

The Italian Risorgimento: A memory that divides

Gabriele Sorrentino

In Italy there are two national festivals: April 25 remembers the Liberation from Nazi-fascism. June 2, is the Republic Day. Italy, on the other hand, does not celebrate March 17, 1861, when the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed or other dates that celebrate the “*Risorgimento*”, that is, the historical process that led to the creation of the unified state. Why has Italy forgotten this historic moment? The Risorgimento was a complex historical process that, however, developed in a mode that created divisions within the country that is still struggling to deal with the issues of a process that saw in fact the annexation from Part of the Piedmont of the other pre-united states. Even the posterior construction of the patriotic mythology on the part of the winners is an element that over the long run has ended up dividing rather than merging. An example in this regard is a figure like General Enrico Cialdini, who led the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples by methods that even contemporaries considered rather brutal. The “Risorgimento” political mythology dedicated to Cialdini streets and squares with choices that are now being discussed throughout the Peninsula by feeding a political end to this character. To grow as a country, Italy has to deal with its own Risorgimento and I believe that to achieve this, a new approach needs to be taken in this troubled period in all its problems in order to unite winners and losers to be able to metabolize this process as an element The founder of the country.

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