



No. 9 "Italia Redenta" [From 'The Great War Britains Efforts And Ideals shown in a series of lithographic prints: 'The Ideals' series]

Date

1917

Primary Maker

Charles de Sousy Ricketts

Medium

Lithograph on paper

Dimensions

68.6 x 42.5 cm

Description

This is a three colour planographic print (lithograph) on paper, and is part of a series entitled 'The Great War: Britain's Efforts And Ideals shown in a series of lithographic prints: 'The Ideals' series. There are a total of six lithographs in this particular series, and in total there

are ten series. The lithographs are numbered as if the entire ten series are one, so this print is number 9. This print depicts a female warrior fighting what appears to be a two headed bird; in the foreground there are five female figures. Despite being ostensibly part of the Triple Alliance with Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italy did not enter World War One until 1915, and then it was on the side on the Allies. Italy had reached a secret agreement with Britain and France which would see it gain territory in exchange for its commitment of Italian soldiers towards the Allied war effort. Rickett's lithograph celebrates the possibility of Italy's redemption through its support of the Allied cause. Since the 19th century a Nationalist movement of Italian Irredentism sought the unification with Italy of people of ethnic Italian origin, or Italian speakers, located in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and other territories. Thus places such as Trieste, parts of Dalmatia and South Tyrol as well as Italian pretensions for territory in Africa became bargaining tools. With the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 Italy gained much of the territory it aspired to along the Adriatic coast. Rickett's lithograph 'Italia Redenta' shows a classically draped and helmeted winged figure warding off an attack from a two-headed eagle, a visual metaphor for the Austro-Hungary Empire. Below are shackled and oppressed people which The Studio described as 'representing the long-alienated cities... scarcely able to yet realize their redemption.' Italy had fought along its northern borders in difficult terrain and sustained heavy losses. Russian withdrawal from the war in 1917 added to the difficulty of the

campaign. However, social unrest in the Austro-Hungarian Empire ultimately led to its being weakened and enabled the Italian army eventually take the upper hand. Jessica O'Donnell 2014