sought concrete solutions to the problems bothering them. We will examine their ideas, then, not to get at why fascism appealed to those who should have known better, but to get at what fascism was in the first place.

Nor is this a book about the "intellectual origins" of Italian fascism, as opposed to some other kind of origins. We will use "intellectual" evidence to determine which of the political, social, economic, and psychocultural problems in Italy were operative causes of the rise of fascism. Ideas are the links between the people who did the things we seek to explain and the problematic phenomena in reality that might have been causes; critical analysis of ideas enables us to gauge the relative weight of these problems in the responses comprising fascism. Since fascist actions are not simply transparent, with the intention behind them obvious, it is not immediately apparent what the fascists themselves found troublesome; so we have no choice but to turn to our second line of evidence—to fascist ideas, such as they are.

Of course the second-rate ideas we will be considering are by no means transparent either. We must begin by taking the syndicalists seriously, on their own terms, but we will not end up taking what they said at face value. Their ideas call for interpretation, which requires that we make judgments about how well they understood problems and about the plausibility of the solutions they proposed. This approach will not result in some sort of "rehabilitation"—the reader need have no fear. On the contrary, a deeper historical understanding of the syndicalists and fascists will make it possible to criticize them on the basis of more valid criteria and to learn more significant lessons from their experiences and mistakes.

2 / *The Politics of Pessimism*

An interpretation of the origins of Italian fascism depends on an evaluation of the quality of the liberal regime from which fascism emerged. Some historians emphasize the inadequacies of liberal Italy, highlighting its oligarchic and repressive features, while others insist that the liberal regime, for all its imperfections, was moving at a respectable pace toward viable democracy. If liberal Italy was basically healthy, then fascism can be seen as a mere "parenthesis," an unfortunate accident resulting largely from an exogenous shock—World War I. From this perspective, the "pathological" tendencies in Italian life had a chance to develop political force only because of the dislocations of the war. Moreover, those tendencies were symptomatic of a crisis that was by no means confined to Italy. On the other hand, those viewing liberal Italy in a less favorable light stress the continuity between fascism and what went before: fascism was the "revelation" of all the traditional Italian vices, the "autobiography" of a flawed nation.[1]

But a third relationship between liberal Italy and fascism is theoretically possible—the one that the fascists themselves claimed was operative. From this perspective, liberal Italy was indeed inadequate, and fascism was to do precisely the things that the liberal regime had proven unable to do. Even though the Fascist regime in practice never created a viable alternative to liberal Italy, this claim cannot be dismissed out of hand; it may have been a plausible attempt to create such an alternative that motivated fascists in the first place. But if we are to address this central interpretive question, we must explore the way in which Italy's situation as a fragile young nation affected the development of her liberal institutions. We must probe the complex set of problems with which our fascist spokesmen grew up and keep those problems in mind as we watch syndicalism evolve and fascism emerge. In this exploration, we will be talking about matters of degree. The questionable features of the liberal parliamentary system in Italy can be

found elsewhere as well. But the difference in degree may account for the fact that the kinds of people who supported that system elsewhere turned against it in Italy. Italy was a weak link in the liberal parliamentary system of bourgeois Europe: tensions and deficiencies in the system in general were closer to the surface in Italy than elsewhere.

After the foundation of the Kingdom of Italy in 1860, a restricted class of generally able and upright men found themselves trying to consolidate a precarious new nation and to shape liberal institutions at the same time. The liberal system developed some peculiar features in Italy primarily because it was made to work in a situation of national infancy, political inexperience, and social fragmentation. As a result of these special difficulties, Italy's political elite, including those who shaped educated political opinion as well as those who governed, shared a common perspective, despite vast differences in methods and priorities. Its essential feature was a basic pessimism—a lack of confidence in their society, a lingering sense that their nation was flawed and fragile. Many liberal rulers had misgivings about the masses and about real democracy in the later nineteenth century, but in Italy doubts about the civic capacities of the Italians exacerbated the usual defensiveness. The Italian political elite viewed itself as the embodiment of liberal principles and viewed the state as the sphere through which it could nurture those principles in the face of a superstitious, illiberal society. Not only did Italian society appear to lack political experience, it seemed to have been corrupted by centuries of government at the hands of Spaniards, Bourbons, and priests.

When they looked downward into Italian society, members of the Italian political elite perceived fragmentation and atomization at all levels. The problem was most obvious in Italy's regional diversity, especially in the difference between North and South, but it also extended to narrow local *campanilismo*, and even deeper, to basic cultural values and attitudes. Social solidarity and civic virtue seemed to be rare among Italians, and this seemed to explain why national political awareness, organizational capacity, and respect for law were relatively scarce in Italian society. Sensitive Italians confronted troubling questions about the implications of Italy's unfortunate past for the task of nation building. Why had Italian culture become narrow and provincial, and why had Italy fallen prey to foreign domination in the centuries since the Renaissance? Was Italy fit to become a modern, self-governing nation? These concerns found moving expression in an influential essay by Francesco De Sanctis, "L'uomo del Guicciardini" ["The Guicciardinian Man"], written in 1869. De Sanctis was concerned with the central problem of Italian history, how the buoyant and advanced culture of the Italian Renaissance could have led, beginning with the

French invasion of 1494, to centuries of subservience to foreigners. The key, he felt, was a moral hollowness and superficiality in sixteenth-century Italian culture.[2] And he warned that, despite the achievement of formal Italian unity, "the Italian race is not yet cured of that moral weakness; we still bear the scars which our history of duplicity and simulation has inflicted on us." De Sanctis concluded that modern Italy would encounter her problem of character at every turn and would continue to find her history flawed if she proved unable to transform herself.[3]

De Sanctis's laments and exhortations were part of a long tradition of Italian self-criticism. Fifty-two years later, in the aftermath of World War I, Giustino Fortunato explicitly invoked De Sanctis's analysis in the jeremiads which made up his deeply pessimistic *Dopo la guerra sovvertitrice* [*After the Subversive War*].[4] With the liberal regime crumbling around him, Fortunato felt that all the weaknesses underlying Italy's development as a nation were emerging in stark relief: egotism and cynicism, a propensity for facile rhetoric, a lack of civic discipline stemming from a lack of moral discipline. Italy still needed "the mystical sense of duty from which derives the kind of love of country which is so lacking among us and which we never had in sufficient measure to enable us to repel—or contain—the foreign invasions."[5] The Italian masses were shortsighted and egotistical, but the Italian middle classes, grasping for parasitical bureaucratic jobs, were no better. Fortunato also blamed the liberal governing class—in fact, all Italians had in common certain characteristics impeding the development of healthy political institutions: "Every one of us, in private, makes fun of the law and, in public, pretends to be unaware of it, amid a furious, blind scramble for advantage, in which everybody seeks to prevail with whatever means available, for it is precisely a sense of the rights of others that we most lack."[6] Writing a few years later, a younger liberal, Guido De Ruggiero, found the combination of a narrow, decadent ruling class and a fluid, apolitical populace responsible for the degeneration of the liberal parliamentary system in Italy during the later years of the nineteenth century. Sensing that Italy was somehow different, he lamented the persistent lack of solidarity and national identity among his fellow Italians.[7]

These are tricky and sensitive matters, but there is no question that these pessimistic perceptions had a basis in fact. Historians of liberal Italy, as well as political scientists seeking the factors underlying modern Italian political culture, have similarly noted a lack of the civic consciousness and national awareness necessary for coherent political organization.[8] Alberto Aquarone finds healthy integration between state and society to have been especially lacking in the Italian South,

"because of the old and still persistent poverty of civic life, as measured by the weakness or absence of spontaneous forms of association in the social body."[9] The American historian Edward Tannenbaum sees as modern Italy's most serious weakness "a conditioned inability to work together in a spirit of trust and cooperation"; as a result of this defect, civic culture and national identity were still seriously underdeveloped in Italy by 1914.[10]

The same cultural features can be found in other liberal parliamentary systems, but matters of degree are crucial, so it is worth considering recent comparative analyses by political scientists. To be sure, studies of Italian political attitudes since World War II are not directly applicable to the period before World War I, especially because so much that happened subsequently might well have fostered political alienation and cynicism. But, as contemporary political scientists themselves insist, their findings indicate deeply rooted propensities underlying modern Italian history. And in fact those findings only confirm what pessimistic Italians had long been saying about their society on the basis of less systematic evidence.

In *The Civic Culture*, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba compare political attitudes in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Mexico, and the United States, and conclude that Italy is "an alienated political culture," especially lacking in social solidarity and in confidence in political action. The Italian political culture is

> one of relatively unrelieved political alienation and of social isolation and distrust. The Italians are particularly low in national pride, in moderate and open partisanship, in the acknowledgement of the obligation to take an active part in local community affairs, in the sense of competence to join with others in situations of political stress, in their choice of social forms of leisure-time activity, and in their confidence in the social environment.
>
> If our data are correct, most Italians view the social environment as full of threat and danger. Thus the social fabric sustains neither an allegiant political culture nor an allegiant pattern of political participation. And perhaps as sobering is the fact that the Italians are the most traditional of our five peoples in their attitudes toward family participation.[11]

After centuries of foreign domination, Italians tend to understand all governments as external, almost natural forces—to be endured or corrupted from within—and not as instruments responsive to social needs and organized involvement. Thus, Almond and Verba note, Italians have a low propensity to form groups for political action.[12]

In the same way, Luciano Gallino finds Italian society to be especially fragmented among European societies, while Joseph LaPalombara argues that Italians since unification have remained less likely than Britons or Americans to form voluntary organizations and to participate

in the political process.[13] Italians tend to rely passively on the central government to solve problems. The result is an ambivalent attitude toward the state: "The Italian, despite his suspicion and mistrust of the government or the central administration, still thinks that all the problems affecting him ought somehow to be solved by some minister, or some bureaucrat, in Rome."[14]

We must be careful, needless to say, in using such broad sociocultural categories in historical explanation; they can easily be misused or overused. Writing in 1956, the noted historian Piero Pieri remarked that Italy's history of provincialism and foreign domination had of course left its mark on the Italian character, fostering a petty individualism, but this, he said, was obvious and trite.[15] The problem for historians was to demonstrate in concrete terms that this underlying cultural syndrome had had a significant impact on historical events, and that other, more tangible kinds of explanation were not sufficient to make sense of those events. In fact, however, it is not necessary to insist on a direct relationship, explaining the transition from liberalism to fascism as a result of the cultural patterns we have discussed. We will find in operation an indirect relationship: those responsible for the events—both liberals and fascists—acted as they did because they believed such sociopolitical alienation to be especially acute in Italy and to be a major source of her problems. And we have seen that this perception was not implausible, that it did have some basis in fact. Given Italian self-doubts, moreover, contemporaries critical of their society were liable to magnify the defects in Italian political culture, exaggerating the discipline and political competence of non-Italians and the corresponding deficiencies of Italians.

Some of the fundamental characteristics of liberal Italy stemmed from the nature of the unification process and its immediate aftermath. Cavour and his followers saw Italy's situation in 1860–61 as a period of emergency to be surmounted as quickly as possible. And disintegration of the hastily constructed new nation was indeed a possibility, given the active hostility of the Church and the Bourbons and given the limited diffusion of Italian national identity. Italy seemed to lack the framework of consensus for a constituent assembly, giving the people a share in choosing basic institutions, fostering serious discussion among the various regions, and demonstrating that the Italian people had come together to create a new state. Instead, the Piedmontese monarchy, the Piedmontese constitution of 1848, and the Piedmontese administrative and legal systems were simply imposed on the rest of the country, with discussion deliberately kept at a minimum. The regions of Italy were added to Piedmont in piecemeal fashion, behind the facade of carefully

engineered plebiscites. When King Victor Emanuel II of Piedmont became the first king of Italy, he did not become King Victor Emanuel I, but chose to remain Victor Emanuel II.

It seemed best to get the period of uncertainty and transition over with as quickly as possible, keeping things firmly under control. And that control apparently required centralized administration on the French model, even though Cavour and most of the Piedmontese moderates would have preferred a pluralistic system, with a greater measure of local autonomy and self-government.[16] They were confronting a cruel dilemma. Italy's great regional diversity made a federal solution especially appropriate, and if the new Italian state had taken a federal form, preserving local procedures and traditions, it would have seemed less an alien intrusion to ordinary Italians. By encouraging participation at the local level, a federal system would have fostered the political education the country so badly needed. On the other hand, the very regional heterogeneity and lack of national consciousness that made federalism theoretically desirable seemed to make centralization essential in the short term; only through centralized control and uniform procedures, it seemed, could the nation be kept from falling apart.

Cavour felt there was no time to study local conditions and procedures, to see what might be salvaged from the old order to provide a more organic basis for the new one. Consequently, a flurry of decree laws fundamentally altered the legal and administrative structures of the various regions, imposing centralization and Piedmontization—all before the first meeting of the new Italian parliament. Cavour feared that parliamentary discussion would be too lengthy and too divisive.

The cautious liberals who comprised the Destra Storica, or old Right, after their leader Cavour died in 1861, hoped that gradually the level of civic virtue in society could be raised so that the state could become more popular. Massimo D'Azeglio gave voice to the prevailing view in the ruling class when he uttered the best-known imperative in modern Italian history: "Fatta l'Italia, bisogna fare gli Italiani"— "Having made Italy, it is necessary to make the Italians." But since the political elite was defensive and pessimistic about the society, the state which it created was, for a liberal state, unusually aloof and restricted. The state was quick to respond to popular disorders in heavy military fashion, by declaring martial law or even a state of siege, and as a result ordinary people continued to experience the state as alien and unresponsive. However necessary the state's exclusiveness may have been at first, it could only breed more of the antistatism and "anarchism" which had caused the political class to lack confidence in the society in the first place. The central problem of modern Italian history was how to break out of this vicious circle: how to enable a society that

apparently could not be trusted to gain enough political experience and civic consciousness so that it could be trusted.

With the state distant and aloof, and with decision making centralized, opportunity for participation on the local level was limited. Some historians maintain that the new system actually stifled political capacities in society, but others point out that centralization could have done only limited damage, since the impetus for political organization and initiative was so weak. In either case, Italy remained even decades later "a shattered society," relatively weak vis-à-vis the state and lacking in organizational capacity and confidence in political action.[17]

A major turning point was reached in 1876, when an inevitable expansion of the political base occurred. As the issues and passions of the Risorgimento receded, the Right began to splinter along regional and personal lines, and the leftist opposition changed in character. The "historic" Left, its roots deep in the Risorgimento, constituted a loyal opposition after 1860, advocating somewhat more democratic policies on the basis of a slightly different sense of the nation's priorities. But increasingly, during the Right's long period of predominance, others without much political vision or experience became frustrated with government policies and thus became politically active, naturally gravitating toward the Left. This process occurred especially in the South, which had suffered economically from unification and was restive under centralized administration. But there were also more specific sources of frustration which make clearer the nature of the sectors that were becoming politically active in the South. Local banking and financial groups resented the ties that had developed between the Destra governments and the Banca Nazionale, the oldest, most firmly established Italian financial group. These other banks were often interested in questionable kinds of financial speculation, but the policies of the upright Destra, and the dominant position of the conservative and responsible Banca Nazionale group, constituted major obstacles.[18] By 1876, the Left was becoming a coalition of local groups, seeking political access in order to pursue such narrow interests as these.

By 1876, the Right was too narrowly based and too limited regionally to be viable, despite its achievements and its high moral level. And so when Marco Minghetti's ministry fell in March of 1876, King Victor Emanuel II chose Agostino Depretis, leader of the moderate Left in parliament, to form the new government. The fall of the Destra, and the Left's sweeping victory in the parliamentary elections a few months later, seemed to constitute nothing less than a revolution. Democrats were enthusiastic, feeling that now at last there would be serious changes, including the institution of universal suffrage, to enable Italy to move quickly to genuine democracy. While the suffrage

reform which Depretis finally engineered in 1882 hardly justified the buoyant hopes of 1876, it did expand the electorate from six hundred thousand to over two million, or from 2 percent to 7 percent of the total population, and established that further expansion would accompany increases in literacy.

It fell to Depretis to make the political system work in the new situation, and no one grasped the nature of the challenge better than he. Depretis fully shared the pessimism of the Italian political class, but he recognized that since the immediate emergency was over, the political system had to be expanded to encompass a broader segment of society, and the South had to be more fully integrated into Italian political life. The expansion of the political base entailed new risks, however. A high percentage of the deputies elected in 1876 had never served in the Chamber before; they lacked not only experience in national politics, but also the moral legacy of participation in the Risorgimento. Enjoying the support of local notables, they were sent to parliament to serve as brokers for restricted local interests. So the rigidly upright men of the Destra Storica were giving way to men with a different conception of the purpose of politics.[19]

As a coalition of heterogeneous local interest groups, the Left lacked common long-term commitments, and after the elections of 1876, the huge Left majority in the Chamber began to splinter.[20] As a result, Depretis found himself confronting the fundamental political problem of liberal Italy—the problem of consensus, of forging a workable majority out of a fragmented Chamber representing a fragmented society. To make the political system work under these conditions, he felt it necessary to pander to the appetites of whatever deputies were willing to offer their support. The priorities of the deputies apparently reflected the priorities of a society still prone to corruption, and there seemed no choice but to make the most of the situation. So between 1876 and his death in 1887, Depretis managed both to expand the basis of consensus for the system and to maintain a workable majority in parliament—by means of government favors for loyal deputies and the local interests they represented. The clientele involved were often interested in the kind of financial speculation we have already mentioned; Depretis thus became the link through which they gained access to the state administration.[21] If he needed it, the cooperative deputy could also count on the ministry to intervene in his behalf at election time, through the centralized administrative apparatus, which gave the Minister of the Interior close control over the local situation through the appointed prefect and, through him, the police.

Through his system of state favors and influence peddling, Depretis managed to link together the heterogeneous regional interest groups

that were now being brought into the system. The essential measure of consensus could apparently be achieved only on the basis of the least common denominator, participation in the state's patronage network. Depretis feared that attempting to bind these heterogeneous interests together by means of a coherent program might lead to a dissolution of the majority, perhaps to a bitterly divisive system of regional parties, and ultimately to political chaos. Italy was not yet ready for real politics; the chief objective continued to be preserving the state itself—in its expanded form.[22]

In principle, expanding the base of the political class to include newer business sectors could have meant an injection of dynamism and vision. However, the Italian capitalist bourgeoisie lacked both entrepreneurial vigor and the confidence for political leadership. The European recession from 1873 to 1896 hardly encouraged confidence, but there was widespread doubt about Italy's long-term potential for industrial development in any case. The country seemed to lack the necessary resources, especially coal, and new Italian industries would have difficulty finding markets, given Italy's overall poverty and the competition which her more industrialized neighbors could offer. As a result, Italian businessmen during the Depretis period tended toward speculative maneuvering—in urban real estate, for example—not productive industrial enterprise.[23] They did not constitute an assertive, self-conscious class, claiming to merit political power because of their unique capacities, because they could modernize the country, because they had a new program to offer.[24] They sent deputies to the Chamber simply to win the bureaucratic favors upon which their speculative activities depended. And these deputies played into Depretis's hands by competing with each other for governmental favors, giving him their political support in return. Thus the priorities of the Italian bourgeoisie and the political tactics of Depretis combined to produce *trasformismo*, or transformism, that peculiar set of political relationships characteristic of prewar Italy.

Through the patronage network, Depretis succeeded in expanding the political consensus "vertically," pushing the lower limit of political access a bit further down into society. But transformism also had a "horizontal" axis, linking Depretis's old Left with important sectors of the old Right. Not surprisingly, Depretis's strategy of compromise with the flawed society alarmed the paternalistic liberals of the old Right, but given the potential danger from below, some felt it necessary to go along with Depretis if the state itself was to be maintained. Marco Minghetti's position epitomized the ambivalence of the old Right in the face of this dilemma. He criticized the abuses which political interference in the administration and the judiciary produced under the

Left, but he was still willing to support Depretis in practice in 1882, in the wake of the suffrage expansion. In fact, Minghetti served as a mediator between Depretis and members of the old Right who were uneasy about Depretis's methods but who desired to support the state in light of the apparent threat from below.[25] By 1882, a major part of the old political elite, from both left and right, was coalescing into a conservative bloc seeking to defend basic institutions.

The transformist system which Depretis established and Giolitti later expanded did provide the short-term consensus and stability that seemed essential to the pessimistic Italian governing class. The country stayed together; institutions endured; parliament functioned, after a fashion; and a kind of unity was forged among the heterogeneous regional elites. These were real accomplishments, which perhaps afforded the basis for a more productive and democratic future. But the stability was superficial: the consensus was a short-term stopgap, an ongoing compromise made of a multiplicity of individual deals, serving to paper over the deeper lack of consensus in the fragmented society. This was a politics of expediency that worked only by neglecting the country's deep structural problems—the impact of unification on the South; the need for economic development, agrarian reform, and regional autonomy; the need to make the state and the political process more popular and responsive, once the post-Risorgimento emergency was over. These were divisive issues which seemed best avoided or indefinitely deferred. It was necessary to endure. And so the real problem of the new order in unified Italy, as the years after 1860 turned to decades, was not instability—but stasis.

The costs of short-term stability and consensus were thus enormous; the system seriously corroded Italian parliamentary institutions and, in the last analysis, prevented the political process from becoming a vehicle through which the society could confront basic problems and make reasoned choices. On the horizontal axis of transformism, concern for order and short-term stability produced an emphasis on homogeneity not conducive to real politics; the dangers from the untrustworthy society seemed so immediate that politically conscious Italians felt they had to focus on what they shared, rather than develop competing long-term programs. To pose the basic choices confronting the country would fragment the ruling class and thereby weaken the common defense of established institutions.[26] On the other hand, the vertical axis of transformism produced a degree of heterogeneity and fragmentation equally incompatible with genuine politics. Depretis sought to prevent the deputies from grouping around substantive political issues in the Chamber, since definite choices and programs would apparently threaten his precarious coalitions. As the manager of parliament, Depretis was free to maneuver, but he dared not use his freedom to provide real political leadership, articulating choices and proposing reforms. Politics had to be restricted to the level of personal relationships between the parliamentary manager, on the one hand, and the deputy and his local clientele, on the other. Political activity involved merely the bargaining and influence-peddling necessary to keep the fragile majorities together. Here again, basic choices and problems were sidestepped; here again, the result was stagnation.[27]

Some serious decisions had to be made, of course, but the system kept parliament relatively weak within the decision-making process. In exchange for favors, the deputies in the Chamber were willing to go along passively while the ministry and the upper bureaucracy made the decisions. Procedural problems also damaged the effectiveness of parliament, so the executive invoked special powers to make laws by decree.[28] The bureaucracy became an important de facto legislative organ as a result. The monarchy and its inner circle remained powerful as well, especially in military and foreign policy. In general, parliament provided a shield for an oligarchic system of government—a system that tended to keep the society weak in political capacity vis-à-vis the restricted political elite. And since it compromised the standing of parliamentary government, Depretis's system ended up perpetuating the country's political alienation and cynicism.

These political patterns also reinforced the tendency toward parasitical and speculative forms of economic activity in Italian society. The emerging economic sectors became heavily reliant on the state, showing little taste for direct competition or for developing their own organizations to pursue their interests. Alberto Caracciolo has well summarized the consequences: "The protectionist mentality impoverished autonomous initiatives, discouraged tendencies to rely on oneself or on the spontaneous association of producers. . . . In the phase of the growth and establishment of the national state, . . . the poverty of initiative on the local level stands out. It is an indisputable phenomenon, whatever its causes, and one heavy with consequences for the maturity of the ruling class and for political participation in the country for decades to come."[29] The political system, then, undercut whatever potential society had to develop political alternatives.

The system also warped the industrial development that was no doubt essential for the nation's long-term viability. Government help enabled questionable financial interests to prosper and even to establish a stifling hegemony over the economy. Newer industrial sectors quickly manifested the same parasitical propensities as the dominant economic groups. This pattern was most obvious in the Italian steel industry, which began to develop in earnest in the 1880s. A viable steel industry

could have been created in Italy, despite her lack of coal, but only by industrialists willing to engage in long-term planning, to sacrifice immediate profit in order to reinvest, and to replace capital stock frequently in order to maintain efficiency.[30] But short-term financial and speculative concerns were foremost, so there was very little long-term planning. Bankers, stock promoters, and contractors with well-established political links promoted the new Terni steel complex, for example, not entrepreneurs and investors seriously interested in industrial development. Efficiency in Italian steel remained low; it was clear from the beginning that the industry would depend indefinitely on state help, and a variety of government orders and subsidies were forthcoming to keep it on its feet.[31]

Above all, steel required tariff protection. And the culmination of the interrelated economic development and political maneuvering of the 1880s was the tariff of 1887, which protected both southern grain and northern steel, thereby cementing the alliance of regional interest groups that formed the basis of the Italian state.[32] Although it was possible for Italians to favor protection on rational economic grounds, political criteria predominated in fact, and the tariff system did more to hinder than to further economic development.[33] The high grain duties preserved outmoded techniques in the South, as well as a landowner class with little interest in modernization. Steel protection meant higher costs for steel consumers like the promising young machinery industry, which now had to devote some of its energies to the scramble for state favors, bargaining for a few more percentage points of protection.

Some sensitive Italians, troubled by the direction of Italian politics after 1876, began splitting off from the mainstream to form a current of principled conservative opposition to transformism—and even, in some cases, to parliamentary government in general. The old Right had understood the state as a bastion of civic virtue, but parliamentary government under Depretis seemed to be allowing the particular interests of the backward society to undermine the state's integrity. Rather than form a political party to work within the parliament, those who blamed the popular, elective, parliamentary side of the state for this apparent degeneration began to identify with the permanent, administrative side of the state, which they viewed as the preserve of a permanent ruling elite embodying the national interest in the context of an untrustworthy society.[34]

Although Marco Minghetti was willing to work with Depretis, and although he remained committed to the parliamentary system in principle, he was deeply troubled by the patterns being established after 1876. In an influential book published in 1881, Minghetti dissected the links in the vertical axis of transformism, showing how the political managers

interfered in the administration and the judiciary for the benefit of their parliamentary supporters.[35] The resulting abuses, he complained, only discredited the state in the eyes of a populace already tending toward political cynicism and hostility. The flaws in Italian political life were partly the result of inexperience, but Minghetti thought he saw a deeper problem as well—an unusual dearth of organizational capacity in Italian society. If Italy's unhealthy political patterns were to be overcome, Italians would have to learn to join together on their own initiative, for organization, Minghetti insisted, serves to discipline individuals and to enhance their political effectiveness.

Two other critics, Gaetano Mosca and Vilfredo Pareto, worried especially about the hypertrophy of the state in its parliamentary form; it seemed to be stifling the energies of society.[36] Parliamentary government depended upon favoritism and corruption, and the bureaucracy had to expand to provide the favors which the ministers needed to maintain their majorities. Pareto, writing in 1893, described with remarkable precision the vicious circle ensnaring Italian parliamentary government: the absence of a stable party structure made patronage necessary to forge a majority, but the resulting extension of government functions kept the society weak and disorganized and thus impeded the formation of parties. "It is not easy to say," he concluded, "whether the political disorganization of Italy is the cause or the result of the existing corruption."[37] But the result was clear, as Pareto lamented a few years later: on the one hand, the people lost all respect for the state, but on the other hand, everyone looked to the state for favors and solutions.[38] Individual and societal capacities atrophied as people scrambled for the protection of some politician. Mosca shared these concerns, but he was more clearly in the tradition of the old Right than Pareto, and his accents were more conservative and traditional. While Pareto began to anticipate the emergence of a new elite, Mosca emphasized the role of the nonelective apparatus of the state as the protector of liberal values and individual rights against mass democracy.[39]

The results of the opening to the left in 1876 and of the suffrage expansion in 1882 also disillusioned principled political observers on the Left. Some, their vision skewed by the dreams of the Risorgimento, had expected government quickly to become more popular and effective after the fall of the old Right. But if the Right had been aloof and unresponsive, the Left was corrupting and ineffectual. And the suffrage expansion of 1882 hardly raised the quality of the deputies in parliament—transformist favoritism worsened.[40] At the same time, the preindustrial radical traditions of republicanism and anarchism seemed to offer no viable solutions. The laments of the great poet Giosuè Carducci gave voice to the frustration, the sense of betrayal and impotence on

the left in the 1880s. In a famous speech on the death of Garibaldi in 1882, he commented with sadness about the sectarianism and the infatuation with empty formulas which he felt had become characteristic of republicanism.[41] Yet Carducci's own perspective was in some ways backward-looking, his thinking colored by the generous hopes of the Risorgimento. And now Garibaldi was dead: the Risorgimento was over. But surely Italy was not without hope of regeneration, and surely all the promise of the Risorgimento was not to be forgotten for good.

In the 1890s, crises and turning points were reached in several crucial areas simultaneously, setting the stage for the promise of the Giolittian era to follow. Confidence in Italy's potential for industrial development reached its nadir in 1893–94, when a wave of banking scandals and failures shook the Italian economy, raising new doubts about Italy's capacity for industrialization.[42] It now became clear that her industrial growth during the 1880s had been fragile and that her banking system was still underdeveloped and highly speculative. But reforms designed to overcome the immediate banking crisis established a foundation for the industrial takeoff which Italy finally began to experience after 1896.[43] Italian friendship with Germany was at its peak during these years, and Prime Minister Francesco Crispi got German help in the renewal of Italian banking. While the major banks that had crashed had been oriented toward financial speculation, new German-led banks like the Banca Commerciale of Milan immediately became involved in industrial development, providing the young companies in which they invested with entrepreneurial guidance as well as capital. In addition, these new banks were instrumental in moving the Italian economy into areas of industrial development that Italian businessmen lacked the confidence and experience to enter on their own.[44] For example, the Banca Commerciale promptly began to develop Italy's hydroelectrical industry, and electricity emerged as a leader in the rapid growth which began in 1896. Still, the surge in industrialization did not depend entirely on the initiative of banks; in the auto-machinery industry, initiatives were more decentralized, more dependent on individual entrepreneurs.[45]

Hydroelectric development had a major psychological impact, promoting confidence that Italy could hope to industrialize after all, despite her lack of coal.[46] Sectors of the Italian middle class now began to show more interest in developing the country industrially, in preparing for the new industrial world. And the revival of confidence that accompanied industrialization soon led to greater optimism about Italy's potential as a nation.

Marxist ideas became widely known in Italy beginning in 1891, when Filippo Turati began publishing *Critica sociale* in Milan. In his history of liberal Italy, Benedetto Croce recalled the stimulating effect

that Marxism had had on many young, educated, middle-class Italians during the 1890s.[47] With its universal model of historical development, Marxism offered a healthy dose of cosmopolitanism to a culture that was still ingrown and provincial, a way of transcending its debilitating self-doubt. Marxist inquiry also required scientific study of concrete social and economic phenomena, a significant departure from Italian rhetorical traditions.

Marxism was particularly attractive to Italian leftists growing disillusioned with the republican and anarchist traditions. In contrast to preindustrial radicalism, Marxism viewed solutions to present problems in terms of the industrialization process; Italian society had the potential for radical change precisely because it was participating in this universal process. This meant that Italy could no longer claim either a special spiritual mission or a special revolutionary vocation, but neither was she permanently flawed by peculiarities of character and history. Confidently facing the future, Italian socialists formed a national party at Genoa in 1892, adopting a Marxist program designed to burn all bridges with the anarchist and republican past of the Italian Left. But while the new socialism of the 1890s gained strength from the apparent inadequacy of the earlier leftist currents, it also fell heir to some of their concerns and sensibilities. Certainly the Socialists of the 1890s wanted to be Marxists, but their movement was partly a populist reaction to the static transformist bloc that had been cemented in the 1880s.[48] This element of radical populism in Italian socialism mixed uneasily with Marxism.

Trade union organization began in Italy at about the same time. The first Italian Chamber of Labor, modeled on the French *bourses du travail*, was founded in Milan in 1889, and by 1893 there were fourteen of these local labor centers, linked in a national organization. The first large May Day demonstrations took place in the major cities in 1890, symbolizing the genesis of a class-conscious Italian labor movement. The advent of modern socialism and trade unionism rekindled old fears about the fragility of Italian institutions and colored ruling class perceptions of the great popular unrest of 1893–94 and 1897–98. In fact this unrest stemmed from immediate economic hardship, not socialist subversivism, but it helped to cause the most severe crisis that Italy had experienced since the 1860s. It looked for a while as if things were finally starting to come apart.

The crisis of 1893–1900 had several facets. The banking scandals produced serious financial disarray, and the complicity of Prime Minister Francesco Crispi and other leading politicians undermined the already shaky prestige of established institutions. But most important was the quasi-insurrectionary popular unrest and the inadequacy of the repressive strategy adopted to confront it. The major political

leaders of the years from 1893 to 1900—Crispi, Antonio di Rudinì, and Luigi Pelloux—all began with relatively moderate approaches to the ongoing crisis, but the insecurities in the ruling class were so great, and the situation so apparently explosive, that they were soon drawn toward authoritarian reaction. Crispi blamed Socialist subversivism for the *fasci siciliani*, a movement of peasant demonstrations and land seizures in Sicily in 1893–94, so he responded with severe repression—martial law, mass arrests, large-scale deportation to penal islands without trial, dissolution of workers' organizations and cooperatives, and then, in October 1894, dissolution of the Socialist party itself and arrest of the Socialist deputies. When the bad harvest of 1897 produced a wave of demonstrations and riots throughout Italy in 1898, Antonio di Rudinì, Crispi's successor, responded in the same way, with wholesale arrests and a declaration of martial law. The culmination occurred in Milan in May, when as many as 118 people were killed, hundreds wounded, and thousands arrested in a reaction that included the suppression of newspapers and the dissolution of unions and cooperatives.

The reaction reached its climax under General Luigi Pelloux in 1899–1900, with a serious attempt to circumscribe parliamentary government. Having kept order in Apulia in 1898 without recourse to martial law, Pelloux was supposed to be a conciliatory figure, but he lacked political experience and soon fell under the influence of Sidney Sonnino, an able and upright man rooted in the tradition of right liberal opposition to Italian parliamentary government. In an article published in 1897, Sonnino had advocated a return to the letter of the constitution of 1848, with the ministry responsible to the king rather than to the chamber.[49] When Pelloux promoted a tough bill for the preservation of order, giving the executive wide powers to ban public meetings and to dissolve organizations deemed subversive, he insisted on promulgating the law by royal decree, bypassing parliament. But a complex combination of events ultimately defeated this attempt at reaction. Pelloux resigned in June 1900, and a new era in Italian politics followed. By now it had become clear that the authoritarian policies of 1893–1900 were inappropriate and counterproductive. Even Sonnino became reconciled to parliamentary government. It seemed more and more evident that Italy did not have to resort to the methods of Crispi or Pelloux to preserve order and national unity.

The man who dominated the new era was Giovanni Giolitti, Minister of the Interior and major force in Giuseppe Zanardelli's cabinet from February 1901 to October 1903, then prime minister for all but a few interludes until March 1914. Especially before 1908, this was a

buoyant and prosperous period—the most promising that liberal Italy ever enjoyed. With much of the bitterness of the 1890s left behind, there was at last a chance to come to grips with the nation's congenital problems. Giolitti was honest, able, and effective, and there is increasing agreement that he seriously desired to expand the Italian political system, to bring about fuller popular participation. It was Giolitti who engineered near-universal manhood suffrage for Italy—in time for the parliamentary elections of 1913. But while some have lauded Giolitti as the architect of Italian democracy in the making, others have vilified him as an arch-corrupter who impeded democracy by cynically exploiting the most unfortunate weaknesses in Italian society.[50] It is symptomatic of the basic explosiveness of the Italian situation that a figure as hard-headed, sober, and even bland as Giolitti could become one of the most controversial figures in modern European history.

Giolitti was more optimistic than his predecessors: Italy was modernizing and maturing; the political system could safely be expanded—to include, especially, the emerging industrial proletariat of the North. The popular classes were bound to assume a greater share of political and economic power, but this change could be advantageous for the existing order—if the established political class responded wisely. The state, Giolitti insisted, must cease to view the labor movement as inherently subversive and strikes as inherently threatening to the established order. Strikes were legitimate attempts by the workers to better their condition, so the state should remain neutral when they occurred, no longer siding automatically with the employers in the name of order.

In practice, Giolitti generally followed this strategy of conciliation toward the workers. His governments sometimes pressured employers to make concessions in order to avert strikes or to agree to a relatively generous settlement in the event of a strike. Socialist cooperatives in the Po Valley were granted public works contracts on attractive terms and even a special bank of labor to provide credit. Hoping to lure the Socialists into the government, Giolitti made overtures to Filippo Turati as he was preparing his new ministry in 1903, although Turati declined. Giolitti wanted to undercut socialism as a political alternative while extending the existing system to include the organized workers of the North.[51] At the same time, his insistence on the state's neutrality in labor conflicts was part of a more general policy of elevating the state to a higher level of impartiality and universality. The situation no longer seemed precarious, so he fostered greater rectitude in the administration and the judiciary, and even defied powerful private interests by creating a state life insurance monopoly.

Giolitti believed that the divorce between people and state in Italy

could be overcome, but it was necessary to be patient, avoiding rhetoric and panaceas. It was necessary above all to be realistic—about what could be expected from the existing society and especially about the political implications of Italy's regional differences. And here we penetrate the surface optimism of Giolitti's strategy and encounter deeper perceptions and values that linked him to the traditions of the post-Risorgimento Italian political class. Giolitti was pessimistic about human nature in general, but he was especially skeptical about the political maturity and moral fiber of his own people.[52] There seemed to be strict limits to what he could hope to accomplish.

Italian society was slowly growing more unified and homogeneous, but fragmentation and heterogeneity remained its essential characteristics even in Giolitti's time. So Giolitti, like Depretis, was preoccupied with the problem of political consensus, which on the immediate level was the problem of forging a majority in the Chamber.[53] He not only continued, but perfected, the old system of electoral interference and government favoritism, secure in his belief that the state remained more liberal than the society, that the state was gradually redeeming the society. Given the greater political immaturity of the South, and given the more restrictive suffrage in the South resulting from the literacy provision of the electoral law, southern electoral districts were more easily manipulated, and it was the South that provided the core of Giolitti's majority. Giolitti not only exploited the backwardness of the region, but also prevented the political education it needed.[54] At the same time, he sought to keep his majority loyal and passive through individual favors, to keep real political issues from developing, so that he could govern essentially without parliament.

Giolitti's system, which reached near-perfection during his longest ministry, from May 1906 to December 1909, involved a highly ambivalent relationship between ministry and bureaucracy because of the balancing act he was trying to perform. In order to deliver the favors necessary to maintain his majority, Giolitti exerted an unprecedented measure of direct, minute control over the bureaucracy. But in doing so he was seeking the maneuverability he needed to bypass parliament and govern through the bureaucracy, which, for him too, was supposed to stand above parliamentary politics and societal particularism, pursuing the long-term interests of the nation.[55] No wonder Giolitti drew bitter criticism from both conservative liberals and democrats. The former complained that Giolitti's interference with the administration compromised the integrity of the national state; and they argued, plausibly enough, that it was only because the ministry ultimately depended on parliamentary support that such corruption was necessary. From the democratic perspective, on the other hand, Giolitti and the permanent apparatus of the state formed a conservative bloc intended to undercut parliamentary government and genuine democracy.

The advent of near-universal manhood suffrage must be viewed in light of Giolitti's overall attempt to develop the outer shell of parliamentary democracy without the internal substance. Despite this major step toward democratic forms, Giolitti continued to interfere in the electoral process, to fragment the Chamber through petty dealing, and to enhance the role of the nonelective side of the state at the expense of parliament. Thus critics could deny that the coming of universal suffrage improved the quality of Italian democracy; thus they could argue that the Chamber elected in 1913 did not represent anything at all.

Giolitti used the breathing space afforded by relative prosperity not to change the Italian political system, but simply to expand it, especially by spreading favors to the emerging working class of the North. Rather than reform the tariff and tax structure, he opted for public works and increased government spending. He had no real sympathy for the big southern landowners, but he was unwilling to attack the grain protection which maintained not only the landowners themselves, but also, indirectly, the southern parliamentary contingent—the core of his majority.[56] Government involvement in the economy continued, with the state offering subsidies to a wide range of industries, from sulphur to sugar beets. Most important, government favors for the protected steel complex were expanded. With state help still available, the steel industry failed to confront its congenital structural defects; leaders of the industry continued to worry more about short-term dividends and stock prices than long-term productivity. By 1914 the steel industry had the capacity to produce more than the domestic market could absorb, but its efficiency remained so low, and its prices so high, that many domestic firms still bought steel abroad, despite the high tariff.[57]

So while Italy began to experience some healthier kinds of industrial development after 1896, the parasitical sectors that had emerged in the 1880s were not forced out. Consequently, as comparative studies have shown, the Italian industrial takeoff between 1896 and 1908 was relatively weak.[58] The Italian state impeded rational economic growth by reinforcing a tariff structure which protected the least deserving sectors of the Italian economy and by subsidizing certain industries for essentially noneconomic purposes. With its access to state favors, the Italian bourgeoisie remained lethargic and lacking in entrepreneurial vigor, despite the context of industrial takeoff.[59] Much of Italian industry continued to rely on the German-dominated investment banks,

showing little evidence of growing independence. In general, Italian culture still placed a low premium on industrialization and business expansion.

Still, there were critics. The influential southern economist Francesco Saverio Nitti chastised the Italian bourgeoisie for its lack of productive vigor and suggested that an aggressive labor movement might prove a valuable stimulant.[60] Since the unhealthy aspects of the Italian economy depended on protection, those desiring more efficient industrial development tended to be militant free traders, often without understanding Italy's economic condition or the more fruitful uses that she could have made of protection.[61] Laissez-faire principles led some to criticize even the new investment banks for excessive concentration of economic power. These critics were generally seeking to promote economic progress, but it was difficult to sort out the contradictory patterns of the Italian economy.

Giolitti's determination to open the system to the organized workers and his reluctance to challenge the protectionist basis of much of northern industry were closely linked in his overall design.[62] He could get businesses to agree to relatively high salaries for certain groups of workers because he offered continued favors or acquiesced in the formation of cartels. These policies kept prices artificially high and ultimately produced a redistribution of wealth that reinforced Italy's regional imbalance. The South paid the price for favors to business and labor in the North.

Giolitti's opening to the left proved only partially successful. The Socialists and workers did not have to be enemies of the state, but Turati's refusal to join Giolitti's new ministry in 1903 made it clear that neither could they yet provide a reliable political base. So, increasingly, Giolitti relied on newly organized Catholic political groups for support, a strategy which reached its culmination in the elections of 1913, the first held under near-universal manhood suffrage. Since the electorate was now almost three times as large, the system could not be so easily managed by the old methods. Corruption and intimidation continued, but Giolitti's men also worked out a clandestine deal to guarantee Catholic support for Giolittian candidates in exchange for promises to respect Catholic interests in education and divorce. Like Depretis before him, Giolitti found it necessary to engineer a new conservative bloc to keep the system firmly anchored in the wake of a suffrage expansion.[63]

In working with the Catholics, Giolitti hoped to keep his system of personal domination intact. He was not trying to encourage an autonomous Catholic party and political role; indeed, his compromises with the Catholics were intended in part to prevent a cohesive Catholic political grouping from developing.[64] From the Giolittian perspective, a system of autonomous mass parties, with programs of their own, would be divisive and unstable. Giolitti's opposition to "modern" mass parties is sometimes taken as evidence that he could not adjust to twentieth-century inevitabilities. But in fact he anticipated the dangers of a more comprehensive party system and tried to prevent the party fragmentation and inflexibility that later helped to ruin, for example, the Weimar Republic in Germany. Attempts to promote a more "modern" party system in Italy after World War I led to precisely the problems that Giolitti had feared. The basic pessimism of the Italian political class—from Cavour and De Sanctis to Giolitti and Mosca—was not without foundation, but it is still not clear that Italy required a system as restrictive as Giolitti's fifty years after unification.

The Giolittian program, then, was not a qualitative departure from the established patterns of liberal Italy. Despite the greater margin for progressive action after 1900, Giolitti was too concerned with keeping the system together to attempt basic changes.[65] The rickety system of favors, compromises, and expedients continued to keep the country together—in some ways better than before—but as confidence developed within the maturing and industrializing society, more and more Italians were becoming convinced that Italy could do better.

Some of Giolitti's most influential critics were part of the tradition of critical liberalism that began to emerge after 1876. To right liberals like Gaetano Mosca and Luigi Albertini, editor of the *Corriere della sera* of Milan, Giolitti was simply furthering the process of degeneration which Depretis had begun, compromising the state's integrity by lowering it to the level of societal particularism. Mosca continued to worry about the hypertrophy of the bureaucracy, as the state sought to satisfy the interest groups represented in parliament, while Albertini especially deplored Giolitti's policy toward strikes, which seemed to indicate weakness in the face of a developing threat from below.[66] The influential laissez-faire economist Luigi Einaudi denounced the parasitical protectionism which Giolitti perpetuated, but he found reason to hope that the industrialization process was enabling a more productive middle class to emerge in society. And as it developed consciousness of itself, this new entrepreneurial bourgeoisie would give rise, in turn, to a new political class.[67]

These critics remained securely within the liberal tradition, but some of their insights could influence others less committed to liberal values. And a different kind of opposition movement began to emerge around 1903, centering at first around a series of avant-garde journals in Florence, especially Enrico Corradini's *Il regno*. Corradini (1865–1931) had been a writer cultivating his own esthetic sensibilities until Italy's

defeat at Adowa in 1896, and public indifference to it, jolted him into political consciousness. He founded *Il regno* to express his disdain "for the vileness of the present moment in the national life" and to promote national pride among Italians.[68] While Corradini at first relied on rhetorical invocations of ancient Rome, his two major collaborators, Giovanni Papini and Giuseppe Prezzolini, sought to look to the future. Italy's industrial development excited them tremendously. Italy seemed finally to be developing a vigorous industrial bourgeoisie, a class that stood in sharp contrast to the parasitical middle-class sectors clustered around the parliamentary state. In a symptomatic exchange in *Il regno* in 1903, Prezzolini and Vilfredo Pareto disagreed over whether the Italian bourgeoisie could renew itself.[69] Pareto saw only continued decadence, but Prezzolini, who was thirty-four years younger, disagreed, pointing to examples of growing middle-class fortitude—in employer resistance to strikes, for example. To be sure, Prezzolini admitted, the Italian bourgeoisie was still insecure, but the very existence of *Il regno* was evidence that some middle-class sectors in Italy were beginning to assert themselves. Despite this disagreement, however, Prezzolini and his colleagues learned a great deal from Pareto and used his categories as they sought to come to grips with the problems of their society.[70] They agreed that Italian parliamentary government under Giolitti indicated a ruling class in an advanced stage of decadence, and they agreed that renewal could only come from new elements untouched by the corrupting political process.

Prezzolini and Papini remained influential cultural innovators throughout the Giolittian era. Through their review *La voce*, which appeared from 1908 to 1916, they continued their efforts to promote the political education of the nation and to speed the emergence of a new ruling class. They hoped to make Italian culture more practical and serious, but their interests were eclectic and they sometimes fell into rhetorical excesses themselves. With their calls for a more dynamic culture bound up with the modern industrial world, they had much in common with F. T. Marinetti, who launched the famous futurist movement in the arts with the clamorous manifesto of 1909. Worshipping speed, violence, energy, and the power of machines, the futurists expressed in extreme and sometimes ridiculous form the growing sense that Italy, thanks to industrialization, need not be stuck with her old provincial culture and her static transformist politics. Papini and others associated with *La voce* came together with the futurists through the review *Lacerba* from 1913 to 1915. Papini's glorification of bloodshed and war in this review hardly furthered the development of a more serious and practical culture.[71]

Prezzolini and Papini had had a major hand in shaping the new

nationalist sensibility which began to crystallize with *Il regno* in 1903, but they proved to be mavericks unwilling to support Nationalism as it became a formal movement and took on a more precise political coloration.[72] Instead, Enrico Corradini constituted the major link between the new nationalism of 1903 and the concrete political movement.

The earlier, more literary nationalism began to give way to a more systematic political ideology in 1908. Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina that year—and Italy's passive response—raised questions about the cautious foreign policy which Italy had followed since 1896. Moreover, the relatively buoyant industrial growth experienced since 1896 began to slow down in 1908. Now there was less margin for concessions to the unions, and it began to seem that Italy needed to penetrate foreign markets, by imperialist expansion if necessary, to provide outlets for expanded Italian industries.[73] By 1909, Corradini had developed the concept of Italy as a proletarian nation, one of the cornerstones of the new Nationalist ideology.[74] In December of 1910, nationalists of various kinds met in Florence to constitute a formal movement, the Italian Nationalist Association. Considerable heterogeneity and ambiguity remained: some members of the association advocated protection, others free trade; some emphasized irredentism, at the expense of Austria-Hungary, while others emphasized imperialist expansion in the Mediterranean, at the expense of France. But all of them were concerned with foreign policy and believed that Italy was ready for a more assertive role. This preoccupation with Italy's international position stemmed in part from the troubling phenomenon of accelerating Italian emigration. From 1909 to 1913, an average of 680,000 Italians, or about 2 percent of the population, emigrated each year. The exodus reached a peak of 873,000 in 1913.

Italy's war with Turkey over Libya in 1911–12 forced the Nationalist movement to define itself more precisely and made it a serious force in Italian political life. Through a new Nationalist newspaper, *L'idea nazionale*, and through speeches delivered all over Italy, Corradini, especially, played a major role in whipping up support for the Libyan War. The Nationalists portrayed war in general as the kind of educational experience that Italians needed.[75] Willingness to wage war indicated Italian renewal; the experience of war itself would complete the process, binding the Italians together in national solidarity for the first time. But the Nationalist Association began to establish a doctrine with real coherence only at its third congress, held in Milan in May of 1914. Here the jurist Alfredo Rocco emerged as the most forceful Nationalist ideologue, and it was Rocco, above all, who oriented Nationalism clearly to the right, forcing a sharp break with liberalism.[76]

We can best discuss the substance of Nationalism when we con-

sider the program it offered Italians during the crisis following World War I. For the moment, it is sufficient to note that Nationalism had roots in the conservative, critical liberal tradition, with its distrust of the Italian masses and its disdain for transformist expedients. But in Nationalism, that tradition lost its links to liberalism and turned into something else. At the same time, Nationalism was more confident and assertive than the tradition it was leaving behind. Italy's industrial development seemed evidence of new energy in the Italian middle class; the Nationalist movement was itself the vanguard of the new bourgeoisie that would eventually assume the leadership of the nation.

Nationalism emerged in reasonably straightforward fashion; it was aware of its intellectual and political roots and had no difficulty identifying its social constituency. By 1914, it had established itself as a major focus of opposition to the Italian political system. The development of syndicalism was much more tortured.

3 / *The Origins of an Antipolitical Vision*

Italian revolutionary syndicalism developed not from within the labor movement, but from within the Socialist party, as a product of the strategic disputes which Giolitti's conciliatory policy occasioned. Socialist collaboration with progressive middle-class groups in the resistance to Luigi Pelloux in 1899 and 1900 had already indicated that, in a relatively backward country like Italy, Socialists had much to gain by working with others in parliament. But some Socialists objected to the reformist minimum program which the party adopted in 1900 and to the support for the government which Socialist deputies provided during an important vote of confidence in 1901. When matters came to a head at the party's national congress in 1902, reformism emerged the victor; the congress approved parliamentary support for the government, sanctioned tactical alliances with progressive bourgeois parties, and endorsed the pursuit of reforms. The current that became syndicalism began to develop at the same time, as the young Neapolitan Arturo Labriola denounced reformism and called for the radical structural change that the reformists seemed willing to put off indefinitely.[1] At this point, however, there was no specifically syndicalist doctrinal alternative, and those on their way to syndicalism were difficult to distinguish from other antireformist intransigents like Enrico Ferri.

By 1902 Ferri and Labriola had established themselves as the chief spokesmen for the antireformist Socialists. In February Ferri had founded a review, *Il socialismo*, to compete with Filippo Turati's *Critica sociale*, but Labriola had his doubts about Ferri and in December of 1902 founded a weekly newspaper, *Avanguardia socialista*, to serve as his own journalistic instrument in the fight against reformism.

By early 1903, the antireformists seemed to be in the ascendancy. In 1902 Giolitti had temporarily altered his tactics, becoming less con-