

My Appeal

Students!

Do you want to know the truth about the Revolutions of 1848 and what they really meant? Here you are:

It was not for a material interest that the people of Vienna fought in 1848; in weakening the empire they could only lose power. It was not for an increase of wealth that the people of Lombardy fought in the same year; the Austrian Government had endeavoured in the year preceding to excite the peasants against the landed proprietors, as they had done in Galicia; but everywhere they had failed. They struggled, they still struggle, as do Poland, Germany, and Hungary, for country and liberty; for a word inscribed upon a banner, proclaiming to the world that they also live, think, love, and labour for the benefit of all. They speak the same language, they bear about them the impress of consanguinity, they kneel beside the same tombs, they glory in the same tradition; and they demand to associate freely, without obstacles, without foreign domination, in order to elaborate and express their idea; to contribute their stone also to the great pyramid of history. It is something moral which they are seeking; and this moral something is in fact, even politically speaking, the most important question in the present state of things. It is the organisation of the European task. It is no longer the savage, hostile, quarrelsome nationality of two hundred years ago which is invoked by these peoples. The nationality . . . founded upon the following principle: - *Whichever people, by its superiority of strength, and by its geographical position, can do us an injury, is our natural enemy; whichever cannot do us an injury, but can by the amount of its force and by its position injure our enemy, is our natural ally*, - is the princely nationality of aristocracies or royal races. The nationality of the peoples has not these dangers; it can only be founded by a common effort and a common movement; sympathy and alliance will be its result. In principle, as in the ideas formerly laid down by the men influencing every national party, nationality ought only to be to humanity that which the division of labour is in a workshop - the recognised symbol of association; the assertion of the individuality of a human group called by its



geographical position, its traditions, and its language, to fulfil a special function in the European work of civilisation.

(Pardon my British spelling; I was in exile in London and learned English there).

Students!

If you keep up with the news nowadays, you will see that my description of the old nationalism pretty much holds now. This is a great disappointment to me, because, as you can see from what I wrote, I believed in a different kind of nationality, **that is**, every nationality has a mission (you can see that in my comment about the “division of labour” above). So far, this has not happened, even though the Marxists, who I condemned because their ideas naturally led to dictatorship, have apparently been thrown into “the dustbin of History” (I’ll have to admit that their slogans were catchy).

You always thought of me as an Italian nationalist, but even though I fought for the independence and unity of Italy, I was really a European thinker but now my ideas have become worldwide (my girlfriend Giuditta would be proud of me; she was way ahead of her time, taking up with me in defiance of the conventions of the time). You can see this by the way the two hundredth anniversary of my birth is being celebrated (2005), in places as far away as India (Gandhi took up my ideas) and even in Boston. I had a lot of friends in Boston,



including that poor Margaret Fuller, a founder of your women's movement and an important Transcendentalist writer. She helped me when I guided the Roman Republic, even met a man she fell in love with when she was there and had a child, but they all died in a shipwreck near Fire Island (New York City) when they were returning to the U.S. They never did find the bodies or the manuscript on Italy she was writing, but anyway, go visit her monument in Mount Auburn Cemetery.

But I digress from the main point of this revolutionary manifesto. I am pretty disappointed that nationalism still seems to be the driving force in the world. **Nationalities** working for the common good of **Humanity** should be the guiding force of the world, and striking down all repression should be their objective.

Students!

I am confident that my principles are still valid and will better humanity! I **Appeal to You.** You need only go out to work for them! **By revolutionary means, if necessary!**

Students!

It's up to you. Make the twenty-first century my century, the century of Brotherhood, (Humanityhood?) **Liberation and Democracy!**



MAZZINI