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Italy: The Case for Division

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SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

Italy: The Case for Division
A Comparative Thesis between Northern and Southern Italy

A Thesis Submitted to
The Faculty of the International Studies Major
In Partial Fulfillment for the Degree of
BA in International Studies

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Introduction

While this thesis focuses on the question of whether northern and southern Italy should be divided because of their geo-political and socio-economic differences, the question this thesis poses is, why is there a division to begin with? Some believe the divide between northern and southern Italy is based on the fact that they are culturally different people and geographically their locations have created differences between them. Others argue that politically, their forms of government have influenced this division and statistically the gap in GDP and population density have further influenced this separation as well. However, this thesis argues, with agreement of many scholars, Italy was never really united to begin with.

The issue of political separation due to social and geographical changes has affected many unified nations. There are many factors that contribute to the desire for a division. In the case of Italy, some argue that the north should separate from the south in order to regain its independence and undo the *Risorgimento* of the 1860's. During the *Risorgimento*, Garibaldi, with the support of Britain, helped Italy regain political unification and independence (Barbagallo). Others feel Italy was never united, but instead the south was simply colonized by the north (Glass). In any case, there are many issues that have led to the question of whether or not northern and southern Italy should be divided because of their geo-political and socio-economic differences.

Background

“We suffer increasingly from a process of historical amnesia in which we think that just because we are thinking about an idea, it has only just started” (Angel-Ajani 6). The beginning of these geo-political and socio-economic factors dates back to the history of Italy and its first inhabitants. In the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. Greeks settled to the southern tip of Italy while the Etruscans and Romans occupied the central and northern mainland (“Background Note: Italy”). Eventually the peninsula of Italy became unified under the Roman Republic and by the third century B.C. they soon controlled the neighboring islands as well (“Background Note: Italy”).

In the first century A.D., the Roman Empire ruled the Mediterranean world, however, when the Empire collapsed in the fifth century A.D., “...the peninsula and islands were subjected to a series of invasions, and political unity was lost” (“Background Note: Italy”). This loss of unity led to a “succession of small states, principalities and kingdoms, which fought against themselves and were subject to ambitions of foreign powers” (“Background Note: Italy”). The rivalry between these small states in addition to the tension between the popes and the Holy Roman Emperors turned Italy into a battleground.

In the 11th century, the northern and central Italian cities started to prosper and the Renaissance began. “Although Italy declined after the 16th century, the Renaissance had strengthened the idea of a single Italian nationality” (“Background Note: Italy”). Similarly, by the early 19th century, a nationalist movement developed and led to the reunification of Italy in the 1860’s (“Background Note: Italy”). Eventually, the

Italian *Risorgimento* “gave unity to a country that had had the name ‘Italy’ at last two millennia earlier” (Barbagallo 388). Before this unification, there was a strong division from multinational character and Italy was separated regionally as well.

In the mid-eighteenth century Italy was divided into seven states: the Kingdom of Sardinia (with Piedmont and Liguria), the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Papal States (Lazio, Umbria, the Marches, and parts of Emilia and Romagna); the rest of Italy was controlled by Austria, directly from Vienna in the case of Lombardy-Veneto, and by the Habsburg scions in the case of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the duchies of Parma and Modena (Barbagallo 388).

Italy remained divided regionally and socially even after the unification of Italy. The idea behind this political unification was to create a nation-state that would make “Italy” and “Italians” rather than having its inhabitants identify themselves with their regions or villages.



Above: Map of Italy Before Unification:

<http://www.halsema.org/people/theleonardifamily/history/mapsof15-18thcentitaly/images/fullsize/7.jpg>

Before the Unification of Italy in the 1860's, Italy was just a group of different functioning states that had no desire to be united. When the unification process did occur, it was at a higher, colonial level rather than a choice of the people. The basis of this unification did not really "unite" these states into Italy, but it instead tried to create a singular culture for a group that had no commonality. This was the beginning of the so-called "division" of Italy.

Geography tended to isolate different areas, and imposed profound climatic, economic and social differences, especially between north and south. The lack of roads and other means of communication reinforced these differences. Emblematic of these divisions, in 1860 the Italian language was used by little more than 2 per cent of the population (Barbagallo 389).

These factors greatly reinforced the separation of Italy and have led to a strong divide between the north and south.

Geography

The Industrial Triangle

One factor that contributed to this division is the geographical locations of northern and southern Italy. “The bulk of heavy industry is concentrated in the northwest, in the Milan-Turin-Genoa industrial triangle” (“Italy-Industry” 1). Because of northern Italy’s location, conveniently situated near the rest of Europe and other European markets such as France, Germany and the UK, the north has transformed into an industrial marketplace compared to the agricultural, less industrialized economy of the south. “During the period since 1945 a major preoccupation has been the disparity between the north and south...in spite of efforts to industrialize the south and Islands...few indirect new jobs have been created” (King 257). This geographical factor has allowed northern Italy to become a major means of production and to gain a growing, diversified industrial economy.

The flat land available in the north provides a sound location for large factories, and the high-density population (approximately 10 million), makes for a strong labor force and market to sell goods. Similarly, the exportation of these goods through the major ports and airports in the north has made them more accessible than those in the south. This may be why; according to the World Fact book, Italy overall is the seventh major export power in the world with a yearly sum of about \$546 billion (CIA: World Fact Book).

Agriculture

Of Italy's exports, 27% comes from industry in comparison to 2% from agriculture. In addition to the impact of exports from the industrialized north, the labor force is influenced by these statistics as well with 30.7% coming from industry and a mere 4.2% coming from agriculture (CIA: The World Fact Book).

Southern Italy, however, still relies greatly on their geographical location for their farming and agricultural needs. The warmer temperature in the south helps farmers produce their goods, mainly fruits, vegetables and olive oil ("U.S. Department of State"). Unfortunately the land in the south is composed of many high steep hills that make it difficult to farm. The south's geographic location is also isolated and far from the rest of industrialized Europe, making it difficult to get their products to other European markets.

With the industrialized north and agricultural south, geography clearly displays the division of Italy into two. However, while geography may separate the country into two distinct entities, when it comes to the economic status, recent research shows that Italy is actually divided into three.

Economy

There are new economic theories that support the idea that Italy is separated into three regions. The first economic divide comes between northern and southern Italy because of their industrial split. However, due to the so-called Second Industrial Revolution, another divide occurred, separating the two regions once again. This second divide created a new economic entity in the middle, known as Third Italy.

The Industrial North

While the concept of the industrial north is still fairly new, the technologically advanced industries in the north have led to international competition and economic growth for Italy. This is illustrated in Giacomo Becatti's preliminary survey of industrial districts in post-war Italy,

...what has largely made our growth and elevated position in the international league tables possible has been...the constant massive flow of exports of personal and household goods...largely attributed to growth in industrial districts, which are the jewel in the crown of "Made in Italy" (Becattini 1129).

Originally the shift went from a country focused on specialization and small local products to one that revolved around the industrial revolution and the mass production of goods. The industrialization of northern Italy and the rise of the industrial triangle

involving the three major northern cities of Turin, Milan and Genoa, really began to prosper in comparison to the underdeveloped agricultural south (Agnew 85).

The Southern Question

Despite the beginnings of regionalization, there were very unclear lines as to where the “south” actually began. “ Italy from Rome southwards was the classic *Mezzogiorno* of retarded agriculture and burgeoning cities without much if any manufacturing industry” (Agnew 85). Because of the lack of industrialization in the south, the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno* was created. The *Cassa del Mezzogiorno*, or “Fund for the South” was a program created in the early 1950’s, to promote economic growth and industrialization in the South.

The *Cassa del Mezzogiorno* addressed four main points to help the failing South: income and taxes, infrastructure, public job programs, and equalized wage rates. In the early 1950’s the goal of this project was primarily to construct public works and infrastructure to provide credit subsidies and promote investments. It focused mostly on rural areas however, due to the poor financial management in the south, most of the money never even made it to the local economy. Despite its efforts, the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno* failed and rather than jump-starting the southern economy, it instead allowed for the success of criminal behavior and the rise of the mafia. Therefore, the northern portion of Italy continued with their industrial success while the south stayed behind.

Southern Italy has continuously to been a lagging region and while there have been many attempts to help the depressed areas, the south still drags behind "...the other two-thirds of the country despite an abundance of special assistance programs, increased urbanization, a continuation of high rates of out-migration and a marked reduction in the relative economic importance of agriculture (Baum 58)". Although the south has shifted to a higher productivity rate and increased land reform, irrigation and farm consolidation, they still have not diversified as much as the rest of the country.

"Third Italy"

The economic division between the north and south left a large part of Italy in a geographical limbo and yet this "Middle Italy" region was experiencing a rapid growth in industrial employment further dividing Italy into three, rather than two separate entities.

While the north of Italy remained greatly industrialized in terms of heavy industry, and the "true" south continued to lag behind, this new "Third Italy" began to flourish in "...lighter industries such as processed foods, clothing, shoes, furniture and specialized metal-working that became particularly important exports for Italy following the accession to the European Community in 1957" (Agnew 85). The products produced by the so-called "Third Italy" greatly differed from the factories in the north and farms in the south. Third Italy focused their attention on "uniquely manufacturing by small-and-medium sized family firms" (Blim 257).

Women have also played a large role in the success of "Third Italy" by carrying both jobs in commerce and industry as well as "reproducing the households that produce the family firms, and they labor in the family firms as adjutants and workers..." (Blim

258). Their role in the economic development of “Third Italy” initially started as labor participation, replacing men in agricultural work. This soon led to pursuing jobs in industries such as apparel, textiles, and shoes to fill the labor scarcities (Blim 258). In some regions of “Third Italy”, women were responsible for 23% of the workforce in 1971 and were up to 34% by 1991 (Blim 258).

While this economic division of “Third Italy” may seem like a new claim, it was actually foreseen since the end the Second World War, when sociologist Arnoaldo Bagnasco first used the idea of the “Three Italies” in 1977. Bagnasco saw the correlation between Italy’s first regional division into north and south over the controversial “southern question”,

...which had long viewed the south’s economic failure since Italian political unification in the mid 19th century as either the result of national economic policies favoring northern industrialists (and the analogous failure of the northern working class to unite with southern peasants) or the environmental, locational and comparative cost disadvantages of the south, relative to the north (Agnew 85).

Despite these differences between the north and south, “Third Italy” has been prospering between the north and west, and the south for three main reasons, which can be attributed to small firms. The first reason for their success is the “residual logic” of a mode of capital accumulation in which small firms have little competition with larger firms. Next is the “logic of international division of labor” where the Italian economy has

allowed specialization to occur. Lastly, is the concept of “diffusion logic”, which is in response to the strikes and labor disputes of large, decentralized factories where they were forced to outsource to smaller firms such as those in “Third Italy” (Agnew 85).

Overall, there has been much growth and change for Italy’s economy throughout history. The dynamics of the different regions have helped develop and differentiate the division of Italy into three separate economic entities. The contrast between Italy is “...typically capitalist growth mechanisms present in the Center-North of the country starting with the so-called industrial triangle, and weakness, or absence of such mechanisms in the Center-South...” (Becattini 1106). The northern industrial region was defined by the evolution of mass production, in comparison to the south, which was ready to inherit the earth and a form of flexible production (Agnew 86). Similarly, this division formed the successful region of “Third Italy” which fed off of their export potential and led “Third Italy” to overall economic competitiveness in the second industrial divide of Italy. However, while we may highlight the north because of its economic success, when it comes to tourism the south is not far behind.

Tourism

Although the north has many major tourist locations such as Milan, Venice, Florence and Rome, with the introduction of *agriturismo* and wineries in the south, many tourists are attracted to this otherwise less traveled region.

Agriturismo

A recent attraction in the untouched *Mezzogiorno* is the concept of *agriturismo* or agritourism. The idea behind *agriturismo* is to create a “symbiotic relationship between tourism and rural life” (“Less Travelled Than Northern Italy” 2). This green tourism is focused on the south, towards people looking to explore the lesser-known Italy. With the popularity of the green-movement, *agriturismo* has become a successful economic tactic for the south to sell and produce their goods as well as a means to increase tourism in the region. In the 1980’s the creation of the *Commissione Nazionale Cos’è Biologico* by a group of Italian landowners interested in organic farming allowed for farmers to work hand in hand with consumers and set regulations for organic farming in the country. “An attempt is made to limit competition for the agritourism establishment’s products. The farm is then able to advertise and market themselves while earning income and providing hospitality to travelers” (“Less Travelled Than Northern Italy” 2).

There are many benefits that come along with the rise of agritourism in the south. Many regions have embraced this new idea and have profited both in agricultural sales and tourism statistics. “Since 2001, agritourism has increased by 25 per cent in

Italy. Several establishments are now able to accommodate guests overnight, and tourists enjoy the opportunity to participate in region's traditional culture, customs and food" ("Less Travelled Than Northern Italy" 2). The south of Italy has caught onto the growing success of agritourism and they have attracted tourists to otherwise rarely explored regions. In return, tourists are experiencing areas of Italy "...rich in landmarks and palatable history, the south is seeing an upswing in popularity with tourists, and agritourism farms provide an economical, educational, and genuine Italian experience" ("Less Travelled Than Northern Italy" 2).

Wine

Along with the success of agritourism, the south is benefiting from another tourist attraction as well--wine. While the *Mezzogiorno* has had significantly less growth than the north, one exception to this has been in regard to tourism.

The regions of the *Mezzogiorno* are endowed with a considerable natural, anthropological and historical resource. Those territories are particularly suitable for tourism as the modern tourist/consumer can find exactly what he wants to see (DiGregorio 2).

In the mix of those cultural and historical attractions is the highly representative product of wine from the *Mezzogiorno*. "Wine, in particular the high quality one, eventually becomes the lead for tourist routes and a valid reason to discover the territory"

(DiGregorio 2). With the production of wine increasing in the south, it has spiraled into the development of other new business opportunities in the hospitality fields as well and has led to the socio-economic and territorial expansion of vine-growing areas (DiGregorio).

The southern region has greatly increased their tourism numbers and from 1960 to 2003, tourists in Italy increased above 50 million units, 25% of which comes from the south (DiGregorio 3). In addition, southern Italy has improved tourism in the region by an annual rate of 4%. Southern Italy has attracted many visitors because of their competitive prices and the change in tourists themselves. In today's society, tourists are more independent and dynamic, there is "...a new variety of tourism appreciating more of the territory, the environment, the history, the culture and the traditions" (DiGregorio 3). In effect, southern Italy has benefitted greatly from this new breed of tourists and from the growth of *agriturismo* and wine tourism.

Popular Destinations

In comparison to southern Italy's tourism success in spite of being a more remote and unexplored territory, northern Italy is quite the opposite. Northern Italy seems to prosper not on the remote location of their region, but on the popularity of it. With tourist attractions such as Rome, Venice and Florence the northern region often profits from the historical and destination attractions in their region.

While the south benefits mostly from Italian tourists within the country, many outsiders choose the north for their tourism.

Northern Italy offers a vast array of bustling cities and peaceful retreats for tourists to enjoy. Whether you long to surround yourself with cultural landmarks, natural beauty or old-fashioned charm, you're certain to find something to meet your traveling needs (Gosford1).

Rome offers history and geography as well as many cultural artifacts left from the Roman Empire. Similarly, Venice "is world famous for its canals, a grand basilica and breathtaking bridges. Venice offers a romantic vibe amidst a fairytale setting" (Gosford 1). As one of the major tourist attractions in Italy, Venice prospers from the popularity of this sinking city and the famous gondolas.

Florence is another destination for many western travelers interested in seeing history as well as a wide variety of museums. With over sixty museums throughout this quaint city, it is a definite tourist attraction for all. Home of Michelangelo's famous *David* as well as the grandiose *Duomo* and Uffizi Gallery, travelers are drawn to this Tuscan region to find culture as well as a delicious cuisine.

Another popular tourist attraction in the north is the city of Milan. Milan is the undisputed fashion capital of the world. While conveniently located in the industrial triangle of Italy, "...Milan offers sophistication and style at every turn. You can also spend your days touring renowned museums and view such treasures as Da Vinci's *The Last Supper*" (Gosford 1).

The highest growth is shown by local tourism systems that grew at a rate of more than 100 percent. As to the rate of growth in terms of employees, the highest positions are still occupied by Rome, Florence, and Venice, which rank among the first six, together with Milan, Turin and Naples (Lazzeretti 219).

Overall, while the north remains to be the destination for many tourists due to the art of their cities and the well-known attractions, the south is making a name for its region with the help and popularity of argitourism and wine tourism.

Social Differences

Most of the dividing factors between northern and southern Italy have been clear in regards to different historical backgrounds, political entities, economic success and even tourism rates, however, there is still a social aspect that further divides this nation into two distinct regions. While traditions hold back the south, the north of Italy has broken away from these customs and is moving towards modernity.

The Traditional South

Southern Italy is Europe's principal empirical case study of failed modernization. Southern Italy is used by students of anthropology and sociology as a case study for clientelism and crime; by economics students as a case study for underdevelopment; and by political science students as a case study of the politics of factionalism and corruption. Increasingly, moreover, those interested in cultural studies have become interested in the South, particularly in representations and constructions of Southern "backwardness" (Davis, and Marino 1).

Southern Italy's so-called "backwardness" illustrates the contrast between north and south, due to the socio-economic modernization that is occurring in the north followed by the dependency on traditions in the south. From the significance of a tight-knit family to the life-style of *mammismo*, these traditions show how the old-fashioned

way of life in southern Italy is hurting their chances towards economic and political success, as well as modernity.

While there is a strong emphasis on family all throughout the country, in southern Italy the family unit is very important. “The nuclear family is the dominant social unit and of overriding functional importance. Each family is an essentially isolated unit” (Silverman 70). Families are at the center of life in southern Italy and one tradition that highlights this is the *siesta*, when daily work is paused, shops are closed, and everyone returns home to their family for a large meal and nap. Another southern tradition that illustrates the importance of family is the concept of *mammismo*.

“In the southern regions it is not at all uncommon to find extended families living together in a solid unit so do not underestimate the importance of family or the tightness of its bond” (“Living in Italy” 1). *Mammismo*, also known as a “mama’s boy” is a tradition that is consistent in the southern region of Italy. The typical *mammismo* often remains at home with his family until he has a successful job and wages, sometimes even long after is married. While this choice may seem economical it is also socially affecting the dependency and lack of modernization of the southern region.

Particularism and Traditions:

Similarly, particularism in the south has given it a reputation for being socially closed and narrow in comparison to its counterpart of universalism in the north. When it comes to the southern question, particularism plays a major role in the lack of modernization that takes place in the south, in comparison to the growing modernization

in the north (Mutti 579). The south follows a more traditional lifestyle where people are married young and then continue to live with their families until they can afford a place on their own. In contrast, the northern region of Italy has taken a more modern approach.

Modernity in the North

Italy's regions show remarkable differences in institutional performance, which remain stable over time. The most important result of this comparative analysis is, not unexpectedly, the confirmation that central and northern regions are more successful than their counterparts in the south (Maraffi 1348).

In comparison to the southern traditions, in the north it is not uncommon for students to move out when they go away to school. Similarly, while the family unit is still important, many parts of northern Italy do not participate in *siestas*, rather they continue on with their regular business day, which shows their stride towards modernity. Another unusual cultural difference between northern and southern Italy is their attention towards the individual. In northern Italy, there is more of a focus on the individual rather than the family as a whole. It is also not uncommon to start families of their own much later in life, usually after school or a career is in order.

Southern Italians showed significantly more interest in other people than northern Italians, both in the sense of worrying more about others' negative behavior and considering it very important to feel good about other people. Northern Italians

tended to center their attention on the self; they reported greater worry about self-achievement than about relationships with other people and feared personal harm more than loneliness (Galati 1).

Lastly, there is a drive for economic success in northern Italy, in contrast to its traditional southern counterpart. These societal factors and cultural nuances have allowed northern Italy to proceed towards modernity while the south still lags behind.

Politics

Tangentopoli Scandal

All of the previous factors have led up to yet another division between the north and south in terms of politics. In the 1990's when Italy was faced with the *Tangentopoli* scandal, the corruption of Italy was exposed. When Judge Antonio Di Pietro had Mario Chiesa, a member of the Italian Socialist Party, arrested the start of his *Mani pulite* (clean hands) investigation began. All over Italy, people heard about the political corruption that had been exposed in the north and a nationwide Italian judicial investigation into political corruption was held.

Mani pulite also led to the disappearance of many political parties and some political leaders committed suicide after their crimes were exposed. These crimes became known as Tangentopoli, or "bribeville". The scandal involved many wealthy politicians who were suspiciously living beyond their means. It was eventually discovered that the politicians were accepting bribes such as money or voters' support. The scandal led to the awareness of this systematic nature of corruption in Italy and the fall of two major political parties, the Christian Democrats and the Communists. The disintegration of these parties led to the rise of the *Lega Nord per L'indipendenza della Padania*, also known as "The Northern League".

The *Lega Nord*

Like so many of the other 'regional Leagues' in northern Italy, many believed that the *Lega Nord* would eventually disappear as well however, it has managed to become a primary force within Italian politics. The *Lega Nord* now holds a political power over Italy and wants to evoke change and a division between northern and southern Italy. The basis behind the *Lega Nord* is that they believe they, in the north, are held back by the corrupt, bureaucratic central Italian state, which is in turn biased against the south of Italy ("The Constrasting..." 27).

The *Lega Nord* was formed in 1990 by Umberto Bossi through the unification of various northern regional parties. It eventually shifted toward the center-right party and joined forces with *Forza Italia*, "Go Italy", led by Silvio Berlusconi. Together they formed a new coalition. While the coalition gained popularity, *Forza Italia* soon became the *Lega Nord's* greatest opponent so the *Lega Nord* left the coalition and became a regional party once more. After the *Lega Nord* separated from *Forza Italia*, things did not go as smoothly as planned and they faced an identity crisis. The party decided to reinvent themselves once more and focus on their two main themes: political territorial identity and an 'anti-system' stance. Their goal was for northern and central Italy to secede from the south and form its own invented territory known as Padania. *The Lega Nord* pushed for the independence of Padania because they no longer wanted the burden of southern Italy sharing their success.

The *Lega Nord* initially stressed the idea of ethno-regional differences to gain support, however, after little success they decided to shift toward federalism and the division of Italy into three macro-regions. These regions were known as the north, central and south. The *Lega Nord*'s new goal became the secession and independence of Padania from the rest of Italy (“A Place...” p 216). While the term ‘Padania’ comes from the River Po in northern Italy, it was a new, invented territory created by the *Lega Nord*, to justify their political claims.

With the creation of ‘Padania’ the *Lega Nord* aims to create a kind of ‘neo-ethnicity’ for a ‘nation’, which is made up of citizens who do not necessarily have a common history, culture or language but an identity derived from similar socio-economic values and attitudes” (“The Contrasting...” 28).

This allowed the *Lega Nord* to become a new kind of political party that focused on secession as the only solution. With the creation of Padania, the *Lega Nord* invented a territorial boundary that divided Italy because of their cultural differences and placed northern Italy as the most successful. Similarly, the actual territorial boundaries are vague to allow the party to keep their political opponents off-guard (“A Place...” 217). Territory is very important to the political agenda of the *Lega Nord* but from this point of view the territory defines a culture associated with northern Italy rather than a homogenous Padanian culture (Agnew). The idea behind Padania is that it created the geographical boundaries needed for the basis of historical claims rather than historical claims as the basis for geography (“A Place...” 218).



Above: Map of Padania, region created by the Lega Nord: www.mssl.ucl.ac.uk

The Mafia

While the *Lega Nord* is a major influence to the division of Italy in the north, the influence of the Mafia as a political entity in the south contributes as a dividing factor as well. The Mafia's manifestation in the south not only affects its inhabitants on a socio-economic level, holding back many businesses from the larger entrepreneurial capitalist economy, it also greatly contributes to the politics of the south as well.

In order to give more power to local governments, Rome has intentionally weakened its national authority. At the local level however, governments are heavily influenced—or even dominated—by organized crime, especially in southern Italy (“Stratfor” 1).

Because of the corruption associated with the Mafia, the south is unable to prosper. The Mafia's influence interrupts any progress that the south is making by infiltrating the police, administration and justice systems and stealing from the Italian economy (Palmowski). The Mafia has attained political autonomy through the corruption, intimidation, and murder of public officials...the mafia principles in the operation of its drug trafficking enterprise are similar to primitive predatory impulses, as economic conflicts become interfamilial wars and market competition is characterized by vendettas and bloody struggles (Arlacchi 1).

With this concept as a means for political power, it is difficult to achieve any real political goals without the Mafia interfering. In comparison to its northern counterpart, the south struggled to rule over its own region due to this corrupt influence. It is estimated that more than 350,000 companies in Italy were forced out of business because of organized crime ("Stratfor"). Similarly, while the Mafia continues to control the southern portion of Italy, the central government has done nothing to stop their illegal activities (Palmowski).

The Mafia has changed from an underground organization to one that controls the majority of the southern population. They have infiltrated public systems, engaged in extortion and theft from the Italian economy, and have put a damper on progression and economic success in the south. Because the central government in the south is slowly losing their power, the more power they relinquish in hopes of someday regaining control of the region, the more power the Mafia gains and will continue to rise. This cycle will

only lead to the expansion of organized crime in Italy. Currently, the Mafia is able to provide a sense of protection and security that other forms of government have not, however, in return they have total control over economic progress (or lack there of) in the south.

Conclusion

Overall there have been many geo-political and socio-economic factors that have led to this cultural divide between northern and southern Italy. While their different historical backgrounds originated this divide, more recent differences have furthered a cultural separation between the north and south. Geography, as a factor that played a major role between the division of northern and southern Italy, has greatly affected both of these areas. Northern Italy has always been richer than southern Italy and this is largely due to the north's geographic location. Because of the north's access to European markets and culture, it became more industrialized and economically successful. Contrarily, the arid climate and inferior soil in the south made for poor agricultural development and in effect a less developed economy as well.

In addition, the economic success of the north and the creation of "Third Italy" have created even more competition for success in the south. The north's location has given them access to grow in terms of their economy and trade routes, while the isolated south still lags behind with agriculture as their primary means of capital. Because of this division, the "Second Industrial Revolution" occurred in Italy, allowing the development of "Third Italy" which emphasized the middle grounds that were less industrialized than the north but more economically successful than the south.

Relative to the economic division, tourism has affected both the north and south as well. While the south has become increasingly more popular due to the rise of *agriturismo*, the north still holds 75% of tourism in Italy. Wineries have allowed the south to prosper as well but the north still holds many popular tourist destinations such as

Rome, Venice and Florence, which have been continuously frequented by Italy's inhabitants, and many outside tourists as well.

Cultural and social differences of these two regions have set them apart even more. The north is moving towards modernity while the southern region is still stuck on traditions. The concept of *mammismo* in the south has affected its social growth and progression while the north has become more modern in its ideals, allowing children to move away for education or job opportunities in comparison to the south where they remain in the family home for most of their adult life.

Lastly, when it comes to politics, the progress of regionalist parties in the north such as the *Lega Nord* in comparison to the success of organized crime as a form of government for the south has furthered this division. The differences between northern and southern Italy are evident. This thesis covers the obvious separations between the regions in terms of the north's successes geographically, economically, socially moving towards modernity, and politically. While the *Lega Nord* continues to push this division because of their frustration in carrying the south, the question still remains, are these reasons enough to divide Italy?

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