La mascolinità nella letteratura e nelle arti

Decostruzione/evoluzione di modelli identitari

A cura di
Mariaconcetta Costantini e Federica D'Ascenzo

LED Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia Diritto

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OFF THE BEATEN TRACK IN THE KINGDOM OF ITALY WITH THOMAS ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE

Questioning Victorian Models of Masculinity through Narratives of Travel in *A Lenten Journey in Umbria and the Marches* (1862)

Claudia Capancioni

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ABSTRACT

This chapter questions Victorian models of masculinity through a little-known travelogue entitled *A Lenten Journey in Umbria and the Marches*, published by Thomas Adolphus Trollope (1810-1892) in 1862. Trollope was a prolific British writer whose career was defined by his life in Italy from 1843 to 1887, a period in which he witnessed the establishment of the Italian Kingdom. While the peninsula remained a central destination for the British traveller, in the second half of the nineteenth century, its traditionally feminised representation was questioned by politically engaged writers, like Trollope, who claimed instead masculine gendering for the newly united country. As a modern nation, Trollope believed, the Kingdom of Italy required a masculine image and, in *A Lenten Journey in Umbria and the Marches*, he goes off the beaten track to shape one in contrast to that of *la bella Italia*.

KEYWORDS: *la bella Italia*; nation state; Risorgimento; Roman question; travel writing.

1. QUESTIONING VICTORIAN MODELS OF MASCULINITY THROUGH TRAVEL WRITING

This chapter studies a little-known Victorian travelogue entitled *A Lenten Journey in Umbria and the Marches* (1862)[1] by Thomas Adolphus Trollope (1810-1892), a prolific British author whose career was mostly

[1] *A Lenten Journey* from now on.

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defined by his life in Italy from 1843 to 1887, during which he witnessed the Risorgimento struggles and the establishment of the Kingdom of Italy. It is his only travel book exclusively dedicated to Italy and it reflects his active support to a modern united Italy. Although his travel narrative displays a deep historical interest in the regions visited, Trollope's preoccupation is focused on the present, the need to find a solution to the Roman Question[2], and Pope Pius IX's refusal to renounce temporal power. In *A Lenten Journey* Trollope shows his hopefulness in the Italian Kingdom's ability to become a successful modern European state by establishing a new image for the Italian peninsula as a nation. He transforms the traditionally feminised Italy into a masculine Italian Kingdom by taking on a popular non-fictional form through which, since the Grand Tour, male British travel writers in particular had reiterated a gendered image of the peninsula as *la bella Italia*, a woman that epitomised beauty and sensuality, a glorious past and a demeaning present, whose suffering fate Lord Byron famously romanticised as a "fatal gift of beauty"[3] in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1818). The nation state was a conceptual androcentric construction that was central to Victorian political discourse and, in revising the paradigm of *la bella Italia*, Trollope demonstrates how intrinsic Victorian gendered poetics and politics of representation are in the case of the Kingdom of Italy. The travelogue presents a genre characterised as masculine[4]; yet, in the case of Italy, Trollope must contend with a literary tradition that has envisioned the Italian territory as a forsaken woman subjected to foreign powers to model a new masculine image of Italy that fulfils Victorian ideals of the nation state. He defies expectations and visits areas in central Italy that British travellers do not explore to uncover historical evidence of those qualities that the Victorian political androcentric imagination conceived as masculine, most significantly individual agency and determination.

Central to the study of political and social reform, the Victorian age is a fruitful historical period for investigating patriarchal gendered double

[2] This expression describes the dispute between the Kingdom of Italy and the Papal States originated in 1861 when the Papacy refused to recognise the Italian constitutional monarchy's temporal power on Papal territory or to discuss the annexation of Rome as the capital of the new Kingdom. It was settled in 1929 with the Lateran Treaty.

[3] Byron in Pfister 1996, 294. This line is in the fourth canto (41, l. 371), included in Byron's translation of a sonnet by the seventeenth-century Italian author Vincenzo Filicaia, which presents Italy's unfortunate gift of beauty (*Dono infelice di bellezza*) as the cause of its sad fate.

[4] See Thompson 2011, Youngs 2013, and Bird 2020.

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standards and how the socio-cultural expectations modelled on gender difference were constructed and sustained but also challenged and transformed. Its significance is marked, for example, by the campaigns for suffrage, birth control, and women's rights. Melissa Valiska Gregory points out how seminal studying the nineteenth century and the work of Victorian writers has been to recognise how gender, sexuality, and domesticity are constructed in western society and how their representations influence the formation of gender and sexual identity, in pioneering feminist, gender, and queer studies since the end of the 1970s[5]. The intersection of gender and queer theory has been notably key, Gregory highlights, in "the important masculinity studies of the mid-nineties"[6], and identifies *Dandies and Desert Saints: Victorian Styles of Masculinity* (1995) by James Ely Adams and John Tosh's *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (1999) as principal examples that rethink masculinity by sustaining multiple and contrasting constructions of normative masculinity. This chapter interconnects masculinity and genre studies to reflect upon the Victorian gendered conceptualisation of a modern nation state in Trollope's *A Lenten Journey* and shows how the travelogue, a genre based on the narrating traveller's epistemological authority, offered a means to both challenge and sustain thinking about gender and cultural gendering.

In the Victorian period, travel writing increased its popularity and status as a heterogeneous genre which successful writers such as Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, and Thomas Trollope's younger brother[7], Anthony Trollope, opted for, and through which scientists and travellers, such as Charles Darwin, David Livingstone, and Henry Morton Stanley, circulated new knowledge[8]. Thanks to technological innovations travelling became faster, more affordable and comfortable. It turned into tourism with travel agencies, package holidays, and guidebooks. While the Italian peninsula remained a central destination for the British traveller, its traditionally feminised representation was questioned by politically engaged writers like Thomas Trollope who supported the Risorgimento and the constitutional monarchy that resulted from it, the Kingdom of Italy. The British gentleman's Grand Tour had mythicised the peninsula as a place to find the traces of an illustrious ancient past, experience sexual

5 See Showalter 1977, Gilbert - Gubar 1979, and Sedgwick 1985.
6 Gregory 2016, 286.
7 Thomas was the eldest child in the family. See Trollope 1895, 42.
8 See Youngs 2013 (Part 1) and Thompson 2019.

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freedom, and prepare for life as an adult. More importantly, in the British liberal tradition, the feminised representation of Italy as *la bella Italia* projected an image of passivity in contrast to one of agency exemplified by northern European countries, such as Britain, where politicians perceived they needed to intervene to secure Italy's freedom and ignite its regeneration as a united, modern nation. In supporting the unification of Italy, the British government built on a gendered narrative that assigned a feminine passive, tragic role to Italy, and a masculine, active, rational role to Britain. As a modern nation, Trollope believed, the Kingdom of Italy needed an image encompassing those qualities Victorian Britain constructed as masculine: determination, initiative, and agency. *A Lenten Journey* is his most significant travel writing effort in transforming *la bella Italia* into the Italian Kingdom and claiming a masculine gendering for the new nation.

2. Trollope's transnational Risorgimento

Thomas Trollope was a novelist, a historian, a contributor to British periodicals, including *The Athenaeum* and *Household Words*, and a foreign correspondent firstly for the *Daily News* when he lived in Florence (1866-1873), and then the London *Standard* (1873-1886), when he moved to Rome, where he resided until his return to England in 1887. He had an example of a successful travel writer in his mother, Frances Trollope (also known as Fanny, née Milton 1779-1863), who, in her 1842 *A Visit to Italy*, provided a rare description of Fano, in the Marches, and anticipated his work in juxtaposing the beauty of the landscape between Fano and Foligno with the poverty of the rural communities. Under her mother's endorsement, Trollope began his career with two travel books: *A Summer in Brittany*, released in 1840, and *A Summer in Western France* in 1841. After settling in Florence in 1843 with his mother, his publications started to be influenced by present-day Italian politics and a passion for the history of Tuscany, and of Florence most of all. For example, in 1859 he worked both on the historical volume *A Decade of Italian Women* and, with his first wife, Theodosia Garrow (1816-1865)[9], on *Tuscany in 1849 and 1859*, about the recent revolutions in support of

[9] His second wife was Frances Eleanor Ternan (1835-1913). Thomas and Frances married in 1866, after the death of Theodosia in 1865. Frances too was a novelist. See Poston 1966 and Neville-Sington 2004.

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Italian independence. Together with *A Lenten Journey*, at the beginning of the 1860s, Trollope produced two novels set in Italy, *La Beata* (1861) and *Marietta* (1862), and *Filippo Strozzi: A History of the Last Days of the Old Italian Liberty* (1860), in which, as Pamela Neville-Sington states, "unusual[ly] for its time" [10] the history of Florence is told through the portrayal of one representative individual. In her biography, she also remarks his interest in women's history. Trollope's writing about the lives of Renaissance historical figures, including women, Alison Chapman maintains in *Networking the Nation* (2015), demonstrates his support to the Risorgimento patriotic cause. "On the cusp of Italian Independence" [11], she writes, in *Filippo Strozzi*, Trollope provides historical evidence of the Italian liberal spirit and affirms that, after "three hundred years of slumber time" [12], Italy is ready to a future as an independent nation. I contend that *A Lenten Journey* shares the same scope: it participates in Trollope's creation of what Chapman defines, in view of the wider Anglo-Florentine writing community, as "a pro-Risorgimento historiography that looked at the Renaissance past to prove that Italy was worthy of an independent political future" [13]. This travelogue widens his work's geographical and historical reach, including as its final destination San Marino, a small republic originated in the sixteenth century. Trollope travelled through Umbria and the Marches in 1862 [14], soon after the Kingdom of Italy was officially proclaimed and Victor Emmanuel II became the first king of a united Italy that did not include Rome or Venice. Trollope chooses an area that had been part of the Papal States for centuries and describes the economic stagnation and poverty of their inhabitants to stress the need for the newly united nation to separate the state from the church.

Literary scholars, such as Chapman and Esther Schor (2003), have studied Trollope's work in connection to his first wife, who was a poet, translator, and journalist, and productively placed it within the Victorian Anglo-Florentine community. His long residency in Florence, from 1843 to 1866, is at the origins of his active support to the Risorgimento and the creation, with his mother and first wife, of a transnational and multilingual network. In 1847, he founded *The Tuscan Athenaeum*, a weekly periodical in the English language that, though running only thirteen issues

10 Neville-Sington 2004.
11 Chapman 2015, 248.
12 Trollope 1860, x.
13 Chapman 2015, 248.
14 Trollope specifies the journey took place in 1862. See Trollope 1862, 7.

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from October 1847 to January 1848, disseminated among the Anglophone communities not only the pro-unification literature produced by writers such as his first wife, but also promoted the writing of Italian authors, such as Francesco Dall'Ongaro and Giovanni Battista Niccolini, producing what Isabelle Richet rightly recognises as a transnational space for debates and exchange "combining cultural with political concerns [and promoting] better understanding between democratically minded British and Italian citizens"[15]. Thomas and Theodosia facilitated the transnational circulation of knowledge among intellectuals who shared an interest not only in Italian history but also in the country's present-day socio-cultural and political developments. In Italy, their Risorgimento activism was formally recognised: in 1862, Thomas was awarded the order of St Maurice and St Lazarus[16], and Theodosia was praised in a civic plaque commemorating her 1865 death placed at their Florentine home[17].

Conversely, Trollope's travel writing has not received much attention. The wide-ranging *The Fatal Gift of Beauty: The Italies of British Travellers. An Annotated Anthology* (1996), about "British traveller's perceptions of, and interaction with, Italy"[18] from the sixteenth century to the present edited by Manfred Pfister, for example, includes only a brief extract from *Impressions of a Wanderer in Italy, Switzerland, France, and Spain*. The twenty-first century, however, has already signalled change. Sebastian Kukavica has recently examined the above travelogue together with *A Lenten Journey* focusing exclusively on their representation of Italy "as a counter-geography of modernity"[19] that validates the success of Victorian Britain. Closer attention to the legacy of Trollope's travelogues[20] has been provided by the work of the travel-writing scholar Attilio Brilli, who has astutely identified the originality of *A Lenten Journey*, and singled out Trollope as one of the first travel writers to propose, in the second half of the nineteenth century, a visit to unfamiliar areas of Italy that were not deemed to be desirable travel destinations. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travel books to Italy rarely refer to Umbria or the Marches, because they are places travellers did not visit but travelled through. As I also maintain in a previous essay[21], the unification of Italy

15 Richet 2018, 475-476.
16 See Neville-Sington 2004.
17 See Chapman 2015, 53.
18 Pfister 1996, 9.
19 Kukavica 2023, 139.
20 See Brilli 2004 and 2006.
21 See Capancioni 2009.

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marks a turning point for British travellers to Italy, especially to central Italy, and Brilli points to the momentous role Trollope's travelogue plays in promoting a reaction to "the usual, traditional beaten tracks by going off them to encounter new routes and discover unknown landscapes and towns"[22]. He praises the enthusiasm Trollope shows for unusual itineraries and the Victorian writer's ironic tone in comparing his intrepid agency to the fashionable Victorian tourists. In *A Lenten Journey*, Trollope chooses areas in central Italy whose story had been dominated by the Pope's temporal power, and where British travellers passed through, if necessary, but did not explore because, as protestants, they were not welcome but feared and immediately identified as heretics. In the introductory chapter, he announces a "little visited though highly interesting part of"[23] Italy, where historical evidence displays those features that the Victorian political androcentric imagination conceived as masculine: agency, independence, and determination. These features also coincided with the politicised concepts at the centre of the Italian Risorgimento, and a representation of a united Italy Giuseppe Mazzini described as "a brotherhood of Italians who believe in a law of *progress* and *duty*"[24] whose strength relied on constancy and unity of effort. This image of Italian nationhood is gendered and associated to a fraternal homosocial community that, like the title of Trollope's travelogue, comprises echoes of Christian morals, which will be considered further.

3. A "STRANGELY-STORIED LAND"

In *A Lenten Journey*, Trollope's goal is twofold. Together with reading the decaying urban landscapes of the hill-top towns he visits as a palimpsest that uncovers multiple temporalities and multiple life experiences which fulfil Victorian British travellers' political and cultural expectations, Trollope also provides a guide that aims to render the journey of a British traveller "easier"[25] through a natural environment that is physically demanding and can be at times dangerous. He frames his travel narrative in a masculine notion of travel defined within a western patriarchal ideology that marks separate spheres for men and women and sees the traveller

[22] Brilli 2006, 214; the English translation of the Italian original is mine.
[23] Trollope 1862, 8.
[24] Mazzini 1945. Qtd. in Riall 2007, 21; emphasis in the original.
[25] Trollope 1862, 8.

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as a man addressing a male readership. He declares the "little amount of inconvenience" [26] the journey requires, giving a first interpretation for the word "Lenten" in the title associated to its more literary, archaic meanings. He wittingly acknowledges his compatriots will find the food plain, the accommodation meagre, the means of transport difficult, and people's customs "temperate, sober, and thrifty" [27]. Trollope's satire of the canonical Italian travel, as Brilli notes, provides a rare summary of how "more than two centuries of European travellers to Italy equate to more than two centuries of considerable ignorance of, if not contempt for, the Italians" [28]. Trollope distances his travelogue from this tradition and creates instead an off-the-beaten-track travelling narrative that reasserts masculine notions of a vigorous and adventurous traveller who is ready to experience some difficulties and discomfort to demonstrate strength of character and endurance in order to complete his quest, which is, in Trollope's own words, gaining "real knowledge of Italy" [29]. The new united nation can only be discovered, as he advises, by "quitting the beaten track of English travellers" [30], and travelling "out of the beaten track" [31]. He emphasises this is a harder task for Victorian travellers because the long British tradition of Italian travel has created infrastructures and facilities that render the experience comfortable and convenient. He does not use the word tourism but writes about "the accustomed track" [32] that has ensured British travellers are catered for specifically and, simultaneously, precluded their "contact with genuine Italian life" [33]. It is this traditional consumption of Italy that, in his opinion, has hindered Britain's cultural and political understanding of contemporary life in Italy. He insists they need to interact "with the ordinary Italian world around" [34] them for an authentic, rewarding travelling experience.

Trollope's travelogue is a reliable guide to his present-day Italy because, when he embarks on his 1862 journey, he has resided in Florence for almost twenty years and engaged in the events that resulted in the new Kingdom of Italy. It sustains his moderate liberal views on the

[26] Trollope 1862, 7.
[27] Trollope 1862, 7.
[28] Brilli 2006, 265; the English translation of the Italian original is mine.
[29] Trollope 1862, 8.
[30] Trollope 1862, 13.
[31] Trollope 1862, 4.
[32] Trollope 1862, 4.
[33] Trollope 1862, 5.
[34] Trollope 1862, 5.

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future of the newly united Italy, as well as his criticism of Pope Pious IX. His authority is built on his coverage of Italian affairs and research and writing about Italian municipal history. It is uniquely enriched by his experiential knowledge as an Anglo-Florentine who, with his wife, runs an Anglo-Italian salon and actively contributes to the Italian struggles for unification. Brilli (2006) links Trollope's Anglo-Italian identity to his acute ironic observations, which Brilli thinks are a reason why *A Lenten Journey* remains a relevant Victorian travelogue. More interesting, I think, are the linguistic and social skills that Trollope developed in Florence, which are essential to visiting remote towns in Umbria and the Marches. Besides, his ability to interact with the Italians is soon evidenced in the first chapter when he exhorts his readers to join him colloquially exclaiming in Italian, "*Orsu!* [sic] *Andiamo!*" [35]. His communication skills distinguish his travel writing and his unique credentials strengthen his position as an authoritative cultural interpreter whose education and experiential knowledge can assist in fashioning a convincing travel narrative about unfamiliar places by simultaneously balancing an empirical account with the expectations of a new adventurous journey, distinctive historical and political material with accurate local details. "Most nineteenth-century travel writers", Carl Thompson explains, "sought to distinguish themselves from the figure of the 'tourist', a label that by mid-century was often intended pejoratively" [36]. Trollope too criticises the "follow-my-leader" [37] mentality tourism produces. He sets his travelogue apart with an off-the-beaten-track narrative to remote Italian regions characterised by arduous natural ascents, and an informative municipal historiography. In pursuit of an independent travelling experience, he does not follow the post-road from Arezzo to Perugia but climbs to Città di Castello on the Apennine, and then proceeds to many more difficult ascends to visit old mediaeval towns built on hilltops such as Gubbio, Perugia, Camerino, Macerata, Fermo, Loreto, Recanati, and San Marino. Mount Titano in San Marino is the hardest one and, as such, a fitting final destination. Furthermore, on the Adriatic coast, he does not take advantage of the railway but visits destinations that cannot be reached by train on the Adriatic coast, slowing the pace of travel and increasing opportunities for engaging with the local inhabitants and their customs as he walks and travels by couch.

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35 Trollope 1862, 9; emphasis in the original.
36 Thompson 2019, 121.
37 Trollope 1862, 14.

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Trollope describes Umbria and the Marches as a "strangely-storied land [that] has witnessed the rise and progress of *at least* four different social systems and widely-different civilizations – the Etruscan, the Roman, the Mediaeval, the Modern" [38]. He is interested in the traces left by those historical events and figures of the remote and municipal past that preceded the Papacy's rule because they denote those character features that Victorian readers recognise as masculine. He creates "a pro-Risorgimento historiography" and, through masculine gendering, identifies "the signs of the renewed vitality, which is beginning to rouse Italy" [39]. The Lenten travel narrative suggested in the title appears to fit this scope well. Traditionally, this is a narrative of difficulties and hardship, of penitence, fasting and abstinence in preparation for Easter and the celebration of Christ's resurrection. Moreover, the title evokes the pursuit of a renewed self and a valuable future. In the introductory chapter, however, such possible assumptions are quickly spoiled, when Trollope ironically clarifies that his empirical motivation for the word "Lenten" derives from "the time of the year at which it was made" [40]: forty days, he thinks, are sufficient to travel from Arezzo to San Marino crossing the Apennine, and "the early spring is a very pleasant time for travelling in Italy" [41] in general. There are religious locations on the way, including Assisi and Loreto, but they are only places of long-standing religious traditions in his eyes. In line with Victorian Protestant views on Italian Roman Catholicism, Loreto is powerfully identified as a place of superstitious practice instead of religious faith. The theme that fits more with a Lenten travel narrative tradition is, therefore, the difficulty and hardship of the journey, which reflects the Italian Kingdom's arduous struggle to complete its unity. Following form, Trollope includes a travelling companion whose presence is rendered mostly through the use of the plural first person pronoun and possessive adjective. His friend is male, anonymous, voiceless, and only rarely mentioned. If seen as a pilgrimage, Trollope's Lenten journey is a political one and its rewarding destination is San Marino, "the oldest of the social bodies in Europe, [a] virgin Republic of eight hundred years' duration, which has never wished, and does not wish to change its lot" [42]. San Marino is an ideal

[38] Trollope 1862, 2; emphasis in the original.
[39] Trollope 1862, 30.
[40] Trollope 1862, 7.
[41] Trollope 1862, 8.
[42] Trollope 1862, 295.

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final destination because it unfolds the potential Italians possess to run a modern, dynamic, independent nation, capable of shaping its own future. Its heritage does not easily fit within the feminised, passive image of Italy even if, as evinced in the above quotation, Trollope's text presents unresolved linguistic ambiguities produced by a masculine travel writing genre that retains a gendered notion of land as female and does not distinguish its geographical from its political identity.

Trollope is interested in the Italian people and interacts with all the social groups in the local communities he visits. He reports conversations with waitresses and chefs, the local aristocracy and the farming communities, the passers-by and the owners of small businesses. Their "free interchange of thought and opinion on any subject"[43] represents, in his opinion, a most remarkable transformation in Umbria and the Marches; for instance, after visiting Gubbio, he concludes:

> the change, which this new freedom of the tongue is operating with wonderful rapidity in the social and moral characteristics of the Italians, is one of the most suggestive, as it is one of the most valuable results of the new order of things in the Peninsula. [44]

The population has found a renewed willingness to engage in conversation. Their rural and urban landscapes, which are depicted with authentic attention to detail, can only be an initial point for Trollope, who then proceeds to contrasting them with their poverty and need for education. As he enters Fermo, for example, he sharply notes how he "is reminded for the tenth thousandth time that picturesqueness and prosperous civilization do not go hand in hand"[45]. He is interested in the human stories and voices he finds in the landscapes. He engages in conversations with the people around him or investigates historical testimonies and traces. The individual stories he tells are an original feature that gives vitality and dynamism to the narrative. As expected, the conversations are controlled through translation, but the correct use of local expressions adds authenticity to the text. When the interlocutors are female, they tend to be young waitresses who are also the object of the travellers' male gaze and provide evidence of the two British friends' heteronormativity. Trollope and his companion predictably disclose a preference for the women in the

[43] Trollope 1862, 100.
[44] Trollope 1862, 100.
[45] Trollope 1862, 199.

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Marches and their "laughing black eyes" [46] and "eyes full of vivacity and intelligence" [47].

Trollope is critical of the Papacy and openly depicts the Pope as a despot, whilst the first king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, embodies the new Italian nation. Like many other British liberals, Trollope understands how the latter represents a reassuring unifying leader, an ideal of nationhood sustained through constitutional monarchy, not republicanism. Previously Trollope had been doubtful of Napoleon III, Mazzini, and Giuseppe Garibaldi as suitable candidates. As an editor of *The Tuscan Athenaeum*, Trollope accepted to present a moderate view sustaining the then newly elected Pope Pious IX, who appeared less conservative and open to a united Italy. The Pope later withdrew his troops during the Italian first war of Independence (1848-49) and became instead "implacably opposed to the emergence of an Italian consciousness, condemned Italian nationalism, and refused to recognise the new state" [48]. Pious IX betrayed the Risorgimento quest for a united Italy with Rome as the capital. Victor Emmanuel II, on the other hand, showed his keen support to the Risorgimento and attained a positive image as a soldier king that became prominent in forging his state image of a father of the nation. His image of soldierly valour links him to a patriarchal notion of assertive leadership. Terry Kirk comments that "military valour and the protection of arts and industry were emphasised over his natural preference for the hunt, food and women" [49]. Victor Emmanuel II, for Trollope, represents an image of democratic government that conforms more to Victorian expectations of a nation state. He was not as heroic or charismatic as Garibaldi, a hero of two worlds who fought for an idea of liberty that was represented by republicanism, but the king was more predictable and represented constancy, heritage, and a model of national independence that, as in Britain, was founded on a constitutional monarchy. It is worth also noting that he bestowed upon Trollope the order of St Maurice and St Lazarus the same year *A Lenten Journey* was published.

Trollope's main motif is municipal history and how it attests to the past ability of the Italian nobility to activate change, to show strength of conviction, agency, and belligerence. A keen historian, he deepens his knowledge of the local heritage by consulting rare texts of local history,

[46] Trollope 1862, 253.
[47] Trollope 1862, 154.
[48] Raponi 2014, 29.
[49] Kirk 2008, 35.

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which are duly referenced, and investigates local superstitions and customs. He recalls those historical moments of crises, rebellion, and short-lived tyranny led by communities or individuals whose actions question the notion of a Papacy's peaceful rule. He rewrites the history of the towns he visits, which has long been recorded by Roman Catholic institutions, and casts the Papacy as the abusive, corrupted rule that crashes the individual's freedom. In his opinion, the Papacy was not less violent and ecclesiastical tyrants were capable of being more belligerent and vindicative than secular despots, who, in his accounts, encapsulate stereotypical masculine qualities that he aspires the Italian Kingdom to rediscover. He considers the Papacy a cause of stasis and stagnation in Italy's past and present, which needs to be eliminated. In sustaining the need to separate political from religious power, he also maintains the attention on the Roman Question. At the end of chapter XIII, he provokingly exclaims, "I would rather live under the rule of our friend Oliverotto, ten times over!" [50]. In *Il Principe* (1532, *The Prince* 1640), Niccolò Macchiavelli considers Oliverotto Eufreducci a model tyrant who succeeded through atrocities. Figures like Eufreducci were controversial, associated to violence and persecutions as they aggressively rose to power. Nevertheless, Trollope identifies them as agents of progress arguing that "the rich Italian nature, the rich Italian soil *did* produce great men and great things under the rough energy-generating influence of those stormy times" [51]. He prefers Eufreducci's promethean energy and determination as an alternative model to the Papacy because it stimulates change and potential. He does not consider the consequences experienced by the local people but focuses only on historical cycles and how "it was amid the turmoil and confusion and violences of the centuries previous to the commencement of the Papal rule, that genius was produced, that art strove, that wealth was created" [52]. His "pro-Risorgimento historiography" centres on Italy's masculine agency and determination.

4. Conclusions on Trollope's pro-Risorgimento travelogue

A Lenten Journey fittingly concludes with an evocative, hopeful dawn in San Marino, after a very arduous climb. Standing "on the castle battlements

50 Trollope 1862, 222.
51 Trollope 1862, 23; emphasis in the original.
52 Trollope 1862, 22.

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at sun-rise"[53], Trollope admires a remarkable dawn on the Adriatic Sea. Touched by the rising sun, the land comes to life as if under a promethean fire that ignites it with strength and purpose. It is a new dawn that symbolises Italy's regeneration by means of a male mythical image of creation, whose intense light also evokes representations of the resurrection of Christ. It is a worthy reward for the traveller and a hopeful message to both the Italian and British supporters of the Kingdom of Italy. At the dawn of a modern Italian nation, Trollope celebrates a mythical image of regeneration that contrasts with that of the passive *bella Italia* and sustains a western androcentric discourse of agency. Contending with Victorian conflicting gendered poetics and politics of representation, his revision of the Papal States' history in Umbria and the Marches fashions a "pro-Risorgimento historiography" that sustains a masculine gendering of Italy through palimpsestuous views that uncover the traces of those masculine traits Italy needs, in his opinion, to solve the Roman Question and seize a leading role in Europe as a modern nation.

Trollope's travelogue advises to opt for a "ramble through the byways"[54], a mode of travel that favours a slow pace, interactions with the local communities, uncertainties, and difficulties, and that requires determination and resilience, as well as knowledge of the Italian language. Visiting the remote hill-top towns in Umbria and the Marches provides unique ways to reclaim an Italian vigorous, masculine image. In those rural and urban communities where the symbols of the Pope's rule dominate, Trollope reclaims past local political rivalries and belligerent episodes triggered by individuals whose actions, whether successful or not, demonstrate initiative, determination, and agency, qualities that Victorian liberal, dominant political discourses constructed as masculine, and which, he maintains, the Italian Kingdom has reawakened.

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53 Trollope 1862, 307.
54 Trollope 1862, 293.

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