

involvement in associational life of ordinary men and women' (p. 11). Soper purposely steers away from recording the achievements of popular associations: rather, he is interested in the role played by the seldom-recognised 'heroic bankers' and their likes. Indeed, according to Soper, it was the aim of Veneto's liberal elite to place itself 'within the heroic tradition of the Risorgimento' (pp. 70–71.) The book focuses on one generation of liberal leaders – Luigi Luzzatti, Emilio Morpurgo and Fedele Lampertico – '[T]oo young to have participated in the revolutions of 1848–49', yet 'active public figures at a peculiar moment in Venetian history: from 1861 to 1866 they lived in a region that was ruled by the Austrian Empire but adjoined by a free and independent Kingdom of Italy' (p. 58). These men, brought up in a region where Manin had led democrats away from Mazzini's republicanism to embrace the monarchy, were resolved in steering associational life towards political moderatism, away from the rival Catholic and Socialist models.

This aim became increasingly challenging following the 1876 elections, as progressives and democratic leaders found new confidence in their power to lead associational life. In this sense the narrative of the book is both local and national: Soper's choice to approach the topic from the peripheries, rather than in the context of the better known centres of associational life such as Milan, is innovative and welcome. Indeed, Soper succeeds in showing that while some of the challenges encountered by the liberal professionals of the Veneto in 'building a civil society' were due to the delayed inclusion of the Veneto, many others were common to both centre and periphery.

Marcella P. Sutcliffe  
*University of Cambridge and UCL*  
[ms2080@hermes.cam.ac.uk](mailto:ms2080@hermes.cam.ac.uk)

© 2015, Marcella P. Sutcliffe  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13532944.2015.1029327>

**Victorian radicals and Italian democrats**, by Marcella Pellegrino Sutcliffe, Woodbridge, Boydell & Brewer, 2014, xii + 252 pp., £50.00, ISBN 978-0-86193-322-8

This important new study tells the story of the 'losers' of the Risorgimento – the Italian democrats – and their followers in Great Britain. It contributes to the 'new history of the Risorgimento' by showing how Mazzini's international appeal transcended physical, national and class divides to unite a significant number of Victorians in support of Italy's national dream. Until now, research on the considerable British interest in the Risorgimento has focused overwhelmingly on the Italian enthusiasm of the educated and privileged classes, and upon the British establishment's support for the unification of Italy as a constitutional monarchy under the leadership of Cavour and Piedmont. The tendency has also been to concentrate on the period leading up to the creation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861, and it is only recently that historians have begun to show much interest in British–Italian relations following that date. Pellegrino Sutcliffe breaks with this tradition in two key ways. First, she reveals the existence in Britain of radical support for a radical solution in Italy. She does this by examining the ideas of individuals and organisations who, as supporters of a republican Italy, shared a widespread and different vision from that of the statesmen who offered Britain's diplomatic endorsement of Italian

unification. Second, the author continues the story of Britain's radicals and their interest in the new Italy through the era of Italian nation-building, right up to the country's *fin de siècle* crisis and beyond.

The book is divided into two sections. The first of these is concerned with the years leading up to the unification of Italy. Here Pellegrino Sutcliffe examines the ideals that constituted the 'building blocks' (p. 27) of Mazzini's vision not only for Italy but for humanity: republicanism, freedom of and equality for the individual, education, suffrage, and cooperation within a reconstituted Europe of democratically governed nation-states. She shows how Victorian radicals were drawn towards Mazzini's concept of a 'popular Risorgimento', exploring his following within the Chartist movement and early co-operators, as well as the impact that his role in the Roman Republic of 1849 had upon his popularity in Britain. The author then turns to discuss the relationship between Victorian Mazzinians and Italian democrats during the so-called 'decade of preparation' for Italian unification. During the 1850s defections and sustained loyalties characterised the Victorian radicals' relationship with Mazzini in the face of a campaign perpetrated against him by *The Times* and other British newspapers. As Garibaldi's popularity waxed, Mazzini's waned. By the time the most popular hero of the Risorgimento had become associated with the Italy that was formed on the Piedmontese model in 1861, Mazzini was left with a 'small, yet vocal' core of loyal followers, 'whose belief in republican Italy did not waver' (p. 84). The second part of the book considers how those loyal to the Mazzinian ideal became grossly disillusioned with the Kingdom of Italy, the resurgence of Mazzini's following in Britain amid the discontent of the mid-1860s, and the ongoing development of Victorian ideas regarding his legacy after his death in 1872.

This book is impressive in detail, with regard to the people, the organisations and the relationships it investigates. Pellegrino Sutcliffe has consulted a wide range of sources, from contemporary books, articles and newspapers to an impressive array of archival material located in Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States. She has consulted the papers of a host of mid-nineteenth-century Italophiles, intellectuals, political activists and journalists, including Aurelio Saffi, George Jacob Holyoake, Arnold Toynbee, W.E. Adams, and Alexander Herzen, Jessie White Mario, the Nathan family, and William Gladstone. The bibliography also comprises a very extensive and up-to-date list of publications. From this broad foundation, Pellegrino Sutcliffe produces a work of real originality. By teasing out 'the voices of radical dissent' from the provinces, she debunks the myth that the English people as a whole bought into the liberal Piedmontese myth of the Risorgimento. Not everyone in Britain, or England, shared in 'the liberal assumption that the British constitutional monarchy should be the model for other nations' (p. 117). Not only does Pellegrino Sutcliffe depart from the official narrative of the Risorgimento as forged through the traditional study of high politics and diplomacy, but she enhances our hitherto London-centric understanding of the British interest in the Risorgimento by considering how events in Italy were perceived by working men's associations, educational institutions and the democratic press. The one criticism worth making, however, is that this book is perhaps too 'English' in focus. Certainly, Pellegrino Sutcliffe's principal aim of showing how the English were not united in their support for Italy's unification as a monarchy rather than a republic is achieved. It might, in view of this aim, be legitimate for the study to make hardly any reference at all to Ireland, the politics of which had a considerable bearing on British attitudes towards the Risorgimento. If Scotland, though, was a font of enlightened ideas that influenced English radicalism (pp. 43–44), not to mention being also a stronghold of the anti-Catholicism (pp. 91–92) that was widely shared by the English in their attitude towards the Risorgimento, it is disappointing that this book pays relatively little attention to the reception of Mazzinianism in

that country. Nonetheless, this very well-written and interesting study makes an extremely valuable contribution to the transnational history of the Risorgimento, and to our comprehension of the complexities of the British relationship with and involvement in the unification of Italy.

O.J. Wright

*Ulster University*

*OJ.Wright@ulster.ac.uk*

© 2015, O.J. Wright

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13532944.2015.1034488>