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Italy and Italians Through American Eyes, 1861-1881

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ITALY AND ITALIANS THROUGH AMERICAN EYES, 1861-1881

by

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ABSTRACT

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Old Dominion University, 2008
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American perceptions of Italy and Italians between 1861 and 1881 were characterized by competing and conflicting images. These two decades in the late-nineteenth century demonstrated the transitional nature of American attitudes towards Italians as contact between the two peoples increased. American travelers went to Italy initially to recreate the journeys of educated Europeans of the Grand Tours of the eighteenth century. By the 1860s this style of travel was on the decline to be replaced by traveling based on exploring the “real” Italy. However, the two styles overlapped and resulted in conflicting and complementary images. In part this was a result of increasing Italian migration to the U.S. Many Americans initially welcomed Italians as the prescription for an under-populated nation in need of successful agriculturalists. However, as more Italians arrived, especially those from the poorer South, attitudes shifted to a more negative and hostile tone. Each of these American perspectives were pushed aside when Italian heroes were considered, however. Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi represented ideal Italians. They strove for Italian independence, just as the American Founding Fathers had less than a century before.

Using a variety of primary and secondary source material, these competing and conflicting perceptions are explored. The project examines 1861 to 1881 as a transitional period for American perceptions, while providing a broader context for understanding the changing nature of American and Italian societies during the period.

I would like to dedicate this project to Chunga Gobbus Bench. May he rest in peace.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Italy has been a geographic space prominent in the American imagination from the inception of the American republic. The Constitutional Convention in 1787 saw arguments for and against various forms of government, including versions based on the ancient Roman Republic. The American inheritance of European literature and classical education etched into the American mind stories, images, and writings encompassing the region that became the Italy of the nineteenth century. For Americans, contact with a small number of Italians in America, including Thomas Jefferson's violin teacher and Filippo Mazzei, a Tuscan physician turned Virginia planter, demonstrated that Italy, although a mere geographic expression politically, retained its cultural power in America. Prior to the Napoleonic Wars only a few Americans, whom Van Wyck Brooks calls "the forerunners," such as Benjamin West, traveled to Italy, mainly to study art.¹ Paul Baker reports that American visitation to Italy increased by the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, with roughly one thousand Americans traveling to the peninsula annually by the mid-1840s.² Nathalia Wright documents the tradition of American

This paper follows the format requirements of *The Chicago Manual of Style* 15th edition.

¹ Van Wyck Brooks, *The Dream of Arcadia: American Writers and Artists in Italy, 1760-1915* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1958), 1-12.

² Paul Baker, *The Fortunate Pilgrims: Americans in Italy, 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), 20.

writers traveling to Italy, which grew out of the broader movement of European tourism during the period.³

The influx of travel-inspired writings in the mid-nineteenth century about Italy slowly helped to create idealized visions of Italy and to a lesser extent, the Italians themselves. Partially based on these perceptions Italians became the ideal immigrant, based on the idea that they were all successful agriculturalists. For many Americans immigration was evidence of American superiority and destiny. The mythical American melting pot had successfully assimilated the first generation of Americans, most of whom were themselves immigrants. By the mid-nineteenth century, the idea that an American manifest destiny, with its need to inhabit the North American continent, existed and immigration became more than simply proof of American greatness. It became necessary for continued success. It was in this context that immigration agents on federal, state, and local levels sought out ideal immigrants. Italians seemed clearly to fit the requirements. However, as Italians arrived in increasing numbers during the century, Americans found themselves confronted with a people who stood in stark contrast to the picturesque characters described in novels and travel writings. The disconnect that existed between visions of idealized immigrants who were sought for immigration and those that actually came would eventually help to turn sentiment against Italians, especially as the majority of those arriving during the mass migration period were from the poorer South.

The racial undertones evident in characterizations of Italians, whether immigrants in America or those observed by Americans in Italy, were largely brushed aside when discussion came to Italian heroes Giuseppe Garibaldi and Giuseppe Mazzini. As a result

³ Nathalia Wright, *American Novelists in Italy: The Discovers, Allston to James* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965), 18.

of both Garibaldi's and Mazzini's hostility to papal power over Rome and their staunch republicanism Americans hailed them as heroes. The vast propaganda campaign that was a hallmark of Mazzini's efforts for decades prior to unification had won him many admirers and converts, Margaret Fuller a notable example. On the other hand, Mazzini's image in Italy and abroad did not have the same power, largely due to his intellectual approach to affairs and more importantly, the widespread belief that his goals had not been met, with the exception of unification itself. Even this was not accomplished on Mazzini's terms. Likewise, Lucy Riall has recently disputed the notion that Garibaldi was an aloof, simple man as he has often been portrayed. Riall highlights Garibaldi's efforts at fashioning his own image and carefully cultivating his own myth. Garibaldi's popularity had already been sealed before he arrived in exile to New York in 1850. His short stay in America only confirmed the images that many had read about in books, magazines, and newspapers. By the time he had successfully conquered the Bourbon regime in Southern Italy and deferred his rule to King Victor Emmanuel his popularity was at an all-time high. During the period from 1861 to 1881, American press reports about Garibaldi numbered in the thousands. Whether it was a report of the birth of a grandson or his daily routine at Caprera, Garibaldi was a regular presence in the press. Much of this was due to his cultivation, as Riall points out, but Garibaldi's elevation to the pantheon of heroes and great men ultimately rested on his military victories in 1860.

Because of Italy's aesthetic appeal to educated Americans, and the fact that those same individuals lamented that "the world ha[d] ceased to be so magnificent as it once was," it was almost essential to travel back in time, as it were, to experience Italy.⁴

⁴ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, ed. Thomas Woodson (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980), 169.

William Stowe argues that Americans often used European travel to construct particular identities that considered race, class, and gender.⁵ One aspect of American construction of identities through travel was the framework that had been set by European travelers of the Grand Tours of the eighteenth century. James Buzard writes that the currents of Romanticism evident in the Grand Tours helped to shape later traveling, especially in America as American intellectuals sought to associate themselves within the Romantic tradition.⁶ As Americans increasingly arrived in Italy for this purpose they were consumed with the desire to reenact the experiences of their predecessors. Either following guidebooks, which had become prevalent by mid-century, or literature, such as Madame de Staël's *Corinne*, American travelers moved from point to point, even seeking to evoke the identical emotions described in the literature.⁷ In addition to reenacting experiences, American writers proceeded to build upon the canon of literature that either described Italy or simply used Italy as the backdrop for their stories.

The intersection of these perspectives of Italy and Italians demonstrated the transitions that were occurring not only on the Italian peninsula, but in the United States as well. The first chapter will examine transitions in American travel in Italy. American travel began to move away from the reenactment of the experiences and emotions of Romantic travelers towards a more pragmatic approach. Sophia and Nathaniel

⁵ William W. Stowe, *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), xi.

⁶ James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 19.

⁷ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980). Greenblatt argues that literature functioned in three interlocking ways: as a manifestation of the behavior of the author, the expression of codes which the behavior is shaped, and a reflection upon such codes. Although Greenblatt utilized this framework to examine the early modern

Hawthorne, for example, epitomized the travelers concerned with romance. Sophia, an amateur artist, spent much of her time sketching Italian scenes, while Nathaniel composed literature that not only utilized Italy as a setting, but also presented many idealized visions of Italy and Italians. The Hawthornes were little concerned with Italians themselves, only contacting those necessary to facilitate their travels. In contrast to the Hawthornes, William Howells, an American Consul, represented the new type of traveler. He purposefully sought to explore and explain Italy and Italians based on their history. He specifically observed regular Italians in their daily lives and depicted what he thought was their “true” nature. However, Howells was not completely immune to bouts of romance. Like the Hawthornes, he was brought up on the same books and descriptions in the early nineteenth century. Howells’s writings also demonstrate the liminality of traveling in the 1860s and 1870s, as the logistics of travel became more efficient and sophisticated, and the goals of travelers changed over time.

By examining only the writings of these three individuals the author consciously leaves out a wealth of important travel literature and writings from the period. Although the Hawthornes and Howells were located within a common tradition and upbringing, and moved in the same circles among the important and powerful families of America and Europe, the contrasts between their writings in terms of style and content provide an important basis for understanding the changing nature of American travel. The writings of many other important figures, such as Henry James and Mark Twain, have been well-documented in terms of their common relationships and literary output. In this context, this project utilizes personal diaries, notebooks, and “guidebooks” almost exclusively,

period, Romantic writers and travelers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also demonstrated such behaviors.

excluding most of the significant literary output of each figure. This allows for an examination of the ways in which a variety of American attitudes and perceptions interacted, rather than simply focusing on travel alone.

The second chapter explores American perceptions of Italian immigrants, and seeks to demonstrate that just as transitions in the goals of travelers were evident in the 1860s and 1870s, attitudes towards Italian immigrants evolved during the same period. Prior to the 1870s few Italian immigrants arrived in America. Consequently, perceptions of Italians were largely formed through education, popular literature, artwork, and the writings of travelers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne. One aspect of this vision was that of the successful Italian agriculturalist, cultivating a country full of hills and valleys. This idealization worked in concert with the American need for labor to cultivate the untapped wealth of the nation. In this context, Italians became the ideal immigrants, highly sought after by American immigration agents. However, as Italians arrived in increasing numbers, Americans had more opportunities to interact with them firsthand. These experiences led many to conclude that the idealized Italian agriculturalist was not the type of immigrant that was actually arriving. Racial theories were appropriated by anti-immigration forces to explain the undesirability and inferiority of Italian immigrants. Many such theories disassociated Italians from northern Europeans, while others posited biological links between Southern Italians and criminality.

The final chapter explores American attitudes towards Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi. Although each man was considered an Italian hero, especially prior to and at Italian unification in 1861, American attitudes towards the men diverged after 1861. Mazzini was praised for his agitation in the 1830s and 1840s. He was further

credited with keeping Italian issues in the mind of the Western world. However, his intransigence towards the elevation of the Piedmontese monarchy to the leadership of a united Italy wore on many Americans. In part, the deterioration of Mazzini's image in America resulted from the belief that Italy was not quite ready for republican rule. Many Americans wondered if the results of 1848 had already demonstrated Italian unfitness. Americans rejoiced at Italian independence and pragmatically assured Italian republicans that such a form of government would come in time. In contrast to the image of Mazzini as ideologue, Garibaldi continued to be seen as the ultimate patriot. A staunch republican, Garibaldi subsumed his personal political preferences for the benefit of the fledgling Italian nation. This seeming selfless act helped to continue the myth of Garibaldi that had evolved from the 1840s.

American attitudes and perceptions of Italy and Italians were in many ways determined by Americans relative physical proximity to Italians. When viewed from a distance, especially in the context of idealized portrayals of Italy and Italians in literature and art, Italians seemed more desirable. However, when Americans visited Italy or Italians immigrated to the U.S. more hostile attitudes predominated. The intersection of the three distinct perspectives examined in this project demonstrates the confusing and often contradictory American attitudes and perceptions. By highlighting the distinctiveness of each perspective readers can better appreciate the ways in which visions of Italy and Italians became predominantly hostile in the late nineteenth century.

CHAPTER II

AMERICANS IN ITALY

Nathaniel Hawthorne's romantic novel *The Marble Faun* opens with the four main characters standing in the sculpture gallery at the Capitoline in Rome. Hawthorne described the spectacular view from their spot—with the bright sky “and those blue distant mountains . . . the ruins, Etruscan, Roman, Christian, venerable with a threefold antiquity.”¹ He intended to put the reader “into that state of feeling which is experienced oftenest at Rome.”² This state of feeling was the exaltation of emotion and feeling through aesthetic experience that characterized the Romantic movement in the West. The romantic ideals that guided the European travels of Sophia and Nathaniel Hawthorne are evident in their writings about Italy.³ Awe-inspiring picturesque scenes, such as that from the Capitoline in Rome, were sought out for the sublimity they provided. Many such scenes were documented by such earlier travelers as Lord Byron, and provided a template for later travelers, including the Hawthornes, to emulate. Sophia Hawthorne wrote that Byron “came, saw, and became master or conqueror of the land [of Italy],

¹ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1860), 20. *The Marble Faun* is only one work in an entire canon of travel-inspired literature in the nineteenth-century. Precursors to and influences on Hawthorne, such as Charles Eliot and James Fenimore Cooper, provided a framework for Hawthorne and other travelers. These works, in addition to British writers of the eighteenth century, provided a built-in itinerary for later travelers.

² Ibid.

³ European travel during this period was characterized by the search for pleasure, which was derived through the cultural consumption of art and architecture found in romanticized locations, especially those found on the Italian peninsula. For American travelers prior to 1860 see Paul R. Baker, *The Fortunate Pilgrims: Americans in Italy, 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964). For American novelists in particular see Nathalia Wright, *American Novelists in Italy: The Discoverers, Allston to James* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965). See also Joy S. Kasson, *Artistic Voyagers* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1982).

reproducing it in words.”⁴ Travelers not only reenacted the routes of Byron and others, but also sought to recreate the emotions found in their writings about Italian travel. According to William Stowe, this style of tradition-based travel was ritualistic, performed through an enacted drama that followed scenarios copied from guidebooks, literature, or travel writings.⁵ This need for ritualized experiences made the preservation of picturesque landscapes, cities, monuments, ruins, and artwork essential.

Each year that passed meant that ‘authentic’ experiences became increasingly difficult to find.⁶ This caused an obvious and a not so obvious reaction in American travelers. Their negative attitudes towards specific modifications and renovations in modern Italy were based on this desire to see Italy as Byron saw it. On another level American travelers sought to remove modern Italians from time, from the inexorable march of history. If modern Italians were rendered outside of time then the “cultural residue” of ancient and Renaissance Italy could remain as ‘real’ Italy to American travelers.⁷ For many travelers, Italy was “a land of monuments; and those who builded them ha[d] long passed away. A mighty silence succeeds them.”⁸ In this context, Italy

⁴ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy* (New York: G.P. Putnam & Son, 1869), 301.

⁵ William W. Stowe, *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 55.

⁶ The basis for considering foreign traveling a success, or authentic, for travelers such as the Hawthornes, was the degree to which they could reenact the ritualized experiences of their predecessors. In this context, any experience inhibited by Italian people, other travelers, renovations to structures, or demolition of structures, for example, could not be considered ‘authentic.’

⁷ Joseph Luzzi, “Italy without Italians: Literary Origins of a Romantic Myth,” *Modern Language Notes* 117, no. 1, Italian Issue (Jan 2002): 51.

⁸ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 468.

existed specifically for travelers to experience as a grand living museum; Italy was “something that *has been*,” and would always be with the past.⁹

The experiences of the American Civil War and Italian Unification in the early 1860s in many ways damaged the romantic idealism of *antebellum* American thought. Although examples of romantic writings continued, the hegemony of romantic writings was challenged by the 1860s by an approach based on realism. The writings of William Dean Howells in the 1860s and 1870s epitomized this transition. Howells explored the everyday life of Italy and Italians. Looking beyond the emotional tones of Romanticism, he actually cautioned against such approaches, which he argued pointed travelers to locations which gave little insight into the heart of Italy. Howells sought to know Italy “differently from those writers who have described it in romances, poems, and hurried books of travel.”¹⁰ Although Howells did not explicitly characterize the Hawthornes, Byron, and other Romanticists, as mere ‘tourists,’ his remarks revealed a sense of superiority based on his experiences living in Italy, in contrast to those who hurriedly traveled from one sight to the next. James Buzard has examined the negative connotations that the word tourist acquired in contrast to that of traveler, tracing the earliest use of the word tourist to the late eighteenth-century.¹¹ However, even if Howells

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ William D. Howells, *Venetian Life* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), 10. Howells work heavily echoes John Ruskin’s *Stones of Venice*, written from 1851-1853. John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, ed. Jan Morris (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981). The links between Howells and the Hawthornes, and earlier writers, such as Ruskin have proved important fields of inquiry in literary and historical research. Although this project focuses on the actual descriptions of Italy, Howells and the Hawthornes place among American and British travelers in a broader view can provide additional background and context for those wishing to delve deeper into the field.

¹¹ James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). The study of tourism is a burgeoning field, utilizing methodologies from a variety of disciplines. The two classic works are Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class: A Economic Study of Institutions* (New York: The Modern Library, 1934), and Dean MacCannell,

saw individuals as tourists based on his belief that their itineraries were simple-minded obsessions with particular sights and locations, made famous largely through literature and guidebooks, the Hawthornes would have, in their own time, seen themselves as travelers in contrast to mere tourists as well. In addition, Howells' writings were not completely free from episodes of romantic emotion, evidence that he too was overwhelmed by emotions just as the Hawthornes had been in the late 1850s. In addition, Howells described Italy and Italians with many of the same characterizations as the Hawthornes. Nonetheless, despite these similarities, Howells' observations reveal an effort to learn about Italians and their character while the Hawthornes saw them simply as an exotic 'other' to be observed from a distance.

PICTURESQUE ITALY

The emotional hold of Italy upon the psyche of American travelers remained consistent from the earliest Romantic travelers to the realist travelers of the later nineteenth century. American intellectuals in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, steeped in classical education, were heavy cultural consumers of not only the travel writings and novels describing Italy, but also the artwork depicting Italian landscapes and ruins which were ubiquitous in the United States by mid-century. Italian cities, based on their long history, were perceived to contain a particular charm and essence that American cities, most no more than two centuries old, could not hope to match. Henry James described the United States of the 1840s and 1850s as having "no great things to look out at (save

The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class (New York: Schocken Books, 1976). More recently Urry has adopted Michael Foucault's concept of the 'medical gaze' in John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage Publications, 1990). See also Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough, eds., *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2001).

forests and rivers); life was not in the least spectacular.”¹² Consequently, picturesque scenes in Italy took on that much more importance for American travelers seeking sublimity.

The connection between the actual artwork, landscapes, and peoples that travelers experienced and their imagining of that artwork, landscapes, and peoples induced a sense of saturation which often overwhelmed travelers’ senses.¹³ Nathaniel Hawthorne provided a concise articulation of this principle when he explained that Italy was “crowded so full with memorable events that one obliterates another; as if Time had crossed and recrossed his own records till they grew illegible.”¹⁴ Travelers were overwhelmed with emotion in two key instances on their journeys. First, their initial visits to famous monuments and locations were almost guaranteed to be one of the most saturated moments of the trip. Second was their departure from Italy, as the realization that their experiences were coming to an end and their return to ‘normality’ was imminent. This period was often characterized by travelers’ reassessment of many of the emotions felt during their travels, including lamentations. Howells’s explicit turn away

¹² Henry James, *Hawthorne* (Ithaca, NY: Great Seal Books, 1956), 67. In *Hawthorne* James lamented the absence of a ‘high’ civilization in the U.S., especially in contrast to Europe. James argued this absence resulted in a less than ideal setting for a novelist. William Howells disagreed, finding that the whole of human existence sufficed for a novelist. This back and forth between James and Howells, and the theme of the past versus the present in literature can be found in many works. See Alan Holder, *Three Voyagers in Search of Europe: A Study of Henry James, Ezra Pound, and T.S. Eliot* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966). Christof Wegelin, *The Image of Europe in Henry James* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1958).

¹³ Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 177-187. Buzard argues that four interconnected themes characterized travelers’ experiences in Europe, Italy in particular: *stillness*, *saturation*, *picturesqueness*, and *non-utility*. *Stillness* refers to the traveler’s desire to experience and savor a location or site without interruption. *Saturation* occurred when travelers experienced sites that were densely packed with historical and emotional significance. *Picturesqueness* encompassed the actual cities, arts, and peoples, which reflected an imagistic model of artistic experience. *Non-utility* describes the disconnect between the particular scene or site and the modern concerns of the traveler’s home society.

¹⁴ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*, 124.

from romantic imaginings caused him to document these intense emotions only in these momentous instances. In contrast, the Hawthornes were not only steeped in Romanticism, but derived their pleasure or displeasure from their ability to recreate the experiences of their predecessors.

William Howells described his arrival to his post at Venice as one of the most memorable moments of his time in Europe. He claimed “there can be nothing else in the world so full of glittering and exquisite surprise, as that first glimpse of Venice.”¹⁵ Howells first glimpse of the Grand Canal, the gateway to a city built upon a lagoon, replete with multicolored houses, and the towering spires of Saint Mark’s Cathedral, offered a “peerless strangeness” for visitors.¹⁶ Howells explained to those yet to experience this first glimpse, “O you! Whoever you are, that journey toward this enchanted city for the first time, let me tell you how happy I count you!”¹⁷ This feeling revealed a sense of regret mixed with exaltation, as if Howells wished he could reenact his own entrance to the city. Instead, Howells would come to know the city in such detail that these initial emotional responses were lost. Howells recounted his emotional experience as a “spectacle of such singular beauty as no picture can ever show you nor book tell you, —beauty which you shall feel perfectly but once, and regret forever.”¹⁸ Howells could only recreate his emotions by writing them down for others to experience through his words, even though he admitted no book could even give the same feeling.

¹⁵ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 28.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 28-29.

This heightened emotional state followed by a sense of regret at the inability to recreate such feelings epitomized many such firsts.

Although the initial arrival in Italy could be the ultimate experience, first visits to particular sites evoked emotions similar, if not as powerful. Sophia Hawthorne's first visit to the Roman Forum caused her to imagine "what a dream of unexampled beauty must it have been, when the white and violet marble temples, porticoes, and richly sculptured arches stood in all their freshness!"¹⁹ Hawthorne exclaimed "The populus Romanus! what words are those to pronounce here!"²⁰ Sophia's initial visit to the Borghese Gallery led to her first encounter with the work of Italian master Raphael, whom she came to admire above all others. Hawthorne called Raphael's "Entombment" "a consummate work of genius."²¹ The emotion of this first encounter with Raphael left Hawthorne "helpless to express [her] sense of this miracle of art," wishing that she could "see it all the rest of my life."²² The ability to finally recreate and experience Italy in a way they could only imagine previously left travelers overwhelmed, helpless, and speechless, on an emotional high.

The only instance which matched the emotional intensity of the arrival in Italy was the departure from Italy. The disappointment and sadness that underlay many travel writers' articulation of their departure, whether documented at the time or recounted later, illustrated the power of the imaginative and emotional appeal of the journey. Nothing demonstrated this more than the writings of travelers who spilt most of their ink

¹⁹ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 228.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 230.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 235.

²² *Ibid.*, 236.

complaining and criticizing Italy, or at least particular Italian locations, only to find themselves caught up in the longing to stay or at least return. William Howells, for example, experienced a far different initial visit to Rome than he did Venice. To Howells “Modern Rome appeared, first and last, hideous. It is the least interesting town in Italy, and the architecture is hopelessly ugly.”²³ This characterization itself is full of emotion; disappointment reigns as either long-held imaginings are not matched or as preconceived biases are upheld. Despite such a negative attitude towards Rome, Howells found himself overwhelmed upon leaving the Eternal City. As his party left the city walls and entered the Campagna, Howells documented an intensity absent from his experience in Rome heretofore. Howells explained, “And, alas! there I caught the Roman fever—the longing that burns one who has once been to Rome to go again—that will not be cured by all the cool contemptuous things he may think or say of the Eternal City; that fills him with fond memories of its fascination, and makes it forever desired.”²⁴ Nathaniel Hawthorne described almost identical attitudes in *The Marble Faun*. Rome, for Hawthorne, was “so indescribably ugly, moreover, so cold . . . where a chill wind forces its deadly breath into our lungs.”²⁵ Despite hating Rome with all his might, Hawthorne wrote that travelers were “astonished by the discovery . . . that our heartstrings have mysteriously attached themselves to the Eternal City.”²⁶ Such was the power that Italy, Rome in particular, held over travelers’ emotions. Regardless of one’s attitude towards

²³ William D. Howells, *Italian Journeys* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872), 152.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

²⁵ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*, 372.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 373.

modern Italy, it would always be the heart of the Roman Empire, and thus the cradle of Western Civilization.

Sophia Hawthorne's emotions upon leaving Rome to explore the peninsula illustrated the attachment formed during her stay. She felt "an extraordinary and unexpected regret at leaving Rome, and if it had been a final departure [she would] have been almost inconsolable, —so potent and profound [was] the hold this 'city of the soul' has upon the mind."²⁷ That this experience came even as Hawthorne knew she was only leaving to visit other parts of the peninsula and was to return demonstrates how powerful this feeling could be. Hawthorne did not document her final departure from Rome because due to sickness she was unable to finish the journal. It simply ended abruptly. However, Hawthorne's response to her first departure suggests that the final departure may have been even more intense.

Picturesque descriptions, in contrast to the more emotional 'landmark' situations such as arrival to or departure from Italy, were articulated in just about any circumstance while in Italy. Sophia Hawthorne described one particular evening in Florence when her group took a walk through the city. The landscape was perfect as "the moon rose . . . and wrapped us in silver-fire—which odd combination of words alone can convey an idea of the glowing splendor of Italian moonlight."²⁸ About a month later while still in Florence, Hawthorne experienced another picturesque moment during a walk through Florence's *contado*. Clouds began to gather as rain approached, and Hawthorne found herself "looking, suddenly [at] a great piece of rainbow dropped down" among the "beautiful

²⁷ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 295-296.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 467.

hills, crowned with castles and villas.”²⁹ These moments created profound moments of happiness for the travelers, yet they were commonplace in such a land, reinforcing the sense that Italy contained what could not be found at home.

One of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s characters in *The Marble Faun* found himself atop a castle tower in an Umbrian valley amidst a view that seemingly encompassed every available stock image of Italy. Trim vineyards, fig-trees, mulberries, smoky-hued tracts of olive-orchards, fields of every kind of grain, white villas, gray convents, church-spires, villages, towns with their battlemented walls and towered gateways, all situated among rivers and lakes.³⁰ According to Buzard, such representations privileged idealized landscapes that looked not only like a painting, but a balanced and complete *scene*.³¹ Hawthorne’s fictional account allowed him to combine multiple images into one grand vision, each part of which could be found within any travel account of Italy. Each image encompassed its own network of representation that could be molded by individual readers, drawn from other writings and especially artwork. Picturesque scenes of the Italian countryside gave a sanitized and purified vision to readers and viewers devoid of Italians, except in so far as they were themselves portrayed as beautiful forms. This vision of Italy contributed to the idea that Italians were of the past.

In addition to the Italian landscape and countryside, certain cities could be picturesque. William Howells preference for Venice did not keep him from calling Genoa “the most magnificent city I ever saw.”³² Howells found the Duomo in Genoa

²⁹ Ibid., 487.

³⁰ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*, 296-297.

³¹ Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 188.

³² Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 59.

particularly beautiful as an example of “architecture which Heaven seems truly to have put into the thoughts of man . . . O beloved beauty . . . wherein all Nature breathes and blossoms again!”³³ However, Venice was Howells’ first love. Living there, rather than simply visiting made one sometimes “forget how marvelous she is.”³⁴ Forgetting would not last long in the city because the “city beguile[d] you street by street, and step by step . . . or Venice lures you in a gondola into one of her remote canals, where . . . palaces stare at you in austere surprise.”³⁵ Moments of sheer pleasure occurred almost daily for travelers in Italy, however, moments of displeasure also occurred regularly, providing contrasts to the sublime instances of silver-fire moonlights.

ROMANCE VS. REALITY

The most glaring example of transition in the style of traveling between Howells and the Hawthornes existed in their considerations of the Italian people. The Hawthornes barely considered Italians on their own terms. Italians were only described positively in their writings because they provided an exotic ‘other,’ thus allowing for an authentic experience. Otherwise Italians were considered nuisances who interrupted and interfered with travelers’ ability to experience Italy. Furthermore, the Hawthornes situated modern Italians as stuck in time, beyond the inexorable march of history. This attitude was concomitant with the idea that Italy was the site *of* history, and largely, if not totally, devoid of any true modern history.

³³ Ibid., 60.

³⁴ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 125.

³⁵ Ibid., 125-126.

The Hawthornes' entire experience in Italy was based on a desire to place themselves within the traditions of upper-class British travelers of the Grand Tour by reenacting the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of their predecessors.³⁶ However, the Hawthornes found that obtaining this "cultural accreditation" was difficult when modern Italians interfered with the *stillness* necessary to internalize the communicated meanings of the locations and artwork.³⁷ Modern Italians interfered in two fundamental ways: first, on an individual level Italians could be very bothersome to American travelers, and second, alterations to monuments or locations inhibited Americans from completing their 'rituals'. Sophia Hawthorne described various occasions when her experiences were interrupted. One afternoon while attempting to contemplate in the Basilica of Saint Peter, Sophia "observed all at once that I was rather officiously attended by a stranger Italian, who seemed bound to suggest to me a good place to stand."³⁸ In Siena's Library of the Cathedral at Saint Bernardino Sophia began a sketch of Raphael taken from the frescoes of Pinturicchio. However, Hawthorne was unable to complete her work, later writing in her notebook that "the guard gave me no peace, and I only made an ineffectual scratch."³⁹ Again in Bolsena Sophia attempted to sketch, this time the ruins of an Etruscan temple. She reported that spectators soon beset her, "men, women, boys, girls, and babies in

³⁶ This tradition encompassed a multitude of writers, such as Byron, Cooper, Eliot, Ruskin, Hawthorne, Twain, James, and Howells, to name only a select few. The scholarship on these individuals alone numbers in the thousands, with many focusing on the literary techniques and symbols utilized in their writings. This study attempts to document only a fraction of such writings.

³⁷ Buzard, *The Beaten Track*, 104.

³⁸ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 293.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 515.

arms, all trying to look over my book.”⁴⁰ Even so, this time her work was not thwarted because, she noted, “whenever any one happened to obstruct my view, the rest commanded him to move from the signora’s eye, and a vista was kept for me most jealously all the time.”⁴¹ Nathaniel described similar experiences. One morning in Florence, after visiting various churches, Nathaniel ended up at the Duomo. Even so, before he had an opportunity to enjoy this final destination Hawthorne wrote that “an old woman began to persecute me so that I came away. A male beggar drove me out of another church.”⁴² These instances illustrate the fact that the Hawthornes considered modern Italians as individuals, and of the present, only insofar as they were disturbances. Italians were portrayed as out of place in their own environment, just as they had been absent from most of the picturesque descriptions of the countryside.

For Sophia Hawthorne, contemporary Italians were “*puppets galvanized into motion, and the real, living, grand beings are no more.*”⁴³ Here she separated the two peoples into real, the marble statues representing the past, and illusory, the people walking the streets at the time. In a bout of romantic imagining, Sophia Hawthorne wishfully wrote that she would not be surprised if the various Florentine masters immortalized in marble “were to descend from their pedestals and walk the streets.”⁴⁴ In fact they would be “more fitting and proper to the place than those persons whom we

⁴⁰ Ibid., 527.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 318.

⁴³ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 468. My emphasis.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

meet to-day. The latter are, as it were, empty chrysalids—deserted shells.”⁴⁵ Hawthorne, situated in the romantic tradition, had little concern for modern Italians; instead she was more interested in visions of classical and renaissance Italy, which the marble statues represented. Italy’s position as a mere “geographical expression” for most of the nineteenth century meant that Hawthorne encountered Italians who possessed little of the greatness that allowed their ancestors to dominate the western world politically and/or culturally.

The only situations when Italians were perceived positively were those that illustrated the physical links between them and their great ancestors. Italians’ physical appearances provided an appealing romantic vision for the Hawthornes. Nathaniel Hawthorne’s character Donatello in *The Marble Faun* was described as “physically well-developed,” and he was compared with the marble statues of ancient Romans.⁴⁶ Even beggarly Italians, who Sophia Hawthorne thought disagreeable to the senses, “had beautiful eyes and perfect lines to their noses, as well as polite manners.”⁴⁷ Romanticized visions of Italian physical appearances allowed travelers to reach back into the past; even if the individuals were not so great themselves, they retained their beautiful “shells.” Here even in what was seemingly an attempt to give modern Italians some credit, they are compared to their ancestors. Once the Hawthornes moved beyond physical descriptions, modern Italians became less and less appealing.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Marble Faun*, 28.

⁴⁷ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 521.

William Howells had the same sense that modern Italians were not like their ancient ancestors. During one of his visits to the newly created Protestant schools in Naples, Howells questioned a young student about Italy's history:

I asked if he liked Italian history better than ancient history. He said he liked the latter, especially that of the Romans, much better . . . '[I said] I should think an Italian boy would like Italian history best.' 'But were not the Romans also Italians, signore?' I blush to say that I basely sneaked out of this trouble by answering that they were not like the Italians of the present day.⁴⁸

This telling exchange illustrated at least two important points about Howells' views and American perceptions more generally. First, Howells' decoupling of the Neapolitan boy from the ancient Romans created a space for the United States to assert its role as a modern Rome, carrying on the torch of Western civilization. Second, Howells hints at contemporary racial theories, which often linked Neapolitans and Sicilians to Africa rather than the rest of the Italian peninsula. The barbarism and backwardness that Howells had read about and then believed he was experiencing in Naples drew upon a century or more of discourse that severed Southern Italy from Northern Italy. Montesquieu's distinction in the mid-eighteenth century between northern and southern regions in his *Spirit of the Laws* relied on climate as a determining factor. Montesquieu argued,

if we travel towards the north, we meet with people who have few vices, many virtues, and a great share of frankness and sincerity. If we draw near the south, we fancy ourselves entirely removed from the verge of morality; here the strongest passions are productive of all manner of crimes, each man endeavouring, let the means be what they will, to indulge his inordinate desires.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 140-141.

⁴⁹ Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, trans. Thomas Nugent (New York: The Colonial Press, 1899), 224.

In addition, racial theorists believed that the successive waves of peoples that moved into or invaded the Italian peninsula following the ‘fall’ of Rome created an almost indeterminable mixture of ‘races.’ By the time of Howells writing, many theorists saw Italy’s racial makeup as impossible to establish. What they did believe, however, was that modern Italians were not directly linked to ancient Romans.

Howells, although an admitted Italophile, did not hesitate to criticize Italy or Italians. While traveling through Northern Italy, Howells proposed that such towns as Ferrara, Mantua, Parma, and Modena and others of the kind, “after having served a certain number of centuries for the use and pride of men, could be released to a gentle, unmolested decay.”⁵⁰ In fact, Howells found it difficult to restrain a sense “of outrage at finding them inhabited, and their rest broken by sounds of toil, traffic, and idleness.”⁵¹ The continued activity in these towns was unnatural, because “they long ago made their peace with the world.”⁵² Howells’ complaints articulated the idea that certain towns had served their purpose in the inexorable march of history. The time when such towns were considered ‘productive’ had passed; they remained simply as a reminder of what *had been* and should be left to Romantic ruin.

When Howells considered modern Italian character he looked for explanations in history. This did not mean that he saw modern Italians in a positive light; rather, relative to others of the time, his characterizations exuded a sense of hopefulness related to Italy’s recent unification. Italians, for example, were gentle, which was remarkable given the

⁵⁰ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 21.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

“homelessness and domestic outlawry” that existed.⁵³ Courtesy and patience were also described as chief Italian virtues, evidenced through various interactions with guards and custodians within the various museums and monuments. The guards and custodians that Howells described stand in stark contrast to those that the Hawthornes encountered. In the latter case they were bothersome rather than courteous, in the way rather than performing a necessary service. For Howells, a stereotypical Italian was described as having a dramatic, romantic, passionate spirit. Whether seen in a young soldier “reading a romance of Dumas”⁵⁴ or in the “untamableness of passion and feeling”⁵⁵ which Howells saw largely as a contrivance “to varnish the real commonplaces of their life.”⁵⁶ Howells posited that much of the reason for these characteristics lie in the fact that “the rags of sentimentality flutter from every crag and olive-tree and orange-tree in all Italy.”⁵⁷

One of Howells’ main criticisms of Italian character was laziness. On more than one occasion, Howells observed that “all day long the people sit and drink coffee and eat ices and gossip together . . . and the soft midnight sees the same diligent idlers in their places.”⁵⁸ This behavior allowed him to study “the universal worthlessness” of the people, in this case of Venice.⁵⁹ The key however, especially for an American steeped in the idea of the Protestant work ethic as a bastion of success, was not simply that Italians

⁵³ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 89.

⁵⁴ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 15.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 349.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 236.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 287.

⁵⁸ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 62.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

were lazy, but that rich or poor “nobody seemed to be driven by any inward or outward impulse.”⁶⁰

According to Howells, the Italians also displayed childlike characteristics. In one sense, even as Venetians were seafarers who traveled the world, “they know nothing of it, being more ignorant and helpless than children on shore.”⁶¹ Here they possess adult abilities, that of expert seafarers, yet their indifference towards the outside world is presented as childlike. This betrays an American prejudice of the period based in nascent American expansion, seen in the opening of Japan only years earlier and other excursions throughout the world. Much of this lies in the perception of the inherent Italian character, as Italians were considered simple people, pleased with the little things in life, “and as easy and unconscious as children in their ways.”⁶² This rather paternalistic attitude betrays the idea that Italy’s period of greatness was in the past, while American greatness was in the present and future.

Another way that Italians are presented as somewhat childlike and simple is in their vanity. Howells pondered if he would ever tire of “the artless vanity of the young Italians, so innocent, so amiable, so transparent.”⁶³ Regardless of their means, Howells noticed, especially in Naples, that Italians dressed to the hilt in the latest fashions. Furthermore, Neapolitans “took to carriages . . . London at six o’clock in the evening is not a greater jam of wheels.”⁶⁴ For Howells, all Italians were ‘dandies’, but the Italians’

⁶⁰ Ibid., 37.

⁶¹ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 57.

⁶² Ibid., 87.

⁶³ Ibid., 46.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 80.

vanity “is perfectly harmless, and his heart is not bad.”⁶⁵ Again, Italians are presented as childlike, based on their seemingly irrational desire to look good despite the fact that money for these latest fashions might be better spent on practical clothes, food, and to improve their daily existence. These descriptions link this childlike demeanor to perceptions that modern Italians and modern Italian society was decadent and stuck in the past.

Another common characterization of Italians, aside from laziness, was dishonesty manifested in a variety of ways. Vetturinos and other drivers in Italy acted as if “there is no species of fact with which . . . [they] will not pretend to have perfect acquaintance.”⁶⁶ In other ways Italians were considered master swindlers, taking advantage of strangers and fellow Italians equally. In this sense Howells gave Italians a back-handed compliment by asserting their ingenuity in preying upon their own countrymen, as they always pretend that “you have been plundered much worse than they, but the reverse often happens.”⁶⁷ Howells buttresses his own observations with that of an Italian who was “so thoroughly persuaded of the rascality of his nation.”⁶⁸ Again Howells asserts the paradox, especially towards Neapolitans, that Italians “are simple, harmless-looking people . . . [who] would no doubt rob and kill in the most amiable manner, if brigandage came into fashion in their neighborhood.”⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 342.

⁶⁶ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 55.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 78.

Despite the decadent status he assigned Italy as a nation, Howells believed in Italy's ability to make progress and get back on the train of history. Howells believed that Italians' negative character traits could be improved upon. Although Italy seemed stuck in the past, education could bring enlightenment. During a stay in Naples, Howells visited the Protestant schools. Instruction included spelling, arithmetic, geography, Bible study, and an overall morality.⁷⁰ Howells lauded "the amount of work the[ir] teachers accomplish[ed] in a day," given the fact that they took "the children of the most ignorant and degraded of all the Italians."⁷¹ He also gave credit to the Italian government for its diligence in engaging in such work that provided "inestimable benefits to the generation which shall one day help to govern free Italy."⁷²

The stark contrast between the Hawthornes' aesthetic considerations of modern Italians and Howells more sociological approach demonstrates the changing nature of travel in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although each of the travelers saw Italy as part of the past, the Hawthornes were concerned with the impact of Italians on their experiences. The purpose of their travels was to reenact the rituals of their predecessors. As individual Italians interfered with this goal they were castigated. Consideration of the daily lives of Italians was not a concern for these romantic travelers, Italians were a people without a present or a future. In contrast, Howells sought to know Italians on their own terms, even if it meant that they possessed negative qualities. Howells also sought the opinions of Italians in order to gain a better appreciation of their

⁷⁰ Ibid., 136-138.

⁷¹ Ibid., 144.

⁷² Ibid., 145.

character. For example, one gentlemen told Howells that Neapolitans were good people, who ““only needed justice to make them obedient to the laws.””⁷³ Howells agreed; Italians were capable of improvement. In fact, Howells believed that Italians possessed an inherent quality which he believed fit “the nation for democratic institutions better than any other, and which is perhaps partly the result of their ancient civilization.”⁷⁴

ITALY EXPLAINED

The most common explanation for Italian degradation was based on political considerations. Travelers agreed that Austrian, French, and Bourbon influences were the major factors, even as they experienced this at different times, whether prior to unification, after unification but prior to the acquisition of Venice, or prior to the incorporation of Rome in 1870. Howells, ever the student of history, argued that Italian duplicity and dishonesty had to be seen in context. The “facts of long ages of alien and domestic oppression, in politics and religion . . . must account for a vast deal of every kind of evil in Italy.”⁷⁵

Travelers to Rome found that the sources of evil in that city were omnipresent. Nathaniel Hawthorne located two sources for Rome’s decadence and decay: monks and soldiers, “the two curses of Italy, each in his way.”⁷⁶ The French were omnipresent in Rome. Sophia Hawthorne and Howells agreed that French rule over Rome was intolerable and described French soldiers negatively. French soldiers were “everywhere

⁷³ Ibid., 75.

⁷⁴ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 382.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 361.

⁷⁶ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 240.

about the city, and make up more of its sight and sound than anything else that lives.”⁷⁷

Sophia Hawthorne considered the French presence as retribution for the abuse of power and crimes committed in the past. To Hawthorne the French were “pigmy . . . mean-looking, ugly, diminutive barbarians.”⁷⁸ Howells concurred, describing them variously as slight and bloodless, gigantic full-bearded animals, and infamous plump little creatures.⁷⁹ Howells explained that he hated the French for additional reasons. “To the enormity of having been born Frenchmen, they added the crime of being commercial travellers.”⁸⁰ This meant that Howells would be forced to see them in most places of commerce thus enhancing his displeasure. Additionally, Howells disliked their attitude toward women, describing it as a savage rudeness, to “which an American vainly endeavors to accustom his temper.”⁸¹ According to Howells, Frenchmen in Rome actually flourished in the “unwholesome” atmosphere of the city, rife with malarial scares. They prospered, looking healthy and robust in the atmosphere, since they must be degraded themselves.

Nathaniel Hawthorne disagreed with Howells and his wife on the question of the French presence due to his linking of France with “civilization.” To him the French were “fresh, healthy, smart, honest-looking young fellows.”⁸² In fact Hawthorne commented that the French soldiers seemed “nearer akin to me than these dingy and dusky

⁷⁷ Ibid., 63.

⁷⁸ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 241-42.

⁷⁹ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 66.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 65.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 64.

Romans.”⁸³ Ultimately, for Hawthorne the French were not a negative influence on the Romans, in fact he essentially posits them as civilizers of the ‘dingy and dusky’ Romans, actually necessary for such a large civilizing mission. Hawthorne’s affection for French ‘civilization,’ characterized by a robust intellectual tradition linked to the Enlightenment, allowed him to see their Western European and ‘modern’ presence in Rome as positive. In fact, they served “as an efficient police, making Rome as safe as London, whereas, without them, it would very likely be a den of banditti.”⁸⁴ Upon leaving Rome Hawthorne observed more troops headed to the city remarking, “on the whole I was not sorry to see the Gauls still pouring into Rome.”⁸⁵

This characterization does fit with the totality of Hawthorne’s perceptions of Rome and Italy in general. In the case of Rome it was the Catholic Church rather than the French presence that was the more serious cause of Rome’s degradation. The Hawthornes especially criticized the Church for the destruction of many artifacts and ruins of antiquity in order to enlarge and remodel for their own purposes. Nathaniel Hawthorne supposed that the Church had taken “a good deal of enjoyment in the destruction of old [pagan] Rome.”⁸⁶ Sophia Hawthorne lamented this when she came across base-reliefs from Marcus Aurelius’s arch “which once stood in the Corso . . . [but the Church] was so barbarous as to destroy, in order to widen the street.”⁸⁷ This particular criticism combines a dislike for the Church itself with the lack of consideration

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 232.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 116.

⁸⁷ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 249.

to the needs of contemporary Italians, the desire to keep every ancient site intact examined earlier. Again at the Mausoleum, Hawthorne chastised the Church and “the reprehensible Popes” for destroying a great part of the tomb of Cecelia Metella “for the sake of robbing it of the slabs of fine marbles with which it was covered.”⁸⁸ The destruction and damage to various artifacts, monuments, and ruins was simply one way for the travelers to condemn the Church, without taking specific aim at the Catholic religion itself.

In some cases, they were not so circumspect. All three travelers condemned the Catholic Church, largely based on their Protestant worldview, for what they perceived to be the degraded and defiled character of the Italian nation that they observed. Sophia Hawthorne wished that she could wash Italy clean of its ills; however, “the corruptions of the Roman Church which have defiled the land . . . water cannot purify it.”⁸⁹ William Howells thought simply that “the Pope and the past seem to be carried on entirely for our diversion.”⁹⁰ Even the beauty and magnificence of Saint Marks Cathedral simply hid the “revolting character of modern Romanism.”⁹¹ Howells argued that Catholicism was simply a superstition which made “priests a bitter jest . . . the population ignorant, vicious, and hopeless.”⁹² Sophia Hawthorne remarked that bishops and priests were often “causative of both spiritual and material defilement.”⁹³ However, even as he criticized,

⁸⁸ Ibid., 251.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 493.

⁹⁰ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 158.

⁹¹ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 161.

⁹² Ibid., 161-62.

⁹³ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 523.

Nathaniel Hawthorne believed that Catholic worship at least still created “a great deal of devout and reverential feeling . . . in people’s hearts.”⁹⁴ If the Catholic Church as whole was superstitious and corrupt it could at least provide some basis of morality.

South of Rome, in Naples, similar explanations were offered. With the incorporation of Southern Italy into the new nation, Howells explained that the “pitched battle[s] which travellers formerly fought, in landing from their steamer, is now gone out of fashion” now that the Bourbons and Camorra no longer ruled.⁹⁵ The worst elements were a result of Spanish tyranny Howells explained. In this he also explained that he was simply repeating what “all Italian writers agreed in attributing the depravation of Naples to the long Spanish dominion.”⁹⁶ Howells saw these long generations of slavery as “almost ineradicable,” and although worse in Naples than elsewhere, that it was bad generally was recognized by “not merely travellers, but all residents in Italy.”⁹⁷ Thus, the character of modern Southern Italians could be explained by their subjection to tyrannical Bourbon regimes.

In Florence Sophia Hawthorne pondered that the city “must have done very wrong to deserve so severe a punishment” as to be ruled by the likes of Leopold and Ferdinand.⁹⁸ Hawthorne, however, reserved her most severe judgments for the Grand Duke and Duchess of Austria and Cosimo Medici. As Florence was still under Austrian

⁹⁴ Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 98.

⁹⁵ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 75.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 84-85.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁹⁸ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 372.

rule during her visit in 1858-59, Hawthorne heaped scorn upon the occupiers. Princess Bonaparte, for example, appeared to her as hardly human, “not alive—an image of dead white wax.”⁹⁹ The most distinguishing characteristic of the Grand Duke for Hawthorne was his “frightful, coarse, protruding under lip, peculiar to the imperial race of Austria.”¹⁰⁰ This Austrian mouth epitomized all that was evil for Hawthorne and caused her to state dramatically that it would be “worthwhile to extinguish the [imperial] race [of Austria].”¹⁰¹ Overall, the Grand Duke appeared to Hawthorne as a monkey with an evil disposition. This particular countenance put the Grand Duke in the company of Cosimo also. For the statues of Cosimo II made him appear as “a negro, with frightful, thick, prominent lips.”¹⁰² Hawthorne’s previous description of Italians as automatons here is elaborated, as “perhaps the Medici were the cause of this death and void—the Medici, and then this present race of Grand Dukes. When a prince takes the form of a monkey, he ought to be deposed.”¹⁰³ Finally, Hawthorne does not forget to apportion some blame to the Catholic clergy in Florence, for they are “mostly fat, with flabby cheeks, chins, and throats . . . [and] seem to blot out the sun, and poison the air.”¹⁰⁴ Their presence in the city was for Hawthorne “invariably repulsive and gross.”¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Ibid., 400.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 411.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 422.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 468.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 480.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

William Howells's time spent as consul in Venice not only allowed him to experience Italian life more fully than most travelers, but also provided the opportunity to delve deeper into the condition of Venice and the surrounding area. Howells offered an extended discussion of contemporary Venice, in an attempt to explain the "social dullness and sadness"¹⁰⁶ that caused incoming visitors to see the city as a "gray, slovenly, bedrabbled, heart-broken old slave."¹⁰⁷ Austrian rule over Venice until 1866, a full five years after most of the rest of the peninsula had unified under the Italian banner, was, according to Howells, the major cause of "the increasing poverty of the city . . . the implacable anger, the inconsolable discontent."¹⁰⁸ Howells came to this conclusion not only based on his own American convictions, but also from his observations of the actions of Venetians and their comments made directly to him. He asserted that there appeared to be complete unanimity on the part of Venetians that the means of Austrian rule "were iniquitous, and that this tenure is abominable."¹⁰⁹ Howells made sure to present his observations as dispassionate facts observed by an official bound to be neutral. However, it is clear what his motivations and concerns were based on his careful inclusion of what others said about Austrian rule, thereby covering his own tracks. To Howells, Austrian oppression explained the decay of musical arts in Venice, the decay in wealth and customs of Venetian nobles, and the poor state of education in the city.

The writings of Sophia Hawthorne, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and William Howells illustrated many of the common American perceptions about Italy and Italians. Each

¹⁰⁶ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 16.

¹⁰⁷ Howells, *Italian Journeys*, 273.

¹⁰⁸ Howells, *Venetian Life*, 16.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

perceived Italy and Italians to be remnants of the past. This belief rested on the idea that the United States was destined to be, if it was not already, the greatest nation in the world, inheritors to ancient Rome. Hence, this inheritance meant that ancient Rome was located *in* the U.S. in a figurative sense. The increasing prosperity and wealth in America was held in stark contrast to the poverty and lack of industry in Italy. The United States represented the future while Italy represented the past. However, the relative youth of the U.S. meant that the country had no great history, no ruins or monuments. Even though the country was in large part still a vast expanse of untamed wilderness, it was not seen to be picturesque. Italy, on the other hand, was the epitome of history, of picturesqueness. The landscapes, cities, monuments, ruins, and even people represented an exotic location for Americans.

The power of romantic ideals throughout the nineteenth century provided a framework of traveling for upper-class Americans. The turn away from scientific rationalism to the power of emotion experienced through nature, art, and literature, allowed travelers the ability to create their own experience. However, as the canon of romantic literature grew, traveling became a ritualized experience based on reenacting the routes, experiences, and even emotions of those who came before. As Sophia Hawthorne considered Byron's fourteen days in Rome in 1817, she expressed her sense that "he not only looked at everything in that short time, but sung it as no one else before or since has done."¹¹⁰ This feeling underscored the importance of the ritualized experience. The problem increasingly became Italy's movement towards modernity, which resulted in an

¹¹⁰ Sophia Hawthorne, *Notes in England and Italy*, 302.

Italy that was less and less like the Italy of Byron's time. The rise of literature based on realism sought to counteract romanticism's influence.

Williams Dean Howells, although himself brought up on romantic portrayals of Italy, began to move towards the depiction of Italy in its everyday life. He believed that he was attempting to observe and engage Italians in their context rather than his own. Although he was not immune to the picturesqueness of Italy and the emotion of his arrival to the peninsula, he documented these feelings only partially. He argued that travelers should avoid many of the routes and locations described by romantic writers, pointing out that they missed the 'real' Italy, that which was lived by Italians each day. Howells did not gloss over Italians' faults or problems, however. He documented these with the same detail that he described Italian history. He sought the opinions of Italians on Italian affairs, and even if he did not agree with them he still offered his reader the results of his inquiries. Ultimately, Howells's attempts at providing a realistic portrayal of Italy, its history, its current status, the explanations for its status, and its future prospects, bespoke his overall love for the peninsula.

American travelers' idealized representations of Italy reinforced certain stereotypes for the majority of Americans who did not and could not travel there. Visions of rolling hills and valleys covered with trim vineyards, fig-trees, mulberries, smoky-hued tracts of olive-orchards, and fields of every kind of grain, gave the impression of a people universally acquainted with the nuances of successful agricultural production. Consequently, when, in the 1860s and 1870s, local, state, and federal officials in America ramped up efforts to find the ideal type of immigrant, Italians seemed to fit the mold. Individuals who had read fictional accounts of Italy and travel writings from the

peninsula formed a picture of a land where thousands of Italians were simply waiting for an opportunity to utilize their skills. Later, as more and more Italians arrived in America, many looked beyond the idealized visions of Italy and Italians, instead to see only the negative characterizations. Before regular Americans could come to form a picture of Italians beyond literary and artistic representations, they would need to see them in their own land, in American cities.

CHAPTER III

ITALIANS IN AMERICA

Racial thinking in the nineteenth-century United States was not only important to the debate over slavery and African Americans, but also for the hundreds of thousands, and later millions, of foreign immigrants arriving on American shores during the century. Expanding on and revising the theories of J.F. Blumenbach and James Cowles Prichard, in particular, Arthur de Gobineau and others provided interpretations of race that contributed to the ways in which Americans viewed the 'other.' It was essential to these intellectuals that Italian origins be determined in order that Americans were clear about the nature of the 'others' arriving in ever increasing numbers over the decades.

Italian immigration to the United States increased dramatically between 1861 and 1881 from that of the previous forty years (See Table 1). Prior to 1861, the Italian peninsula contributed few immigrants to the United States. After 1881 over 2.9 million Italians arrived, ushering in the period of Italian mass migrations into the United States. Although not as significant as these mass migrations, the twenty-one year migration period from 1861 to 1881 saw the introduction of concerns over Italians as a group, in terms of their numbers, their racial characteristics, and the consequences of both of these factors. Nativist reactions to Irish immigration in the 1840s and 1850s presaged reactions to Italians that would become more common by the late 1870s and early 1880s.¹ Reactions were fierce and often violent as Italians were sought for trumped up murder

¹ John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1955), 4. Higham defines nativism as "intense opposition to an internal minority on the ground of its foreign (i.e., 'un-American') connections."

charges in the 1880s, lynched in 1891, and placed under immigration restrictions in the 1900s and 1910s. By 1910, as a group this Mediterranean people became a *bona fide* ‘other’ in American discourse.² However, Italians had not yet been characterized solely in negative terms in the 1860s and early 1870s.

Fear and persecution were not always the norm. The 1860s and 1870s were characterized by the encouragement of immigration in general and Italian immigration in particular. The American President, Congress, state and local officials, intellectuals, and the popular press overwhelmingly encouraged immigration. Although there were voices of dissent, and the strains of nativism and racism that would later predominate could be seen, overall Italians were viewed as a people that could and should be assimilated into the American fabric even if their status as white was not altogether clear.

TABLE 1
United States Immigration, 1820 - 1910³

Dates	Total Immigration	From Europe	From Italy
1820 – 1910	27,918,992	25,528,410	3,086,356
1820 – 1860	5,062,412	4,652,357	12,744
1861 – 1881	5,939,795	4,866,151	82,885
1882 - 1910	16,916,785	16,009,902	2,990,697

² ‘American’ refers to the United States. References to South America are so specified.

³ *Reports of the Immigration Commission. Statistical review of immigration 1820-1910. Distribution of immigrants 1850-1900.* 61st Cong., 3rd sess., 1910. S. Doc. 756, serial 5878.

RACE

By the mid-nineteenth century the division of races had become a significant point of contention among racial thinkers. Thinkers who divided the races into three main races, white, black and yellow, vied with alternative theories that counted five, seven or more distinct races. Gobineau divided humans into three distinct races: white, consisting of Caucasian, Semitic and Japhetic peoples, black, consisting of Hamites, and yellow, consisting of Altaic, Mongol, Finnish and Tatar peoples.⁴ Beginning with James Prichard and solidified by Gobineau and others, this taxonomy of human races was adopted and utilized to account for the infinite gradations apparent within each race. Gobineau, writing in 1854, asserted that the ancient Italians were a mixture of Celts, Iberians, Aryans and Semites, but ultimately with other European peoples, white.⁵ Unlike racial thinkers such as Gobineau, who sought to explain human origins more broadly, Charles Brace offered a sophisticated and detailed analysis of Italian origins.

A nineteenth-century American philanthropist and social work pioneer, Charles Loring Brace was an author and the founder of the New York Children's Aid Society in 1853, which opened a school for immigrant children the same year.⁶ As an intellectual and philanthropist, Brace came into contact with Italian immigrants in New York City, where the largest concentration of Italians in the United States were located. Consequently, his writings and views capture how views on race, and Italians, in particular, had evolved to the mid-nineteenth century. In *The Races of the Old World*, he

⁴ Arthur de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*, trans. Adrian Collins (New York: Howard Fertig, 1967), 146.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ University of Oregon, The Adoption History Project online, <http://www.uoregon.edu/~adoption/people/brace.html>, accessed 26 March 2008.

offered an explanation of the Italian races by region. This particular analysis contrasted with much of the rhetoric surrounding Italians in the nineteenth century, which either saw them as a single monolithic group or simply divided them into northerners and southerners. Beginning in the north were the Lombards, including inhabitants of Piedmont, Lombardy, Parma, Modena, Bologna, Romagna, Ravenna and Rimini, who were of Teutonic blood.⁷ Tuscany was made up of ‘Italicans,’ who Brace described as Latins and Umbrians, and were no doubt members of the Aryan family.⁸ Along the Apennine mountain chain, above Genoa, south to Abruzzo and Calabria, was a primitive race, characterized by its hardness and independence.⁹ Further south, in Naples, were Italians who “still manifest their early Greek origin.”¹⁰ According to Brace, “the Neapolitan population ha[d] no doubt also received large Semitic mixtures from early Phoenician and modern Arabian colonization and conquest.”¹¹ Finally, inhabiting the islands of Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica were Italians who displayed traces of Moorish blood, but also made up of the multitude of races “which in ancient times have passed over Europe.”¹²

Brace’s work was important because it provided a treatise on race which could be digested by non-‘scientists,’ in contrast to the long and tedious works by James Cowles Prichard and others. The work was also important because it demonstrated that there

⁷ Charles L. Brace, *The Races of the Old World* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1863), 360.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 361.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 362.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 361-362.

¹² *Ibid.*, 363.

were individuals who attempted to explain Italian origins on a more sophisticated level than on a north-south axis or by lumping all Italians together, without even defining who was to be considered Italian. Furthermore, Brace's involvement in social issues, and the writings that resulted from this involvement, demonstrate that although Italians were not a dominant minority in the U.S. in 1863, they were not completely unnoticed.

Italian origins and current racial makeup were largely considered within the broader context of racial thinking in the nineteenth-century. As Brace's taxonomy demonstrates, however, Italians were on the minds of American intellectuals. During the 1860s and 1870s Italians were considered part of the white race. As Italian immigration increased during the 1870s and more Southern Italians, those described as "tawny," arrived, the nature of who was considered white was reassessed. Although questions about their character and desirability were raised during these two decades, positive characterizations of Italians were the rule rather than the exception, and Italians were actually encouraged to bring their skills and labor to America.

IMMIGRATION ENCOURAGED: THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

Italians' inclusion in the dominant white race resulted in their inclusion in the discussion of foreign peoples who were desirable for immigration into the United States in the 1860s, in stark contrast to the black races, not even free from slavery in the early 1860s, and the yellow races, particularly the Chinese, who were excluded altogether from immigrating to the U.S. by the early 1880s. As the American nation continued to lose millions of Americans to early graves on battlefields in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and elsewhere during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln made

immigration a topic in his annual address to the nation. The need to replenish the population pushed Lincoln to call on Congress to realize the “expediency of establishing a system for the encouragement of immigration.”¹³ “While the demand for labor is thus increased here, tens of thousands of persons, destitute of remunerative occupation, are thronging our foreign consulates, and offering to emigrate to the United States.”¹⁴

Secretary of State William Seward made recommendations to the chairman of the Congressional committee on immigration in a letter dated March 30, 1864. Seward advised the chairman that the key to encouraging immigration was “the increase of the means of transportation from Europe to the United States.”¹⁵ Additionally, an increase in the number of vessels and a system that “would enable the immigrant to make the passage by the use of credit under an effective obligation to repay the cost” would hasten the immigration of foreign laborers.¹⁶ In 1864, heeding Lincoln’s message, Congress passed “an act to encourage immigration.” One article of the law established a United States emigrant office in New York City to be run by a superintendent of immigration. The superintendent was responsible for providing information to the immigrants upon their arrival and for protecting them from fraud. In addition, the official was directed to make contacts with railroad and transport companies, enforcing the passenger acts, and submitting an annual report to the U.S. Congress with details of each year’s immigration statistics. Lincoln’s message and the subsequent law may have been directed at

¹³ *Papers relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the Annual Message of the President to the First Session of the Thirty-Eighth Congress, 1863*. Part I. New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1965. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 4.

¹⁶ Ibid., 5.

immigration generally, but the Italians would find themselves the target of a variety of immigration plans to cross the Atlantic, both from U.S. officials and their own countrymen.

Increasing attention to Italian immigrants in the various popular press accounts and schemes for encouraging immigration were underpinned by the ideas that had been advanced during the 1860s and 1870s, which included seeing Italians as white, pointed to climatological and geographical similarities between Italy and the U.S., and articulated the need for labor to fill the void left after the Civil War. One of the reasons for the encouragement of immigrants was the belief in their positive impact on the United States economy. In 1870-71 Edward Young, the Chief of the Bureau of Statistics, presented to the U.S. Congress his annual report on commerce and navigation and a special report on immigration in which he compiled information for immigrants about Southern and Western states and territories. In his annual commerce report, Young pointed out that immigration had “been deemed of such vital interest to our material prosperity” that it was apportioned a separate section in the report.¹⁷ This fact illustrated that American officials believed “the value of this addition [of immigrants] to our material wealth has never been more highly prized than during the last two decades.”¹⁸ *The New York Times* agreed with Young, pointing to his assessment that each immigrant brought an annual value of \$800 to the nation, based on \$400 as an average annual wage.¹⁹ By the estimate

¹⁷ Edward Young, *Annual Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Statistics on the commerce and navigation of the United States for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1870* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1871), x.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁹ “The Value of Immigration,” *The New York Times*, April 23, 1871, 5.

of *The Times*, over the previous century immigration must have brought in an estimated six million dollars to the American economy.²⁰

Edward Young's second report offers additional insight on the view of immigration during the period. The special report on immigration indicates a growing awareness of the number of immigrants and accounts for the increasing attention paid by the President, Congress, and American newspapers to the implications of the increasing foreign presence. Young's special report was compiled using statistics from 1869-70, so it is not surprising that Italians specifically were largely absent from the report. The reported 17,147 Italians living in the United States in 1870 accounted for only four-hundredths of one percent of the over thirty-eight million Americans. The key to Young's special report was the sequence of questions that were posed to state officials and reported back to the Bureau of Statistics. Over a dozen specific questions were asked of state officials, in order to provide information for the prospective immigrants. This series of questions related to the possibility of acquiring land and the necessary accoutrements to improve such land, what type of agricultural engagement was possible, and the proximity of available land to markets, railroads, and waterways.²¹ Young compiled the detailed responses provided by each state with the cooperation of local officials, to provide prospective immigrants with as much information as possible. For example, in Pennsylvania officials reported that in Allegheny county skilled labor was needed for glass-works, steel-works, iron furnaces, rolling-mills, and foundries, machine-

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Young, *Annual Report*, xiv.

shops, and other manufactories in Pittsburgh and the vicinity.²² In Louisiana, laborers and farm hands were needed to work in sugar-cane production.²³ Mostly German and Irish immigrants, with a few French and others included, are recorded. Italians are not mentioned in a single instance.

However, newspaper reports across the country took the baton from Young and asserted that Italians were ideal immigrants for a variety of situations. New Jersey reported Vineland as a successful instance of Italian immigrants arriving and adding to the wealth of the nation. At Vineland an “Italian colony” of seventy-five families was settled through the efforts of an Italian, Chevalier Francesco Secchi de Casali.²⁴ *The Baltimore Sun* reported that these families were drawn from the ranks of poor Italians who had been vainly trying their luck in New York City.²⁵ It further reported that the community “appear[ed] to have done well” economically, thus demonstrating Italians’ capability for success if placed in the ‘right’ situation.²⁶ As Young’s report demonstrated, there was an urgent need for new labor to cultivate the seemingly limitless resources of the growing nation.

Despite Young’s care in compiling the special report for immigrants, the influx of mostly illiterate foreigners could have little use for a two-hundred plus page government report. Nonetheless, local officials took it upon themselves to model their efforts after Young’s report. They articulated the answers to the same questions that were posed by

²² Ibid., 9.

²³ Ibid., 168.

²⁴ “Italian Trade and Immigration,” *The Baltimore Sun*, June 2, 1877.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

Young, only to the immigrants themselves or their representatives. In Arkansas, officials voiced their need for labor to work and develop the “vast mineral resources” of the state’s mines and to provide a market for the state’s rich coal deposits.²⁷ In addition to mine work, hills and mountains were to be converted into orchards and vineyards, forests to be turned into valuable timber, unsightly swamps to be converted to “smiling and lovely meadows,” and fertile valleys to be converted into “garden spots, and fields, and meadows, and orchards.”²⁸ Arkansas was not simply competing with other American states and territories to attract immigrants to develop their resources.

One of the earliest plans for encouraging immigration during the period was located in San Francisco and reported in the *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* in December 1862. The article reported that the local Italian newspaper *Cronica Italiana* urged Italians to inform their countrymen about California and coax them to immigrate in order to cultivate the resources of the state. The article estimated the Italian population of the state at 6000, well above official numbers.²⁹ In 1865, the *Dallas Weekly Herald* reported that fourteen Italians had arrived in the month of December through the port of Vera Cruz.³⁰ The ongoing Civil War resulted in fewer foreign immigrants and significantly lower Italian immigration, as the U.S. became a less attractive destination, thus explaining the relative lack of plans during the war years. However, later in the

²⁷ *Little Rock Daily Republican*, December 18, 1872.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ “Inviting Italian Immigration,” *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, December 23, 1862. Official U.S. Census data indicated that approximately 2805 Italians resided in California in 1860, and approximately 1377 Italians immigrated to the entire U.S. during 1861, 1862.

³⁰ “The Tide of Emigration Moves On,” *Dallas Weekly Herald*, December 23, 1865.

decade these types of immigration proposals would increase around the country, especially in the South.

IMMIGRATION ENCOURAGED: THE CLIMATE ARGUMENT

Italians, in a majority of these immigration proposals, are presented as a homogenous people, living on a peninsula with a homogenous climate. In the writings of immigration agents and newspapers the Italian from the land of olive and orange trees was stereotypical, thus explaining much of the reason for Italians' desirability as immigrants. As even a cursory examination of the peninsula which extends from almost 36 degree to 47 degrees latitude demonstrates, Italy's climate is not regionally consistent. Severe winters of the mountainous Alps region in the north can be contrasted to the temperate central region known for its olive and orange trees, and further south to Naples and Sicily where snow is much less prevalent, except at the highest altitudes and the desert winds from Africa are evident.

Regardless of Italy's actual climate and geography, Southern and Western states were the predominant destinations for immigration proposals to the United States. Reliance on climatological and geographical theories, which were intertwined with the older theories on difference of Montesquieu and others, accounted, in part, for this fact. *The Christian Recorder* printed an article in March 1861 entitled "Climate and its Influence," that explained, "in the temperate zone lived the conquering races."³¹ The article argued, despite the impending war, "as it is marked out by the climate laws

³¹ "Climate and its Influence," *The Christian Recorder*, March 2, 1861. The works of J.F. Blumenbach, Lord Kames and others were influential among American intellectuals. Although the work of James Prichard and Comte de Gobineau largely replaced these earlier writings by the mid-nineteenth century, the belief in the supremacy of the climate for explaining race had not yet been completely eliminated.

ordained by Providence, no matter what temporary political troubles we may have, the United States is destined to fulfill its mission.”³² In the temperate zone, of which Italy and the United States were a part, character flourished “like the oak, with its roots deep in the earth, and with the birds of Heaven building in its verdant crown.”³³ Given the continuing allure of climate as an explanatory model for the superiority of the white race, it is not surprising that many of the specific immigration proposals explicitly based their sales pitch on the fact that the climate or geography of a particular place was ideal for Italians to immigrate and ultimately prosper. Brace himself denied the agency of climate in altering race, pointing out that “very much of the effects attributed to climate . . . [are] due to human vices.”³⁴ Gobineau also determined that climate was not a factor in the progression of races, pointing out that although America had a temperate climate, with myriad rivers, gulfs and bays, the natives of the continent did not show the progress which could buttress a climatological explanation. In spite of these caveats, the influence of climate upon immigration proposals remained an important idea in the 1860s and 1870s.

The state of Georgia figured prominently in immigrant resettlement proposals. It was reported in June 1868 by the *Georgia Weekly Telegraph* that an official of the Italian Government had been traveling throughout the South in order to find an ideal point for the relocation of twenty thousand Lombards. The official ultimately determined that the ideal spot for the transfer of silk worms to begin mulberry production was in fact Middle

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Brace, 480.

Georgia. One key to this interest was the belief that the Georgian climate was ideally suited for the Italians and silk worms of the temperate Mediterranean. The *Telegraph* further pointed out that Lombards were the ideal migrants, based on their dense (over)population of 480 to the square mile, in contrast to Georgia with only sixteen to the square mile. Georgia was the location chosen for another such plan a year and half later, this time through the mediation of a Signor Joseph Borra. Borra was reportedly a planter for a decade in antebellum Virginia, and was recognized as familiar with the South.³⁵ Roughly two to ten thousand acres situated on an island was needed for the execution of his plan. The paper reported the proposal was for the immigrants to engage in agriculture and later manufacturing, and an island was necessary in order to guarantee the segregation of Italians and blacks from each other.³⁶ The tenacity of racial theories, most of which relegated blacks to a lesser status and Italians to a liminal status between white and non-white, explains this request. Although the war had ended three years prior, blacks had by no means gained equality in the nation, let alone the South. Thus, Italians, who themselves were of questionable character, saw segregation as keeping with the norms of the dominant white society to which they had migrated.

California and Georgia were not the only locations proposed for Italian immigration. Arkansas was also envisaged as an ideal location for Italian immigrants. In an address by the Immigration Aid Society of Little Rock to the people of the state, officials argued that Arkansas was ““a land where milk and honey flows.”³⁷ They hoped

³⁵ “Signor Borra’s Plan for the Introduction of European Immigration into Georgia,” *Georgia Weekly Telegraph*, January 4, 1870.

³⁶ “An Italian Colony for Georgia,” *The Constitution*, April 22, 1869.

³⁷ “An Address to the People of the State by the Immigration Aid Society of Little Rock,” *Little Rock Daily Republican*, December 18, 1872.

that their home state could “attain the proud pinnacle of success and prosperity that her vast resources, rich soil and genial climate ought to have secured to her in years gone by.”³⁸ In June 1874 *The New York Times* printed an extended article on “The Coming Italian” immigrants to the U.S. One of the main reasons that the *Times* presented for encouraging Italians was “their special adaptability to climates in the United States toward which the Germans, the Irish, the Swedes and Norwegians do not readily turn.”³⁹ The article argued that once Italians realized their ability to prosper in the U.S. “great numbers of them will come hither, and gravitate to the climates most resembling those which they have left behind them.”⁴⁰ Therefore they should be encouraged to settle “in the rich fields of the South and South-west; to plant vineyards and raise stock in the Alleghanies, to grow the orange and the cane in Florida and Louisiana.”⁴¹ *The Philadelphia Inquirer* agreed pointing to Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Southern Missouri and Northern Arkansas as locations “admirably suited to the needs habits and peculiarities of the agricultural population of Italy.”⁴²

IMMIGRATION COMPETITION

In the 1860s and 1870s the United States competed with South America, specifically Argentina, for Italian immigrants. The United States received roughly

³⁸ *Little Rock Daily Republican*, December 18, 1872.

³⁹ “The Coming Italian,” *The New York Times*, June 2, 1874.

⁴⁰ *The New York Times*, June 2, 1874.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² “Invite Them In,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 5, 1880.

12,000 Italian immigrants in the 1860s and 56,000 in the 1870s; Argentina welcomed 114,000 and 152,000 in the same two decades.⁴³ This meant that over seventy percent of total immigration into Argentina was Italian, while in the U.S. Italians barely made up one or two percent of total immigrants.⁴⁴ As Donna Gabaccia and Samuel Baily have demonstrated, the main sources of information and assistance for migrants were local agents and informal personal networks of family, kin, and *paesani*.⁴⁵ Italian contacts in Argentina gave that nation a distinct advantage over the United States in terms of recruiting immigrants to their respective destinations. In addition, the fact that Argentina contained roughly 2,766,890 square kilometers to the roughly 9,826,630 square kilometers of the United States contributed to the ability of cities such as Buenos Aires to compete effectively for immigrants. The long overland journeys necessary to settle in Missouri, Arkansas, California, and Texas, for example, had a substantial cost in terms of time and money, which was not the case for migration to Buenos Aires. By 1870 only New York, California, and Louisiana had Italian populations over one thousand.⁴⁶ In New York City, the city containing the largest Italian population, only an estimated 2,793 Italians were counted in the 1870 census. In Buenos Aires lived over 177,000 Italians,

⁴³ Samuel Baily, *Immigrants in the Land of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870-1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 54.

⁴⁴ See table in Baily, *Immigrants in the Land of Promise*, 54.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 48. Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).

⁴⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1870: Compiled from the original returns of the Ninth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), 341.

with more than 44,000 listed as foreign born.⁴⁷ Americans were not ignorant of this competition for immigrants, and sought ways to better compete for Italian immigrants.

Reports encouraging Italian immigration pointed out that America had to work more effectively to induce Italians to choose the U.S. instead of locations in South America, especially Argentina. *The Baltimore Sun* reported in 1877 that 2,500 Italians were leaving the port of Genoa alone, for South America—Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Brazil in particular.⁴⁸ *The Philadelphia Inquirer* bemoaned the loss of an estimated 130,000 Italian immigrants, “now number[ing] more than a million souls,” that had been turned away during the American Civil War and had settled in “the fertile valley of La Platta, drawn there by the solicitations of the Argentine Confederation.”⁴⁹ The key was not to simply point out the facts, but to determine how to attract Italians. American businessman Michael Scanlan argued that he had worked with Italians in Chicago and New York, and not only were they industrious and energetic people, but they easily could be induced to alter their migration flows from South America to the United States if offers of money, land and improvements were “placed before the Italian people in the most glowing colors by immigration agents, together *with direct steam navigation* between respective countries.”⁵⁰ Scanlan believed that influence of what he termed “South American fever” was on the wane, and thus provided fertile ground for the U.S. to

⁴⁷ See table in Baily, *Immigrants in the Land of Promise*, 59. The figures for Buenos Aires are from 1869.

⁴⁸ “Italian Trade and Immigration,” *The Baltimore Sun*, June 2, 1877.

⁴⁹ “Invite Them In,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 5, 1880.

⁵⁰ Michael Scanlan, “Re: Italian Trade and Immigration,” *The Baltimore Sun*, June 9, 1877.

take up the slack. This could be accomplished through similar inducements of money, land and improvements.

Another key was government intervention in immigration, by encouraging lines of direct steamship transit and increased trade with the Italian government. *The Baltimore Sun* agreed that the ability of immigrants to reach the U.S “cheaply and swiftly by direct water communication between port and port” was paramount to enticing immigrants.⁵¹ The *Sun* argued in “every dollar spent to bring trade and people to your city will enrich you an hundred fold.”⁵²

THE NATURALIZATION DEBATE

By 1870, nothing inhibited debate or silenced those in opposition to increased immigration. Congressional debate in 1870 over a new proposed naturalization law illustrated the debates at the federal level over the benefits or pitfalls of an increased foreign presence in the country. Proponents described proposed naturalization legislation as necessary to allow for enforcement and prosecution of those who knowingly committed frauds against the naturalization system. Even proponents, largely Republicans, were not shy about asserting that the increased foreign presence had resulted in election corruption, something, they argued, that struck at the very heart of American democracy. Republican Senator Charles Drake of Missouri asserted that the city of New York, and state in general, were “under the dominion of a population which but the other day belonged to another kingdom and owed allegiance to another

⁵¹ “Italian Trade and Immigration,” *The Baltimore Sun*, June 2, 1877.

⁵² Scanlan, 2.

Government.”⁵³ Senator Drake was joined by Congressman S.B. Axtell of California, who argued against the idea that “the doctrine of equal civil rights . . . compel[s] us to adopt the doctrine of equal political privileges.”⁵⁴ In fact, Axtell argued that those “who are not qualified by race and lineage to form a part of our domestic life” not be allowed into the “American family.”⁵⁵ These characterizations evoked nativist rhetoric of the 1840s and 1850s that saw immigration as a challenge to the American way of life.

Although negative characterizations of immigrants were not dominant in 1870, the growing awareness of increasing Italian immigration specifically resulted in increased attention paid to what this meant for the American family. Opponents of the proposed 1870 bill believed it to be an attempt to deter immigration. Congressman Orestes Cleveland of New Jersey remarked that “the title ought to be so amended as to read ‘a bill to discourage the citizens of other countries from permanently settling in the United States, and to obstruct the naturalization of foreigners.’”⁵⁶ Cleveland argued that the bill made naturalization an almost Herculean exercise, with “innumerable delays, trials in court like a criminal, and expenses no ordinary workingman could afford.”⁵⁷ Congressman T.F. Bayard of Delaware mocked the bill proposing that, “if a man chooses to sit down and imagine what wrongs may be done he can pass laws *ad infinitum* and then fall short.”⁵⁸ The case against the bill was also made on the basis of race, in a

⁵³ Senator Charles Drake, *Congressional Globe*, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 4836.

⁵⁴ Congressman S.B. Axtell, *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 452.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Congressman Orestes Cleveland, *Congressional Globe*, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 511.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Congressman T.F. Bayard, *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 535.

curious way. Senator Willard Saulsbury of Delaware pointed out the apparent Republican hypocrisy on the issue of ignorant voters, by highlighting the fact that Republicans had allowed “the most ignorant and degraded population that ever existed in any country” to become voters.⁵⁹ Here Saulsbury is referring to African Americans, a group that of course posed a problem for Democratic legislators recently removed from supporting slavery. Saulsbury’s argument also points out the continued belief that ‘white’ immigrants were desirable, far more so than the black race who were ‘actual’ American citizens. Senator John Johnston of Virginia ultimately articulated the positive vision of America in his opposition to the proposed bill. Johnston looked back to the previous century of American history and saw that immigrants had been “the leaven that has caused the great rise in the United States.”⁶⁰ Johnston explained his view that “not only has the population, the wealth, the progress of our country been advanced by immigration, but it has had its effect in improving the condition of foreign countries.”⁶¹ Johnston thus combined the argument of economic prosperity through population and labor with the idea that America as a melting pot demonstrated the greatness of the nation.

The debate eventually ended and the 1870 bill was ultimately passed, but in such a way that limited the possible negative interpretations of the law. Simply allowing for enforcement of the most egregious offenses of naturalization laws, it did not become an oppressive burden to those arriving on American shores. However, the echoes of nativist

⁵⁹ Senator Willard Saulsbury, *Congressional Globe*, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 4837.

⁶⁰ Senator John Johnston, *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, 41st Cong., 2nd sess., 572.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 572.

sentiment which surfaced during the 1870 debate over the naturalization bill became more prominent as an increasing number of Italians arrived in America, many of whom were described as paupers, criminals, poor, idiots, and ignorant. The definition of race which had included Italians as white and argued in their favor were reconstructed by those who, wishing to 'save' the nation from a corrupting influence, reinterpreted the writings of such thinkers as Gobineau and Brace to demonstrate that Italians actually were not so white as it was thought and in fact were undesirable immigrants.

THE RIGHT KIND OF IMMIGRANT?

In 1872 Charles Loring Brace, author of *The Races of the Old World*, published *Dangerous Classes of New York*. Brace examined "the class of a large city most dangerous to its property, its morals and its political life, [which] are the ignorant, destitute, untrained, and abandoned youth."⁶² He saw two types of causes of crime, preventable and not entirely preventable. Ignorance, intemperance, over-crowding, want of work, idleness, vagrancy, weakness of the marriage bond, and bad legislation were preventable causes.⁶³ While inheritance, effects of immigration, orphanage, accident, sexual passions, and naturally weak morals and/or mental ability were not entirely preventable.⁶⁴ Brace wanted, in part, to demonstrate that immigrants were inherently capable of success in America, despite the obstacles in their way. An analysis based solely on press reporting presents skewed results, as they largely concentrate on crime

⁶² Charles Loring Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York* (New York: Wynkoop & Hallenbeck, Publishers, 1880), ii.

⁶³ Ibid., 32.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

and violence rather than successful immigrant stories. Brace offered a report which illustrated immigrants' capabilities while not obscuring the potential ills of immigrants' behaviors.

In contrast to the many popular press reports, Brace believed in the inherent worth of immigrants. As with his examination of race, Brace offered a sophisticated analysis of the underlying explanations for criminal behavior. He avoided simplistic stereotypical descriptions and looked for root causes, not in biology or nature, but in the external circumstances of each situation. Rather than reproach Italians for a natural proclivity for crime and dishonesty, Brace spoke approvingly of many of their character traits, contradicting news reports of their inherent criminality, and pointing out that "they cannot be reproached with intoxication, prostitution, quarreling, stealing, etc."⁶⁵ In fact, Brace argued their positive traits obscured Italians from public view. This allowed their communities to fall "into a privacy that deprived them of the advantages of American benevolence."⁶⁶ Brace's explanation partially indicts the American public, not the Italian community, that acted in a positive manner. Even though he classified Italians as a dangerous class, Brace came to find that "as a class, they possess an earnest appreciation of good habits."⁶⁷

In the Italian section of the Five Points area of New York City Brace saw tenements where hundreds of Italians were packed like "monkeys, children, men and women, with organs and plaster-casts, all huddled together" in a single room.⁶⁸ Brace

⁶⁵ Ibid., 197.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 201.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 194.

pointed to external influences such as Italians' proclivity for agricultural work, lack of English language, and distance from the "better social influences" of their *paese* as reasons for their degradation. He had a particular concern for the children, whose bright eyes he believed "showed that there was mind in them; and the true remedy for their low estate seemed to be our old one, a School."⁶⁹

Brace did more than simply articulate the belief that education would result in the improvement of young Italian immigrants. He, with others, had opened a school in 1855 for the purposes providing an avenue for success to Italian immigrants. By the time of the writing of *Dangerous Classes* roughly 850 students had attended the program, "not over forty had a little and imperfect knowledge of reading in Italian, and only about ten had a slight acquaintance with the English."⁷⁰ Between 1867 and 1872 it was reported that the school maintained a daily average of sixty-five students in the day session and 186 students in the evening session.⁷¹ The results were impressive. More than fifty former students found employment as "printers, confectioners, jewelers, shoemakers, machinists, carpenters, waiters, carvers, and farm-hands."⁷² In addition, a number also went into business for themselves, including those who returned to Italy. Brace argued that anyone who did not know or associate with these students prior to their attendance "cannot form an adequate idea of the result attained in both moral and mental

⁶⁹ Ibid., 195.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 200.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 203.

improvement.”⁷³ Brace saw additional evidence in the fact that ‘graduated’ students “in every instance, whenever one has been employed, Italians are preferred.”⁷⁴

In addition to those who had already ‘graduated,’ evidence could be found in the students still in the program, who “but a few years ago illiterate and totally ignorant of everything around them, [could be found] reading papers, and quoting, discriminating, and discussing the topics of the day, and forming a more or less correct idea of the state of things.”⁷⁵ Even the Italian Minister Plenipotentiary in Washington, Marcel Cerruti, could offer nothing but accolades for the school, which he visited on one occasion. He witnessed “the cleanliness, mental training, and admirable behavior of the one hundred and fifty pupils assembled.”⁷⁶ Although the New York City school provided clear evidence of the potential of Italian immigrants, Brace was not necessarily advocating a mass exodus to the United States. In fact, the conditions he described in crowded tenements and the consequences of failing to institute programs such as the school in New York City, supported the case of those who wanted to restrict or stop foreign immigration. While Brace undoubtedly had no intention or desire to advocate anti-immigrant vitriol, he explicitly argued against such rhetoric in the book, for those who simply looked for any ‘proof’ of Italian unfitness for citizenship this was a clear demonstration of the evils of unfettered immigration.

⁷³ Ibid., 200.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 202.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 201.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 210.

THE WRONG KIND OF IMMIGRANT?

With each arriving steamer the absence of the successful agriculturalist type of immigrant that state and federal officials had been encouraging created a disconnect between promise and reality. When Italian arrivals still numbered in the hundreds, officials could brush off the idea that their ideal immigrant did not actually exist by advocating changes in the enticements offered to immigrants and pointing to South America as a success story. However, as the number of arrivals increased critics and skeptics more loudly and consistently voiced their concerns. Crime and pauperism were embraced as two key characterizations to bring attention to the pitfalls of increased Italian immigration. Both descriptors were based in existing stereotypes. Whether in the fictional writings of Hawthorne or Howells or the correspondence from newspaper reporters located in Italy, stories of dishonest *vetturinos* or those of bandits and brigands in the Apennines were transferred to the immigrants newly arrived in America. The fear that undesirable Italian paupers were relocating to America found fertile ground in the explanations for the increasing Italian migration in the first place.

Reports of Italian crime, especially in New York City, reinforced the stereotypes and supported the prevailing consensus on Italian character, rooted in reports of American press correspondents and travelers in Italy. Reports, such as one in the *Baltimore Sun* in early 1873, entitled “Exercise with the Stiletto,” played on fears about Italian violence.⁷⁷ The article described an attempted murder of two boys by an enraged, drunk “recently arrived Italian immigrant.”⁷⁸ In addition to furthering the stereotype of

⁷⁷ “Exercise with the Stiletto,” *The Baltimore Sun*, January 1, 1873.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

criminality, the article dehumanized Italians by equating their character with animalistic traits of “the agility of a cat and the ferocity of a tiger.”⁷⁹ The emphasis on the man’s status as a newly arrived Italian immigrant and the use of dehumanizing descriptors point to an approach which could only have reinforced perceptions about Italians, especially given their relatively small presence in crime statistics as reported in the government census.⁸⁰ One press report pointed to the fact that New York police records were “seldom graced by the names of this [Italian] portion of our community.”⁸¹

Reports of alleged crimes were not in themselves a conscious effort to cast Italians in a particular light. However, newspaper titles and subtitles indicated well-ingrained stereotypes. A clear example of such characterizations of Italian immigrants was reported in *The New York Times* in late 1874. The paper reported on a murder committed by an Italian who killed one of his own countryman over a four cent debt. Joseph Vaccari, charged with the murder, allegedly admitted to committing a murder in Italy and only receiving a two year prison sentence.⁸² The accused purportedly asked to be sent back to Italy to answer for the recent crime in mind of the lenient sentence he had previously received. The subtitle of the article, “The Class of Immigrants who Come from Italy,” explained a great deal.⁸³ This class, consisting of the criminal element, was

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ For example, in the 1880 census it was reported that there were 170 total Italians prisoners in the U.S., out of a total 59,255 prisoners, 12,917 of which were categorized as foreign. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population of the United States in 1880: Compiled from the original returns of the Tenth Census, Report on the Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1888), 515.

⁸¹ “Italians in New York: Who and What They Are,” *The Phrenological* 52, no. 4 (Apr 1871): 242.

⁸² “A Murdered Sentenced,” *The New York Times*, October 15, 1874.

⁸³ Ibid.

cast as “the worst and most superstitious class of Italian society,” as Vaccari remarked that while he wore his crucifix “he could not be sentenced to death.”⁸⁴ Here the Italian criminal character is combined with American anti-Catholicism which described the religion as superstition, thus painting virtually all arriving Italians with the same brush and lumping them together with the Irish.

Murder and attempted murder were not the only types of crime that caught the attention of the public. Child slavery also made newspaper headlines in America. Although Congress ultimately condemned and outlawed such activity in the 1880s and 1890s, the infamous *padrone* appeared in press reports in the early 1870s linking Italians to such insidious behavior. The *Little Rock Daily Republican* reported in late 1872 that “large numbers of Italian children are purchased from their parents and brought to this country to earn a living for their owners by begging and stealing.”⁸⁵ A *padrone* named Glione was found guilty of “imprisoning free persons with intent to keep them in a state of servitude against their will” in Connecticut in 1873.⁸⁶ Newspapers were not the only place where padrones found their activities recorded. American author Mary B. Lee wrote a fictional account in 1875 of “an Italian boy, kidnapped and brought to New York,” called *Lucien Guglieri*. The recounting of the practice in fictional accounts reinforces the fact that awareness of Italian immigration and recognition of potential “ills” associated with it were increasing throughout the 1870s.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ “Destitute Italians,” *Little Rock Daily Republican*, December 18, 1872.

⁸⁶ *The Christian Recorder*, August 7, 1873. The conviction was reached with the help of an Anti-Fugitive Slave Law, which had been passed in 1854 to nullify the Fugitive Slave Law and had never been used and never been repealed.

The roughly 12,947 Italian immigrants who arrived in the U.S. in 1872 and 1873 dwarfed the number of Italians arriving yearly for the previous decade. In fact the eleven years prior to 1872 combined accounted for roughly 14,541 Italian immigrants, barely 1500 more than the following two years. In this context that *The New York Times* followed events at Castle Garden, the immigration landing, between December 10 and December 19, 1872. The paper published an article daily, missing only one. This intense reporting on Italian immigrants, a decade before the number of Italians arriving would surpass 100,000 yearly, makes clear the perception that hordes of paupers, criminals, and the mentally ill were flocking to America. Press reporting during the rest of the decade, including many editorials, would continue this theme of invading hordes.

On December 10 *The New York Times* reported that nearly 500 Italians arrived, described as “the most worthless of the immigrants of all nationalities, bringing no money with them to this country, and earning little or none after arrival.”⁸⁷ The article focused on the immigrants’ lack of material belongings and poor dress, and described the Commissioner of Immigration’s claim that taking care of the immigrants required three hundred dollars per day. By day two, with the immigrants still housed at Castle Garden, the paper gave an account of how they came to arrive in New York. First, they were mainly from small villages and hamlets in the Abruzzi, and of “the lower classes of Italian peasants, with a few tradesmen among them.”⁸⁸ Apparently the immigrants were duped by unscrupulous immigration agents, who described “America as a country of

⁸⁷ “Swindling Immigrants,” *The New York Times*, December 10, 1872.

⁸⁸ “The Italians,” *The New York Times*, December 11, 1872.

fabulous wealth and multiplying wages a hundred-fold.”⁸⁹ Ultimately, their passage money was stolen by said agents and they were left in New York completely destitute. Day three of the saga brought an additional steamer of Italians to Castle Garden, thus exacerbating an already tense situation. The *Times* reported several knife fights, again presented as the preferred method of fighting among Italians during the passage, and of a number of thefts from other “more respectable” passengers.⁹⁰ By the fourth day, the Commissioner of Immigration, who was frantically searching for a solution to what was quickly becoming a crisis, was not the only one under intense pressure.

The *Times* reported that “the Italian Government is sending its criminals to this country . . . openly asserted by several of the respectable immigrants.”⁹¹ Such reports that the Italian Government was complicit in sending convicted criminals forced the Italian Consul-General De Luca to respond with a strong rejection of such assertions. In addition to the more than one thousand Italians arrived over the past days, reports warned that “a thousand [more] persons are said to have started from Genoa for the United States a few days since.”⁹² Consul-General De Luca asserted that press reports from Milan and Naples demonstrated the Italian Government was not responsible for sending immigrants. He pointed to articles that decried the “scourge of emigration” which had deprived the Italian South of much needed labor.⁹³ De Luca further pointed to large amounts of gold coin on his desk which he claimed were from Italians in the U.S.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “The Homeless Italians,” *The New York Times*, December 13, 1872.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² “The Suffering Italians,” *The New York Times*, December 14, 1872.

⁹³ Ibid.

who wished to send money back home, thus refuting the notion that Italians did not and could not earn wages in America.⁹⁴ By the fifteenth, a week since the first arrival, the *Times* reported on another landing of 111 Italians, bringing the total influx, according to the paper, to 2,057 over the previous four weeks.⁹⁵ Taken at face value this number represented an astounding increase in Italian immigrants, given that the number represented, in a single month, almost the total number that had arrived in 1870 and 1871 respectively, and double that of previous years. For the first time in the coverage, however, the paper reported that, based on their conduct, immigration officials' "place no confidence in the statements so freely made branding them as Italian convicts."⁹⁶

A week into the situation, the *Times* printed an article which delved into "a lively discussion as to their [Italian] character, and the true cause of their abandonment of their native country."⁹⁷ Reporting both sides of the argument, that the arrivals were brigands and criminals sent by the Italian government or that they were simply peaceful immigrants taken advantage of by unscrupulous immigration agents, the *Times* then offered its own assessment and found the answer in political developments in the recently created Italian nation.⁹⁸ As a result of Southern Italy's incorporation into the nation, "taxation has largely increased, the cost of nearly all necessities has doubled, and . . . the Neapolitan peasant naturally resents this state of things, and is ready to listen to anyone"

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ "The Poor Italians," *The New York Times*, December 15, 1872.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ "Italian Immigration," *The New York Times*, December 17, 1872.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

with tales of great wealth in America.⁹⁹ This explanation for emigration also explained why Italian immigrants were the poor and destitute, even if not by their own making. The prolonged debate in such an important newspaper in the country, a paper which others from around the country pulled articles to fill their own pages, illustrated that Italian immigration was becoming a major issue for state and federal officials, as well as concerned citizens and philanthropists, such as Charles Brace. The debate over the nature of the immigrants, whether criminals and paupers or simply swindled immigrants, brought these issues into the spotlight and resulted in increased coverage throughout the decade. By the end of the 1860s, with the continually increasing numbers of Italians arriving, the debate in the press heated up again.

One factor related to the arrival of paupers from Italy was their impact on American labor and the labor market. The over-crowding that Brace identified as a contributing factor to increased crime was exacerbated, according to the *Worcester Daily Spy*, by the “lack of thought and foresight, which allows these people to crowd into places where the natural course of affairs cannot possibly furnish the work they expect.”¹⁰⁰ *The Banker’s Magazine and Statistical Register* concurred, pointing out that it “is well known that no class of European immigrants into this country are ready to labor for less wages than the Italians.”¹⁰¹ The magazine reported Italians’ seeming willingness to travel far for relatively little. One example was found in a mill town in Pittsburgh. Although a worker “lives in a comfortable atmosphere compared with that in

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ “About the Labor Question,” *Worcester Daily Spy*, August 3, 1878.

¹⁰¹ “Italian Laborers,” *The Banker’s Magazine and Statistical Register* 14, no. 4 (Oct 1879): 302.

which the silk-winder [in the Julian Alps] exists,” their general work existence was described as relatively hopeless.¹⁰² In some cases it was not just the squalid conditions of the workplace, but also hostility from other groups. According to the *Baltimore Sun* “the presence of the Italians has created a great deal of hostility . . . especially by the German and Irish elements.”¹⁰³ In Pennsylvania, Italian workers who replaced Irish strikers at a factory were attacked sustaining two serious injuries.¹⁰⁴

The *North American and United States Gazette* sought to alert Americans that the benefits of immigration also bring commensurate evils.”¹⁰⁵ In addition to repeating the claim that the Italian government was sending criminals and paupers, the paper pointed to the *padrone* system as an additional danger of allowing unrestricted immigration. The paper chastised those “many intelligent writers and public men” who had fallen into an almost knee-jerk disposition to consider immigration as an unqualified success and absolutely necessary.¹⁰⁶ Finally, the article based its appeal on the fact the American race already possessed a “well-established character, language, national traits and valuable institutions, manners and customs, religion, morals and business aptitudes, and we have a duty incumbent on us to preserve these intact.”¹⁰⁷ According to the paper, the continued influx of foreign immigrants could only threaten this situation.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ “Italian Laborers in New York,” *The Baltimore Sun*, July 4, 1874.

¹⁰⁴ “Italian Laborers Attacked by Irish Strikers,” *The New York Times*, June 6, 1874.

¹⁰⁵ “Protection and Foreign Immigrants,” *North American and United States Gazette*, March 23, 1874.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

The complexity of American social and political life in the 1860s and 1870s created often contradictory impulses among politicians, officials, private citizens, and the press regarding immigrants and immigration. Over the course of these two decades American awareness of Italian immigration increased dramatically. Although minor compared to the 1880s and beyond, immigration during the 1860s and 1870s caused Americans to think seriously about the relative benefits and costs of Italian immigration. During these two decades racial thinking played in Italian immigrants favor, as they were classified as white, in contrast to African-Americans, held in bondage until 1865. The bloody civil war that ultimately destroyed the institution of slavery, even as it did not eliminate racial hierarchies and prejudices, created an urgent need for immigrants to replenish the millions killed. For Italians, their classification as white was further enhanced by climatological theories of race, given American perceptions of Italy as not only a homogenous peninsula geographically but was similar to the American South and West. This similarity, buttressed by American perceptions of Italians as inherently successful agriculturalists, caused myriad states and territories to publicly and aggressively court Italian immigrants to their land. In the 1860s and 1870s it was a common view that immigration brought untold economic benefits to the country as government reports pegged the value of individual immigrants at almost \$1000 each.

Encouragement of Italian immigration and positive characterizations of Italian ability and capability predominated during the period even as debates over naturalization and the criminality of immigrants became increasingly negative. Reports, such as Brace's extensive analysis of crime in New York, demonstrated the immigrants possessed the inherent capability to succeed in the 'right' situation, achieved as a result of gaining

an education, the bedrock of the American creed. Politicians who debated naturalization in 1870 pointed to America's status as the land of opportunity as evidence of the nation's strength. Those in opposition to immigration claimed that this heritage could only be weakened by the arrival of so-called undesirable immigrants, who they argued were mostly criminals and paupers. The arrival of thousands of largely destitute Italians in a matter of a month at the end of 1872 could have only strengthened the case of immigration opponents, as *The New York Times* devoted over a dozen stories to document the plight of the 'poor' arrivals. However, the attention paid to this particular case did not result in tighter immigration restriction or a shift to solely negative descriptions of Italians. Although it did serve to provide a framework for the rhetoric and fear that would become acute in the 1880s, American officials continued to recruit Italians throughout the 1870s. Ultimately, the 1860s and 1870s were transitional decades. American perceptions of Italian immigrants shifted from mostly positive and welcoming to increasingly negative and hostile. By 1882 when Italian arrivals began to number in the hundreds-of-thousands annually, American attitudes had become predominantly negative. Hostility and violence was not only committed against Italians more frequently but was attributed to Italians themselves more often.

Americans who argued that Italians could and would assimilate into the American nation and improve their nature through education pointed not only to recent graduates of charity schools in New York City, but also to the Italian artists, intellectuals, businessmen, and many of the exiles in America who were seen as a credit to their race. In many ways these contrasting visions underscored the relative status of certain individuals. Any of those Italians considered successful still retained some of the

stereotypical character traits, however, they had transcended the perceived stagnation that stifled their race as a whole. Certain individuals, such as Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi, transcended not only the negative aspects of Italian nature, but were elevated onto a plane to be seen as heroes of the world.

CHAPTER IV

ITALIAN HEROES

American perceptions of Italy and Italians during the 1860s and 1870s were intimately tied to the creation of an Italian nation in 1861 and the consequences of continued French and Austrian involvement on the peninsula. American attention turned to Italy in 1859 and 1860 as both Piedmont and specifically forces led by Garibaldi pursued successful military campaigns against the Austrians and Bourbons. Although most Americans rejoiced at this stunning development, the question of Rome was unresolved and remained the focal point of American attention during the next twenty years. However, the spate of newspaper articles, books, and essays dealing with Italian affairs did not begin suddenly with the first shots fired at Montebello on May 20, 1859. The presence of Italian political exiles in America as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century and the widespread European revolutions of 1848, with their initial successes and ultimate reversals at the hands of reactionary forces, brought Italian affairs to America's attention during the mid-nineteenth century. The prominence of ideals of liberty and freedom among Americans steeped in republican ideology resulted in an affection for the struggles of Italian nationalists seeking to create a new nation from the disjointed and patchwork territories of the Italian peninsula.

American attitudes towards Italian nationalists Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi in the 1860s and 1870s provide a guide for understanding the broader perceptions of Italy during the period. Mazzini stood as the intellectual hero of the *Risorgimento* based on his long and wearied advocacy of Italian freedom from foreign

rule, his constant sacrifice for those ideals, and his attempts to sustain interest in and attention to the struggles of Italian nationalists. His creation of *La Giovane Italia*, his support and organization of a variety of revolutionary plans, and his role as triumvir of Rome in 1848-1849, raised Mazzini to a prominent status among republicans throughout the West. Garibaldi held an even higher place among the pantheon of Italian heroes based on his exploits in South America, defense of the Roman Republic in 1848-49, brief exile in New York City, and successful return to Italy to destroy Bourbon rule in Naples and Sicily. Garibaldi was associated with many virtues including disinterestedness, valor, patience, leadership, patriotism, and military genius.

After unification in 1861 American attitudes towards Mazzini and Garibaldi began to shift. Each maintained a prominent place among Italian heroes and was credited with securing Italian independence. However, because Mazzini was seen as the spiritual guide and intellect of the *Risorgimento* many Americans saw his task as complete with the successes of 1860. It was time for the new generation of Italian statesmen to take over. Mazzini's intransigent attitude towards the monarchy caused many to see him as a hindrance to the progress of the nascent nation. In some ways he became, until his death in 1872, a living martyr of the *Risorgimento*. In contrast, Garibaldi, whose heroic status was that of a military genius and leader of men, transcended politics in the American psyche. Although a republican himself Garibaldi was seen to have placed his nation above his own personal political preferences.

The first stage of Italian unification was completed in early March 1861 as the Italian Parliament officially recognized Victor Emmanuel as King of Italy. In America, the republic was on the brink of a Civil War that was to last four long years. The

American press congratulated Italy on its successful struggle for independence and considered the long road Italians had traveled to get to that point. Throughout the century successive failed attempts to push the Austrians from the northeast and the Bourbons from the south had created a long list of Italian nationalist martyrs and the impression that Italians were not yet ready for independence. The most visible examples came in the aftermath of the revolutions of 1848. The early successes of nationalists all over the peninsula in that year were followed by crushing reactions by powers bent on maintaining the status quo and keeping Italy as a “mere geographic expression.” Hence, by 1861 Americans could look back at the previous two years of fighting with astonishment at a result which they believed the major powers would continue to suppress. Some admitted that “it had become fashion to doubt whether the Latin races of Europe could be trained to freedom.”¹ This view emphasized an Anglo-Saxon pride that assumed for itself “the only capacity of freedom, and looked down on . . . a worn-out Latin stock, without social virtue, born for slavery and superstition.”² In retrospect some in the American press argued that it was clear that Italy’s “long degradation was their misfortune far more than their fault, that every growth of national union ha[d] been crushed by foreign intervention and by the anomaly of a Papal principality.”³ In this context, Americans looked to Mazzini and Garibaldi as representatives of the two stages of Italian unification. Mazzini prepared the plans and Garibaldi carried out those plans.

¹ “Italy in Transition,” *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature*, January 1861, 49.

² “The Regeneration of Italy: Part I,” *The United States Service Magazine*, June 1864, 585.

³ *Ibid.*, 591.

ITALIAN HEROISM

The American exaltation of *Risorgimento* heroes employed language used to describe familiar American Revolutionary heroes. Mazzini was, in many ways, an Italian Jefferson, while Garibaldi was compared to the American ‘father’ George Washington. By the late eighteenth century as Americans fought for their separation from the British crown they elevated an entire generation of heroes to be remembered as the ‘founding fathers’ of American independence. Consequently, when Americans looked to the Italian peninsula and the decades long struggle to overthrow foreign rule they were reminded of the struggles of their own ancestors less than a century before. American familiarity with Italy’s predicament prior to its unification in the 1860s resulted largely from the work of Italian nationalist Giuseppe Mazzini. As a result of his tireless efforts to maintain the spotlight on Italian affairs Mazzini not only succeeded in increasing awareness but was himself raised to the pantheon of ‘great men.’

The American press largely credited Giuseppe Mazzini with single-handedly keeping Italian nationalism alive and in public view during the 1830s and 1840s. Since Mazzini’s efforts in the early 1830s “the eyes of the people of America ha[d] been turned with earnest and hopeful attention upon the land of the Caesars.”⁴ Only those who had made the ultimate sacrifice in the pursuit of Italian freedom from tyranny and oppression were seen to have given more than Mazzini. Mazzini’s allies helped cultivate his image in America prior to 1861. American journalist Margaret Fuller’s writings of Mazzini’s efforts in Rome in 1848, the American pro-Mazzinians English Colonel Hugh Forbes and Hungarian republican Louis Kossuth visits in 1851, and Jesse White Mario’s speaking

⁴ “Viva Italia,” *Pomeroy’s Democrat*, August 27, 1871.

tours in 1858, all contributed to the spread of Mazzini's name and message to the American people. Horace Greeley argued that although Mazzini would likely never become the President of an Italian Republic, the peninsula was "united and free far sooner than if he had never existed, or never dared and suffered."⁵ Suffering and sacrifice were often used themes to describe Mazzini's steadfast resolve in the face of massive opposition from the reactionary European powers. It was in the context of suffering and sacrifice that the theme of Mazzini-as-martyr began.

Mazzini was seen to have struggled "without means, without arms, without an army, the police of many lands waiting to arrest him, prisons kept in readiness for him."⁶ In spite of these obstacles and with "no pause, no rest, no comfort; constant danger, unceasing vigilance, a career of terrors," Mazzini "endured for others, who, brutified by foreign despotism, have not sense to know, nor sentiment to bless."⁷ These qualities and actions were exalted as a type of heroism that was "pure as the yearnings of a maiden's heart. Such heroism has been practised daily for many years by Joseph Mazzini."⁸ Such a status led one report to conclude that "there is more of modern Italian history in [Mazzini's] life than there is in Cavour's and Garibaldi's put together."⁹

Although Mazzini was credited for his role as an Italian hero and patriot, negative attitudes also portrayed Mazzini as an obstacle in the struggle for Italian unity. Despite America's preference for republicanism, Americans as a people also saw the need for

⁵ Horace Greeley, "Young Italy—Mazzini," *The Independent*, January 17, 1861.

⁶ "Italy's Teacher and Patriot: Joseph Mazzini," *Federal American Monthly*, October 1865, 323.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 324.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ "Mazzini and the Italian Revolution," *New Englander*, July 1879, 487.

practicality in some cases. Mazzini's continued condemnation of the monarchy was displayed in his push for Venice and later Rome to proclaim republics instead of join the Italian nation. These positions were seen as the height of arrogance which placed personal ideology above the needs of the nation.

As the nascent Italian nation rallied around King Victor Emmanuel many moderate republicans subsumed their political desires for what they believed was the cause of Italian patriotism. American republican and Mazzini supporter Horace Greeley thought "the instinct which rallies Free Italy around the throne of Victor Emanuel [wa]s wiser than the impulse which would hurl her pellmell upon a half a million of Austrian bayonets under the leadership of Mazzini, which is right as to the end, wrong as to the means."¹⁰ The reason that many republicans in America tempered their support for republican institutions in Italy was found in the expressions of surprise about Italy's successful unification. While Italy had in fact gained its independence it was seen as not quite ready for republican institutions because "the [political] system must be an organic growth of the social mind and the existing conditions."¹¹ This paternalistic attitude set a possibility for republicanism in Italy in the future, but many contemporary Americans believed "at present its step can only be from the hereditary absolutism of the past to a constitutional monarchy."¹² With this viewpoint in place, one that allowed Americans to revel in Italian independence while retaining their superiority, attitudes towards Mazzini's programs became more hostile.

¹⁰ Horace Greeley, "Young Italy—Mazzini," *The Independent*, January 17, 1861.

¹¹ "The Regeneration of Italy: Part 2," *The United States Service Magazine*, July 1864, 50.

¹² *Ibid.*

Mazzini had long been cognizant of his image in America. He had long admired American republicanism, elevating the U.S. as the model for republicans across the globe.¹³ His article on American slavery chastised Southern planters for their subjugation of the oppressed and downtrodden. Mazzini's positions on slavery and his support for President Lincoln and the Union cause in the American Civil War earned him the respect of the northern press. By 1866, and still in a self-imposed exile fighting for republican principles, Mazzini addressed a letter to "friends of republican principles in America."¹⁴ In the address Mazzini reaffirmed America's role as protector and propagator of republican principles throughout the world. In addition, Mazzini urged the U.S. to engage "and take share in the battle [against monarchy]. It is God's battle."¹⁵ The response to Mazzini's pleas indicated American attitudes in the period. While the republican men who received the address were in almost universal agreement with Mazzini, they argued that the lessons of Washington and Jefferson were paramount, that the nation "'have as little political connection as possible' with foreign Nations . . . [engaging] 'peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all Nations; entangling alliances with none.'"¹⁶ This assertion of non-intervention did not deter Mazzini from penning a longer and more detailed proposal to republicans in America. In February of 1867, Mazzini published "The Republican Alliance" in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

¹³ Joseph Rossi, *The Image of America in Mazzini's Writings*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1954).

¹⁴ Joseph Mazzini and Edward A. Stansbury, "An Address to the Friends of Republican Principles in America," New York: s.n., June 1866.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ New York Special Committee, "Response to 'Address to the Friends of Republican Principles in America,'" June 1866.

This second article garnered the attention of more than just sympathetic republicans who could do no more than organize societies to raise money and awareness for the cause. It caused opponents of Mazzini to examine his calls for a republican alliance, and provided an opportunity to further the idea that Mazzini's time had passed. An article in *The Galaxy* in March 1867 hammered Mazzini on his proposed republican alliance, his hostility to the Italian monarchy, and even his patriotism. William Alden, an American newspaper-man, called Mazzini's republican alliance hopeless and evidence "that its author has, in great measure, lost his powers of memory."¹⁷ His argument was that Mazzini had distorted the events in Italy since 1848 by portraying the monarchy as incapable of leading and continuing to rely on foreign assistance to rule.

Alden went further than simply attacking Mazzini's positions or recollection of events, however. Alden asserted that Mazzini's "patriotism, statesmanship, and military skill . . . might never have been recognized, had he not himself so loudly asserted it."¹⁸ This ad-hominem attack ascribed attributes to Mazzini, such as military skill, which were clearly based on falsehood. Mazzini's role as triumvir in Rome saw him rely on Garibaldi for military preparations and fighting. Mazzini clearly deferred to military leaders, even volunteering to fight as a regular soldier for Garibaldi. Any claim that Mazzini asserted himself as a great military leader was unfounded.

The idea that Mazzini's reputation for patriotism was unearned was even more outrageous. Alden claimed that Mazzini held himself up as the "possessor of the only

¹⁷ William L. Alden, "Mazzini's Last Manifesto," *The Galaxy*, March 1, 1867, 487. Alden worked briefly for the *New York Times* in the 1860s and again from 1874-1885. He was named Consul General to Rome in 1885 by President Grover Cleveland, and was eventually granted the title of Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Italy by King Humbert. "The Lifework of William L. Alden," *New York Times*, January 16, 1908.

¹⁸ Alden, 484-485.

genuine article of Italian patriotism . . . precisely what he has done to support his pretensions it would be somewhat difficult to discover.”¹⁹ The juxtaposition of Alden’s attacks with the overwhelming recognition of Mazzini’s immense contributions to Italian independence in American popular and academic writing render Alden’s claim utterly inflammatory. His obvious attacks on republicanism and on Mazzini in particular, are confirmed in his later exaltation of the Italian monarchy and commentary regarding Garibaldi, whereby he suppresses Garibaldi’s own republicanism as evidence of his child-like nature even as he praises the general’s military heroics.²⁰ Alden’s final criticism that Mazzini’s influence had “gone utterly and forever,” while part and parcel of his inflammatory rhetoric, was one that was adopted even by less hostile writers.

Some writers agreed that Mazzini had lost his influence in Italy. Ernst Gryzanovski saw Mazzini’s unwillingness to join the monarchists in 1860 as childish and the party of action as “a party of *passion*.”²¹ Gryzanovski argued that Mazzini “had gradually lost his knowledge of Italian actualities” as a result of his exile in England.²² Although Mazzini had correctly identified the “great truth of the times—the drift toward nationalization,” his republican intransigence, especially during the revolutions of 1848 was problematic for pragmatic Americans.²³ Another commentator portrayed him as having in 1848-49, “when expressly and particularly called upon, in the very straits of a

¹⁹ Ibid., 484.

²⁰ W.L. Alden, “Garibaldi’s Ideas,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1885: 108-115.

²¹ Ernst Gryzanovski, “The Regeneration of Italy,” *The North American Review*, October 1871, 295-296.

²² Ibid., 296.

²³ “Mazzini and the Italian Revolution,” *New Englander*, July 1879, 492.

war of independence, for help which [wa]s valuable and which he [wa]s able to render, deliberately refuse[d] to give it.”²⁴ Thus, the wars of 1859-60 were seen to have taken place without Mazzini’s personal involvement, and it was easy for some to conclude that “Italy was made united, independent and free without other assistance on [Mazzini’s] part than the unintentional contribution . . . in helping to organize the Sicilian expedition of Garibaldi.”²⁵ Despite these conclusions, the commentator admitted the importance of Mazzini’s influence in “creating political opinions of people for nationhood.”²⁶

This negative view was not universal. Mazzini’s supporters saw the effort to paint him as out of touch as advocated by “men who never lost a penny nor suffered banishment through devotion to the oppressed. O shame!”²⁷ The pro-Mazzini press painted him as a martyr for the Italian cause. For them he was a man “with an inextinguishable zeal and an undaunted spirit [who] combine[d] the judgment of a sage, the inspiration of a prophet, and the faith of a martyr.”²⁸ The *Liberator* argued that a purer patriot than Mazzini did not exist. What was his reward? He was, since unification, “all this time banished from Italy, and under sentence of death, by the government, for his burning words and noble deeds in that direction.”²⁹ According to the *Liberator*, it could imagine no worse treatment for a man who “had been raised up for the

²⁴ Ibid., 500.

²⁵ Ibid., 506.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ “Italy’s Teacher and Patriot: Joseph Mazzini,” *Foederal American Monthly*, October 1865, 323.

²⁸ “Patriotic Offering to Joseph Mazzini,” *Liberator*, September 15, 1865.

²⁹ Ibid.

freedom and elevation of his native land.”³⁰ For his supporters, it was better to “live to work, even in secret, to prepare the way, and make the road tolerably clear, for such pupils as Garibaldi.”³¹

While Mazzini prepared the way for his pupils, Giuseppe Garibaldi’s military exploits in South America and his valiant defense of the Roman Republic had established his name by 1859. However, there was no substitute for success to guarantee Garibaldi’s star. “Success throws a fascinating halo around the name and deeds of genius and of valor.”³² Although Giovanni Battista Cuneo, a friend of Garibaldi, had published a biography of the general in 1850, and other shorter biographies appeared prior to 1859, it was not until the breakout of war in 1859 that Garibaldi literature flooded America.³³ Theodore Dwight’s translation and publication of Garibaldi’s memoirs in 1861 was the most prominent work in America.³⁴ American readers could follow Garibaldi’s exploits in his own words. From his defense of Rome and the heartbreak of his wife Anita’s death to his successful overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy in 1860 readers internalized the heroic attributes of Garibaldi.

According to press reports Garibaldi’s life of virtue began early. The *Christian Examiner* reported that at eight years old “when, seeing a woman fall into the water,

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ “Italy’s Teacher and Patriot: Joseph Mazzini,” *Foederal American Monthly*, October 1865, 324.

³² “Italy in Transition,” *The North American Review* 92, no. 190 (Jan 1861): 16.

³³ Giovanni B. Cuneo, *Biografia di Giuseppe Garibaldi*, Torino: Fory e Dalmazzo, 1850. In Lucy Riall, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

³⁴ Giuseppe Garibaldi, *The Life of General Garibaldi*, trans. Theodore Dwight, (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1861).

[Garibaldi] threw himself after her, and saved her from drowning.”³⁵ This episode epitomized Garibaldi’s rescue of the Italian peninsula, not from watery depths, but from the depths of foreign oppression. Garibaldi’s valor was also seen during last siege of Rome in 1849. In an interesting spin of republicanism, Americans saw in this episode “no parallel except in classic annals . . . and in some of the episodes of the American Revolution.”³⁶ Physically, “the breadth of [Garibaldi’s] shoulders and the depth of [his] chest, with a certain firm and commanding position of [his] head, gave the impression of power and authority.”³⁷ Garibaldi’s power and authority was illustrated by the devotion of his men to him. His almost effortless ability to raise men for battle was demonstrated by the fact that he was often forced to refuse volunteers because of the overwhelming response to his calls. He was unselfish, evidenced in his refusal of comfort and wealth while in South America. He did not take advantage or persecute civilians. In fact, it was reported that in victory Garibaldi wearied “himself to exhaustion in restraining the wanton soldiers, befriending the weak, checking bloodshed, and advocating forbearance.”³⁸ Garibaldi’s combination of virtue and skill caused some to consider him as “the man *predestined* to be the deliver of Italy, the messenger of the Almighty to whom the commission was given to prepare his own countrymen for a new life.”³⁹

In many ways, the qualities that made Garibaldi seem the man destined to deliver Italy, made him seem comparable to the man who was destined to deliver America,

³⁵ “Garibaldi,” *Christian Examiner* 70, no. 1 (Jan 1861): 109.

³⁶ “Italy in Transition,” *The North American Review* 92, no. 190 (Jan 1861): 30.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁹ “Garibaldi,” *Christian Examiner* 70, no. 1 (Jan 1861): 137.

George Washington. Garibaldi's experiences in South America and Rome offered a parallel to Washington's experience in the French and Indian War. Just as Garibaldi's attempt to secure Rome in 1849 ended in failure, Washington's first action at Fort Mifflin, which ended in retreat, provided each with real world experience. Garibaldi's ultimate success in 1860 and Washington's success in the American Revolution were each based on their first-hand experiences in battle. In addition to military parallels, Garibaldi and Washington were both seen as self-made men. The fact that Garibaldi "did not pursue any regular course of education" was strikingly similar to Washington's humble beginnings and practical education gained on his farm.⁴⁰ Each man's perceived selflessness manifested in his ultimate virtue: patriotism.

Garibaldi's patriotism found its highest expression in the form of his "voluntary resignation of authority into the hands of Victor Emmanuel" his dictatorship of southern Italy.⁴¹ This final heroic act evoked the mythology of Cincinnatus. Garibaldi, like Cincinnatus, possessed not only power over his government, but was also held in such regard that a continuation of his dictatorship was actually desired by many. However, his choice to leave this role and go back to his farm on Caprera found an almost exact expression in Washington some six decades earlier. Washington was the epitome of patriotism in America. He endured countless hardships in the field, took a disinterested approach to his presidency of the constitutional convention, and in his most heroic act, peacefully and voluntarily stepped down after two terms as the first president of the United States. Both Garibaldi and Washington were immensely popular among their

⁴⁰ Ibid., 112.

⁴¹ "Italy in Transition," *The North American Review* 92, no. 190 (Jan 1861): 55-56.

own men and the nation at large, and could have easily taken any venture they desired. Yet, each sacrificed any personal ambition to serve the needs of their people, as each believed was necessary. For, in Garibaldi's case, although he was "a strong and most uncompromising republican, by conviction as much as by long habit of life . . . he could not think of carrying out his principles and views to the detriment of the independence and unity of his beloved country."⁴²

What made Garibaldi even more appealing was his humble nature. Theodore Dwight, a popular American author, wondered if there was "a character better adapted as a model for American youth, in training them to just views of the value of what has been called the humble virtues of common life?"⁴³ Garibaldi's common life on the island of Caprera was widely reported in the American press. Any American who had the slightest interest in Garibaldi was familiar with the details of his life and home on the island, a single story dwelling, with a ground floor only divided into seven "unadorned rooms."⁴⁴ His room contained "everything of the most common kind," including a plain iron bed frame, four common chairs, a simple writing table, and a simple chest of drawers.⁴⁵ Garibaldi's guests were even instructed even to make their own beds.⁴⁶ His most prized possessions were reportedly not various swords, binoculars, and telescopes, given to him in honor of service, but instead a "box of tools for cultivating and ingrafting vines sent to

⁴² "Garibaldi," *Christian Examiner* 70, no. 1 (Jan 1861): 135.

⁴³ Theodore Dwight, "Introduction," in Garibaldi, *The Life of General Garibaldi*, v.

⁴⁴ "Garibaldi's Home," *Christian Advocate*, June 20, 1878.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ "Latest Concerning Garibaldi," *Christian Advocate*, October 10, 1878.

him by some friend in England.”⁴⁷ Garibaldi’s days at Caprera were reported to be mostly uneventful. First, he would walk to a small pond to observe some pet geese. After a cup of coffee, Garibaldi worked his fields until midday, when he returned home to sign any paperwork that was due. A simple dinner followed, consisting of *minestra* and two other dishes, without wine. After two more hours in the fields the General returned for supper, a short bit of journal writing, and sleep.⁴⁸

Although Mazzini and Garibaldi followed different paths to their elevation as Italian heroes, their cooperation in proclaiming and defending the Roman Republic in 1848-1849 allowed each man to display their unique talents. Mazzini’s role as triumvir and Garibaldi’s role as general reinforced the perception of the intellectual and the military leader. Ultimately, their Roman venture was defeated at the hands of French forces. However, the question of Rome continued to plague the Western World to 1870, when the city was incorporated into the Italian nation, and beyond as Pope Pius IX and his successor Leo XIII proclaimed themselves “prisoner(s) of the Vatican.”

THE ROMAN QUESTION

The train of disappointments for Italy regarding Rome was a major theme in American writings about Italy during the 1860s and early 1870s. Negative attitudes towards the Pope and the Catholic Church were prominent among these writings. This negativity was built upon a variety of perceived affronts. First, the short-lived euphoria of Pope Pius IX’s liberal declarations in 1846, betrayed by his refusal to join in the independence movement. This euphoria turned to hostility after the Pope was restored to

⁴⁷ “Garibaldi’s Home,” *Christian Advocate*, June 20, 1878.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

his temporal domains after the fall of the Roman Republic at the hands of French forces. Anti-Catholic sentiment in America itself played a major role as well. The nativism of the 1840s and 1850s, mostly towards Irish Catholics, increased agitation against the Church and kept attacks against the Pope at the forefront of public discourse. Other events, such as Monsignore Bedini's papal tour of America in 1853 also contributed to anti-Catholic, or at least anti-papal, sentiment. Finally, the Pope's intransigence in the face of Italian unification in 1860-61, the incorporation of Venetia in 1866, and his continued reliance on French military power to keep his temporal domains fuelled anti-Papal attitudes.

As Pope Pius renounced any intentions towards reform or compromise, the largely Protestant American press increased its rhetoric denouncing what many perceived to be the injustice of denying the city of Rome to the revitalized Italian nation as its capital under the leadership of King Victor Emmanuel. The press reacted with scorn towards the Pope and sympathy towards citizens of the papal domains. American reaction in the north often equated the Italian peasantry of the papal territories to the millions of slaves held in bondage in the American South. The Italian peasantry was considered "slightly raised above barbarism . . . the vices induced by centuries of slavery and its multiform debasements."⁴⁹ Many believed that "so long as Popery maintains its hold upon the intellects and consciences of the uneducated masses of the population, we dare not hope for the consolidation of free institutions."⁵⁰ This prevalence of illiteracy was also seen as evidence of the superiority of Protestantism over Catholicism, as it was

⁴⁹ Horace Greeley, "Italy," *The Independent*, January 10, 1861.

⁵⁰ "Italy in Transition," *The Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature*, January 1861, 50.

argued that Protestant nations did not have nearly the same level of illiteracy. Although they were considered almost barbaric and uneducated, Italian peasants were believed to be “impatient to shake off the yoke of these [Roman] priests.”⁵¹

American veneration for Protestantism over Catholicism was intimately tied to ideas of liberty and progress. Some argued that the inhabitants of Catholic nations advanced less rapidly than those of Protestant nations.⁵² Many Americans attributed this failure to progress to the lack of liberal features in the Papal States. For example, one article pointed out that “freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free schools, free pulpits, liberty of worship, liberty of action, [and] liberty of trade [we]re utterly unknown in the territorial domains of the Pope.”⁵³ A reason for the lack of what were considered basic rights was that “wherever the sovereign is held to be the representative of Divinity, liberty cannot establish itself.”⁵⁴ Even anti-Catholics did not argue that “as a pontiff [the Pope] is the accredited and revered head of the Catholic Church,” however, his temporal rule as sovereign made him “the rapacious and despotic usurper of the Italian domain.”⁵⁵ It was argued that the further inability of the church to ‘progress,’ because of its dogmas, ceremonies, miracles, could be overcome if it would “renounce its false traditions, its worldly pomps, its tyrannical pretentions, and return to the truth which is in Christ.”⁵⁶

⁵¹ “St. Peter’s Pence Again!” *New York Observer and Chronicle*, February 13, 1862.

⁵² Emile de Laveleye, *Protestantism and Catholicism: in their bearing upon the liberty and prosperity of nations*, London: William Clowes and Sons, 1875.

⁵³ “Garibaldi at Rome,” *The Independent*, August 1, 1867.

⁵⁴ Laveleye, 34.

⁵⁵ “Garibaldi at Rome,” *The Independent*, August 1, 1867.

⁵⁶ X, “Popery,” *New York Observer and Chronicle*, September 19, 1867.

Aside from the religious aspect of Papal rule over Rome, the place of the city in the Western psyche made its incorporation into the Italian nation imperative and inevitable for many. The city of Rome was “the mistress of the world, the centre of civilization . . . It [wa]s the city of the Caesars, of Cicero, Livy and Horace—the Metropolis of art and science, literature and law—which gave civilization to the western world.”⁵⁷ The intervening centuries between the ‘fall’ of the ancient Roman Empire and the creation of an Italian nation in 1861 were not even considered by most Americans, Catholics excepted. Papal rule over the city and surrounding territory was simply seen an anomaly and a major reason for Italian disunity throughout the centuries. To Americans, “the inhabitants of the Papal States are all Italians, speaking the Italian language. They are of the same race and lineage as the people of Italy, animated by the same hopes and aspirations for a united country. They are separated by an arbitrary boundary.”⁵⁸ In some ways this view illustrated the conflicting views of many Americans, who could see all Italians as the same while at the same time pointing to the inferiority of those in the South.

After a lull in attention due to the American Civil War and six years of Italian inability to make its own destiny without foreign assistance, Americans looked once again to Rome. Garibaldi’s failed attempt to take Rome in 1867 reinvigorated the debate in America over Rome and inability of the new Italian nation to incorporate the city. As a result of French intervention Garibaldi was defeated at Mentana and Papal temporal claims were again defended by foreign forces. However, some asserted that Garibaldi

⁵⁷ “Why Italy Must Have Rome,” *Zion’s Herald and Wesleyan Journal*, December 5, 1867.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

had “a far better right to get up a rebellion for the deliverance of Rome than Napoleon has to keep Rome enslaved for his own selfish ends, or than the Italian government has to bow to such dictation.”⁵⁹ Others, who were less comfortable with advocating rebellion just after having gone through a civil war, believed that “if there is any principle whatever in armed revolution, it must apply to this case, justifying Garibaldi, and condemning the Italian government as inconsistent, ungrateful, and treacherous.”⁶⁰ The Italian government’s arrest of Garibaldi before his attempt on Rome as a result of their fear of French armed intervention and their perceived cowing to Napoleon did not sit well with American anti-Catholics and anti-papists.

Some in the American press saw in the failed attempts to incorporate Rome examples of poor statesmanship and diplomacy, even if foreign influences still predominated. Garibaldi’s own “reputation for statesmanship, if he ever had any, ha[d] been irretrievably lost,” even if his military heroism was not questioned.⁶¹ Following the initial effort to unify most of the peninsula in 1861 it was argued that, although Rome and Venice would ultimately become part of Italy, their incorporation could not happen immediately “without endangering [sic] the ruin of Italy.”⁶² The reliance on France in the war of 1859-60 led many to doubt Italy’s ability to make an attack on Austrian-held Venetia and ensured that French support of the Pope would keep Italy from attacking

⁵⁹ George Prentice, “Garibaldi and Italy,” *Zion’s Herald and Wesleyan Journal*, November 14, 1867. Prentice’s southern upbringing, anti-immigrant rhetoric during the 1840s and 1850s, neutral status during the war, and opposition to Reconstruction policies, make his advocacy of rebellion only two years removed from a brutal civil war less surprising.

⁶⁰ “Garibaldi and Revolution,” *Advocate of Peace*, November/December 1867.

⁶¹ “Has Garibaldi Failed!” *The Independent*, December 5, 1867.

⁶² “The Regeneration of Italy: Part 2,” *The United States Service Magazine*, July 1864, 54.

Rome. This attitude was strengthened when Italy was essentially given Venetia by Prussia after its defeat of Austria in 1866.

Italy's role as an ally of Prussia in the Austro-Prussian war of 1866 meant that she reaped the spoils of Prussia's victory, even as her own forces were roundly defeated by Austrian forces. Doubters saw Garibaldi's attack on Rome in 1867 as foolish given the circumstances of French support for the Pope and Italy's inability to gain military victories unaided in 1866. "Instead of remembering that politics is 'the science of the possible,' and being content to leave the solution of that [Roman] problem to the future, the more impulsive element in the nation precipitated it before the proper time."⁶³

Garibaldi's defeat at Mentana and the French strengthening of their forces in the Eternal City only reinforced the idea. Some Americans saw Garibaldi's mission and believed that "had the party of action deliberately designed to recall the foreigner, they could hardly have taken a surer means than the very one which they adapted."⁶⁴ This latest mission became for many yet another example of the failure of Mazzinian ideas post-1861, with Garibaldi still considered heroic, but misguided.

The sentiment that Italy deserved Rome and that the papacy was a despotic regime was not universal. Some American Catholics defended the Pope. They argued that despite any supposed evidence that "the Roman people . . . prefer[ed] to remain as they are."⁶⁵ Catholics asked aloud, "how would American Catholics like to have King Victor Emmanuel and [Prime Ministers] Ratazzi or Ricasoli dictating the affairs of the

⁶³ "The Eternal City," *The Round Table*, November 23, 1867.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ "A Word about the Temporal Power of the Pope," *The Catholic World*, January 1868, 529.

church in this country?”⁶⁶ The Pope’s temporal claims did serve a purpose, according to pro-papal advocates. “Divine Providence ha[d] given the vicar of Christ a temporal sovereignty as the security of his independence and the bulwark of the liberty of the universal church.”⁶⁷ Therefore, it was argued, the Church’s temporal claims in fact did the opposite of what its detractors claimed. Instead of having a despotic and absolute rule over its dominions, the papacy simply held court against the likes of “Mazzini, Garibaldi, and their associates” who were seen to aim at “the complete extirpation of all religion and all established political and social order from the world.”⁶⁸ Ultimately, with the help of outside influences again, Italy incorporated Rome into the Italian nation in 1870. France’s war with Prussia beginning in that year forced the French to pull their forces from Rome, leaving an open path for the Italian military to take control of the city. Thus, even in victory it was “the losses of France [that] ha[d] thus been Italy’s gain.”⁶⁹

Now that Italian unification was seen to be completed, anti-Catholic and anti-papal forces in America could rejoice. In New York in January 1871, “an audience large in itself and embracing a disproportionate share of that portion of [the] population distinguished for wealth, culture and high repute” gathered to celebrate the resolution of the Roman Question.⁷⁰ “The hearty and imposing unanimity which greeted every

⁶⁶ Ibid., 532.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 529.

⁶⁹ W.P. Morras, “Italy,” *Lippincott’s Magazine of Literature, Science and Education*, March 1871, 266.

⁷⁰ “Italian Unity,” *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, January 23, 1871.

demonstration of sympathy for the Italians in their attainment of their full national life, afforded sufficient proof” of American exuberance for Italy.⁷¹

American perceptions of Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi following Italian unification in 1861 demonstrated the broader attitudes towards Italian issues in the period. Mazzini was seen as an Italian hero, who had kept Italian issues at the forefront of American minds during the 1830s and 1840s, when Italian unification seemed like a distant fantasy. His sacrifice and suffering as an exile, unable to live in the land of his birth and lifelong advocacy, was trumpeted as the epitome of heroism. Garibaldi, on the other hand, had earned his stripes in South America, and had even lived in New York for a brief period. His humble beginnings, military successes under less than ideal circumstances, and perceived disinterested nature caused many American to see him as an Italian George Washington. In this sense, Garibaldi was the most famous Italian of the period. Americans expressed surprise at Italian unity, as many believed that Italy would remain an example of past glory and the world’s museum. However, most Americans rejoiced for the advance of liberty and ‘progress’ as evidence of not only their own superiority, but of the inevitability of increasing liberty and freedom across the globe. American attitudes became more practical after 1861, however. Because it was a surprise that Italy unified at all, many Americans were satisfied that it did so under a monarchy. If Italians were barely ready to be free, then it made sense to many people that they needed training to become good republicans. Maybe in time they could ‘progress’ towards such a goal. For the time being it was enough that they were free. In addition, the fact that Venice and Rome were not part of the nascent nation was decried,

⁷¹ Ibid.

yet the situation was also seen in practical terms. Americans believed that each region would inevitably become part of Italy. And as Italy proved that it could not effect such changes on its own, only uniting with the help of France, Americans thought it necessary to use diplomacy. In this context, the American press evinced a growing narrative that Mazzini had outlived his usefulness. It was not denied that his role had been essential to Italian unification; however, his continued intransigence towards the Italian monarchy caused many to see him as privileging his own ideology over his nation. This refusal to accept the king as the lawful sovereign of the Italian nation was seen as unpatriotic; a serious charge given the importance placed on patriotism in nineteenth-century America. The instability of the Civil War years in America and resultant difficulties of Reconstruction provided an additional lens for Americans. America's difficulty preserving its own republic in the 1860s contributed to the sense that monarchy could provide a stabilizing force for an Italian peninsula rife with uncertainty and political intrigue.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The complexity of American representations of and attitudes towards Italy and Italians in the 1860s and 1870s represented the changing nature of Italian and American societies. The attitudes and literary and artistic output of American travelers in Italy often worked to form American perceptions, and at the same time, they worked in concert with representations of Italians in America. As American travelers described the stereotypical nature of Italians, including their passion, vanity, laziness, and dishonesty, those same characteristics were seemingly observed in Italian immigrants in the U.S. American travelers by the mid-nineteenth century carried an Italian guidebook *and* one of the many novels set in the Italian landscape. These American travelers sought out Italy in order to construct particular identities that not only placed them within the traditions of upper-class European travelers, but also allowed them to posit America as the nation of the present and future, the inheritor to ancient Rome.

The writings of American travelers such as the Hawthornes were rife with idealized landscapes, cities, and people. Traveling was considered the culmination of the American education for artists and intellectuals. In order to place themselves within the existing tradition of travelers, Americans reenacted the exact routes and even sought to capture the specific emotions described in their guidebooks and novels. The problem was that traveler's ability to perform ritualized experiences was becoming severely hampered as the century progressed. By the time of unification in 1861, Italy had started on the long road to modernization. The introduction of railroad lines, improved communication,

and improved ocean travel all contributed to degrading the “exotic” experience for travelers. To a large degree the perceived backwardness of the peninsula, with its fragmentation, made for a more “authentic” experience. In this context, authentic meant the ability to leave the travelers home country, with its industrialization, utilitarianism, and constant productivity, for a land that was stuck in time. The Hawthornes linked the modern Italian peninsula with the past, while excluding any place in the present or future for modern Italians. In this way Italians retained their “primitive nature,” which was exactly what travelers desired.

By the end of the American Civil War the idealized style of traveling, epitomized by the Hawthornes, began to wane. Although this form of travel did not disappear, American contact with Italy and Italians had become such that it lost some of the exoticism and charm. As idealistic traveling waned, a form of traveling based on realism arose. William Howells’ detailed examination of the history of Venice, for example, provided what seemed to be a glimpse of Italians in their own context. Although Howells was not immune from his particular American way of viewing the world, he consciously attempted to move away from describing things in the same way as had been done for centuries. Howells explored the strong connection between modern Venetians and the myths of their fallen republic. He visited schools in Naples in order to assess the development of Protestantism in Catholic Italy *and* to congratulate the newly created nation on its attempts to educate its population. In these and many other descriptions, Howells focused on the Italians that he encountered, rather than simply noticing them when they were nuisances or in the context of a nascent tourism system. Howells

displayed his vision of Italy as a place that could progress and rejoin the forward trajectory of history.

The 1860s and 1870s was not only a transitional period for Americans traveling in Italy, but was also a time of increasing contact with Italians in America. Most Americans did not possess the means or ability to embark on foreign travel. In addition, their identities were not so intimately tied to such grandiose ritualized experiences. Travel writing and novels set in Italy did, however, work to impress certain perceptions upon American minds. American experience with Italians up to the 1860s had been mostly with artists, intellectuals, and political exiles, all of whom were much more educated than the average Italian and average American. This contact, combined with the influx of artistic representations of Italy and Italians contributed to an idealized vision of Italians as farmers and winemakers happily plying their trade in vineyards, orchards, and fields across the peninsula. Americans who called for increased immigration embraced this idealized view. Whether it was the need to populate the country and harvest its wealth or to replenish the millions lost in the American Civil War, Italians became the perfect immigrants. They lived in similar climates to the American South and West, where immigration was most needed. All across the country immigration committees drew up plans to attract Italians to their state and locality. Historians who skip directly to the period of mass migrations have generally overlooked this positive vision of Italians. The latter period was largely characterized by hostility and even violence. As Italians were increasingly packed into tenement housing and forced into a small number of industries they were stereotyped as backward, illiterate, dirty, untrainable, and criminal. However,

the period prior the mass migrations illustrates the ambiguous nature of American perceptions about Italy and Italians.

A final American perspective on Italy and Italians, that towards Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi, adds an additional layer of conflicting and competing visions. Both were heroes of Italian unification, having fought for decades to secure Italian independence from foreign oppression. This ideal was one that Americans could identify and sympathize with. Americans saw in Mazzini and Garibaldi the characters of their own struggle for independence. Garibaldi was compared directly with Washington even during his lifetime. However, the picture was not so simple. After 1861, Americans accepted that Italy had been unified under a monarchy. Although no friends of monarchs, Americans saw Italian unification as a miracle given the desire of the European powers to keep the status quo. Consequently, Italians were seen as having been delivered from such terrible oppression that their nature had been degraded to a point where republicanism was not even a possibility until they had more political training. In this context, constitutional monarchy could be accepted with the knowledge that freedom and independence had spread and would ultimately reach its full expression in the future. Mazzini, however, continued to agitate for republican government, even to the detriment of the Italian monarchy. For many Americans this was an egregious case of selfish lack of patriotism. Americans prided themselves on their ability to subsume personal ideologies for the benefit of the nation. Had not the Constitutional Convention demonstrated exactly this idea? Garibaldi, on the other hand, displayed patriotism by accepting Victor Emmanuel's sovereignty over the new Italian nation. This act of selflessness was hailed as the epitome of patriotism.

The competing and often conflicting visions of Italians between 1861 and 1881 were eventually replaced by a more rigid consensus on the undesirability of Italians by the end of the century and beginning of the twentieth. As this study has demonstrated Americans' relative proximity from Italians often determined the degree to which they were viewed positively or negatively. By the late 1880s when Italian immigrants arrived to the U.S. in remarkable numbers many Americans could no longer avoid personal contact with them and the idealized portrayals were mostly left behind, resulting in increasingly hostile attitudes.

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