CORNELIA TURNER'S TRANSNATIONAL RISORGIMENTO

by

JESSICA DEMARCO-JACOBSON

(Under the Direction of Casie LeGette)

ABSTRACT

Even though Cornelia Turner wrote two novels that supported the Italian unification movement (Risorgimento), she is mostly remembered for her relationships with her famous male contemporaries, namely Percy Bysshe Shelley and Giovanni Ruffini. I analyze how Turner's first novel, *Angelo Sanmartino: A Tale of Lombardy in 1859* (1860), attempted to garner Anglophone support of the Risorgimento. Additionally, I argue that Turner complicates Diana Moore's concept of Risorgimento "revolutionary domesticity," and that her life's work offers critical insight into how English women writers supported Italian unification. This thesis constructs the first comprehensive biography of Turner, examines her literary and political influence on her contemporaries, and highlights her role in the Italian nationalist movement. In doing so, I share just one example of how nineteenth-century women writers played an integral role in how Italy became a nation, how that nation has always defied borders, and the transnational nature of nation-building.

INDEX WORDS: Cornelia Turner, Risorgimento, *Angelo Sanmartino: A Tale of Lombardy in 1859*, Romantic literature, Victorian literature, Nationalism studies, Transnationalism studies, Revolutionary domesticity, Feminist recovery

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JESSICA DEMARCO-JACOBSON

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JESSICA DEMARCO-JACOBSON

Major Professor:	Casie LeGette
Committee:	Richard Menke
	Barbara McCaskill
	Steven Soper

Electronic Version Approved:

Ron Walcott
Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2025

DEDICATION

Dedicato a tutte le donne che hanno creato l'Italia, i cui nomi sono stati relegati alle note a piè di pagina dei loro contemporanei maschili, o sono stati completamente perduti nella storia.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Doubt not but that the land [Italy], which teems with sons and daughters such as you, will work out her entire deliverance." These are the closing lines to Cornelia Turner's first novel, *Angelo Sanmartino: A Tale of Lombardy in 1859* (1860). Written during the Italian unification movement known as the Risorgimento, Turner's novel imagines how both men and women can work together and contribute to the nation in the making. Despite her literary contributions to the Italian nationalist movement, Turner is mostly remembered for her friendships with her more well-known male contemporaries, Percy Bysshe Shelley and Giovanni Ruffini. While some scholars have recognized Turner's influence in her peers' writing, few have recognized the literary merit of her own works or how her fiction offers radical forms of revolutionary domesticity. Although her novels did not achieve commercial success in her time and have been rarely studied since, they merit academic attention during ours. Cornelia Turner's work demonstrates just one example of what nineteenth-century British women writers can teach us about nationalism, networks, and how extrinsic voices created nations in Europe.

Turner was involved, interested, and heavily inspired by the Risorgimento, the nineteenth-century Italian sociocultural, nationalist movement that aimed to unite the regions of the peninsula into one modern nation. Cornelia's active involvement in the movement was influenced by her mother, Harriet de Boinville, an active salonnière, who encouraged Mary Shelley (and likely others) to become involved in the Risorgimento. Cornelia participated in de Boinville's networks during her youth and became fluent in Italian at a young age. But she was

also influenced by Giovanni Ruffini, a patriotic Italian exile and novelist who her mother had befriended in Paris. After de Boinville's death, Turner and Ruffini moved in together, and they both began writing novels supporting Italian nationalism. Turner wrote two novels, *Angelo Sanmartino: A Tale of Lombardy in 1859* (1860), and *Charity, a Tale* (1862), which provide unique and important insight into how English women writers tried to garner support for the Risorgimento. In particular, *Angelo Sanmartino* bridges the gap between British and Italian literary traditions. Turner created an Italian nationalist novel, written in English, that encourages Anglophone support of the Italian nationalist movement. In doing so, she expands the literary forms of revolutionary domesticity that were commonplace during the Risorgimento.

Turner was a part of the larger political and literary movement Diana Moore terms "revolutionary domesticity," which was "how politically active British women used their traditional domestic, nurturing, and maternal behaviors and identities along with the privileges of their British status to participate in [the Risorgimento]" (*Revolutionary Domesticity* 29).[1] In other words, revolutionary domesticity was a way for many women, particularly of the middle and upper-classes, to be politically active in the available, socially acceptable ways, such as gift-giving and childcare, but also financial and emotional support of Italian nationalists (Moore, *Revolutionary Domesticity* 29). Women also participated in literary activities, constantly writing and communicating across borders. They "refus[ed] to limit their activities, interests, or personal connections to one nation" (20). For example, women applied their linguistic skills to translate works of male Risorgimento heroes, which Turner frequently did for Ruffini (Moore, *Revolutionary Domesticity* 118). Famous examples of women writers who engaged in Risorgimento revolutionary domesticity include Elizabeth Barrett Browning, whose *Casa Guidi*

[1] Diana Moore first explored this concept in her 2020 article, "Revolutionary Domesticity: The Feminist Strategies of Anglo-Italian Mazzinian Nationalists."

Windows (1851) and *Poems Before Congress* (1860) advocated for English support of the Risorgimento; Margaret Fuller, whose journalism informed Americans about the movement; and Jessie White Mario, whose translations provided the Anglophone world with Italian perspectives (Moore, *Revolutionary Domesticity* 112). I argue that Cornelia Turner expands the current understanding of literary revolutionary domesticity. She was a translator and editor, but also a novelist. She created perhaps the first Anglophone pro-Risorgimento novels written by a woman. In doing so, Cornelia Turner utilized the novel to communicate across borders. In understanding how Turner utilized her transnational experiences in her early life (travelling between England, Saint Vincent Island, and France) and her transnational literary circle to write her novels, I set out to uncover more of her biography.

Because Turner's biographical information only exists in sources about her male contemporaries—with the exception of Barbara de Boinville's *At the Center of the Circle*—I aim to construct the first brief, but cohesive biography of Cornelia Turner as *her own author*. I accomplish this by compiling details from various biographies of Percy Shelley, Giovanni Ruffini, and Vernon Lee, along with letters from these figures and other contemporaries. By reviewing these other biographies and combing for details about Turner, I highlight how the current academic consideration of Turner primarily depicts her only as one of Percy Shelley's fleeting romantic interests, rather than an accomplished author and political mover in her own right. I have included four portraits of Turner throughout this thesis to illustrate the major episodes of her life. Three of the portraits are being shown for the first time since their initial publication in 1931, while one is being shown for the first time since its original publication in 1986. Aside from this biography, I will analyze how Turner continued her mother's political

literary circle, and how she and Ruffini exemplified “Romantic sociability” and collaboration through their works.

First defined by Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite in their seminal book on the subject, the concept of “Romantic sociability” ultimately rejects the idea that the Romantics were “lone poet[s], withdrawn into productive introspection, with individualism rather than collective activity” (4). Instead, the Romantics were inspired by Enlightenment culture to utilize social spaces such as private homes and public areas (such as coffee-houses and inns) to discuss republican ideologies and participate in dissenting culture, especially during the 1790s (Russell and Tuite 4-5). Turner’s mother, Harriet de Boinville, inspired by the Enlightenment and Revolutionary Era ideals she was in direct contact with, enacted Romantic sociability in her Bracknell home. Like her friend William Godwin, de Boinville was a proponent of a more “private” Romantic sociability which depended on home visits and private dinners (Russell and Tuite 17). Cornelia Turner continued her mother’s Romantic sociability into the Victorian era, and used her novels as a form of public sociability. But equally important is how she utilized the private spaces of her letters and her family’s apartment in Paris to garner Anglophone support for the Risorgimento. As a proponent of Romantic sociability, Cornelia Turner encouraged her connections to engage with the Risorgimento, particularly through their writing or more tangible services. In the example of Ruffini, Turner successfully encouraged him to participate in the new Italian parliament. Like Dorothy Wordsworth, Cornelia Turner deserves scholarly attention for the literary and political influence she had on her connections.

In Anne K. Mellor’s *Romanticism & Gender* (1993), she rightly criticized Romanticist scholarship for being “unwittingly gender-biased,” almost exclusively focusing on the writings of six male poets: William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Blake, Byron, Percy

Shelley, and John Keats (1). In recent years, scholars have re-examined women's role in Romantic literature, seeking to give equal weight to Romantic women authors (Mellor 1). An example from the past half-century is how scholars have completely reconsidered the role of Dorothy Wordsworth. Specifically, scholars have studied how her *Grasmere Journal* and other works were vital to the success of her famous brother, William. Wordsworth's journal entry about a field of daffodils directly inspired one of her brother's most famous poems, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (Christopher Wordsworth 213). With second-wave and third-wave feminist scholarship came increased interest in how certain sisters inspired their more famous brothers, as seen with scholarly texts like Michael Polowetzky's *Prominent Sisters: Mary Lamb, Dorothy Wordsworth, and Sarah Disraeli* (1996). Since the late 1980s, several other Wordsworth journals and letters have been published.[2] Just as scholars have done with Dorothy Wordsworth, I argue that it is crucial to understand how writers such as Cornelia Turner strongly influenced her contemporaries in their creative writing and political involvement in the Italian national cause.

I will challenge how some Ruffini biographers undervalue Turner's translations and contributions to his novels, and I will demonstrate the impact she made in his works. My thesis will openly acknowledge how Turner catalyzed the writing of her famous contemporaries, while celebrating her novels' own contributions to the Risorgimento. Turner's status as a "helper" to her male contemporaries should not reduce the importance of those contributions, because her collaborative efforts were also political and literary ones. In other words, her collaboration with others is **not** a sign of writerly weakness but instead of writerly strength and importance.

The general question I seek to answer is: How did Cornelia Turner, a nineteenth-century English woman writer, engage in political and literary work to support the Italian Risorgimento,

[2] See *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, Vol. 1: The Early Years:1787–1805*, Oxford University Press, 2015.

and how did her literary networks facilitate this engagement? In short, Cornelia Turner was a literary activist for the Italian nationalist movement. Her activism was twofold: **1)** She encouraged those in her literary circle to expand their interest in Italian culture and nationalism. For example, she tutored Shelley in Italian and successfully encouraged Ruffini to partake in the new Italian parliament. **2)** Her novels, particularly *Angelo Sanmartino*, attempted to garner Anglophone support for the Risorgimento. By engaging in novel-writing, Turner expands the definition of (literary) revolutionary domesticity past the "helping editor/translator" identity. While she continued to help edit the works of those in her circle, doing so was an inherently political task. However, Turner also created novels to advance the Italian national cause, and might be one of the first Anglophone women to do so. Additionally, she is a crucial example of women's sociability and political work. In short, this thesis recovers Cornelia Turner's work, highlighting her Romantic sociability, both private and public, as an exemplification of Anglophone literary revolutionary domesticity during the Risorgimento. In doing so, I share just one example of how nineteenth-century women writers played an integral role in how Italy became a nation, how that nation has always defied borders, and the transnational nature of nation-building.

CHAPTER 2

EARLY LIFE: STORMS & REVOLUTIONS (1795-1813)

Cornelia Pauline Eugenia Chastel de Boinville was born in her grandfather John Collins' house in Willesden, England on 23 February 1795. Her father was Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Chastel de Boinville (c. 1756-1813), an aide-de-camp to General Lafayette. Her mother was Englishwoman Harriet de Boinville, née Collins (1773-1847), an ardent supporter to the French Revolution and influential friend to famous writers, such as Frances Burney, William Godwin, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Shelley, and Giovanni Ruffini (Colby 15, BdB 12-14).[3] The family's peaceful stay in England came to an end when Collins requested Harriet and Jean Baptiste to superintend his plantation on Saint Vincent island, which was destroyed by combatants in the Second Carib War (BdB ch 4-5).

First, Harriet, Jean Baptiste, and baby Cornelia had to make passage through County Cork. But bad weather set in, and Cornelia fell ill. Luckily, Lord Robert Jocelyn, 2nd Earl of Roden, and his wife Lady Jocelyn, graciously took the family under their "hospitable roof" (Constable 13-14). But the tides soon turned again in December 1796. Just when the family attempted to depart, forty-three French ships sailed towards Ireland, preparing to invade (McGarry 24). A naval battle ensued. As cannonballs whistled from across the middle of a stormy Bantry Bay, Harriet de Boinville found herself hunkering at the bottom of a boat with her sick, wailing, one-year-old daughter and pregnant with another child. The family arrived safely

[3] BdB = Barbara de Boinville.

at the Saint Vincent plantation in early 1797; Cornelia's brother, John Alfred, was born soon after.

John Collins' Saint Vincent plantation sowed the seeds of the family's wide revolutionary and literary circle. William Godwin's friend, James Marshal, visited Saint Vincent in 1784 and stayed with Collins while he was there (Cameron 255). Although we don't exactly know when Godwin himself became acquainted with the Collinses or related families, he and Marshal, both young and broke, attempted to convince Collins to fund their writings (BdB 9). In addition to being the beginning of the family's wide literary circle, the Collins plantation also provided the money that supported de Boinville and Turner for the rest of their lives. Collins, a medical doctor and plantation owner, was also the likely author of an ameliorationist text that advocated for treating slaves "humanely."[4] Profits from Collins' enslavement of Black people allowed him to leave a large monetary legacy, which would be the equivalent of over a million pounds in 2025, to his descendants in his will (Cameron 254). In other words, Harriet and Cornelia were able to enjoy the privileges they had, thanks to Collins being an enslaver. Harriet, who wore the "badge of republicanism, a wide red band" and called herself "*une enfant de la Révolution*," may have felt at odds with the source of her family's money (Constable 10-11). Additionally, the island imposed an exacerbated version of the isolation her family experienced in England, where Jean Baptiste was considered an enemy of the British (BdB 33-34, 36). As a result of these difficulties, Harriet and Jean Baptiste's stay in Saint Vincent did not last long. After a disappointing year on the island, Harriet and her children returned to England to stay with her father in London (BdB 34-35).

[4] *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves in the Sugar Colonies by a Professional Plan* (1803).

Harriet's life took another turn for the worse after Jean Baptiste went to France to get his name off the Emigrant list (Constable 14-15).[5] He went on to participate in the disastrous Napoleonic campaign of 1812. The freezing temperatures of the Russian winter made Jean Baptiste seriously ill, and he died as a prisoner of war in Vilna, modern-day Lithuania. Harriet and her children didn't discover he was dead until an agonizing seventeen months after the fact. Despite their constant separation and tragic ending to their marriage, Harriet made important connections through her marriage to Jean Baptiste, creating the beginnings of her wide revolutionary and literary circle, which was eventually continued by her daughter Cornelia. Harriet de Boinville's circle included the philosopher, William Godwin; his daughter and author of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley; and her husband, the Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Other key members included the contemporary bestselling writer Frances Burney d'Arblay; the Italian patriot and novelist Giovanni Ruffini; and Harriet's brother-in-law, the vegetarian activist John Frank Newton.

[5] His grown son from his first marriage, Eugène, just had his property sequestrated (Constable 15-16). This might have been an additional reason for Jean Baptiste's return to France: he may have wanted to settle this pressing family matter about the property.

CHAPTER 3

EARLY CIRCLES OF HARRIET DE BOINVILLE AND CORNELIA TURNER (1813-1844)

Frances Burney d'Arblay (1752-1840)

While he served under General Marquis de Lafayette, Jean Baptiste de Boinville met his compatriot, Alexandre d'Arblay. Their English wives, who both married penniless Frenchmen despite their fathers' wishes, understood the difficulties of being in a transnational relationship in the Napoleonic Wars and soon became fast friends (BdB 41-43). Frances Burney d'Arblay, one of the bestselling authors of the eighteenth-century, remained with her husband in peaceful England while her friend went back and forth across the Channel. When her husband Alexandre was called to quell the Haitian slave rebellion, Burney feared for his life. Harriet de Boinville understood what it was like to be separated from a husband, especially amidst dangerous revolutions, and sent consoling letters to her friend. Burney assisted her friend while she was ill in Paris. de Boinville repaid this kindness by offering to forward the novelist's mail for her (BdB 42-43). Three surviving letters from 1793, 1802, and 1814 demonstrate close rapport between the de Boinvilles and d'Arblays, and how they bonded over their similar backgrounds (BdB 225-227, 230-232). In addition to these letters, Burney's diaries and journals also mention the de Boinville family with warm regard, on multiple occasions (Burney 127, 133, 137, 154, 157, 189). One of these letters reveals that Jean Baptiste prevented Burney from taking a "fruitless trip" from Paris to Dunkirk in 1810, potentially saving her life in the process (Burney 154, BdB 62-63). As Barbara de Boinville writes, the women demonstrated their rapport more through deeds rather than words, making that rapport somewhat difficult to analyze (BdB 43). Although

the lack of existent primary sources only leaves us with fragments of their interactions, Burney was only one of Harriet's well-known literary connections in the wide circle that Cornelia Turner would later continue.

William Godwin (1756-1836) and his Protégé, Thomas Turner

Thomas Jefferson Hogg satirized the conversations that Harriet de Boinville would later facilitate at her Bracknell estate in the 1810s: "They sighed, turned up their eyes, retailed philosophy…and swore by William Godwin and Political Justice" (qtd. in Cameron 276). Although Hogg's records of the topics discussed at de Boinville's salon indicate that she was an avid reader of Godwin's work, it is unknown when or how she met Godwin himself. Harriet was only eleven years old when Marshal visited her father's Saint Vincent estate, and she likely remembered him. Even though the origins of their connection is murky, Godwin's meticulously-kept diary shows that Harriet de Boinville was one of his closest friends in London. Aside from connecting over their shared radicalism, Harriet may have also loaned money to the habitually broke Godwin, considering a lawyer or bookkeeper was sometimes present during their meetings (BdB 52, Marshall 406). Harriet met with Godwin at his tall corner house on 41 Skinner Street at least 72 times between her first visit on 8 Aug. 1809 and 1827, the year she moved to Paris. Harriet's daughter, Cornelia, often accompanied her mother on these visits (BdB 51).[6]

Miranda Seymour speculates that the Godwin children (Fanny Imlay, the illegitimate daughter of the late Mary Wollstonecraft and American diplomat Gilbert Imlay; Mary, later to be Mary Shelley; and Jane Godwin) may have envied Cornelia and her mother because of their wealth and proficiency in foreign languages. Seymour thinks it may have been difficult for the

[6] Barbara de Boinville lists the specific dates as: 20 March 1810, 9 August 1810, 4 March 1811, 15 May 1811, 13 July 1811, 17 July 1811, 18 July 1811, 9 September 1811, 1 October 1811, and 19 October 1811.

Godwin girls not to "draw unfavourable comparisons with dumpy Mrs [Mary Jane] Godwin" (Seymour 65). I argue that these speculations are harmful and distracting from other possibilities, such as if de Boinville introduced the Godwin girls to her radical ideology (BdB 58-60). de Boinville, with her signature red sash and egalitarian salons, may have utilized her visits to Godwin as an opportunity to further radicalize his children, who were already steeped in the radical beliefs of the time. In other words, I argue we should focus on how Boinville and her daughter may have allowed the girls to discuss radical republican ideas in the Age of Revolutions, rather than any potential jealousy.

The mother and daughter's visits to Skinner Street brought Cornelia into contact with Godwin's friend, lawyer/legal advisor, and protege, Thomas "Tom" Turner, whom she would later marry on 24 January 1812 (BdB xi, 69). According to Barbara de Boinville, Godwin's diary notes that Cornelia saw Tom on at least ten occasions between 1810 and 1811 (BdB 70, 259). Apart from Godwin's sparse diary entries, Cornelia Turner's life from 1802 to her marriage to Thomas Turner on 24 January 1812 is difficult to track. Despite the limited amount of details on Cornelia's childhood, several letters do reveal some insight into the nature of her marriage to Tom. For example, we know that Harriet de Boinville approved of the marriage. In a letter dated 7 March 1814 to Frances Burney, Harriet wrote that "Cornelia is married to a man whose understanding and conduct satisfies entirely her mother" (qtd. in BdB 99). However, the couple themselves did not seem to approve of their marriage thirty years later, when Cornelia Turner separated from her husband in 1828 (Corrigan 181, St Clair 994). There are several speculations behind their separation, one of which is Thomas Turner's history of homosexual encounters.

According to St Clair's *The Godwins and the Shelleys*, Thomas Turner first reached out to Godwin on 4 July 1803, looking for advice after he had a homosexual encounter:

> …I totter on the brink of perdition and call on you to save me…Last September an intimacy took place between me and two young men whom I proudly designed to guide to knowledge and virtue. Instead of this they are dragging me to ignorance and vice. I see my danger, I lament and condemn my folly but I go on. A violent affection for one of these youths reduces me to the most abject slavery. I have absented myself from them, I have shut myself up in my study, I have had recourse to my books in which I once found felicity…absence encreases the fire that consumes my soul. I must fall or I must go mad should you in whom is my last hope deny me the support I am soliciting. Let me come to your house and enjoy your conversation…Let me in your company regain my love of wisdom…If you [deny my request] the blossom which you have called forth in me will be destroyed I shall wither like a blasted tree. (qtd. in St Clair 300-301)

Considering the content of the letter, which details Tom's difficulty in ignoring the "violent affection" of a male youth, it is strange that this is the first known point of contact between him and Godwin. In any case, these homosexual encounters may have caused the later separation between him and Cornelia in 1828 (BdB 75, 137, 155-156). Conflicting personalities may have also been a factor, as Godwin and Thomas's relationship had its ebbs and flows.[7] Godwin believed that Tom married Cornelia for her money, as she was to receive £10,000 on her marriage ("Editorial Notes for Turner, Thomas," Myers, O'Shaunessy, and Philp).[8] If this was indeed the case, it provides another plausible reason their marriage was not a success. Although the cause of the Turners' separation is unknown, the de Boinville-Turner family's relationship

[7] In 1809, Godwin broke off the friendship completely. However, the two always seemed to restore their friendship, and Thomas Turner was eventually "regarded as an honorary member of the Godwin family," and he regarded "Godwin as his rescuer and his adopted father" for the rest of his life (St Clair 301). Godwin's appreciation for Turner is evidenced in a letter dated 18 May 1811 to his second wife, Mary Jane Godwin, where he praises Turner for preventing him from going "mad" in a particularly awkward financial situation (qtd. in Kegan 183).

[8] As per request of the William Godwin's Diary hosted by the University of Warwick, I have parenthetically cited the editorial entry for Thomas Turner. However, I use the general citation in the Works Cited section.

with William Godwin nevertheless provided them with further well-known connections, such as Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)

Harriet de Boinville first met Shelley in the spring of 1813, when both lived near each other in Pimlico, Central London, and bonded over their similar political ideologies. When de Boinville moved to Bracknell, 27 miles west of London, she presided over another radical salon. Shelley made regular appearances at de Boinville's Bracknell estate, which served as something of a forerunner to her future salon in Paris. de Boinville invited people of all backgrounds at Bracknell, just as she would later invite refugees to stay at her Paris salon (Bradley 67-68). Aside from its inclusive atmosphere, de Boinville's salon dined on only vegetarian cuisine, which allowed a tangible way to practice her radical beliefs.. Her salon's inclusivity and insistence on the "vegetable diet," as it was then called, allowed it to exemplify the current "radical dining" culture in Romantic sociability. Her inclusivity also demonstrates a private version of the equitable Romantic lectures that people of all classes would attend (Russell and Tuite 14, Russell 125). Another aspect of de Boinville's Romantic sociability was her generosity towards her guests, especially Percy Shelley.

In 1813, Percy Bysshe Shelley faced the consequences of his Byronic actions, with increasing debts and an unplanned child born to his first wife. The Newton family, whom Shelley was friends with, suggested that he stay with Harriet, related to them through her sister Cornelia Collins Newton. Shortly afterwards, Harriet welcomed Shelley at her large country house in Bracknell. Shelley yearned to return to de Boinville's radical salon and moved to a nearby house, along with his first wife Harriet and their daughter Eliza Ianthe. He eventually

moved into de Boinville's house for a short time in the spring of 1814, and befriended the seventeen-year-old Cornelia while he was there. Shelley moved out a few months later, after eloping with Mary Godwin (Cameron 277). de Boinville regretted ending her friendship with Shelley, but she was nevertheless one of the first to recognize and encourage his poetic genius and revolutionary beliefs (Cameron 278).

Many scholars theorize that Shelley held romantic feelings for Cornelia (and even Harriet), citing two poems and some saucy journal entries he wrote in broken Latin at Bracknell (Haines 65, Holmes 228, St Clair 360, Worthen 101). Some believe that Shelley's passion for Cornelia may have been the reason for the end of his friendship with the family (Dowden *Vol. II* 543, Bieri 272). However interesting it is to ponder the nature of the Turner-Shelley relationship, this focus strips Turner and her mother of their individuality and true importance in Shelley's life. In other words, when scholars spend so much time trying to determine whether or not Turner was one of the many objects of Shelley's desire, they reduce Turner's role to just that, an object of desire. For that reason, my focus here is the literary and pedagogical relationship that Shelley had with de Boinville and her daughter, Cornelia Turner. de Boinville's Romantic sociability allows us to see her family's influence on the poet.

Harriet de Boinville's Bracknell salon had an inclusive atmosphere that allowed its guests of various socioeconomic backgrounds to discuss a wide variety of radical political topics. One of the frequent points of discussion among the "twenty different subjects" at Bracknell dinners was William Godwin (qtd. in Cameron 277). Hogg records that de Boinville hosted vigorous philosophical discourse about early Romantic literature, Godwin's ideas in his essays and novels, along with women's rights (527, 561-2). Among the specific texts they discussed were Godwin's *Political Justice*, "the parts of Petrarchs, [Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young*] Werters , *St. Leons*

[Godwin's second novel], and Fleetwoods [Godwin's third novel]" (Hogg 463). Like Godwin, de Boinville's circle was one of "private sociability," a company of friends who sustained literary culture in Romantic-period Britain (Russell and Tuite 17). Indeed, Godwin and de Boinville's private sociability, which consisted of home visits and private dinners, continued to play an increasingly important part in literary public culture (Russell and Tuite 17). While Hogg's sarcastic ridicule of de Boinville's Bracknell salon suggests he did not appreciate its purpose, his biography of Percy Shelley nonetheless provides us with important details about the salon. In addition to topics of discussion, Hogg also tells us that de Boinville's salon allowed people of all socioeconomic backgrounds.

The inclusive atmosphere of de Boinville's salon constructed a more private version of the inclusive atmosphere that Romantic lectures offered. Hogg disdainfully notes that de Boinville's salon was not just for the Eton and Oxford-educated elite—but also for people "all of low origin"—to discuss how to progress and perfect society (463). Hogg writes that there were generally "two or three sentimental young butchers, an eminently philosophical tinker,[9] and several very unsophisticated medical practitioners, or medical students, all of low origin, and vulgar and offensive manners" (463). Although Hogg's descriptions are clearly tinged with a sardonic attitude, these descriptions bear striking similarity when Isaac D'Israeli caricatured John Thelwall's lectures. D'Israeli wrote that Thelwall's lectures attracted "wild apprentices…tiny taylors' sitting among 'the bloody offals of butchers stalls,'" along with "people of gentility" (qtd. in Russell 125). de Boinville's salon incorporated the inclusive atmosphere allowed at Romantic public lectures, and similarly received criticism from more

[9] "Chiefly derogatory. Any itinerant trader, performer, or beggar; spec. (esp. *Scottish* and *Irish English*) a Traveller, [Romani person], or other person living in an itinerant community. Sometimes also: a vagabond, tramp, or disreputable person" (*OED*).

conservative crowds for doing so (Russell 125). Although Hogg mocked the Bracknell estate as "the abode of perfect republican equality," de Boinville's salon allowed Percy Shelley a place to explore the brave, radical ideas that he later published in his poetry (527).

One radical idea discussed *and* practiced at de Boinville's Bracknell salon was vegetarianism. Vegetarianism, then called the "vegetable diet," was radical for several reasons. In essence, the vegetable diet was a humanitarian, proto-ecological sensibility that saw individual action, one's diet, as a means to enact social change and revolution. Eating meat was a marker of status, while the vegetable diet was the fare of the lower, labouring classes (Morton 34-35). In addition to the diet's class consciousness, vegetarianism also saw animals as equal to humans, making it egalitarian (Morton 26-28). Thus, the private Romantic sociability of the dinner invitation became a means to explore a radical idea through its actual practice (Russell and Tuite 17-19). Shelley first experimented with vegetarianism while at the University of Oxford. But he only practiced it seriously after meeting de Boinville's brother-in-law, the vegetarian activist John Frank Newton, of the same Newtons who encouraged Shelley to stay with de Boinville in 1813 (Hogg 238, Cook and Guiton 77). Despite being converted to the diet by Mrs. Cornelia Collins Newton herself, Hogg scoffed at the meatless meals served at Bracknell: "Flesh, fowl, fish, game, never appeared…the simplest fare of the poorest old woman…was the diet" (Hogg 504-563). Shelley's first large poetic work, *Queen Mab,* which he wrote while at Bracknell, contained a note titled "A Vindication of the Natural Diet" that championed the vegetarian diet. Later that year, he published the essay as a pamphlet. In addition to this essay, the poem itself uses the following imagery to demonize eating meat: "He slays the lamb that looks him in the face, / And horribly devours his mangled flesh" (qtd. in Preece 252). In 1813, Shelley published a more temperate essay advocating for vegetarianism titled "On the Vegetable System of Diet"

(Oerlemans 531). Ethical vegetarianism remained one of Shelley's most passionate beliefs for the remainder of his life, and *Queen Mab* would never have come to fruition if not for the help of Harriet de Boinville and Cornelia Turner.

de Boinville and Turner offered more than the vegetarian diet to feed Shelley's imagination; Cornelia Turner helped Shelley complete *Queen Mab* when he was suffering from severe writer's block. In an 1873 letter to Vernon Lee, Turner recalled her consoling response and advice to Shelley's frustrations with himself:

> That is a mistake, Shelley…A poet's mind is like a China rose tree. It is covered with a first crop of roses. Then the blossoms fade & nothing but the silver green leaves all forlorn remain, but after a while a fresh set of buds come forth & blossom, & thus crop succeeds crop of beautiful flowers through the year. (qtd. in Corrigan 185-6)

Turner's advice did indeed help Shelley overcome his doubts, and he privately published *Queen Mab* in 1813. The poem was not only "the finest argument for ethical vegetarianism since…the third century," but also an announcement of his "controversial and decidedly radical political agenda" (Preece 253). And as Turner notes, he went on to write poems in the nine years that followed until his untimely death in 1822 (Corrigan 186). Turner reflected on Shelley's writing capacity, stating that "Genius does not die out of creation, the hidden germ remains & bursts forth at its time" (qtd. in Corrigan 185-186).[10] Her advice to Shelley, which essentially told him to be patient with himself, worked, as evidenced by his prolific poetical output after the fact. This exchange demonstrates how early Turner began cultivating close relationships with contemporary writers.

[10] Turner seems to be paraphrasing Shelley's *Defense of Poetry* (1821), where he said "[the poet's] thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of latest time." Or perhaps Shelley was paraphrasing Turner!

I would be remiss if I failed to mention the family's substantial emotional support during Shelley's tumultuous first marriage. Shelley himself stated that his time at Bracknell was the happiest of his life, and that de Boinville and Turner presence provided him with "a strange contrast to [his] former friendless & deplorable condition" (qtd. in Bieri 270). However, de Boinville and Turner were far from only being "supportive women," and instead provided him with a significant literary and pedagogical relationship that developed Shelley's political beliefs and poetic focuses. For example, Turner shaped Shelley's love of Italy and Italian literary culture.

Figure 2.1: Contemporary miniature of Cornelia Turner, from *Shelley and his Circle:1773-1822*, Vol. III (1986), on page 995. Likely from 1813-1820.

Cornelia Turner, Percy Shelley, and their Shared Love of Italy

Long before she met Shelley, Cornelia Turner demonstrated an early interest in Italian nationalism and culture. One of her first exposures to Italian culture was through opera. In a letter to Vernon Lee 10 Sept. 1874, Turner remembered her aunt and namesake, Cornelia Collins Newton, a great lover of music:

> My Aunt was the favourite pupil of a German pianist and composer, [Jan Ladislav] Dussek, and I think one or two of his compositions were dedicated to Miss Cornelia Collins…When quite a little girl I listened evening after evening to Mozart's trios and quartettes exquisitely played, besides a mixture of Haydn and later of Beethoven. It was a real atmosphere of music which lulled my childhood. Later, when grown up, I came to Paris and constantly enjoyed the Italians, when at their greatest perfection…
>
> My cousins, my Aunt's daughters, brought up in exclusive adoration of German music, came to Paris and I went with one to a concert, where sang for the first time in France a young and beautiful Italian singer. Her very first notes enthralled me. "That is a great artist", I said. When we went home, my cousin said to her sister with the contempt she felt for my unpractised music, "Cornelia [Turner] was delighted with an Italian singer just come out!" " Is she a good singer?" asked the sister. "Nothing extraordinary, just like all Italians". The new singer, my delight and my cousin's contempt, was [Giulia] Grisi." (qtd. in Corrigan 184-5)

This letter excerpt provides exciting personal details about her childhood and familial connections. First, we learn that Turner's family had strong ties to Romantic musicians, such as the Czech (not German, as Turner incorrectly notes) composer Jan Ladislav Dussek.

Additionally, the letter reveals that Turner held a specific interest in *Italian* music in her adulthood, even if her relatives did not share the same Italophilia. Given the nationalist role that opera played in the Risorgimento, Turner's exposure and interest in Italian music marked an early nationalist interest as well (Chiappini 66-68).

Opera, a popular cultural art in Italy and abroad, became the most representative form of Italian Romanticism between 1830 and 1850 (Chiappini 57). Thus, opera soon became a means of patriotic exaltation; the medium demonstrated Italian social issues and unrest through musical stage epics. In other words, early nineteenth-century Italian operas were a reliable reflection of widely held political sentiments (Chiappini 57, 67). During the nineteenth century, Italian opera productions toured all around the peninsula, throughout Western continental Europe, and even England (Körner 41). As a result, nineteenth-century Italian theatre and opera "fulfilled a role comparable to that of [the] periodicals" which circulated amongst Risorgimento intelligentsia (Körner 41). The opera that Turner saw provides further evidence of her early interests in Italian nationalist art and culture.

The second half of the excerpt from the letter reveals that Turner and her family saw Giulia Grisi's first performance in Paris. While the letter itself does not reveal which opera Turner and her family watched, Grisi's first Paris performance was on 14 October 1833 in Gioachino Rossini's *Semiramide* (Pearse and Hird 103). Giuseppe Mazzini, one of the founding fathers of Italy, lauded Rossini's operas, including *Semiramide*, as "the music of the future" because of their freedom-fighting characters and biblical themes (Chiappini 58). Turner's interest in Italian opera is apparent in *Angelo Sanmartino,* where the eponymous main character hears his first love, Flora Alton, sing the young fisherman's ballad from Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*. Turner thus sees opera as the powerful nationalist tool it was. Turner continued

expressing her interest in cultural products of Italian nationalism, and encouraged Shelley's life-long love of Italy and Italian literary culture.

At first, Shelley thought Cornelia was "cold and reserved," but later learned that she was quite "the reverse of this" once they began to bond over a shared love of literature and all things Italian (qtd. in BdB 99). Turner helped Shelley master the Italian language, a markedly nationalist move, through texts used in the nationalist movement. According to James Bieri, Harriet de Boinville encouraged Shelley and Hogg to learn Italian through Tarquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered* and Ludovico Ariosto's *Orland Furioso*, texts belonging to the Risorgimento literary canon (Banti 64, 176). By taking a closer look at Turner's tutelage, we learn more about her interest in Italy, her expertise in the Italian language, and how she tried to share nationalist ideals through pieces of the Risorgimento canon.

The choice to learn Italian was an inherently nationalist one. As Italian linguist Tullio De Mauro writes, before "the political [Italian] unification in 1861, there was not a force capable of increasing or at least maintaining the linguistic homogeny of the different regions" (16).[11] Especially in the years leading to unification, Italians debated over *la Questione della Lingua*, that is, how Italy could have a unified language with all its regional dialects (Cavanaugh 19-21). Even in 1862, a year after the Kingdom of Italy was established, the Italian language (literary Florentine) was hardly spoken outside of Tuscany and Rome, by only 2.5% of the total population (Hull 151). Thus, de Boinville's and Turner's knowledge of the language further points to their strong nationalist interests. In addition, the fact that the de Boinvilles (mostly Turner) taught Shelley "standard" Italian was remarkable. In doing so, they mirrored how Italian exiles successfully spread the Italian language (*italofonia*) to garner support for Italy in the early

[11] Translated from the original Italian: "*...e l'unificazione politica del 1861, non avevano agito forze capaci di accrescere o almeno salvaguardare l'omogeneità linguistica delle diverse regioni.*"

nineteenth century (Fournier-Finocchiaro 134, 142). Shelley and the other Romantics became more familiar with Italian literature than that of other European nations and welcomed the "new Renaissance of Italy" (Mack Smith, "Britain" 12). Along with the help of their "approved grammars and dictionaries," Shelley was able to enter the dialogue of Italian nationalist culture that de Boinville and Turner so appreciated (Varinelli 15-16). The texts that Turner and Shelley read together further support that their learning Italian had a nationalist streak.

Together, Turner and Shelley read Cesare Marchese di Beccaria's 1764 "*Tratto dei delitti e delle pene*" [*Treatise on Crimes and Punishments*], which proposed a humane, utilitarian system of reform for incarcerated people. Specifically, Beccaria condemned torture and the cruel punishments of the old criminal justice systems and instead advocated for rational, fair justicial administration (Tarlton Law Library). Beccaria's ideas, popular amongst Italian, English, and French radicals, revolutionized the prison-industrial complex in Europe and England (Carlson 224-225).[12] The treatise was considered the best-known representative of Italian Enlightenment (*Illuminismo*) thought in the North and helped lay the groundwork for later Risorgimento ideals (Beales and Biagini 17-18). Shelley believed that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the World," and his poetic criticisms of torture were ultimately rooted in Beccarian ideology ("A Defence of Poetry," Carlson 221-223). So, the fact that Shelley read this proto-nationalist text with Turner's help, demonstrates the beginnings of her long-time interest in Italian nationhood and spreading that interest to those in her circle.

The two also read Dante and Petrarch's sonnets, both integral parts of the Risorgimento intellectual tradition (Bieri 260, Curran 96, Banti 19). Along with these two founding fathers of the "standard" Italian language, Turner and Shelley also read Ludovico Ariosto and Torquato

[12] Godwin was also a reader of Beccaria (Carlson 225).

Tasso, early modern authors who also belonged to the Risorgimento intellectual tradition (Rossetti Angeli 25). Cornelia's tutorage in the Italian language allowed Shelley access to further radical ideas, culminating in his desire for a unified Italy.

When Shelley published his 1819 verse drama, *The Cenci,* he printed an edition himself in Livorno. However, the title page says the volumes were printed in Italy, not the city of Livorno or the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Hogg questioned Shelley's decision to do so, as it was a markedly political statement (Reiman 1001). The Italian nation would not be a reality until about fifty years later. Speaking as though it already was one in the early nineteenth century was a relatively new and incredibly radical idea, punishable by imprisonment or exile (Beales and Biagini 35-38). Thus, Shelley's bold decision to print *The Cenci* in "Italy" reflects Turner's foundational role in introducing him to the linguistic and cultural context necessary to participate in such radical Italian nationalism.

Shelley continued to be sympathetic towards the Italian national cause. His travels to Italy ignited artistic responses to a series of revolutions throughout the peninsula. Specifically, his "Ode to Liberty," "Ode to Naples," and *Swellfoot the Tyrant* reveal these sympathies (Schmid 61-63). Following the Palermo riots and Carbonari uprising in Naples, Percy wrote a letter to Mary Shelley, hoping for similar reforms in England, mourning the "terrible slaughter" at the events, but celebrating that "[t]he event [in Palermo]...was as it should be—Sicily like Naples is free" (qtd. in Schmid 66). As Mark Kipperman explains, Shelley's Romantic ideals allowed him to view the Italian nationalist cause as a progressive force, a political expression of a people's desire for autonomy from tyranny (Kipperman 50-51, 58). While Shelley celebrates and idealizes this "Romantic" nationalism he found in Italy, he (and Mary Shelley) were critical of whether or not these nationalist revolutionary causes were morally fit, because of their violent nature

(Schmid 83, Kipperman 56). Despite his reservations, Shelley's engagement with Italian nationalism illustrates the impact of Turner's teachings, which enabled him to interpret the ongoing Italian unification movement.

After years of struggling to live a gentlemanly life following a series of poor financial decisions, Shelley decided to move to Italy, where his money would go further. Considering that Shelley had "little practical knowledge" of Italian upon his arrival, Turner's Italian lessons went far, the practice with Italian canonical texts especially so (Rossetti Angeli 25). Now, he intended to read solely in Italian (Worthen 194). While in Italy, Shelley developed a stronger interest in canonical authors crucial to Risorgimento thought. For example, he began to engage further with the works of Guido Cavalcanti, Dante, Machiavelli, and Petrarch; the latter in both Italian and Latin (Anselmi 41, Rossington 659). Shelley paid special attention to Dante, a favorite of the Romantics, when he travelled to Milan for the first time, but soon became interested in Vittorio Alfieri, an Italian writer who contributed much to Risorgimento-era ideologies of liberalism and republicanism ((Rossetti Angeli 25, Rossington 659, Howells 5). It is likely that Shelley first discussed Alfieri with the Boinville-Turners when he first stayed with them at Bracknell in July 1813 (Rossington 655). As noted by Michael Rossington, the poetry that Shelley wrote while in Italy closely mirrors that of Alfieri's (626-627). In doing so, Shelley expanded his alignment with the Italian nationalist cause—an engagement Turner's early instruction made possible.

Cornelia Turner's relationship with Percy Shelley had a lasting influence on his intellectual and literary pursuits. Firstly, her emotional support and literary advice allowed him to complete his first long poem, *Queen Mab***.** Secondly, Turner shaped Shelley's political and cultural engagement with Italy by teaching him Italian through *Illuminismo* and early nationalist texts. Turner and her mother's influence is especially clear in some of the poems that Shelley

wrote in Italy, such as "Ode to Naples," "Ode to Liberty," and *Swellfoot the Tyrant*. "Ode to Naples" in particular illustrates Shelley's admiration of the Risorgimento and his wishes for similar reforms to be made in England (Schmid 61-63). As with her later relationships with Giovanni Ruffini and Vernon Lee, Turner's role as Shelley's mentor highlights how she bridged the gaps between literature, politics, and personal connections across national boundaries. Along with Percy Shelley, Harriet de Boinville and Cornelia Turner also influenced Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley and her interests in Italy and the Risorgimento. However, the size of that role is complicated by the nuances of their relationship.

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797-1851) & Italy

In this section, the Shelley surname will refer to Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. Shelley arguably expressed more interest in Italy and Italian nationalism than her husband. Her interest in Italian patriotism began early, with her reading the works of Vittorio Alfieri and Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi during 1814-1819, both of whom inspired nineteenth-century Italian nationalists (Crook 75).[13] These intellectual influences shaped her literary works and political views. For example, *Valperga* (1817-1821) reflects Sisimondian influence; her articles for the *Westminster Review* continued to support Italian nationalism; and in the 1831 version of *Frankenstein*, Elizabeth's Milanese father is an Italian patriot who embodies Alfierian principles (Crook 75-77). Shelley's early exposure to texts and authors of the Risorgimento intellectual tradition served as a foundation for her continued support of the Italian nationalist cause.

[13] Vittorio Alfieri (1749-1803) was an Italian writer, often considered one of the forerunners of Italian nationalism. Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi (1773-1842) was a Swiss historian and political economist who frequently wrote on French and Italian history.

On 11 June 1836, Harriet de Boinville wrote a letter to Shelley shortly after her friend William Godwin passed away, feeling it important to reconnect despite being out of touch for some time (BdB 243). In this letter, de Boinville also encouraged the young writer to reignite her interest in Italy:

> When I last saw you[,] you were looking with a tearful eye to Italy—as the land of your happiest recollections…but the rust of absence has had time to form. Has it so eaten into your love that you take no great interest in the present affecting state of Italy?...Accident has thrown me into contact with some Italian exiles who to my interest in the struggles of Italy as part of a general struggle…[here,] they live in honourable privation uncrushed morally by the numerous ills of exiles & devoted heart & soul to intellectual labours for the benefit of their country and of humanity. (HdB qtd. in BdB 208-9)[14]

Although it is difficult to determine why Boinville felt that Shelley stopped caring about Italy's "present affecting state," de Boinville's letter may have been inspired by the history of tension between them. In a letter dated 9 May 1842, Shelley instructed her half-sister Claire Clairmont, who lived in Paris at the time, not to "have fancies about the Rue Clichy [household]" (*MWS* II 25-6).[15] Shelley's ill feelings towards the de Boinville-Turners can be found as early a letter to Leigh Hunt dated 6 April 1819, where she wrote negatively about the family:

> [The Turners] are very strange…[Thomas] Turner is a man envious man & a slanderer…we should at least keep a kind of barrier in the way of intimacy. Mrs Boinville is a very delightful woman but has the unhappy knack of either forgetting or appearing to forget her friends as soon as they turn their backs — (*MWS* I 91)

[14] HdB = Harriet de Boinville. The letter originally comes from the Bodleian Libraries Abinger Collection, Dep C 516, c. 49, folios 40-1.
[15] *MWS = The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley,* Vol. I and II edited by Betty T. Bennett (1980).

Percy Shelley held similar views about Thomas Turner, if not partly because of his history with Cornelia, certainly because of the lawyer's role in the poet's finances. As aforementioned, Thomas was Godwin's protégé and later became his financial advisor and lawyer (Kegan 183, St Clair 301). Turner frequently advised Godwin against sending more money to his profligate son-in-law. Percy likely shared these experiences and frustrations with Mary, adding to the complicated past with de Boinville and the Turners.

This potential strife aside, Shelley's Risorgimento involvement increased after this letter and after her next visit to Paris in 1828, where she met with de Boinville. de Boinville had moved to Rue de Clichy 74 just the year before, at fifty-five years old. At the time, Shelley had five published books; *Frankenstein* and *Valperga* both included references to the Risorgimento. In 1843, Shelley once again stopped in Paris on her way to Italy. Clair Clairmont introduced Shelley to a group of Mazzinians expatriates that she herself met through the de Boinville-Turner circle (*MWS* II 85). According to Nora Crook, these Mazzinians were: Ferdinando Gatteschi, Guiterra, Mazzi, and Count Martini.[16] Betty Bennett adds Carlo Romano to this list (*MWS* II 85). Turner may have also introduced Shelley to one of her other Risorgimento connections, her close friend Vincenzo Gioberti, an Italian Catholic priest and founder of the Neo-Guelph movement who supported the idea of uniting Italy under a confederation with the Pope as its king (Crook 79).

Shelley took Boinville's advice quite seriously, and soon used her newfound Risorgimento connections to contribute to the Italian cause. Her *Rambles in Germany and Italy*

[16] The full identities of the latter three names are difficult to trace. Firstly, I am fairly certain "Guiterra" is a misspelling, as that is not an Italian surname. Betty Bennett writes the name as "Guitera," which matches the Carlo Guitera in Clairmont's letters to Shelley (Clairmont). I also could not find a "Mazzi". Emily W. Sunstein suspects that Count Martini may have been Martini Giovio della Torre Crema, who was a "coming leader of Italian liberation" (306). Nora Crook also misspells Ruffini as "Ruffigni" (79).

(1844) was published to raise funds for Gatteschi and reflects the culmination of her Risorgimento involvement. In the Preface, Shelley invites British sympathy for Italian nationalism, citing England as the fountainhead for "the aspiration for free institutions all over the world," maintaining that "the seed was all sown by us" (qtd in Moskal 194). In the text, Shelley also speaks approvingly of *La Giovine Italia* (Young Italy), Mazzini's movement to create a united Italian republic (Crook 79-80). Unfortunately, Gatteschi realized that the heartfelt language in Shelley's letters, which were sent along with the funds, could be read as seductive. He took advantage of this to blackmail Shelley for further funding ("Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley"). Despite her situation with Gatteschi, *Rambles*, which was reprinted in 1854 and 1858, still earned its place as "a significant piece of British pro-Risorgimento" writing (Crook 88).

Although Shelley's interests in the Risorgimento cannot be entirely attributed to the de Boinville-Turner circle, their influence did play a role. de Boinville's attempts to reignite Shelley's interest in the Risorgimento illustrate how she and Turner tried to involve members of their circle in the Italian nationalist cause. Additionally, Harriet de Boinville and Cornelia Turner both introduced Shelley to members of Risorgimento intelligentsia. Their connections, including Turner's ties to influential figures like Gioberti, and de Boinville's impassioned letters, demonstrate the different ways they tried to get Shelley involved. Shelley's literary and financial contributions to the Risorgimento underscore her dedication to Italian nationalism, which was heavily encouraged by de Boinville and Turner.

CHAPTER 4

CORNELIA TURNER & GIOVANNI RUFFINI IN PARIS (1846-1874)

Shortly after Mary Shelley's *Rambles in Germany and Italy* (1844), Cornelia Turner's Risorgimento circle in Paris grew wider, and she interacted with some of the most influential figures of nineteenth-century Europe and England. This chapter focuses on Cornelia Turner's three-decade relationship with Giovanni Ruffini (1807-1881), a relationship which I argue clearly positions her as the center of a Risorgimento circle in Paris. The cohabitative relationship between Turner and Ruffini allowed them to engage in creative collaboration and increased involvement in the Risorgimento. Understanding their partnership allows us to fully comprehend their participation in the Italian nationalist movement and see the transnational networks that were necessary for creating nations.

Sometime in 1828, Cornelia Turner separated from her husband, and took her children to live with her mother in Paris on Rue de Clichy 74 (St Clair 994). Turner brought along her adult sons, Oswald (1814–1876) and Alfred (1817–1893), forming a multigenerational household under de Boinville's matriarchal guidance (BdB 157). Turner's relocation marks her deeper immersion in the intellectual and political circles of Paris. According to Maurizio Isabella, Paris was the most important city for the Risorgimento exile community because of French culture's contributions to liberalism and revolutionary legacy. Thus, most exiled patriots were based in Paris or at least maintained contacts there (Isabella 28-29). With her mother already acquainted with a number of Italian political exiles and housing some of them at Rue de Clichy, Turner entered the Paris Risorgimento circle quickly—and soon became the center of it.

Other people's deathbeds are not often where people expect their fortunes to improve, but such was the case for Giovanni Ruffini, a "solitary and penniless" Italian exile who arrived in Paris in 1842 (BdB 199, Corrigan 181). For two years, Ruffini struggled to keep himself afloat, and had mostly done so by writing librettos for the Italian composer, Gaetano Donizetti. Ruffini's libretto for Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* was the most successful. After the composer had a mental collapse, Ruffini received only a small income from his mother (Corrigan 181-182). In January 1846, Ruffini's worries now shifted to his friend and fellow Italian exile who was growing ill, Dr. Giulio Robecchi (1806-1846), who originally came to Paris to become a doctor and escape his anti-nationalist hometown in Piedmont (Gioberti x). When Ruffini visited Robecchi's deathbed, he met Harriet de Boinville and Cornelia Turner.[17] After Robecchi's death, Ruffini remained friends with the family. de Boinville soon invited Ruffini to come live in the apartment above them. This was the beginning of a close relationship that provided Ruffini with emotional and financial stability, giving him the means to engage in literary, nationalist pursuits. But, de Boinville and Turner were not merely "supportive" women. Instead, Turner and Ruffini began a collaborative literary relationship with each other, with Turner at its center.

Soon after their meeting at Robecchi's deathbed, Harriet de Boinville passed away on 1 March 1847. Ruffini quickly wrote a letter to Charles de Boinville to share the sad news, revealing that Turner was broken from grieving her mother's death (Corrigan 90-91). de Boinville left several gifts to her daughter. First was a gold watch that originally belonged to Dr Charles Burney, which was then given to Frances Burney, then to Boinville. Second was likely the rights to the house. After a brief stay in Italy, Ruffini returned to Paris in 1849, then moved in

[17] After Oswald attended Robecchi's public lessons and lectures, which were given in Italian and French, the teacher and student became close (Linaker 58). Robecchi became Cornelia's consoler once she lost her fifteen-year-old daughter Pauline in 1842 and after Oswald began to develop a mental illness (Linaker 58, BdB xi, 195-196).

to live in Turner's apartment. They cohabited with one another until Turner died in 1874 (Corrigan 182). Their cohabitation allowed them to develop their collaborative literary relationship with one another, as they both only began writing novels when they began to live together. The fact they lived together invited contemporary and scholarly speculation about the nature of their relationship, but their cohabitation ultimately became a testament to their loyalty and mutual support for one another.

Figure 4.1: A portrait of Cornelia Turner from *Giovanni Ruffini e i suoi tempi* (1931), on page 337. Likely from the 1850s, but potentially from the 1840s.

Allan Conrad Christensen, a leading Ruffini scholar, believes the thirteen-year age gap between Turner and Ruffini made it unlikely they had a romantic relationship (*A European Version* 31).[18] Vineta Colby comments on their cohabitation, stating that their relationship would've been "irregular" in Victorian society, but it was not shocking to the English living in Paris (16). Despite their cohabitation potentially seeming "scandalous" to some contemporary observers, the two "lived on in perfect harmony…wholly devoted, loyal, and indispensable to each other" (Christensen, *A European Version* 31). Contemporary Scottish novelist Margaret Oliphant visited Turner and Ruffini in the winter of 1864-1865, and wrote in her *Autobiography* that the two lived together

> as if there had not been such a thing as an evil tongue in the world…an elderly romance, in old fidelity and friendship, made innocent, almost infantile…independent of sex and superior to it, amid all the obliterations of old age. (qtd. in Colby 16)

Oliphant's observations also provide contemporary insight into the collaborative literary relationship that Turner and Ruffini had.

When visiting Rue de Clichy, Oliphant characterized Ruffini as an "Italian refugee of the 1848 times[19]...[whose] written English was beautiful, but he spoke it badly and with difficulty" (103). This linguistic limitation became one of the catalysts for his literary collaboration with Cornelia Turner. Ruffini frequently drafted his works partly in English and partly in French, leaving Turner to translate the French passages into polished English (BdB 210). Turner's contributions were instrumental in shaping two of Ruffini's most significant works, *Lorenzo*

[18] While the letters may provide evidence for Christensen's claim, the age difference does not necessarily do so. Turner's mother married a man 17 years older than she was (BdB xi). Such age gaps were uncommon in the Victorian era, but not necessarily rare. Some contemporary etiquette books, such as T.L. Nichols' *How to Behave* (1873), advocated for an age gap in marriages (Brownell).

[19] The Revolutions of 1848, which caused political upheaval in Italy and the whole of continental Europe.

Benoni and *Doctor Antonio*, where she translated portions of the drafts, bringing his creative vision to completion.

Beyond translation, Turner played an active role as co-writer and editor of Ruffini's novels. Itala Cremona Cozzolino described their collaboration:

> …As soon as Ruffini sketches out the episode, Turner develops it and connects it to something else; they are like two fresh rivulets of humour that flow freely into convergence in a work of literature that will bear a single name but where much of the originality comes from Turner, who with her profound knowledge of English literature immediately warned of possible repetitions, citing the book and the author with marvelous certainty. (Cozzolino 408)[20]

This framing provides an alternative—and I argue, more accurate—understanding of the Turner-Ruffini literary collaboration than what Allan C. Christensen presents. In short, Christensen states that Turner's work was derived from Ruffini's, that her novels were "decisively didactic" and lacked Ruffini's imaginative power ("The Novels" 8-9). Additionally, Christensen states that "Cornelia did not possess for herself the creative talent of an artist" ("Cornelia Turner" 153). I find it strange that Christensen believes Turner's work was supposedly both cowritten by Ruffini, but at the same time, not as good as Ruffini! While he recognizes Turner's ability to spur other authors, namely Shelley and Ruffini, into action and deserves credit for their "artistic products," he ultimately considers Turner little more than their "muse" ("Cornelia Turner"

[20] Translated from the original Italian: *"...appena Giovanni abbozza l'episodio, Cornelia lo svolge, l'innesta ad altro; sono come due freschi rivoli d'umorismo che scorrono fluidi per convergere in un'opera letteraria che porterà un sol nome ma dove tanta parte di originalità risulta di fonte della Turner, la quale con la sua profonda conoscenza della letteratura ipse metteva subito in guardia su possibili ripetizioni, citava libro e Autore con meravigliosa sicurezza."*

153).[21] In Christensen's view, Turner and Ruffini's novels were simply a "joint venture." I challenge this view.

Christensen's view of Turner and Ruffini's novels being a "joint venture" derives from Giuseppe Sertoli, but Sertoli's stance contains more appreciation for Turner's role in her collaborative relationship with Ruffini. Sertoli argued Turner and Ruffini's work gives the reader "a clear impression of a shared work, as though one author intervenes to complete a picture left by the other author," as is the case in *Angelo Sanmartino* in respect to *Lavinia*. In other words, Sertoli states that "the two authors confront the same theme from two different — but complementary — points of view" (Sertoli 132).[22] Sertoli expresses his appreciation for Turner by welcoming the idea of a Turner biography and criticizing how Victorian scholars and Ruffini scholars have only remembered the titles of her novels (Sertoli 131, 133). While Sertoli does see Turner and Ruffini's novels as a "joint venture," he highlights how Turner's novels are "less cautious and 'diplomatic'" (less Cavourian), and more bold (more Garibaldian) than that of Ruffini's (137). In other words, Sertoli supports the "joint venture" argument, but appreciates Turner's literary merit and originality. While Christensen's criticisms and similar scholarship frame Turner's works as auxiliary to Ruffini's, *Angelo Sanmartino* demonstrates a distinct, more fiery perspective than Ruffini. As Sertoli confirms, *Doctor Antonio* is ultimately a tragic novel where little nationalistic achievement actually happens. In contrast, *Angelo Sanmartino* contains

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[21] Translated/paraphrased from the original Italian: *"...Queste opere [di Cornelia Turner sono] decisamente didascaliche, [e] hanno molto poco di quella presa con cui la potenza immaginativa del Ruffini…Mentre Cornelia non possedeva per sé il talento creativo dell'artista, suppliva a questa carenza con una sorprendente capacità di galvanizzare la creatività di scrittori come Shelley, Ruffini e altri ancora. Essa non permetteva agli uomini (e alle donne) che l'ammiravano di rimanere in uno sterile e improduttivo letargo, ma Ii spronava…a fare il loro dovere e a realizzare le loro potenzialità letterarie. Il merito del prodotto artistico che ne veniva fuori doveva naturalmente andare sia alla musa, che a qualcosa di pin del semplice agente catalitico di Shelley, che allo scrittore, che è qualcosa di pin del passivo amanuense dell'Aveling di Ruffini."*

[22] Translated from the original Italian: *"...i due autori affrontano uno stesso tema da due diverse – ma complementari – angolature…"*

more direct nationalist activism where the characters play a role in the Lombardian victories against the occupying Austrian forces. Aside from the differences between Turner and Ruffini's work, it is important to note that their collaborative circle contained a third member.

Turner and Ruffini didn't just work as a pair, but they were the core of a productive literary and activist circle. Their collaborative circle also included Henrietta Jenkin, a Scotswoman who supported the Risorgimento. According to Raffaella Antinucci, when Ruffini was working on *Doctor Antonio*, he entrusted Turner's "predilection for historical reconstructions and tragic situations" (Antinucci 74).[23] Meanwhile, Jenkin was to edit the first sixteen "idyllic" chapters (Antinucci 74). After the second editing phrase, Jenkin sent Ruffini corrections, while he was staying with Turner in Chambery. As a result of Jenkin's edits—and likely Turner who was with him at the time—the manuscript underwent dramatic changes in wording (Antinucci 77-81). Turner also developed Ruffini's plots alongside him, helped him avoid copying English literature, guiding him "on a path to originality" (Christensen, *A European Version* 32-33). The collaboration between Turner, Ruffini, and Jenkin, contained one throughline, which is that they all wanted to advance the Italian national cause through their literary works. Indeed, nearly all of Ruffini's seven novels, except for the comedic *The Paragreens*, were patriotic and sympathetic to the Italian national cause.

Ruffini was well-involved in the Italian nationalist movement long before he met Turner. In the 1820s, Mazzini befriended the Ruffini family and became especially close with Giovanni's brother, Jacopo (Pesman 99). In the summer of 1833, twenty-one Mazzinian rebels, including Jacopo, were imprisoned and condemned to death under the orders of King Charles Albert of Sardinia. Jacopo, worried that he would be tortured for information about his fellow rebels,

[23] Translated from the original Italian: *"...la sua predilezione per le ricostruzioni storiche e le situazioni tragiche..."*

ended his own life on the eve of his and Mazzini's twenty-eighth birthday (Hearder 188; Christensen, *A European Version* 11). Mazzini made a martyr of his "first and best friend," reporting that Jacopo wrote his last words on his cell walls using his own blood: "This is my answer; I leave my vengeance to my brothers" (qtd. in Riall, "Martyr Cults" 267).[24] After Jacopo's death, Ruffini and his other brother Agostino joined Mazzini in exile, living in France, Switzerland, and England. But after eight years, Ruffini began to question his early idealism and Mazzinian revolutionary extremism in general, and moved to Paris in 1841 to be amongst more moderate patriots (Christensen, *A European Version* 12). When he met Turner in 1846, she encouraged him to remain active in the movement, albeit through less dangerous means: writing novels.

By the 1850s, Italian exile and Risorgimento thinker-propagandist Giuseppe Mazzini had become a household name (Cove 62). Victorian writers such as Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and her husband Robert, had all helped make the Italian cause even more well-known to the Anglophone world (Cove 62-3). However, Ruffini was the Anglophone writer with "the greatest investment in Italian insurrection and exile and personal expertise in the Mazzinian years of the early Risorgimento" (Cove 64). Unlike his Victorian contemporaries, Ruffini's works offered an Italian point of view, from an Italian who participated in the nationalist movement since its Mazzinian roots (Jolly 390). He wrote seven novels, but *Doctor Antonio,* which he was only able to write because of Turner's contributions, was his greatest critical and popular success (Jolly 390). *Doctor Antonio* made his home region of Liguria, specifically the Riviera, a major tourist spot for the English throughout the nineteenth

[24] According to Allan Christensen, Jacopo Ruffini was born Giacomo. To signalize their bond, Mazzini changed his name to Jacopo, after the eponymous main character from Ugo Foscolo's *Jacopo Ortis*, an Italian Romantic epistolary novel belonging to the Risorgimento literary canon (*A European Version* 11; Banti 18, 31). Interestingly, the fictional character also commits suicide.

century; visitors often hoped to see Ruffini himself (Christensen, "Giovanni Ruffini" 149; Ghersi 101). His celebrity in the nineteenth-century Anglophone world allowed him to achieve "minor fame" as a "minor novelist" among contemporary historical and literary scholarship (Christensen, *A European Version*, 157). Many scholars have dubbed him the "Dickens of Italy" due to his stylistic simplicity and Dickensian sense of humor, and his novels as a European version of Victorian fiction (Christensen, *A European Version* 162). While the collaboration between Turner and Ruffini led to the latter's minor stardom, the same is not true for the former. Turner's work allowed for Ruffini's success.

Truly "a daughter worthy of her mother," as her grave in Paris says, Turner encouraged Ruffini to remain involved in Italian politics (BdB 213).[25] Mazzini called upon Ruffini several times; first, for a teaching position in Brighton, then for the eve of the Five Days of Milan (Christensen, *A European Version* 31-32). The third time, Ruffini was called to legislative duties in the new Subalpine Parliament in 1848, and at first did not want to go, disgusted by politicians. But Turner eventually convinced him that it was his patriotic duty to do so. He went in late May 1848, thanks to Turner's encouragement, and later accepted a ministerial appointment as well. As Christensen writes, Ruffini's "short-lived re-entry on the political scene was thus the manifestation of his love [for Turner] rather than his patriotism" (*A European Version* 32). Just as Turner played a role in creating Ruffini's novels (and catalyzing his brief return to politics), Ruffini provided Turner with intimate knowledge of the Risorgimento, which was crucial in making her own novels.

Turner already had Risorgimento connections when she came to Paris, such as Vincenzo Gioberti, but Ruffini's direct participation in the movement and relationship with Mazzini

[25] Translation of the original French: *"Digne fille de sa mère."*

brought her closer to how Italians and Italy struggled to define themselves as a modern nation. Turner and Ruffini's cohabitation allowed for Turner to write an Anglophone novel aimed at inspiring British support for the forthcoming Italian nation.

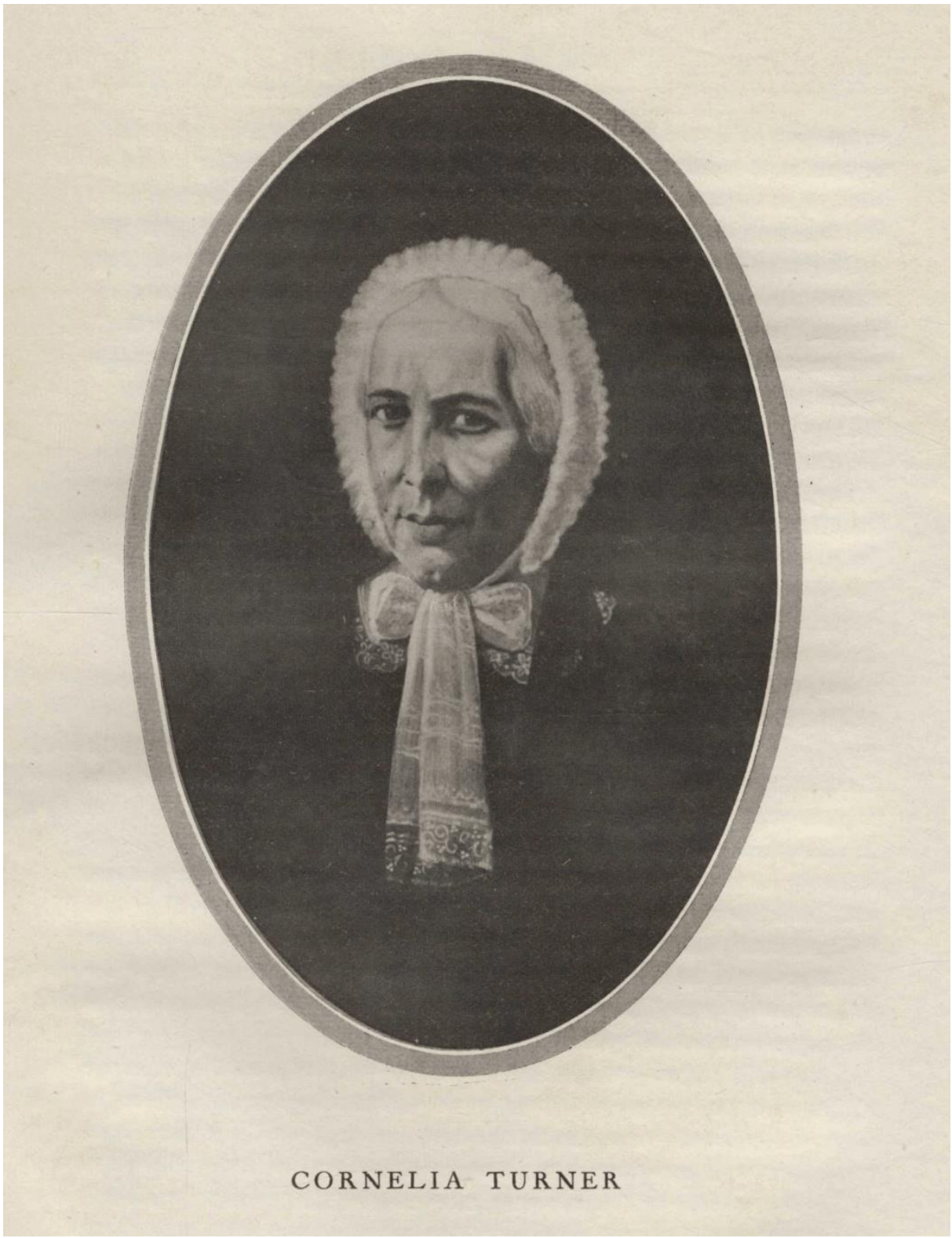

Figure 4.2: A portrait of Cornelia Turner from *Giovanni Ruffini e i suoi tempi* (1931), on page 369. Likely from the early 1860s.

CHAPTER 5

CORNELIA TURNER'S *ANGELO SANMARTINO: A TALE OF LOMBARDY IN 1859* (1860)

Introduction & Summary

Cornelia Turner's *Angelo Sanmartino* allows us to see the way she is carefully thinking about how women can (or can't) be involved in revolutionary nation-building. She explores the possibilities of limits of revolutionary domesticity along with the frustrations and challenges of transnational work through three female characters: Lucy Morestead, Flora Alton, and Giulia/Giulio Ligoni. Although Lucy Morestead only lives for a few pages, she demonstrates the form of revolutionary domesticity that Turner was most familiar with. Her eventual demise mirrors the ideological gaps between English conservatism and the radical Italian revolutionary ideals. Meanwhile, Flora and Giulia are foil characters who represent the limits of revolutionary domesticity. Specifically, Flora represents the limits of how a stay-at-home fiancée can contribute to the national cause and Angelo's difficulty in completing transnational work. Meanwhile, Giulia, who goes to fight in the war herself, represents the radical possibilities that women can undertake in order to free Italy from Austrian occupation in the North, and to involve themselves in the movement at large. By looking closely at these three women characters, we can further understand Turner's frustrations with the limits of revolutionary domesticity and her considerations of other, more radical possibilities for women to contribute to the Risorgimento. Additionally, we can also see how Turner develops a distinct, individual literary identity and departs from Ruffini, further rejecting Christensen's criticisms.

Cornelia Turner published both of her novels anonymously. Very little information on either book exists, and there are few contemporary reviews available in online databases. However, *The Glasgow Herald*'s review insinuates that *Angelo Sanmartino* was neither a popular nor successful book. Indeed, the novel was never reprinted. Considering the novel's obscurity, I will first summarize the novel before I analyze it, thanks to some help from *The Glasgow Herald* review. Spoilers ahead!

The young English lady Lucy Morestead, travels to Italy to convalesce. While there, Lucy falls in love with and eventually marries Signor Angelo Sanmartino, a Milanese nobleman and patriot. Signor Sanmartino fights in the 1848 Five Days of Milan, a Lombardian insurrection against Austrian rule, and joins the general campaign, where he contracts a terminal illness and soon passes away. Lucy and her son, named after his father, return to England to live with her Conservative and Italophobic family. Their time there is unhappy, and young Angelo yearns to return to their beloved Italy. Lucy cannot withstand the "mutual silence on all matters connected with foreign politics" that she agreed on with her family and becomes ill again; this time proves fatal (Turner 20). Now under the care of his uncle, young Angelo must go to Winchester school to receive an education befitting an English boy. Angelo experiences intense Italophobia there but befriends one of his schoolmates, John Brown, after a fistfight. John leaves school to fight in the Crimean Wars, and Angelo follows him in the Piedmontese army and becomes a war hero. Unfortunately, his uncle calls him back to England to accept the office of private secretary to an eminent English nobleman and statesman.

In 1856, Angelo receives a letter from an old friend of his parents, George Brooks. Brooks informs Angelo of the Mazzinian insurrections in Milan, and that the Austrian government has confiscated his (and other noblemen's) property as punishment. Angelo wishes

to return to Italy, but his uncle disallows him, and he must instead join the Lord's son in a convalescent retreat to Devonshire, where he falls in love with an Italophilic English lady named Flora Alton. Shortly after their engagement and much to his betrothed's dismay, Angelo listens to the internal call to return to Italy and fight for its independence. The couple continues to communicate through letters while Angelo is on the battlefield, but Flora begs him to return to England, causing "painful dissonance between his beloved's mind and his" (Turner 284-285). Angelo tries to re-garner her interest in the Italian national cause by telling the tragic family story of two Brescian soldiers he meets, Andrea and Giulio Ligoni. Flora cannot bear the terrible realities of the war, and writes to end their engagement (Turner 401-2). Brooks consoles Angelo, but the young patriot is now able to give "an undivided heart to Italy" (*Glasgow Herald*). The two join John Brown and the Ligoni brothers in Garibaldi's *Cacciatori delle Alpi* [Hunters of the Alps] to fight against the Austrians.

Giulio becomes severely wounded trying to save his brother Andrea in battle. Andrea reveals that Giulio is in fact *Giulia*, his sister who has been fighting for Italian unification under the disguise of a male soldier (Turner 458). She survives the wound, becomes a nurse, and tends to Angelo and Andrea, who were injured in the next battle. Angelo falls in love with the nurse, not knowing who she is until he regains consciousness. Unlike his sister, Andrea does not survive his wound, but his death (weirdly) inspires Angelo to propose to Giulia, and she accepts. Once their volunteer regiment becomes a formal one, Angelo decides to stop soldiering and returns to diplomacy. At the end of the novel, Angelo, Giulia, and Brooks all sit together at Lake Como, proud of their achievements so far, but know there is much more to be done before Italy is a truly independent and united modern nation.

Although there is much to say about *Angelo Sanmartino*, I will mainly focus on the three main female characters (Lucy, Flora, and Giulia) and Turner's thoughts about women's roles in the Risorgimento and revolutionary domesticity at large.

Lucy Morestead

Lucy's inability to create a revolutionary salon at her brother's estate demonstrates the very importance of doing so. After the death of her Italian patriot husband, Lucy is left without her Risorgimento connection and the means to participate in the national movement, and so tries to do what she can on the English homefront, using the news as her medium, but is met with Conservative, Italophobic opposition. Once Lucy moves in with her brother, the siblings agree to maintain a "mutual silence on all matters connected with foreign politics" (Turner 20). While this prevents them from "wounding each other," it also creates a "yawning gap" between them (Turner 20). To keep herself occupied, Lucy reads the *Daily News*. One day, she invites some friends and reads aloud a column about troubling events in Italy, but they don't share her level of concern nor her progressive views. One of the guests asks Lucy if she sympathizes with Pope Pius IX, whose subjects in the Papal States forced him to flee Rome. Lucy answers, "I look on the Pope as having betrayed the cause of Italy, and as the worst enemy of her independence," reflecting the anti-clerical sentiments of several Italian nationalist leaders, including Mazzini and Garibaldi (Turner 23, Carter 21-22) Her guest does not share these sentiments, and the conversation quickly turns to less important matters, leaving Lucy unable to involve herself in the Risorgimento. Victorian novels often included scenes like these, where characters form strong opinions of tough topics and argue over them with other characters. One example is Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, where reading the newspaper becomes a communal

activity (Rubery 6). But this is not the case for Lucy, who is unable to form a community that cares about the Risorgimento. Instead, the newspapers remind her and her son of Italy's troubles.

Lucy's failed conversations with her lady friends marks a greater failure to enter the revolutionary domestic circles that liberal Victorians engaged in during the Risorgimento. She is ultimately unable to garner Anglophone support for the Italian national movement. As Diana Moore writes, these revolutionary domestic circles allowed "politically active British women [to use] their traditional domestic, nurturing, and maternal behaviors and identities along with the privileges of their British status to participate in revolution [in Italy]" (Moore, *Revolutionary Domesticity* 29). The number of Italian expatriates in England inspired wide support of the Risorgimento, especially among women, who often worked together to raise funds for Italian revolutionaries and expatriates exiled from Italy for their nationalist activity.[26] Women interested in Risorgimento revolutionary domesticity saw Anglophone newspapers as a means to disseminate information about the Italian national cause because they had the capacity to influence British popular culture (Sporer 44). Italians specifically sought British support partly because British education highly valued classical history and literature hailing from Italy's ancient past (Mack Smith, "Britain" 13). Additionally, British politicians knew more about Italy than other European countries, so the "Italian question" was the foreign policy that received the most sympathy from them (Mack Smith, "Britain" 14). Therefore, Lucy's struggle to garner support amongst the Tories highlights the realities that women faced when trying to engage in revolutionary domesticity.

The most famous examples of English women who supported the Risorgimento are people who were able to travel, or even live in Italy. For example, Elizabeth Barrett Browning

[26] Famous examples of Italian revolutionary expatriates in England include Mazzini and Gabriele Rossetti, father of the famous Rossetti family, among many others (Isabella 60-62).

and Theodosia Garrow Trollope both moved to Florence so that they could be more involved in the movement. However, women on the English homefront, usually became interested in the movement thanks to Italian exiles like Mazzini. Scholars such as Maura O'Connor and Anne Summer argue that Italian patriotism appealed to their English Romantic imagination and Protestant sense of duty (Moore, *Transnational Nationalists* 28). O'Connor also suggests that Italy offered "the possibility of becoming involved in significant political and social developments that were less available to them at home" (253). Most of the women on the English homefront were middle and working class and were able to skirt the conservative expectations pressed upon higher class women such as Lucy (Moore, *Revolutionary Domesticity* 7). In fact, Lucy's guest ends their discussion of Pius IX by marking that their political conversation is unsuitable for ladies and that implying she gets her political opinions from her Conservative husband (Turner 23-24). Turner asks how Lucy can contribute to the Risorgimento, when she is holed away in a Conservative Italophobic household, and the only other pro-Risorgimento person she has is her own son. The short answer is that she can't. Women like Lucy, whose radical, liberal connections were cut loose by the tragic realities of war, were made unable to contribute, because she did not have the circle needed to accomplish her means.

Turner is not completely abandoning revolutionary domesticity with her representation of Lucy's plight, but instead highlighting its limitations. Lucy's frustrations reach her son, who pressures his mother to return to Genoa for the summer, but she quickly falls ill and soon dies. *Angelo Sanmartino* begins with Lucy's miraculous recovery in Italy, the restorative wonders of the Italian landscape, and her affectionate marriage to an Italian patriot. But just twenty-seven pages later, Lucy's "gentle spirit had fled to join the beloved one [Signor Sanmartino] who had preceded her" (Turner 27). Her swift death symbolizes the collapse of her hopes for personal

fulfillment and garnering British support for the Risorgimento. Additionally, Turner utilizes Lucy's death to comment on the constraints that many Victorian women experienced when trying to participate in a national movement from within the domestic sphere. If Lucy was amongst a more liberal family and circle, she could've met the same success that her nonfictional contemporaries did. And even more subtly, Turner seems to be saying that the work one can do for Italy within one's home country, is itself limited. And since Lucy cannot contribute in life, Turner allows her to contribute in death.

Throughout the remainder of the novel, Lucy remains a fond memory for young Angelo. Angelo uses Lucy's memory to make her a Mazzinian martyr and garner British support for the Risorgimento. Historically, female Risorgimento martyrs were rare, but certainly existent. However, they were all Italian, not English. Italian women such as Eleonora Fonesca Pimentel, Luisa Sanfelice Folino, and Teresa Confalonieri were all killed or imprisoned in their struggles for Italy (Riall, "Martyr Cults" 270). However, these female martyrs were "outshone by the self-sacrifice of a male elite…who had become through their suffering the embodiment of Italian freedom" (Riall, "Martyr Cults" 270). Also unlike Mazzini's male martyrs, who usually died at the hands of foreign occupants in the Italian peninsula, Lucy dies of the frustration, disappointment, and isolation of being unable to engage in revolutionary domesticity. She nonetheless remains a powerful rhetorical tool for Angelo throughout his journey to support the Italian unification movement. For example, in his young life before he reaches the British age of majority, Angelo consistently cites his mother's memory as a reason to receive an education in Genoa, to join the Piedmontese forces in Crimea, and always as a reason to return to Italy. Lucy's memory assists Angelo when he tries to convince his school friend John Brown that the Austrians "held brutal, insolent, dominion over them [the Milanese]" (Turner 48). When Angelo

tells the story of the 1848 revolutions and his parents' role in them, his mother is the prime example of a "tender and loving, and heroic" woman who is able to actively participate (Turner 411). Indeed, Lucy Morestead remains a martyr for the Italian cause throughout the plot.

Near the end of the novel, when Northern Italy's freedom seems imminent, Brooks confirms Angelo's memories of his mother: "'She was all you say…she knew whom she loved, and what she would. Her firmness and her constancy overcame all the opposition of her parents'" (Turner 411). Brooks reveals that he knew Angelo's mother since his childhood and always loved her for her beauty, charm, strong intelligence and enthusiasm. Although Signor Sanmartino ultimately won her affections, Brooks helped convince Lucy's parents that her foreign betrothed is not all that bad. When Brooks joins Angelo and Giulia at Villa Sanmartino in Lake Como, he rejoices that he can tell his traveller's tales to Lucy and Signor Sanmartino's children (Turner 559-560). Brooks' longtime admiration for Lucy emphasizes her unwavering commitment to radical Romantic love of an Italian patriot and the forthcoming modern Italian nation at large. Despite her early death in the novel, Lucy is immortalized through tragic memory, like Mazzini's martyrs. Her beloved memory consistently motivates Angelo to return to Lombardy and fight for its liberty and unification with the other regions of the peninsula.

Flora Alton

Flora Alton, Angelo's first betrothed, represents another limitation of revolutionary domesticity. Even though the Altons are a more liberal, Italophilic crowd, ultimately they feel Angelo's politics are too radical. In other words, Flora and her family represent false sympathy and activism, a superficial Anglophone engagement with the Risorgimento that never transcends their surface-level Italophilia. In other words, Flora and her family happily indulge in Italy's

cultural allure, but ultimately reject the ideological commitment and support that the Risorgimento demands.

False Italophilia is what begins Angelo and Flora's relationship. While in Devonshire with his employer's son, he hears Flora singing the young fisherman's ballad from Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*. When young Angelo hears the Englishwoman sing this Italian opera, he instantly knows that she is a fellow Italophile, and their shared Italophilia sparks their relationship. As aforementioned, Italian opera was a means of patriotic exaltation during the Risorgimento, a cultural medium that was a reliable reflection of widely held political sentiments (Chiappini 57, 67). Donizetti included veiled nationalist references in *Lucrezia Borgia*, and Victorian novels such as Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit* (Dec. 1855-June 1857) and Wilkie Collins' *The Woman in White* (Nov. 1859-Aug. 1860) also include *Lucrezia Borgia* as major plot points (Greenaway 49-50). Lured by Flora's beauty and Italophilia, Angelo courts her and soon tutors her in Italian literary culture that inspired Risorgimento intelligentsia.

The first book they read together is Alessandro Manzoni's *I promessi sposi,* **the** historical novel of the Risorgimento.[27] Italians quickly saw the parallels between the novel's setting in seventeenth-century Lombardy—when the Duchy of Milan was ruled by the Spanish Habsburgs—and the Austrian Habsburg rule of Northern Italy. More importantly, *I promessi sposi* set out to unify Italy through contemporary Florentine, which Manzoni wanted to become the "standard" Italian language (Maraschio and Matarrese 334-335). Manzoni explicitly expressed the desire for his works to provide a rebirth for the Italian language by "reunit[ing] the written language…[settling] on Tuscan as his preferred vehicle to embody the project," and the longstanding "language question" was undoubtedly a major intellectual discussion within the

[27] Known as *The Betrothed* in English. Interestingly, the eponymous main character in Ruffini's *Doctor Antonio* (1855) also reads *I promessi sposi* with his English love interest, who is curiously named Lucy.

Risorgimento movement (Curtotti, Mancini). In introducing Flora to *I promessi sposi*, Angelo teaches her about the Italian struggles for independence and the creation of a unified sociocultural and lingual identity. Through Angelo's relationship with Flora, Turner highlights how Italian literary culture had the ability to interest the English in the Italian national cause. Once Angelo is able to further educate Flora in the Italian cultural products she so loves, he tries to garner her political sympathies for the Italian nationalist movement.

Angelo and Flora's courtship—at first successful—allows them to discuss Austrian occupation in Lombardy and the Five Days of Milan, which the Altons ultimately sympathize with (Turner 203-204). Angelo accomplishes this through his retellings, which Mrs. Alton notes is "like hearing one of Walter Scott's novels" (Turner 204). But Angelo reminds them that Italian unification is not a "far-off dream," as Flora thinks (Turner 205). Turner thus mimics the words of Alphonse de Lamartine, who once described Italy as a land where "everything is asleep," filled with Romantic nation-dreams that hadn't yet become a reality (Patriarca 382, Reill 266). While the newspapers and letters from Italy have kept Angelo up to date on Italy, the English are relatively ignorant. Thus, Angelo proves the importance of Italian exiles and émigrés, who can the realities of the Risorgimento to English audiences, in hopes of garnering their sympathy and support for the nationalist cause. Turner utilizes the main character in her novel to demonstrate the power that Romantic literature can have in creating Italian sympathy, even though he ultimately fails in accomplishing this task. Turner was likely inspired by Risorgimento exiles in England, such as Giuseppe Mazzini, who strongly believes Romantic literature had the capacity to help create an independent Italy (DeMarco-Jacobson 15-16). While Mrs. Alton has doubts about Italian capacity for successful revolution, stating, "there is no more of those people in Italy doing anything more, than of my flying to the moon," Angelo was at least able to make her agree

that Austrian occupation is harmful to Lombards like himself (Turner 208). Angelo is incapable of doing much more, as he cannot marry Flora until she comes of age, which is more than a year away. Thus, he keeps himself busy with his diplomacy work with the English Lord. But the year of 1859 brings inspiring prospects for the young revolutionary. Once again, newspapers facilitate the sociopolitical dialogue about whether or not the English should support the Risorgimento, and if the Italians are "a race fitted for self-government" (Turner 152).

New year, new Italy? On 1 January 1859, Angelo reads the telegraphic report in the newspaper and sees that Napoleon III has just publicly disapproved of Austria's occupation of Northern Italy. He is overjoyed that there is "once more a ray of hope for us in Italy" (Turner 222).[28] However, the news soon allows Flora and her family to reveal that love of Italy starts and stops at cultural appreciation. A month after Napoleon III's statement on Austria, Angelo "eagerly" cuts open the newspaper, and "with a beating heart, ran his eye along the columns of the Parliamentary report, and lighted almost instinctively upon the Premier's expressions concerning Italy" (Turner 233).[29] Frustrated by the words on the page, Angelo cannot comprehend England's moral turpitude and flings the newspaper away. Angelo immediately decides that he must go to Italy and help bring its independence. His first thoughts turn to Flora, his betrothed. He informs Flora that "no Italian must hold back[, that he] must not be missing on the muster-rolls" in order to free Italy from "her long oppression" (Turner 240).[30] Flora and her

[28] As Jonathan Marwil points out, nineteenth-century newspapers treated wars like the serial stories they published, and thus "readers could anticipate a new installment often containing dramatic or sentimental moments that wars, like novels, inevitably provide" (23-24).

[29] There is much to say about *Angelo Sanmartino* and newspaper. In this scene, reading the newspaper causes Angelo to flush "with indignation [and wince] "at the sneering mention of the dream of Italian unity" (Turner 233). Angelo is so upset by the newspaper's lukewarm stance on the Austrian occupation of Lombardy, that he gets up and starts pacing about the room (Turner 234). His reactions to the newspaper are similar to how one might react when reading a novel; Turner newspapers the novel and novelizes the newspaper, bridging the gap between the novel and the news.

[30] Muster-rolls - an official list of soldiers in an army or some particular division of it (*OED*).

father try to convince Angelo to stay in England, citing both political and emotional concerns, but Angelo makes an important response:

> Each Italian is bound and ready to do his best. None should hold back; and it is to contribute my humble quota to the mass of active united Italians, that I feel it my duty to go and take my place in the ranks of my country. Were I to fail in this duty…even my Flora…would despise me for a craven. (Turner 245)

Turner incorporates several aspects of Risorgimento rhetoric in Angelo's response. First, Angelo's statement that Italians are bound, by moral obligation and intrinsic national duty, to enlist mirrors Giuseppe Mazzini's "General Instructions to Young Italy" (*Selected Writings* 128). Angelo's Mazzinian rhetoric is only somewhat successful, as Mr Alton considers him a "monstrous peppery fellow," and Flora appears only convinced by pressure to love her betrothed (Turner 246). Flora's concerns grow once Angelo leaves to fight in Italy.

As Angelo writes to his betrothed Flora from the imminent battlefield, her letters beg him to return to England, which causes a "painful dissonance between his beloved's mind and his" (Turner 284-285). Angelo argues that he and Flora have it good, as many of his compatriots have "left a home, a dear wife…a beloved betrothed…[and] risked imprisonment and death" to fight for Italian unification and independence (Turner 288). But Flora is in her own words, "a little weak creature, only fit to live in the peace and quiet in which I was born and bred" (Turner 401-402). In the nineteenth-century equivalent of a break-up text, Flora writes to him that she doesn't have the spirit to be the wife of an Italian revolutionary (Turner 401-2). Flora fails to fulfill her revolutionary domestic role, which is to wait for Angelo to return home safely, and to support him through her letters in the meanwhile. Englishwomen's participation in the Risorgimento was influenced by cultural admiration, which Flora certainly had. But their participation was also

influenced also by family and network ties (Bacchin 95). The Altons did not want their daughter involved, nor did Flora ever express the individual desire to contribute. Therefore, Flora's refusal to engage with revolutionary domesticity prevents her from developing her female consciousness and elaborating her own identity (Bacchin 95). Ultimately, Flora's failure to engage in the revolutionary domesticity of the Risorgimento contrasts greatly against Angelo's second love, Giulia Ligoni, who dresses as a man to fight in several Lombardian battles against Austrian forces.

Giulia/Giulio Ligoni

The character Giulia Ligoni, who disguises herself as the soldier Giulio, represents the radical possibilities of women's involvement in the Risorgimento.[31] More specifically, she represents the historical examples of how women directly involved themselves in the military victories necessary to free and unite the regions of Italy into one modern nation. Angelo's last letters to Flora tell the family story of two Brescian soldiers he meets, Andrea and Giulio Ligoni. "The Story of the Ligoni," told by Andrea to Angelo, then to Flora, spans across three chapters, 82 pages. Allan C. Christensen deemed it an "interesting history," but "another digressive narrative," although the story serves several purposes for Turner's literary goals ("The Novels" 13). Firstly, it provides her Anglophone audience with a local history crucial to Lombardy's eventual liberation from Austria at the end of 1859. Secondly, it provides a longer history of Giulio's participation in Northern Italy's struggle for independence. Ultimately, "The Story of the Ligoni" reflects the individual sacrifices that Italians made in the Risorgimento. In

[31] In this section, I will refer to the character with the name they have at the specific plot point I am discussing.

other words, the Story of the Ligoni is more than a "digression;" it is a necessary component of Turner's narrative.

Much like the historical novels of Turner's time, fictional characters are at the center of her history of the conflict, but the real historical figures also play a crucial role. Turner begins with the fall of the Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy in 1815 and ends with the Brescian conflict in 1849. Between those epochs, Turner discusses the morality of national conscription, the Five Days of Milan (March 1848), the First Battle of Custoza (July 1848), the deaths of several Ligoni (Turner 302, 310). She also recalls important dates, such as when truces were signed, proclamations that targeted nationalist locals (Turner 310, 312, 314, 315). Turner also includes multiple historical figures from the Brescian side of the conflict including:[32]

- Giovanni Zambelli, Brescian patriot and one of the martyrs of Belfiore (Bertolotti)
- Giuseppe Saleri, Brescian lawyer and patriot ("SALERI Giuseppe")
- Girolamo Sangervasio, written as "Sangervaso" in the novel, Italian patriot and lawyer who participated in the Ten Days of Brescia
- Pietro Boifava and Tito Speri, two of the Brescian commanders
- Pietro Venturini, according to Angelo's letter, "an aged friend of the Ligoni, an advocate, very popular in Brescia" who refused to salute the Austrian banner and demanded death instead, which he received. This information is confirmed in an Italian book from 1909 (Turner 373, de Luca 136).

All of these figures are recognizable to Brescian locals, with Boifava and Speri being the most famous in the province (Cola). With this impressive list of real historical figures, Turner weaves

[32] Austrian historical figures that Turner includes: Austrian Field Marshal Radestzky; Austrian General Haynau who became known as the "Hyena of Brescia" for his brutality (Jewison and Steiner); General Laval Nugent, of Irish birth, fought for Austria; and Colonel Josip Jelačić, written as "Jellachich" in the novel, a Croatian lieutenant field marshal in the Imperial Austrian Army.

an intricately detailed summary of the Ten Days of Brescia. The font of Turner's incredible detail is ultimately unknown, but likely sources and inspirations are contemporary newspapers, foreign correspondents, and her and Ruffini's Italian connections, who may have provided the information.[33]

But the most moving part of the Story of the Ligoni is the number of historical and fictional martyrs who made Brescia into the Lioness of Italy (Cola). Because Turner interweaves the factual and fictional so well, it becomes difficult to differentiate between the two at times, but her point is clear: the Ten Days of Brescia and the heroes that served in it should be remembered as martyrs who died for the Italian cause. One example is Saleri. Contemporary Italian sources remember him as a minor figure, but he earns paragraphs in Turner's English novel, while he is not named in any contemporary Anglophone sources. One of the fictional martyrs is the Ligoni brothers' father, whose death inspires Giulio to join his brother and be amongst the first to join Garibaldi. Ironically, shortly after the Story of the Ligoni, Turner states that the purpose "of this humble little book [is not] to give an account of the campaign[s] in Italy…[but instead to] simply to tell the modest history of our young friend, Angelo Sanmartino" (Turner 393-394). Despite this statement, Turner provides extensive detail of the protagonist's campaigns, and other Italian nationalist campaigns in the Northwest (389-392). However, the narrative soon turns back to Angelo and his role in Garibaldi's campaign.

Turner's most striking and unusual hero is Giulio, who takes a Tyrolese bullet to save his brother. Giulio falls into his brother's arms; extremely distressed that his sibling may be dead, Andrea reveals that Giulio is in fact *Giulia*, his sister who has been fighting for Italian

[33] The Italian book, *I dieci giorni dell'insurrezione di Brescia nel 1849* (1849) by Cesare Correnti contains much of the same details that Turner includes in *Angelo Sanmartino*. For example, *I dieci giori* recalls that the Brescians did not like Zambelli, a pro-Austrian who was head of the municipality, and wanted to replace him with Saleri (Correnti 21-22). Angelo's letter summarizes the scene using similar language (Turner 330).

unification under the disguise of a male soldier (Turner 458). Now, all of the narrator's comments about Giulio being a "very young, still unbearded youth…still slim of figure and slight of limb," suddenly make sense! (Turner 293-294). As Christensen notes, Angelo's reassurances to Flora—meant to soothe her insecurities about her own cowardice—now ring with irony: "I do not wish to enlist you as a soldier," and "You are not called on, my tender, trembling dove, to fulfil the part of a man" (Christensen, "The Novels" 15). But more importantly, Giulia's participation in the Risorgimento illustrates the opposite of traditional Risorgimento revolutionary domesticity. British women typically involved themselves in the movement through gift-giving, childcare, and financial and emotional support of Italian nationalists (Moore, *Revolutionary Domesticity* 29). Italian women in Italy did these things as well, but there were also more "radical" examples of women who dressed as men to fight in battle (Gennaro 120-125). The most famous example is Rosalia "Rose" Montmasson, the only woman to participate in Garibaldi's Expedition of the Thousand (Perger 197). Giulia/Giulio represents a subversive alternative to the more conventional roles women were able to participate in during the Italian Risorgimento, especially in contrast to Lucy and Flora.

Giulia's radical involvement in the Risorgimento continues after she takes a bullet for her brother. After her survival, she becomes a nurse and eventually tends to Angelo and Andrea, who were injured in the next battle. Angelo falls in love with the nurse, not knowing who she is until he regains consciousness. Despite the best efforts of Giulia and the other hospital volunteers, Andrea dies a rather violent death after receiving mortal battle wounds. Soon after, Angelo and Giulia reveal their feelings for one another; the latter states that "Giulio will once more take his place in your band" (Turner 536). Although Giulia is in mourning, Angelo asks her hand in marriage, citing the need to offer her protection if she is to become Giulio again, and she accepts.

Although Turner stated that the character would remain *Giulia* after the initial reveal, Giulio/a's gender fluctuates throughout the last two chapters of the novel, cementing the character's insistence on breaking nineteenth-century gender norms in order to achieve Northern Italian freedom.[34]

At first, Angelo worries about her returning to war, but the couple proves to be a marriage of equals, and they both decide to continue their military service. Their decision bears striking similarity to the relationship of Giuseppe and Anita Garibaldi; Anita met Giuseppe in Brazil and joined him in battle, even when she was pregnant, and until her untimely death (Valerio 155-169, 186). Shortly after Angelo and Giulia's quick marriage, "she donned, once more, her military dress, and that evening Giulio started for the Romagnas" (Turner 541). Turner's description here is similar to that of Luisa Battistotti Sassi, who crossdressed as a man to participate in the Five Days of Milan (Gennaro 120-125). The writer Virginio Inzachi narrated her transformative movement: "Sassi accompanies the prisoners inside [at a barrack] and comes out a rifleman" (qtd. in Gennaro 121). Unfortunately, Giulio must end his military commitment. After General Manfredo Fanti's transformation of Garibaldi's volunteers to a formal set of regiments, Giulio decides it will be easier to instead remain as Giulia, as the nature of a regular regiment would prove difficult for the character to keep Giulio's true identity a secret (Turner 544-545).

Angelo and Giulia's discussions replicate the Romantic ideal of a radical marriage of equals, a concept which Turner continues to admire. A letter from Agostino tries to convince Angelo to enter a political career rather than continue his military one (Turner 547-548). However, it is only a conversation with Giulia that succeeds in convincing Angelo to join the

[34] There's certainly a queer reading to be had of Giulia/Giulio!

Piedmontese parliament. Giulia's ability to convince Angelo to go to Parliament is reminiscent of how Turner convinced Ruffini to do the same. Through this conversation, Giulia and Angelo fulfill the concept of Margaret Fuller's "concept of the couple who are united in spirit by their common intellectual interests," which was idealized in politically radical nineteenth-century marriages especially in the Italian Risorgimento (Worley). Although the couple played their role in liberating Northwest Italy from Austrian rule, they know that full Italian unification is still far from being complete.

A final conversation underscores the central theme of the novel: the continuous, collective struggle for Italian unification—will only be achieved through the efforts of its supporters. Within the last pages of the book, Angelo, Giulia, and Brooks all sit together at Lake Como, discussing their involvement thus far. Angelo exclaims, " Yes, we are happy!...but it is sad to think that poor Venetia is still in bondage, and tortured more than ever by the Austrian!" (Turner 560). Giulia and Brooks concur; Brooks concludes: "Envy not those countries, more fortunate, but less blessed…[Be] thankful to Heaven for the high privilege granted to the sons of Italy, of striving by ennobling exertion and self-sacrifice for an exalted end" (Turner 561). To paraphrase Brooks, Italy teems with sons and daughters who are ready to ensure Italy's deliverance (Turner 560). Despite the progress they've made through military contributions and personal sacrifices, the fight for complete liberation remains far from over. Instead, the sons and daughters of Italy (and other countries, too!) must continue to self-sacrifice for the exalted end they so wish for: to create the independent, united modern nation of Italy. Just as the characters in her novel note, collaborative politics do not end here, and Turner continues them with Giovanni Ruffini and Vernon Lee.

CHAPTER 6

THE NETWORK LIVES ON: CORNELIA TURNER, GIOVANNI RUFFINI, VERNON LEE, AND THE GOLDEN WATCH (1870-1874)

Violet Paget (1856-1935), more commonly known by her pen name Vernon Lee, was one of the last members of Cornelia Turner's literary circle. Lee had the privilege of meeting Turner when she visited Paris in 1870, when she was just fourteen years old.[35] The visit must have been exciting for the young Violet, who was an aspiring writer. Turner had already published two novels; Ruffini had published seven and also wrote for Italian periodicals (Colby 16). Turner and Ruffini immediately took Violet under their wing, as Paget recalled in a letter: "[Turner] made me promise to send her my [short story,] *'Biographie d'une Monnaie'* to Thun and to write to her" (qtd. in Colby 16).[36] The story was young Violet's first and last piece published under her birth name; future publications would be under "Vernon Lee" (Teets and Geoffroy). Recently uncovered at the Colby College Vernon Lee Collection, the fifteen-page short story was just the start of the young author's strong relationship with the Turner literary circle, which provided much guidance in her early writing years. In addition to this guidance, Turner and Ruffini also shaped Lee's political views, especially those on the Risorgimento.

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[35] The Pagets also befriended Henrietta Jenkin when they visited Rome and Thun, Switzerland. Interestingly, Jenkin supposedly left her husband "for a passionate fling with Agostino [Ruffini]," Giovanni's brother. After Jenkin suffered a collapse, Giovanni nursed Jenkin back to health. Giovanni then introduced Jenkin to Turner, who he was cohabiting with at the time (Colby 14-15). *Doctor Antonio* was supposedly based on Jenkin's unhappy relationship with his brother (Colby 16).

[36] Turner seems to have mistakenly called the story *"La Biographie d'une Monnaie"* in a letter to Lee, dated 6 Aug. 1870 (qtd. in Gagel 27). However, Lee notes that the publisher changed the title to *"Les Aventures d'une pièce de Monnaie"* during the publication process (Gagel 10-11).

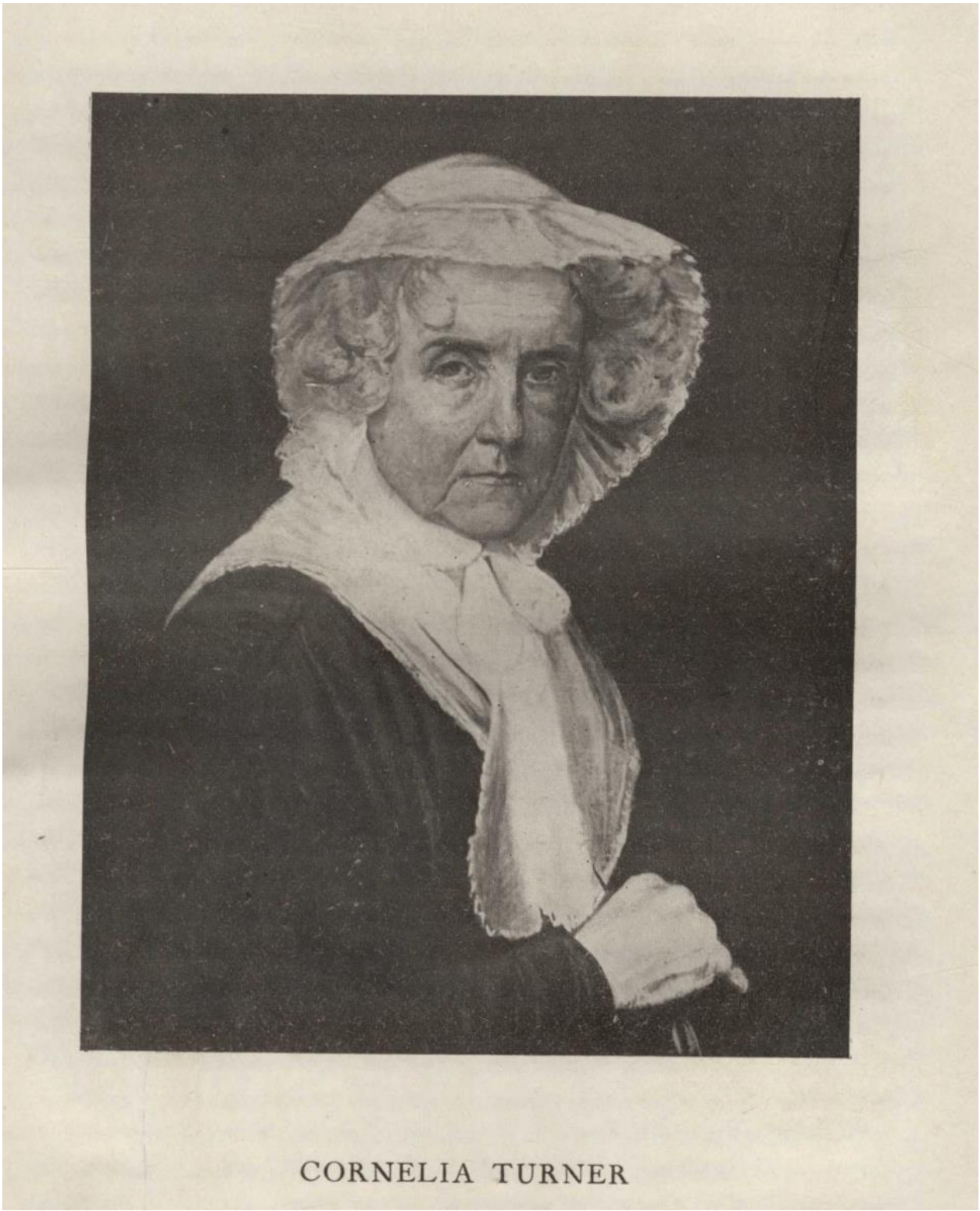

Figure 6.1: A portrait of Cornelia Turner from *Giovanni Ruffini e i suoi tempi* (1931), on page 385. Likely from the early 1870s.

Considered an "*enfant précoce*" by Ruffini, Lee's closest friendships were with literary adults like Turner and Jenkin. These relationships heavily shaped what Lee decided to write about and guided her through any difficulties with publishers. For example, after a plot point was cut in Lee's short story, Turner provided consolation to the frustrated young writer:

> "Never mind," as poor Shelley…used to say when he was vexed…[T]here is enough there to do you great credit…[The story] place[s] you at once out of the category of what my friend Shelley used to name with horror 'Young ladies.' You have taken a superior standing to this offensive class. I can but say "go on and prosper." (qtd. in Gagel 27).

This excerpt reveals how Turner's literary circle evolved from the first person in it, Shelley, to the last person in it, Lee. The circle, you could say, has finally come full circle. In other words, Turner used her experience consoling Shelley to console Lee, and even recalled the experience to Lee to make the young author feel better about the frustrations of the publication process. Lee wrote about the kind, consoling words in a letter to her father: "Such praise from an authoress as good as Mrs Turner, the friend of the Shelleys and of Ruffini…tell her how flattered and delighted I am by it" (qtd. in Gagel 28).[37] Turner corresponded with Lee for four years, continuing to encourage the young woman's interest in writing and music. Turner continued to refer to Shelley in her letters to Lee, using him as an example of a writer who was underappreciated during his time (Colby 16-17). And as we have seen, Turner tells Lee about how she helped Shelley conquer writer's block when he was composing *Queen Mab* (Corrigan 185-186).

[37] Lee once told her father what she thought of Turner's second novel, *Charity*: "[Turner] has several fine thoughts, but as a writer is far inferior to Mrs [Henrietta] Jenkin" (Gagel 21)). In her letter to Violet dated 6 Aug. 1870, Turner mentions that she and Ruffini often crossed paths with Mr. Paget when taking walks about Paris (see the letter in Gagel 27).

Similar to her relationship with Shelley, Turner not only offered emotional support, but also encouraged Violet's interests in Italian culture, especially with literature and music. "*Biographie d'une monnaie*" itself offers a wide range of Lee's early interests in the eighteenth-century and Roman history. As the title suggests, the short story is an it-narrative, a biography of a Roman coin from the Hadrianic period up into the author's contemporary nineteenth century (Teets and Geoffroy). Lee was most likely influenced the it-narratives popular in the eighteenth century, such as Charles Johnstone's *Chrysal; or, The Adventures of a Golden Guinea* (1760-65), which narrates a coin's life, and its various owners through the ages (Teets and Geoffrey). In Lee's it-narrative, the coin starts its life in the hands of a gladiator who wishes to buy his enslaved grandfather's freedom and ends in the hands of two kind men in the Roman Jewish Ghetto who buy bread for a poor little hungry beggar boy. It is certainly refreshing that a fourteen-year-old girl was able to write a more positive depiction of Jews than most of her Victorian contemporaries. Aside from Lee's striking sensitivities, the short story also demonstrates the clear influence of Turner and Ruffini. When Lee visited Turner and Ruffini in June 1870, the three talked of Rome, Paris, and statues; this visit is also when Turner requested that Lee share the short story with her (Gagel 10-11). Turner and Ruffini also lent Lee books, such as *Plutarch's Lives*, which clearly influenced "*Biographie d'une monnaie*," which tells the lives of several Romans through an ancient coin.

Turner and Ruffini also provided Lee with important literary connections that allowed her to find publishing opportunities. At first, Turner stated that all of Ruffini's connections with magazines and newspapers were "dead or have disappeared," but she eventually found an interested editor for Lee (Corrigan 186). That editor was William Blackwood, one of the owners of William Blackwood and Sons (1804-1980), which published many famous Victorian authors

such as Joseph Conrad, George Eliot, Margaret Oliphant, and Anthony Trollope in books and the monthly *Blackwood's Magazine* ("William Blackwood").[38] In 1884, Vernon Lee published a three-volume novel, *Miss Brown*, through Blackwood and Sons. Two years later, she also published *A Phantom Lover: A Fantastic Story* (Bassett).

Aside from this important connection to a publisher, Turner and Ruffini also influenced Lee's political views. According to Vineta Colby, Vernon Lee was consistent in her liberal, socialist politics; her family had a "vague sympathy for Italian independence and unification" (272). But her first exposure to the realities of politics was in Paris 1870, when she met Ruffini, a Risorgimento veteran, and Cornelia Turner, who had long harboured Italian nationalist sympathies. Lee's ears were more open to demands for sociopolitical change once she left Paris and arrived in London in the 1880s (Colby 273). Cornelia Turner and Vernon Lee only corresponded for four years; on 25 October 1874, Turner passed away. The letters between Lee and Ruffini after Turner's death reveal what happened when the primary force from their literary and political circle was removed. In other words, the loss of Turner left a void within their circle.

Ruffini's letters especially reveal what Turner's loss meant to them. She was the center of their literary circle, and the center of Ruffini's world. Ruffini immediately informed Lee of her "faithful correspondent['s]" death: "...it was four in the morning, she died in my arms, like a baby falling asleep on its mother's breast…I couldn't write more about it. I'm devastated" (qtd. in Corrigan 187-188).[39] On 7 November, Ruffini sent yet another heart-wrenching letter to Lee, conjuring memories of Turner's warm nature:

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[38] William Blackwood (1776-1834) founded the publishing house, William Blackwood and Sons (1804-1980). After William Blackwood died, the business eventually passed on to his relatives Major William Blackwood II and William Blackwood III. Lee was likely referring to one of the latter.

[39] Translated from the original French: *"Un quart d'heure après, il était quatre heures du matin, elle s'était éteinte dans mes bras, comme un bebe qui s'endort sur le sein de sa mère…Je ne saurais en écrire davantage. Je suis foudroyé."*

> [Turner] had always been so warmly interested in us all, so kind, encouraging and inspiring…Although writing was so painful to her of late, I received from her to the last a number of long letters, full of kindness and hopefulness which I shall always treasure up as relics to remind me to persevere in the right course and to make myself as worthy as possible of the good opinion she had formed of me. (qtd. in Corrigan 186-187)

Ruffini's letters to Lee continued to exalt Cornelia Turner as the very definition of goodness, sorely missing her presence in their shared Paris apartment and the world:

> [Date: 1 Nov. 1874] All that remains of this dear soul is just a handful of ashes. If you had seen her, how she had become young and beautiful again, what a solemn smile, and at the same time serene. Her coffin was bending under the flowers, those flowers that she loved so much. Almost every morning I brought her a bouquet, they said roses picked in Paradise, such was her joy and gratitude. (qtd. in Corrigan 188)[40]

Ruffini expressed that his one consolation was that God allowed him to be at his post at the fatal hour, a post which he "never deserted for a minute during the 28 years of happiness that he owed to her" (qtd. in Corrigan 188).[41] However, he remained distraught that the "hearth of tenderness" that warmed his heart, had finally been extinguished (Corrigan 188). With his greatest confidante and encourager now lost to the world, Ruffini sought Lee's company.

Ruffini hoped their friendship would naturally succeed that of "*quella ch'io cerco e non ritrovo in terra* [she whom I seek and do not find again on Earth]," referencing the second line of Petrarch's Sonnet IX about Laura's death (qtd. in Corrigan 188, Hainsworth 166). Lee begged

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[40] Translated from the original French: "*Tout ce qui reste de cette chère Arne n'est qu'une poignée de cendres. Si vous l'aviez vue, comme elle était redevenue jeune et belle, quel sourire solennel, et en même temps serein. Sa bière pliait sous les fleurs, ces fleurs qu'elle aimait tant. Presque tous les matins je lui en apportais un bouquet, on eut dit des roses cueillies en Paradis, telle en était sa joie et sa reconnaissance."*

[41] Translated from the original French to English: *"...je n'ai déserte d'une minute durant les 28 années de bonheur que je lui dois."*

Ruffini to join her in Florence, but he struggled to leave Paris, the city he spent half of his life with Turner. However, he eventually realized that their Parisian home no longer existed without his beloved Cornelia (Corrigan 189). So he began to depart in January 1875, seeking to return to his Ligurian hometown of Taggia, where he hoped the nearby baths would sooth his "*acciacchi* [aches and pains]" (qtd. in Corrigan 190). Ruffini had always crossed the enchanting country with his partner, and this was his first time going without her, completely alone (Corrigan 191). Upon his arrival in Taggia, he planted two rose bushes that he took from Turner's tomb, seeking to create a "replacement for this dear and quiet Montmartre Cemetery [in Paris] where she rests" (qtd. in Corrigan 191).[42] Ruffini was now anxious to keep himself busy and make himself "as worthy as possible of the good opinion" Turner had formed of him and sought to continue the bureaucratic work Turner once encouraged him to do (qtd. in Corrigan 186-187).

Now in his late 60s, Ruffini became the honorary president of the Workers' Society and the deputy of the Municipal Council of San Remo. However, he knew that these honours were not bestowed upon him purely because of his own merit. Turner directly helped Ruffini in his Italian political endeavours, so much so that she became a hero in Taggia:

> [Date: 8 May 1875] I also owe a good part of my reputation to Mrs. Turner…[who] won the votes of even the most ferocious Papalins.[43] Everyone here cherishes and venerates…the memory of this woman whom we were sure to see appear every time there was danger or suffering. (qtd. in Corrigan 192)[44]

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[42] Translated from the original French: *"un remplaçant de ce chère et tranquille Cimetière de Montmartre oil elle repose"*

[43] "A member of the papal party or church; an adherent or supporter of the Pope; a Roman Catholic" (*OED*).

[44] Translated from the original French: *"Je dois aussi une bonne partie de mon renom a Me. Turner, qui fit plusieurs séjours dans ces régions, et gagna en peu de temps les suffrages même des plus féroces Papalins. Tout le monde ici cherit et venere, en fait du moms profession, la memoire de cette femme qu'on etait stir de voir paraitre chaque fois qu'il y avait danger ou souffrance."*

Although Ruffini's last years were "spent in obscurity and oblivion," his friendship with Lee kept him company (Corrigan 239). Indeed, Lee's faithful letters to her elderly friend, with talk of Florentine sociopolitics and antivivisectionism, topics both Turner and Ruffini supported, kept him company during his last years in Taggia (Colby 19-20). After Ruffini's death in 1881, Vernon Lee continued to be a successful writer, publishing many works that illustrated her Italophilia. For example, her *Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy* (1887) brought Italian writers such as Pietro Metastasio, Carlo Goldoni, and Carlo Gozzi, to English knowledge ("Vernon Lee"). She also published more than thirty books, a play, and several short story collections.

Turner's last wish was that Lee receive a golden watch, which Turner's son Alfred sent to her in 1875. The watch had originally belonged to English music historian Dr Charles Burney (1726-1814). As Beatrice Corrigan notes, the golden watch was an appropriate gift for Lee, who adored eighteenth-century Italian music just as the composer did (187). The watch had passed from Charles Burney, to his daughter Frances Burney, to Harriet de Boinville, to Cornelia Turner, then finally to Vernon Lee (Colby 17). Much like the Roman coin in her short story, the golden watch had seen the most enthralling parts of the long nineteenth-century: the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the Revolutions of 1848, and the "completion" of Italian unification in 1871. Ruffini remarked how fitting it was for Lee to receive the watch: "To you, *enfant précoce*, rightfully returning the memory of this other *enfant précoce*, who was Mme [Frances Burney D'Arblay" (Corrigan 187).[45] We do not know who Vernon Lee chose to pass the golden watch onto, but we do know from her writings that the memories of Cornelia Turner and Giovanni Ruffini remained with her throughout her life.

[45] Translated from the original French: *"A vous, enfant précoce, revenait de droit le souvenir de cette autre enfant précoce, qui fut Me. D'Arblay."*

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Through my biography of Cornelia Turner, an exploration of her and her mother's literary and political circles, and an analysis of her first novel, *Angelo Sanmartino: A Tale of Lombardy in 1859* (1860), I have argued for the many reasons this so-far understudied figure deserves more scholarly attention. First, Turner's and de Boinville's connections to major contemporary figures, and their ability to catalyze those connections to make tangible literary and political efforts, puts them at the center of their revolutionary and Risorgimento circles. Secondly, although a complete analysis of all of its interesting literary pathways was not possible here, one of the concerns that Turner's *Angelo Sanmartino* expresses is the limits of Risorgimento revolutionary domesticity and the challenges of transnational work. The novel explores the limits and radical possibilities of how women can involve themselves in the Italian national cause through three female characters: Lucy Morestead, Flora Alton, and Giulia/Giulio Ligoni.

Despite their historical significance and insight, Cornelia Turner and her first novel remain largely undiscussed in academia. Turner's transnational background provides a unique transnational angle to the Risorgimento, a worldwide phenomenon in which the Victorians were heavily involved. Turner's novels unsettle national boundaries, calling for a transnational approach to her literary contributions. This project has attempted to restore Turner's voice as one of the many Anglophone women writers who were integral to defining the Italian nation and citizen, through novels set in—and written during—the Risorgimento. I redefine Turner's

literary contributions as deserving of literary and academic attention and restore her voice as one that was central to the creation of modern Italy as we know it today. Through Cornelia Turner's wide-reaching circle, she catalyzed her connections to contribute to the Italian national movement; through her understudied novel *Angelo Sanmartino,* she attempted to garner Anglophone support for her transnational Risorgimento.

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APPENDIX A

THE GOLDEN WATCH'S NEXT RECIPIENT:

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP

Cornelia de Boinville Turner is a massively understudied figure who continues to live in a few pages of the biographies of her more famous, mostly male contemporaries. Considering how little has been said about Turner and her two novels, *Angelo Sanmartino* and *Charity*, I was unable to explore everything I was interested in, because of the constraints of a master's thesis. As such, I will lay out the potential pathways that I hope future scholarship considers for this fascinating author who deserves more scholarship about her.

For those interested in uncovering more about Cornelia Turner's biography, I recommend consulting the Vernon Lee Collection at Colby College, Maine. This collection holds nearly 100 letters from Turner's literary circle. They hold 18 from Turner to Lee, 72 letters from Giovanni Ruffini to Lee, and one letter from Lee to Turner. In her 1962 article, Beatrice Corrigan uses extensive excerpts from the Ruffini letters to argue that his friendship with Lee helped him through Turner's death. These excerpts contain excellent detail of the relationship between Turner and Ruffini, and help us understand the extent of their literary and co-authorial relationships. After my recent request, the Colby College Special Collections librarians have uploaded photos of the Turner-Lee letters to JSTOR, and will do so for the remaining letters. Future scholarship should consider reading through these letters to uncover more about Cornelia Turner's life and literary circle.

In addition to these letters, William Godwin's detailed diary tells us the exact dates, and when Harriet Boinville would bring her young daughter along (Godwin). Their visits to Skinner Street brought Cornelia into contact with Godwin's friend and protégé, Thomas Turner, whom she would later marry. According to Barbara de Boinville, Godwin's diary notes that Cornelia saw Thomas on at least ten occasions between 1810 and 1811 (70, 259). Apart from Godwin's diary entries, Cornelia Turner's life from 1802 to her marriage to Thomas Turner on 24 January 1812 are difficult to track.

For those interested in Cornelia Turner's literary works, she wrote another novel, *Charity: A Tale,* which was published in 1862 by T.C. Newby, famous for publishing Anne and Emily Brontë's novels. Although *Angelo Sanmartino* is understudied, this is even more so the case with *Charity*, for which virtually no secondary information exists. *Charity* concerns Protestant-Catholic relations in England and Italy, but has some content about the Risorgimento as well. A study of *Charity* would help us further understand Cornelia Turner's transnational Risorgimento.