

Unità d'Italia. Not to Celebrate Today is to Celebrate Defeat

Tiziana Rinaldi Castro (March 17, 2011)



"I am an anarchist today who says: 'remember this state and celebrate it. Before you take it all down, don't divide it.' "



Though I will always have political discussions and nauseam with Giuseppe Garibaldi in my mind on the way he conducted himself in the South of Italy and about the unresolved issue the South is still dealing with today as a result of the unification of Italy and the 3000 dead as a result of "La discesa dei 1000" and the mafia foraging Cavour (as it did later America and World War II -see Genovese-) and the resulting birth of the bloody and heroic Brigantaggio and I will always be ambivalent towards the Savoia House for the crimes committed in my land while advancing the unification of Italy, I will also bow to Garibaldi's bravery both in Italy and here in America and to Mazzini's political visionary idea of an Italian State.

It is a matter of resistance. I am an anarchist today who says: "remember this state and celebrate it. Before you take it all down, don't divide it. Before we find within ourselves the strength to live in peace according to our ethics rather than in order, in obedience to our laws, let's preserve this State that children so young that we would not ask their advice, bled to death on the streets of Italy to give it to us whole, after a thousand and four hundred years of foreign domination". Not to celebrate today is to celebrate defeat. It means to offer our country unraveled and quartered like a cow to these carogne of the Lega and the Nano maligno - and there isn't a word in English which sound can equate in my spirit the disdain I feel deep in my heart as much as the word CAROGNE-

The South was not better off as it was and if the violence that it was submitted to by the Garibaldini was atrocious there were also many, many, many of us downthere who followed Garibaldi because to live under the Borbons was unthinkable and shameful, and I am the great grandchild of one Luigi Rinaldi who was sentenced to 24 years of prison for having spoken out against them. And I would not be here today if Giuseppone had not passed by in those faithful days and my great grandfather had not been taken out of jail in time to have a family. For better or for worse a change occurred, and the Borbons came down finally. We can cry, we do it so well, all the time, but we were free of the very ones who had oppressed us for generations and had we tried to do it ourselves we would have died by the thousands anyway. No one missed them except for the barons, the counts, the dukes, and the land lords. Peppa La Cannoniera in 1800 and the young Balilla with a stone in his hand a hundred years before, who prepared the ground for that unification would have not missed them. Cristina Trivulzio, Rosalia Monmasson, my beloved Giuseppe Mazzini, Silvio Pellico, and all the others who gave their life then, my great grandfather and yours did not, you can be sure of that.

But I miss those young kids who died for me, who thought of me as their future, as their hope, as their reason for dying before they even reached their "maggior età". They did not know me but they died for "un'Italia libera, non oppressa, non divisa", as the anthem sings. And it is that Italy that I have to defend today in their name and against the motherf*#%@^#*s of the Lega, the very ones who after having "enslaved the South" for 150 years, after having taken us around the world in shameful migrations, after having brutalized Neapolitan and Calabrians around the North of Italy and Europe in mines and factories dividing families and changing the very content of our music and literary corpus by exacerbating the melancholic character of my people, to build their damn regions and countries, where we have been treated like dogs, would like to cut us off today. Not in my name, not if I can have my say, no.

I have to defend the unification of Italy in honor of Mazzini who was offended, humiliated, imprisoned, and condemned to die, no matter that his words and the nobility of his thoughts still echo and vibrate in the heart of any liberal thinker and can soothe and elevate the soul of the dispossessed and has inflamed the spirit of every child in History classes around the peninsula for a century and a half. I have to defend it in honor of Silvio Pellico who spent the best years of his manhood in prison. And the longing, -the 'struggimento'- in the pages of his memoir "My prisons" is a heart wrenching testament to all that a spirit that believes and that has a vision will remain unbroken, no matter how brutal a force will try its best to cut it down. Our Italian forefathers did not have a grand life, but suffered exile, slander, prison, and death sentences. It is in the name of all of them, known and unknown, that I am celebrating today the unification of my country. They left me the idea of a united Italy 150 years ago and I am going to make sure it is such the day I die, for my



children.

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