

Collateral Effects. Emotional and Material Costs for Political Engagement in Mazzini's and Garibaldi's Followers

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Abstract

The paper aims at scattering light on the backstage of total militancy in the case of Mazzini's and Garibaldi's followers. Political engagement meant as an existential commitment to the 'Cause' – either in underground conspiracy networks and in open light volunteering, up to parliamentary activity – implies emotional and material costs. Still an under-investigated dimension, the 'collateral effects' of 19th Century patriotism can be profitably appreciated when digging into family and friends' correspondence, into ego-documents: from Mazzini's most intimate confessions, to Giovine Italia local leaders' choices, to Garibaldinian officers facing the battlefield or even the parliamentary arena, the impact of politics onto the private horizon reveals the multiple layers of gain and loss, of expectation and disappointment playing an unavoidable role in so many male and female 'broken lives'. The selected cases give evidence of how disrupting 'the political' can be when it enters the private sphere by means of risk, absence, punishment, and how nevertheless fulfilling it can be when offering the ultimate reason to leave the beloved ones as well as a professional and heritage status behind.

Author information

Arianna Arisi Rota is Full Professor of Contemporary History in the Department of Political and Social Sciences at Pavia University, where she teaches courses on 19th Century History and History of Diplomacy. Her research focuses on two main axes: the history of the diplomatic machinery and the history of politicization in 19th-Century Europe, with special attention to generational mobilization and cleavages and to memory-building. She is the author of, among others, *I piccoli cospiratori. Politica ed emozioni nei primi mazziniani* (2010); *1869: il Risorgimento alla deriva. Affari e politica nel caso Lobbia* (2015); *Risorgimento. Un viaggio politico e sentimentale* (2019).

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Monday, 14 June - Session 2 - **10,30-12,00 CET (Webex)** - Panel – *Revolution and the language of feelings in Italy: from Mazzini to 1970s terrorism*

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