



RACCOLTE STORICHE
PALAZZO MORIGGIA
MUSEO DEL RISORGIMENTO
LABORATORIO DI STORIA MODERNA E CONTEMPORANEA



23 March 1848

A painting by Carlo Stragliati
in late 19th century Milan

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The Civic Historical Collections of Milan - with the Museum of the Risorgimento, the Archive and the Library - is the institution that more than any other preserves, at city level, the memories of the Five Days of 1848, in collections that are only partly exhibited in the two central rooms of the Museum dedicated to this episode of Milanese history.

Therefore, it is not only about important and iconic paintings but - in the Archive, the Library and the Deposits - also a very rich collection of prints, posters, drawings, pamphlets, banners, memorabilia and a very important series of funds, part of the Risorgimento archival nucleus dedicated to 1848 in Milan. These include, to name but a few, the “Carlo Cattaneo”, “Cesare Correnti”, “Agostino Bertani” and “Provisional Government of Lombardy - Casati Papers” funds, as well as the “Patriots who were awarded the commemorative medal of the Five Days” fund.

On the occasion of the anniversary of the Five Days of 2024, the second issue of the “Quaderni delle Raccolte Storiche” (Historical Collections Notebooks) is published. This periodical was launched last year with the aim of providing in-depth information for the museum’s public on some of the core elements of the institute’s rich heritage. The publication is part of a series of enhancement initiatives (e.g. periodic exhibitions in the museum of archival documentation, monthly informative and in-depth discussions by the institute’s scientific staff, conferences, and open days at the archives) implemented over the past year to build an increasingly rich dialogue between the museum and its public. It also bears witness to the dense network of relations and collaborations in which the museum is embedded; in fact, the main contribution is written by Silvana Citterio, vice-president of IRIS, the leading association of Milanosifastoria, a project promoted by the City of Milan and the Milanosifastoria Network. Inaugurated in 2014-2015, the project aims to relaunch culture and history education in the Milan area.

The magazine is dedicated on this occasion to Carlo Stragliati's painting "23 March 1848", that celebrates the victorious outcome of those famous Five Days (18-22 March). The painting occupies a central place in the Museum's exhibition itinerary. Mentioned and reproduced in all sorts of publications and media celebrating the Five Days (commemorative stamps, videos, printed materials), every time one approaches the author and the painting to delve into its history one runs into - to the detriment of the visual fortune of the work - vague and fragmentary news. This publication aims to bring the Museum's public closer to this iconic work by exploring in depth, thanks to detailed archive research provided with an informative approach, questions regarding the author and the context in which it was conceived.

The prominence given to women by Stragliati in his painting, perhaps a purely symbolic incarnation, perhaps a real intention to recognise their historical importance on the part of the author (the question remains open), also provides an opportunity to broaden our view of the role they played during the Five Days. The in-depth examination of the painting is flanked by a number of fact sheets, compiled by Patrizia Foglia, the reference person for the drawings and prints collections of this institute, on the visual testimonies present in the immense archive of the Civic Historical Collections and relating to some female figures. This is a small sample of the Institute's broader graphic heritage, catalogued in recent years and available on the portal www.graficheincomune.it and on the Mebic-Museums and Libraries in the Municipality website (<https://mebic.comune.milano.it/mebic>).

This avenue of research is also the result of the Museum's recent considerations; the current layout of the rooms, dated 2009, goes back to a time when it was not yet perceived as an urgency to also recount the female protagonism: for this reason, with a series of initiatives and targeted itineraries, among which this publication can be rightly included, the Museum is highlighting these stories.

Francesca Tasso
*Castello Sforzesco Area Director,
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1 Giuseppe Grandi, *Female figure. The first Day (The tocsin bell)*, 1881-1894-
lost-wax casting 1:2 scale from 1935

A detail of the Monument to the Five Days of Milan unveiled on 18 March 1895
Milan, Palazzo Morigngia | Museum of the Risorgimento (deposit Gallery of Modern Art, Milan)



23 March 1848

A painting by Carlo Stragliati in late 19th century Milan

| Silvana Citterio
| IRIS Vice President

The Five Days seen through the eyes of Stragliati

Two happy young women look out over a jubilant crowd waving the Italian flag, while, next to the window, an old woman smiles. This is how Carlo Stragliati (Milan, 1867 - ivi, 1925) depicted the joy for the victory of the Five Days, almost fifty years after the popular insurrection that, from 18 to 22 March 1848, led to the ousting from Milan of the Austrians and their army, a well-trained force of about 14,000 men, in a city that, at the time, had about 160,000 inhabitants. The painter places three female figures in the centre, in a symbolic passing of the baton between generations, inspired by the Italian tricolour flag. *"It is now your turn to fight for freedom and independence"*, the older woman seems to say to the two young women. The girl in the centre of the painting holds the flagpole, wearing a corset and petticoat, while the young woman at the window wraps herself in the Italian flag, absorbed and almost enraptured by a dream of the future. Both seem driven by the urge to share their joy with those who are celebrating in the street.

In the depiction of a domestic setting and, in the background, of the city in celebration, in the interplay between inside and outside, between the private and public dimensions, the painter seems to identify political freedom with personal freedom, as if the liberation of the city from the Austrians was an acquisition of rights for women and, therefore, a conquest for all: male and female, aristocrats and commoners, young and old. Depicted in the corner of the painting, abandoned on the ground, are the sewing objects - ball of thread, scissors, needles - with which the three women have just finished making the tricolour flag. Viewing the painting raises several questions: which women does Stragliati represent in the painting? And who were his inspiring muses?

2 Carlo Stragliati, *An Episode of the Five Days in Piazza Sant'Alessandro*, mid 1890s, oil on canvas, Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (inv. MR 49673)



3Baldassare Verazzi, *Fighting at Palazzo Litta*, 1849, oil on canvas, Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (inv. MR 9339)

The Five Days: from the event to the creation of *a myth*

From widespread anti-Austrian sentiment to uprising

The revolution of March 1848, when an entire city rose up for freedom, and better and fairer living conditions, marked a turning point in the history of 19th-century Italy. Aversion to the occupying troops and the police regime imposed on the city was widespread among the different social classes. The anti-Austrian sentiment, which had already manifested itself in September 1847 when the new archbishop, the Italian Romilli, entered Milan, was tested during the so-called “smoking strike”, with clashes provoked by the military who flaunted their large cigars in the faces of the Milanese out for a stroll. The clashes on 3 January 1848 left six people dead and around fifty wounded. The hostility was further strengthened between January and March, following the arrests that the hated commissioner Luigi Bolza ordered against Milanese patriots at night.

On the morning of Saturday, **18 March**, a large crowd gathered at the Broletto (the place where the population met for democratic assemblies) and reached the Government Palace, where Lieutenant Governor O'Donnell granted authorisation for the constitution of the Civic Guard, the handing over of police weapons and the recognition of the Town Hall as the city's governing body. However, Field Marshal Radetzky, commander-in-chief of the Austrian armed forces, refused to countersign these concessions and imposed an ultimatum: if the Milanese did not lay down their arms, the city would be razed to the ground. The Milanese citizens responded by erecting barricades:

“The barricades meanwhile became more and more numerous; there were one thousand seven hundred of them in the city; and heavily loaded with stones, they could resist even a cannon.”¹

To communicate internally, between barricades, a relay service was organised, while to launch proclamations beyond the city walls, balloons were successfully experimented with.

On **20 March**, after two days of bloody fighting, at the meeting in Palazzo Taverna, the insurrectional Committee, led by Carlo Cattaneo, rejected the truce proposal put forward by the Austrians. The Milanese continued to fight until the evening of **Wednesday 22**. At dawn on **23 March**, the Austrian army would retreat towards Lodi, thus liberating the city.





4 Carlo Canella, *Fighting at Porta Tosa*, 1848 circa, oil on canvas, Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (inv. MR SN 00003). Whole and detailed



5 1848. *The Milan Revolution* - Fragment of a fan page, c. 1850, hand-coloured lithograph, Milan, Civic Collection of Prints "Achille Bertarelli" (Fans p. 3-158)

6 1848. *The Milan Revolution* - Fragment of a fan page (detail), c. 1850, hand-coloured lithograph, Milan, Civic Collection of Prints "Achille Bertarelli" (Fans p. 3-159)

The female and popular participation

On 18 March, the women of the Verziere (the traditional greengrocery street market of Milan) stormed the city court in mass and freed their men who were being held there for political reasons. Many common women fought from the rooftops, from the windows or on the barricades. Among them was **Luisa Battistotti Sassi**, who on the same 18th March, after arresting and handing over three police guards at Casa Trivulzio, fought on the barricades between S. Eustorgio and Porta Ticinese, as the recognised leader of a hundred or so insurgents; **Giuseppina Lazzaroni** (or Lazzeroni), a seventeen-year-old who ran away from home to fight at Ponte Vetro; **Maria Bertarelli**, a shopkeeper reduced to poverty, who during those days was a relay girl under the gunfire to bring food to the fighters and to deliver messages to the Defence Committee; **Giuditta Facchini**, wounded in the San Vittore district, while she was throwing stones and tiles at the enemy from her window. And let us mention, again among the women of the people, **Paola Grandi**, the housekeeper of **Rosa Monti**.

Among the aristocratic women, **Laura Solera Mantegazza** and **Carmelita Fé**, the young wife of Luciano Manara, stood out for their support of the insurgents and assistance to the wounded. Let us also remember **Cristina Trivulzio di Belgioioso** who, having rushed from Naples on hearing the news of the insurrection, paraded in the liberated city on 6 April 1848 amidst a jubilant crowd. This is how Count Joseph Alexander Hubner, the Austrian diplomat who had come to the city for negotiations with the Provisional Government, described her:

“Arriving in Milan in the afternoon, we found the city in jubilation. They were not celebrating, as I feared, a victory over Marshal Radetzky, but the solemn entry of Princess Belgioioso at the head of one hundred and eighty young Neapolitans. [...] Followed by her young Neapolitans, she carried a large flag with the Italian colours unfurled. Handkerchiefs were waved at the windows and balconies and the ovations of the spectators echoed in the air. Arriving in Piazza San Fedele, behind Palazzo Marino, she was received by Count Casati, who made a very eloquent speech.”²

Cristina, after the return of the Austrians (6 August 1848), went into exile along with tens of thousands of other Milanese:

“After the events of August almost 100,000 Milanese took asylum in the Ticino Canton in Switzerland. [...] A large number of Lombards, especially those who hoped for everything from the House of Savoy alone, went to Piedmont, where they received an unfriendly welcome: in Paris those who had come to ask for French help were coldly received. Austria had preceded our complaints by every calumny.”³



7 Ratti e Charlot (inc.), *Giuseppina Lazzeroni*, from *"The Illustrated World. Universal Newspaper"*, a. II, Turin 1848, p. 309, silograph on wood head, Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Library of the Civic Historical Collections (P BER 98)

8 Chiappori (dis.) – Ratti e Charlot (inc.), *The princess Cristina Trivulzio-Belgioioso*, c. 1848, silograph on wood head, Milan, Civic Collection of Prints "Achille Bertarelli" (RI. P. 257-60)



The sacrifice of the Milanese and immigrant population

It was precisely working men and women, labourers and artisans, domestic servants, “filandere” and seamstresses, who participated in the uprising in their masses and paid the greatest contribution in blood.

Carlo Cattaneo, with the declared intention of attributing the entire city and especially its popular classes “*the credit for that five-day battle that drove the Austrian army back to the Mincio*”⁴, and in reminding us how “*the majority of those killed had to be the working class; the barricades and the workers now go together like the horse and its rider*”⁵, indicates on 31 March: “*more than three hundred dead from injuries.*”⁶ In the total count Cattaneo mentions: 5 printmakers, 13 shoemakers, 4 tailors, 3 hatmakers, “*a dozen masons and stonemasons*”, “*twenty varnishers, gilders, saddlers, weavers, spinners, glovemakers*” and “*no less than fifteen iron and bronze workers, so it appears that this strong community was all on the barricades*”.⁷ Then, referring to the contribution of the female population, he continues:

“The number of women killed is greater than one would believe; some may have been by chance, but many by courage and love; and some by the ferocity of the enemies, who not only raged in the defenceless parts of the city, but hiding above the spires of the Duomo cathedral, they liked to strike treacherous blows at the inner balconies and poorly closed windows. We can see a midwife, an embroiderer, a milliner, and among those who are said to be stitchers, some young girls.”⁸

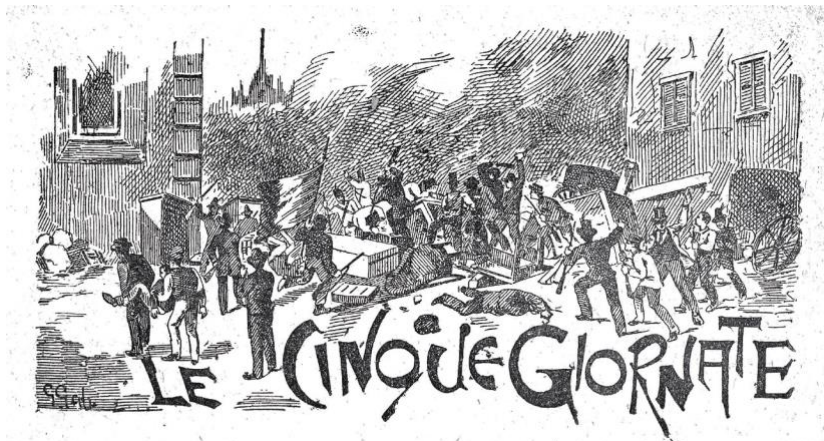
In addition to the more than three hundred dead, one must add the wounded who died later, weeks or months after the glorious days of March. An example above all is Alcina (or Albina) De Bernardi, a spinner, aged 17, who was born in the town of Montichiari, in the province of Brescia. A hard worker, probably having immigrated from the countryside to work in a Milanese spinning mill, she died at the Maggiore hospital from an “*arquebus wound*” on 16 April 1848. Did Alcina take up arms to fight? Or did she assist the wounded near the barricades? Could she have been shot “*treacherously*” by some sniper? Or by an unfortunate accident, while delivering a message? We cannot know. But the name of Alcina De Bernardi, who perished of gunshot wounds, twenty-five days after the Austrians were driven out, is inscribed on the monument with which the city wished to celebrate the uprising of March 1848.



9 A.Chizzolini, *Inauguration Ceremony of the Five Days Monument*, 18 March 1895, aristotype, Milan, Civic Photographic Archive (AV L. 41)

From memoirs to Grandi's monument

The written memoirs of protagonists of the Five Days, such as Carlo Cattaneo and Cristina Trivulzio di Belgioioso, and, at the same time, the visual accounts of painter-witnesses, such as Carlo Canella⁹, Felice Donghi¹⁰, brothers Domenico and Gerolamo Induno¹¹, have built and gradually consolidated, in the collective memory of 19th century Italy, the image of that victorious uprising. Since the early months of the Provisional Government, thought was given to building a commemorative monument, dedicated not to a single individual, but to the entire city. The project, abandoned inevitably with the return of the Austrians to Milan, resumed in 1859, when a plaque with the names of the fallen was placed above the column at the Verziere building, today located in Largo Augusto. In 1884, after an unsuccessful attempt with architect Luca Beltrami, the task was assigned to Giuseppe Grandi who created a large allegorical sculpture with five female figures around an obelisk.



The monument has a lion at its base, a metaphor for the people rebelling with strength, and continues developing from the first day (a woman beating the bell with a hammer, calling for uprising), to the second (a woman crouched, grieving and weeping for the fallen), to the third (an imposing woman inciting the barricades to defend themselves), to the fourth and fifth days, where women with trumpets, a lion and an eagle represent victory and subsequent glory. This is a unique work of art, well representing the entire community of Milan and the role played by women in the liberation of the city; a powerful image of a past event, the Five Days, while looking forward to the national state that was being established.

The monument was solemnly inaugurated on 18 March 1895, after the sculptor's death (30 November 1894). On the obelisk, on the list of the **fallen**,¹² the names of thirty-nine women can be read.



J G. Galli, illustrator and lithographer (19th century news)

THE FIVE DAYS. THE MONUMENT

From the Porta Vittoria Column to the Grandi Monument in C. Romussi, "The Five Days. The 1848 Monument", Milan 1895, Palazzo Moriggia | Library of the Civic Historical Collections (Library O 7924, p. 15)



IL SINDACO DI MILANO

DISPOSIZIONI D'ORDINE PER LA CERIMONIA INAUGURALE

DEL

Monumento delle Cinque Giornate.

AVVISO

Tenuto conto delle disposizioni adottate d'accordo coll'Autorità di Pubblica Sicurezza allo scopo d'ottenere che la cerimonia riesca meglio ordinata e più solenne,

SI DETERMINA:

1. Tutte le Associazioni che parteciperanno alla cerimonia dovranno formar parte del corteeggio; e di conseguenza, anziché lungo il corso di P. Vittoria, dovranno, per le ore 9.30 del giorno 18 corrente, prender posto lungo la via S. Antonio e via Ospedale, dalla quale prenderà le mosse il corteeggio che accompagnerà i carri mortuari alla loro uscita dall'Ospedale. Le Associazioni invieranno però per l'ora anzidetta, come dall'invito speciale stato ad esse diretto, nel cortile dell'Ospedale, la rispettiva bandiera accompagnata da non più di due loro rappresentanti oltre il portabandiera.

2. Il corteeggio percorrerà le vie Fantano, Larga, Rastrelli, Piazza del Duomo, corso Vittorio Emanuele, via Durini, Ponte di P. Vittoria, e per la breve tratta della via Francesco Sforza entrerà nel corso di P. Vittoria.

Lungo tutte le anzidette vie sarà impedita la circolazione dei veicoli - la via Rastrelli, lo sbocco di via Durini in Verziere e la tratta di via Francesco Sforza saranno chiuse anche ai pedoni.

3. Nel corteeggio, precederanno i carri mortuari tutte le bandiere delle Associazioni e Corpi che vi prenderanno parte, accompagnate dai designati rispettivi rappresentanti.

I carri procederanno fiancheggiati dai Veterani e dai pompieri e saranno susseguiti dalle Autorità civili, militari, ecclesiastiche, da tutte le Associazioni in corpo, dagli Istituti ed in genere da tutti gli intervenuti alla cerimonia.

4. Giunto il corteeggio in prossimità del Monumento e nello spazio racchiuso dalla prima cancellata che lo circonda prenderanno posto i portabandiera col vessillo delle Associazioni; i rispettivi rappresentanti prenderanno posto invece nello spazio determinato dalla seconda cancellata e dallo steccato stato costruito all'ingiro di quella, insieme alle autorità, nei posti che saranno in luogo indicati.

Lungo il Corso di Porta Vittoria, nello spazio racchiuso dai cordoni formati dalla truppa, rimarranno schierate le Associazioni e gli Istituti.

5. I Veterani, i mutilati delle Cinque giornate, la Famiglia del compianto scultore Grandi, i rappresentanti della stampa ed eventualmente le altre persone che fossero munite di lettera d'invito che li autorizza a trovarsi nelle vicinanze del Monumento per aspettarvi l'arrivo del corteeggio, dovranno accedere al Corso di Porta Vittoria dal Ponte di Porta Vittoria e via Francesco Sforza, facendosi riconoscere dall'incaricato del servizio di Sorveglianza in luogo.

Il Sindaco
VIGONI.

TAGLIABÒ, *Segretario gen.*

TRAGLIABÒ & C. - MILANO



Negli ultimi 20 anni è avvenuta in Italia una tale trasformazione, in senso di modernità, nelle idee, nei costumi e nei rapporti sociali soprattutto nei grandi centri, che tutti quelli che lottarono e lottano ancora per un migliore avvenire, possono sentirsi confortati e incoraggiati nell'opera loro, per modesta ch'essa sia.

Anna Kuliscioff

19.1.902

Guigoni & Bossi
Milano



Milano, 13 Corso V. E.

L. MOGHI MILANO
9 - 902

The author and his world

Milan in the last decades of the 19th century

The painting produced by Carlo Stragliati is set in the period in which the urban landscape was redesigned in large cities to build the spirit of the nation that had emerged from the Risorgimento. In the last decades of the 19th century, in Rome as in Milan, toponymy was modified, tombstones and plaques were inserted into the urban fabric, and statues and monuments were erected to “shape history”. In particular, in Milan, the improved bond between the city's political and cultural classes allowed a pact to be forged for the construction of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, which, inaugurated in 1878, became the fulcrum of urban redevelopment on the Duomo cathedral - Castello Sforzesco axis and, at the same time, the heart of city life, the Milanese's living room. At the other end of the route, the restored Sforzesco Castle stands out as an ancient monument, visually and symbolically set in the frame of the new Italian nation.

The city, just to mention a few events, saw the birth in 1891¹³ of the Chamber of Labour, in 1896 the *Avanti*,

the newspaper of the Socialist Party, Italy's first mass party, and in 1899 the National Women's Union, an institution which is still active today. In Milan at the end of the 19th century, female figures such as Rosa Genoni, the inventor of Italian fashion, Anna Kuliscioff, the doctor of the poor, Ersilia Bronzini Majno, the founder of the Unione Femminile (Women's Union), the elementary school teacher and former Stellina, Carlotta Clerici who, together with Giuditta Brambilla and Linda Malnati, also a teacher and her life companion, opened the first women's section of the Chamber of Labour, even anticipating the official inauguration in 1891, in the rooms of the Castello. All of them would interpret the emancipationist and pacifist battles of Milan at the time.



M Guigoni & Bossi (successors of Icilio Calzolari), *Ersilia Majno*, post 1888, albumin on paper, Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Civic Historical Collections (Carte de visite Fund, MRN inv. 627)

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ESPOSIZIONI · RIVNITE



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MILANO 1894
 DA MAGGIO A OTTOBRE

1894

Stab. Tip. Lit. Zanaboni e Gabuzzi - Milano

V. TURATI - inc.

The United Exhibitions of 1894

It was precisely at the Castello Sforzesco, renovated and “cleared” of elements judged by Luca Beltrami as not originating from the Visconti-Sforza period, and at the Sempione Park that the city, from **5 May to 6 October 1894**, organised and hosted a major international fair, the Esposizioni Riunite (United Exhibitions). Together with the *Second Triennial Exhibition of Fine Arts*, i.e. the national painting and sculpture competition that the Brera Academy promoted every three years, no less than eleven agricultural, craft and industrial exhibitions were added. Each exhibition had its own design autonomy and a different dimension, national and/or international, and was managed by a specific organising committee.¹⁴ The General Executive Committee was chaired by Prince Gian Giacomo Trivulzio. The fair was able to promote industrial and artisan products, both innovative and traditional, and attracted not only the curious. The *Second Triennial Exhibition of Fine Arts*, with its rich offer of works of different quality and price, suitable for a diverse public, expanded the art market.

There was certainly no lack of criticism: Leone Fortis, who was commissioned to prepare a report for the Minister of Education, complained about the excessive number of paintings exhibited at the Painting Exhibition, both in terms of the overall number (1313 paintings!) and in relation to each artist (in his opinion, the most famous prevailed, depriving young artists of opportunities); he complained about the disappearance of genres such as history and sacred painting in the face of emerging fashions; he contested the exhibition space, believing that the Academy would have been more suitable. Above all, he strongly denounced the way in which the prizes were awarded: the judging commissions, predominantly made up of exhibiting artists, did not mention the criteria used in the proceedings.¹⁵ Many controversies marked the awarding of prizes in the Gavazzi competition and the Fumagalli competition. Carlo Stragliati competed in both, but his painting *23 March 1848* was not among the artworks sold, nor among those awarded prizes.



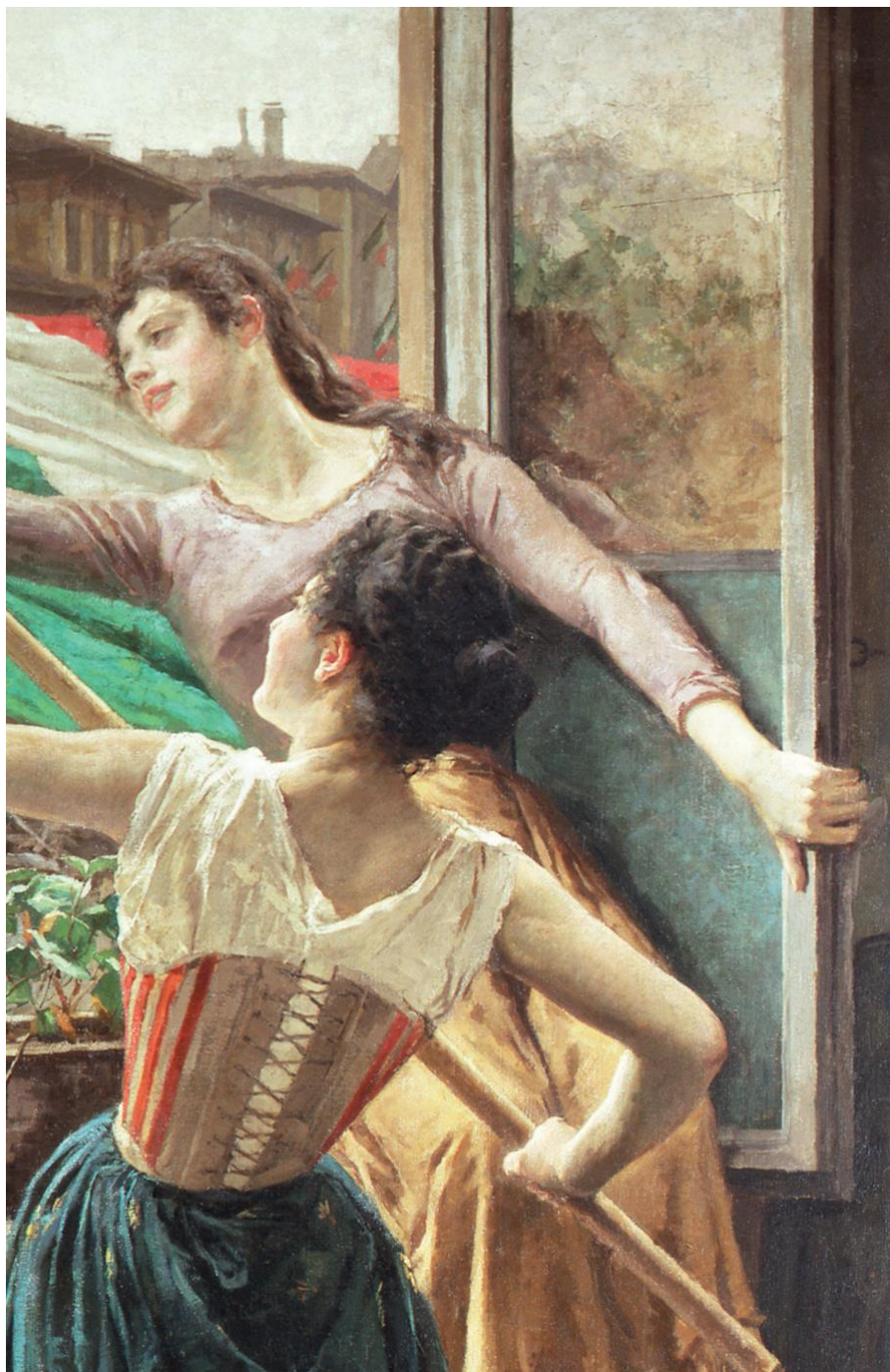
Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, from the Five Days to the Expo Committee

Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, a key figure in the General Executive Committee of the United Exhibitions where Stragliati's painting competed, was born in Milan on 6 June 1839 to Giorgio Teodoro and Marianna Rinuccini.¹⁶ He is, therefore, a very young witness of the Days of 18 to 22 March 1848. He recalls the coming and going of the insurgents from the house in Piazza S. Alessandro and the embassy where his father Giorgio Teodoro was treacherously wounded. Due to the after-effects of that wound, he died prematurely in 1856: Gian Giacomo received the commemorative medal in his name on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Five Days, 20 March 1898. The young Marquis Trivulzio distinguished himself as a valiant standard-bearer in the Risorgimento battles from San Martino to Custoza and was awarded various honours for military valour. In 1864 he married Giulia Barbiano di Belgioioso d'Este. Two sons were born of the marriage: Giorgio Teodoro (1865-1898) and Luigi Alberico (1868-1938). In 1885 King Umberto I bestowed the title of Prince of Musocco on him, and in 1890 named him an Officer of the Order of Saints Maurice and Lazarus, rewarding his civil and military virtues and his scientific, literary and artistic merit. In February 1892, he was elected to the Milan City Council. In 1894 he was appointed Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy¹⁷, for his role as President of the Committee for the United Exhibitions in Milan. Here is the text of the telegram, dated 22 February 1894, in which King Umberto I announced that he had conferred the honour on him.

“TO GIVE YOU PROOF OF MY FULL SATISFACTION FOR THE WORK YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF ARTS AND INDUSTRY, I HAVE CONFERRED ON YOU THE CROSS OF GRAND OFFICER IN THE ORDER OF THE CROWN OF ITALY. MAY THIS HONOUR BE A TOKEN TO YOU OF MY SINCERE SYMPATHY. UMBERTO”

In 1896 Gian Giacomo became a Senator of the Kingdom of Italy and in 1898 he was appointed honorary member of the Brera Academy; he would pass away on 9 July 1902.

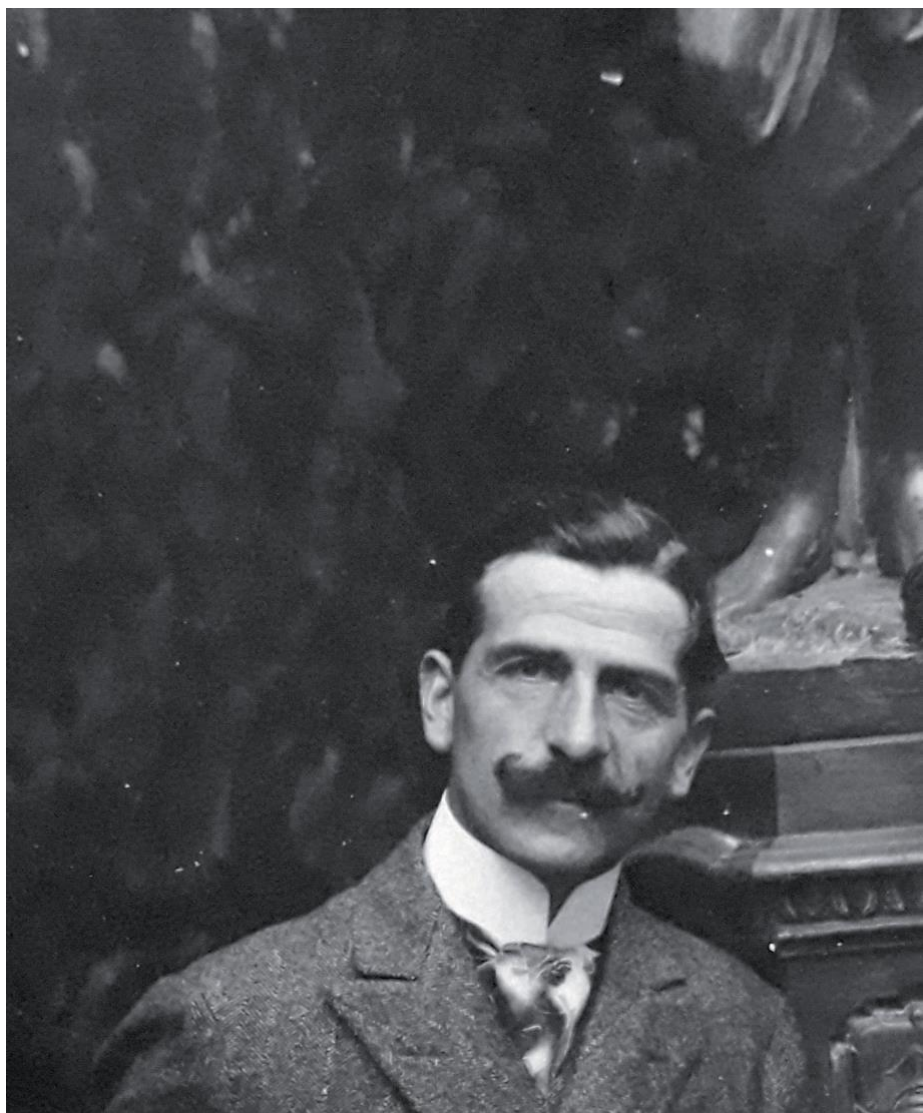
© Gian Giacomo Trivulzio as a young man, with uniform and hat in hand, Photographic Archive Trivulzio Foundation (People series - box 6 - Property of the Trivulzio Foundation - AFT, People, 67.001)



The title of the painting: an unsolved enigma

Also Carlo Stragliati feels the influence of the time period and submits his work to the *Second Triennial Exhibition of Fine Arts* - a painting and sculpture competition incorporated into the United Exhibitions of Milan in 1894. He entitles it "23 March 1848". The painting has similar subject matter and dimensions to the painting "**Episode of the Five Days in Piazza S. Alessandro**", now preserved in the Museum of the Risorgimento in Milan. Could this be the same painting? And if so, why a different title and with such a precise location, Piazza S. Alessandro, yet not recognisable? In the background of the painting, only a generic "urban landscape" consisting of council houses; neither the Baroque church dedicated to the saint nor Palazzo Trivulzio, which stands opposite it, today as then, at street number 4, can be distinguished. Could the painting be another copy elaborated later and independently by Stragliati, according to a custom not uncommon among artists of the time? Or was the new version commissioned from him in 1898 for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Five Days? And Stragliati entitles it "Episode of the Five Days in Piazza S. Alessandro", as an implicit homage to the Trivulzios, in particular to Prince Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, President of the Executive Committee of the United Exhibitions of 1894, Senator of the Kingdom since 1896, and, perhaps, commissioner of the work?

In the official catalogue of the *United Exhibitions of Milan* of 1894, Stragliati's work is entered under no. 988 as "23 March 1848": is not among those sold, nor is it among the prize-winners. Instead, in the Guide published by Innocente Carnazzi for visitors to the first Milanese Expo, with a dedication to Prince Trivulzio "soul and life of the great programme of the United Exhibitions", Stragliati's work is entered under no. 988 with the title "Patriotic demonstration"¹⁸. Then, the traces of the painting and/or of a second version of it for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Five Days were lost, until 1984 when the Museum of the Risorgimento in Milan acquired it from the antiquarian Subert with the new title. In the Museum's loading register it is marked as received on 12 April 1984, while the date of production indicated is 1898. The title indicated is, perhaps for brevity: "Episode of the Five Days". The hypothesis that this might be a second copy, produced for the Fiftieth anniversary of the Five Days, or the same work renamed by the author to pay homage to Gian Giacomo Trivulzio and perhaps also to his illustrious great-aunt, Cristina Trivulzio di Belgioioso, is not confirmed by documented evidence. We know, however, that in 1898, Prince Trivulzio and Carlo Stragliati were appointed honorary members of Brera, the former in March among the so-called "art amateurs", the latter in June as a painter. Both were part of the Academic Corps and, as residents of Lombardy, participated in the Academy's activities with their work and their "advice", determining the composition of the Academic Council and the competition judging commissions with their votes.



The painter Carlo Stragliati

Who was Carlo Stragliati? What were his relationships? Which social environments did he move in? Can his biography and production - in which the female figure seems to have centrality and recurrence - help us define the date, production, and context of the work?

Carlo Stragliati was born in Milan on 7 July 1867¹⁹ from Giuseppe, resident at number 6 in Via Moscova, and Margherita Sartori. He completed his basic education in 1883, at the age of 16, at the Urban Municipal School in Gallarate, where he attended the fourth grade.²⁰ At the age of 17, he enrolled at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brera, having as his fellow students in the 1884-1885 school year three women of the same age, two of whom were teachers and a third who came from a vocational school. At Brera, Stragliati completed his entire training in six years: in the years 1888-1889 and 1889-1890, he won the silver medal for nude drawing and graduated in July 1890, as a pupil out of Giuseppe Bertini's School of Painting. After finishing his studies, he regularly entered competitions for painters: in 1891, with the work *Tintoretto Painting his dead daughter*, he took part in the Fumagalli (for figure painting) and Gavazzi (for historical subject painting) competitions, held as part of the *First Triennial Exhibition of Fine Arts in Brera*.

At the Gavazzi competition, Stragliati's work was the only one admitted, but the jury decided not to award it, because although *"not lacking in certain praiseworthy qualities, especially in a young man, the painting does not have that sum of merit that would be required for the prize, either in its composition or in its execution."*²¹ In 1894, he participated once again in the Fumagalli and Gavazzi competitions, where his historical subject painting *23 March 1848* was worthy of mention. Both competitions were held as part of the United Exhibitions of Milan, the city's first major fair, which counted twelve different events, including the *Second Triennial Exhibition of Fine Arts at Brera*. Also in 1894, a crucial year for the painter, on 15 November, he was proclaimed the winner of the competition for the Oggioni pension, with which he was awarded, for the two-year period²² 1895-1896, an annual subsidy of 1728.38 Lire, which allowed him to further his studies with trips to other cities. The one in Venice in 1896, authorised by the then secretary of the Brera Academy, Giulio Carotti, is documented.



PALAZZO DI BRERA.

Furthermore, the last instalment of Oggioni's pension was paid to him in July 1899, after the approval of his last piece *Figure of a life size woman, the subject of sad news*.²³

His acquaintance with Gian Giacomo Trivulzio, President of the Committee of the United Exhibitions in Milan in 1894 and, like the painter, named an honorary member of the Brera Academy in 1898, probably dates back to this period. In 1898 he exhibited *Mater derelicta* in Turin, a large canvas with a social theme, treated with realism and attention to both pathetic and sentimental aspects. His figure studies (e.g. *Monaca*, Milan, Gallery of the Maggiore Hospital) and portraits, a genre for which he was known, with numerous works commissioned by personalities from the musical world, including one of Giuseppe Verdi on his deathbed, are of Scapigliata inspiration.

He continued to maintain his residence and the centre of his activities in Milan in the 20th century, having as his points of reference both the Brera Academy and the *Society of Artists and Patriots*, which (founded in 1844 as the Society of Artists) continued to perform an important social and cultural function with educational initiatives (themed conferences for specific audiences, e.g. on the role of printing for typography students), consultancy on projects for the city (the members expressed an expert opinion on the new cemetery and the new Piazza Duomo) and entertainment, organising concerts, parties, lotteries and raffles.

Members of the *Society of Artists and Patriots* would paint each other's portraits and then donate the painting to the association, enriching its patrimony. It is the Sicilian painter, who moved to Milan, Salvatore Corvaja²⁷ to paint the portrait of Carlo Stragliati, while he painted portraits of the sculptor Donato Barcaglia, the stage designer Antonio Rovescalli and the master ironworker Alessandro Mazzucotelli. He died in Milan on 28 June 1925, leaving behind his wife Adele Suardi.

Q G. Barberis-F. Canedi, engravers, *The Palace of Brera in G. Mongeri, Art in Milan: notes to serve as a guide in the city*, Typography of the "People of Italy", Milano 1872, Milan 1872, woodcut on head wood Milan, Civic Collection of Prints "Achille Bertarelli" (VOL J 75, p. 316)



I. R. ACCADEMIA DI BELLE ARTI IN MILANO

AVVISO DI CONCORSO

È aperto il Concorso alla pensione istituita dal benemerito defunto Cav. Pietro Oggioni a favore dei giovani artisti lombardi che intendessero di recarsi a Roma od in quelle altre città che loro venissero designate pel migliore perfezionamento dei loro studii. La pensione dura un triennio, coll' annuale assegno di austr. L. 2000, comprese le spese di viaggio. Il pensionato è scelto sui risultamenti di apposito esperimento da eseguire in questa Accademia.

Per questo primo triennio dovendo la pensione essere applicata ad un cultore della pittura, s' invitano gli aspiranti a rassegnare pel giorno 31 Maggio corrente le loro istanze regolarmente giustificate coi certificati comprovanti.

1. di non avere oltrepassato il trentesimo anno di età;
2. d' esser suddito lombardo;
3. di possedere una sufficiente coltura letteraria.

Per l' esperimento gli aspiranti si troveranno presenti al giorno 15 Giugno per le ore otto del mattino. Esso consisterà.

- a) di un piccolo bozzo ad olio di un soggetto estratto a sorte.
- b) dello studio ad olio della testa del protagonista.
- c) di una descrizione estetica della composizione.
- d) di un disegno a mezza macchia del modello vivo.

L' orario fissato per ciascun lavoro, e le cautele sotto le quali devono essere eseguiti saranno comunicati allorchè si presenteranno personalmente; e saranno essi pure ragguagliati degli obblighi e delle condizioni inerenti alla pensione tanto rispetto ai saggi annuali quanto ai modi di pagamento.

Milano, 6 Maggio 1857.

Il Segretario, f. f. di Presidente,

G. MONGERI.

The Brera Academy in the days of Stragliati

In the last decades of the 19th century²⁴, the Brera Academy oversaw both artistic training with the day school of Fine Arts and artistic-technical training with the evening workers' school, where artistic teaching was directly applied in the high craft trades (goldsmiths, chisellers) and in the most popular courses for bricklayers, stonemasons, plasterers, mechanics, carpenters, upholsterers, painters and blacksmiths. Girls enrolled especially to be able to teach drawing: the Academy issued “qualifying licences” for elementary and technical schools. In addition, the Academy was the custodian of private foundations for prizes and scholarships, which it awarded by means of special invitations to tender, and it promoted artists with fine arts exhibitions, where rich cash prizes were awarded. The Oggioni pension is, in fact, one of these scholarships, which is interesting because Stragliati himself competed for and benefited from it.

The will of Cavalier Pietro Oggioni, an art collector and merchant, bequeathed to the Brera Academy of Fine Arts the entire collection of his paintings and a large sum of money for a scholarship which, from one three-year period to the next, would be awarded to a young graduate student, in turn a painter, a sculptor or an architect, so that he could further his studies in Rome or other cities. The will, which replaced his previous last will of 1837, was written and signed by Pietro Oggioni himself on 5 August 1848. It was made public after his death on 12 January 1855.

The date is interesting: 5 August 1848 is, in fact, the day before the Austrians returned to Milan. In this context, the choice of a new drafting of one's “last will” suggested a way to protect the estate from possible confiscation or fiscal reprisals, which, as we know, were not lacking against many insurgents and exiles. Pietro Oggioni does not appear to have played any active role during the Five Days and the subsequent months of the Provisional Government, let alone a managerial one. Nonetheless, Pietro's concern was legitimate and, in fact, having destined his patrimony to a public institution, moreover founded in 1776 by Maria Theresa, proved to be a winning move, as demonstrated by the painter Carlo Stragliati who, coming in thirteenth among the winners, enjoyed the Oggioni pension from 1896 to 1899.

R *Oggioni Pension. Notice of the 1857 announcement*, Milan, Brera Academy - Historical Archives (ASAB, Carpi B III 19, Legato Oggioni. Various acts from 1855 to 1905)

In 1872, the Academy gratefully erected a bronze bust in memory of the well-deserving benefactor. The memory of Pietro Oggioni had to be alive and visible in the years in which the painter completed his artistic training in the Palazzo Brera.

This is the story of this painting and its creator, with some doubts, which remain somewhat unanswered, and many interesting suggestions; more than a century after the years in which Stragliati created the masterpiece, his homage to those glorious days of the Milanese people's uprising still retains a strong iconic value, representing one of the paintings most admired by visitors along the museum exhibition itinerary.

It was precisely because of the evocative power that the piece still carries with it that it was used for the cover of the digital text *Making Italy, Making Italians. The process of national unification*²⁵ and on the commemorative stamp for the 150th anniversary of Mazzini's death (1805 – 1872).²⁶

Even in the third millennium, Stragliati's painting is still used to represent women who are free and protagonists of their own lives, a happy combination of art, history as well as social and civic values.

Notes

¹ Cattaneo C., *The uprising of Milan*, Feltrinelli, 1951, new 2011 edition, edited by Marco Meriggi, p. 72.

² Cited in Pier Luigi Vercesi, *The woman who decided her fate. The countercurrent life of Cristina di Belgioioso*, Neri Pozza, Vicenza, 2021, p. 213.

³ From Princess Cristina Triulzi-Belgioioso, *Italy and the Italian Revolution (From the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' 1848); in addition: The last sad events in Milan (narrated by the Committee of Public Defence, with documents)*, preface by Arcangelo Ghisleri, Remo Sandron Editore, Libraio della R. Casa, Milan-Palermo-Naples 1904, p. 36.

⁴ Cattaneo C., *The uprising of Milan*, cit., footnote p. 87-89. The article was published under the title "Mortuary register of the barricades in Milan" in "Italy of the People" of 3 July 1848, then in Cattaneo C., *The uprising in Milan in 1848 and the subsequent war. Memoirs*, Typography of Italian Switzerland, Lugano 1849.

⁶ Ibid. cit. Footnote on p. 88

⁶ Ibid. cit. Footnote on p. 87

⁷ Ibid. cit. Footnote on p. 88

⁸ Ibid. Footnote p. 89.

⁹ Carlo Canella (Verona 1800 – Milan 1879)

¹⁰ Felice Donghi (Milan 1828 - Turin 1887) who, in March 1848, described the events of the city day by day with his pencil and brushes.

¹¹ Domenico Induno (Milan 1815 – 1878), Gerolamo Induno (Milan 1825 – 1890): both participated in the Five Days and, on the return of the Austrians, took refuge as exiles in Switzerland, in Asola.

¹² The total number of dead Milanese is still a controversial issue: while 392 names are inscribed on the Grandi monument in Piazza Cinque Giornate, more recent studies indicate 409. (See the introduction by Marco Meriggi, *Cattaneo and 1948: democracy and federalism for a united Italy* to the already cited Carlo Cattaneo *The uprising of Milan*, p. 10) We would like to mention the project to enhance the crypt of the Cinque Giornate monument and the study to restore dignity and identity to the remains of the fallen soldiers laid to rest there, promoted by the Municipality of Milan, the Monumental Cemetery, the IRCCS Ca' Granda Maggiore Hospital Policlinico Foundation and the University of Milan.

¹³ On 1 October 1891, the Milan Chamber of Labour was inaugurated in some of the rooms of the Castello Sforzesco provided by the mayor Giulio Belinzaghi.

¹⁴ Below is the complete list. The exhibitions listed under No. 2 and No. 9 contain different 'objects' and areas.

1. National exhibition of Fine Arts - National and Triennial Competition of the Brera Academy
2. National wine and olive oil exhibition and international wine and olive oil machinery exhibitions
3. National theatre art exhibition
4. International workers' exhibition
5. Sports exhibition
6. International photography exhibition
7. Geographical and ethnographic exhibition
8. International postal and philatelic exhibition
9. National exhibition of graphic and related arts and international advertising exhibition
10. Horticultural exhibition

See *Milan 1894. The United Exhibitions*, edited by Rosanna Pavoni and Ornella Selvafolta, Cinisello Balsamo, Silvana Ed., 1994.

¹⁵ See Leone Fortis, *Art at the United Exhibitions in Milan*, Milan, Fratelli Dumobard Editori 1895. <https://archive.org/details/lartealleesposiz00mila/page/67/mode/1up>

¹⁶ Her father, Giorgio Teodoro, was the son of another Gian Giacomo, brother of Gerolamo Trivulzio, Cristina's father, who died in 1812, leaving her an orphan at the age of just four. Cristina Trivulzio, married to Emilio Barbiano di Belgioioso, is therefore the great-aunt of our Gian Giacomo.

¹⁷ Nominated Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy. The decree is dated: Rome, 30 May 1894 and signed by Umberto I King of Italy Grand Master of the Order of the Crown of Italy.

¹⁸ See *Illustrated guide for visitors to the United Exhibitions in Milan*, edited by Innocente Carnazzi, Milan, 1894, p. 83.

¹⁹ While researching the papers of the painter kept in the Historical Archive of the Brera Academy, it was possible to find his birth certificate: Carlo Stragliati, it is certain, was born on 7 July 1867, not in 1868, as erroneously reported by various sources. For example: <https://www.galleriarecta.it/autore/stragliati-carlo/>

²⁰ In 1877-78, the Coppino Law had extended the elementary cycle to five years and, above all, had defined three years as compulsory. So, the fourth is a year beyond the compulsory, an enabling year for further studies.

21 By resolution, dated 30 May 1891, of the Selection Committee: rapporteur Camillo Boito, president Achille Formis. The jury was the same as the one for the 1891 Fumagalli competition. (See ASAB, CARPI B II 20)

22 The communication to Stragliati states: two years for the Oggioni pension. Pietro Oggioni instituted a three-year competition, but the Brera Academy reduced the term to two, maintaining a three-year cadence: in the first year the competition was announced and in the following two the winner could enjoy the pension.

Communication to Stragliati for allocation of Oggioni pension in 2 sheets, signed by Secretary G. Carotti and President Visconti Venosta; Milan 26 November 1894 (sent on 27). With instructions for 1st quarterly payment from 1 January 1895. It says "*You may enjoy this pension in the space of two years.*" 23 See Luigi Goffi, The private competitions, in Agosti G. and Ceriana M., *The historical collections of the Brera Academy*, Centro Di, Florence, 1997.

24 From the reports on the academic years 1891 - 1892, 1892 - 1893, 1893 - 1894 . See *Proceedings of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts*, Stab.Tip. Lib. Ditta F. Manini Wiget, Milan, 1896. The volume can be browsed at: https://books.google.it/books/about/Atti_della_R_Accademia_di_belle_arti_di.html?id=p0wqldwrccsC&printsec=fron

25 See <https://milanosifastoriabl.wixsite.com/fifi/home>

26 See <https://tgposte.poste.it/2022/03/10/un-francobollo-a-150-anni-dalla-morte-di-giuseppe-mazzini-il-padre-dellunita-ditalia/>

27 In the Aloi Fund of Milan's Central Municipal Library 'Palazzo Sormani', an Archive folder preserves reproductions of the author and the portrait painted by Corvaja, nowadays in a private collection.



*Il sesso gentile si mofoe
a difesa della patria.*

Battistotti-Sassi

Female faces of the Five Days. A journey through images

| Patrizia Foglia



The role of women in the formation of the Italian nation has been and still is the subject of studies and in-depth research that have highlighted individual figures, important relationships and significant political and social achievements. The Civic Historical Collections in Milan, through the exhibits on display in the Museum of the Risorgimento, the archive documents and the graphic and photographic collections, enable us to reconstruct a cultural evolution that saw women conquer, during the 19th century, a new social position in the

political, associational and educational landscape.

The events of the Five Days of Milan in March 1848, that Milanese “revolution” that saw an unparalleled popular involvement, represented a significant stage in this identity process.

In this section we present a small selection of pieces that, revolving around those days of popular uprising, introduce us to some women, known and lesser known, who knew then, with their courage and determination, how to become the protagonists of a choral moment of redemption.

There is also no shortage of representations with a strong symbolic value, in which the subject expressed in the female form refers to the values that women and men made their own in their struggle to acquire freedom.

The two young women depicted by Stragliati are, with the other “daughters, mothers and sisters”, companions in this process of emancipation.



Andrea Appiani the Younger

(Milan, 1817-1865)

The conspirator (Young Italian emigrant girl who holds the national colours close to her heart)

c. 1850-1855

oil on canvas

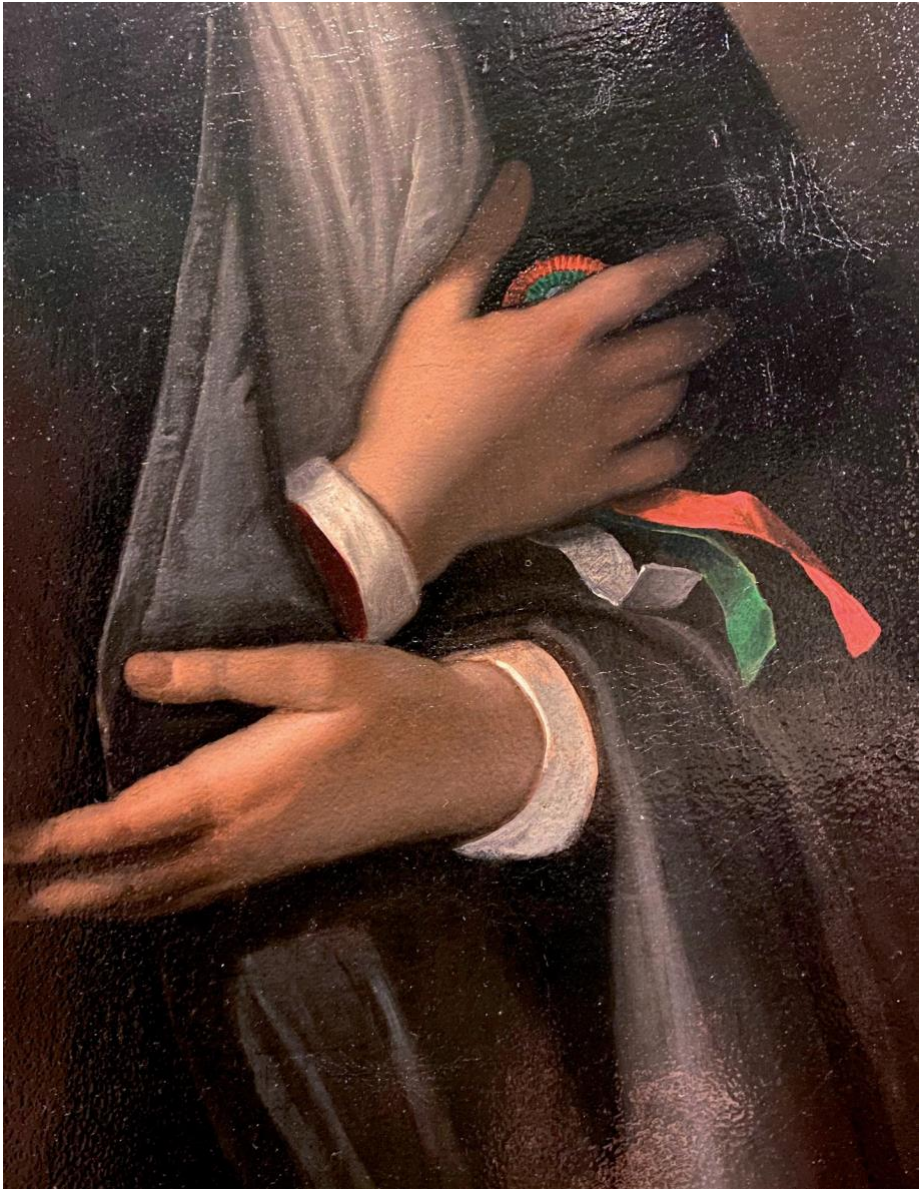
Milan, Palazzo Moroggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (inv. MR 49980)

An ideal itinerary depicting the events of the Five Days interpreted “in the style of women” cannot disregard one of the most significant works in Milan's Museum of the Risorgimento, a symbolic painting by Andrea Appiani the Younger, nephew of the better-known painter of the same name, which sums up the identity values that animated the patriotic spirit and made it possible to achieve unity. The work depicts a young woman with a dark cloak covering her body and head, a white blouse emerging, her arms folded across her chest, in an almost Renaissance pose. What catches the viewer's eye, however, is a small object that the mysterious young woman is holding in her right hand, a tricolour cockade, a reminder of the national flag and the independence she so yearned for.

After the failure of the First War of Independence (1848-1849), the patriots continued their revolutionary action in secret, often forced to flee, finding refuge in Paris, London, Switzerland or the neighbouring Piedmont region. The title *Jeune italienne émigrée pressant sur son coeur les couleurs nationales*, under which the painting was presented at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1855, within the Austrian pavilion as a work owned by the Negroni Prato family, is attributed to this destiny that united many

of them at the time. This is how it is referred to in the catalogue of the Parisian¹ exhibition, the only document that attributes the work to Appiani Junior: “*André Appiani, né à Milan, élève de M.F.Hayez*”. The Milanese newspapers of the time, however, passed over this painting in silence, speaking only of the other work the artist took to Paris, a canvas with a Petrarchan subject, much less politically demanding. However, the Paris Exposition was an important stage for Appiani Jr. at the time and the fact that he brought such a patriotic canvas to that event leaves many doubts as to both the identity of the woman depicted and the intentions that motivated the artist to create such a particular work. It must be kept in mind, however, that similar subjects, linked to the exiled condition of Italian patriots, intellectuals and politicians, were also popular in those years with other artists, even though Appiani Jr. tackled the subject in an entirely personal manner.

¹ *Exposition Universelle 1855*, p. 593



Long believed to be the work of Luigi Zuccoli² and assigned to Andrea Appiani the Younger by Fernando Mazzocca, the painting is characterised by a setting reminiscent of the style of Hayez, his master in Milan and a family friend. However, there is no resigned gaze of the melancholic Hayezian beauties here, but rather a new strength and courage that shines through in the face and the firmness of the pose³.

The canvas was probably completed shortly after the tragic events of 1848, a date supported by comparisons with other works from the same period⁴.

The female subject becomes a symbol of freedom and awakens the feeling of Italianness, in which we do not see the best-known iconography of a turreted Italy, but a depiction that evokes the drama of the events of the Risorgimento era: what Mazzini had affirmed was thus fulfilled, the need for art to be connoted by a strong civil mission, becoming an instrument of the collective progress of a nation⁵.

The iconography of women was undoubtedly one of the identity elements of this process of growth, an archetype that has its roots in antiquity and developed over the centuries with extraordinary media force, becoming a recurring theme in the Risorgimento and post-unification periods⁶.

² See F. Della Peruta, F. Mazzocca (edited by), *Milan from the Restoration to the Five Days*, SKIRA, Milano, 1998, p. 156, p. 260, n. 614

³ See S. Regonelli in F. Mazzocca (edited by), *Romantici e Macchiaioli. Giuseppe Mazzini and the Great European Painting*, SKIRA, Milan, 2005, p. 258. V.10.

⁴ See Regonelli, op. cit.

⁵ G. Mazzini, *Modern Painting in Italy* in F. Mazzocca, 2005, op. cit, p. 253 and ss.

⁶ On the female iconography linked to the personification of Italy see: F. Mazzocca,

The iconography of the homeland between the age of reforms and the Unification in A. M. Banti, R. Bizzocchi (eds.), *Images of the Nation in the Italy of the Risorgimento*, Carocci, Rome, 2002; G. Belardelli, *Italy Imagined. Iconography of a Nation*, Marsilio, Venice, 2020



Gerolamo Induno

(Milan, 1825 - 1890)

Women sewing a flag

Mid-19th century

Watercolour on paper

Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (inv. GAM 1040)

Gerolamo Induno¹ actively participated in the Risorgimento period, from the Milanese uprisings of 1848 to the events in Rome in 1849 on Garibaldi's side, from Crimea in 1854-1855 to the Second War of Independence with Garibaldi's troops; his political adherence was also reflected in paintings and graphic works in which minor characters, representing a small population, are often depicted. Gerolamo looked at a more collected, intimate dimension, in interiors in which figures exchanged melancholic glances, affirmed family values, and concretised an idea of nationhood that arose from below, rooted in a past with a long common history and handed down from one generation to the next². In keeping with this approach, in which he defended the moral values that were to form the basis of the new Italy, in 1863 the artist produced an oil painting entitled *The Flag*, a theme, that of the Italian tricolour, dear to many artists in those years³. Although created in the 1860s, the work refers to the period of the Austrian domination of Lombardy, to those days in March when Milan revolted.

¹ Regarding the brothers Gerolamo and Domenico Induno, see, among others, G. Matteucci (ed.), *Domenico e Gerolamo Induno. The history and chronicles written with the paintbrush*, critical essay by F. Mazzocca, U. Allemanni & C., Turin, 2006; M. Agliati Ruggia, S. Reborà (eds.), *Around the Induno brothers. Painting and sculpture between genre and history in the Canton of Ticino*, SKIRA, Milan, 2002

² Belonging to this particular genre are, for instance, other works by the artist such as *The Letter from the Camp (1859)*, *The Wounded Man's Tale (1866)*, *The Sailor Returns (1866-1870)*, *Listening to the News of the Day (1864)*, some of which present the same spatial setting, in familiar interiors with figures and everyday details. See F. Mazzocca, C. Sisi (eds.), 1861. *The painters of the Risorgimento*, with the collaboration of A. Villari, SKIRA. Milan, 2010, pp. 122-123; pp. 124-125; pp. 130-131; pp. 142-143

³ See the work with a similar subject by Odoardo Borrani, *The 26th of April 1859*, oil on canvas presented at the 1861 National Exhibition in Florence (Viareggio, Matteucci Institute). On the iconography of the tricolour flag, see C. Collina, E. Farioli, C. Poppi (eds.), *Painted Flag. The tricolour in Italian painting 1797-1947*, Silvana Editoriale, Cinisello Balsamo, 2003



Gerolamo Induno, *Figurine of the Company of the Barricades*, mid-19th century, black pencil and watercolour on straw paper, Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (Prez. XIX s. p. 12)

Gerolamo's participation in the "Milanese revolution" was his first contribution to the events of the Risorgimento period and it was precisely to these events that the artist dedicated an extraordinary series of pencil and watercolour drawings, now part of the graphic collections of the Museum of the Risorgimento in Milan. Exhibited in the *Pavilion of the Italian Risorgimento* set up for the *Italian General Exhibition* in Turin in 1884, and thus part of the conspicuous iconographic and documentary collection set up at the Exhibition by the Milanese Commission,⁴ these works represent a direct testimony, captured from life, of the many faces that animated those days. Gerolamo Induno described figures of commoners and members of the "*Company of the Barricades*" in these drawings, as well as young women, hidden behind the door of their homes weaving the flags that would finally fly from the windows, roofs and spires of the Duomo as the Austrians fled. This watercolour on display at the Museum of the Risorgimento, in the first room of the Five Days, presumably painted just after the events in Milan and then taken up again in the 1863 painting, is dedicated to these true heroines of those days. It was the strong symbolic value that the tricolour flag carried with it that the artists paid homage to then, laden with their experiences as soldier-painters, like Induno, who experienced the events of the Risorgimento at first hand, on the Milanese barricades or in the ranks of Garibaldi's troops. Immediately recognisable, the tricolour flag was and remains a bearer of identity significance for the nation in the making. "*In this genre of painting, immediately popular with the public, the symbols must be immediately recognisable, and so the tricolour or flag becomes an easy means of identifying the patriotic allusion [...] in the poorly working-class interior characterised by symbols of everyday life (the painting with the religious image, the cages with the birds, the head of salad lying on the floor) three women are intent on making a tricolour flag. One of them is in Ciociaro costume, underlining the desire to maintain the sense of the oldest traditions in the new national identity*".⁵ In his book dedicated to the Five Days of Milan, Antonio Monti wrote as follows "*Young dark-haired and blond heads, venerable grandmothers' and mothers' heads bent over night and day to make flags and cockades and tricolour ribbons [...]*".⁶

⁴ For an in-depth analysis of the series, see P. Foglia, *Pages of a graphic diary. Watercolour drawings by Gerolamo Induno in the Milan of 1848* in P. Peluffo, M. Canella, P. Zatti (eds.), *Chronicle of a Revolution. Images and places of the Five Days of Milan*, Silvana Editoriale, Cinisello Balsamo, 2011, pp. 108-117

⁵ E. Farioli, *Making Italians: pedagogy of the unification of Italy in painted flag*, op. cit., p. 71.

⁶ A. Monti, *1848 and the Five Days of Milan*, Hoepli, Milan, 1948, Fratelli Frilli Editori, Genoa, 2004, pp. 129-130)

Galleria dei principali costumi Milanesi prima, durante e dopo la rivoluzione.



L'indipendente
Lo studente
Lo povero uomo
Il rivoluzionario
La confermatrice
Lo uomo più sarkico
La signora gentile
Molti si armano col



Grenadier Corvo
Ufficiali di Linea
Guardia Nazionale
Guardia in base
Guardia col rispetto
Capitano della Guardia
Guardia Nazionale
Proprietario

Milano presso L. e B. Feltrinelli, Calle S. Margherita 5.° an.

Luisa Battistotti Sassi

Gallery of the main Milanese costumes before, during and after the revolution

Milan, Pietro and Giuseppe Vallardi

Second half 19th century

Hand-coloured lithograph

Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Museum of the Risorgimento (Historical Events 316)

Among the many costumes and characters depicted in this lithograph is Luisa Battistotti, one of the revolutionaries of the Five Days, at the top right, with rifle in hand, tricolour armband and proud attitude. Her name is indicated in the inscription at the bottom, accompanied by the significant words *“The fairer sex moved in defence of the nation”*. Born in the town of Stradella in 1824, Luisa moved for work to Milan, in the district of Vettabbia and later married the artisan, brass worker, Sassi. The sweetness of this young woman's face, as it appears in this work, conceals the courage that led her to take up arms, wear men's clothes and fight in the first barricade, that of the Borgo Santa Croce, on 18 March 1848.

In the issue of *“Illustrated World”* of 20 May of that year, in an article dedicated to *“Modern Italian Heroines”*, she is remembered as follows: *“at the first tremor of popular upheaval she welcomed the breath of freedom in her chest. She laid down her feminine garments, and under the guise of a rifleman ran into the streets to seek out danger. A new desire that revealed itself to her Italian spirit [...] from 18 March until the 22nd she never laid down her arms: when her feminine face was recognised, her presence alone was an awe-inspiring and encouraging sight for the strongest.”*¹. Although the description by Luigi Cicconi, who signed the article, still conceals a distant equality between men and women, the exaltation of Battistotti's strength is evident. This also motivates her presence in the Vallardi brothers' press alongside only male figures, both civilian and military. Luisa was then twenty-four years old and many chronicles of the time speak of her exploits, of her ability to lead the rebels and of the gratitude that the city, free from the Austrians if only for a short time, had towards her. On 12 April 1848, the Provisional Government granted her an annual pension of 365 lire: *“wishing to give a public sign of gratitude to those who were designated by the people's vote as heroes of the barricades”*.

¹ *The Illustrated World. Universal Newspaper*, G. Pompa e C. Publishers, Turin, Year II, Number 20, Saturday 20 May 1848, p. 510



(Luigia Battistotti maritata Sassi)

Vajani Pietro, engraver (active during 19th century)

Luigia Battistotti, née Sassi

Xylography on wood head, from *The Illustrated World. Universal Newspaper*, G. Pomba e C. Editori, Turin, Year II, Number 20, Saturday 20 May 1848, p. 509

Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Library of the Civic Historical Collections (P BER 98)

It is therefore no coincidence that in the lithograph Luisa is the only one mentioned by name as a true tribute to the role of women in those tragic events². The accounts of the time regarding Battistotti are characterised at times by almost hagiographic overtones, although it is true that this young woman showed great spirit of initiative during the “revolution of Milan”. She is remembered in the front row, in the Duomo cathedral, on 6 April 1848, at the *Te Deum* to commemorate the victims and give thanks for the victorious outcome of the revolt. The return of the Austrians caused her, like many others, to flee the city; first she stayed in Turin and then moved overseas: “*From Turin she left for America with a student from Pavia: she took refuge in California, in S. Francisco, where she achieved a certain affluence and eventually passed away there in 1876*”³. The date of his death is not clear, and some texts indicate 1897 as the most probable year; however, the story of her life, apart from a few uncertain details, undoubtedly outlines one of the most interesting biographical events of the time.

² The xylography present in “*The Illustrated World*” was reproduced as a lithograph in the *Old Milan* collection, published in Milan in 1887 at the Bernardoni Typography of C. Rebeschini e C. Similar depictions can be found in other illustrations, such as those accompanying the *Courier of the Dames* of March-April 1848, which, however, lack inscriptions indicating the names of the women depicted.

³ Quoted excerpt from *Luisa Battistotti Sassi. Heroine of Liberty*. Documentary notebook, written and collected documents edited by Wanda Baiardo Brondoni, Stradella, Lions Club Stradella Broni Montalino, 2001, p. 27.



Baldassare Verazzi

(Caprezzo, 6 January 1819 - Lesa, 18 January 1886)

Episode of looting during the Five Days of Milan

c. 1848

Watercolour, pencil and ink on paper

Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Civic Historical Collections (Prez. XIX s. p. 31)

The previously unpublished artwork is preliminary to the well-known painting, held in a private collection, with the same subject, and is an example of Baldassare Verazzi's¹ adherence, as recalled in recent studies², to the strand of genre painting. In this fine watercolour painting, recently acquired and from the collections of Giorgio Ni-codemi's family, Verazzi depicts an agitated scene that suggests the climate of tension experienced during those tragic days of uprising. It must be remembered, in order to understand the choice of approaching these themes, that the artist's studio in Via della Cervetta is remembered as "*a centre of revolutionary action, since a group of young people conspired there against Austria*".³ This political affinity of Verazzi's is also evident in his masterpiece, exhibited along the itinerary of the Museum of the Risorgimento, *Combat at Palazzo Litta*, oil on canvas of 1849, in which Verazzi portrayed himself, also a protagonist on the barricades and bearer of a feeling of heroism, love of country and rebellion. In this scene, a Hungarian soldier forcefully bursts into a high-bourgeois residence - one can see the carpet, the furnishings, the luxurious fittings - to carry out a looting operation: in the foreground a young mother tries to protect her son who is lying on the floor, while others seek shelter under the furniture or by fleeing.

¹ For the artist's biography and work, see, among others, the recent study by F. Copiatti and V. Cirio, *Baldassare and Serafino Verazzi. Painters of Lake Maggiore. Two lives between Verbano, Milan and Latin America*, Alberti Libraio publisher, Verbania, 2006

² See S. Rebora in *Romanticism*, edited by F. Mazzocca, Silvana Editoriale, Cinisello Balsamo, 2018, pp. 352-353

³ E.E. Brambilla, Baldassare Verazzi in "The Roads of Italy and Latin America", no. 8, August 1929, pp. 843-838 cited in S. Rebora, op. cit. Verazzi's participation in the revolutionary uprisings of 1848 is, however, not confirmed by archive documents but only by bibliographic sources which report that his studio was then transformed into a meeting place for the rioters. See Copiatti-Cirio, op. cit., p. 42



The tragedy is well expressed by the female figure who, in the contortion of her body and the mimicry of her face, perfectly sums up what is happening and the suffering inflicted by the soldiers under Radetzky's orders. In the background, a volunteer steps forward, pointing his rifle at the soldier, who already seems to be overpowering the woman; everything happens in the shadow of the Duomo spires, visible through the window opening in the background.

The preliminary watercolour does not differ much from the final work, except for very few details and a more delicate colouring: the female figure here becomes the symbol of an offended and frightened humanity and, at the same time, of a yearning for freedom that in those March days saw Milan become the stage for a revolt that united all social classes, intellectuals, bourgeoisie and the population.

Julius I Adam

(Munich 1826 - Munich 1874)

Scene of combat in the streets of Milan in March 1848 (detail)

From *Erinneungen an die Feldzuge der K. K. Oester. Armee in Italien in den Jahren 1848-49*, Munich 1851, c. 1851, Lithograph

Milan, Palazzo Moriggia | Civic Historical Collections (Historical Events 26)



Paolina Grandi, veteran of the Five Days of Milan

Rocco Cisari, photographer (active in Milan, late 19th century-early 20th century) before 1916

silver salt gelatine print

Milan, Palazzo Moriggi | Civic Historical Collections (Carte de visite Fund, MRN inv. 1163)

This portrait of Paola Grandi (1829-1916), one of the lesser-known protagonists of the 1948 movement in Milan, is also part of the rich photographic fund of the Civic Historical Collections.

A native of the Corsico neighbourhood, on the banks of the Naviglio Grande canal, she came to the city as the housemaid of Rosa Monti, who was much more widely known among the women who took part in the popular uprising and one of the few who were awarded the commemorative medal of the Five Days.¹ Testimonies of the time recount Paolina following Monti, who is said to have motivated the young woman in the fight against the Austrians and with her built the barricade of the Contrada Crocifisso.

“Housemaid, from Corsico. She worked for Rosa Monti, née Verga, who distinguished herself during the Five Days of March 1848, and, drawing example and courage from her, she effectively assisted her in erecting barricades, transporting wounded and other things. It was while erecting a barricade that a large stone fell on her right leg, bruising it.”².

Antonio Monti, in his 1947 paper on the Five Days, wrote about her: *“Paola Grandi, a housemaid, had a long life. Men of my age remember seeing her still around 1915 participating in patriotic processions and commemorative ceremonies of the Five Days. In 1948 she was in the service of a married Rosa Monti.”*

¹ Rosa Monti née Verza (or Verga) is mentioned in volume 10 of the *Patriots' Fund to whom the Commemorative Medal of the Five Days* was awarded, which is kept in the Archive of Palazzo Moriggi. Only five women appear in the lists of medal recipients and among them, besides Rosa Monti, there are Luigia Grandel, Giuseppina Mazza, Luigia Rossetti and Maddalena Zoppis. See L. De Montis Romaniello, D. L. Massagrande (ed.), *Patriots' Fund to whom the Commemorative Medal of the Five Days* was awarded, Institute for the History of the Italian Risorgimento, Milan Committee, Milan 1993, p. 58

² A. Faconti, *The Five Days. Deaths, wounded, well-deserving*, Chiesa & Guindani, Milan, 1894, pp. 222-223.



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*Dono
del nipote
Angelo Grandi*

inv. 1163

MUSEO NAZIONALE DEL RISORGIMENTO ITALIANO
n. di inv. 31749

Paolina Grandi

Veterana delle Cinque Giornate di Milano
(1848)

Illustrazione: In combattimento, venne ferita ad una gamba. Alla valorosa superstite venne, allora, consegnato, dall'On. Comune di Milano, un diploma in unione ad una pregevole medaglia. Ebbi inoltre medaglie d'argento di: Vittorio Emanuele II (date a coloro che si distinsero nelle guerre per l'Indipendenza e l'Unità d'Italia) e la medaglia di Umberto I. (data ai veterani dell'Unità Italiana).

MUSEO NAZIONALE DEL RISORGIMENTO ITALIANO
n. di inv. 31749

“Verza, a resident of the Contrada del Crocifisso, where Monti, aided by Grandi, built a barricade, while machine-gun fire raged and a howitzer burst, wounding Grandi”³. This relationship between Paolina and Rosa emphasises the collaboration in the uprising between the different social classes. This was also well depicted in paintings, prints and drawings dedicated to the events of the Five Days, in which representatives of all social classes are seen united in the same desire to liberate themselves from the oppressors. The photograph, donated in March 1949 by Angelo Grandi, Paola's nephew, bears a long inscription on the back listing the honours she received: it is a rare document, among the many that are preserved in Palazzo Moriggia of those events and that today allow us to reconstruct the history of the sometimes forgotten women and men of the Italian Risorgimento period.

³ A. Monti, *op. cit.*, 2004, p. 134

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