

How far do you agree with the view that the limited appeal?

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Mazzini was an important figurehead for the unification of Italy, historians such as Pearce and Stiles state that that 'no one else campaigned for so long or so tirelessly in the cause of a united Italy'. He had extremely radical and liberal ideas about how Italy should be unified, and some historians Mazzini's ideal was that Italy should be unified 'from below'.

He wanted the people of Italy to rise up from their high-powered oppressors, while still maintaining the opinion that if monarchs were prepared and wanted to fight against the Austrian domination, then they should be supported and not hindered. He wanted a 'brotherhood of the people' to all move toward greater socialequality(Denis Mack Smith described him as having 'contempt for xenophobia and imperialism) so that all of the people of Italy would unite in order to unify their country.

Mazzini also stressed that Italy should be unified 'by its own efforts', wanting to avoid any outside help- especially from France- in fear that they may just replace one outside domination by another. However, the limited appeal of his ideas were shown when Italy was eventually united and done more-so from above than it was below- he was described as being 'disgusted' by this and criticized the new Italian unified state, describing it as a 'dead corpse'.

It could be argued that Italy could have been unified earlier under Mazzini's watch if it had not been for how his 'one overriding aim' distracted from the main goal of a united Italy. It could also be argued, as Robert Pearce details, that Mazzini was 'absent from Italy' for such a long and extended period of him (totalling in 'all over 40 years') that he became 'out of touch' with this

situation. This then caused him to over-exaggerate the 'national identity' of Italians.

This meant that he dis-appreciated the revolutionary potential of the peasants/ the common people, as he had little to none contact with them and knew little about them. As a result of this blindness, his further attempts to cause unification failed, an example of this is an organised mutiny within the Piedmont that then failed- but the most obvious was the failure of the planned uprising in Naples, in which Mazzini went on the assumption that the peasants were 'a volcano about to erupt'-whereas this was not the reality of the situation.

We can also see examples of his disassociation to the 'real' people of Italy in his political society 'Young Italy'; despite being hailed as 'Italy's first real political party', their membership was extremely limited to well educated, young, middle-class men. It was here that one of Mazzini's major weaknesses became apparent- that as a result of his 'complex thinking' as well as his studies of law and medicine, his ideas became too intellectually advanced for most people to grasp and most certainly too radical for the 'cautious, middle-class reformers'.

This prevented many from joining the cause- leading to failed coups in Piedmont as well as uprisings in Naples and Savoy. His supporters described him as the 'greatest, bravest, most heroic of Italians'. His deeply radical approach led his political enemies to accuse him of being an 'enemy of Italy' and a 'terrorist'. His ideas were of democracy, rights, and equality for all (he even campaigned for the rights of women, wanting to give them the vote).

These ideas were extremely liberal and were far from limited in the sense that they were not censored or right-wing and they inspired many to the cause. However, his ideas were unrealistic for the times (women would not get the full vote until after World War II), but it was the fact that his ideas were extremely modern and remarkably radical that converted people to Mazzini's idea of a 'democratic, self-governing state'. This would suggest that his ideas were not limited, but appealing to the people of Italy.