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Abstracts

MIROSLAV ŠEDIVÝ, *The Watershed of 1840. The Rise of International Insecurity and the Origins of Italian Moderate Nationalism*

In 1840 the international crises and territorially limited armed conflicts in Europe and overseas gave rise to or at least fueled feelings of deep mistrust, pessimism, and fear among a considerable number of Europeans toward the unsettled international situation, provoking across Europe a transnational debate about stability and justice in international affairs and the prospect for peace, all of which were usually seen as very insecure. This widespread and intensive public reaction to what was regarded as external threats if not to the general peace then at least to the security of European countries continued beyond 1840. It had wide-ranging and often negative consequences for the stability of the post-Napoleonic international order established in 1815 and impacted on the formation and rise of nationalism in Europe, yet it still remains almost completely ignored by historians and political scholars. Through the presentation and analysis of the response in the bourgeois public sphere to international insecurity in the example of the origins of moderate Italian nationalism, this essay reveals the strong influence of international affairs on how Europeans viewed justice and security in the mid nineteenth century. In this respect 1840 marks a critical moment when particularly members of the educated middle and upper middle classes changed the ways they approached and judged issues regarding the quality of international relations and nation building. The Italian political arena illustrates well this sea change in political behavior, both in the short term in 1840 and in the long term in the following decade, which represents another topic still little known in historical scholarship.

Keywords:

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