good 51 pieces of writing by the Vicenza native, published in Italian and foreign periodicals. In the context of the emergent discipline of public law in Italy, Brunialti was the author of fundamental encyclopaedic entries such as "Camera dei deputati" ("Chamber of Deputies"),[46] "Governo" ("Government")[47] and "Elezioni politiche" ("Political Elections").[48]

Faithful to the classical setting of the liberal scholar, and a supporter of Italian colonialism from the beginning,[49] he did not turn his nose up at the scientific study of colonial law and founded, as D'Amelio noted, the *Giornale delle Colonie* (*Journal of the Colonies*) in order "to contribute to preparing for expansion, and in the meantime connect Italians spread across the globe".[50] In 1885 he was author of an "essay in a frank, Crispian tone" entitled "L'Italia e la questione coloniale" ("Italy and the Colonial Question"), where he defined Italian colonialism as the "economic and civil development of a people outside of their political borders".[51]

In 1897, dedicating "a formidable volume to the topic of colonisation" in the *Biblioteca di scienze politiche*,[52] Attilio Brunialti published the first and only Italian translation of Leroy-Beaulieu's masterpiece *De la colonisation*

moderno, 15 (1986), pp. 307-353; Giovanni Cazzetta, "Predestinazione geografica e colonie degli europei. Il contributo di Attilio Brunialti", *Quaderni fiorentini per la storia del pensiero giuridico moderno*, 33-34 (2004-2005), pp. 115-168.

43. See, for example, Carmelo Caristia, "Degli odierni indirizzi del diritto costituzionale italiano", *Rivista di diritto pubblico*, 1 (1913), pp. 52-77.

44. Franco Piodi, "Attilio Brunialti e la scienza dell'amministrazione", *Rivista trimestrale di diritto pubblico*, 2 (1976), pp. 675-706.

45. Sebastiano Rumor, *Gli scrittori vicentini dei secoli decimottavo e decimonono*, Venice, Tipografia Emiliana, 1905, vol. I, pp. 271-302.

46. "Camera dei Deputati", in *Digesto italiano*, vol. VI/1, Turin, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1888; "Camera dei Deputati", in *Enciclopedia giuridica italiana*, vol. III, Milan, Vallardi, 1903.

47. "Governo", in *Enciclopedia giuridica italiana*, vol. VII, Milan, Vallardi, 1914-1935, pp. 293-378.

48. "Elezioni Politiche", in *Enciclopedia giuridica italiana*, vol. V/1, Milan, Vallardi, 1895, pp. 486-727.

49. Cazzetta, "Brunialti, Attilio", p. 349.

50. D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", pp. 636 ff.

51. *Ibid*.

52. Cazzetta, "Predestinazione geografica e colonie degli europei", p. 115.

chez les peuples modernes.[53] Brunialti's translation – which remains little known because it is located between other works within the large volume in which it was published – was introduced with a very long[54] preface[55] which laid out a genealogy of Italian colonialism, legitimising and exalting the colonial adventure: the bearing of the preface is such that the Italian version of the French colonialist's work could not be fully understood without reading the long introductory essay.[56]

Moreover, even within the context of the emerging discipline of colonial law, the question posed by the Albertine Statute's consensual legitimacy remained: faced with the objection that applicable norms in Italy, following the Kingdom's Statute, were not published in the colony, there were those who, like the jurist Mariano D'Amelio (1871-1943), magistrate in the colony of Eritrea from 1899 to 1905, departed from the theory of continuity during the unification process also supported by Brunialti and held that the lack of publication of Italian norms had no legal value "since the formal extension of the statute is without precedent in Italy; and, as with subsequent annexations of Italian provinces, our fundamental charter is considered to extend to the plebiscites, thus in the colonies it should be considered to be imported with the military occupation".[57]

Despite Brunialti's copious academic, journalistic and didactic activity, a monograph about his life or a complete collection of his works are notably lacking. As a matter of fact, the bibliography mentioned before by Rumor, despite listing over 425 pieces of writing, does not include the numerous articles that were published in daily newspapers and local and national periodicals like *La Sveglia* and *Il Paese* from Vicenza, *La Ragione* and *L'Italia del popolo* from Milan, *Il Diritto* and *Il Messaggero*.[58]

In order to ponder the validity of critiques aimed toward Attilio Brunialti by those who consider him a (mere) disseminator, it could be useful to briefly reflect on the nature of the translations contained within the *Biblioteca di Scienze politiche*.[59]

For Brunialti, the importance of a library of knowledge where the Italian translations of works of American, French, English and German liberal thought

53. Marco Fioravanti, *Civilisation et barbarie. Regards croisés sur le droit colonial italien*, forthcoming.

54. "presque aussi long que le volume de Leroy-Beaulieu lui-même": Fioravanti, *Civilisation et barbarie*. Many of the works translated by Brunialti were introduced in a preface of his, for example in his Italian translation of *On Parliamentary Government in England: Its Origin, Development, and Practical Operation* (London, 1867) by Alpheus Todd, or enriched by his notes, like the translation of *The American Commonwealth* (London, 1888, 3 vols) by James Bryce.

55. "qui engloutit parfois l'œuvre même de Leroy-Beaulieu": Fioravanti, *Civilisation et barbarie*.

56. *Ibid.*

57. Mariano D'Amelio, *L'ordinamento giuridico della Colonia Eritrea*, Milan, Società Editrice Libraria, 1911, p. 82.

58. Jorg Lüther, "Quel che la storia di Attilio Brunialti insegna al costituzionalismo italiano", *Democrazia e diritto*, 1-2 (2011), pp. 43-63; D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", pp. 636 ff.

59. D'Amelio, "Brunialti, Attilio", pp. 636 ff.

probably stemmed from the belief that such knowledge should be accessible to all participants in the political process, rather than being restricted to a multilingual elite of academics. In Brunialti's time, a greater distribution of liberal knowledge of a political and administrative nature could have logically supported the ability of the Italian civil servant – whether a magistrate or a humble, low-paid office worker – to effectively manage the consent of the rising popular masses, in a state that had already become "the exclusive custodian of those public tasks which allow it to reach out to the solitary citizen".[60]

Upon closer inspection, it is even possible to glimpse a desire to involve ordinary citizens, and not only civil servants, within Brunialti's popularising activity. Whether it was in his assertion that the Chamber's role predominated over that of the King in a monarchic government, supported by the thesis that the Statute was revocable and modifiable, or within his early studies on the representation of minorities,[61] it is possible to identify Brunialti's attempt to promote government by consent, expressed legally through the parliamentary representation of Italians, along with a greater awareness of their own political role in society, aided by the popularisation of knowledge. Accordingly, his countless translations, though not always perfect from a philological perspective, could nevertheless carry out the function of improving the political awareness of subjects, who were not yet citizens.

Even if we wanted to consider Brunialti a mere populariser of liberal writing, it is impossible to negate the precious contribution of his *Biblioteca*, whether advancing Italian administrative science or helping the whole of Italian society develop an authentic civic awareness.[62] Moreover, the historiography has only recently acknowledged his contribution – as we have already had the opportunity to see above[63] – since it was necessary to wait until the 1970s for his efforts as a populariser to be fully recognised in historical studies through the emergence of the discipline of public history, originally within the Anglo-Saxon domain.[64]

60. Bernardo Sordi, *Diritto pubblico e diritto privato: Una genealogia storica (Collezione di testi e di studi)*, Bologna, il Mulino, 2020, ch. II.

61. Attilio Brunialti, *Libertà e democrazia. Studi sulla rappresentanza delle minorità*, Milan, E. Treves Editore, 1871.

62. Piodi, *Attilio Brunialti e la scienza dell'amministrazione*.

63. Rapini, "Una scienza per la 'felicità dei cittadini'".

64. See George Wesley Johnson, "The Origins of The Public Historian and the National Council on Public History", *The Public Historian*, 21/3 (1999), pp. 167-179.

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