

Charles Albert's desire to broaden the base of popular support for his dynasty also informed his social and cultural policies. While he left educational and charitable activities in the hands of the Catholic Church, he intentionally favored those religious orders engaged in educational and social work at the expense of the more contemplative orders and tightened state regulation of existing Catholic charities. At the same time, the king encouraged popular educational and welfare activities by new voluntary associations that began to emerge in the 1830s. Thus, his government sanctioned the founding of the first nurseries, schools, and poor houses by private individuals, for the most part prominent aristocratic moderates like Cesare Alfieri, Roberto d'Azeglio, Camillo Benso di Cavour, and Carlo Boncompagni. In the years after 1835, these men began to carve out a new role for themselves by promoting a number of educational, charitable, and cultural initiatives that would prepare the social terrain for those political reforms that, according to Alfieri, were needed to "combat revolution". D'Azeglio, his wife Costanza, and other female relatives from the Costa della Trinità and Luserna di Rorà families led the way in these areas, sponsoring new workhouses and poor relief shelters in the wake of the cholera epidemic of 1834. Cavour's similar concerns led him to collaborate with Count Carlo Beraudo di Pralormo in the reorganization and reform of the religious charities, or *Opere pie*, in 1834. Moderates also became involved with the problems of popular education, founding in 1839, for instance, a new organization to promote the diffusion of children's shelters and schools throughout the realm. Their activities led one local citizen to boast in 1840 that "the charitable institutions are the first and greatest marvel of Turin" and "would honor a metropolis three times its size". The monarchy also undertook prison reform by issuing new guidelines in 1839 to enhance the moral and civic re-education of the prisoners.

Charles Albert's ambitions were even more extensive in the cultural arena, where his initiatives consciously exalted the past achievements and glories of the House of Savoy in order to stimulate popular pride in and allegiance to the monarchy. From the outset, he employed monuments, symbolic rituals, buildings, paintings, and historical reconstructions in Turin to invent a tradition of royal grandeur that enhanced the prestige of his dynasty both at home and elsewhere on the Italian peninsula. Beginning in 1831, the king launched a campaign of architectural and pictorial commissions to modernize and redecorate the royal residences of Turin, Racconigi, and Pollenzo. He also oversaw the construction of public monuments in the major squares of his capital, each narrating a great moment in civil and dynastic history. By the end of