UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

FRACTURED FUTURES IN THE ITALIAN LITERARY IMAGINATION: COMPETING NATIONALISMS AND RHETORIC SURROUNDING JEWISH IDENTITY FROM 1516 THROUGH THE OTTOCENTO

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

LITERATURE

by

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2020

SIGNATURE PAGE

The dissertation of Tatiana Zavodny is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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(Chair)

University of California San Diego
2020

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my grandmother, Edna.

EPIGRAPH

"L'écrivain est en situation dans son époque:
chaque parole a des retentissements.
Chaque silence aussi."

Jean-Paul Sartre

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"The fat cat sat on the tall wall." The poetic simplicity of this statement was the unlikely start to my pursuit in earning a Ph.D in Literature.

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I also sincerely thank Dr. Todd Kontje for his guidance throughout my entire time in the program. His support began in my very first year when I enrolled in his introductory theory seminar and continued again with my independent study work. His guidance helped to enhance my German language skills and allowed me a chance to explore a topic somewhat unrelated to my dissertation – Jewish identity in German fairytales – which later evolved into a syllabus that I used when I taught my own class on Fractured Feminist Fairytales. In our meetings leading to the dissertation to discuss my chapter drafts, he went out of his way to provide helpful secondary sources which allowed me to view my project on Italian nationalism in relation to a larger, European context.

I would also like to thank Dr. Deborah Hertz for bringing a valuable interdisciplinary perspective to my dissertation. Her wealth of knowledge on Jewish communities throughout European history and insights into the literary salons of Berlin were vital to my first chapter. The time and care she took in meeting with me, discussing my chapter drafts, and providing guidance on all aspects of graduate life were truly incredible.

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program. I am so grateful for Lynn and Mel for inviting me into their lives. I wish to also give my sincerest thanks to the Literature Department as well for their dissertation year fellowship which supported me during my fifth year of study.

I am also incredibly grateful for my experiences working as a Teaching Assistant in the Humanities program at Revelle College. I have had the opportunity to work with amazing faculty and coordinators who have fostered an environment which not only advanced my professional development and helped me become a better teacher, but one which helped me evolve into a more conscientious human being. In the Revelle Humanities program, I have also gained lasting friendships with my fellow Teaching Assistants across many academic departments, including my own. Our lengthy discussions in the 'overflow room' cultivated a support network, intellectual community, and a sense of belonging I had never found anywhere else.

I am also thankful to the Graduate Student Association. It was truly a pleasure working alongside talented and gifted graduate students from every department across campus as their president. I am also happy to have worked with other incredible graduate students as a Community Assistant with HDH who started out as my colleagues and quickly became my friends.

My life has also been greatly impacted by supportive friends outside of my graduate program. The late-night conversations, countless Saturday barbeques, and even holiday celebrations shared with the Santoro family were integral in helping me manage the myriad of demands of graduate school. I am so grateful to be able to share successes and setbacks with these friends who have practically become family.

Most importantly, I am eternally thankful for my family. I am grateful to my siblings for providing emotional support, for listening to my frustrations, for helping me navigate graduate

school, and for showing me that the pursuit of higher education and earning a Ph.D. was possible. I also am thankful to my parents for making innumerable sacrifices to always put my education first. Their example has instilled in me the value of an education – not merely for the purposes of earning a degree, but for the ability to use that newfound knowledge to improve the lives of others. I am especially appreciative of my mother's creatively poetic use of language in introducing me to the written word when teaching me how to read my first sentence about a cat sitting on a wall. She and my dad gave me so many tools I would need to be successful not only in this program, but throughout my life.

Finally, I am profoundly grateful for the indelible influence of my late grandmother, Edna. Her life served as an example of perseverance in the face of seemingly-insurmountable obstacles, the importance of maintaining perspective, and the way one person can have a positive impact on others. I am fortunate enough to have been influenced by her love of learning and insatiable lifelong curiosity; her example instilled in me a fighting spirit to persevere in this program and in life. Grandma, I did it!

VITA

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Ph.D. Comparative Literature. University of California, San Diego.
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President, Graduate Student Association. UCSD. 2016 –2017
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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

FRACTURED FUTURES IN THE ITALIAN LITERARY IMAGINATION: COMPETING NATIONALISMS AND RHETORIC SURROUNDING JEWISH IDENTITY FROM 1516 THROUGH THE OTTOCENTO

by

Tatiana Zavodny

Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

University of California San Diego, 2020

Professor Stephanie Jed, Chair

My dissertation explores the way fear of Jewish identity haunts the Italian literary imagination and allows a new understanding of the Risorgimento as a negotiation between centuries-old religious struggles. My first chapter begins with the establishment of the Venetian ghetto in 1516 described in diaries by Marino Sanuto alongside Pietro Aretino's drama *La Cortigiana* and correspondence between Sarra Copia Sulam and Catholic bishop Baldassare Bonifacio. Reading these texts together reveals two competing perspectives – one which envisions Jewish identity as 'subaltern' through coded language that emphasized the

need for confinement and conversion and the other which advocates for tolerance and integration.

The second chapter examines the diary of Anna del Monte within the larger epidemic of forced baptisms and the exchange between G.B.G. D'Arco and Benedetto Frizzi on the role of Jews in their Catholic communities. My analysis suggests that the tensions in their writings reveal a strong connection between the *rhetoric* of fear and confinement and its *actuality*. In this way, Jewish identity continues to haunt the literary imagination and the same tensions in 16th-17th century Venice are made visible in social thought in the 18th century.

My third chapter reads the portrayal of Jewish identity in Risorgimento writings as a culmination of this haunting. This chapter provides a radically new interpretation of canonical texts which reveals two competing nationalisms – one based on an assumed ethnoreligious heritage and the other a pluralist perspective based on a shared sense of political affiliation. Incorporating works by Cesare Balbo, Antonio Fogazzaro, and Vittorio Alfieri facilitates my reading of Ugo Foscolo's epistolary novel, *Le ultime lettere*, as an iteration of the Wandering Jew narrative.

Focusing each chapter on a different snapshot of Italian history shows how, across time, Jewish identity occupied a precarious position with an uncertain future which contextualizes the consequences of assimilation into the pluralist national cause or exclusion from the emerging ethnoreligious nationalist movement of the 19th century. Thus, my research enables the field of Italian literature to move beyond the traditional 'secular versus Catholic' competitive view and instead understands Risorgimento writings as way to envisage solutions to prior religious tensions.

INTRODUCTION

In May of 2017, an article appeared on the main webpage of the Movimento 5 Stelle, a currently influential political movement in Italy.[1] On the surface, the article, titled "Le banche ombra gestiscono il mondo,"[2] appears to detail some of the non-transparent practices of global banking systems and suggests that another fiscal crisis may be in store because of such practices. The aspect of this article which caused significant uproar, however, was not the content, but the image that preceded the title. The image is strikingly similar to a still from the film Nosferatu, depicting the silhouette of an elderly man with a hunched back ascending a staircase. The two key differences in the image on the website, however, are that the elderly man is wearing a kippah and entering a door marked Lehman Brothers – an investment banking company founded by Jews. Many have condemned the image and suggestive nature of the article for its anti-Semitic overtones and its similarity to previous caricatures seen in fascist propaganda in the previous century.[3] While such overt anti-Semitism may seem shocking in the 21st century, from a

[1] Founded in 2010 by Beppe Grillo, an Italian internet personality and comedian, the Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S) gained traction for its direct democracy style and aims to reduce corruption within the Italian government. This new group – which refuses to call itself a 'political party' in favor of the term 'movement' – strikes a similar chord as the American concept of 'grassroots' style campaigns and its populist sentiments. Though initially perceived as a small faction on the Italian political scene, the movement made large gains from 2010-2017; they ranked second in Italy during the 2014 European parliamentary elections and had members who were elected mayors of Rome and Turn in 2016. The movement has come under scrutiny for its lack of representation within the organization, expelling of members for voicing criticisms, the frequent vulgar or violent language of its members (described in *la Repubblica* in an article on Nov 30, 2012), and anti-Semitic sentiments. For further reading, see: Maria Elisabetta Lanzone's *The "Post-Modern" Populism in Italy: The Case of the Five Star Movement*; and Filippo Tronconi's *Beppe Grillo's Five Star Movement. Organization, communication, and Ideology*.

[2] "The shadow banks manage the world." All English translations throughout this project are my own, unless otherwise noted.

[3] Including: L'Osservatorio antisemitismo della Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea. Other outlets which have criticized anti-Semitism of the M5S include Il Foglio (Italian center-right newspaper) in an article on February 28, 2017, Italy's Huffington Post in an article on December 07, 2017, and on August 09, 2014 in the Rights Reporter, a non-profit independent News magazine.

historical perspective this anti-Semitic depiction of Jews should not surprise, as it has haunted the politics of the Italian peninsula at least since the 14th century.[4]

Much scholarship exists documenting anti-Semitic rhetoric in 20th century propaganda and literature during a resurgence of nationalism under fascism. Scholars often point to the publication of the fascist magazine *La Difesa della Razza*[5] or even cartoons published in popular newspapers like *Il Giornale dei Balilla*,[6] and even to the 1938 racial laws that constituted the official policies of the Italian nation under fascism and stipulated that "gli ebrei non appartengono alla razza italiana"[7] as examples of anti-Semitism which occurred alongside an increasingly nationalist discourse. Some scholars, like Renzo De Felice, make visible the connection between anti-Semitism and Italian nationalist rhetoric of the 20th century. He notes the interesting disparity between the Jews who supported the regime financially and were even

[4] Please note that there will be multiple terms used to refer to the territory known as modern-day Italy throughout this text based on the time periods which are being analyzed. I will use the term 'peninsula' when referring to the territory of modern-day Italy. Since Italy is divided into different regions before its unification in the 19th century, some will be referenced directly; this is done when a law, rule, or condition was known to have only affected that region or has significant relevance to that region as opposed to all others. References to the Church, or to Church authority signify the role and influence of the Catholic Church throughout the entire Italian peninsula. This project relies on the idea that, while the Pope maintained authority over the territorial region of the Papal States, the faith he represents was also able to maintain an ideological influence over the entire peninsula since the vast majority of inhabitants adhered to this faith. Please note that not all secondary references may use the same terminology; any differences will be signaled in my analysis or in subsequent footnotes. It is further significant to note that any sense of "Italian" identity throughout these time periods discussed would inherently be an imagined one since the united country itself did not exist. Pertinent to this aspect of forging national identity is Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.

[5] *In Defense of the Race*

[6] The name Balilla is likely a reference to the nickname of a student (Giovanni Battista Perasso) who started a revolt in Genoa in the late 18th century against Austrian occupation. The term 'Balilla' is often associated with fascist youth groups (like the Avanguardia Giovanile Fascista) and their periodicals in the 20th century.

[7] "Jews do not belong to the Italian race." 1938 leggi razziali; In citing primary readings, I provide the original Italian quotes in-text with an accompanying footnote of the English translation. The translation information is indicated in the footnote accompanying the first reference from that text. For primary sources where no suitable English translation was available (specifically for Carli, Balbo, D'Arco, and Frizzi), the English translations in the footnotes are my own.

active participants in fascist political events despite the racialized language of Jewish identity in the leggi razziali (De Felice 59). He claims, however, that before the 20th century, "Italy has never really experienced racism or racist sentiment among the general public…the very roots of racism are *conspicuously absent*. [My emphasis.] This explains how…when Fascism introduced its racist policies aimed at instilling a 'racial consciousness' among the Italian people…[it] failed to sway the Italian public" (21-22). He further clarifies this statement when specifically commenting on the history of antisemitism in the Italian peninsula:

> If in the second half of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th, the 'Jewish race' is discussed in Italy it is not in any racist biological sense, but somewhat mistakenly as a reference to the traditions and culture of the Jews as a group present within many regions. There was no real anti-Semitic movement in Italy during [the 19th century] that can be compared to those of other countries; at the most there were small manifestations of an innocuous and traditional type, which were disappearing under the pressure of assimilation. Some high-level anti-Semitic incidents that were quickly silenced and forgotten, for instance the campaign waged by Pasqualigno against I.P. Maurogonato to become part of the Minghetti government in 1873, clearly show how these outbursts were alien to the Italian mentality and sensibility. (De Felice 25)

This viewpoint suggests that the origin of antisemitism in Italy do not predate the mid-19th century and that it did not contain any racial connotations. I suggest that such a comment does not fully address the rhetoric surrounding Jewish identity portrayed in literature which viewed Jewishness less as a set of cultural practices, but as an irremovable aspect of one's character. I would further suggest that while De Felice's perspective addresses the rise of anti-Semitism alongside the surge of fascism, it leaves open an explanation regarding *why* anti-Semitism arose during this period and *why* the Jewish community became the target of the Fascist regime and its derogatory leggi razziali.[8] Though De Felice's discussion of public reception is not the focus of

[8] Race Laws

this project,[9] I would suggest that this racial language was nothing new to Italy and is critical to understanding anti-Semitism today.

In fact, Jean Feerick in her work *Strangers in Blood*, notes that although scholars originally believed that categories of race in the region were "an invention of Enlightenment epistemologies, critics of the early modern period are increasingly discovering traces of its modes and logic in…the sixteenth and…seventeenth centuries" (Feerick 3). My research in the following chapters excavates this 'mode and logic' showing that this racialized language is present as early as the sixteenth century in such texts as Pietro Aretino's drama *La Cortigiana* in which a character's Jewish identity is portrayed not only as an indelible feature he can never obscure, but that this renders him silenced and marginalized in both figurative and literal ways. Thus, I suggest that even though the application of race toward specific religious difference may not have been common or apparent in all works throughout the early modern period, this does not mean that such racial language was entirely absent. Furthermore, my project explains that this racialized language was central to the Italian nationalist movement and its discursive origins. To elucidate these origins, my research has compiled a wide range of literary texts – from diaries, to dramas, and even an epistolary novel – in examining the representations of Jewish communities from the 16th century through the 19th century. In viewing these diverse texts together as pieces in a puzzle, a larger image emerges which shows that the anti-Semitic sentiments of the 20th century and today are deeply intertwined with Italy's nationalist movement. Throughout my project, I show through reading these texts together that Italy's Risorgimento of the 19th century develops as a struggle between two different nationalist models – one which is based on a presumed ethnoreligious (Catholic) heritage through the exclusion of

[9] For further reading on this, please see Cecil Roth's *The History of the Jews in Italy*.

Jewish communities and another which advocates for pluralism and the foundation of a nation on the basis of political inclusion.

Other scholars note the importance of analyzing literary texts to better understand the varied depictions of Jewish identity in the Italian peninsula. In her text *Strangers at Home*, Lynn Gunzberg's analysis of literature from the 14th through 16th century demonstrates, the ways in which literature points to social relations which remained absent from historical accounts. Her analyses illustrate how literary texts came to imagine Jewish identity as a separate entity, excluded from 'Italian' society. She traces the treatment of Jewish characters beginning with the Sonetti Romaneschi of Franco Sacchetti of the 14th century to the Pasquinate of G.G. Belli in the 19th century to illustrate that, even though Jews were an assimilated and integral part of Italian society, they were perpetually marked as inferior throughout its history.

Gunzberg's analyses also illustrate a historical shift in the way Jews were presented though Italian literature. For example, she notes that the Jewish character was initially portrayed as a "victim, a cowardly object of mockery and cruel jesting and no match for his oppressor and how this tractable character became the popular stock type" (Gunzberg 94).[10] According to Gunzberg, as Italian society progressed toward a nationalist movement, there occurred a notable shift in this 'stock type.' In her discussion, for example, of the 18th century popular Florentine ballad, *'Gnora Luna*, Gunzberg shows how this caricature became a way of "grotesquely satirizing Jewish…customs, greed, dishonesty, and love of money…play[ing] on all the stereotypes, all of the common insults" (96). My research both builds on Gunzberg's project, tracing the representation of Jewish characters across centuries of Italian literature, and also

[10] She takes a socio-historical approach to explain the ways being Jewish was perceived as an irremediable aspect of one's own self. Thus, even after converting to Christianity, Jewish people would never be rid of their inherent Jewish-ness.

expands upon her work in showing how representations of religious difference were integral to the emerging nationalist movement of the 19th century.

My project also builds on other research that explores the marking of Jews as an irreconcilable 'Other' in historical accounts. Flora Cassen's study, *Marking the Jews in Renaissance Italy*, suggests the segregation ushered in with the establishment of the ghettos and forced compliance with dress codes requiring Jews to don a badge or hat in the Renaissance were politically motivated; moreover, her research concludes that these measures provided the largely-Catholic rulers both a means of establishing social control and the security of a visual representation of Jews as a dangerous Other, "willing" to be subjugated. Cassen fundamentally explains the marginalization of Jewish communities and their larger identity as a power struggle – waged within Italian cities against Catholic officials who, though instrumental in imperial rule, were still vying for authority in the peninsula. This power struggle also plays a prominent role in the literary imagination surrounding the establishment of the Venetian ghetto.

Studying the treatment of Jews and their depiction in Risorgimento writings also adds to our understanding of the larger European context. For example, much work has been done to understand nationhood in France and Germany. The models for nationhood in these two countries provide important context surrounding Italian nationhood; my research suggests that the two models for Italian unification proffered in the 19th century – one pluralist and the other ethnoreligious – resemble the two models followed by France and Germany. Rogers Brubaker's *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* examines how each country's definition of nationhood was shaped by its storied past. He notes that nationhood "…was oriented to the reform of an existing nationwide state in France" against the monarchy, "but was identified with a purely cultural, indeed a specifically literary national spirit (Nationalgeist) in Germany"

(Brubaker 6). In other words, while France's nationalist movement was perceived as relatively political, Germany's was differentiated more on the basis of ethnic heritage. I would suggest that the Italian nationalist case can be understood as a tension between these two models, where the two competing views of nationalism within an emerging Italy represented these two perspectives.

Ari Joskowicz's *The Modernity of Others* also offers important insights to contextualize the Italian nationalist movement in the larger European context. Joskowicz's text explains that nationalist movements in Germany and France, largely influenced by enlightened and romantic thinking, led to different attitudes toward Jews and their integration and assimilation. In Germany, he claims, religious difference often incorporated Catholicism into a larger nationalist discourse while excluding Judaism, whereas "France did not produce a challenge to Jewish civic rights, as it had in Germany" (Joskowicz 47). Viewing this in relation to Brubaker's analysis would suggest that the political nationalism within France allowed for more religious inclusion than the ethnically-based nationalist model in Germany. Joskowicz also contends that in both countries, "it is not the hatred but rather the intense interest in Judaism and Catholicism as alien objects of inquiry that is most characteristic of European secularism in its various forms" (Joskowicz 29). I suggest it was not merely a fascination with Judaism which caused its fractured futures as either assimilated or expatriated from the emerging Italian state; it was a history of long-standing discrimination, mistreatment, and subjugation based on religious difference which placed the community in Italy in this precarious position.

Other scholars like Cristina Bettin state that despite these tensions within Italy's past, the status of Jewish communities gradually improved over time. She suggests that the role of Jewish communities in the peninsula existed on a curve that bent toward inclusion; though Jews did not

necessarily adopt the larger community's identity and customs, they came to be treated as equals in the larger community while maintaining their own customs and identity. My research, however, reveals a somewhat more nuanced curve, showing that the treatment of Jews and Jewish identity in Italy has existed on a pendulum, sometimes progressing toward full assimilation[11] at one apex and at others, swiftly barreling back to segregation and discrimination at its other end. Even though the pendulum swings wide in each direction, its extension never fully touches either extreme; it only ever reaches an approximation of these two polar opposites. The texts I have chosen to include in this analysis – from Sanuto's diaries, to Aretino's drama *La Cortigiana*, to the diary of Anna del Monte, to the *Le ultime lettere* of Ugo Foscolo – highlight the inflection points on this pendulum, moments when the incorporation of Jewish communities either seemed imminent or was entirely rejected.

As will be clear to most readers, my analysis of the ways in which fear of a religious Other 'haunts' Italian literature and history depends on Avery Gordon's work in *Ghostly Matters* and, in particular, on the way "haunting," as a theoretical concept, affords us the opportunity to understand hidden power structures embedded in society (3). Integral to this theoretical concept is the notion of complex personhood which, for Gordon, means "that even those who haunt our dominant institutions and their systems of value are haunted too by things they sometimes have names for and sometimes do not" (5). In other words, the idea of haunting that Gordon explores implies the presence of something that is both existent and long-passed that continues to affect present society. In the many cases she examines, Gordon reveals how absences and gaps are often sites for understanding the crafting of abstractions and the authoritative perspective. My

[11] In Bettin's study, and for the purposes of my analysis, 'assimilation' refers to a minority group's full adoption of the larger community's identity and customs whereas 'integration refers to a minority group's maintaining their own customs and identity though being treated as equals in the larger community.

project here attempts to examine those gaps in the literary representations of a narrative which crafted a distinct *italianità* so vital to the nationalist movement; my research reveals a discourse of exclusion around Jewish identity, even when anti-Semitic rhetoric is perceived to be '*conspicuously absent*' from the nation's history as De Felice has claimed. Gordon's sociological examination of what a society represses throughout its history and how this repressed matter lingers and 'haunts' future discourse is especially pertinent to my reading of how the fear of Jewish identity haunts Italian literature and history and, though seemingly long-passed, continues to affect the present through the threat of perpetual return.

My idea of something which is both absent, yet ever-present, is also indebted to Derrida's *Specters of Marx*, as he describes how Europe has been 'haunted' by the specter of communism. Specifically, Derrida asserts that communism, though no longer present, posed a threat to an emerging capitalist Europe because it was "dreaded as communism to come. It had already been announced, with this name, some time ago, but it was not yet *there*. let's hope that in the future it does not become an actual, effectively present, manifest, non-secret reality" (46). The specter here represents the ideas of communism which had already passed, yet threatened to return. Though his discussion begins with this specific ideology, Derrida later suggests that many other ideologies and identities can be interpreted as a specter or ghost. My research, from the first chapter which explores the origins of the first ghetto in Venice through the final chapter on the rhetoric of conversion through the Risorgimento, extends the thinking of Derrida and Gordon to the case of Jews in the Italian peninsula by revealing how the Italian literary imagination is haunted by a fear of religious difference that implicitly permeates discourse though it is not always explicitly made visible.

My analysis in this dissertation does not attempt to prove a *causation* between the language surrounding Jewish identity in literature and the rhetoric of the Risorgimento; instead I suggest that these two seemingly unrelated threads of Italian history – the depiction of Jews in literature and the emergence of nationalisms of the 19th century – are discursively intertwined. In so doing, my work is inspired by the approach of Italian philosopher Remo Bodei. In his article "Farewell to the past: historical memory, oblivion and collective identity," he examines the way societies are constructed from multiple histories which serve as ghosts of the present and whose "presence is nonetheless distinguishable due to the disturbing effects they produce and the taboos with which they love to protect themselves" (Bodei 255). Such ghosts are hidden from the surface through multiple layers of meaning which are all intertwined together. Bodei explains the role ghosts play in a social paradigm as a series of threads which make up a rope:

> In fact, the nature of identity is not as much like a single thread so much as like a rope that has been woven slowly and patiently; it is also unwoven over periods of long and bloody conflict. It is thus composed of the braiding of many threads, each of which belongs to a particular history, that is more-or-less loosely connected to the others in space and time. The more the individual threads are rendered visible, the stronger the rope becomes. The threads, in turn, can become the starting point for new knots. Conversely, at least over the long term, the more the rope is weakened, the more the connections to the outside are reduced or severed. (259)

Bodei's study urges for a society to become aware of the 'threads,' or the multiple identities, conflicts, and events, which constitute the collective community. My research borrows this idea to suggest that an imagined Italian nationalism of the 19th century is comprised of 'threads' made up of religious tensions. Making these threads visible allows us to analyze how fear of Jewish identity has haunted the literary imagination in historical context and to see how the rhetoric of such fear often accompanied the confinement and exclusionary treatment of real Jewish

communities. Thus, I suggest that the Risorgimento itself cannot be understood without making visible these tensions.

Even though the 19th century movement appeared to include Jews into an Italian national identity, I suggest that studying the threads of these stifled religious tensions which underlie the Risorgimento reveals a simultaneous expatriation of real Jewish communities throughout the nationalist movement. This same perplexing trend, where our perception of greater inclusion of Jewish identity is met with shocking anti-Semitism, is evident even today in contemporary politics; this is why an awareness of such threads will enhance our understanding of Italian identity today. Making visible these threads can contextualize the seemingly unexpected rise in anti-Semitic acts and rhetoric of the 21st century so that these events can then be understood not as something new and alien to Italian identity, but as something deeply rooted in its discursive history.

My analysis hypothesizes that a fear of Jewish identity which leads to a preoccupation for its confinement and conversion continues to haunt literature of later centuries. In fact, other scholars like Jon Stratton have linked the confinement of Jews to Foucauldian social theory. In his chapter "Historicising the Idea of Diaspora," Stratton discusses life in the Frankfort (and, less extensively, the Venetian) ghetto. He comments

> Foucault argues that the seventeenth century was the century of 'The Great Confinement.' He writes that confinement 'constituted one of the answers the seventeenth century gave to the economic crisis that affected the entire Western world.' However, while the methods of spatial segregation were generalized during this period, as the rapid spread of the ghetto a century earlier suggests, the sensibility which thought in terms of such a solution was older.[12] (Stratton 130-131)

[12] The suggestion that the establishment of the ghettos may have been a reaction to the economic crisis does not seem too incredulous, given that others have suggested the Crusades had similar motives, namely to persuade merchants to use vessels from Catholic Italy as opposed to those from Muslim Egypt through fearmongering (Stow *Alienated Minority* 104). For further reading, please see Kenneth Stow's *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe*.

Here, I would agree with Stratton's assessment and believe that a more detailed analysis connecting the establishment of the ghettos with Foucauldian theory is warranted. In analyzing literature of the 16-17th centuries– both works of fiction and nonfictive letters – I suggest that Foucault's studies of confinement are relevant to explaining the perception and portrayal of Jewish identity.

Foucault's theories on confinement are particularly relevant to the language used to describe Venetian Jewry and bear relevance to the fluctuating treatment of Jews from inclusion to expatriation in Italian history. Though his ideas from *History of Madness* largely stem from a discussion of the role of madness in 17th century society, he asserts that they more broadly represent a process of confinement of a group which has been in the margins of society for some time. For example, he suggests that the impetus behind confining a portion of society which was previously in the margins of society was to control its influence in society:

> What confinement… demonstrate[s]… was the manner in which the classical age perceived unreason… They feared its lurking presence…Being so present and pressing the world of the insane was not easily perceived: it was intimated, felt and recognized before it was really there at all, and banished to a world of dreams and literary and pictorial representation. To feel its presence so close was not to perceive it, but was rather a certain means of experiencing the world in its entirety, a certain tonality of each perception. Confinement, by contrast, isolated unreason, removing it from the landscapes where it had been permanently present and elusive all at once. (Foucault 101-102)

In other words, for Foucault, unreason presents a threat to a totalizing social community because it defies reason and remained lurking in the margins of society. I would suggest that this same description is present in the way Jews are described as a threat to a totalizing Catholic identity which is subtly present in the margins of social life. Borrowing Foucault's ideas reveals how Jews are portrayed as a secretive entity which could not be understood, yet were present in everyday life. This portrayal is critical to understanding how their status as threat was established

and an awareness of this portrayal fosters a new understanding of the Risorgimento.[13] Because literature provides a space in which to influence the social imagination and to (re)construct a narrative which establishes identity,[14] I suggest that this same fear of an Other can be read into the literary depiction of the establishment of the ghettos in Venice and the Papal States. My analysis of Sanuto's Diaries and Aretino's *La Cortigiana,* in chapter one show the pertinence of Foucault's ideas of confinement to understanding how growing anxieties surrounding Jewish identity occurred alongside its depiction as an abject threat to society which needed to be controlled in some way.

My understanding of Jewish identity as a feared threat that haunts Italian literature is also indebted to Kristeva's theories of the abject. Specifically, I explore the literary representation of Jewishness as an "otherness, a burden both repellent and repelled, a deep well of memory that is

[13] Incorporating Foucauldian theory also has broader implications; first, viewing this study in relation to Foucauldian theory suggests a new understanding of the history of social thought. Foucault chose his time period because of the perceptible differences in the treatment of madness – from relatively unknown, to a celebrated difference during the Renaissance, to one which represented a threat that haunted the social conscious in what he termed the 'Classical Age' of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. In finding that the mad were only segregated, perceived as scapegoats during the 'Classical Age,' he postulated that the impetus of the change in perceptions of madness were shifting social mechanisms that occurred in the late 17th century. While I agree with his assessment that a "…Europe-wide social sensibility must have almost imperceptibly taken shape… [and that] it was that sensibility that suddenly isolated the category destined to people… places of confinement," I would suggest that his theories can actually be extended to an earlier time period when viewed in relation to Jewish studies (Foucault 54). Incorporating Foucauldian theory here also places the topic of Jewish studies in a larger context, as a facet of study of marginalization as a social phenomenon. A longer analysis would examine these links in more detail.

[14] For further reading on national identity construction, please see Homi Bhabha's *Nation and Narration*, 1990. Bhabha claims that all national identities are constructed by advancing Benedict Anderson's ideas from *Imagined Communities*. He emphasizes the importance of narration in forging an identity by illustrates that nationalism is both a movement for unification of the land *and* one that is constructed through narration, as both a realist expression and an ideology. In this process, he suggests that in an attempt to represent its history, a nation inherently concurrently recreates its own imagined past. Bhabha's theories are also unique in that he implies all nations define themselves culturally in relation to the Other. My dissertation engages with the idea that that a similar process is evident in literature produced throughout various regions of the Italian peninsula from the 16th through 19th centuries. In essence, a move toward nationalism which included various regions of Italy into a larger identity, other identities were inherently excluded.

unapproachable and intimate…" (6). In other words, the abject is a part of the self which is also expelled and reviled. Like Kristeva, I also identify Jewish abjection as "above all ambiguity. Because…it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it – on the contrary, abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger" (9). I also chart articulations of Jewish abjection as a "place where meaning collapses" (Kristeva 2) and as the "collapse of the border between inside and outside" (Kristeva 53). In essence, the abject is the part of the self which is Other and the fear surrounding it stems from the broken border which threatens the original self.

I begin, in the first chapter, "Jewish Identity as Abject: The Haunting of the Literary Imagination through the Seicento," with a focus on the establishment of the ghetto in Venice to explore the language of confinement and conversion of Jews. I analyze selections from the diaries of Marino Sanuto, a politician and amateur historian who wrote extensively between 1498-1533. Through analysis of his writings, I show how the Jewish community was perceived as Other in Venetian society and how ghettos first became a tool not only for physical control, but also ideological control through a preoccupation with Jewish confinement and conversion. My analysis suggests that Sanuto's diaries capture a growing anxiety about potential Jewish economic power and articulate an imagined Jewish identity, one that could be used as a tool for Catholic influence.

My analysis of Sanuto's diaries to understand the Jewish case in Venice is greatly influenced by Foucault's theories on spaces of confinement. As Foucault explains, the spaces of confinement "with their social role of segregation and purification… had long functioned like a great memory that had been kept silent, and lurking in their shadows was the dark power of an imaginary that many hoped had been exorcised for good" (Foucault 361). Borrowing Foucauldian theory as a framework to read Sanuto's diaries and language surrounding the

opening of the first ghetto in the 16th century reveals that Foucault's theories on the social mechanisms behind the confinement of a feared population are applicable much earlier than the theorist hypothesized.[15]

Furthermore, analyzing the literary drama *La Cortigiana* by Pietro Aretino in the first chapter, I show how Sanuto's ideas were representative of his time and not merely isolated opinions. My analysis of the drama originally published in 1525 and then revised in 1534 focuses on the one Jewish character, Romanello, who is tricked by a Christian merchant and later imprisoned, a scene that is nearly identical to a previous one involving the trickery of a Christian vendor who is merely cheated out of his money. In addition to analyzing Romanello's abjection (with reference to Kristeva), my reading of Aretino is also indebted to Chakrabarty's work on subaltern narratives. Because Romanello's story is a mere iteration of another narrative which already occurred in the text, it seems his character has "become [a] variation…on a master narrative" that structures the plot of the text (Chakrabarty 27).[16] Even his diminutive name roughly translating to 'little Roman,' further reinforces his status as subaltern and suggests that his diminutive status is the reason he is not afforded the same outcome as the Christian vendor. More broadly, I read Romanello's iterative narrative as connected to later representations of Jewish identity as a mere iteration of a Christian one, and consequently portrayed as deserving of

[15] Thus, viewing Foucault in relation to this literary analysis implies that the same social shift he described in the 17th century in relation to madness was *already* occurring in the early 16th century against Jews. In this sense, viewing Foucault's social history particularly in relation to Jewish studies reveals a new understanding of social thought. For example, a more detailed analysis would study the way Sanuto describes the establishment of the Venetian ghetto in 1516 alongside the language used in the papal bull *Cum Nimis Absurdum* of 1555 that established the ghettos across the papal states; I suggest this analysis would illustrate that many of the social changes that Foucault's theories describe nearly a century before Foucault claims they existed.

[16] Though Chakrabarty is predominantly discussing Indian history as subaltern in relation to the larger, totalizing view of the field from an often-European perspective, he acknowledges that his theories may be applied to all such cultural histories that have been subordinated.

unequal treatment. Reading Aretino's text with this theoretical background allows me to reveal that Aretino's work presents a larger 'master narrative' of exclusion where Venice is imagined as a region of ethnoreligious homogeneity.

Just as Chakrabarty depends upon Spivak's pivotal 1988 article *Can the Subaltern Speak*, my analysis of Romanello relies on Spivak's discussions of the 'divided subject' and questions Aretino's ability to 'speak for' a Jewish character.[17] For example though Aretino often mocked the corruption of Catholic religious officials, his status as a part of this larger Catholic community deters his ability to accurately 'speak for' real Jews who often faced the discrimination that Romanello experienced. Just as Romanello is viewed as a threat to Maco's assumed religious authority and is silenced through arrest and confinement at the end of the drama, so too were Jews within the walls of the ghetto. My chapter shows how literature often captured and contributed to such contemporary dynamics of silencing the subaltern.

I conclude chapter one with a reading of primary texts like Copia Sulam's[18] *Manifesto* (1621) and her letters defending her beliefs to Baldassare Bonifacio. I examine references to her Jewish faith, Bonifacio's suggestion that her 'heretical' faith and poses a threat to the tenets of Catholicism, and her inability to 'speak for' herself outside of the power structure established by his letters. With this information, I show how an imagined Jewish identity – and even Copia Sulam's own self-representation – are constructed as 'subaltern' through coded language which emphasizes the need for her confinement and conversion.

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[17] Spivak's theories outline a class struggle in which peasant proprietors "'cannot represent themselves; [but]… must be represented" by the oppressing class which controls mediums of writing and education (71). Though the representation of Jewish identity in literature in relation to a larger, totalizing Catholic one does not necessarily reflect *class* struggles, many other aspects of Spivak's theories are nonetheless pertinent.

[18] Though other scholars like Don Harrán refer to this author by her maiden name only, my project will refer her as Copia Sulam, since this is the way she signed her letter to Bonifacio and the name under which she penned her *Manifesto*.

These texts illustrate that fear of Jews – whether real people or their imagined, constructed identities – was articulated to suggest that only confinement and conversion could protect a largely Catholic audience from 'contamination.' Furthermore, my close readings also reveal a simultaneous, divergent perspective which advocates for tolerance and integration. For example, Copia Sulam's attempts to 'speak for' herself against a Catholic official nearly mimic Romanello's attempts to assert his own equality under the law and are also reflected in Meshullam's protests against the foundation of the ghetto (as described by Sanuto). At each of these moments of exclusionary rhetoric, there exists a simultaneous urge for tolerance woven into the 'threads' of a discursive history leading to the imagined nation in Risorgimento writings. It is this tension surrounding Jewish identity, rooted in these 16th century texts which, as we shall see, continues to haunt the discursive history of the peninsula as something which is not explicit anywhere, yet subtly present everywhere. When combined with analyses provided in later chapters, I ultimately show that nationalist rhetoric in literatures during the Risorgimento is the culmination of this haunting.

Chapter two, "The Seeds of the Risorgimento: Crafting a Common Enemy to Forge a Shared Identity," explores texts produced during the 18th century amid the forced conversions and confinement of Jews. Critical to my textual analysis is the context in which these works were produced. My chapter begins with an explanation of the way economic theory, philosophy, and even the criminal justice system were all increasingly shifting away from the authority of the Church. With this relevant information, I illustrate how Jewish identity becomes a convenient scapegoat, used as a tool by the Church to assert more ideological control over the peninsula during this time of increasing secularization and decentralized authority; furthermore, I show how identity is now constructed in relation to specific Jewish individuals not merely through

literary publications, but in other written mediums as well. For example, this chapter examines the diary of Anna del Monte, a Jewish woman who was kidnapped and detained in the House of Catechumens,[19] and an exchange of publications between G.B.G. D'Arco and Benedetto Frizzi on the role of Jews in their larger Catholic communities. In showing how the imagined religious identity within these texts is grounded in the lives of these specific individuals, I suggest that the tensions present in their writings reflect more than just an imaginary space to explore ideas. Instead, these texts reveal a strong connection between the *rhetoric* of fear and confinement, and real events of forced conversions, kidnapping, and confinement occurring within the peninsula in this period.

Understanding this context of ideological, political, and social shifts away from the Church helps explain a contributing factor to the prevalence of forced conversions against Jewish communities in the 18th century and their eventual decline into the 19th. Though often overlooked in critical analyses of Italian history and Italo-Judaic relations, I suggest that reading the construction of Jewish identity through literature against these historical events, the larger epidemic of forced baptisms can be perceived as a direct action against the nationalist movement due to the Catholic Church's anxieties about diminished control and authority. Furthermore, I suggest that this specific attempt to regain control through confinement and conversion, seen so prevalently in literature of Venice in the 15th and 16th centuries, evolves into a struggle to define the nature of an Italian 'nation' in the 19th century as one rooted not in forward-looking nationalist ideals, but in a reliable, centuries-old trope of religious identity.

[19] The House of Catechumens in Rome was a space where Jews who wished to convert would be held in confinement and receive instruction on Catholicism. As will be discussed later, author Caffiero points out that very often Jews would be kidnapped, accused of wanting to convert, or turned over by family members seeking financial incentives. Their confinement was largely against their will.

In this chapter, I show how a rhetoric of confinement and conversion is present in the Diary of Anna del Monte.[20] For example, in analyzing her repetition of the phrase 'rubbare [*sic*] l'anima,' I show how the text represents not just the theft of her soul through forced conversion, but also the loss of her agency, so closely tied to her religious beliefs. I also examine how the language of confinement haunts the text – not just the confinement of Anna's body within the House of Catechumens – but her description of the policing of her words as confinement of thought through her frequent descriptions of how even a small slip of the tongue could result in her conversion.

This chapter again engages with Gordon's ideas of hauntology and Foucauldian theories of confinement. I analyze the language of Anna's diary which shows a preoccupation with control over her Jewishness– a tension between her Catholic captors at the House of Catechumens and her own desire to reaffirm her religious faith. I show that examples like her interrogator's attempts to incentivize her conversion with offers to marry eligible Catholic bachelors suggest how Anna's confinement is used as both a punishment for and an incentive to change her beliefs. Furthermore, viewing the emphasis on Anna's gender in the diary through the lens of Kristeva's abjection will show that her female body is being used as a tool to further highlight the plight of Jews and to explain their subjugation to non-Jewish communities.

This chapter also examines contemporary rhetoric during the years following her case. These texts include G.B.G. D'Arco's *Della influenza del ghetto nello stato* (1782) and Benedetto

[20] A larger analysis would show that Anna del Monte's case is quite similar to that of Edgardo Mortara. In fact, my research began in reading about his story through David Kertzer's *Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara*. In this book, Kertzer outlies historical details surrounding the incident and in tracing the treatment of Jewish communities in Bologna through past generations suggests that the kidnapping may represent a larger ideological struggle. His analysis further suggests that the kidnapping which occurred well into the 19th century to the backdrop of the Risorgimento can be interpreted as the Church's desire to shape a common identity based on religious difference for the emerging Italian nation.

Frizzi's response to it, *Difesa contro gli attacchi fatti alla nazione ebrei* (1784).[21] In doing this, I show that the same tensions witnessed in previous literary texts are now visible in texts of political and social opinion. These texts provide divergent perspectives, including those against intolerance and those in support of exclusionary rhetoric. Again, with reference to Foucault and Kristeva, I show that Jewish identity is viewed as an abject Other; D'Arco's recommendations for complete separation between religious communities as punishment for supposed Jewish deviance and even the necessity to control individual persons by forcing them to take Christian names show a desire to eliminate Jewish identity and pacify its threat to an emerging homogenous, Catholic 'Italy.' In this vein, I show that these two texts present readers with protonationalist discourse and provide the foundation for divergent forms of nationalism that will emerge in the 19th century – one, based on a presumed shared ethnic heritage and the other, a political ideation with little reference to religious difference. Reading these texts alongside Anna del Monte's diary shows that a language of social anxiety, shared between autobiographical and political texts, reveals a culture bent on converting and confining real Jewish communities.

Chapter 3, "Fractured Futures in the Risorgimento Writings," examines particular works of 19th century Italian literature in order to question traditional studies which define the Italian Risorgimento in stark opposition to religious ideals. Situating my analyses of 19th century texts in the religious tensions and identity struggles traced in chapters one and two, I show that the discourse of the Risorgimento can be understood not merely as an emerging nationalist discourse, but as a negotiation between these religious tensions that had been present in the peninsula for centuries. Specifically, I outline two competing forms of nationalism – one

[21] Frizzi's given name was Benzion Raphael Kohen. He wrote and published under the name Benedetto Frizzi. I will refer to the author as Frizzi since this is the name he chose to use.

religious, based in part on an assumed ethnoreligious heritage[22] that places Catholicism at the center of one's duty to the emerging nation, and the other which I will refer to as pluralist based on a shared sense of political affiliation spearheaded by Mazzini and Garibaldi.[23] My project argues that these competing nationalisms provided a forum to envisage 19th century solutions to long-standing anxieties over the role of Jewish identity.

I begin this chapter by briefly explaining the origins of these two competing forms of nationalism that emerged to create a sense of communal belonging. Researching the participation of Jewish communities in nationalist organizing, for example, Elizabeth Schächter has noted the mixed reaction of Jewish communities toward assimilation as evidence for the notion that the Risorgimento was purely secular. Specifically, she notes Jewish community involvement in the 1820-1821 uprisings in Piedmont, their help in financing the Risorgimento, and their affiliations with Mazzini's *La Giovine Italia* organization and journal of the same name to underscore the pluralistic dimension of Italian nation formation.

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[22] This phenomenon of a national identity based in (re)establishing a moral order within an emerging Italian nation has been noted by other Italian scholars. Specifically, I Stephanie Jed notes that such a phenomenon which links the establishment of a moral order and nationalist thought occurred in Florence in the early 19th century in her chapter "Gender, Erudition, and the Italian Nation." For further reading on other scholarship surrounding this topic, see Emiliana Noether's *Seeds of Italian Nationalism, 1700-1815* (1951); and Maurizio Isabella's *Risorgimento in Exile* (2009).

[23] I have chosen to use the terms 'ethnoreligious' and 'pluralist,' a divergence from the purely 'ethnic' and 'political' terminology used by Rogers Brubaker in detailing competing versions of nationalism of the 19th century in France and Germany for three reasons. First, his study focused on issues of nationalism primarily surrounding citizenship. Since my project differs from his in that my research emphasizes the importance of religion in the emerging political sphere of early nationalism in the peninsula, a new framework was required which would incorporate this perspective. Second, the term 'ethnoreligious' implies not only a presumed shared ethnic heritage, but also one founded in a common religion. Third, the term 'pluralist' allows for divergent religious perspectives within the emerging nationalist movement, but does not inherently suggest an adoption of a purely secular mode of politic. Specifically, I will show that, although a Mazzinian nationalist model allowed for more tolerance of religious difference through its deemphasis on the Catholic faith as the center of civil society – thus seemingly advocating for secularism – it also subtly excluded the Jewish faith from its larger narrative. Specific examples of this will be illustrated in the body of chapter 3.

Throughout her text, *The Jews of Italy 1848-1915*, Schächter explains that Italo-Judaic relations and even opinions within Jewish communities fluctuate amid Risorgimento thinking of the late 19th and early 20th century. She indicates that Jewish communities were often fraught with diverse opinions surrounding their own identity. Her analysis claims that particularly in the middle of the 19th century, a faction of Jews maintained the notion of a hybrid identity, retaining both their Italian and Jewish heritages. In the years following the revolutions of 1848, Schächter argues that Italian Jews were fully assimilated into society. By 1875-1910, however, she indicates that there was a general unease or disaffection with emancipation in which Jews in Italy either abandoned their religious ties altogether or turned toward Zionism. Though she does not fully address possible reasons for this societal shift in the ways Jews viewed themselves, she later notes other events that occurred in Italy and throughout Europe which may have influenced this shift. These include the Hep! Hep! riots[24] in Germany, the kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara, accusations of blood libel and ritual murder perpetrated by the Catholic Church,[25] requests for Jews not to be elected or appointed in political spheres,[26] and the Dreyfus affair[27] in France which received the full support of the Catholic Church in Italy. By the turn of the 20th century, "despite religious equality established since 1871, government administration and the armed forces at the higher levels were largely closed to Jews" (Schächter 122). Schächter thus implies

[24] The Hep! Hep! riots were a series of pogroms against the Jewish communities across various regions in Germany and marked a turning point in Judeo-German relations. See Guido Kisch's *Historia Judaica: A Journal of Studies in Jewish History, Especially in Legal and Economic History of the Jews. Vol. 21-22.*
[25] Perpetuated specifically by Umberto Benigni, priest, professor, and confidant of Pope Pius X.
[26] De Felice and Schächter both cite the incident of Francesco Pasqualigno, a parliamentary deputy, who advised King Vittorio Emanuele II not to appoint Isacco Pesaro Maurogonato as finance minister, because of his conflicting 'nationalities' – one Jewish, the other Italian (Schächter 110). Cf. p. 3 above.
[27] During which a French officer of Jewish descent was accused of treason and unjustly sentenced to prison despite evidence proving his innocence had been made public. Though he was later exonerated, the case divided France and much of Europe.

that Jews' relation to their traditions and heritage was in reaction to the rising wave of anti-Semitism across Europe.

Two issues in Schächter's analysis which become problematic for my research are first, that it does not rely on literary analysis and second, that it suggests the treatment of Jewish identity in Italy progressed steadily throughout the early modern period toward inclusion until this sudden shift toward exclusion. For example, she primarily uses historical documents as her reference points in arguing that Italian Jews were among the most assimilated in Europe. She cites that by the 13th century, they spoke Italian dialect of their respective regions and the curriculum in Hebrew schools was taught in Italian and stressed the importance of the cultural heritage for all students. While I agree that Italian Jewish communities during this time made significant attempts to assimilate into the larger Catholic society, my assembly of relevant literary texts fills the gaps in Schächter's argument to explain how such a steep surge in anti-Semitic discourse arose during the late 19th century.

In chapter three, I incorporate this historical information to analyze literary texts which illustrate divergent perspectives on Jewish identity; these include Fogazzaro's *Daniele Cortis* (1885), Cesare Balbo's *L'Ebrea* (1854), Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (1802), and Alfieri's *Saul* (1782). Specifically, I illustrate how some encapsulate ethnoreligious nationalism, like Fogazzaro's *Daniele Cortis* (1885). In telling the story of a Catholic politician and his aspirations, Fogazzaro re-envisions the type of nationalist leader bound by a religious duty to a Catholic Italy. After all, the pluralist nationalists already had Garibaldi, so heavily constructed through the literary imagination, to look to as a figurehead. Ethnoreligious nationalists could find, in the titular character of Fogazzaro's text, a literary character for their own aspirations. Daniele Cortis, suspected of being a cleric (which in the text suggests an opposition to the

Mazzinian-esque nationalist cause), represents a form of nationalism which is heavily influenced by Catholic religious doctrine founded on the conversion and exclusion of Jews.

Though the character Daniele Cortis *appears* to want to move the nationalist cause *away* from Jewish exclusion, his character never reaches this viewpoint; in fact, consideration of religions other than Catholicism or even a form of nationalism which allows for religious pluralism are notably absent from the work with the exception of subtle references, which will be explained in detail in the chapter. Reading Fogazzaro alongside Cesare Balbo's *L'Ebrea,* I show how Jewish identity is imagined in a precarious position with an uncertain future – either as assimilated into the pluralist national cause or as expatriated from the emerging ethnoreligious nationalist movement.

In this chapter, I also explore the pluralist nationalist texts and their potential for inclusive depictions of religious minorities. For example, I show that although an imagined Jewish identity continues to be used as a tool in Ugo Foscolo's text *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis*, this time it is depicted in a way of representing the pluralist nationalist movement. Foscolo's text, which tells the story of a nationalist who retreats to Italy to evade persecution and later decides to commit suicide, presents readers with a glorious death for one's country and nationalist ideals. Though it is never explicitly stated that Jacopo is a Jewish character, I argue that *Le ultime lettere* can be read as an iteration of the Wandering Jew narrative and Ortis represents an imagined Jewish identity.

I analyze the *ultime lettere* along with secondary texts regarding Foscolo's own background, including his childhood desire to liberate the Jews of the Venetian ghetto, and the original German *Sorrows of Young Werther* which served as an inspiration for this text. Perhaps the most convincing piece of evidence, however, comes from Foscolo himself. In one of the

letters, he deliberately casts Jacopo as Alfieri's inherently Jewish character, King Saul. In reading *Le ultime lettere* against Alfieri's *Saul*, which is a modified retelling of the Biblical tale detailing the days leading to lead Jewish character's choice to take his own life, I suggest Jacopo's precarious position between happiness or continued turmoil represents the position of Jews in Italy on the cusp of nationalism, threatened with an uncertain future between assimilation or expatriation. Through these excerpts, Foscolo suggests that not only can Jews die a glorious death for the nation, but that Jacopo exemplifies this Jewish nationalist figure.

Foscolo's creation of a biblical identity for Jacopo Ortis, I would suggest, signifies a multivalent ambivalent space for Jews in the Italian literary imagination of the 19th century. Though the movement that Foscolo and Alfieri represent is most closely aligned with the pluralist and seemingly inclusive ideas of Mazzini and Garibaldi, Jacopo's and Saul's eventual suicides suggest, nevertheless, an inherent exclusion since the characters are dead and their death is necessary to enact the 'pluralist' nationalist cause. When viewed in context of the Risorgimento, a time when many actual Jewish communities were becoming increasingly influential in the movement, these literary depictions of an imagined nation suggested a bleak outlook for the assimilation or even integration of actual Jews into this emerging nation.

My concluding chapter synthesizes the pattern of hauntology evidenced in my previous chapters on the 16th-18th centuries to show that and the larger 'master narrative' of exclusion becomes the basis for an ethnoreligious national movement. Focusing each chapter on a different snapshot of Italian history shows how, across time, Jewish communities and the representation of their larger identity in the peninsula exists between two extremes. Just as a pendulum sweeps back and forth, their inclusion in the larger Italian peninsula and emerging nationalist movement exists on a continuum of recursive motion; at times, as in Venice and Rome of the 17th and 18th

centuries, it is close to complete expatriation, and at times, as in the 19th century, it is close to complete assimilation. The nature of this project necessitates an assembly of texts across centuries of Italian literature and across discursive genres. In reading these divergent texts together and incorporating secondary sources from scholars well-versed in the entire body of work of authors like Foscolo and Alfieri, my project enables us to move beyond a secular versus Catholic competitive view to understand the Risorgimento in terms of the Jewish identities that seemed so irrelevant, but were, in fact, present and integral every step of the way.

CHAPTER 1:

JEWISH IDENTITY AS ABJECT: THE HAUNTING OF THE LITERARY IMAGINATION THROUGH THE SEICENTO

SECTION I: HISTORICIZING THE GHETTO

Examining the nationalist movement of the 19th century without considering it in a larger historical and literary context would neglect the fact that the religious tensions which underlie the Risorgimento were present throughout the peninsula's long history and are made present when examining works of literature. Just as Risorgimento literature of the 19th century showed two competing forms of nationalism – one ethnoreligious and the other pluralist – I would argue the same tensions, though not yet nationalist, can be viewed in literature dating back to the descriptions surrounding the establishment of the first ghetto. Furthermore, I suggest that the tensions of the Risorgimento can be understood not just as a desire for nationalization as most traditional research suggests, but in terms of religious difference. Specifically, through literary analysis of texts which have generally been deemed "minor," we can re-consider the tensions of the Risorgimento not just as a struggle *for* nationalism, but also as a struggle *against* religious dominance.

I begin this chapter in 16th and 17th century Venice and Rome, as these sites represent the origins of Jewish confinement, namely through ghettos, in the peninsula and the world. The texts I examine include excerpts from Sanuto's *Diarii* (1498-1533) on the opening of the synagogue and establishment of the ghetto, Aretino's treatment of Jewish identity in *La Cortigiana* (1525 and 1534), and Copia Sulam's *Manifesto* (1621) with letters in response to her detractor, Baldassare Bonifacio. Analyses of these texts reveal how Jewish identity was cast as a threat to

Catholic unity and how a language of fear surrounding Jewish identity developed to respond to this threat. It is important to trace this language of fear to its roots, in order to understand the tensions around Jewish identity that have been present in the margins of the Italian literary imagination for centuries, as a ghost which threatens its perpetual return. Viewing these texts as connected, moreover, enables us to identify a negotiation between a totalizing Catholic social identity and a more pluralist viewpoint, a negotiation that seeds the ethnoreligious and pluralist tensions seen in Risorgimento discourse.

Before proceeding to the analysis of the texts, it is important to ask: if the Catholic Church was based in Rome and its prominent dividers were based in Germany and England,[28] what makes Venice so central to this analysis? First, Venice was the first city in the peninsula and one of the first in the world to establish a space specifically designed to confine its Jewish inhabitants as a means of controlling a portion of its population because of irrational fears held against them.[29] Venice was also the first example within the Italian peninsula of how such segregation was not only possible, but *profitable*. For example, though it may seem contradictory that the move to establish a Jewish ghetto in Venice was caused by anything other than religious tensions, many have linked its creation to economic fears in the region which spurred these tensions. As Kittler has noted, Venice's economy, in the late 15th century, suffered a major economic crisis due to growing corruption among profit-driven nobles, effects of changes in

[28] With the Protestant reformation inspired by Luther's *95 Theses* in 1519 and the English Reformation when King Henry VIII broke away from the Church in 1534.

[29] The Venetian ghetto is predated by the older Frankfurt Judengasse in Germany. Though Jews had lived in this area dating back to the early 11th century, it wasn't until 1462 that the city required Jews to live within this restricted area behind walls meant for their separation. A larger analysis will show the ways Venice may have been influenced by this prior example; however, the focus of my project is on the history of Jewish confinement within the Italian peninsula. For further reading on the Judengasse in Frankfurt and its potential connections to the Venetian ghetto, see: Dana Katz's *The Jewish Ghetto and the Visual Imagination of Early Modern Venice*.

trade powers,[30] and the Venetian economy's inability to diversify since it was largely monopolized by four banking institutions. With strained finances, the city's rulers needed to derive funds, and levying taxes on Jews while allowing them to remain in the city and conduct their business provided a solution.

Another reason 16th century Venice is so important to understanding Jewish identity in the Risorgimento is that Jews provided a convenient scapegoat for the region's economic troubles *because of* the already-heightened religious tensions. Venice's location and physical control of certain territories, as, for example, the islands just off its coast, made it a beacon for merchants flocking to the region bringing their religions and foreign customs; this included immigration of Greek scholars after the fall of Constantinople in the 15th century and immigrants from Morea and other territories like Cyprus and Dalmatia.[31] Indeed, as early as the 15th century, the diversity of Venice's population prompted an envoy of the French King Charles VIII to remark that "most of their people are foreigners" (Ravid "Venice" 450). While this statement was observational and implied no judgment, other contemporary accounts were not so neutral.

Others highlighted the beauty of Venice's multicultural population and its peaceful coexistence. For example, the contemporary historian Francesco Sansovino admired the "infinite number of men from different parts of the world, with diverse clothing, who come for trade," and also commented that "as a result of trade, the [Venetian] Jews are extremely opulent and wealthy, and they prefer to live in Venice rather than in any other part of Italy. Since they are not

[30] These included the changes in trade which resulted from the Ottoman Empire's new control over Constantinople in 1453 and the decline of the Hanseatic League. For further reading, please see: Kittler, Juraj. "Too Big to Fail: The 1499–1500 Banking Crisis in Renaissance Venice." *Journal of Cultural Economy*, vol. 5, no. 2, 20 Mar. 2012, pp. 165–178., doi:10.1080/17530350.2012.660783.
[31] For further reading, see *Venice and the Islamic World, 828-1797* published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art; see also Davies and Davis' *Between Venice and Istanbul: Colonial Landscapes in Early Modern Greece*.

subject to violence or tyranny here as they are elsewhere" (McPherson 30) (Brown 216). Though Venice was more accepting than many other locations in Europe where Jews were being expelled, it was far from inclusive (Hinds 100). Even though Jews were allowed to remain in the city, they were required to pay steep fines and live in a highly-policed Ghetto. If we read between the lines of Sansovino's comments, we might perceive a certain anxiety of the largely Catholic nobility about its Jewish population in the face of an influx of Muslim and Greek Orthodox immigrants.

In his chapter on "Venice and Its Minorities," Benjamin Ravid has questioned the idea that Venice was an 'inclusive' utopia, noting that Venetians were becoming increasingly concerned with the criteria for establishing oneself as a true Venetian. As a result, foreigners were often viewed as second-class citizens, or not even citizens at all:

> …it is necessary to determine who was considered a Venetian and to clarify whether foreign immigrants could shed their status of being foreigners by becoming Venetians…the nobles possessed a monopoly of all political rights and power and could engage in commerce both within the city and outside it…Below the nobles were the *cittadini originarii* (original citizens, i.e., citizens by birth), often referred to as just *cittadini*. To be a member of this group required proof of having been born in Venice of legitimately born ancestors who had resided in Venice for at least three generations and during that time not engaged in any 'mechanical trade' (Ravid "Venice" 450-451).

This explanation makes it clear that even though immigrants were part of Venice's thriving economy, suggesting they shared equality would be an exaggeration. There were other avenues for immigrants to attempt to assimilate to Venetian society with similar rights and privileges as the *cittadini*, though these were often difficult and required severing all ties with their places of origin. This move toward tracing one's lineage in Venice for generations should also be viewed as a move against the Jewish community there, as many were Ashkenazi or Sephardic, and traced their roots to Germany or the Iberian Peninsula (usually the result of previous expulsions).

More importantly, Ravid shows that at a time when the city was being inundated with immigrants, Venice began to fear these foreigners and their perceived threat to the unity of a larger Catholic identity of the region.

At the time of the establishment of the Jewish ghetto, Venice was already struggling with other prominent religious communities, including the Greek Orthodox residents. On the one hand, the "papacy's attitude towards the Greek orthodox world was rather lenient…in view of papal policy of appeasement with the Greek Orthodox world against the backdrop of the Ottoman advance. This trend was particularly manifest in the papacy's policy regarding the Greek community in Venice…" (Arbel 170) Two papal bulls in 1514 approved Orthodox places of worship and new protection under the auspices of Rome. Though this would seem like an improvement, it did not actually result in more freedom. essentially, the move merely replaced one Roman Catholic figurehead (usually a local official in Venice) with another one located in Rome, under the direct supervision of the Pope (Greene 79). These small freedoms were to be revoked by Pope Paul III who, in 1542, upended their previous agreements and began forcing Orthodox officials to follow Roman Catholic practices, even requiring "that all Orthodox priests should make a profession of (Catholic) faith" (Arbel 171). Thus, even though the Greek Orthodox community saw temporary freedoms, the fear of a perceived threat to the hegemony of the largely-Catholic region was ultimately the driving force of political action.

In 1540, Venetian officials also began exerting more control of another religious minority – the Jews. With a decree for "a wall of appropriate height that joins the walls to the left and right, and…a door made therein…[and] no other exit…except for said door" (Calimani 46), officials permitted Levantine Jews conducting trade in the region, to move from the over-inhabited Ghetto Nuovo to the Ghetto Vecchio. While Riccardo Calimani has suggested that

"[t]he expansion to the Old Ghetto was not a new restriction…but a tardy and reluctant acknowledgement of the importance of the Jews in the city's economy," I suggest that such 'acknowledgement' that emphasizes permission to conduct business diverts attention from the fact that this permission only existed within a walled-in portion of the city with only one entrance and exit (Calimani 46). This 'expansion' to the Ghetto Vecchio may have represented a begrudging desire not to recognize the importance of Jewish merchants in Venice's prosperity, but signaled a desire to control them even more.

These restrictions of Jews in Venice through harsh taxes, specific clothing requirements, and strict living arrangements coincided with similar measures to confine Jews in Rome. Early in the 16th century, Pope Paul III's sweeping reforms, intended to bring the Church back to its foundations, had specific consequences for the Jewish community. For example, the reinstitution of the Carnival in 1536 also reinstituted a forum to discriminate against and dehumanize the Jewish community.[32] In 1555, Pope Paul IV published his bull *Cum Nimis Absurdum* that established the ghettos across the Papal States.[33] His chief reason for this move, as outlined in the bull, was outrage over Jews who "have erupted into insolence: they presume not only to dwell side by side with Christians and near their churches, with no distinct habit to separate them"

[32] D'Azeglio in his *Ricordi* explains a tradition in which Jews were put in a cask and "rolled from the top to the bottom of the Capitoline hill" (D'Azeglio "Capo Ventesimoterzo"). The Synagogue would later be granted a request to substitute a 'foot-race' of Jews instead. "Later still, the biped racers were changed into quadrupeds, and the Ghetto had to supply the eight palliums (pieces of fine velvet of various colours) for the eight days of the Carnevale" (D'Azeglio "Capo Ventesimoterzo"). In essence, they were transformed into non-human-like beings (similar to horses). For further reading, see Massimo D'Azeglio's "Capo Ventesimoterzo" in *I miei ricordi, Volume 2*, 1867 or Andrea Maffei's collection and translation of D'Azeglio's works *Recollections of Massimo D'Azeglio, Volume 2*. 1868.

[33] The establishment of other ghettos throughout multiple other regions in Italy, though not necessarily in direct correlation to the *Cum Nimis*, were also caused by a similar growing fear which inspired the papal bull. The ghettos in Turin (in 1679) and Vercelli, Casale Monferrato, Alessandria, and Asti (all in 1723) – among others – were established under the rule of the House of Savoy.

(Stow *Catholic Thought* 294-298). In other words, the motivation for the bull was religious fervor and anxiety over Jewish integration into Roman society.

Thus, even though the impetus for the Venetian and Roman ghettos seem different – one seemingly economic and the other by papal decree regarding the dangers of integration – these differences were merely superficial. Instead, this move toward segregation across the peninsula in the 16th century was actually inspired by one motivation – *fear*. Venetian officials feared losing financial and social control because of the activities of its Jewish merchants, and papal authorities feared the loss of ideological control over its faithful if they did not take action to instill a sense of Catholic identity and belonging. In both Venice and Rome, authorities felt the need to take their cities 'back.'

In order to understand the fear and growing anxiety surrounding the expression of Jewish identity, I turn now to three literary texts that can help us to capture the complexity of social tensions in Venice in a particular moment in the broader history of competing narratives of confinement and inclusion. The diaries of Marino Sanuto and Aretino's popular drama *La Cortigiana* capture both a growing anxiety toward the Jewish faith with reactions to this fear and show how the Jewish community and its imagined identity were perceived as an 'abject' Other in a larger Catholic Venetian society. Though scholarship suggests there was little response against ethnoreligious principles and the perceived threat of Judaism, analysis of Sanuto's diaries in the 16th century and Sarra Copia Sulam's correspondence nearly one hundred years later suggest otherwise.

In analyzing these texts in relation to one another, the traditional view of a pluralist Venice tolerant of all religions begins to fray. The diaries and letters show not only how an imagined Jewish identity could be used as a tool for Catholic influence; they suggest, moreover,

that, in their portrayal of Jewish characters, Jewish identity was 'spoken for' and 're-presented'[34] in a way that cast it as a threat which needed to be confined or converted. The language of fear which haunts these texts points to early moments in a story of pluralist and ethnoreligious tensions that will develop in the battle for Italy's identity in the 19th century. Tracing the language of fear back through episodes of Jewish confinement through the peninsula's history, beginning with the first ghetto in Venice, shows how such language reveals fulcrum points in which the pendulum of history swings between inclusion and expatriation for Italian Jews.

[34] A distinction which will be explained in more detail in section II in an analysis of Aretino's *La Cortigiana*.

SECTION II:
CONFINED TO THE PAGE: 16TH COUNTERNARRATIVES OF JEWISH IDENTITY

Born in 1466, Marino Sanuto came from a politically influential family. As the son of a senator, Sanuto grew to follow in his father's footsteps in being elected to the Maggior Consiglio of Venice and later becoming senator himself. Though he completed many other works in his lifetime, he is perhaps best known for his *Diarii*, which present readers with an eclectic amalgamation of historical events, government rulings, and even personal stories about his family. His 58-volume extensive writings capture the quotidian and mundane, like records of payments made by officials, to the monumental, as evidenced by his descriptions of astonishing events like the establishment of the Venetian ghetto. Though his diaries were perhaps intended to serve as unbiased historical record, my analysis reads the way they construct Venice in the literary imagination. This is possible in large part because they do not constitute merely historical fact. His personal flair often interprets historical details and gives us insight into Venetian social values during his time, including a perspective which urges for Catholic authority over his city. What is more interesting, perhaps, is that there also exists a counternarrative in his writings, as he – perhaps unwittingly – gives voice to a perspective which supports a pluralist Venice.

Scholars have suggested that Sanuto's diaries present a complicated representation of Jewish issues which cannot be ignored. For example, Sanuto's descriptions have been described at times as "…that of a curious and sympathetic reporter and that of the mirror of bouts of contemporary prejudice" (Labalme 336). My research does not negate this complex view because his writing style is sometimes unclear; it is not always possible to discern whether the opinions given are his own or whether they belong to the people who serve as the subject of his

writing.[35] An example of this confusing structure occurs in an entry from 1515 about the confinement of Jews. At this time, the walled-in Ghetto Nuovo was not yet the proposed site for segregation. Instead, the Venetian Council of X considered segregating the Jews to Giudecca, an island in the Venetian lagoon:

> In questa matina, sier Zorzi Emo savio dil Consejo fe'lezer in Colegio una parte: che li zudei, quali sono in questa terra molti in diverse caxe et contrade et danno mal exempio a li christiani tutti, siano mandati ad habitar a la Zueca etc. Hor inteso questa parte da' zudei et *maxime* Anselmo banchier et Vivian andono a trovar i Savj, dicendo è pericoloso non siano messi a saco, stando a la Zueca, da'fantazini, et che stariano meglio a Muran; et feno tante pratiche, che il resto dil Colegio non l'asentì, et però fo soprastato.[36] (Sanuto Volume 20, pg. 138)

Though the original location would not have been a walled-in separation, the island would provide a significant barrier between Catholic and Jewish society. It is somewhat unclear if Sanuto himself supports this move, or whether he is merely capturing the sentiment of those like Zorzi Emo. Also important to note here is that the chief reason for the proposed segregation in this passage is *fear*. In commenting on how Jews live 'in questa terra molti in diverse caxe et contrade,' Zorzi Emo (as recorded by Sanuto) suggests that their integration in Venetian land and society will have negative effects on their Christian neighbors due to their 'mal exempio.' Sanuto's summary of Emo's claims would have Venetians believe that the only solution to the fears of integration was separation and confinement of Jewish residents to the small island.

[35] Sanuto could potentially be seen more as a sympathetic reporter, as he also commented on the unfairness of certain traditions (like how Jews were not supposed to be seen around Easter). For further reading, see Patricia Labalme's *Città Excelentissima*.

[36] "On this morning, sir Zorzi Emo, member of the Council read a speech to the Council: that the Jews, who are in very diverse homes and districts in this region and give a bad example to all Christians, should be mandated to live in Giudecca, etc. Now, when this was heard by the Jews, and especially by Anselmo the banker and Vivian, they went to visit the council members, saying that living in Giudecca, they would be in danger of being robbed by soldiers and that they would be better off at Murano; and they negotiated a lot; the rest of the Council did not assent, and so, it was left pending."

Also critical in this excerpt is that Sanuto does not refer to the given names of the Jewish spokesmen he cites – Asher Levi Meshullam and Chaim Meshullam[37] – but he refers to them by their Christianized names ('Anselmo' and 'Vivian') and by their professional roles as bankers. Though being referred to by one's profession may have been common during the time, Sanuto's use of their assumed Christianized names is further evidence of the oppressive force of a totalizing Catholic identity which is normalized in his writings. As Kristeva has shown,[38] naming another through one's own terms represents the appropriation or cancellation of a person's identity. Following this, I suggest that the renaming of Asher and Chaim Meshullam to Anselmo and Vivian del Banco not only dehumanizes them as objects which can be renamed, but conveys an attempt to control their identity.

Though going by a Christianized name was commonplace during the time – especially in light of the discrimination against the Meshullams and the community they represented – Sanuto's renaming allows us to understand the dehumanization of Venetian Jews in a new way. Because Catholic Venetian officials feared Jewish identity, as evidenced by the suggestion of the threat their 'mal exempio' posed for neighbors, this supposed threat needed to be managed. In appropriating Asher and Chaim Meshullam's Jewish identity signified through changing their Jewish names into Christianized ones, they are transformed into a less threatening entity. Thus, their challenge to Venetian control as described by Sanuto is undermined because of their inability to control their own identities. This choice to appropriate their identity and try to control it in a tame way was not just done by the author this diary, but by the Venetian officials involved in this case who also insisted on using their Christianized names. This larger involvement

[37] This paper will refer to Anselmo del Banco and Vivian (also called Vita) by their birth names, Asher and Chaim Meshullam. All cited sources will use whichever name appears in the original text of the document.
[38] Kristeva 41.

suggests that fear surrounding these brothers' Jewish identity was not merely the opinion of a 'notetaker' to history, but by the society itself in which the Meshullams' Jewish identity was sublimated to a larger, totalizing Catholic one.

This excerpt above is also important because it illustrates a complicated counternarrative to Catholic hegemony. In this passage, readers are confronted with strong voices of dissent against the Council of X and against fearmongering. After all, nothing was decided as a result of this meeting, as the issue regarding the location of the Jewish community was left 'pending.' So, it would seem that the brothers were somewhat successful in voicing support of religious tolerance. This view is further complicated, however, when considering that Sanuto's *Diarii* appear to suggest that the brothers *support* their community's own segregation on the island of Murano. While the brothers did reference this other island as a possible home for Jewish residents, it is likely that they did not truly want to be separated from mainland Venice, but rather that their proposal for the island of Murano was merely the lesser of two evils. After all, the Jewish residents did bring this topic to the Council[39] and Murano was nearly twice as large in terms of land mass while being the center of the thriving glass-making market which served nearly all of Europe. If the Jews were going to be forcibly relocated, a move to Murano would have been more tolerable than one to Giudecca.

[39] The discussion of segregation was called for by Zorzi Emo, member of the Council of X. In his text *The Ghetto of Venice*, Riccardo Calimani's detailed explanation of the progression of economic decline in Venice – through its tribulations and attempted recovery and the influence of the Jewish community in its history – suggests that the image of the Jewish community became increasingly negative and the Jewish moneylender became a popular stereotype. Calimani further notes that by 1499, when the large Garzino, Pisani, and Lippomano banks had all failed, the increasing economic crisis spurred on negative sentiments surrounding the Jewish community in Venice and that "[a]t the news of grave and imminent peril, the Venetian populace reacted with strong emotion, deep religious fervor, and moral anguish, whipped to still greater intensity by the fiery sermons the preachers were delivering from the city's pulpits" (31). It would seem this growing anti-Semitism may have been part of the reason for Emo's discussion of segregation.

The brothers' success in preventing Jewish segregation was short-lived; on March 26, 1516, Sanuto recorded another exchange of a Cardinal Dolfin and Asher Meshullam again regarding the establishment of a segregated region for Jews. While Sanuto's diary presents an example of the totalizing Catholic identity forced upon Meshullam, a more complicated view of Jewish identity is later revealed. Sanuto's description of Meshullam's plea is quite striking and, I would argue, represents a subtle subversion of the ethnoreligious emphasis being proffered by the Cardinal. For example, Sanuto notes that Meshullam laid out a well-reasoned argument against the establishment of the ghetto in claiming:

> …che questa era cosa injusta per più rispeti: prima, perché non stando in mezzo di zentihomeni e altri christiani sarano messi a sacho…e stano apresso le guarde di Rialto, non che tanto lontano; poi li è stà promesso, per il Consejo di X con zonta, non innovar altro di loro, che saria romperli la fede, e li strazaroli à pagà tanti danari per tenir le botege di Rialto, hora sariano ruinati; poi li poveri judei non vorano andar habitar li e si partiriano di qui, et lui Anselmo à promesso pagar per tutti, sichè non potrà pagar non havendo da chi scuoder le taxe; suplichando non li fosse innovà questo, ma quando si havesse recuperà il Stado, l'era ben onesto andaseno li hebrei fuora in le terre dove stevano, benché a Mestre non pono più star per non vi esser caxe. Hor andò, fuora e il Dolfin più caldo cha mai, vol poner la parte in Pregadi… (Sanuto *Diarii* Volume 22, pg. 73)[40]

This quote from Sanuto's diary is important for many reasons. First, in detailing the vulnerability of the Jewish community to attacks, which they had already been experiencing so near to the guards of the Rialto, Sanuto highlights the plight of the Jewish community, something rarely

[40] "... that this was unjust in many respects: first, because not being in the middle of society and other Christians they will be plundered, robbed… and staying right near the guards of the Rialto, [the police] are not far away; moreover they have been promised by the Council of Ten and the executive committee, that there would be no changes which would amount to breaking promises, and the rag merchants would be ruined if they had to pay so much money to keep their shops on the Rialto; besides the poor Jews will not want to go live there and they would leave, and he Anselmo promised to pay for all, since there would be no one from whom to exact taxes; begging them not to introduce these changes, but if they wanted to take back their state, it would be more fair if the Jews were to leave the city for their former homes, though they could no longer stay in Mestre, because there were no houses. Now he [Meshullam] went out and Dolfin angrier than ever wanted to place this issue in the Pregadi [another branch of Venice's government] …"

seen in literature of the time.[41] The description of Meshullam's willingness to pay the heavy taxes imposed on all Jews for those less fortunate portrays a positive image of Jewish identity; not only is he demonstrating a chief tenet of his faith, but also one highly regarded in the Christian faith: charity.

Even if Sanuto is merely presenting a description of historical events which seems unlikely given his frequent personal interjections throughout his volumes of work, I would argue that his choice to include these details challenges Catholic readers not to see Jews as Other, and therefore portrays a breakdown of the border between Christian and Jew in the literary imagination. In essence, Sanuto presents readers with a "collapse of the border between inside and outside," or between Catholic and Jewish as Kristeva may suggest (Kristeva 53). This tension between the totalizing Catholic identity and a counternarrative for inclusion, evidenced through the details Sanuto includes in his diaries, is not unique to this author or even to Venice in the 16th century. Through Sanuto's texts, we see a unique moment in which the pendulum of history, at an apex, appears to change its course. Just as we think the pendulum will continue swinging toward inclusion, fear and confinement force it barreling back toward exclusion again as the Ghetto of Venice was established despite the appeal.

Pietro Aretino's *La Cortigiana* presents a different articulation of the complex and growing anxiety towards the participation of Jews in Venetian society.[42] An interesting aspect of this drama is that it contains two distinct endings which greatly affect the outcome of the sole Jewish character. Though Aretino's text was originally written and set in Rome in 1525, it was

[41] An opposing view will be apparent in Aretino's *La Cortigiana* below.
[42] Another one of Aretino's texts (Il Marescalco) contains a Jewish character. An analysis has not been included here since the character plays a less pivotal role in that play. For further reading, see Deanna Shemek's "Aretino's Marescalco: Marriage Woes and the Duke of Mantua" in *The Journal of the Society for Renaissance Studies.*

republished with edits in Venice in 1534. In the original edition published in Rome, the Jewish character is last seen being hauled off to jail; in the 1534 Venetian edition, the Jewish character achieves greater agency. These edits are critical to understanding the context surrounding the perception of Jewish identity during the time in Venice because of the multiple layers of meaning within the drama. In analyzing these endings, it becomes apparent that though both versions of the drama explicitly reference Rome, the 1534 version subtly signifies Venice. Analyzing the "excesses… of meaning" throughout the text, as Bodei may call them, it becomes clear that the language of fear permeates the text and points to historical changes in the confinement of Jews during Aretino's time (Bodei 256).

Perhaps in an attempt to reinvent himself, the painter turned writer moved to Rome from Arezzo in 1517 and became known for his bitingly satirical work. Many of Aretino's works mocked those in established positions of power, even Catholic religious officials. For example, he was particularly known for having openly ridiculed Pope Leo X in his *The Last Will and Testament of the Elephant Hanno* and even become known as the scourge of princes.[43] Having overstayed his welcome in Rome by offending enough of those in control and surviving an assassination attempt against his life in 1525 – the same year he wrote *La Cortigiana* – he found refuge for himself and his ideas in Venice. Some have even suggested that Aretino, like many authors of his time (including Malipiero, Strozzi, and Busenello) critiqued Rome as a society whose values were decaying and perceived Venice to be far superior (Rosand 139).

[43] For more information on Aretino's personal life and prior works, see: Margaret L. King's *The Renaissance in Europe*; Danny Chaplin's *Pietro Aretino: The First Modern*; and Edward Hutton's *Pietro Aretino: The Scourge of Princes*. For further reading on the pasquinate, see Duilio Chiarle's *Le Pasquinate ovvero la Grande Satira*; and Mario Dell'Arco's *Pasquino statua parlante*; For further reading on Aretino's life or time in Rome, see Raymond B. Waddington's "Aretino's Satyr: Sexuality, Satire and Self-projection in Sixteenth-Century Literature and Art" in *Modern Philology*.

Upon leaving Rome and settling in Venice, Aretino brought his unsettlingly sarcastic writing style with him; he continued to post satires at the base of the Rialto bridge. Of course, not everyone in Venice was thrilled with this writing form. Sanuto suggests disapproval for the practice in claiming that in Venice "…è sta principiato a far cose che non laudo, et è che volendo imitar quelo si fa a Roma a Pasquino in Rialto sopra colone vien la note posti vari soneti et capitoli. Prima fu posto contra Pietro Aretino el qual in versi et prosa dice volentiera mal di signori et altri, et cussi io li vidi li versi et molti li copiorono" (Sanuto *Diarii* volume 57).[44] Though there may have been some initial backlash, Aretino's ideas and sarcastic writing style became popular when his friend and typographer, Francesco Marcolini, published many of his works.

Few of Aretino's other works deal with Jewish issues or incorporate Jewish characters. Though some could analyze Aretino's strong opposition to Church control of secular life as a support for a pluralist society against religious dominance, his treatment of Jews in *La Cortigiana* is problematic for this interpretation. Thus, even though he may be perceived as more inclusive, his work subtly reinforces fear of Jewish identity and suggests that confinement is the only way of addressing this social anxiety. The threads of fear surrounding Jewish identity in this text reveal the pendulum's swing toward exclusion and expatriation.

Aretino's *La Cortigiana* tells the story of Maco, a young man who travels to Rome with aspirations of becoming a cardinal. Throughout the text, Maco is tricked by an unsavory mentor into thinking that he needs to become a crass courtesan (or cortigiano) before pursuing his true aspirations. His mentor is later tricked by his own servants (particularly by Rosso) into sleeping

[44] "He began doing things I do not admire, and in wanting to imitate that which he did in Rome on the Pasquino [statue] on the Rialto above the colonnade, he posted, I noted, various sonnets and chapters. At first, people were against Pietro Aretino, who, in verse and prose, willingly speaks ill of lords and others, but then I saw the verses and many people copied them."

with a prostitute, believing the woman is his unrequited love. As the drama continues, however, the reader realizes that trickery and identity (particularly in relation to clothing) are overarching themes that continue to reappear in nearly every scene and become nervously anticipated twists to propel the plot forward. Just as the audience settles on a new scene or act, the fear that someone's identity will be appropriated or sublimated – and the course of events drastically changed – looms ever-present.

It is critical to read Aretino's text in relation to Venice for many reasons, but perhaps the most obvious is the nature of his revisions of the play between its original publication in 1525 and its republication in 1534 when he was located in Venice. Though the setting of the play – Rome – did not change, many of the details surrounding the characters and dialogue *did* change. While some changes were minor, like adding dialogue to explain characters' actions, others are more significant. [45] For example, almost all dialogues involving the Jewish vendor were altered; three scenes were even added to the end of the final act in which the single Jewish character reemerges from his prior confinement in prison.

Aretino's key alterations made between the two editions of the play reveal a heightened awareness of Venetian society, while other details which remained the same lent themselves nearly flawlessly to a Venetian setting. For example, the name of the often-clumsy and half-witted character is named Maco in both versions. It is unknown exactly why the name Maco was selected for this character. The name does bear a striking similarity to the name Callimaco in

[45] For more detail on these changes, see: Richard Andrews' *Scripts and Scenarios: The Performance of Comedy in Renaissance Italy*. The 1534 version of Aretino's drama is perhaps the most widely-published one, given its significant alterations which affected its rhythm and conclusion. For more information, see Alessandro Giardino's *Corporeality and Performativity in Baroque Naples: The Body of Naples*; and Donald Beecher's *Renaissance Comedy: The Italian Masters, Volume 1*.

Machiavelli's *La mandragola* published just one year earlier in 1524.[46] Since Maco is also a variant of the name Emanuel, which means 'God is with us,' the character's lack of agency or general intelligence could be seen as a mockery of any monotheistic religious community, while simultaneously signifying a mockery of Jews due to the name's Hebrew origins. Though perhaps initially set in Rome, his name seems to fit perfectly with Venice's growing fear of foreign, Jewish inhabitants. Recall Ravid's explanation of the criteria which defined 'cittadini originarii' as citizens of Venice by birth as opposed to foreigners - many of whom were Jewish – who were often treated as second-class citizens.

Even the name of the character, 'Rosso,' seems to lend itself to a Venetian setting. It is unclear whether Rosso is the character's first or last name; in either case, the important part of the name is its color referent. In trade relations between Venice and Turkey (a complicated history that had resumed after the Venetian-Ottoman Wars[47]), one significant Venetian import was a red-colored pigment called cinabrese or sinopia. During the Renaissance, Venice was known for its abundant supply of this red color used in paintings and often referred to today as 'Venetian Red.' Naming the one wise character known for his forethought and ability to cunningly weave his way through complicated situations with ease after the bold color that the northern city is known for would seem to suggest the possibility that Aretino is subtly referencing Venice. Rosso's superiority to all the other characters, despite his status as servant, would also suggest a comedic duality. Though he serves, Rosso is also portrayed as being truly superior to all other characters, especially Maco and the Jewish character, Romanello. In this way, Rosso is portrayed as a true Venetian or 'cittadino originario.'

[46] Though some analysis could show similarities to the trickery at play in Machiavelli's also politically motivated text, these details are irrelevant here.
[47] For further reading, see Roger Crowley's *City of Fortune: How Venice Ruled the Seas*.

Though one could argue that the name of the Jewish character, Romanello, suggests that the text does not inherently lend itself to a Venetian setting, the name does not rule out such layered meanings at work in Aretino's play and highlights an important aspect of the portrayal of Jewish identity. Though the name Romanello, literally translated as 'Little Roman,' does suggest this character is a diminutive citizen of Rome, a compelling historical detail alters this perception. In fact, Verona – a city under Venetian control during Aretino's time – was often referred to as 'Little Rome' dating back to the 13th and 14th centuries (Simonis and Cavedoni 401). This connection to Venice is heightened by other details of his character, particularly those given in the 1534 edition. In creating an archetypal Jewish character without ever using his name except in stage directions, Aretino dehumanizes Romanello; moreover, Aretino associates him with the diminutive Italian suffix '-ello,' referring to him the way one might refer to a pet. Furthermore, due to the layered meanings at work in Aretino's text, his name could also refer to an underlying fear of this Jewish character and a consequent desire to verbally subordinate his Jewish identity to a larger, Catholic one. This, as we shall see, is supported by this character's actual status as subordinate to all other characters.

In analyzing the role of this sole Jewish character and his actions in Aretino's *La Cortigiana*, I show that his exchange with a Catholic character embodies the same tension and fear visible in Sanuto's diaries between a totalizing ethnoreligious identity and a counternarrative which urges for tolerance of pluralism. Three scenes, in particular, are crucial for analyzing the role of the single Jewish speaking figure of this drama; two of which appear to be iterations of each other – first involving a pescatore and the iteration involving a Jewish merchant – and the third that occurs at the end of the 1534 edition of the drama. First, in Act One, Rosso, a servant of Maco's mentor, is told to wash his master's laundry and buy fish for an upcoming event.

When he is left alone with the clothing and money necessary for the purchase, readers are allowed a glimpse of Rosso's thinking:

> In fine i panni rifanno le stanghe, e se questi Signori andassero mal vestiti come noi altrí o che scimie, o che babbuini ei parrebbono. Io stupisco di loro, che non bandiscono gli specchi per non vedere quelle lor cere facchine. Ma io sono il bel pazzo a non fare un leva ejus con la vesta e con gli scudi. Che la maggior limosina che si faccia è il rubare un Signore. Ma per ora giunteremo questo Pescatore, il Signore assassineremo più in grosso. Io veggio uno pescivendolo, che mi ha proprio aria di fare il pratico, e poi essere un zugo.[48] (Aretino 1.11)

This personal excerpt is important because it immediately casts the pescatore, the soon-to-be victim, in a very sympathetic light by showing the extent of Rosso's calculating nature. Readers cannot help but empathize with this unwitting and honest character. This episode leads seamlessly into the following scene in which the actual moment of deception occurs. It becomes evident that Rosso, dressed in his master's clothes, has now assumed a new identity when the pescatore refers to him as 'vostra Signoria' and graciously accepts a significantly lower payment for his goods.

Due to the reader's knowledge of Rosso's malevolent plan, and these textual references that illustrate the pescatore is none the wiser, readers feel sympathy for this vendor. While receiving his goods, Rosso pretends as though *his* servants are delayed in arriving with the payment. Only later does he randomly point to an unsuspecting bystander, a friar standing near a church door, and claim that man is his servant. After telling the pescatore to wait nearby, Rosso

[48] "In the end, clothes remake the bodies, and if these gentlemen were to go as badly dressed as us they would seem like monkeys or baboons. I am amazed at them, that they do not ban mirrors to avoid seeing their boorish looks. But I am the handsome fool if I don't take advantage of these clothes and money. The charity one can give is to steal from a master. But for now I will join this fisherman, we will assassinate my master wholesale. I see a fish seller who seems to be practical, and then he's a fool"; All quotes from La Cortigiana are from the 1534 version, listed in the works cited page, unless otherwise noted; A version of this quote is contained in the 1525 edition, in Act I scene xv. All references in the footnotes to this edition of the drama can be found in English in a copy edited by Donald Beecher, Carmine Di Biase, and Massimo Ciavolella with an introduction by Raymond B. Waddington (2003).

claims he will receive the payment from the friar, but readers quickly realize his alternative intentions when he mutters "Va tien fidanza di servitori io lo voglio scannare con un bastone; ladro, magnapagnotte, traditore"[49] (Aretino 1.13). Then, upon meeting the friar, Rosso claims the following: "Rosso: Quel poverino che vedete quivi ha la moglie spiritata ne l'osteria della Luna con dieci spiriti a dosso onde priego la vostra Reverenzia per l'amor di Dio, che vogliate metterlo alla colonna, et avverta vostra Signora che il povero disgraziato è mezzo che scemo e tutto adombrato"[50] (Aretino 1.14). Upon hearing this, the friar walks to the pescatore and promises to exorcize his wife. When the pescatore does not understand the situation and begins demanding payment, the friar assumes he is also possessed. Readers only discover what happens to the pescatore as a result of this exchange a few scenes later:

> Pesc: Roma, doma. O credi ch'è 'l Paradiso, naccheri, che cose crudeli sono queste...Io arrabbio, io scoppio: due ore m'han tenuto a la colonna come spiritato con tutto il mondo intorno pelandomi, pestandomi e fracassandomi… or vatti con Dio che io son chiaro di Roma….che maledetto sia Roma, chi ci sta e chi l'ama, e gli crede. E lo dirò a suo marcio dispetto, io mi credeva che il castigo, che l'ha dato Cristo per mano degli Spagnuoli, l'avesse fatta migliore, et è più scellerata che mai.[51] (Aretino 1.23)

[49] "Go, put your trust in servants, I want to slay him with a stick. Liar, scrounger, traitor." This detail does not appear in the original version. Its addition in the 1534 version appears to portray the pescatore in an even more sympathetic light, being utterly oblivious to Rosso's calculating nature.

[50] "That poor fellow you see here has a possessed wife in the Moon tavern with ten spirits to ward off, so I beg your Reverence, for the love of God, have him taken to the Colonna [prison], and warn your wife that the poor wretch is disgraced and half stupid and completely shady." This quote also appears in the original 1525 version in act 1, scene xvii.

[51] "Rome, Shome! Or do you think it's Paradise, castanets? - what cruel things are these! I'm angry, I'm bursting: two hours they kept me at the Colonna as if I were possessed with all the world around skinning me, stomping on me and beating me...now go ask God if I am clearly from Rome… may Rome be cursed, and those who live there, who love it, who believe in it. And I will say it to his rotten spite, I believed that the punishment, which Christ gave him at the hands of Spaniards, had made it better, and is more wicked than ever." A version of this appears in act 1, scene xxi in the 1525 original; however, it is not presented as a speech for this character, but instead the information is given in smaller portions through dialogue with the friar. Editing this information for the 1534 version so that it appears as a monologue for this character adds sympathy to his plight, as he is able to speak directly to the audience, rather than to another character.

At the end of this scene, the reader realizes two important facts. First, previous dialogue in this scene highlights the idea that this vendor has been tricked out of his money before and that he has heard of countless other vendors unwittingly suffering the same fate. In fact, "practical joking had its place in the courtier's life as a form of wit and pleasantry…Aretino understood the value of the trick structure as a principle of comic design. That such practices had been a part of Roman life in recent memory provided the precedent for treating comedic trickery as a representation of social reality" (Beecher 106). With this information, Aretino is incorporating this common life occurrence in Rome during his time as a new, almost comedic narrative trope to emphasize societal frustrations. Because this excerpt provides readers with a somewhat comedic representation of these real-life frustrations, readers can empathize with the pescatore and laugh at their shared experiences.

The second important detail that readers witness in this scene is the idea that the pescatore has a certain degree of agency in his life. While he cannot prevent this trickery from occurring, he is given a voice and a space in the text for readers to witness his point of view. Furthermore, having been frustrated for the last time, he finally has the chance to leave the city in hopes of a better quality of life elsewhere. His agency is even further established when considering differences between the 1525 and 1534 versions of this drama. In the earlier version, these were the last utterances by the Pescatore. In the updated version, Aretino adds three final scenes at the end of the fifth act in which the Pescatore (along with the Jewish vendor to be analyzed below) reemerge and seek retribution. Some scholars note that this addition contributes to the "festive spirit of reconciliation" (Beecher 110). While I agree that these added scenes contribute a more thorough ending which attempts to tie up loose ends – by specifically concluding the subplots of the two vendors who had been tricked – this conclusion hardly

presents a 'festive…reconciliation' for both characters. When the pescatore is granted access to reemerge in the penultimate scene – a new addition in the 1534 version – he confronts Rosso. He exclaims: "Fuggire mariuolo? Tu ti credevi per essere di notte passeggiar sicuro, tu credevi farla a un Fiorentino, et andarne netto, eh?"[52] (Aretino 5.24) Rosso tries to sidestep the issue by suggesting it was an accident and his friends protest the vendor.[53] The pescatore is then ignored and the characters resume a dialogue about a diamond and a necklace that Rosso was returning to his master.

In the final scene, the fish vendor is further able to assert his agency in asking "Et io dove rimango senza danari de le mie lamprede?"[54] (Aretino 5.25) This agency is immediately blunted by another character's insistence on his patience with "Tu pescatore, perdona al Rosso per esser tu Fiorentino si da poco, che ti sei lasciato truffare come dici: e vieni con questo Giudeo bestia…"[55] (Aretino 5.25). In these lines, 'questo Giudeo bestia' refers to Romanello. In the following lines, the pescatore thanks this character for such an assurance and finally forgives Rosso, but not the "…preti traditori che m'hanno pelato,"[56] a reference to the actions taken by the friar attempting to rid him of his supposed possessed spirit (Aretino 5. 25). Though the pescatore's situation has improved, as he will receive payment for the goods stolen by Rosso, he hardly receives recompense for being tricked and being – as he claims – nearly skinned alive as the result of Rosso's actions. Instead, he is forced to accept some of the blame for allowing himself to be a victim of this crime.

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[52] "You thought you could run away, scoundrel? You thought you were safe walking at night, you thought you could do that to a Florentine and get away with it?"
[53] One character even pleads for the pescatore to "non uccider la nostra Commedia" referring to Rosso (Aretino 5.24 in the 1534 version).
[54] "And where will I be without money for my lampreys?"
[55] "You, fisherman, forgive Rosso because there is so little Florentine in you that you let yourself get tricked as you say: and come with this beastly Jew..."
[56] "…traitorous priests who skinned me."

These exchanges involving the fish vendor are also similar to scenes later in the drama in which Rosso attempts to steal from a *Jewish* junkyard dealer. Perhaps one of the first details readers notice is the fact that the stage directions explicitly call attention to this vendor's religious identity by introducing him as "Romanello, a Jew" (Aretino 4.15) Because no other character has been introduced according to his or her religious or even regional affiliation, it becomes clear that this figure is being defined solely by such an identity. Furthermore, in both versions, the character's name next to the dialogue is *only* referred to as the abbreviated "Giu" for Giudeo. Never does his name Romanello actually appear next to his lines. This adds another significant layer of meaning to Aretino's text; not only is this character presented as a diminutive 'Roman,' but he is not even referred to by his supposed name. By creating an archetypal Jewish character and not using his name, Aretino further dehumanizes Romanello and signifies an entire population of people by making his religion his sole identifying marker.

Romanello's status as subaltern is signified in two ways. Most notable are references to him a subhuman creature. The final scene in which Romanello is called a 'bestia' is just one of numerous examples of his dehumanization; at other times, he is referred to as a 'dog' and it is suggested that officers should 'tie him up' like an animal (Aretino 4.15, 4.16, 5.25). Furthermore, Romanello's status as subaltern is also signaled by his lack of agency in responding to trickery. In Act 4 Scene 15, Rosso victimizes this vendor in a nearly identical way as he had ticked the pescatore. The parallels between the two scenes – with the pescatore and the Jewish vendor – are quite apparent; both utilize clothing as a form of assuming a new identity to deceive and trick a vendor. In fact, their being paired together in their reemergence at the end of the drama in the 1534 version suggests an inherent link between their two narratives. In essence, this second scene with Romanello is an iteration, or re-presentation of the first one and, according to

Rosso's previous comments, both scenes appear to be iterations of countless other tales of deceit. Because this iteration with the Jewish character occurs after the one involving the pescatore, Romanello's narrative is subtly cast as a diminutive version of the previous one. Romanello's story and his *character's experiences* have become a variation of a larger narrative that structures the plot of the text, a narrative that refers more to Venice than to Rome.

This reference to societal issues specific to Venice and not Rome can first be seen in an exchange between Romanello and Rosso in the tensions between their religious perspectives. After asking the price of a garb, Rosso is persuaded to try it on and suggests that Romanello try on a friar's cap so that Rosso can see what it would look like for a friend. Upon viewing this Jewish man wearing a Catholic garb, Rosso exclaims "io voglio che tu ti faccia Cristiano"[57] (Aretino 4.15). It is important to note that this part of the dialogue only appears in the 1534 version of the drama published in Venice. In the earlier edition, the conversation between these two characters ended with Rosso and Romanello trying on different garbs. Here, the importance of religious difference is overtly signified when Rosso calls attention to Romanello's hidden Jewish wardrobe markers, a red badge on his chest (Aretino 4.15).

Though Romanello tries to find common ground[58] and dismiss such a divisive statement, his attempts are ignored. Unable to take a hint, Rosso continues to provide three reasons why the man should convert. First, Rosso says "Ascolta bestia. Se ti fai Cristiano, in prima il di che ti battezzi tu beccherai un pien bacino di denari, poi tutta Roma correrà a vederti coronato d'olivo ch'è una bella cosa"[59] (Aretino 4.15). Giving financial gain as the first reason evokes the

[57] "I want you to become Christian."
[58] Romanello tries to find common ground in claiming that they both believe in God and calls out the inappropriate request by claiming "Se volete comperare, è una; e se volete ragionare, è un'altra" (Aretino 4.15).
[59] "Listen beast. If you become Christian, first, the day you get baptized, you'll get a bowl full of money, then all of Rome will run to see you crowned with an olive branch, which is a beautiful thing."

association of money with the Jewish community, an image and stock type which was becoming more popular in Venice – especially with the accusations of bankers' hidden Jewish identity during the economic crisis in prior years.[60] In this way, Aretino is using Romanello to 're-present' this stereotype which would resonate with a Venetian audience. Rosso's second reason, that Romanello would be able to eat pork ("tu mangerai della carne del porco"[61]) evokes the ever-present social differences between the two religious communities across the Italian peninsula at the time. Rosso's third reason is perhaps most interesting in that it evokes images of discrimination[62] even more specific to *Venetian* Jewish communities:

> Rosso: L'ultima è che non porterai il segno rosso nel petto.
> Giu: che importa questo?
> Rosso: Importa; che gli Spagnuoli vi vogliono crocifigere per cotal segno.
> Giu: Perché crocifiggere?
> Rosso: Perché parete de i loro con esso
> Giu: è pur differenzia da noi a loro.[63] (Aretino 4.15)

Here, Rosso is referencing the difference in clothing, an inherent feature which originated in the Middle Ages; during the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, Innocent III decreed that Jews "…in every Christian province and at all times shall be marked off in the eyes of the public from other peoples through the character of their dress," the Council neglected to mention how this feature should be implemented (Merback 1). Hereafter, regions across Europe adopted different forms of demarcating their Jewish inhabitants; from badges, to cloaks, to hats, a clear social border was

[60] Calimani, Riccardo. *The Ghetto of Venice*. P. 31.
[61] Aretino 4.15
[62] In addition to the reference to Romanello as a subhuman 'bestia.'
[63] "Rosso: The last is that you will not have to carry the red sign on your chest.
Giu: Why does this matter?
Rosso: It matters because the Spanish want to crucify you for this sign.
Giu: Why would they want to do that?
Rosso: Because it seems you are like them with that sign
Giu: It is to differentiate between us and them."

being drawn between Jewish and Catholic residents.[64] In reading Aretino's text, which is supposedly intended to be set in Rome, the detail of the color and style of Romanello's badge is significant. Though the two primary colors of clothing used to denote Jewish identity in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance were red and yellow, the red badge worn on Romanello's chest appears to be specific to Venice *and not Rome* where the story is set.

Though the Papal States (and Rome) used red tabards and yellow hats to denote Jewish residents, they did not require any badges be worn (Cassen 35) (Roth 295). Venice, on the other hand, required that Jews specifically wear either a red hat or a red badge on their chest (Roth 360-361). Quite interestingly, further historical documentation suggests that in northern regions like Venice, red was predominantly worn by Levantine Jews, called 'tedeschi' whereas yellow was typically worn by the Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain (Ravid "From Yellow to Red" 180). While it is impossible to know for certain if Romanello was meant to represent a Levantine Jew, I would postulate that this could be the reason he references his red badge as the trait which distinguishes himself from the Spanish. Since Venice was inundated with waves of immigration of both Levantine and Sephardic communities – who were likely distinguished within Venice by their red and yellow badges – it would seem Romanello's reference to his garb subtly signifies this historical detail. Given this contextual information, it seems very strange that Aretino, someone who was familiar with the customs of both Rome and Venice, would invoke a red badge if he had intended to specifically signify a Roman setting for his play. Because of this detail, I suggest that Romanello's red badge represents an inherent signification of a *Venetian* – not a Roman – setting. It would seem that the master of duplicity and sarcasm has managed to trick the readers once again.

[64] For further reading, see Flora Cassen's *Making the Jews in Renaissance Italy.*

With this detail, it would seem Aretino is using Romanello to 'speak for' the Jewish community in Venice while also re-presenting the social tensions which led to their exclusion and confinement. The fact that this dialogue that shows an anxiety over Romanello's hidden markers of his Judaism was only added for a Venetian audience suggests it also captures a growing anxiety over religious difference within Venetian society, as evidenced by Sanuto's diaries. I would further argue that Romanello's ability to 'speak for' the Jewish community is complicated. Initially, he appears to exercise a significant amount of agency to negate Rosso's attempts to inscribe him into a larger Catholic society. For example, he mirrors Rosso's speech in refusing to convert:

> Rosso: … E poi non avendo tu il segnale di Giudeo, i putti non ti tempesteranno tutto di con melangole, con iscorze di melloni, e con cucuzze. Si che fatti Cristiano, fatti Cristiano, fatti Cristiano. Te l'ho volute dire tre volte.
> Giu: Io non mi vò fare, io non mi vo; fare, io non mi vò fare. Ecco che anche io lo so dire tre volte.
> Rosso: Io, messer Giudeo, mi ho (come uomo da bene che io sono) fatto il debito mio, e scaricata la coscienza…[65] (Aretino 4.15)

In this excerpt, Romanello's three refusals seems to indicate his agency and presents a counternarrative to Rosso's all-encompassing one which would compel the Jewish merchant to convert. It would seem, therefore, that Romanello's refusal to convert represents an urge for pluralist tolerance. Even though Romanello will not convert, his continuation as though nothing out of the ordinary had just occurred and his indifference toward the clothing he is forced to wear suggests a desire for inclusion in society regardless of his religious difference. Much as Meshullam was cast as a figure urging for tolerance and pluralism in Sanuto's diaries,

[65] "Rosso: And then, since you do not have the sign of Judeo, the putti (winged infants) will not batter you every day with bitter oranges, with melon peels, and with pumpkins. So, become Christian, become Christian, become Christian. I wanted to tell you three times.
Giu: I don't want to do it, I don't want to, I don't want to. There, I also know how to say it three times.
Rosso: I, Messer Giudeo, have (as a good man that I am) paid my debt, and discharged my conscience…"

Romanello embodies these same traits in the edition of this drama intended for a Venetian audience.

This scene in both versions of the drama ends with Romanello's confinement in prison merely because of his Jewish identity. This can be observed when Rosso flees with the stolen garb and tells a police officer that Romanello – dressed as a friar – is making wild accusations:

> Rosso: Signor Capitano, questo Frate è uscito di casa di una puttana, o d'una taverna imbriaco, et emmisi posto a correr dietro, et io per non mi trafficar con religiosi, mi son dato a fuggir…
> Giu: Io non son Frate, son Romanel Giudeo, che voglio il saio ch'egli ha in dosso.
> Bargello: Ahi sozzo cane fetente, tu, schernisci la religion nostra? Pigliatelo, legatelo, e mettetelo in prigione.
> Giu: Signor Bargello, cotestui è un mariuolo.[66] (Aretino 4.16)

The attempt to discredit Romanello as a drunken priest becomes irrelevant as soon as the police realize Romanello is a Jew. Quite striking is Romanello's voice in this passage; standing up to the police and asserting his religious identity despite his outward appearance signified by the garb would have been risky whether in Venice or Rome. Though a version of this dialogue occurs in the original version, the text presented here from the 1534 version shows Romanello taking a much more assertive stance in support of his Judaism.[67] It is hard not to envision this scene as a dramatic representation of growing anxieties within Venice; just as Sanuto's diaries detail a young Jewish man speaking up against intolerance, Aretino also presents his audience with another figure boldly 'speaking for' an entire community.

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[66] "Rosso: Mr. Captain, this Friar has come from the house of a whore, or drunk from a tavern, and I tried to chase him, and, in order not to deal with the religious, I began to flee…
Giu: I am not a priest, I am Romanello the Jew who wants the habit that he has on him.
Bargello: Ah, you foul stinking dog, you ridicule our religion? Take him, tie him up, and put him in jail.
Giu: Mr. Bargello, he is a rogue!"

[67] In the 1525 version, Romanello's line in 4.16 is "Signor capitano, costui m'ha giuntato! Io son Romanello giudeo che…" In this earlier version, Romanello is cut off and his statement seems less assertive than his revised dialogue in which he clearly and boldly states his name and religion ('Io non son Frate, son Romanel Giudeo, che voglio il saio ch'egli ha in dosso').

Despite Romanello's boldness, which illustrates a certain level of agency to speak out against injustice, his rights are immediately stripped because he is Jewish. This notion that Romanello is being defined by and represented ('re-presented' to society) by Aretino based on his Jewish identity further incorporates the prominent concept in Italian society that "Jews were assigned a specific role and status from birth and that as long as they refused conversion, their behavior should reflect their assigned place" (Gunzberg 92). Romanello, inscribed in the text through his Jewish identity, is also forced to remain in his 'assigned place' in society despite his attempt to speak out. Though it may seem as though Romanello is assuming a new identity in trying on the friar's robe, his ultimate arrest suggests otherwise. When Romanello reveals his Jewish identity to the police officer, despite wearing the friar's garbs, he is forced to remain in his 'assigned place' as a Jew.

Furthermore, because the garb makes no difference for Romanello, his Jewish identity is portrayed as an irremovable aspect of his character which cannot be masked by mere façade. By the end of this excerpt, and the entire drama, Romanello is merely an object to be beaten. Rosso, on the other hand, is once again able to take on a new identity as a well-respected member of an Italian Catholic society. While the garb increases Rosso's agency, it does nothing to aid Romanello. Thus, his religious identity negates any garb – or any other identity – he attempts to assert. In juxtaposing these scenes, it becomes clear that Romanello's story serves as an iteration of a larger narrative within the text and within Italian history that places his Jewish identity as Other, or subaltern.

The officer's sudden response is important; aside from the obvious dehumanization with comparisons to a dog, the officer's order – 'pigliatelo, legatelo, e mettetelo in prigione' –points to a social sentiment that Jews should be confined. I argue that this confinement occurred not just

because Romanello was a Jew, but because, donning a friar's habit, he could "look" Catholic, thereby weakening the boundaries between religious identities and threatening a totalizing Catholic culture in Venice. By marking Jews with specific clothing since the thirteenth century, Venetian society had essentially created a hypothetical border between Catholic and Jew, between Self and Other. With this in mind, Romanello's garb – which would have likely hidden his red badge – represented a breakdown in the barrier between Jewish and Catholic. Romanello's dehumanization further supports this interpretation; references to him as a 'cane' or 'bestia' suggests that this scene, which culminates in his confinement, can be read as an attempt for Venetian officials to mark Jews as subhuman, thereby rendering their humanity mute and requiring the removal of the threat they supposedly posed.

Moreover, Romanello's Jewish identity – both present and hidden while wearing the friar's garb – is seen as a haunting presence. Because its presence is made known to the audience and never truly forgotten because of references to the red badge hidden by his new garb, I would suggest the character's Jewish identity is something which is hiding, yet ever-present and can reemerge without warning at any moment. Reading this scene (and the whole text) in relation to the haunting presence of Jewish identity also presents the audience with new connections. For example, the police's strong reaction to Romanello's false identity followed by imprisonment represents an attempt to remove the threat that his ambiguous religious identity poses to the harmony of the drama.[68] Romanello's imprisonment also reestablishes a dividing line between self and Other, or in this case, Catholic and Jew, a line that was blurred by his wearing the friar's garbs. Though Romanello is confined in prison in both versions of this drama, Aretino's choice

[68] This is reminiscent of Foucault's theories that confinement represented an attempt at removing the threat "from the landscapes where it had been permanently present and elusive all at once" (Foucault 101-102).

to maintain this plot point for a Venetian audience takes on a new significance given the region's move in establishing the ghetto to separate and confine Jews despite their already-marked clothing differences.

Perhaps more intriguing is how, in the revised edition, Aretino undermines and challenges this totalizing worldview. In the penultimate scene of the 1534 edition, Romanello reappears with the fish vendor to speak out against how he was mistreated. Though his dialogue is much briefer than the other vendor's and the audience does not get to hear a detailed account of all his sufferings, I suggest his mere presence is important because Romanello attempts to illustrate an alternate view in his own defense. Upon emerging, Romanello confronts Rosso and says "A questa foggia si truffano i poveri ebrei: oimè le mie braccia. La corda in cambio del pagarmi? O Roma porca, le belle ragioni che tu ti tieni. Ma il diavolo non vuole che comparisca il Messia, che forse forse ella non andria cosi"[69] (Aretino 5.24). This small moment of vindication is significant because it shows that Romanello's confinement is temporary and, more broadly, that confinement is not a solution to growing anxiety surrounding Jewish identity.

Romanello's voice is never given true equality; his shining moment is cut short when another character again dehumanizes him and his religious affiliation. The other character, the noble Parabolano, claims "sta queto, Isac, o Jacob che tu abbia nome. E non ti paja poco a te, che

[69] "In this form, poor Jews are tricked: oh my arms. [You give me] torture instead of paying me? Oh Rome [you] pig, what fine reasoning you have. But the devil doesn't want the Messiah to appear, because maybe maybe it wouldn't go like this"; Another reason this version of Aretino's drama signifies Venice appears in these lines. According to an anthology of phrases composed by Giovanni Stefano da Montemerlo in 1566 entitled *Delle frasi toscane (libri XII)*, it appears this phrase that Aretino uses here actually refers to a phrase which occurred during Venetian senate proceedings in 1495. Pietro Bembo mentions these proceedings – though he does not specifically reference the phrase – in his text *Istoria Viniziana*. For further reading, see pg. 106 of Giovanni Stefano da Montemerlo's *Delle frasi toscane (libri XII)*; and Pietro Bembo's *Istoria Viniziana (Libro Terzo)*.

sei di quelli che crocifissero Cristo, il rimanerti vivo"[70] (Aretino 5.24). Not only is Romanello being associated with his religious background, this becomes his sole identifying trait. In claiming that Romanello is one who crucified Christ, an overt biblical reference used to fuel Anti-Semitism, Parabolano is suggesting that his punishment in prison was not severe enough; it implies Romanello's only payment shall be the fact that he kept his life. In this scene, Parabolano is constructing an inherent ethnoreligious identity from which Romanello is excluded. It would seem that because Romanello does not belong to this shared identity, he is not entitled to the same rights that the fish vendor claims, namely, the right to recompense. It is difficult to ignore the connection to questions surrounding the citizenship rights of Venetian Jews. Just as Jews were considered second-class citizens, and therefore were not entitled to the same rights as '*cittadini originarii*,' it seems Romanello is also barred from the rights afforded to others because of his religion (Ravid "Venice" 450-451).

If the play were to end there, it would imply Aretino's support for this derogatory view. Instead, however, the scene ends with Romanello's line of a single word: "pazienza" and he reemerges in the following scene with the promise of payment (Aretino 5.24-25). Just as the pescatore is finally offered repayment, so too is Romanello. Here again, Aretino appears to be undermining support for the other characters' harsh views against the sole Jewish character. At the end of the play, Romanello is finally being repaid. Though it does not come near sufficient compensation for his sufferings, and he is still dehumanized and discriminated against in the process, Aretino presents an urge for *financial* parity, though not complete *social* equality.

[70] "Be quiet, Isaac or Jacob, whatever your name is. Does it mean nothing to you that you still live, even though you are one of those who crucified Christ."

This position is complicated by Romanello's final line in the drama. His final phrase "Servidor di quella"[71] could be read in two different ways: either as a mere pleasantry, a common phrase to thank the payer and confirm his subaltern status, or as a moment of sarcasm in which Romanello ridicules the notion that he owes any thanks for a repayment that in no way compensates for his suffering. Both interpretive possibilities work together to suggest that Aretino is articulating social tensions specific to Venice in this revised version of the drama; his sole Jewish character's simultaneous mockery of and support for his social role in relation to the Christian characters' ethnoreligious identity both tames the threat his identity poses and acknowledges (even in mockery) his subaltern status. This finale suggests that, for Aretino, only Romanello's acceptance of his subaltern status and exclusion from the larger ethnoreligious (Catholic) identity of the region can address the fear posed by his difference.

Just as the play illustrates that the fear surrounding Romanello's Jewish identity leads to the necessity of his confinement in prison in the 1525 version, so, too, did fears of religious division lead to the establishment of spaces of confinement for Italian Jews. By 1534, it would seem that Aretino's additions to the drama represent a statement on social struggles in Venice. Just as Sanuto's depictions of the establishment of the Ghetto of Venice reveal tensions in the depiction of Jewish identity, here again, these tensions suggest that Jewish identity is similarly depicted as a 'threat,' one which could now breach all borders – both physical and social – if not properly confined.

[71] "Your Lordship's servant."

SECTION III:
CONFINED TO THE PAGE: 17TH COUNTERNARRATIVES OF JEWISH IDENTITY

In the correspondence between a Catholic bishop Baldassare Bonifacio and a Jewish woman, Sarra Copia Sulam (c. 1592-1641), we see another example of how Jewish identity was perceived as a threat and abject Other that needed to be neutralized, 'spoken for' and 're-presented' to Catholic society. Though this correspondence occurs nearly a century after Sanuto's and Aretino's texts, it conveys a similar pattern of fear surrounding Jewish identity while also revealing a counternarrative which urges for pluralism and inclusion in the face of religious dominance, a pattern which can be seen from the establishment of the first ghetto in Venice through the Risorgimento. These letters are invaluable for analysis for three reasons. First, this is one of the few texts in which a Jewish writer articulates her *own* identity against a larger Catholic narrative in Venice during this time period; second, it represents one of the first examples in which *ideas* were able to permeate the walls of the ghetto and influence Catholic society; third, the important difference between Copia Sulam's story and the Jewish character in Aretino's text is that conversion is the primary focus of discussions for eliminating the threat of Jewish identity.[72]

Copia Sulam was a young Jewish woman of considerable means who, living in the Venetian ghetto, established her own literary salon which brought together many Catholic men of letters to discuss philosophy and literature. One of the men who frequented her salon was Baldassare Bonifacio, a poet and Catholic bishop. Their exchanges include letters, his treatise, and her *Manifesto*; these create a forum for the presentation and discussion of religious identity

[72] We will see that this shift (from confinement to conversion as a means for redefining Jewish identity so that it no longer poses a threat to a totalizing Catholic one) extends through time in Italian literature to even the 19th century in which Balbo's *L'Ebrea* suggests that it is only though conversion that unity can be achieved.

to an increasingly public sphere of readers. These writings are haunted by a fear of the Jewish other, and just as Foucault argues that spaces of confinement were established as a way to control unreason and establish a 'threshold' or 'neutral zone,' I would argue that *fear of* Jewish identity not only causes Bonifacio to 're-present' it, but that such fear makes the 're-presentation' necessary; in so doing, his letters created a space in which Jewish identity could be controlled, confined, and directed toward conversion.

Bonifacio reestablishes an imaginary border via his letters in reaction to the fact that, even though Copia Sulam was physically confined in the ghetto, her *Jewish ideals* threatened to permeate its walls and influence Catholic society. In this way, Copia Sulam's attempts to publicize her ideas posed a threat to Bonifacio's totalizing authority; Bonifacio countered the potential influence of her ideas, by stirring pre-existing social anxieties surrounding religious difference. I read his blatant mischaracterization of her faith as an attempt to neutralize the threat her words posed to Catholic authority in the region. In this process, my analysis demonstrates that their works can be read beyond the scope of their personal interactions; instead, their words become a literary depiction of the larger anxiety surrounding identity politics in 17th century Venice.

Little documentary evidence of the details of Copia Sulam's life exists outside this correspondence. Though we know she had interesting exchanges with poet and author Ansaldo Cebà, only *his* letters have survived. Don Harrán, author of *Jewish Poet and Intellectual in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, has provided a compelling analysis of Cebà's letters in an attempt to recreate Copia Sulam's likely topics of discussion.[73] Such an analysis is important to restoring the voice of an often-marginalized perspective; my project, however, focuses on the prose

[73] For further reading, please see Harrán's section "Sarra Copia and Ansaldo Cebà" in his book *Jewish Poet and Intellectual in Seventeenth-Century Venice*.

through which she actively constructs a voice for tolerance and inclusion, which can primarily be found in her letters and *Manifesto*.[74]

Her own dedication to the *Manifesto* (1621) reveals that Copia Sulam's relationship with her father Simon (who died in 1606, when she was a teenager) proved vital to her identity. Here, she writes directly to her father, hoping that her text will in part "…accrescer le tue gioie, con quel poco acquisto di fama, che nel mio nome forsi vedrai, per la qual cagione penso non ti sarà men caro haver prodotta una Donna, per conservatione del tuo nome, al mondo, di quel che ti sarebbe stato l'haver prodotto un'huomo, come in questa vita mostravi estremo desiderio..." (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 527).[75] In detailing her hope to make her father proud despite her gender, Copia Sulam provides insight into her marginalized status as a woman not just within Venice, but within the Jewish community and family, as well.

Indeed, she begins her text proper with details of the rhetorical constraints under which she felt 'forced' to publish her ideas which informs readers of her status within the ghetto. She notes:

> Posso creder, benigni Lettori, che sia per parervi cosa strana, che il mio Nome non affatto ignoto in questa Città, né fuori, comparisca la prima volta alle stampe in materia assai diversa da quella, che poteva forse esser aspettata dalla mia penna; ma l'altrui, o sia stata malignità, o simplicità, o trascuratezza, mi ha neessitata a quello, a che non ero per movermi facilmente per qual si voglia occasione..."[76] (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 526).

[74] A larger analysis would analyze her other surviving documents like her poem in response to writings of Gabriele Zinano, though these do not engage in the same topic as the letters and *Manifesto*.
[75] "…increase your joy at seeing perhaps the little renown that accrues to my name. For this reason I think that having brought a woman into the world will be no less dear to you, for the conservation of your name, than having brought a man into it, as you so fervently hoped would happen in this life"; All translations of Copia Sulam's and Baldassare Bonifacio's correspondence are provided by Don Harrán. See: Harrán, Don. *Jewish Poet and Intellectual in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, edited by Don Harrán, University of Chicago Press, 2009.
[76] "I can imagine, benign readers, that you are apt to find it strange that my name not at all unknown in this city or beyond, should make its first appearance in print on a subject quite different from what might perhaps be expected from my pen. But another person, either out of maliciousness or out of naivete or thoughtlessness, has forced me to do what I only uneasily would have been stirred to do on any other occasion."

By beginning with the manifesto in this way, readers can discern that she had built quite a reputation in Venice and that her influence – or at least the ideas rooted in her salon – permeated beyond the walls of the ghetto where she lived.[77]

The topic which sparked debate in her correspondence with Bonifacio had to do with a discussion on the immortality of the soul. No documentation exists to definitively prove that the topic was discussed at Copia Sulam's salon. Such questions were, of course, central to Renaissance philosophy and to Catholic dogma. In fact, Pope Leo X issued a bull in 1513 at the request of the German inquisitor Heinrich Kramer to help in prosecuting those who denounced the immortality of the soul. Scholars note that Copia Sulam would likely have been shielded from the Inquisition, since it exercised influence predominantly over baptized Christians and her firm adherence to her faith likely protected her from such scrutiny (Westwater 37, 119). Copia Sulam's predominantly Christian salon interlocutors, however, were not under such protection. In fact, the Inquisition targeted those "who flirted with Judaism, [or] who mingled Judaism with Christianity" (Pullan 58). Charges of this nature would certainly have posed a threat if leveled against the Christian men who frequented her salon.

Within his first letter that sparked their correspondence, Bonifacio subtly presents Jewish identity to readers as a problem which poses a threat to the teachings of the Church and any who engage in such a discussion. By linking the heretical belief against the immortality of the soul with Copia Sulam's Jewish faith, as Bonifacio does in his first letter, it would seem he is attempting to stoke fears among her intellectual community and against her specifically for

[77] As Don Harrán has noted, her "salon has been qualified, in historical retrospect, as a forerunner of Jewish women's salons in nineteenth-century Berlin" ("Introduction" 34). Thus, even though Copia Sulam is merely one person, her *Manifesto* can be read in a larger context in which her ideas – so often linked to her Jewish identity – threatened to spread beyond the walls of confinement.

directly contradicting Church doctrine. Although Copia Sulam's specific claims are not recorded in his letter, Bonifacio suggests her discussion asserted that the soul lays with the body after death and that she must have believed in this claim due to her religious beliefs.[78] Such a claim is preposterous, as she even is 'forced' to make clear later in the dedication to her manifesto, when she notes that her late father would be residing "tra spiriti viventi dimori e dimorer[à] in eterno" (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 527)[79] Bonifacio is clearly deaf to her true beliefs, as he insinuates that Copia Sulam must convert and invites her to consider partaking in the 'brightness' afforded by Christ:

> La Natura in questo mondo non ci ha dato stanza di habitatione, ma di alloggio...Solo il mio Christo, architetto divino ch'edificò l'universo, può distruggere e fabricare quel Tempio nel quale, com'una Deità, risiede l'intelletto dell'huomo. E però disse e confermò con l'opera: *Possum destruere templum hoc et in triduo reaedificare illud.* Pensiamo, Signora, alla rinovatione di questo Tempio...il quale io desidero che rimessi per voi così sereni i suoi giorni...[80] (Bonifacio "Lettera" 604).

It is important to note that Bonifacio is writing here in reference to Copia Sulam's recent health concerns,[81] but using these concerns as a means of advancing his own religious doctrine against her Jewish identity. In comparing the inability of her doctors[82] to repair her body to his claims of Christ rebuilding and 'rinova[re] di questo Tempio,' Bonifacio provides a clear attempt to

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[78] In his footnote 4, Don Harrán comments that by referring to her as 'Sabba' from the outset of the letter, Bonifacio inherently suggests that all her ideas (and his misconceptions of them) are endorsed by her faith. I would contend that this connection is also apparent near the end of the letter, when Bonifacio explains that 'only my Christ' is capable of healing sickness and saving the soul (Harrán 273).

[79] "for eternity amongst other 'living spirits'"; Evoking her late father in this way affirms her steadfast belief in the immortality of the soul. After all, if she did not believe in the immortality of the soul, she would not have referred to his as one 'living' for all 'eternity.'

[80] "Nature did not give us a room in this world for permanent residence, but rather for temporary lodging…only my Christ, the divine architect who built the universe, can destroy and construct that temple in which, like a deity, there resides the human intellect. Moreover, he said and, in his work, confirmed the words…I can destroy this temple and rebuild it in three days. Let us think of renewing the temple, Signora…for I wish your days restored to such brightness."

[81] Her specific health condition is not clear; historical records indicate that Copia Sulam lived healthily for more than another twenty years before her death.

[82] A detail mentioned previously in his letter.

convert her from Judaism. Thus, he suggests that her Jewish faith has failed her just like her doctors; only Christianity would be able to heal her from despair.

But why would Bonifacio be making such a desperate attempt to convert Copia Sulam? There is no evidence to show that the bishop attempted to convert others in the ghetto, so what drove his earnest pleas for her conversion? I suggest we can read Copia Sulam's confinement within the walls of the ghetto as a representation of a border as a neutral zone; in this case, the ghettos provided a border between the self and Other – Catholic Venice and its Jewish inhabitants.[83] Given that Copia Sulam's thinking garnered respect from many Christian men who attended her salon, her ideas had the potential to rupture or breach the walls of the ghetto and to challenge Catholic authority. I suggest that it was this potential threat that spurred Bonifacio's letter and his attempts to convert her. In other words, Bonifacio's efforts to convert her stemmed from his concerns that her 'Jewish' thinking, which challenged the status quo, posed a threat to his authority and the totalizing Catholic identity of the Venetian Republic.

One of the first ways that Bonifacio signals the danger of Copia Sulam's Jewish identity is through references to her not by name, but by the practice of her religion. At the outset of his letter, Bonifacio addresses Copia Sulam as "Signora Sabba Giudea" (Bonifacio "Lettera" 604).[84] In a footnote, editor Harrán comments that Bonifacio's reference to Copia Sulam as 'Sabba' points to the fact that he views her not only as a Jew, but that "her sympathies lie with her [Israelite] people" (Harrán "Jewish Poet" 270). Renaming her in relation to her faith, Bonifacio, perhaps unwittingly, is responding to the same fear we saw in Aretino's text, when the first stage reference to Romanello was as 'a Jew,' and in Sanuto's description of Meshullam as 'Anselmo

[83] Cf. Foucault's ideas of the importance of physical borders in establishing that "order was no longer in a free conflict with disorder…" (77).
[84] "Signora Sabba, the Jewess."

del Banco.' These examples of renaming Jewish figures suggests an attempt to assert control over the expression of their identities, to alienate them, and to delineate a distinct border between Catholic and Jew in the literary imagination as a reaction to fear. Copia Sulam's subalternity, in this correspondence, is also complicated by her gender; not only is she identified as a Jew, but she is also discriminated against as a woman, as a Jew-*ess*.[85]

Moreover, with the reference to Copia Sulam as 'Sabba,' Bonifacio was not only referring to religious difference; he was also expressing a fearful perspective through a cultural prejudice that associated Jews with the 'witches' Sabbath (the literal meaning of the term "Sabba").[86] During the Early Modern period, suspicion and accusations surrounded the Jewish community in Venice; the Inquisition sought to root out anyone who opposed the Church, and accusations often fueled by conspiracy theories were targeted specifically toward Jews. The research of Davis and Ravid confirms the frequency of these accusations. Their work links the Inquisition's prosecutions of Lutheranism, accusations of witchcraft among Jews, and what the text terms 'crypto-Jews' (Jews who secretly still practiced their faith despite proclaiming conversion).[87] Also of relevance to Bonifacio's use of the term 'Sabba' is the fact that Copia Sulam's rabbi and confidant, Leon Modena, was believed to have been "interested in some forms

[85] This analysis does not provide a complete breakdown of all the gendered dimensions of this dialogue which certainly affected Copia Sulam's ability to represent and 'speak for' herself. Given that discrimination against her gender is quite obvious throughout these letters, I have chosen to focus on how her Jewish identity is being portrayed. A longer analysis would engage in a reading of her gender and its complications in her ability to speak out against injustice. Specifically, a book-length analysis would show how Copia Sulam's criticisms of her male captors may actually have been shared by other women during her time. For example, Venetian nun Arcangela Tarabotti criticized social constructs which placed men in charge of women's liberties. For further reading on her background and perspective, see Stephanie Jed's chapter "Wings for My Courage" in her text *Wings for Our Courage* (2011).

[86] For further reading on Early Modern witchcraft in the peninsula, please see Carlo Ginzburg's *I Benandanti,* 1966.

[87] In fact, the authors note "Of the total 2910 inquisitorial hearings, 1,565, or just over half, date from the years 1541 to 1600; the greater part of these dealt with either Lutheranism (803 or 51.3 percent) or witchcraft (199 in all)" (Davis and Ravid 98). For more on Jewish trials during the inquisition, see Davis and Ravid's "Jews, Crypto-Jews, and the Inquisition" in *The Jews of Early Modern Venice.*

of magic and astrology and was also involved in teaching occult practices" and his grandson was later persecuted on charges of witchcraft (Davis and Ravid 114). Bonifacio's reference to her as 'Sabba' can therefore be read as a literary expression of the growing anxiety at play in Venice related to its ethnoreligious (Catholic) identity.[88] By signifying her religious affiliation, Bonifacio is attempting to evoke a separation between her Jewish identity and Bonifacio's Catholic one. I would also argue that the reference to Copia Sulam as 'Sabba,' functions as the sign which tells us that a haunting is occurring. Thus, Bonifacio's seemingly innocent salutation represents a type of 'seething presence' of fear which haunts his writings (Gordon 8).

I suggest that this context also reveals a new reading of the way Bonifacio addresses Copia Sulam as 'Sabba' at the outset of his letter. Just as Romanello's confinement provided a supposed solution to his donning the Catholic garb that threatened the border between self and Other, Bonifacio's reference here indicates an attempt to re-establish a border between Catholic and Jew that the ghetto was no longer able to provide. If this did not suffice as a deterrent for the threat of her ideas, Bonifacio's letter also presents a new method to neutralize the threat – conversion.[89]

In the course of the exchanges between Copia Sulam and Bonifacio, it becomes clear that her ability to represent her ideas is stunted by Bonifacio's framing. Her letter in response to Bonifacio incorporates Aristotelian theory to explain how humans are comprised of form and matter (Copia Sulam "Lettera" 524-525). She engages in a line of hypothetical questioning as a form of extending Bonifacio's logic, asking, for example: "ma per qual cagione il Creatore non fece l'huomo per natura immortale, se hebbe intentione che tale si preservasse? O se tale non

[88] Other references to witchcraft are potentially contained within this correspondence, but these would need to be expounded in a longer analysis.
[89] His call for conversion, in fact, reveals a fear of her Jewish identity as an abject Other that is worthy of Derrida and Foucault.

havea stabilito che fusse perché costituirlo miracolosamente in essere, nel quale non havea da durare?" (Copia Sulam "Lettera" 525).[90] This line of questioning provided fodder to those like Bonifacio who accused her of questioning the soul's immortality on the basis of her religious beliefs.

Copia Sulam's reference to Aristotelian thought proved to be such a catalyst for Bonifacio's accusations against her because such a discussion was deeply rooted in centuries of religious ideological conflict. It did not help that Aristotelian thought in the northern part of the peninsula had become associated with perceived anti-Catholic sentiment – especially on the topic of the immortality of the soul – spurred by the Jewish intellectual community. In his *De Anima* (c. 350 BCE), Aristotle built on previous work by Plato and posited a complicated notion of the connection between soul and body. Specifically, Aristotle "conceded its separability [between soul and body] as possible, though not ineluctable" (Harrán 46). This lack of decisiveness became central to the polemics around the immortality of the soul; if the body and soul were inseparable, how could the soul be considered immortal?[91]

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[90] "…for what reason did the Creator not make man immortal by nature if He intended to have him preserved as such? Or if He did not establish his being to be so preserved, why constitute him miraculously into a being in which he did not have to last?"

[91] Over the medieval period, Aristotle's theories were taken up by Catholic and Muslim philosophers. The Arab philosopher Averroës and the Catholic Thomas Aquinas both wrote extensively about the question of the immortality of the soul in relation to Aristotelian theory. Aquinas did not support Aristotelian theory and suggested that it was contradictory to Church teachings because of its seemingly contradictory suggestion that the soul is both inseparable from and an inexorable part of the soul. For further reading, please see John P. Rowan's English translation of Aquinas' *De Anima* entitled "The Soul: A Translation of St. Thomas Aquinas' De Anima." For further reading on Averroës' theories, please see Oliver Leaman's "Averroës and His Philosophy." By the 15th century, Jewish philosophers like Elia del Medigo in Bologna wrote in support of Aristotelian thought while Catholic philosophers like Marsilio Ficino in Florence denounced such a perspective in favor of Platonian theories which more definitively asserted the separation between soul and body and more easily supported Catholic doctrine. The mere presence of these examples illustrates that over the centuries, philosophers of Islam, Judaism and Christianity attempted to reconcile Aristotelian thought with their own respective religious beliefs. Pietro Pomponazzi, a 16th century philosopher and former student of del Medigo, continued the tradition of incorporating Aristotelian thought in explaining the link between the body and soul. Though he was a Catholic scholar, his criticism of Aquinas' interpretation of Aristotle garnered significant backlash from Catholic officials –

Upon further inspection, however, it becomes clear that Copia Sulam's thoughts do not question the soul's immortality, but constitute a questioning of whether the soul would remain the same after death, with the same set of static elements. Copia Sulam suggests that "...poiché dissolvasi, e corrompasi qual si voglia composto, sempre di esso rimane la materia... dunque se di due parti componenti che vediamo nelle ose naturali, dico materia e forma, una dura eternamente e l'altra svanisce, a qual di loro sarà ragionevole di attribuire la corruttibilità [del secondo]..." (Copia Sulam "Lettera" 524).[92] In other words, Copia Sulam claims that upon death, the matter remains but the form, which unifies and governs it as a cohesive whole, does not. Near the end of her letter, she notes "…poiché sì come un corrente fiume ci rappresenta avanti a gli occhi acque che corrono, e passano in un instante e pur sempre è quel fiume e non sempre quell'acque stessi [sic], così humane specie ci mostra ad ogn'hora individui transitorij, li quale non sono sempre li medemi ben che sempre si a la specie medema" (Copia Sulam "Lettera" 525).[93] When viewed in unison with her previous comments, it becomes clear that even though the form (soul) vanishes, she does not imply it is inherently mortal, rather that it is ever-changing, much like the waters in a river perpetually flow. Just as the river would remain as a constant landmark with completely different waters, so too would the soul remain a constant

despite the fact that Pomponazzi himself used Aristotle's views to *support* his belief in the immortality of the soul (Harrán "Introduction" 46). I would suggest that Copia Sulam's invocation of Aristotelian thought in her letter garnered the same vitriolic reaction from Bonifacio that Pomponazzi faced, despite the fact that Copia Sulam's letter actually reinforces the immortality of the soul. For further reading on Del Medigo, see Bland, Kalman P. "Elijah Del Medigo, Unicity of Intellect, and Immortality of Soul." *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, vol. 61, 1995, pp. 1–22. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/4618849.

[92] "…for what remains of any compound, were it to dissolve and be corrupted [through deterioration and death], is always matter…therefore if I speak of matter and form as two component parts that we see in natural things, and the first of the two lasts eternally and the second vanishes, it will be reasonable to attribute corruptibility [of decay and degeneration] to the second."

[93] "Just as a running river represents to us…waters that flow and immediately pass by, yet is always that river and not always those same waters, so the human species shows us transitory individuals who, at every hour, are not always the same although their species *is* always the same."

presence, but its elements would not remain stagnant for eternity.[94] This distinction, however, did not matter to Bonifacio. He was convinced of her blasphemy.[95] In addition to providing clarity against Bonifacio's accusations, Copia Sulam's response is important because it represents a counter-narrative to his totalizing identity.

Within a year after receiving Copia Sulam's letter in response, Bonifacio decided to take their conversation public and he published a treatise *On the Immortality of the Soul*. In this text, he further continues to accuse her of having denied this core Catholic belief and suggests that her views represent a larger Jewish view of life. In so doing, I suggest his writing casts Jewish identity – regardless of whether she ascribed to his view or not – as a threat to Catholic ideology. This is clear when he claims

> Solo m'incresce che la vostra Luna vuol più tosto riceuer'oscuro lume da quel fosco Sole, che chiarissima luce dall'ineclissabil Sole: E che voi sola tra gli Hebrei dopo tante migliaia d'anni negate fede all'infallibil chirografo, che scrisse Iddio di sua mano, revocando hora in dubbio la verità delle sacre carte, ed anteponendo l'autorità di Aristotile à gli oracoli de'Profeti."[96] (Bonifacio *Immortalità* 5)

In referencing the 'thousands of years…among the Jews,' Bonifacio himself suggests their discussion of ideas are not merely isolated to their conversation, but will inherently be influenced by the ideology and representation of each of their religious theologies informed by thousands of years of history. His insistence that her ideas signify those of the Jewish faith and counter Catholicism suggests that he is crafting a form of Jewish identity which 're-presents' it to society

[94] Modena also published a text that supports immortality of the soul. He doesn't discuss water, but he does suggest that the soul is immortal and that this is in line with the teachings of Judaism.
[95] At one point in his treatise he published in response to Copia Sulam's letter, Bonifacio even describes Aristotle as a 'venenoso maestro,' comparing the noted philosopher to the serpent which misguided Eve's thoughts (Bonifacio *Immortalità* 5)
[96] "I am only sorry that your moon prefers to receive an obscure beam from that dark sun than to receive the brightest light from the Sun that cannot be eclipsed; and that after thousands of years you alone among Jews disavow faith in the infallible covenant that God inscribed in His own hand, calling into question the truth of the Holy Writ and placing the authority of Aristotle before the oracles of the Prophets."

as a threat that has not yet been fully contained. In other words, through her abjection, his writings cast *Jewish identity* as an abject Other and which is a perpetual threat to Venice.

Furthermore, his suggestion that her 'moon…receive[s] an obscure beam from that dark sun' implies another connection to her Jewish faith and feminine identity. Not only does the Jewish conception of time rely on the lunar calendar (as opposed to the sun in the Gregorian tradition), but the moon in Jewish mysticism has been viewed as "a visible sign of God's throne" and is often associated with the role of women – through Rosh Chodesh celebrations and commemorations of the moon's monthly cycles (Dennis "Moon"). In stating that Copia Sulam's 'moon' is informed by 'an obscure beam from that dark sun,' I would suggest that Bonifacio implies that her thoughts are not only influenced by her religion, but that they are based on erroneous knowledge, as the 'dark sun' from which she derives her ideas would not provide sufficient enlightenment.

Bonifacio's words also suggest his intention to 're-present' Copia Sulam's own faith to her. With his words that 'you alone among Jews disavow faith in the infallible covenant that God inscribed in His own hand,' Bonifacio suggests that she should be like other Jews, sticking to the 'covenant' and not straying into the works of Aristotle. Bonifacio's subsequent incorporation of parables further asserts his authority over her religion; he comments, "E per tacer de'nostri, io toccherò solamente quelli, che sono da tutti gli Hebrei stimati verissimi. Leggesi nella sacra Historia de'Rè, ch'Elìa riuocasse alla vita il figliuolo della vedouella hospitatrice sua...Se dunque l'anima può ricongiungersi al corpo; ella certo non si corrompe separandosi dal suo corpo" (Bonifacio *Immortalità* 12).[97] Initially, Bonifacio's words would appear to accurately

[97] "Keeping silent about [Christian] examples, I will mention only those that all Jews consider to be most true. Read the sacred story, in Kings, about Elijah restoring to life the son of the widow…If…the soul can be reunited with the body, it certainly does not become corrupted in separating from its body…"

acknowledge the importance of the immortality of the soul in Judaism. Instead, I would argue that citing examples 'all Jews consider…most true' reveals his perceived superiority in comprehending these parables. In instructing Copia Sulam – an educated woman, well-versed in Judaism – to 'read the sacred story' vital to her own faith, Bonifacio is inherently censuring her intellectual capabilities and casting her identity (as a woman and a Jew) as subaltern and subordinate to his own totalizing perspective.

Furthermore, I suggest that it is Bonifacio's Catholic religious identity which allows him to 'speak for' Copia Sulam's own ideas through his misrepresentation of them. His position of authority because of his religious ideology is evoked when he indicates a desire to 'kill' Copia Sulam's mortal soul. He writes:

> Non per tanto, essendo necessitato ad entrar in duello con voi, per combattere non a corpo a corpo, ma più tosto anima con anima, concepisco buona speranza che resterà morta la vostra, perch'è mortale; e che non riceuerà punto di offesa la mia, perch'essendo immortale, viene ad esser fatata...Onde non hò bisogno dello scudo, ma solamente della spada...ma dall'eterno fabro nella fucina della carità: con la quale io mi movo ad uccider l'anima vostra mortale, acciò che ne risorga un'altra immortale non generata dalla natura, ma creata da Dio. [98] (Bonifacio *Immortalità* 6)

In suggesting that their supposed philosophical disagreements represent a battle of their souls, Bonifacio implies that his disagreement is representative of a disagreement between their respective faiths and not merely as individuals. I would also suggest that his desire to kill her 'mortal' soul poses not only a threat to her life, but can more broadly be understood as an attempt to control and subdue her Jewish identity by converting it into a Christian one which will 'rise up' instead.

[98] "Not being obliged…to enter a duel with you by fighting body to body, but rather by fighting soul to soul, I entertain fair hope that your soul will remain dead because it is mortal and that mine will sustain no injury at all because, in being immortal, it becomes invulnerable. Thus I need not a shield, but only a sword…I am stirred by charity to kill your mortal soul so that it may rise up again as another immortal one not generated by nature but created by God."

Bonifacio continues to use complex rhetorical strategies in order to realize his efforts to subdue and convert Copia Sulam's soul. For example, he claims that he wishes her no harm while subtly undermining this message, "Non desiderio di sovrastare à voi disputando; non ambitiosa arroganza, ò superba temerità mi ci scorge: *Sed me iussa Dei, quae nunc has ire per umbras, / Per loca senta situ cogunt, noctemque profundam, / Imperijs egere suis*" (Bonifacio *Immortalità* 6).[99] Though his protestation not to threaten her is compelling, Bonifacio's intentions are complicated by the fact that this insistence against any threat is immediately followed by the citation of the verses from Virgil's *Aeneid*; these verses appear *after the death of Dido* and justify the necessity of her death for the narrator's journey. This reference to Virgil implies a threat against Copia Sulam despite Bonifacio's claims to the contrary. The conversion of Copia Sulam's soul and the death of her Jewish identity are necessary for Bonifacio to continue in the vicissitudes of his own philosophical navigation. Like Aeneas, Bonifacio suggests it is God who fills the sails of his intent to 'kill' Copia Sulam's soul when he explains "Penso di haver havuto il cuore coperto di acciaio, essendomi arrischiato di solcare un'Oceano tanto vasto e profondo, che, se la Tra montana dello spirito di Dio non havesse indrizzato la mia navigatione, mi sarei senza scampo ò smarrito, ò sommerso" (*Immortalità* 56).[100] By invoking God, Bonifacio also implies that his ideological viewpoint is supported by the entire Church.

Later in the treatise, Bonifacio writes directly to Copia Sulam and makes two final appeals for her conversion. The first appears when he clarifies "Non dico già che uccidiate tutta voi stessa; ma quelle parti che, senza distruggere il composto, possono separarsi" (Bonifacio

[99] "While I argue, no desire to threaten you, no ambitious arrogance, and no proud temerity should be perceived in me: …'But God's commands, which now force me to go through these shades, / Through rough places on the earth and through deep night, / Drove me on in their injunctions.'"
[100] "I think my heart must have been covered with steel in having ventured to plough an ocean so vast and deep. Were it not for the North Wind of God's spirit that directed my navigation, I would, with no way out, have either drowned or gone astray."

Immortalità 60).[101] In a footnote to the text, Harrán comments that "By 'parts' Bonifacio seems to be referring to Copia Sulam's non-Christian opinions" (308, n. 196). In other words, Bonifacio implores her to exorcize her Jewish identity and transforms it into an entirely Catholic one. The second zealous attempt to promote her conversion comes in the sonnet attached to the conclusion of the treatise:

> …Ciò che la tua bellezza in se nasconda,
> Io direi ch'ella è tomba, ov'alma, immonda
> Di colpa original, sepolta giace.
> Questa è la colpa, onde quel colpo uscio,
> Che la forma immortal di vita prima,
> E corrompe l'imagine di DIO.
> Corri, corri al lavacro, ond'hor deriva
> La vita: CHRISTO è quell'augel sì pio,
> Che col suo sangue i morti figli avviva. [102] (Bonifacio *Immortalità* 61)

On one level, in telling Copia Sulam to 'Run, run to the baptismal font,' Bonifacio is simply compelling her individual conversion. More broadly, however, Bonifacio is attempting to re-present her Jewish identity as a threat. By claiming that 'original sin…[is] at the root of that tragedy that denies the immortal form of life,' he is implying that Judaism is the 'tragedy' that has caused her to reject the immortality of the soul and the saving grace of baptism. Moreover, Bonifacio's words cast Copia Sulam as a representative of her entire faith; in other words, he 're-presents' her identity by transforming it from that of an individual woman into that of a mouthpiece[103] to 'speak for' her faith, just as Romanello was used to signify the Jewish

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[101] "I am not saying you should kill all of yourself, but rather only those parts that, without destroying the compound, can be separated."

[102] "…What your beauty hides in itself, /I would say it is a tomb where the soul, impure / From original sin, lies buried./ This is the sin at the root of that tragedy / That denies the immortal form of life / And corrupts the image of God / Run, run to the laver [or font], from which there now springs / Life: Christ is that bird so pious / As, with its blood, to revive its dead children."

[103] Bonifacio also suggests that Copia Sulam could not have written such letters herself. He accuses "namely, the rabbis and one in particular: Leon Modena…. [who] is said to have 'dictated' to Copia the letter that occasioned Bonifacio's discourse on immortality" (Harrán "Jewish Poet" 305). This comment is not just an example of blatant sexist thought that Copia Sulam was not capable of penning her own

community of Venice in *La Cortigiana*. For Bonifacio, censuring Copia Sulam's intellectual capabilities, aspiring to "kill" and convert her soul, taking away her individual identity, and confining her as a mouthpiece who 'speaks for' her faith are all strategies to establish the superiority of his narrative. Bonifacio's attempts to 'enlighten' and convert Copia Sulam create a frame in which anything she writes in her own defense will be understood in relation to his 'superior' reasoning and faith. This is perhaps one of the reasons she adamantly references her father's immortal soul in her dedication.

In response to Bonifacio's treatise, Copia Sulam publishes a manifesto, in which she asserts a compelling narrative in support of her Jewish identity, though her attempts fail to fully break free from this power structure in which she has been inscribed. After a preamble in which she addresses her reputation and the dedication to her father's immortal soul, Copia Sulam includes two sonnets to begin her defense. In these sonnets, she solicits God's help to deflect "quanti / Strali m'avventa il perfido livore,"[104] referring to the accusations made against her by Bonifacio in his treatise (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 315). She concludes the sonnet by writing to God, "Cessi d'audace lingua il falso suono / E chi adombrarla vuol scorga, per prova, / Che la mia fede ha in te ferma possanza" (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 315).[105] Copia Sulam's suggestion that her comments are meant to stop 'the brazen tongue' can be read in two ways. On one level, her rebuttals to each of Bonifacio's claims clearly present an attempt to 'speak for' herself and to

original responses; instead, a subtle accusation against her religious community belies Bonifacio's words. While attempting to discredit Copia Sulam's intellectual prowess, he is also suggesting that her alleged reluctance to acknowledge the immortality of the soul did not merely represent her views, but the views of her entire faith, professed by an influential rabbi in the ghetto. Though she was friends with Leon Modena, no evidence exists to support the accusation that the rabbi dictated the young woman's responses.

[104] "darts…hurled at me in treacherous resentment."

[105] "May the false sound of the brazen tongue cease, / And may he who wants to besmirch it discern, for proof, / How my faith has firm strength in You."

assert her own agency and perspective. On another level, having only her own faith to invoke in her defense, Copia Sulam involuntarily reinforces Bonifacio's perspective; she can only ever construct her identity *against* his totalizing perspective, as she must prove her *innocence* against his allegations.

Copia Sulam's second sonnet further demonstrates how her attempt to assert agency fails to fully break free from the power dynamic in which she is inscribed. She notes:

> …m'accingo
> A la difesa, ove m'oltraggia e sgrida
> Guerrier che ardisce querelar d'infida
> L'alma...
> Entro senz'armi in non usato aringo,
> Né guerra io prendo contra chi mi sfida,
> Ma, perché tua pietà mio Dio m'affida,
> Col petto ignudo i colpi suoi respingo. [106] (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 316)

Being motivated by 'outrage' to embark in 'an unaccustomed arena' again illustrates her reluctance to publicly address her detractor. In addition, the reference to Bonifacio as a 'warrior' challenging her to 'war' that she enters 'without arms' suggests that she starts at a disadvantage, as he has already launched his accusations, and they will stand until she is able to disprove them. However, even though Copia Sulam is unarmed, she seems to accept both her disadvantage and the opportunity to 'repel' Bonifacio's blows with her own Manifesto. This detail suggests an attempt to portray her faith as superior to his because she is 'protected by [God's] pity' instead of needing to bearing arms.

At one point, Copia Sulam intentionally contrasts her motivations, borne from outrage and self-defense, from Bonifacio's borne from 'arrogance:'

[106] "…I gird myself / For defense, having been outraged and rebuked / By a warrior who dares to indict as unfaithful / The soul… I enter, without arms, an unaccustomed arena, / Nor do I wage war on him who challenges me, / Rather, in being protected by Your pity, my God, / I repel his blows with a bare breast…"

> Ditemi dunque...che cosa vi ha mosso a far quel Trattato, a stamparlo, et ad imbrogliarvi il mio nome. Voi dite con i versi di Virgilio, che Dio vi ha eletto a questo. Grand'arroganza veramente, dunque non haveva il Signior Iddio per materia sì sublime, e sì importante un'ingegno più elevato e un ministro più dotto di voi, voi solo ha scielto fra la schiera di tutti i litterati per atto a trattar sì degno soggetto... [107] (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 528)

In referencing Bonifacio's perceived 'elevated intellect,' it would seem Copia Sulam is implying that his own arrogance – and not his religious faith – is the source of his perceived authority. By undercutting Bonifacio's assumptions that God would have chosen him for 'treating so worthy a subject,' Copia Sulam's words provide, on the one hand, a counter-narrative to his totalizing worldview. Shifting the focus from the broadly religious to the highly personal with accusations of his own arrogance, Copia Sulam attempts to transform their correspondence from a representation of their larger religious ideologies about the immortality of the soul into a personal conversation. Still, while calling him on his arrogance and unfounded accusations, Copia Sulam cannot help but confirm Bonifacio's privileged status, as he accuses her publicly and her own subaltern status, even as an educated woman of influence.

Copia Sulam's attempts to resist the constructed subalternity of her identity are apparent throughout her *Manifesto*. From the very beginning, she adamantly protests Bonifacio's mischaracterizations of her ideas while also asserting her own agency provided through her faith:

> ... se pure in alcun discorso io vi ho promossa alcuna difficoltà Filosofica, o Teologica, ciò non è stato per dubio, o vacillamento, che io habbia mai havuto nella mia fede; ma solo per curiosità d'intender da voi, con la solutione de miei argomenti, qualche curiosa, e peregrina dottrina; stimando ciò esser concesso ad ogni persona che professi studij, non che ad una Donna, e donna Hebrea, laquale continuamente vien posta in questi discorsi da persone, che si affaticano di ridurla, come voi sapete, alla Christiana fede. Inconsiderata dunque è stata la vostra calunnia ... potendo il vostro Libro ricever anco querela di libello famoso; ma la pietà della mia legge mi fa pietosa della vostra simplicità, laquale vi ha fatto

[107] "Tell me then…what moved you to prepare and print that treatise and get my name mixed up in it? You say, with verses of Virgil, that God appointed you for this. Great arrogance, to be sure! You imply that…the Lord God did not have a more elevated intellect and a more learned minister than you and that you alone, from the throng of all men of letters, did He choose as fit for treating so worthy a subject."

> credere di farvi immortale di fama, con trattar dell'immortalità dell'anima, e non havendone alcuna pronta occasione ve l'havete finta da voi stesso.[108] (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 528)

Here, Copia Sulam defends her writings by claiming that her only intention in corresponding with him was to pursue an intellectual discussion on the topic of the immortality of the soul. In this passage, she also defends her views and attacks Bonifacio for his blatant misrepresentation of them tantamount to 'libel.' Even though she attempts to place her faith (through her reference to 'my law') as one superior to his 'simplicity,' her narrative can never quite escape the totalizing nature of his claims against her, since her entire *Manifesto* is written "…solo per giustificarmi, e sincerarmi appresso tutti coloro, liquale non conoscendomi potessero dar qualche credenza alla vostra accusa, in quanto appartiene alla Religione che io professo" (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 528).[109] The reason for Copia Sulam's insistence on properly presenting her beliefs stems from Bonifacio's ability to inscribe her narrative as subaltern to his because of her Jewish identity. Because his accusations are coming from a totalizing ethnoreligious perspective, one which was now 'threatened' with division by Copia Sulam's urges for tolerance, her narrative throughout her letters is cast as subordinate to his.

Moreover, her reference to her faith (in stating 'my law') has two implications; first, it represents her worry that his comments may be applied to an entire Jewish community. This

[108] "Even if I raised some philosophical or theological difficulty in some discussion with you, it was not out of any uncertainty or indecision I might have ever felt about my faith…. Rather it was solely out of curiosity to hear from you some curious and uncommon teaching to provide a solution to my arguments. I reckoned that such a procedure is legitimate for any person who pursues studies, let alone a woman, in this case a Jewish woman continually drawn into these discussions by persons who do not tire of converting her, as you know, to the Christian faith…Your slander…was…inconsiderate…I could have...your book persecuted for its infamous libel. But the compassion of my law makes me feel compassion for your simplicity, which made you believe you could become immortal in fame by treating the immortality of the soul. Not having any immediate reason for doing so, you yourself concocted one."

[109] "…only to vindicate and acquit myself in the eyes of those who, not knowing me, might give some credence to your accusation about my being guided by the religion I profess."

application, only possible because of Copia Sulam's Jewish identity, is tantamount to fear mongering. Copia Sulam's concerns were not without merit since "…the Jewish authorities were shaken, in the same years, by an even more conspicuous denial of the soul's immortality in the writings of the converso Uriel da Costa…he was branded a radical and excommunicated. Copia had reason to worry about her standing in the community"[110] (Harrán "Jewish Poet" 54). Secondly, her reference to her Jewish faith as the foundation for her rebuttal of Bonifacio's attacks brings out into the open what had been left implicit in Bonifacio's, including references to her 'moon' and the urgency for her to wash in the baptismal font. Indeed, from the very first time that she was addressed as 'Sabba,' Jewish identity was merely a specter in Bonifacio's text, something not directly referenced and not yet present, though an entity which permeates all their writings and frames the impetus behind their correspondence.

Bonifacio's initial reference to Copia Sulam as 'Sabba,' coupled with his numerous attempts to convert her evokes a sense of a feared Jewish identity and a desire to destroy the ghost of her identity which still threatens to return. Copia Sulam's reference to her Jewish 'law' signifies the return of its ghost because it implies her defiance of Bonifacio stems from her religious background. Even though references to Judaism are rarely made explicit, reading the subtle mentions toward her faith and 'law' reveal the important role it plays in her rebuttal of Bonifacio's totalizing worldview. This assertion of her faith becomes an urge for tolerance and support for a pluralist perspective, because her Jewish identity is inscribed as an abject Other of a larger, hegemonic Catholic one that simmers beneath the surface of these writings.

[110] Recall Pullan's statement that the Inquisition predominantly prosecuted those "who flirted with Judaism, [or] who mingled Judaism with Christianity" (58). Others, like Lynn Westwater have noted that the Venetian Inquisition also fervently prosecuted Jews, and conversos, who threatened the Church (Westwater 119).

At one point in her *Manifesto*, Copia Sulam criticizes Bonifacio's poor understanding of Hebrew by taking issue with his usage of a word:[111]

> ...qui potrei richiedervi strettissimo conto, di sì fatta interpretatione, se haveste parlato di vostro sentimento: ma perché so che voi non havete mai veduta lingua Hebraica, e che da altri è stato soffiato nella vostra ciarabottana, dirovvi solo, che da questo fate conoscere chiaramente, che anco le altre cose tutte, che havete dette, vi siete assicurato a dirle, senza intenderle; almeno in questo particolare, parlando voi con una Hebrea dovevate farvi imboccare da chi meglio intendesse la proprietà della lingua... [112] (Copia Sulam "Manifesto" 530)

In this passage, Copia Sulam negates the veracity of his opinions, claiming that someone else must have written them for him.[113] She further undermines his authority in three ways; first, as a man of letters, by claiming he writes words 'without understanding them;' second, as a Catholic, by indicating his insufficient understanding of Hebrew to converse with a Jewish interlocutor; and thirdly, she undermines his authority as a man by emphasizing that 'speaking with a Jewish *woman*' would have required a greater intellect than his. In criticizing his ability to use Hebrew accurately, Copia Sulam is also criticizing his ability to 're-present' her religious identity. While these comments were meant to assert her own agency and superior knowledge of the subject, they also simultaneously cannot escape the frame that Bonifacio created; her critique inherently

[111] The Hebrew word in this case was 'ruah' which means 'breath' or 'spirit.' Bonifacio invokes this terminology when discussing how the Hebrew scriptures reference the separation between body and soul. He claims that this word is used "throughout the Scriptures… [as] an immaterial substance" and that only humans possess this quality and not other living creatures on Earth since "the human mind, the angelic mind, and the divine mind" are all created in God's image (Bonifacio Trans. Harrán *Immortalità* 287). Copia Sulam's rebuttal to Bonifacio's linguistic appropriation here presents an attempt to ridicule his flawed logic in misrepresenting her faith.

[112] "Here I could ask you for a highly detailed account of such an interpretation if you had spoken your own opinion. But because I know that you have never seen the Hebrew language and that others embedded it in your trappings, I will tell you only that from this as well as all the other things you have said it is clear…that you made sure to say them without understanding them. In this particular at least, when speaking with a Jewish woman, you should have been spoon-fed by someone who better understood the peculiarities of the language…"

[113] Her claim that someone else must have written his words is similar to the way Bonifacio suggested Leon Modena wrote Copia Sulam's letter.

poses a threat to his worldview. In this way, her *Manifesto* can never be read without the threatening, 'seething presence' of her Jewish identity.

Other markers which signal that Copia Sulam's Jewish identity is cast as a subaltern threat include her need to perpetually refute his claims, assert her own views, and her fervent attempts to defend her faith. When viewing these exchanges in relation to the larger historical context, her role as subaltern becomes more significant; no longer do their exchanges merely pertain to two interlocutors, but they can be read as a literary depiction of the larger anxiety surrounding identity politics in 17th century Venice. Just as Jewish identity had been confined to the ghettos in an attempt to control a perceived threat against Catholicism, Copia Sulam's ideas were being subjugated to Bonifacio's totalizing re-presentation of her identity as a threat that needed to be confined or neutralized through conversion.

Though Copia Sulam is clearly writing from a socially disadvantaged position, the tension that her expression highlights is significant. Her attempts to subvert Bonifacio's representation of her ideas and identity may be unsuccessful, but they nonetheless expose the presence of a counter-narrative to a totalizing ethnoreligious identity. We saw the same tension in Sanuto's diaries and in Aretino's play in which two Jewish figures – one real, one fictitious – speak out for tolerance in the face of oppression. Just as Romanello attempted to claim his religious identity before being confined to prison and Meshullam spoke out in support of his community which was to be confined to the ghetto, Copia Sulam also attempts to speak for herself and to re-assert her religious identity after being inscribed into a larger Catholic one. The difference here, however, is that a new 'solution' has been posed. Bonifacio's letters suggest that not only could Jews and their identity be confined as a way of supposedly resolving this tension; in Bonifacio's conception, conversion became a new alternative.

Reading the presentations of Jewish identity in texts by Sanuto, Aretino, Copia Sulam, and Bonifacio, a language emerges that helps us to better-understand the mechanisms which cause Jewish identity to haunt Venetian literature during the 16th and 17th centuries.[114] Indeed, we find in these 16th and 17th century texts, both voices that emphasize religious identity as the basis of exclusion and voices of real and fictitious Jewish figures who incorporate a pluralist viewpoint. It is important to read these texts in relation to later, more explicit expressions of national aspirations, which present the same tensions in other pivotal moments in the peninsula's history when the future of Jewish identity hung in the balance between expatriation and assimilation.

Just as Remo Bodei argued for a society to become aware of the 'threads,' or the multiple identities and tensions which constitute the collective identity, I suggest the Risorgimento cannot be understood without understanding the particular threads of fear of Jewish identity which have haunted the literature of the Italian peninsula at least as far back as the 15th century. Historical moments when the pendulum swings toward expatriation, as in 15th and 16th century Venice with the confinement and conversion of Jews brought about by fear, can be investigated by analyzing those voices that fracture, weaken, and haunt a totalizing ethnoreligious identity. The re-weaving of these voices, or 'threads,' helps us to understand the Risorgimento not solely as a nationalist, secular movement, but as a movement haunted by a fear of the role Jewish identity might play in the imagined national polity.

[114] Incorporating Foucauldian theory in these readings suggests not only a new understanding of Jewish studies in Italy, but a better understanding of the way sociological changes which bent toward confinement of marginalized groups that were originally attributed to the late 17th century actually occurred nearly a century sooner. Utilizing this alongside other theorists like Kristeva, Derrida, and Chakrabarty allows for different perspectives on the depiction of Jewish identity through Italian literature to emerge.

CHAPTER 2:

THE SEEDS OF THE RISORGIMENTO: CRAFTING A COMMON ENEMY TO FORGE A SHARED IDENTITY

SECTION I: FORCED CONVERSIONS OF THE 18TH CENTURY

In 1701, Paolo Sebastiano Medici (1671-1731), a prominent Hebrew scholar and convert to Catholicism, published a *Catalogo de' Neofiti illustri*,[115] whose goal was to persuade Jews to convert based on the projected prospects and freedoms they would experience as a Catholics. In the introduction, he vilified his Jewish readers, who had become "…appresso tutte le Nazioni … lo scherno, e vilipendio del Mondo tutto, senza Regno, senza Tempio, e senza Sagrifizio, riputato abominazione, e immondezza…" (Medici xvii).[116] He further vilified the Jews in his 1705 publication, *Patimenti e morte di Simone Abeles fanciullo ebreo di dodici anni*,[117] which, painting a savage image of Jewish parents, narrates the story of a father who murders his son because of the youth's desire to convert. These texts were referenced and quoted by Pope Benedict XIV in 1747 (and, in 1759, by Lorenzo Ganganelli, an influential cardinal and outspoken perpetrator of accusations of blood libel). Though scholars typically depict Benedict XIV as a pope who imposed less severe sanctions against the Jewish community,[118] his letters

[115] *Catalogue of Illustrious Neophytes*
[116] "…in comparison with all nations, the mockery and contempt of the whole world, without a kingdom, without a temple, and without a Eucharist, regarded as an abomination, and as filth…"
[117] *Sufferings and Death of Simon Abeles Jewish Boy of Twelve Years*
[118] Cf., in particular, Rebecca Messbarger's "The Art and Science on Human Anatomy in Benedict's Vision of the Enlightenment Church" in *Benedict XIV and the Enlightenment: Art, Science, and Spirituality*; and Renee Haynes' *Philosopher King: The Humanist Pope Benedict XIV*.

show support for clandestine baptisms[119] and his bull *Beatus Andreas* even fueled claims of ritual murder perpetrated by Jews (Caffiero 8).[120]

In this chapter, I show that, in order to understand how the fear of Jewish identity led, in the 18th century to increased scapegoating of Jews and Jewish communities, it is important to focus on new challenges to the Church's ideological control over its believers. In particular, scientific advances, built on the methods of Galileo Galilei and Giordano Bruno, would question the role of the Church in the study of the natural world, and the seeds of the Enlightenment provided a secular sense of liberty and individuality. It seems that, for the Church, an old scapegoat proved to be the best common enemy for sustaining a shared ethnoreligious identity steeped in Catholicism.

The effects of Illuminismo in Italy can be seen most notably in an emphasis on scientific thought and its accessibility. In particular, the publication of Giambattista Vico's seminal work *Scienza Nuova* in 1725 represented a shift away from the thinking of Descartes, whose "whole system of scientific knowledge depends on our assured knowledge of God" and toward the breaking down of truth into two distinct frameworks – *il vero* and *il certo* (Cottingham 174). In other words – unlike Descartes, Rousseau, and Montesquieu – Vico's *Scienza Nova* not only removed God from the center of all forms of knowledge; he suggested that all laws and customs were human constructs, thereby threatening the divine legitimacy of canon law.

Scientific experimentation was also instrumental in challenging the authority of the Church over its believers. The experiments of Luigi Galvani and Alessandro Volta, for example,

[119] *Lettera a Monsigor Arcivevscovo di Tarso Vicegerante*. Feb 28, 1747.
[120] Caffiero also notes that this bull "represents a fundamental event in the history of the accusation of ritual murder, in part because this text…is the historical precedent alluded to in the decree of the Holy Office in 1900" which claimed that "'ritual assassination is nonetheless historically certain…'" (34, 7).

sparked controversy in both academic and social circles.[121] First, their studies showed that humans could produce electrical currents and control physical beings, which implied a new way of understanding phenomena in the natural world, previously elucidated only by religious beliefs. Second, though the scholars stayed friends, their professional disagreements were quite notable, spurring scientifically-oriented social discourse.[122] Scientific discoveries had even become chic, according to Messbarger, who notes that "articles on such scientific topics as physics, chemistry, and botany appeared in popular women's magazines and became *de rigueur* for the fashionable lady" (Messbarger 74). Examples of popularizing scientific texts addressed to women include: Francesco Algarotti's *Il Newtonianism per le dame* (1737),[123] an entertaining dialogue about the basic tenets of Newtonian scientific study, dedicated to the French enlightenment author Fontenelle and compared to his *On the Plurality of Worlds*; Algarotti's *Filosofia per le dame* (1737); and Campagnoni's *La chimica per le dame* (1792). Thus, the scientific discoveries of Galvani and Volta generated significant excitement and dialogue in academic circles and had rippling effects in society, as well. It was now easier to envision a civil society without God at its center with new methods of understanding the world, ones which did not rely on ritualistic beliefs.[124]

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[121] Galvani was a Catholic, had received funding from the Papacy, and was "dismissed from the university and lost his salary when he refused to take an atheistic oath of allegiance to the Cisalpine Republic" just before his death (Cunningham 14) (Magill 525). Regardless of his intentions in conducting his experiments, their results may ultimately have led to a subtle subversion of Church authority.

[122] In fact, "controversy… [of their experiments] spread to other scholars at Bologna versus those at Pavia, physiologists versus physicists, animalists versus metalists…" (Magill 525).

[123] This text marks the awareness of the upper-class female reader in the Settecento. The text also highlights the importance of Laura Bassi, Italian philosopher and third woman in the world to earn a doctorate in a scientific field and first women ever to earn a professorial position in Europe – in 1732.

[124] Though these ideas may have originated earlier with the works of Pico, Galileo, or Bruno, Galvani's and Volta's experiments met with less public resistance. The Church convicted Galileo of heresy, Bruno was burned at the stake, and Pico was only protected from the Inquisition because he had the support of Lorenzo de' Medici. Thus, while scientific thinkers may have opposed Church doctrine prior to this moment, the threat they posed was now more consequential.

This shift, promoted by scientific discoveries and their accessibility, also brought changes in economic and philosophical thinking that further threatened the authority of the Catholic Church. Antonio Genovesi's *Lezioni di Commercio* (1769), for example, advocated for a separation between Church and State and questioned the role of religious education in civil society (Genovesi Cap. IV, VII).[125] Moreover, Genovesi points to the greed and financial scandals of the Church, highlighting problems with obscure Catholic laws which could not be understood by the masses.[126]

Genovesi's scrutiny of religious laws and beliefs is not surprising, given his own volatile relationship with the Church.[127] But to understand the threat Genovesi posed to Church authority, it's especially important to read such texts as the *Lezioni* in relation to other contemporary texts that were reexamining old forms of thought. Vico's *Scienza Nuova* brought with it a highly-organized philosophical framework that did not place God at the center of understanding Truth, while Galvani and Volta's experiments provided scientific principles – in place of religious ones – to explain the natural world. The *Lezioni* were just another link in this trend of displacing the authority of the Church.

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[125] Genovesi was also writing around the same time as the economist, Adam Smith. For information on similarities and differences between Smith and Genovesi on the separation of Church and State, see Luigi Bruni's chapter "Public Happiness and Relational Goods" from *Policies for Happiness*; Genovesi "Conclusione di questi elementi" in Cap. VII.

[126] Genovesi Cap. XXI section XXXVI; Genovesi Cap. VI section IX; he also questioned the ethics of Church practices Cap. XIII section VI.

[127] Having initially studied to take religious orders, he pursued a career in law and then in physics and metaphysics. Scholars note that in the 1740s, he was rejected for a prestigious position as theology chair at the University of Naples because he "faced insurmountable opposition from within the Church…he was accused of Deism, and of being a follower of Bayle [a prominent Protestant French philosopher] or of the Socinians [a nontrinitarian sect of Christianity that came out of the Reformation]" (Robertson *The Roman Catholic* 351). It was only after this rejection that Genovesi "developed his enthusiasm for political economy" (Robertson *The Roman Catholic* 351). This was certainly not the first time Genovesi's works had been at odds with the Church; his *Elementa metaphysicae* was condemned by the Holy Office in 1755 (Lehner and Printy 223). Raffaele Iovine notes that the Holy Office issued three censures of his *Lezioni*. Cf. Raffiele Iovine's "Tre inedite censure del Sant'Ufficio alle 'Lezioni di commercio' di Antonio Genovesi" in *Frontiera d'Europa*.

In his influential work *Dei Delitti e Delle Pene* (1764), Cesare Beccaria's also contributed to this trend, criticizing practices surrounding the use of punishment for criminals. Though Beccaria does not explicitly refer to the Catholic Church as the official juridical body of the Papal States, he does criticize the ability of regional officials to interpret appropriate punishments for defying Canon laws, providing subtle support for the removal of religious laws in secular life.[128] He furthermore questions whether the Church ethically treats those accused of crimes, and he denounces the practice of secret accusations (so commonly used in forced baptisms against Jewish communities).[129] As scholars have noted, though Beccaria was not writing in the Papal States, contemporary response to his work recognized, nonetheless, that Beccaria's text "could threaten to undercut…the towering position of the Roman Catholic Church as arbiter of justice and morality" (Thomas xxiv).[130]

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[128] Beccaria, chapter III. See also Chadwick, 186 and Paolo Prodi, "The legal system: Canon law and legal law" in *The Papal Prince: One Body and Two Souls*; and James M. Powell's "Innocent III and Secular Law" in *Law as Profession and Practice in Medieval Europe*.

[129] Beccaria chapter XXIX. Throughout the Settecento, the Papal States had a notoriously storied history of corruption. Even well into the 1800s, prisoners could often be held without a trial (see Kertzer, David. "Destroying the Papal States." *Prisoner of the Vatican*), (Lyons 109), (Robertson *The Case for Enlightenment* 23). This is of particular relevance for Jews during the 18th century, especially those who were confined without trial and psychologically tortured in the House of Catechumens. It would seem Beccaria's theories would outlaw such a discriminatory practice altogether; Beccaria, section XV. The Papal States and other territories under the influence of the Church are rife with examples of secret accusations. Dating back to the Inquisition in the 13th century, names of those who accused others of heresy and other offenses would often be kept in confidence under the pretense of their protection, though it usually only stirred fear (Corry 46). The Church's stance on secret accusations remained in effect well into the 19th century and even permeates the Edgardo Mortara case in which the identity of the accuser was kept a secret and the Mortara family was only notified when officials arrived to take their child. Most famously, Beccaria wrote against the practice of torture (section XVI) sanctioned by the Church as far back as the Constitutiones Sanctæ Matris Ecclesiae (1357), the first constitution of the Papal States, in 1357, and the Papal Bull *Ad extirpanda* of 1252 (Caenegem 100). The use of torture openly continued well into the 19th century (DiJoseph 82; Küng 251). Beccaria was also the first and most prominent to oppose the death penalty (section XXVIII; Hostettler 52). The Papal States were infamous for their extensive and gruesome displays of capital punishment by use of the mazzatello, a hammer-like object used to inflict blunt-force trauma to the victim's head, from Beccaria's time until this method was abolished by Garibaldi in 1870 (Mannix 89).

[130] There are numerous details in the publication history of this text that lend themselves to the interpretation that it posed a threat to the Church. Initially, the work "was published anonymously, for security reasons, fearing some reprisal from Catholic authorities" (Newman and Marongiu, lx). Jonathan

The same emerging ideas – from Beccaria's harsh criticism of any legal system imbued with religious beliefs, to the emerging philosophical theories on the nature of civil society in Vico's work, to the scientific advancements of Galvani and Volta, and to innovative economic ideals from Genovesi – would soon permeate literary fiction and awaken a new ideological fixation to address those concerns – the idea of nationalism. Given that these publications were written by non-Jewish authors, why would Jewish identity become the canvas on which to re-envision a unified ethnoreligious identity in literary fiction?

In her work *Strangers at Home*, Lynn Gunzberg suggests an answer to this question; the texts of Jewish writers in this period, texts which she refers to as "acts of self-defense," also "indicate a growing strength and awareness" among Jewish communities of their agency in their largely Catholic surroundings (32). One of these texts, Isacco Levi's treatise *Il difensore degli Ebrei o sia lettera di Isacco Levi al Signor du Fresne mercante di Smirne* (1784) in particular, even "identified the root of the 'Jewish problem' to be the political power of the Church, that is the union of Church and State" (Gunzberg 32). The scrutiny facing the Church from economic and political spheres was spreading to religious minority groups, as well, and was being expressed through literature.

Israel has noted how, in Beccaria (and Pietro Verri), "theological criteria have no role in defining offenses or determining punishment, something tacitly undermining the very foundation of the Inquisition" (Israel 343). Moreover, Beccaria's work was officially censured by Pietro Lazzari, the Jesuit teacher and ecclesiastical scholar who served as chair of the Collegio Romano. Cf. Girolamo Imbruglia's "Illuminismo e religione. Il Dei delitti e delle pene dalla difesa dei Verri alla censura inquisitoriale" in *Studi settecenteschi*. Unsurprisingly, Beccaria's work was heavily influenced by the Verri brothers (whose contributions to the pluralist national movement will be discussed below in chapter 2), friends with whom he would later found an intellectual society and periodical *Il Caffè*, "dedicated to waging relentless war against economic disorder, bureaucratic petty tyranny, religious narrow-mindedness, and intellectual pedantry" (Paolucci xii). Ferdinando Facchinei, a Beneadictine monk in Florence, "criticized Beccaria for his exclusion of religious considerations from his reflections" (Dawson and Morère 307). Other scholarsThomas notes, however, that another reason for Facchinei's response was his recognition that Beccaria's text "could threaten to undercut…the towering position of the Roman Catholic Church as arbiter of justice and morality" (Thomas xxiv).

Gunzberg's analysis is critical to understanding this shift, in that she traces the development of the Jewish character from its representation in Sacchetti's 14th century Sonetti Romaneschi to the Pasquinate of G.G. Belli in the 19th century. Through her analysis, she illustrates how the Jewish character was initially portrayed as a victim, a cowardly and effeminate male object of mockery and cruel jesting and no match for his oppressor and how "this tractable character became the popular stock type" (Gunzberg 94).[131] She also notes that Jewishness was portrayed as an irremediable aspect of one's own identity and even after conversion to Christianity, Jewish people would never be rid of their religious identity.

To investigate this growing scrutiny of the Church appearing in philosophy, science, commerce, and law in the 18th century and its relation to the portrayal of Jewish identity, I turn now to a text that challenges the authority of the Church from a literary perspective – the *Diary* of Anna del Monte. This text documents the 1749 kidnapping of a Roman Jewish woman and her 13-day detention in the House of Catachumens. As Kenneth Stow notes, in his *Anna and Tranquillo,* "Anna's kidnapping also took place at a trying moment for the kidnappers themselves…eighteenth-century thinking that promoted the 'inalienable rights of mankind' was threatening not only ecclesiastical power, but, even more, the Church's claim to possess the single, absolute truth" (11).

[131] This is part of the reason why connecting Jewish identity portrayed in Anna's diary to the feminine was particularly relevant to constructing an abject Jewish identity.

SECTION II:
RELIGION AND REASON: RISING NATIONALISM, FEAR, AND THE CONFINEMENT OF JEWS

Little is known about the life of Anna del Monte.[132] She is believed to have been born sometime around 1731 based on her age at the time of her kidnapping in 1749. Near the age of 18, Anna was taken from her home in the Roman ghetto based on an accusation from a neophyte (Sabato Coen) who claimed she was promised as his wife and that she expressed a desire to convert to Catholicism. She was held and interrogated about her faith in the House of Catachumens from which she was released after thirteen days because of her repeated refusal to convert.[133] Shortly after returning to her home in the ghetto, it is believed that she drafted the diary of her experiences. It is the only known text which details a first-hand experience within the walls of the House of Catechumens in Rome. Because her diary was circulated without a publisher by her brother to highlight the plight of Jews in Italy, some have conjectured that her brother may have edited her journal to suit his own objectives. Others have questioned the

[132] Throughout my analysis, I will refer to her as either 'Anna del Monte' or simply as 'Anna' when distinguishing her from her brother, Tranquillo, of the same last name.

[133] Though the following lengthy quote is not directly relevant to my analysis, I find it pertinent to reproduce here to provide context and scope for the type of treatment del Monte faced while in the House of Catechumens. "The madness of the House of Converts had its method. On Monday, the second day, Anna had but two visitors…who told her how important her conversion was – for herself, but also for the Church. On Tuesday, she saw the arch-priest again. On Wednesday, she was left on her own, to think. This was the strategy in the first stages; let Anna wonder: about her Judaism, her future, but especially her whereabouts. Then, at the height of her mental anguish, Anna was bombarded: four days in a row, three or four visits each day, a total of fifty-four in all, by thirty-eight different people. Each visit lasted hours, about eighty in all – the most strenuous accompanied with endless preaching, at suggestive hours of the day like sunset. These were well-designed psychological games" (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* Footnote 30). The psychological warfare that Anna del Monte endured combined with the history of forced conversion of Jews who are merely accused of having a desire to convert or inadvertently say something that can be interpreted as a desire to convert by Church officials highlights the anguish that Anna del Monte and many other Jews in her community faced. She was not the only Roman Jew to experience this treatment, but no others have left such detailed accounts of their treatment.

historical veracity of the document's interpersonal dialogue.[134] For the purposes of my reading, it does not matter whether or not the text was edited or if the dialogue is accurate, as I am interested less in Anna del Monte the woman and more in the construction of her Jewish identity in this text that *was* circulated by her brother.

Though much research has been done into the House of Catechumens, exact records of practices there are difficult to find. In her study, *Forced Baptisms: Histories of Jews, Christians, and Converts in Papal Rome,* Marina Caffiero illustrates Benedict XIV's ruthlessness, given his fervent support of the House of Catechumens, which remained the site for incidences of forced conversions throughout the 18th century. Caffiero provides perhaps the most detailed accounts of such cases. These include cases of children who were kidnapped from their parents or offered by relatives for financial gain; spouses and children taken from their homes when the father converted; and people, like Anna del Monte, who were forcibly confined in the House of Catechumens because neophytes accused them of the desire to convert.[135]

Though the documentation does not detail all those who managed to refuse conversion or were released after their forced detainment, research by Vogelstein and Rieger indicates that the numbers of those forcibly *converted* was notable in Rome in the years between 1634 and 1790 while the practice before this time period was relatively uncommon.[136] I suggest that the incidence of this practice may be read as a measure of just how much philosophical, scientific,

[134] Based on historical accounts detailed by M. Caffiero, the dialogue referenced in Anna del Monte's diary does not seem to be far from the truth. For further reading, see: Marina Caffiero's *Forced Baptisms: Histories of Jews, Christians, and Converts in Papal Rome.*
[135] The law Patria Potestas set forth by Benedict XIV mandated all family members to convert upon the conversion of the father; these three different types of cases, though significant, will not be fully explicated here since they are the subject of Caffiero's text and thoroughly dealt with there.
[136] See Paul Rieger and Hermann Vogelstein's *Geschichte Der Juden in Rom*; Specifically, Paul Rieger and Hermann Vogelstein cite 1,195 baptisms from 1634-1700 and 1,237 from 1700-1790.

and literary publications imbued with enlightenment ideals and proto-nationalist discourse, threatened the Church's ideological control.

This connection between the practice of forced baptisms and the presence of a growing anxiety over the evolving identity of the peninsula portrayed in literature is perhaps most evident when considering where texts which challenged a homogenous ethnoreligious identity were published. Communities located closer to the seat of the Church were more affected by harsh sanctions and the practice of forced baptism, since "the further the convert lay from Rome, the more difficult it was to keep him or her under the control of [Cardinal Sirleto] or one of his surrogates…" (Mazur 22). It was not a coincidence, therefore, that, as we saw above, the texts of Vico, Genovesi, and Beccaria that weakened Church influence were not produced in Rome. The voices of dissent in Rome were expressed differently and the *Diary of Anna Del Monte* represents a form of dissent within Rome that is not seen elsewhere, a unique counternarrative that subverted Church authority merely by its circulation in the seat of Christendom.

It is important to remember that the process of conversion in the 17th century was not always a personal choice. If a Jewish person in the Papal States simply misspoke, this could be considered an irreversible act of desiring to convert; and the mere profession of a belief in God was seen by the Church as a license to baptize Jews against their will, especially if someone had already accused them of desiring to convert (Stow *Jewish Life* 12-13). Stow's study thoroughly explicates the complicated aspects of Jewish life in the 18th century, provides insights into the poorly documented experiences inside the House of Catechumens, and details legal practices surrounding the Church's role in daily life. My analysis extends his research by illustrating how the *Diary* serves as voice of opposition against the Church and its practices. Examining the language by which a Jewish worldview is forged and constructed, I suggest that the *Diary*

manages to articulate, in the context of the Church's struggle to hold onto its influence, a call for a more pluralistic society.[137]

The representation of Anna's voice throughout her diary is a complex task for analysis, as she is inherently placed as subaltern and powerful at the same time. Though Anna wrote the initial draft of the diary and thus represents herself, she is also 're-presented' by the significant edits of her brother Tranquillo, who, publishing the diary after her death, would have been unable to capture her lived experience as a woman in confinement. Furthermore, her story is being used for a clear political agenda in which she is 'spoken for' by her brother while also somewhat 'speaking for' herself and the entire Jewish community of Rome. Tranquillo is using Anna's story of her experience as an iteration of a larger social narrative which places Jews as the abject of Roman society to raise awareness about their social standing. In so doing, I suggest, Tranquillo is highlighting the subalternity of Jews in Rome by inscribing Anna's diary into a longstanding narrative of religious struggle.[138]

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[137] Some may suggest that a literary analysis of the diary would prove insufficient because Anna's brother, Tranquillo, is known to have heavily edited the text and shared it to advance his own agenda after her death. For example, Stow even notes that "Tranquillo reworked [the diary] to suit his own perspective…the diary as we have it, therefore, has two protagonists: Anna and her brother…" (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 2-3). While I acknowledge that it is impossible to tell exactly which parts have been edited and how, I suggest this knowledge supports my assertion that Jewish identity was being constructed in a specific way. For example, the type of psychological warfare that Anna del Monte endured and the history of forced conversions of Jews would have been common knowledge among the Jewish community of Rome during her time. It seems no wonder, then, that Tranquillo, son of a very influential and well-off family within the ghetto with knowledge of the expanded Jewish rights in France, would want to make his sister's treatment common knowledge throughout the peninsula and to take down the institutional practices that made it happen. Kenneth Stow even notes that Tranquillo "…shaped his sister's diary into an instrument for fighting back, a manual for those who might find themselves in Anna's place. The message is blunt: expect the worst, but hold fast…" (*Anna and Tranquillo* 12). It would make sense that Tranquillo's intention, perhaps through additions to the manuscript or through Anna's own words, would be to imbue the diary with a sense of pride in Jewish identity and urge for inclusion into a larger, Catholic society. Though authorship is a fascinating dimension of this text, my analysis does not depend on determination of authorship. Instead, I focus on the completed construction and its effect on the reader, which is independent of the author.

[138] In essence, her story has "become [a] variation…on a master narrative" that Tranquillo is crafting for readers (Chakrabarty 27).

Reading Anna's diary also poses other significant difficulties. Though it would seem that Anna is being re-presented by her brother – which casts her inherently as subaltern as a woman who is no longer able to 'speak for' herself – her brother is also a member of the subaltern religious group whose plight they are both highlighting. Can Tranquillo accurately re-present Anna's lived experience which allows her to speak for herself? My analysis argues that he cannot; there are layers of subalternity at play within Anna's diary which no amount of analysis can ignore or remove. But can Tranquillo re-present the struggle to maintain Jewish identity in the face of a totalizing Catholic one? My analysis suggests the answer to this is yes. In analyzing the known document, even with its complex origins, I argue that it can be read as a voice of opposition against Church control. The fact that Anna's character throughout the diary defies her captors so forcefully and retains her Jewish identity suggests that she poses a threat to Catholic authority and its ability to confine.

In the face of her oppressive captors Anna becomes a force to be reckoned with in her own right. Whether every quotation is accurate or added for effect, the result is the depiction of a young Jewish woman whose agency comes from an unwavering faith. Indeed, Anna's words are often imbued with layers of meaning which signify not merely the physical tribulation she endured, but craft an imagined Jewish identity which threatens to return to challenge her captors and their attempts to confine and convert her. My analysis reads Anna's defiance as another iteration of the tensions seen with Sarra Copia Sulam, with Romanello in Aretino's text, and with Asher Levi Meshullam in Sanuto's diaries in Venice. In other words, this tension between Catholic and Jewish communities is both long-passed and a tension that continues to affect present society. In this sense, the kidnapping of Anna del Monte and the practice of forced

conversion more broadly can be viewed as another iteration of religious tensions dating back to 16th century Venice.

Religious identity permeates the entire text of Anna del Monte's diary – every dialogue, every moment of silence, and especially the representation of her personal thoughts. For example, the diary begins with details of her kidnapping right from the kitchen of her family home during the Jewish festival of Passover. It comes as no surprise, then, that one of the chief messages of this text, as noted by Stow, is to remain steadfast in one's Jewish faith. Though the text does not indicate how many men came, it does capture the brutality and chaos that occurred. Her text claims that the officials under the authority of the Vice Regent barged into the house without warning, and without explanation, held her at gunpoint before shoving her outside. When her father tried to intervene, he was threatened at gunpoint, too. With few words exchanged, Anna was taken away.

Interestingly, Anna's agency to control her situation is quite complicated; though she is unable to refuse transport to the House of Catechumens, she asserts her will in a different way. On the first day of her captivity at the House of Catechumens, Anna is seen speaking out against Church authority. When confronted with a prioress (one of the few women who would continue to visit her over the thirteen days) who suggested that only through conversion could Anna become illuminated, the diary notes Anna's quick reply "Ed io, pigliando spirito, mi arrischiai a rispondere, che ero tanto illuminata, quando io non fossi pervertita dalla Santa Religione dove ero nata…" (del Monte 56).[139] This defiance in the face of such oppression is a common theme across the thirteen days. The reaction of the Catholic officials, who either leave the room in a

[139] "I responded boldly, and with pluck, that I had already been illuminated, and I had no intention of being deceived to desert the religion into which I was born." All translations of Anna del Monte's diary are from Kenneth Stow's *Anna and Tranquillo*, unless otherwise noted.

huff or more adamantly try to convert her, portray reactions to Jews in Roman society. Anna's defiance throughout the diary represents, more generally, an opposition to these reactions and to confinement of the Jewish community during her time. Just as the fictional Romanello spoke out against the Christian Rosso for mistreatment, Meshullam appeared before the Council of Ten to protest the establishment of the first ghetto, and Copia Sulam published a manifesto against her male detractor, here again, in the 18th century, a Jewish resident is speaking out to affirm difference.

The words of this diary, given its historical context and our knowledge that Tranquillo shaped it to highlight the plight of the Jews in Rome, suggest that the struggle in the diary between Anna and her captors is not simply a personal one, but is representative of a larger struggle for ideological control. This larger struggle and fear of Jewish difference which leads to confinement and (attempted) conversion is perhaps most clear when a male preacher uses fear as a tactic against Anna. On the fifth day, when a male preacher entered the room and attempted to convert her through throwing water at her, he claimed "…'che ci voglio impegnare il Sacro Collegio de Cardinali, e l'istesso Pontefice ancora se occorre, pur che non restiate Vincitrice'" (del Monte 65)[140] Because the 'victory' here refers to Anna's maintaining her faith, I would suggest that the battle is not between Anna and the men who frequent her room, but between two ideologies. This terminology is particularly interesting; its appearance in the diary suggests the clear construct of an ideological struggle which – perhaps Tranquillo had hoped – would resonate with a larger community within the Italian peninsula in the 18th century. The term 'victor' also suggests that this text supports active protests for religious pluralism in the face of a totalizing identity. Thus, it would seem that in presenting Anna's battles with her captors, the

[140] "…If I wish, I will get the entire College of Cardinals and the Pope himself to ensure you do not walk out of here as a victor."

text actually signifies a struggle for ideological control between a totalizing Catholic worldview and a more pluralist one. The details of Anna's defiance through her steadfast faith envision successful opposition and protest for other Jews to follow. Furthermore, Anna's resistance and her successful release also imply a hope that something can be done in the face of such oppression, when families are being torn apart. While I agree with Stow's interpretation that the diary's message is one of remaining true to the Jewish faith, as noted above, I would suggest there is also another message at play, a message that fights back against this language of confinement, one that will become increasingly relevant at the end of the Settecento when voices will emerge that more overtly express *dissent against a totalizing ethnoreligious identity*.

This message is infused into nearly every page of the diary through associations to Anna's religious beliefs and devotion. It would seem, for Anna del Monte, that vocal defense of her Jewish beliefs *was* her mode of dissent. For example, the very first words of her diary relate the timing of her ordeal to the Hebrew calendar and observance of its holy days and upon entering the House of Catechumens, she defies male conversos and religious officials in asserting her own identity and remaining steadfast to her religion as a Jew (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 20, 24). In fact, nearly every day, she repeats a similar statement in defense of her faith and expressing her desire to return to her family and die a Jew. In the face of multiple visitors each day, sometimes verbally violent sermons and near constant surveillance, Anna del Monte never misses a chance to resist. At one point, she even yells at a priest trying to persuade her to convert that "…pur troppo non manco di pregare Iddio, che mi cavi da questa carcere, e mi facci ritornar Giudia in mano de miei Signori Genitori"[141] (del Monte 60). The man trying to convert her leaves the room in a huff. On another occasion, when speaking with the Archpriest San Celso,

[141] "I never miss an opportunity to pray to God: to get me out of this jail and allow me to return to my family as a Jew."

Anna exclaims "Onde però, potete predicar quanto volete, e dir quanto volete, che non mi convertirete mai della mia Religione. Bene fareste a farmi ricondurre nelle braccia de miei Signori Genitori, da dove fui rubata, e nulla importa a Voi, che Io sia dannata" [142] (del Monte 75). In these two examples, remaining steadfast to her faith here is her way of resisting not only those men trying to convert her, but an ideological struggle which is trying at all costs to inscribe her.

Perhaps, just as important is the representation of relentless repetition of attempts at her conversion. Even as she openly refuses on each occasion, worrying intermittently about a slip of the tongue[143] which could ruin her, the attempts of her captors only become more forceful. The sheer number of sermons and lectures she receives indicates an anxiety over her faith and their inability to control its expression. In this way, the diary conjures a ghost – metaphorically and even literally in the form of her deceased grandfather – to represent her ever-present and unwavering Jewish identity.[144] Just as one captor leaves and the ordeal to control her identity seems over, another captor is said to enter the room and the process begins again.

Anna's devoutness of faith also gives her the ability to actively speak against Catholicism as a totalizing ideology, as well. At one point, on the ninth day of her confinement, one Abbot Cavalli entered her room indicating that he was sent specifically by the Pope to baptize her. After giving a sermon, he brought in at least two other men to join them in the room. The diary is unclear who these men were, but it seems likely that they would have been either priests or

[142] "You can preach as much as you like and say what you want, but you will not convert me. You will do well to take me back to my home, to my parents, from whom I was stolen; you don't really care whether I am damned."
[143] More detail on these examples will be provided below.
[144] As Derrida notes "to conjure also means to exorcise: to attempt both to destroy and to disavow a malignant, demonized, diabolized force, most often an evil-doing spirit, a specter, a kind of ghost who comes back or who still risks coming back *post mortem*" (Derrida 58-59).

conversos who had been brought in before. Regardless of their beliefs, it was clear that Anna del Monte was significantly outnumbered. She recounts the strange activity that took place:

> …e con una certa arroganza, quasi colle mani agl'occhi, che parevano tre spiritati, che misero a rumore tutto il Luogo, vedendoli fare tanto fracasso, mi sbigottij di tal maniera, che non sapevo che risponderli. Doppo di ciò, principiò uno de essi a dire: 'ma rispondetemi, credete a quel Dio di Mosè, Aharon, David, e s Selomo'h,[145] vostri e nostri Antichi Padri?' Ed Io, non pensando all'insidiosa Rete, che procuravano stendere per allacciarmi in qualche piccolo parola con dire un *Sì*, mi andavo ritenendo di non dir mai tal parola, per non cadere in qualche inconveniente. Doppo molte interrogazioni, scappai a dire: 'Sì certo che ci credo,' per non mostrarmi discredente del mi overo Dio. A queste parole *S*ì *ci credo,* cominciò a gridare come un anima disperata, dicendo agl'altri che erano seco: 'eh, quietatevi tutti, che con una parola questa è fatta. [146] (del Monte 81)

Even though we typically conceive of baptism and religious practice as a willing choice, the same standard did not apply to Jews during the 18th century. Anna's mere slip of the tongue after days of interrogation was enough, it seems, for the process to begin.

A striking detail is that immediately following the Abbot's claim that 'è fatta,' Anna triumphantly responds:

> E sentendomi dir queste parole, mi tramortij, e mi gelai da capo a piedi, ma nell'istante Sua Divina Maestà, mi diede in quel punto uno spirito elevato, che cominciai a gridar con voce alta: 'E che credete di avermi convinto, per aver dato una risposta doppo tante interrogazioni, ed avermi obbligata a rispondervi? Credete di allacciarmi, e che Io sia divertita dalla mia Santa Religione? Io sto più forte adesso che prima, e non pensate di soffogarmi con questa falsità, e bugia, perché nessuno mi può cavar dalla bocca quello non sono, né sarò mai per dire, né per fare quel che voi credete, né ho sogezzione delli vostri stravaganti, e sciocche

[145] These names were written in Hebrew in the diary. I have included them in Italian here for ease of reading.

[146] "Arrogantly, they place their hands almost over my eyes, like men possessed. They made an infernal noise, and jarred by the disturbance, I lost control. I did not know what to say. And when they kept demanding, one of them in particular, whether I believed in the God of David, Solomon, Aaron, and Moses, with me not thinking of the 'insidious net' they were casting to ensnare me, the word they were looking for slipped out: Si, yes. It was no help that I kept telling myself to say nothing. But after so many interrogations, I blurted it out. So that they should see that I was not a disbeliever in *my* true God, I said, 'si. Certainly, I believe.' At which, one of the three began yelling desperately, 'quiet you others; with just this one word, è fatta, it is done.'"

> proposizioni, con dirmi è fatta, è fatta. Di questo Io me ne rido, poiché son nata Giudia, e così voglio morire…[147] (del Monte 82)

Her assertion of her Jewish identity, like that of Copia Sulam against her detractor Bonifacio, is quite remarkable; not only is she able to maintain her religious identity, but her devotion and defiance, which allow her to so vehemently protest the attempts to convert her, also represent a subversion of Catholic authority. Viewed more broadly as a symbol for an entire Jewish community, the repeated attempts to convert Anna del Monte can be understood as an attempt to neutralize an identity that was seen as a threat to a homogenous ethnoreligious identity in Rome.

Furthermore, I suggest this passage was meant to kindle the fire of protest which struck fear in the Church. Stow's footnote to his translation of this passage notes that, according to the law, Anna's protest would have meant little in the face of the Abbot's claims against her. She would have likely been converted if this exact dialogue actually took place. Stow wonders if this section may have been added by Tranquillo in hopes of changing the laws. After all, the Jewish community of Rome was unwillingly subject to compulsory sermons, heavy taxes, and regulations which controlled their schedules and professions. Failure to comply meant imprisonment or investigation from the Roman Inquisition. Perhaps, just as important, we also see, in Anna's words, a model for how Jews might openly oppose the oppressive laws and totalizing ethnoreligious identity of Rome. Thus, it seems this excerpt has less to do with wanting to change the laws, but with the Roman Jewish community realizing their ability to protest. The very existence and circulation of this text served as an act of protest by providing a

[147] "I froze and became senseless. Still, I gathered my wits and began to scream: 'What do you think, that you have persuaded me, that I would leave my holy religion? You are not going to get anywhere with lies, saying 'È fatta.' I am more firm (in my Judaism) than before. Don't pretend to yourselves that you are going to choke me with falsity and lies. You are not going to get out of my mouth something I would never dream of saying or being, to get me to do what you believe. I will not subject myself to exaggerated and shocking ideas just because you say: it is done, it is done. Preposterous. I was born a Jew and will die one."

counter-narrative to Catholic records which provided little detail of forced conversions from the perspective of the Jewish victims.[148]

At the end of the twelfth day, her last full day in the Catechumen, in her exhaustion and exasperation, Anna is visited by the ghost of her grandfather in a dream: "Ed allora mi sognai il mio Signor Nonno Sabbatai,[149] ben vestito in Abito nero e Sima'n acceso e cuscito al Cappello, e mi disse le precise parole: 'Hannah, Io camino con altri Morti per te, sta pur costante a Dio col Santo Sema Israel in bocca, che poco più hai da penare'"[150] (del Monte 94). Here, her shared Jewish heritage is invoked, as in previous moments of her diary, but this time, it is invoked as a ghost that is haunting her interactions with her captors. As Stow notes, the term Sima'n (which literally means an 'omen' or 'sign') refers to the yellow marker that Jews were made to wear in Rome. By invoking Anna's past generations and this clear marker of their shared identity, the text is creating an imagined community of Jewish readers. Read in the context of this circulation of Jewish voices beyond the confines of the ghetto to challenge Catholic authority, the ghost of Anna's grandfather "is not simply a dead or missing person, but a social figure…[it] is one form by which something lost, or barely visible, or seemingly not there to our supposedly well-trained eyes, makes itself known or apparent to us" (Gordon 8). In this sense, Anna's grandfather's message that her suffering will end as long as she is devout can also be read as encouragement

[148] At one point, Stow even highlights the unlikelihood of Anna's ability to speak out against Church authority. Just after she accidentally utters the word 'sì' during a barrage of questions and the Abbot indicated this slip represented consent to conversion, Ann shouts at the man that she will never convert. Stow's footnote clarifies that this exchange would likely not have happened since "in real life, very likely there would have been no going back. The question of what constituted force would have been moot" (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 37).

[149] This name, and the following names, were written in Hebrew in the original text.

[150] "I had a vision of my late *Nonno*, his *Siman* brilliant, illuminated, sewn into his hat. He spoke to me: Hannah (Hebrew for Anna), I am walking with other dead, for you. Be constant with God, saying Shema Yisrael…for your suffering will soon end."

for the community as a whole to practice their faith as a form of resistance against unjust laws from a totalizing Catholic society.

Another key aspect of Anna's diary is that references of returning to her faith are often accompanied by references to her parents. For example, on the sixth day, Anna notes: "Ne mi trovavo disposta a convertirmi, ancorché fosse stata là tutti li giorni e tutte le Notti, per me sarebbe stato tempo perduto, che Io non avevo altra credenza, che quello credono i miei Signori Genitori"[151] (del Monte 71) This is compounded by her similar comments on the seventh day when debating biblical interpretation with one of her captors (del Monte 75). When Anna finally does return to the warm embraces of her relatives, one cannot help but wonder if these connections betray not only the importance of family in faith, but also the role that family and faith were meant to play in her life based on her *gender*.

Having come from a conservative household in the ghetto, much of Anna del Monte's life and choices would have been affected or even dictated by her gender. Not only would Anna have been subject to the harsh rules of the ghetto established by papal decree, such as a forced curfew and wearing a yellow veil to denote her religion, her life was also complicated by her social status and religious laws which inhibited her freedom, as well. For example, her diary mentions her inability to ever be in the presence of a man without a chaperone or to even make eye contact with a man through her window (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 49). Being from a religious and affluent family meant maintaining strict rules meant to preserve her and her family's reputation. While Jewish women did have some agency in their literary salons, as with

[151] "They could preach days and nights, but I would never renounce the faith of my mother and father."

Copia Sulam in the 1600s and in Berlin in the 1700s, it does not appear Anna enjoyed that same freedom.[152]

Furthermore, though some strides for women were being made in the 18th century (like the publishing of scientific ideas 'for women' and that literary salons had become chic), women were still very much treated as second-class citizens.[153] Few women were admitted entrance into Italian universities and most were excluded from professional fields. With respect to crimes facing women, acts of rape were common and, though many cases appeared to have gone to the lay courts, little is known about prosecution for the crimes suggesting that these crimes often received inadequate social attention.[154] This context is important for understanding how Anna's female identity might have been used, in this text, as a tool to further highlight the plight of Jews and to explain their subjugation to non-Jewish communities. In particular, it is important to notice the linguistic innuendos that allude to rape in relation to coerced decisions.

From the very beginning of the diary, attention is called to Anna's gender and class. Upon being taken from her home, she is shocked that she was not even allowed to change her clothing. Since she had been wearing an apron, she indicated that she felt foolish leaving the house dressed in that manner and expected to be treated differently even under such circumstances (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 20). This expectation likely came from her family's status within the ghetto; her uncle was one of the *Fattori*, or elected leaders, who carried sway

[152] The text does not make it clear whether she was required to follow such rules specifically because of her gender or because of her religion; For further reading, see Debra Hertz's *The Literary Salon in Berlin, 1780-1806*; and Bilski and Braun's *Jewish Women and Their Salons*.
[153] For further reading on women in the 18th century, see Findlen, Roworth, and Sama's *Italy's Eighteenth Century: Gender and Culture in the Age of the Grand Tour*. The text provides a thorough and complex account of women's lives in Europe and specifically Rome throughout the 18th century.
[154] For further reading, see Monica Biagi's *La donna in tribunale: storie di stupro a Livorno tra '600 e '700*; see also Lucia Fischer's "Il controllo della sessualità nella Livorno Ebraica tra sei e settecento" in *Donne nella storia degli ebrei d'Italia*.

within the community.[155] The mention of her apron and wardrobe suggests an association with her domestic role, even given her status.

On one occasion, when speaking with the Vice Regent (Cardinal de Rossi) who was trying to convert her, the man inquired about her sexual activity. He suggested that she must have had relations with a man in the ghetto. It is likely that this question refers to her alleged marriage to the converso Sabato Coen, the man who, according to Stow, ""motivated by his hatred for Anna and Tranquillo's father, converted and… 'presented Anna as Sua Sposa' his wife" (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 17). Of course, Anna was *not* Sabato's spouse, but canon law at the time required that if one member of a family converted to Catholicism, the spouse would be forced to convert as well.[156] Anna responds to this accusation, noting Jewish customs of protecting women's safety: "…in Casa nostra non vi è stata mai prattica di giovani, né può vantarsi alcuno di avermi parlato…la nostra usanza è differente dall'uso di Lor Signori, stante che le nostre Zitelle non escono mai, se non sono prima sposate, che da ciò puote Vostra Illustrissima comprendere, se Io possa aver avuto mai prattica con nessuno"[157] (del Monte 57). In this passage, readers see that she needs to be hyper vigilant to defend her 'virtue' as a woman

[155] The Fattori were lay leaders of the Jewish community in Rome. For further reading on their role in the Jewish community and interaction with the larger Roman civil government, see: Kenneth Stow's "Ethnic Amalgamation Like it or Not" in *Jewish Life in Early Modern Rome*; and Singer and Adler's "Rome" in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*.

[156] M. Caffiero notes that Pope Benedict's *Apostolici Ministerii munus* often forced women to convert on the basis of their marriages, even if the marriage was not yet official. She writes "…since both Jews and Christians respected the distinction between engagement and marriage…both the engaged man and the husband had the right and the authority to 'offer their spouse' or their spouse-to-be in faith, and the Church had the right to accept the 'offering' and to confine the woman in the House of Catechumens for forty days for the purpose of inducing her to convert" (Caffiero 63). Such was the case for Anna del Monte. The only problem: she was never married or promised to be married to Sabato Coen. The practice of Jewish who converted simply to offer the woman he loved who refused his proposal and force her into conversion and a Christian marriage with him is detailed in Caffiero's chapter "The Birth of a New Jurisprudence" from *Forced Baptisms*.

[157] "We do not have young men in the house, and no one can claim to have conversed with me…Here, we are different from you [Christians]. Our young women never leave the house [unaccompanied] before they are married. It should be clear to Your Illustriousness that I never had anything to do with anyone."

and fend off baseless accusations. If read more broadly, Anna's disadvantaged position within this text (as a woman held captive by men) can be seen to represent, more generally, the position of the Jewish community in Rome at the time, unable to speak in its own defense against a more powerful ethnoreligious identity.

In her study *Forced Baptisms,* Marina Caffiero documents numerous cases in this period in which spouses were forced to convert and children were offered for baptism by their grandparents against the parents' wishes. She also documents cases of women who were accused of having relationships in the ghetto with conversos simply because the men wanted to marry them upon their forced conversion. The Inquisition, according to Caffiero, "had an efficacious police force at its disposition, as well as judiciary power for 'hunting Jews,' which went into operation especially when converts relapsed into Judaism or when Jews 'offered' to the Catholic religion attempted to evade baptism for themselves and their children" (Caffiero 14). Given that a false accusation could be the metric for one's confinement in the House of Catechumens, it would only seem natural that Roman Jews had to be hypervigilant in the assertion of their faith and status, just as Anna del Monte was about her sexuality.

Another very strong example which suggests Anna's gender is being used as a tool to speak for the entire Jewish community comes in her word choice. In describing her experience in the House of Catechumens, Anna expresses her feeling of sexual vulnerability, praying to be saved from "quell'orso rapace, e da quel fiero mostro infernale, che procurava di rubbarmi l'anima a forza"[158] (del Monte 66). The Italian term 'rubbare,' whose primary meaning is 'to rob,' is related to 'rapire' – 'to abduct' or 'carry off." On another occasion, Anna prays to God for help in maintaining the integrity of her soul, using the term 'rapire:' "…principiaj a

[158] "…[a] rapacious, infernal, monstrous bear, who was trying to 'rubbarmi la Anima' to steal my soul and rob me of my essence by force."

raccommandarmi ad esso con preghiere, acciò si compiacesse di assistermi, e cavarmi dale mani di quei Leoni, che non mangiavano la mia Carne, ma procuravano rapirmi l'Anima"[159] (del Monte 71). Stow's translation 'to rob my soul' does not do justice to the obvious sexual connotation of 'rapire' in this context and its overtones of violence, deceit, and seduction.[160] Just as Anna, as noted by Stow, was likely self-conscious in front of her male captors, especially when baptismal water would "likely have made her clothing cling to her figure" (Stow *Anna and Tranquillo* 34), it is arguable that here the diary presents an innuendo of rape as a *metaphor* for explaining the state of the Jewish community, giving testimony of the violent appropriation of Jewish customs and lives.

This dynamic of sexual violence can also be seen when, on the eleventh day, Anna, once again, refuses to convert. When two priests enter her room, Anna claims "non voltarà mai alcun Uomo la mia mente, nè può levare il mio Libero Arbitrio"[161] (del Monte 88). Invoking the idea that no man will change her suggests a rebuke of her captors' gendered language and sexual innuendo. Her use of the term 'Libero Arbitrio,' or free will, emphasizes her humanity and right to claim this innate quality common to all people. This passage is significant because of Anna's insistence in claiming the same rights to 'free will' as would every Catholic – male or female.

No matter who is responsible for these last words – Anna or Tranquillo – it is clear that the daughter of a prominent family in the ghetto is articulating and rejecting, via Anna's words, her double disadvantage in 18th century society, as a woman and as a Jew. Since it is known that Tranquillo shared the text after his sister's death with the intention of raising awareness of the

[159] "…by throwing myself into prayer, asking Him to help me and free me from the hands of those Lions, who were plotting not to devour my flesh, but to steal (rapirmi; lit., rob) my soul."
[160] Zingarelli cites, among other texts, a 1292 usage (Giamboni, Vizi e virtù): "'condurre con sé qualcuno con la violenza, l'inganno e la seduzione' (to take someone with violence, deceit, and seduction.)"
[161] "no man will change my mind, nor will he repress my Free Will."

conditions of Roman Jews, we can imagine that the detailed narrative of an upper-class woman kept locked in a room with mostly male visitors who groped her face, threw water on her, and made her clothing cling to her body would have likely startled many readers. A second reason for evoking this gender inequality is that it explains the situation of Roman Jews in a way that is relatable to a wider audience. Her rebuke of her gendered treatment underscores her humanity and suggests that *all* Jewish people could be treated in this same way as second-class citizens – even the Jewish men held in confinement could be treated like women.

We do not have to know all the details surrounding the construction of this diary to appreciate the tensions between religious ideologies it articulates. The language of fear which permeates this text paints a vivid picture of Catholic anxieties surrounding Jewish difference. When the practice of forced conversions (or attempted ones like Anna's) began to decline by the beginning of the 19th century, it would seem that such anxieties would have begun to dissipate, as well. But in 1858, the same fear surrounding Jewish identity was sparked again when Edgardo Mortara was kidnapped from his family under the claim that he had been baptized. Edgardo did not leave a diary; his tale is told through the letters and petitions written by the family for his return and international outrage found in the press. I do not intend to reinterpret these sources, as they are exquisitely handled in David Kertzer's *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara*. Still, it is important to bring this case into the narrative I have been constructing here.

In his analysis, Kertzer provides ample historical detail of the Jewish ghetto of Bologna, papal policy during the time, and an analysis of testimonies – among other documents – involving the boy's kidnapping and forced conversion. His conclusion is that this act of kidnapping a child for the purposes of conversion was rare for the time period, citing only six documented cases in the entire 19th century. While his analysis of this case is exhaustive, it does

not investigate the precedence for the kidnapping of Mortara in the long history of forced conversions of the 18th century. Given that these kidnappings and forced conversions were so commonplace during the 18th century, the fact that the number of cases declined so drastically toward the turn of the 19th century may signal that the Church had largely lost ideological control of its territories.

By the time of Mortara's kidnapping, forced conversions were generally frowned upon and public support for the House of Catechumens had dwindled. With the development of nationalist thinking, the Church was slowly losing its power, and Jewish communities would continue to be the focus of contrasting positions. Even with the participation of many Jewish communities in the nationalist cause, tensions between religious exclusion and tolerance still placed Jews in the balance.

SECTION III:
ETHNORELIGIOUS AND PLURALIST NATIONALIST IDEALS DISGUISED AS INTOLERANCE

When Anna's diary was published in 1793, giving readers in various regions new exposure to experiences of terror that Jews under papal laws could experience in the House of Catechumens, the issue of Jewish confinement was already an issue debated in proto-nationalist writing. In 1782, for example, a Mantuan philosopher of political economy, Giovanni Battista Gherardo d'Arco (1739-1791), published *Della influenza del ghetto nello stato*, a work that was hostile to the influence of Jews as a segregated culture in what D'Arco considered to be an otherwise homogeneous Catholic state.[162] Two years later, a physician, Biblical scholar, and philosopher (also Mantuan, educated in Pavia), Benedetto Frizzi (Ben Zion Raphael Ha-Cohen, 1757-1844), responded to D'Arco, in *Difesa contro gli attacchi fatti alla nazione ebrei* (1784), with a counternarrative of religious pluralism that advocated for inclusion and integration of Jewish communities.[163] Read together, these texts represent a particular articulation of the struggle between a pluralist perspective in favor of tolerance and a totalizing, ethnoreligious (Catholic) worldview that informed later Risorgimento thinking.

D'Arco's *Della influenza del ghetto nello stato* is divided into chapters and subsections as if his work constituted a scientific analysis. Each section details the supposed effects that Jews and the ghettos have on different types of economies, ranging from agricultural to mercantile.

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[162] Cf. *Biographical Dictionary, Volume 3*, by Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (Great Britain); and "Chapter 7" from *The Promise and Peril of Credit: What a Forgotten Legend about Jews and Finance Tells Us about the Making of European Commercial Society*, by Francesca Trivellato.

[163] Frizzi was a major figure of the Italian Haskalah (Jewish enlightenment). Modeled after the structure of a text by Simone Luzzatto, Copia Sulam's rabbi and close personal friend, Frizzi's *Difesa* (along with other texts like Isacco Levi's *Il difensore degli ebrei* published in London in 1784) demonstrate the spread of Jewish resistance to a totalizing ethnoreligious identity beyond the walls of the ghettos of Venice and Rome. Cf. Gadi Voghera's *Il Prezzo Dell'eguaglianza: Il Dibattito Sull'emancipazione Degli Ebrei in Italia 781-1848).*

His discussion of economic systems, however, very quickly turns to fearmongering about Jewish ghettos and their negative effects on surrounding economies. Specifically, in the section entitled "Influenza che ha il Ghetto mercè la rivendita delle opere dell'arti dal medesimo acquistate presso gli Artigiani nazionali," D'Arco writes of the practices by which "wealthy Jews" ("Ebrei agiati," 39) made profits by reselling the products of their own "national" (read "Jewish") artisans and how these practices hurt the larger economy. In the case of tin utensils, for example, D'Arco writes how a "curious patriot" ("curioso patriota," 41) discovered that "il vantaggio così del fabbricatore come dell'Ebreo venditore derivava dall'illegale qualità del metallo e dall'abuso del pubblico bollo, dal quale sotto l'ombra delle leggi rimanevano i compratori frodati"[164] (D'Arco 41).

This passage stokes fears that all Jewish vendors will trick their buyers and that they are not to be trusted. It is also important to note that D'Arco, here, credits a 'curioso patriota' for discovering the details of the fraud.[165] He subsequently references the 'inhabitants of the countryside' ('gli abitatori della Campagna' 42)[166] as the 'innocent victims of such a monopoly' ('le vittime innocent di un tal monopolio' 42), because of their 'custom of spending most of their dowries on tin utensils' ('è costume nell'atto di accasarsi il convertire gran parte della picciola dote nell'acquisto di utensili di stagno' 42). D'Arco's reference to this group of inhabitants of the countryside as 'the most valuable part of the state' ('la porzione più preziosa dello Stato' 420)

[164] "the profit of both the producer and the Jewish vendor derived from the unlawful quality of the metal and the abuse of the public seal of approval by which, under the protection of the laws, the customers were defrauded."
[165] As we shall see in an analysis of Carli's *La patria degli Italiani* in chapter 3, the term 'patria' becomes associated with the soil of Italy. Carli's text was printed nearly twenty years before D'Arco's treatise.
[166] I read this seemingly innocuous reference to those who live in the countryside as an appeal to foster an ethnoreligious identity. When read alongside the author's previous references to the 'precious…Countryside' and the 'curious patriot,' it becomes clear that the author is describing not merely the importance of land, but land ownership in forging an identity.

starts to build a future relationship between land and national identity. Though, as inhabitants of ghettos, Jews were separated from this 'more valuable' group, they were nonetheless charged with disrupting the interest and peace of this larger social order.

Later in the text, D'Arco develops this idea of how the separateness of Jews has negative consequences for the larger polity, introducing the term 'patria' as an entity Jews are, by definition, unable to love:

> Siccome l'amor della patria deriva alli cittadini dal senso de' vantaggi ch'essi traggono dalla medesima, non altrimenti gli Ebrei spogli di questi vantaggi cercano trarne dal loro proprio esclusivo collegamento; onde all'amor della patria sostituito in essi l'amor e lo spirito del partito e del complotto, vengono condotti da questo spirito in una diretta opposizione di oggetti di massime e di azioni al bene dello Stato; giacché tanto stretti da vincolo di amicizia, di fede, d'interesse sono tra' membri del loro corpo, quanto disgiunti fino all'odio da tutti quelli che non formano parte del corpo medesimo.[167] (D'Arco 72)

D'Arco's use of the term 'patria' here evokes a sense of proto-national pride in which a connection to country determines one's interests and ideology. Since 'patria' does not belong to Jews, confined as they are to the ghettos, D'Arco suggests they cannot share this love of country. Moreover, because they are confined to ghettos, Jews are, by necessity, more connected to each other than to the larger polity from which they are excluded. To suggest, however, that this exclusion causes Jews to develop 'a spirit of division and plotting,' can only be understood as anti-Semitic logic. D'Arco's text articulates an anti-Semitic vicious circle that confines Jews first in ghettos and then in a rhetoric of consequent anti-patriotism. No longer are Jews only visually marked as Other through their forced wearing of red or yellow clothing, or through their

[167] "Since love of country derives from the citizens' sense of the advantages which they draw from each it [la patria], Jews who are deprived of these advantages can only seek to derive them from their own exclusive connection; such that, with a love and spirit of division and plotting replacing their love of country, they are driven to directly oppose the good of the state with their purpose, principles, and actions, in a direct opposition to objects of maxims and actions for the good of the state, because they are, as members of their group, just as tightly joined by their bond of friendship, of faith, of interest, as they are disjoined to the point of hatred from all those who do not form part of their same group."

confinement in physical spaces on the margins of society; now, in D'Arco's text, Jews are also ideological marked as people who will never be members of the 'patria.'

Throughout the entire text, D'Arco constructs Jewish identity as a feared Other which can never be truly assimilated (or even fully integrated) as citizens into a 'patria' that is defined in terms of a 'good' – 'il bene dello Stato' – to which, according to D'Arco, Jews are opposed. His language also suggests a move toward a more nationalist mode of thought in the 18th century in which citizenship is based on having generational claims to the land. In associating Jews with economic fears (the way Jews were treated during the financial crisis in 16th and 17th century Venice) and questioning their 'private' and secretive lifestyles, he not only draws suspicion to this segregated group, but builds a case for dissociating Jews, deprived of generational claims to land due to their relegation in the ghettos, from the future nation.

In the course of his argument, D'Arco also stirs up a fear of Jews related to currency, claiming that Jewish money-changers do not follow the law, thereby negatively affecting the economy:

> La costante esperienza persuade, che … nella trasgressione ed elisione delle [leggi monetarie] possano gli Ebrei cambiatori delle valute averne stabilito un nuovo genere di mercimonio; tal' è la conseguenza necessaria costante ed universale della correzione degli effetti in mezzo all'esistenza continuata della cagione, o non conosciuta o non volute conoscere.[168] (D'Arco 46)

Implying here that even existing laws were unable to prevent Jews from flagrantly abusing the economic system, D'Arco insinuates that people should fear Jewish moneylenders and currency exchangers because of their capacity to defraud and destabilize the currency. Published in Venice, nearly a century after the grave economic crisis of the 17th century that also led to a

[168] "Consistent experience suggests that … in violating and annulling the monetary laws, Jewish money-changers are able to establish a new kind of illicit trade; such is the necessary, constant, and universal consequence of modifying promissory notes for a continuous unknown reason, or for a reason one doesn't want to know."

wave in anti-Semitism, this text would no doubt resonate with many readers, who were all too familiar with the stereotype of the Jewish money-handler and the fear that its image invoked (Gunzberg 96).

D'Arco's text abounds in references to the private and secretive nature of Jewish communities (D'Arco 50);[169] indeed, they constituted their own 'Jewish nation' ('Ebrea nazione') whose particular laws and customs are opposed to those of 'the State in which it exists' ('lo Stato nel quale esiste' D'Arco 51). According to D'Arco, this opposition had historical roots: from the time of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, "…dagli Ebrei si preferisce la ribellione all'obbedienza, la guerra alla pace, la penuria all'abbondanza..."[170] (D'Arco 68); and their experience of being scattered across different nations filled them with "odio contro di tutti quelli ne' quali credono poter ravvisare gli autori della lor dispersione,"[171] (D'Arco 70). D'Arco's view was that Jews inherently despised all their Christian neighbors, failing to distinguish between those who expelled them and those who promoted tolerance. For this reason, he viewed tolerance of Jews as a dangerous step toward a society's ruin.

To sustain his argument that tolerance of Jews is detrimental to the larger polity, D'Arco points, once again, to Christian tolerance of their astute management of "piccioli segreti ma sempre lucrosi negozi … che è tutto propria di chi non sente freno d'onore né di Religione al suo interesse; di chi si sente oppresso, e crede giusto e conveniente qualunque mezzo al proprio risorgimento..."[172] (D'Arco 75-76). These 'secret businesses' administered by any means necessary and tolerated by Christian tolerance, D'Arco suggests, not only threaten the morals

[169] This is another trope which, as we shall see, will return significantly in literature of the 19th century.
[170] "…Jews prefer rebellion to obedience, war to peace, scarcity to abundance…"
[171] "hate against all those they believed to be the authors of their dispersion."
[172] "secret but always profitable businesses… characteristic of those who do not feel restrained by honor or religion; of those who feel oppressed and believe that any means that will help them flourish again is fair and fitting."

and religion of Catholics; they also 'alienate Jews from the interests of the State' ('l'allontanano dagli interessi dello Stato' 76). According to D'Arco, the very 'arrangements to admit and tolerate' Jews ('i patti di ammissione e tolleranza loro' 76) have been responsible for 'fomenting the alienation and increasing the detachment established by their Religion' ('fomentar maggiormente si viene quell'alienazione, e ad accrescere quel distacco, che stabilito trovasi dalla lor Religione' 76). D'Arco's emphasis on this supposed alienation and detachment implies that Jews do not care about the wellbeing of the State. Read in relation to his focus on the 'peculiar' and 'private' nature of the Jewish community and their alleged manipulation of currency laws, D'Arco creates a suspicion that Jews may even come to conspire against their Catholic neighbors. For D'Arco, both Jewish conditions in the ghetto and society's ills, are brought about by the 'patti di ammissione e tolleranza' which have only exacerbated the problem Jews present to the larger polity.

Strangely, D'Arco's overt fearmongering around Jewish identity and the social ills caused by the segregation of Jews persuades him that the solution to these problems is to implement even harsher sanctions to further control and segregate the community. In fact, he favors revoking what few privileges – like conducting their own businesses – that the ghettos retained.

> ...de' patti e delle condizioni di tolleranza e servitù, con cui ammessi vennero gli Ebrei, veggonsi questi in non poche provincie godere di alquanti privilegj e prerogative.... ma che argomento esser dee certamente di grave meditazione per chiunque riguardando agli effetti e conseguenze loro necessarie abbia ne' medesimi riconosciuto altrettanti principj fomentatori della divisione e distacco del Ghetto dallo Stato nel quale esiste.[173] (D'Arco 76-77)

[173] ".. of the pacts and the conditions of tolerance and servitude, with which the Jews came, one sees [Jews] in many provinces enjoy quite a lot of privileges and prerogatives…that should certainly be a topic of serious meditation for anyone who, considering the necessary effects and consequences, has recognized, in these same effects, just as many elements that foment division and detachment of the Ghetto from the State in which it exists."

Though he never mentions expulsion of Jews from the ghettos or the State, D'Arco's solution is to more severely regulate their lives. In this passage, confinement to the ghettos is no longer enough to contain the fear of Jewish identity. In order to diminish the threat of Jewish activities, D'Arco eventually proposes that state laws should supersede Jewish religious law in any cases in which one party is Jewish and the other is Catholic, regardless of the nature of a dispute or charge or where the incident occurred (80). He further recommends that Jewish schools in the ghetto should be highly regulated and that their curriculum should conform to that of other schools, even in the area of religious education (D'Arco 104).

It did not take long for D'Arco's text to receive notoriety outside of Venice. Specifically, because he praised Empress Maria Theresa for expelling the Jews of Prague, his text was well-regarded by the Hapsburgs (D'Arco 3, 95, 99, 142). Her successor, Joseph II, even appointed D'Arco governor of Mantua (Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge 304). This text, however, also drew one significant detractor. Ben Zion Raphael Ha-Cohen, whose Italianized name was Benedetto Frizzi, was a physician and intellectual in Mantua who wrote frequently about the nature of Jews and the role of Judaism in society. He particularly took note of D'Arco's text and his libel of Jewish communities. Upset with the anti-Semitism and vague generalities within the work, Frizzi's response refuted D'Arco's claims on the basis of his flawed logic and even went so far as to explain, in significant detail, the positive roles Jews and their communities played in their larger Christian societies (Voghera 44-45). I suggest that his response, *La Difesa contro gli attacchi fatti alla Nazione Ebrea nel libro intitolato della influenza del ghetto nello stato*, represents one of the earliest forms of pluralist nationalism inasmuch as it urges for an inclusive view of an emerging Italian nation.

Frizzi's argument is, similar to D'Arco's, divided into numerous chapters and articles, with an introductory section that provides general information about Jewish theology and morality and the Talmudic and Rabbinic laws. These details, notably absent from D'Arco's text, establish Frizzi as qualified to provide an authoritative foundation for his argument and to point to the baselessness of D'Arco's claims. Frizzi's text not only refutes the idea that Jews are inherently different from their Catholic neighbors (a difference that D'Arco had called 'insociabilità'), but he also details the numerous ways in which Jews contribute to economies and benefit the state.

One of the most significant aspects of Frizzi's text, however, is his nationalistic emphasis. While D'Arco uses the term 'patria' vaguely and only in relation to the 'love' Jews are unable to feel, Frizzi is much more explicit about the term when refuting anti-Semitic claims (D'Arco 72). In particular, his use of various terms like 'patria,' 'paese,' and 'Italia' are, in some cases, an indictment of intolerance that will become important later in explicit pluralist national discourse. For example, early on in his text, Frizzi associates D'Arco's intolerance with his will to deprive people of their 'patria,' writing:

> Fanatici costoro son dunque per vanità, per superbia. Non meno lo sono, sebben di opposto carattere gli intolleranti, a conoscere, e combattere i quali è principalmente volto il mio ragionamento. Costoro son quelli, che non sanno tollerare gli eterodossi; e che si fanno un dovere di Religione nel perseguitargli, e ridurgli all'estremo punto, o di abbracciare la fede da loro creduta unica e vera, o di spatriare, e di non aver un sicuro asilo nel mondo, o finir tal volta di vivere. Per ben conoscere l'erroneità di tale sistema basta ravvisarlo prodotto da un'incompatibile superbia. Superbia incompatibile in primo luogo, se filosofar vogliamo sopra l'uomo in se stesso.[174] (Frizzi 11)

[174] "Fanatics, therefore, become so by vanity, by pride. Intolerant people, even though they have a different character, are the same, and my argument focuses principally on knowing and contending with the intolerant. These are people who cannot tolerate the heterodox; and who make it their religious duty to persecute them, and to drive them to the extreme point of either embracing the only faith believed by them to be true, or of leaving the country (expatriating) and not having a safe asylum in the world, or even of ending their lives. In order to fully understand the erroneous nature of such a way of thinking, it is

In discussing fanatics and those who are intolerant of others in the same passage, Frizzi depicts D'Arco as both. In so doing, he makes it clear that his text is not just an ad hominem response to D'Arco and his text; it is also a response to the general human and social qualities of intolerance and an intolerance of religious pluralism. His use of the term 'spatriare' in this context specifically suggests that humans should never be subject to intolerance or prejudice that would force them to leave their homes. Indeed, protonationalist thinkers in this period, like Frizzi, were beginning to imagine a modern Italy or 'patria' as a specific home and identity that would supersede regional cultures.[175]

It is true that Frizzi is not always imagining this future nation when he uses the term 'patria.' When citing D'Arco's use of the term 'patria,' for example, Frizzi makes it clear that he is using the term in a more general sense that connotes a sense of belonging for all of its citizens, even when some citizens have more privileges than others:

> Qual assurdo maggiore in fatti di quello, con cui si sostituisce dall'Autore negli Ebrei all'amor della patria, e dello ſtato quai cittadini lo spirito di partito, e d'insociabilità pel solo motivo della loro men privilegiata ammessione? Se pur vero fosse (che non lo è, come già provammo)... deriveranne… che l'Ebreo stesso nemico divenga del bene generale dello stato? No certamente.[176] (Frizzi 75-76)

enough to recognize it as produced by unforgivable arrogance. Unforgivable arrogance first, if we want to philosophize of man in himself."

[175] As we shall see, in Chapter 3, the term 'patria' began to be important in a modern nationalist self with the publication of *La Patria degli Italiani* by Gian Rinaldo Carli in *Il Caffe* in 1765. Beales and Biagini note that the term patria in the Settecento was only a vague referent and that even "in the 1790s – the existence of an 'Italian nation' was already regarded as axiomatic, but its definition was rather vague" (Beales and Biagini 70). While D'Arco's reference to 'patria' was still vague, this was not the case with Frizzi's text.

[176] "What could be more absurd than the way in which the Author replaces, in Jewish citizens, love of country and state with the spirit of division and insociability only on the grounds of their admission without privileges? Even if it were true (but it is not, as we already proved) ... how could it derive from there that the Jew would become an enemy of the general good of the state? Certainly not."

It is true that Frizzi sometimes uses the terms 'patria' and 'paese' to refer to D'Arco's home region of Mantua; to countries like Poland and Germany (Frizzi 109, 148); and to reference specific *regions* within the peninsula, rather than the peninsula as a whole (108). While these cases might appear to support claims by Beales and Biagini that the 'Italian nation' was still a vague ideological construct, Frizzi also provides readers with an unequivocal term to encapsulate the construct of the future nation: 'Italia.'

It is interesting that one of the first appearances of the term 'Italia' is in relation to the role of Jewish inhabitants and a long shared history pertaining to the entire peninsula: "Sarei troppo prolisso se citar volessi i privilegi, che gli Ebrei in Italia godettero fino dal tempo dell'irruzione de' Vandali … (TESORO del regno d' Italia sotto TEODORICO), sebbene crudeli, sebbene inumani…"[177] (Frizzi 73). Frizzi here is alluding to the fact that many Jews supported Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, because his law allowed for more religious freedom and Theodoric himself consulted with Jewish advisors (Bachrach 33).[178] In citing these invasions, Frizzi here may be starting to shape a kind of pluralist history shared by diverse groups, in order to give definition to the future 'Italia.'

Later in the text, Frizzi mentions the contributions of Jewish artisans, musicians, and artists in specific cities and regions of 'Italia' – from Venezia, Verona, Mantova, Reggio, Roma, Toscana, Veneto (Frizzi 82). He continues to list the contributions of Jewish textile manufacturers, 'nell'Italia,' in Padova, Verona, Siena, Firenze, Fano, Faenza, Forli, Pesaro, and Ancona (Frizzi 116). When viewing these cities on a map, we see that they span the entire

[177] "I would be too long-winded if I cited the privileges that the Jews in Italy enjoyed from the time of the invasion of the Vandals raid (TREASURE of the Kingdom of Italy under THEODORIC), though they were cruel and inhumane…"
[178] For more information on the history of Jewish sympathies to the Vandals and their rights under Theodosian law, see Bernard Bachrach's *Early Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe*.

peninsula north of the Kingdom of Sicily. Thus, while D'Arco only uses the term 'Italia' once (and his use of 'patria' was quite vague); Frizzi's construct of an imagined united 'Italia' referred specifically to all of the regions not governed by the Kingdom of Sicily

Frizzi's text is also critical to understanding the emerging nationalist movement of the coming decades, because it represents a counternarrative to a proto-nationalist vision based on a Catholic ethnoreligious identity. Just as Copia Sulam wrote back against Bonifacio and Asher Meshullam spoke out against the Venetian government in Venice, again Frizzi's acts of defiance shape those tensions between pluralist and ethnoreligious ideas that will come to define the nation. Frizzi's defiance is apparent from the outset of his text when he writes of his first encounter with D'Arco's text: "Al pervenire nelle mie mani il libro col titolo *Della Influenza del Ghetto degli Ebrei nello Stato*…lo trovai affatto sconnesso nelle sue idee, e neppure costante nella principale sua mira. Parlasi sempre dell'Ebreo in generale, anzi che dello speciale abitatore del Ghetto"[179] (Frizzi 3). Frizzi undermines the foundation of D'Arco's text by pointing to the meaningless generalities[180] and harmful stereotypes through which D'Arco aimed to 'study' relations between the Jewish ghetto and the state.

One of Frizzi's largest criticisms in his *Difesa* attacks D'Arco's use of fear. As we have seen, when D'Arco claims that Jewish communities are inherently different from their Christian neighbors, he uses the term 'insociabilità' to connote the inability of Jews to contribute to the larger society (76-77). Frizzi, in response, takes a scholarly approach, drawing attention to D'Arco's ignorance. First, he points out that, contrary to D'Arco's claim, written texts of the

[179] "As soon as the book, titled *On the Influence of the Jewish Ghetto in the State*, reached my hands …I found it completely disjointed in its ideas, and not even constant in its principal aim. It always discusses the Jew in general, rather than the particular inhabitant of the Ghetto."
[180] At one point, D'Arco even references Jewish communities (like those in Poland) in which no ghetto even existed (D'Arco 43-44).

Jewish tradition, in fact, model sociability; and then, being clear about what he does not know, expresses a willingness to research the oral tradition for any evidence to support D'Arco's claim:

> Accertati noi dunque, che dalla teologia e morale degli Ebrei vano sia il temere una derivazione d'alienazione, e separazione delle altre nazioni, perchè anzi da essa discendono principi non ripugnanti al collegamento, ed alla società; vediamo ora se nella orale legge, o siasi tradizionale della Misnà, e del Talmud dedurre si possa il rimproverato spirito d'insociabilità. [181] (47)

In this context, Frizzi's choice of the term 'temere,' in reference to D'Arco's lack of evidence for his erroneous claims, clearly also refers to D'Arco's fear of Jewish difference, a fear that he projects on Jewish communities, when he suggests that Jews feared interacting with, their Christian neighbors. Much in the way that Bonifacio had misunderstood Jewish beliefs in writing to Copia Sulam, D'Arco also incorrectly believed that this trepidation stemmed from the core tenets of Judaism. Since Jewish writings do not support a theory of inherent insociability, Frizzi is able to discredit D'Arco's preconceived notion that mischaracterizes Jewish identity. Frizzi further emphasizes the falsehood of D'Arco's claims by suggesting that he lacks knowledge and understanding of both Jewish culture and human feelings:

> …si vuole dal suddetto autore che il distacco morale del Ghetto derivi dalle leggi o condizioni, colle quali sono stati gli Ebrei generalmente dalle nazioni ammessi ad abitare tra loro... Per fare però tutto ad un tratto conoscere l'erroneità di tale ragionamento, dico primieramente, che supposta ancora l'asprezza del modo, con che furono accolti gli Ebrei allorchè trovarono asilo nei diversi stati, derivar non dovevane la supposta divisione dei cuori, e sconnessione di tendenza. Ciò io lo asserisco, sì riflettendo allo spirito della Religione Ebrea in particolare, sì alla costituzione morale dei sentimenti umani in generale.[182] (Frizzi 65-66)

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[181] "As we have already established that it is futile to expect, from Jewish theology and morals, a source of estrangement and separation from other nations, because, on the contrary, these Jewish teachings hand down principles that are not repugnant to relationship and society; let's now see if one can find, in the oral laws, or in the tradition of the Mishnah, and the Talmud, this regrettable spirit of insociability."

[182] "… our author wants to understand that the moral detachment of the ghetto derives from the laws or conditions under which the Jews were generally allowed by nations to live with each other… In order to disclose immediately the erroneousness of this reasoning, I say in the first place: even supposing that the harshness of the way in which the Jews were welcomed when they found asylum in different states, was meant to cause the alleged division of hearts and the tendency of disconnection, what I affirm comes from

Here, in his comment on D'Arco's discussion of the Jewish diaspora, Frizzi characterizes D'Arco as a writer who is 'biased' against the Jewish community ('mal disposto contro la nazione' 66) and 'argues by conjecture' ('argomenta per congettura' 65). Even if Jews were received harshly in different states, this would not inherently mean that social divisions were caused by their customs or religious beliefs. Instead, by connecting 'the spirit of the Jewish religion' to 'the moral constitution of human feelings in general,' Frizzi suggests that since Jews and their Christian neighbors shared their sense of humanity, it was only the anti-Semitism of people like D'Arco that was causing problems.

Frizzi's text as a whole is directed against intolerance, presenting a very clear counter-narrative that advocates for a way of thinking in which social identity does not rely on religious affiliation. While earlier advocacy for tolerance and pluralism (articulated by writers like Sanuto, Copia Sulam, and Anna del Monte) focused on social relations in more local contexts, Frizzi's text appealed to ideas of a common humanity that would support the building of a nation. Reading Frizzi and D'Arco together, however, we see that Frizzi's ideas represented only one 'thread' of proto-nationalist thinking, with the other 'thread' represented by a perspective that placed the Catholic religion at the core of its ethnoreligious nationalist imagination. As we shall see in Chapter 3, these competing ideologies continue to inform ideas of 'Italia,' transforming from negotiations of religious difference into competing forms of *nationalist* discourse.

reflecting on the spirit of the Jewish religion, in particular, and on the moral constitution of human feelings, in general."

CHAPTER 3:

FRACTURED FUTURES IN THE RISORGIMENTO WRITINGS

SECTION I: CONTEXTUALIZING THE RISORGIMENTO

The development of Risorgimento thinking can, in part, be understood in terms of the changing geopolitics of Italy's regions and the political vicissitudes of occupying powers; France dissolved the Republic of Venice, Austria controlled the Duchy of Milan, and Naples reacted against the Austrian empire. Though this context is important for understanding how thinking of citizenship and belonging changed and evolved, equally important is the role that literature played in crafting an emerging Italian national identity. In fiction, drama, and essays, Risorgimento writers influenced the thinking of their readers with different versions of an imagined Italian national identity. In this chapter, my goal is to analyze the ways in which particular writers wove the 'threads' of religious tensions in their ideas of the nation. While Fogazzaro's *Daniele Cortis* (1885) and Balbo's novella *L'Ebrea* (1857) present an ethnoreligious idea of the nation, Carli's *"*Della Patria degli Italiani*"* (1765), Alfieri's *Saul* (1782), and Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (1799) articulate a more pluralist nationalist sentiment. Reading these texts together allow us to see that these important 'threads' of religious tensions were not new to Risorgimento thinking, but incorporate elements of a much longer history of relations between Catholics and Jews.

Scholars like Paul Ginsborg and Roberto Romani make compelling arguments that there was more than one type of nationalism which emerged (if only partially) during the 19th century. I agree with this conclusion. For example, Ginsborg suggests that the publication of Gioberti's *Primato* as a chief example of the 'liberal Catholic' movement which carried "clear nationalist

and political overtones" (Ginsborg 49). Romani's argument is more nuanced in that he claims that the intermingling of Catholicism in the politics of an emerging Italian nation (such that the Italian nation would be created under the sole power of the Pope) was only prevalent for a brief period of time under Pope Pius the IX.

While I agree with their assertions on the existence of a form of a (Catholic) religious nationalist movement, my analysis differs from theirs in that my chapter incorporates works by Fogazzaro and Balbo to show that this strain of nationalism extended beyond one which merely envisaged an Italian nation headed by the Pope, but more broadly, as one which incorporated the chief tenants of the Catholic faith in constructing a new Italian politic which required the elimination of Jewish inclusion. As in my previous chapters, I show how the fear of Jewish identity haunts these texts and, when viewed alongside the material from my previous chapters, that this nationalist cause can be understood as merely another iteration of intolerant rhetoric between two religions.

These texts, when read together, make visible the important role Jewish identity played in the development of Italian nationalism. When reading Fogazzaro's *Daniele Cortis*, for example, it may not initially be apparent how the text can be read in relation to religious difference, since Catholicism features so prominently and religious minorities are rarely mentioned. Reading this text in relation to Balbo's *L'Ebrea* and Carli's "Della Patria…" show how Fogazzaro's brief discussion of religion and science (as we shall see in more detail in section II) actually participates in a larger conversation that includes Carli's and Balbo's earlier association of science with religious pluralism. In the same manner, if we read Carli, Fogazzaro, Balbo, and Alfieri in conversation with Ugo Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere*, we see how Foscolo's work

presents an iteration of the Wandering Jew narrative as a means of supporting a pluralist nationalist perspective.

One reason why the 19th century was able to mold these preexisting religious tensions in new ways to support a nationalist movement to much broader audiences is due to the rise of literary publications. In her study *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero,* Lucy Riall explores the role of print media in fostering these intertextual conversations and connections. Many authors began writing novels, essays, and stories on this topic with the intention of spurring social action. Riall also argues that that Mazzini spearheaded the campaign for Italian nationalism with a 5-point plan in an attempt to modernize Italy like the rest of Europe (Riall 20).[183] Riall further notes that Mazzini, in particular, exploited literature and media to gain support for the nationalist cause with his journal *Giovine Italia* (1831-1834), realizing that "the rapid expansion of 'print-capitalism' played a central role in the fashioning of national identity, in that reading books, periodicals and printed images could create a sense of community (however imaginary) by allowing people who had no knowledge of each other, and who lived in different places, to share the same experiences and have the same responses to stories and events in which they had no part" (Riall 133).[184] Even after leaving Italy in 1837, Mazzini understood that "the technologies of mass communication could be used to encourage and spread such feelings of empathy for beyond any 'natural' boundaries of national community" (Riall 133).[185]

[183] A book-length analysis would draw parallels between Mazzini's emphasis on the importance of military advancements and the willingness for supporters to pledge their lives in defense of italianità – the innate qualities of Italian-ness – and the discourse of religious fervor seen in authors like Gioberti.
[184] Cf. Benedict Anderson: "…all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (Anderson 6).
[185] Mazzini's travel to England and involvement in the revolts of 1848-9 made him a hero and he began to stir up sentiment there in support of Italy's nationalist movement. For further reading on these revolts in a larger European context, see Evans and Pogge von Stransmann's *The Revolutions in Europe, 1848-1849: From Reform to Reaction.*

Mazzini was hoping that writers in every field might begin to see their thinking as a part of these larger conversations around nation formation. In an 1834 letter to Abbé Lamennais, a Catholic priest and philosopher, Mazzini emphasized the special role of culture in social and political change, arguing that "…art, science, philosophy, the idea of right, the history of right, the historic method – all things, in short, require renovation… Synthesis alone can create those great regenerating movements which transform peoples into nations" (Mazzini *Life and Writings* 40-1). In particular, as noted by Cristina Della Coletta in her study *Plotting the Past: Metamorphoses of Historical Narrative in Modern Italian Fiction*, Mazzini understood literature as having "a pedagogical and moral function" that is "truly inspirational;" that "foresees the destinies of humanity and helps to bring about significant social changes" (Della Coletta 46). It is important to see what social change Mazzini foresaw in the role of Catholicism in the emerging nation.

In his study, *The Italian Risorgimento*, Martin Clark examines the anti-clerical dimension of Mazzinian thinking that foresaw "the end of the Pope's Temporal Power" in a unified Italy:

> Mazzini's real enemy was the Papacy. His followers were anti-clerical as well as insurrectionary. Most of them wanted a secular Italy, with compulsory lay education and lay welfare, and Rome as its capital. This meant not only the end of the Pope's Temporal Power, but the end of the papacy's spiritual dominance over the Italian people. Mazzini…preached the austere virtues of a 'civil religion,' all duty and devotion to the people. (38)

Clark's statements imply that Mazzini defined his nationalist movement in opposition to religious identity altogether, which would exclude both Catholic and Jewish perspectives. Perhaps religious identity constituted an 'Other' for Mazzini to fashion his ideas of the nation against. This general characterization of Mazzini's anti-clericalism, however, overlooks Mazzini's more nuanced view of the influence of religion. Mazzini, in fact, only opposed *the divisions* religious identity could create, writing that Italy wants "faith; not faith in liberty and

equality… but …faith in the possibility of realizing these ideas; faith in God, the protector of violated right; faith in her own latent strength, in her own sword" (Mazzini *Life and Writings* 45). For him, faith in God seems to have been a vessel for the transmission of nationalist ideals, not a barrier which blocked them.

Mazzini further develops his nuanced view of the relation of religious faith to nationalist ideals in his *Patriots and The Clergy*, commenting, "If we inscribe in our banner the words: Liberty, Equality, Humanity, we become the heralds of a Christian faith. We seek the unity of belief that Christ promised for all Peoples, for all the earth" (Mazzini *Essays* 115). He even seems to conflate the rhetoric of religious ideology with that of nationalism, making reference to those who have heralded and died for the nationalist cause as "apostles" and "martyrs" (Mazzini *Life and Writings* 45-46). For Mazzini, two obligations to God and nation do not have to be in stark contrast to one another; they would be required in a nationalist's "pledge of duty…[and] every man is bound to consecrate his every faculty to its fulfilment" (Mazzini *Life and Writings* 31). Though Mazzini believed in a separation of religious powers from state *influence*, he did not oppose religion entirely. Understanding this aspect of his arguments allows us to move beyond the traditional Catholic versus nationalist narrative generally told of the Risorgimento.

Although it might be possible to read Mazzini's references to Catholicism as a limitation to his pluralist thinking, his alliances in the nationalist cause present a more inclusive picture. Schächter, in her study, *The Jews of Italy 1848-1915*, has documented the ways in which the Jewish community helped fight the 1820-1821 uprisings in Piedmont, financed the Risorgimento, and were heavily involved in Mazzini's *La Giovine Italia* organization and journal. In Vercelli, for example, Salvatore Vita Levi and his son Giuseppe offered their bookshop as a location for the organization's secret meetings. Other prominent Jewish

community members who collaborated with Mazzini and Cavour in the Risorgimento include: David Levi, Tullo Massarani, Giuseppe Finzi, Isacco Artom, Giacomo Dina (editor, *L'Opinione*), Alessandro D'Ancona, and Lelio Cantoni.[186] Seeing themselves as "Italians" as much as anyone else, assimilated Jewish patriots understood that Italian unification would also potentially afford them more freedoms: "the process of the Jews' emancipation occurred in conjunction with the emerging Italian nation: the Italian state liberated them and they in turn participated in the wars of independence to liberate and unite Italy" (Schächter 16). Thus, as Italy gained more freedom as a united country, so too did the Jewish community.[187]

One of the first texts to lay the foundation as a precursor to Mazzini's call nearly 70 years later, for renewal in '…art, science, philosophy, the idea of right, the history of right, the historic method,' was Gian Rinaldo Carli's 1765 text, "Della Patria degli Italiani." Appearing in the proto-nationalist periodical *Il Caffè*,[188] this text begins to link the importance of scientific thought and a pluralist idea of the nation with a critique of the Church's temporal authority. Initially attributed to Pietro Verri, this short story depicts a conversation in a coffee house in Milan. From the outset, Carli comments that "…de' loro discorsi si fanno la *verità*, e l'*amore* del pubblico bene; che sono le due sole cose…che gli Uomini divengono simili agli Dei"[189] (14).

[186] A larger analysis would examine the historical significance of their contributions to the Italian nationalist movement. My aim here is to provide these abridged historical details as context for my literary analysis.
[187] Schächter further asserts that this collaboration was made possible by the fact that Jewish residents in Italy were among the most assimilated throughout all of Europe. By the 13th century, they spoke Italian dialect of their respective regions and the curriculum in Hebrew schools was taught in Italian and stressed the importance of the cultural heritage for all students. Viewing this history in relation to Mazzini's texts suggests that his pluralist Italian nationalist cause would not necessarily exclude a Jewish identity.
[188] This influential journal was published in Milan from 1764-66 by Pietro Verri.
[189] "… it is from their discussions that truth and love of the public good are made, the only two things…that make Men become similar to the Gods."

This suggests his belief that such informal gatherings provide a better forum for theoretical and philosophical discussions of nationalist ideas than academic or institutional venues.

The conversation in the café is, at a certain point, interrupted by the arrival of a newcomer (l'Incognito). The group welcomes him into their conversation by asking if he is a foreigner (forestiere). When he replies no 'with a certain air of calm nonchalance' ("con una cert'aria di composta disinvoltura" 15), the next logical question follows: "So, are you Milanese?" ("E' dunque Milanese?" 15). The stranger continues, encapsulating the future dream and ideals of the nationalist movement: "*No Signore,* non sono Milanese …*Sono Italiano …e un Italiano in Italia* non è mai Forestiere come un Francese non è Forestiere in Francia, un Inglese in Inghilterra, un Olandese in Olanda, e cosi discorrendo"[190] (Carli 15). Interestingly, he does not identify with any region and chooses to call himself *un italiano*. It is clear from this exchange that this new patron has a different view of his identity than the other men in the café, one rooted in nationalist sentiment in which all regions of Italy are united. Indeed, the words of the Incognito provide early evidence of a broader sense of national belonging in the cultural context of Milan.

Though only one of several competing perspectives that circulated in Milan in the last decades of the 18th century, Carli's vision of patriotism was original, according to Antonio Trampus, inasmuch as his idea was "not an abstract political model to contrast with the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, but a concrete possibility of finding a cultural unity and territorial continuity on the peninsula" (462). Even to Verri, who published Carli's text in *il Caffè*, Carli's idea of patriotism was "antithetical to the necessity of looking towards the entire

[190] "*No Sir. I am not Milanese ...I am Italian … and an Italian in Italy is never a foreigner, just as a Frenchman is never a foreigner in France, an Englishman in England, a Dutch man in Holland, and so on.*"

European continent rather than merely the Italian peninsula" (Tampus 462). Still, nearly a century later, Carli's vision of a shared cultural heritage and claim to territory would come to inform the most common definition of Italian national identity.

Also critical to our understanding of the Incognito's perspective is the possibility that the term 'incognito' may refer, rhetorically speaking, not only to the fact that this newcomer had never before been seen in the café. Since the man is not acquainted with other patrons of the café, at first it seems relatively innocuous that he would be referenced with these terms. When applying these words more broadly to his ideals, a new significance emerges. Just as the patron is unknown to the men in the café, the of the nation, was, at the time, 'unknown' in Milan (and in other regions of Italy). Moreover, rejecting the implication that he must be either 'Milanese' or someone from another region passing through Milan – insisting, instead, that 'an Italian in Italy is *never* a foreigner' – the Incognito implies that his distinctive ideas, though unknown, will become increasingly prominent as part of the fabric of a new Italian identity.

For the Incognito, the custom of thinking of anyone who lives outside a city's walls as a 'foreigner' is nothing more than a prejudice. He sarcastically calls attention to this in claiming "un genio mistico degl'Italiani, che gli rende inospitali e inimici di lor medesimi, e d'onde per conseguenza ne derivano l'arenamento delle arti, e delle scienze, e impedimenti fortissimi alla gloria Nazionale, la quale mal si dilata quando in tante fazioni, o scismi viene divisa la Nazione"[191] (Carli 15). Here, the Incognito criticizes the very divisive thinking that the patrons of the café exhibit when they ask him his region of origin. Moreover, referring to the Italian 'Nation' with a capital 'N,' Carli is clearly imagining a future nation *not* 'divided in so many

[191] "This can be called a mystical genius of Italians, that makes them inhospitable and enemies to themselves, and, as a consequence, leaves them at a standstill in the arts and sciences and with the strongest impediments to national glory, which cannot spread when the Nation is divided in so many factions or schisms."

factions or schisms,' but to an entity that transcends regional boundaries.[192] It is important to notice that here, Carli is imagining a 'Nation' that is founded on a shared sense of culture – with flourishing arts and sciences, not one founded on ethnoreligious divisions.

The Incognito continues his invective against divisiveness, when he laments 'we are the only [Europeans] who feel indifference for our own Nation' ("perché nessun Oltremontano ha per la propria Nazione l'indifferenza che noi abbiamo per la nostra" Carli 16). He later highlights the fact that England celebrates Newton and France celebrate Descartes, while Galileo receives more praise from 'foreigners' ('estranei') than from 'Italians' (Carli 16). In a similar vein, he laments how unhappy Italians are, because prejudice condemns them to "credere che un italiano non sia Concittadino degli altr'Italiani, e che l'esser nato in uno piuttosto che in altro punto di quello spazio… confluisca più o meno all'essenza, o alla condizione della persona"[193] (Carli 16). It is not surprising that, in order to define the space ('quello spazio') of 'Italy,' the Incognito refers to Petrarch, the author of "Italia mia," citing his canonical description of the peninsula as "il bel paese/ch'Appennin parte, e 'l mar circonda et l'Alpe" ("the beautiful country divided by the Appennines and surrounded by the sea and the Alps" *Canzoniere*, 146). It is also important to observe that Carli never mentions religion as playing a role in his idea of the Nation.

With so much focus on divisiveness and prejudice, the reader of Carli's text, much like the patrons of the café, might begin to question the viability of a future unified nation. Carli offers an answer, when he has the Incognito recite a glorious history of eleven centuries, shared by all regions, in which 'Italians' were united against foreign invaders. The Incognito ends by asking the pointed questions: "e questo non basta a non persuader gl'italiani di essere tutti simili

[192] Cf. Frizzi's similar use of the term 'Italia' discussed in Chapter 2.
[193] "believe that one Italian is not a fellow citizen of other Italians, and that being born in one region rather than another comes to influence, more or less, the essence or condition of the person."

fra di loro, e d'esser tutti italiani?... Ora … qual differenza ritrovare si può mai fra Italiano e Italiano, se uguale è l'origine, se uguale il Genio, se ugualissima la condizione?"[194] (Carli 14-15) With these rhetorical questions, the Incognito suggests that a national identity based on shared history and origins should unite all the regions of Italy. Posing these controversial ideas as questions that remain unanswered in his text, Carli also creates for his readers a forum to consider their meaning and to create their own sense of shared identity.

At the end of "Della patria…," the Incognito constructs a sense of national identity by comparing Italy to other already existing nations in Europe: "se le nazioni dovessero gareggiar fra di esse per la nobiltà, noi Italiani certamente non la cediamo a nessun'altra Nazione d'Europa"[195] (Carli 17). In addition, he creates a sense of national pride, drawing upon the scientific discoveries of Galileo to suggest that 'Italy' could operate politically like the solar system:

> Trasportiamo questo sistema alla nostra Nazionale politica. Grandi, o piccole siano le Città, sieno esse in uno, o in altro spazio situate, abbiano esse particolari leggi nelle rivoluzioni sopra i propri assi, siano fedeli al loro Natural Sovrano, ed alle Leggi, abbiano piu o meno di Corpi subalterni: ma benché divise in Dominj diversi, e ubbidienti a diversi Sovrani formino una volta per i progressi delle scienze, e delle arti un solo sistema; e l'amore di Patriotismo, vale a dire del bene universale della nostra Nazione, sia il Sole, che le illumini, e che le attragga.[196] (Carli 21)

[194] "…and this is not enough to persuade Italians that they are all similar to each other, that they are all Italians?... Now … what difference can one ever find between Italian and Italian, if they are the same in origin, the same in spirit, and very much the same in condition?"

[195] "If nations had to compete among themselves for nobility, we Italians certainly would not be second to any other nation in Europe."

[196] "Let's translate this system to our National politics. No matter if cities are large or small, if they are located in one region or another, if they have special laws for rotating on their axes, if they are faithful to their own Natural Sovereign, and to their own laws, if they rule over more or fewer towns; but even though they are divided into different dominions, and obedient to different sovereigns, let them, for once, form, for the progress of science and the arts, one system alone; and let the love of Patriotism - namely the universal good of our nation - be the Sun which both illuminates and attracts them [the cities]."

Just as the solar system operates under a series of immovable principles, so, 'Italy' should live according to the principle of love of country or 'Patriotismo.' It is probably no coincidence that Galileo's heliocentric theories are the model here, given the erosion of Catholic authority in this period of scientific advancements. With this extended analogy between politics and science, Carli lays the foundation for a national identity based, not on an ethnoreligious idea, but rather on a shared cultural and scientific heritage.

Suggesting that the promotion of this shared cultural and scientific heritage will help his fellow citizens to affirm their own humanity, the Incognito laments that, people have instead gotten in the habit of disdaining the arts and sciences. He, moreover, suggests that in turning away from culture and science, people have strayed from who they are and enjoins them to return, once again, to their identity as 'Italians:'

> amiamo il bene ovunque si ritrovi; promoviamolo, ed animiamolo ovunque rimane sopito o languente; e lungi dal guardare con l'occhio dell'orgoglio, e del disprezzo chiunque per mezzo delle arti, o delle scienze tenta di rischiarare le tenebre, che l'ignoranza, la barbarie, l'inerzia, l'educazione hanno sparso fra di noi; sia nostro principale proposito d'incoraggiarlo, e premiarlo. Divenghiamo pertanto tutti di nuovo Italiani, per non cessar d'esser Uomini.[197] (Carli 21-22)

This is a complicated argument in which the Incognito implies that to be "human," for all those living in various cities and regions of the peninsula, has always meant to value those artistic and scientific achievements that have already made them 'Italian.'

An essentializing argument, to be sure, it suggests that to be one's most human and 'Italian' self was to identify with the 'good' that comes from the arts and sciences, as they had always been practiced. Though essentializing, it nevertheless points not to universal qualities of

[197] "Let us love the good wherever we find it; let's promote it and give it new life wherever it is dying or has fallen asleep; and let's be far from looking with arrogance or disdain we look at whoever, through the arts and sciences, tries to illuminate the darkness, that ignorance, barbarity, inertia, and training have spread among us; may it be our principle purpose to encourage the good, and reward it. May we all, consequently, become Italians again, so that we do not cease being Humans."

character or to particular practices of religion, but to the promotion of culture as a defining characteristic of national identity – past, present, and future. If only, according to the Incognito, people could consistently support those who, through the arts and sciences, worked at 'illuminating the darkness' they would return to their own 'true' selves. The term used in this passage regarding the Incognito's actions is particularly important; to 'rischiarare la tenebre' literally means to illuminate or enlighten the darkness. This verb is closely associated with its synonym, illuminiare[198] which lends itself to the Italian Illuminismo, or the Enlightenment. Thus, it appears that Carli is attempting to link the nationalist ideas of this character which provide new perspectives to the patrons with enlightened thinking of the Settecento. Having expressed this, the Incognito stands and walks out of the café, as if he has stated everything necessary to convey to the other patrons. He has prompted them to consider his call to civic action in support of the arts and sciences, and he does not need to wait for their response. I assert that this ending was meant as a call to action; since no response to these ideas is given within the text, readers are prompted to consider their own response in their own society.

Carli's secular view of national identity, that relies on the arts and sciences without explicitly referencing either Catholicism or Jewish communities, was a view that would certainly allow for more tolerance and pluralism. Ultimately, though, even Carli's more inclusive perspective presents a complication for the role of Jewish identity in an emerging Italian nation; if religion is completely absent from political affairs, Jewish identity may still occupy a precarious position within the emerging state. We shall see how precariousness is depicted, as we turn now to examine the role of Catholic and Jewish literary characters in the struggle to define the Italian nation.

[198] Rischiarare entry in *Treccani in Vocabolario*, "Rendere più luminoso un luogo oscuro, illuminarlo" (http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/rischiarare/)

SECTION II: UNDERSTANDING AN ETHNORELIGIOUS ITALIAN NATIONALIST PERSPECTIVE AND AN EXCLUSION OF JEWISH IDENTITY

Carli's view of a pluralist national identity founded in the arts and sciences can only be understood in relation to those writers who promoted an ethnoreligious view of nationalism that placed the Catholic faith at its center. As much as Carli urged his readers to see the promotion of culture as a duty to themselves as 'Italians' and human beings, writers who promoted an ethnoreligious view encouraged readers to see their practice of Catholicism as a duty to their country. Here, I read Antonio Fogazzaro's *Daniele Cortis* (1885) in conversation with Cesare Balbo's *L'Ebrea* (1857) to understand the precarity of Jewish identity in an emerging nationalist identity that places the Catholic religion the center of the movement. Read alongside Alfieri's *Saul* (1782) Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere* (1802), these texts help us to form a comprehensive, albeit contradictory, picture of the role the history of relations between Catholics and Jews played in the formation of 'Italy.'

In the introduction to their anthology *Formation of a National Audience in Italy,* Romani and Burns suggest that it is important to read Fogazzaro's novel as one whose purpose, at least in part, was to create and appeal to a readership that would see its interests in relation to the fledgling nation (Romani and Burns "Introduction"). In her essay, "A Question of 'Rule of Thumb,'" (published in this collection), Giulia Brian has documented the reception of Fogazzaro's writings "as a distillation of Italian culture, as frescoes of the Italic spirit" (Brian 65). While Fogazzaro's novel may be understood, in a general sense, to tell a story of political fervor for the new nation, the most salient feature of the novel in the context of this study is the conflict it dramatizes between politics and Catholic loyalty.

Published in 1885, *Daniele Cortis* tells the story of a Catholic politician in the middle of his campaign for election as Senator to the Italian parliament who falls in love with Elena, who is already married to another man. Divided between his love for Elena, and his political ambitions, Daniele Cortis is also tormented by the discovery that he may be the unwanted outcome of sexual violence against his mother. Elena, in turn, must also balance her desire to be with Daniele and her duty to her husband, a foreign baron. Through a series of convoluted events between Daniele's and Elena's families, the reader comes to learn that the main struggles of the novel are Daniele's desire to be united with Elena and his ambition to convince voters in the nation's young electorate[199] to reconcile their Catholic faith with the nationalist cause. The end of the text shows that he and Elena are unable to marry, but the conclusion provides a promising view of Daniele's future in his nationalist endeavors.

Some have read this novel, with its emphasis on placing duty to one's country over love, as a about a struggle between Catholicism and nationalism. Such a reading would imply that it is a story of "…a man whose Christian faith is more profound than that of the woman he loves" (Bédé and Edgerton 254). But in fact, Fogazzaro's nationalist perspectives, expressed in the novel, actually promoted duty to Catholicism as a prerequisite for duty to the nation, distinguishing him in opposition to thinkers like Carli. When examining the text in the context of

[199] The text is somewhat vague about who constitutes the electorate. At times, these members are referred to as 'voters,' at other times as members of the electorate, and even as 'a few idiots' at other times (Foscolo Trans. Nichols 154). The most clarity provided in the text is a scene in which Elena receives a telegram indicating that a preliminary vote showed that Daniele was winning. The vote read "342 votes x 338" which would suggest that there were 680 members of the electorate (Foscolo Trans. Nichols 155). It is unclear which body this would have corresponded to in Fogazzaro's own time, since the Italian elections of 1880, 1882, and 1886 were voted on by eligible male voters which totaled a few hundred thousand and the senate was comprised of 508 members – neither of which equal the 680 electors in Fogazzaro's novel.

competing forms of nationalist thought, an underlying message of the novel is revealed – specifically, that duty to Catholicism is synonymous with duty to one's country.

In the very first pages of the novel, when Daniele meets with Elena's family to discuss his political future, the priests are in the next room 'playing cards' ("giuocavano a tresette"[200]) and 'screaming, shouting' ("vocivano, schiamazzavano" Fogazzaro 2), almost as if they are a natural part of the political landscape. Though here they are not portrayed in a very sacred light, Fogazzaro makes it clear, later in the novel, that he aspires to prove to all of his radical, anti-clerical colleagues that priests can be raised to a higher standard. Dictating a letter to the newspaper, Daniele suggests that in his "social revolution," priests would be required to overcome their ignorance with study:

> 'A me importerebbe poco…essere chiamato clericale e avere alle calcagna tutta la muta dei radicali e dei dottrinari italiani...se potessi far solida e potente la patria, ottenerle l'onore di guidare una rivoluzione sociale ordinata...Perché [i preti del mio collegio] sanno che io li ho sempre trattati da ciechi e da ignoranti quanti sono...Sanno che io, cattolico, se diventassi ministro, sarei capace di costringerli a studiare, con una legge di maggio, qualche cosa di più che la *summa contra gentes* (Fogazzaro 42-43).[201]

In this passage, Daniele cast himself not only as a nationalist who craves social reforms, but also as an advocate for changes in the religious establishment. Far from advocating for a separation of Church and state, Fogazzaro presents a hope for an Italian nation informed by a Catholic leadership whose practices are regulated by the state. In other words, Fogazzaro expresses, through Daniele, a critique of the clergy but not of the importance of Catholicism to the nation.

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[200] All English translations of this text are found in Fogazzaro, Antonio. *Daniele Cortis. 1885*, edited and translated by Stephen Louis Simeon. Remington & Co., 1890.

[201] "'I should mind very little…being called a clerical, or having the whole pack of radicals and doctrinaires at my heels…If I could render my country solid and powerful, and obtain for it the honour of leading the way in a well-organised social revolution…Because [the clergy] know that I have always regarded them as blind and ignorant men…and they know that I, a Catholic… if ever I were to become a minister, should be capable of obliging them to study something more than the *Summa Contra Gentiles*."

There are several other passages in the novel in which Daniele criticizes the hierarchy of the Church, while reinforcing the importance of religion in the young nation. For example, he delivers an impassioned plea to the Congressional Assembly urging Catholic voters to prevent foreign influence in Church affairs:

> …che al progresso della società moderna si richiede il concorso della religione e della libertà. Bisogna esigere l'istruzione religiosa data dal clero dove vuole e come vuole...bisogna riconoscere le associazioni religiose che non hanno uno scopo contrario alle leggi...astenersi da qualunque immistione legale o violenta negli affari interni della Chiesa, salvo il diritto di tutela sulle sue proprietà; bisogna che il governo mostri sempre col suo contegno di attribuire un altissimo valore allo spirito religioso. (Fogazzaro 126)[202]

Here, Daniele makes it clear that liberty cannot be exercised without the cooperation and participation ('concorso') of religion. He emphasizes that it is the government's responsibility to protect the rights of Catholics and the Church's ability to function without interference, so long as no lawbreaking or corruption is present. Later, when reflecting on his relationship with Elena, Daniele experiences a moment of clarity when he realizes that his devotion to this ethnoreligious view of politics is his life purpose, writing to her: "Ho bisogno di Dio, cara Elena; sento che la mia vita deve oramai rispondere rigorosamente alle opinioni che manifestai agli elettori, e per le quali combatterò. È anche un dovere politico: bisogna fare un pezzo solo con la propria bandiera se deve star salda" (Fogazzaro 176).[203] When he writes 'è *anche* un dovere politico,' Daniele signifies his struggle between faith and politics; when combined with his statements immediately

[202] "…the progress of modern society demands the assistance of religion and liberty. We must require that religious instruction shall be given by the clergy, wheresoever and whensoever they please…we must recognise all religious associations whose objects are not contrary to law...abstain from any legal or forcible interference with the internal affairs of the Church, save the right of guardianship of property. The government must always show, by its behaviour, that it places the highest value upon the spirit of religion."

[203] "I have need of God, dear Elena. I feel that henceforward my life ought to be made to conform rigorously to the opinions which I laid before the electors, and for which I will fight. It is a political duty as well; one must raise one's own banner and fight under it; one must stand firm."

prior regarding his need of God, this suggests his obligations include a steadfastness to his faith and his nationalist endeavors.

Elena, like Daniele, also struggles. Her struggle, however, is initially moral and not religious. She is torn between her love for Daniele and a sense of duty to her marriage. At one point, when Elena's mother suggests that she leave her husband of his gambling problems, Elena defends the seriousness of her wedding vows "'Questo non l'ho udito…quando lo sposai, che in certi casi potrei non aver più niente di comune con lui. Mi sono sposata sul serio, ved, mamma... Debbo fare tutto il mio dovere'" [204] suggests that she married her husband out of love and must remain loyal to him (Fogazzaro 280). At the same time, she has always acknowledged that her real motive in marrying him was 'the selfishness of the resolution she had made to quit the paternal roof' ("l'egoismo di una risoluzione presa per uscire dalla casa paterna") (Fogazzaro 83). This passage gives the impression her marriage was not based on love or duty to her husband, but because of her own desire to leave her family and start her own life.[205]

Elena's perspective on duty to her marriage evolves with her love for Daniele. In the course of this evolution, Elena's faith grows from a skeptical and punitive idea of Catholicism that judged every desire as "impure and unworthy" ("impuro e indegno" Fogazzaro 150). Initially, Elena's expression of her religious beliefs did not progress beyond hallow ritualistic practices like attending mass and was weakened by corrupt officials and the Church's frequent emphasis on the punishment of sins (like adultery) instead of mercy and understanding.

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[204] "'I never heard, when I married him, that under certain circumstances I could have nothing more to do with him. You see I married him in real earnest, mamma… I must do my whole duty.'"

[205] Though marriages were rarely based solely on love, they were largely affected by economic status, family commitments, and social standing – not necessarily based solely on a woman's desire to leave her family as Elena's marriage is described. For further reading on marriage practices in the 19th century, see the Kertzer and Barbagli's anthology entitled *The History of the European Family: Family Life in the Long Nineteenth Century*.

By the end of the novel, however, Elena has a change of heart. Her religious beliefs have evolved into an acceptance of the need to sacrifice her relationship with Daniele, though she still worries her faith is still not strong enough to merit God's pardon nor that she would be united with Daniele in the afterlife: "Allora il Signore mi perdonerà; non è vero? Ho tanta paura anche adesso di non credere come te, di credere solo perché voglio bene a te. Se fosse così, Daniele, cosa mi succederà nell'altra vita? Potrò andare anch'io dove andrai tu? Oh Signore, tu sarai tanto in alto!" (Fogazzaro 377)[206] While it may at first appear that her 'mistake' was in marrying just to leave her family, her emphasis on having been 'unbelieving' and now giving herself 'wholly to God' suggest that her required punishment is the result of her *lack of religion* rather than her seriousness in taking her marriage vows. Here, Fogazzaro suggests that because of Elena's religious transformation and the sacrifice of their relationship, Elena and Daniele can now believe in their future union. In placing God at the center of her life and focusing on the rewards of her faith in the afterlife that she believes their unity – a metaphor for the unity of an emerging nation – is possible.

He also links this sacrifice to Daniele's growing ability to be a more effective political advocate for truth and justice. After Elena finally admits that she will pray:

> [Cortis] si immerse con febbrile piacere, esaltandosi nel pensiero...che Dio li aveva presi, Elena e lui, per sempre, che gli erano più vicini, l'uno e l'altra, che la loro unione aveva oramai qualche cosa di santo e di eterno, per cui il dolor e la morte non la potrebbero sciogliere. Pensava così...ciecamente convinto che Dio gli dicesse...'avrai *lei* nell'altra vita. Io volli questo frutto dell'amore che v'ispirai. Ora ch'ella parta, e tu, temprato da un doloroso fuoco, va, combatti, soffri ancora, sii nobile strumento, fra gli uomini, di verità e di giustizia" Fogazzaro 374-375).[207]

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[206] "'So, God will pardon me, will He not? What I dread now is that I may not believe as you do, and that I only believe because I love you. If such were the case, Daniele, what would happen to me in the next world? Shall I be able to go whither you do? Oh, God, you will have such a high place!'"

[207] "[Cortis] excit[ed] himself with the thought… that God had taken Elena and him forever, that they were now nearer one to the other, that their union would henceforth contain the elements of holiness and eternity, which neither sorrow or death could remove. He meditated thus…blindly convinced that God

One could certainly suggest that the narrative creates a cause and effect relation between the characters' Catholic faith and Daniele's growing ability to pursue his political ambitions. Or, more precisely, now that faith enables Daniele to imagine his future union with Elena as "sacred and everlasting" ("la loro unione aveva oramai qualche cosa di santo e di eterno" Fogazzaro 375), Daniele is now liberated to work on an ethnoreligious unification of the young nation of Italy.

Our understanding of *Daniele Cortis* as a text that envisions Catholicism and national liberties as necessary companions also encourages a reading that sees other binaries in the novel, and even in Fogazzaro's own subjectivity, as complementary parts of an integrated unity or whole. As Pupino suggests, in his article, "Fogazzaro Letteratura e Vita," the split nature of Daniele Cortis, torn between "between unbending virtue and adulterous passion" ("tra virtu adamantina e passione adultera" Pupino 44), may have been nothing more than an extension of Fogazzaro's own inner conflict between his Catholic loyalties and his fascination for Darwin's theories (Marrone and Puppa 744). In both cases, the divisions are resolved in the novel with a unified reconciliation of Catholic faith with modern political ambitions.

Furthermore, we might read, in the anxiety over Elena's relation to Catholicism as a broader anxiety over other faiths. Specifically, I would suggest that a constant anxiety over the need to convert other faiths exemplifies a haunting presence which looms over many discussions within the novel and is even cast as a threat to Daniele's vision for a united country. As we saw, Daniele suggests that as an elected official, he would require priests to study Aquinas's *Summa contra Gentiles*, a work that explained and defended the Catholic faith against the errors of other

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said to him… 'she shall be yours in the next world. I intend this to be the result of the love wherewith I have inspired you. Now that she is going, do you go forth also, tempered by sadness; go forth, fight, suffer, be amongst men, a noble instrument of truth and justice…"

religions and that was used, in particular, by the Inquisition in Spain to support the conversion of Jews.[208] In this reference to Aquinas, we might also see a hint of Daniele's anxiety that the presence of a Jewish Other might threaten his political ambitions for an ethnoreligious national identity.

Though Jewish identity does not overtly appear in Fogazzaro's novel, we should not overlook its presence in relation to a persistent anxiety, expressed throughout the text, about the integral role of Catholic faith as a driver of politics and unity. Such an anxiety over the need to convert minority religions is also present when considering the emphasis on the role of science within the novel. Recall from the previous chapter that the role of science in society was becoming increasingly important in the late 18th century. Because Fogazzaro is attempting to reinforce a new identity for the country based on the centrality of Catholicism, Daniele acknowledges the influence of science, but rejects its role in society. We may read this sentiment into Daniele's lamentations that in Parliament it was recommended to eliminate public subsidies of schools run by the Catholic orders, if Italy, like France, wanted to live "in the light of philosophy and science" ("nella luce della filosofia e la scienza" Fogazzaro 175). Daniele's further insistence upon the way civilized societies still 'lean upon the Gospel' ("adoperare il *Vangelo*" Fogazzaro 176) implies his belief in the importance of religion rather than scientific thought. Perhaps Daniele, unlike Carli's 'Incognito,' is articulating an anxiety over the potential of science and culture to erode the dominance of Catholic dogma and allow the influence of Italy's Jewish minority.[209]

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[208] Cf. Timothy McDermott's "Introduction" in *Summa Theologiae: Volume 2*; and Thomas Weinandy's "Athanasius' Soteriological Theology Part I: Contra Gentes" in *Athanasius: A Theological Introduction*.

[209] Daniele's desire to 'restore' Catholicism to the East betrays an anxiety over the conversion of non-Catholics. When read in the context of the 19th century and the emphasis on religion and conversion in nationalist literature, it becomes clear that even though Jewish identity does not feature prominently in this text, it's reliance on the domination of one religion over all others leaves little room for religious

Where thinkers like Carli placed cultural and scientific thought at the center of an emerging Italy, Fogazzaro placed religious reform and a return to Catholic roots as prerequisites for governing the young nation. If Jewish identity was not an explicit obstacle to Fogazzaro's advocacy for an ethnoreligious view of the national polity, we might understand how it was implicated in Fogazzaro's thinking, when examined in relation to Cesare Balbo's earlier novella *L'Ebrea* (1857). In his study *Italy in the Age of the Risorgimento 1790-1870*, Henry Hearder examines Balbo's understanding that there was no contradiction between a nationalist Italy and a Catholic one, showing how Balbo's strong patriotic feelings that "Lombardy and Venice should be liberated from the Austrians" were entirely consistent "with that part of Gioberti's theme which recommended a federation of separate Italian states under the presidency of the Pope…Balbo, the lay nobleman, was a far more devout Catholic than Gioberti, the priest…" (197). Works by Balbo, like *Speranze d'Italia* (dedicated to Gioberti), are well known for their articulation of his Catholic vision of Italian unification.[210] In a less known novella, *L'Ebrea*, we discover the ways Balbo's Catholic vision constitutes an ethnoreligious nationalist perspective that marginalizes Jewish identity as a threat to be converted to achieve peaceful unity.

The novella tells the story of a young Christian orphan, Carlo who is taken in by his uncle. After pursuing various professions, he finally chooses the life of a scholar and finds employment as the secretary for a Jewish family in the ghetto. Told first from the perspective of the priest sent to treat the dying Carlo and then from the perspective of the dying man himself,

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pluralism. Reading Fogazzaro's novel in relation to these warnings against religious divisions reveals a growing concern for religious difference and the threat it poses to a unified Italy. With this in mind, every reference to Daniele's faith and duty can be read as another iteration of these concerns. Thus, religious difference within the novel can be read as a haunting that is subtly present everywhere as a 'seething presence' though not explicitly stated anywhere (Gordon 8).

[210] An analysis of the ways Balbo's texts represent Gioberti's ideals, and a close-reading of Gioberti's *Del primato morale e civile degli italiani* (1843), fall, unfortunately, outside the scope of this study.

the story details Carlo's work for this well-to-do Jewish father (Samuele) and his daughter (Regina). In his time at their walled off house in an unspecified city, Carlo is able to observe their family dynamic, but is limited in his interactions with them. Throughout the course of the story, Regina becomes curious about Carlo and often sneaks into his study to read his books. This becomes a regular occurrence which leads the young duo to meet in secret and eventually to fall in love.

By the end of the novella when Carlo's health takes a turn for the worse, the Jewish family allows a priest to provide him one final confession and blessing. Their dialogue, laden with religious rhetoric (especially since Carlo had also studied in the seminary), finally returns the story back to the perspective of the priest and then another narrator (a student listening to the priest recount his story) whose internal monologue suggests that miracles can happen with a Catholic faith. In conclusion, the reader learns that Carlo is alive and well; although this appears to be the miracle referred to in the priest's discussion, the reader learns that the narrative may have been referring to a different miracle – a conversion of the Jewish family. The final scene in the novella shows the Jewish father revealing his intention to convert to Christianity and to give his daughter's hand in marriage to Carlo.

Themes of nationalism and Jewish identity pervade the entire novella. For example, in the beginning, the narrator, who appears to be a student listening to the priest, calls attention to various opinions about Jewish-Catholic relations and whether or not Jews should be allowed to live with and mix with others:

> Chi diceva son troppo cattivi, perciò che la lor legge or male intesa da essi li fa nemici nostri irrevocabilmente; chi rispondeva che noi stessi, più che le loro leggi, li facciamo tali, rigettandoli come appestati; chi replicava che debbono, che son destinati a restar tali fino alla fine del mondo e per paura della fine del mondo non gli avrebbe, credo, convertiti quando l'avesse

> potuto; in somma, già si veniva alle amarezze, alle imputazioni, alle ingiurie velate [contro gli ebrei]…[211] (Balbo 209)

Having set the scene with this step-by-step account of how differences can turn into prejudice and affronts,[212] the priest assumes the role of narrator. He begins by explaining how he had been called to the house to attend to the seriously-ill Carlo and provides a step-by-step account of how the young man and Regina came to have feelings for each other.

In the context of the prejudice against this mixed household, a prejudice that 'scandalized' most of their neighbors, perhaps the most salient passage is the one in which Regina hastens to tell him of her love and her worries for the future. Concerned for Carlo's health, she clarifies the terms of her position, torn as she is between her feelings for Carlo and her feelings of guilt:

> L'amore, finchè non è colpevole, vien da Dio; la colpa sola vien da noi…Possibile che con uno stesso Iddio noi siamo così separati e in terra e in cielo stesso! Possibile che noi vediamo, conosciamo, serviamo quello stesso Dio in modi sì diversi! E che in tanta diversità le due leggi s'accordino quasi in questo solo, di separarci! Ma disobbedire, abbandonare un padre: ingannare, tradire un ospite o un padrone sono colpe gravi in ogni legge…voglio che ambedue evitiamo tal colpa, tali rimorsi, tal vita. Eppure, se tu rimani qui, se ci vediamo ogni giorno a questo modo, se io odo la tua voce, i tuoi discorsi, se veggo i tuoi modi, i tuoi atti, e massime i tuoi patimenti.... io lo so, io lo sento, padrona di me in questo momento e fino adesso, no 'l sarò più in breve, ed amerò forse te più che il mio dovere, che il mio padre, che il mio Dio. Non voglio…[213] (Balbo 220-221)

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[211] "some might say that they [the Jews] are too ill-natured, because their law, now poorly understood even by them, makes them our enemies irrevocably; others might reply that we ourselves, more than their laws, make them our enemies, rejecting them as infected; still others might respond that they must be infected, that they are destined to remain so until the end of the world, and for fear that by the end of the world, they would not, I believe, have converted in time, in short, people quickly arrived at resentments, accusations, and veiled insults [against Jews]…"

[212] This initial reference to supposedly inherent Jewish features which make their ability to live amongst Christian neighbors impossible mirrors the sentiments of G.B.G. D'Arco in the previous chapter. Here it would also seem that Balbo is supporting the segregation that the ghetto provided while implying that their differences are an irremovable aspect of their communal identity.

[213] "Love is not sinful, as long as it comes from God; sin comes only from us…How is it possible that with the same God we are so separate both on earth and in heaven! How is it possible that we see, know, and serve that same God in such different ways! And that with so many differences, the two laws only concur in this one way – to separate us! But disobeying, abandoning a father: deceiving, betraying a guest or a master are serious sins in every law…I want both of us to avoid such transgressions, such regrets,

Regina's confession here highlights the fact that their differences make their love sinful. The fact that Carlo lives in a Jewish home is unnatural and puts them both in an untenable position; they can only save themselves from sin if Carlo leaves their house. When seen in the context of Italy, Regina might be understood to suggest that God does not allow a nation in which Jews and Catholics mingle. Especially if Jews are devoted to their faith, they must separate from Catholics in the interests of national unity.

Just as in Fogazzaro's text, a sense of duty plays an important role in the separation of Carlo and Regina. She attests that her feelings for Carlo threaten to derail her from her duty to her father and faith. Unlike Elena, Regina cannot both fulfill her duty as a Jew and pursue a promise of eternal happiness; the two lovers could be together, only if she were to convert. Thus, just as Elena's duty must undergo a transformation away from her dissolute adherence to rote rituals toward a devout religiosity, Balbo's text implies Regina must also undergo a transformation – specifically, a conversion. When read in context in the 19th century, the text asserts the view that only through conversion and assimilation would Jews be able to join a united Italy.

The end of the novella further strengthens this interpretation that conversion is necessary for unity. After delivering the last rites three times, the priestly narrator, seeing a tiny bit of color return to Carlo's colorless cheeks, addresses the reader with hope: "Che v'ho a dir io? Io credo ai miracoli, e credo anzi che non è possibile che non ci siano stati, e non sieno miracoli tuttodì"

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such a life. Yet, if you stay here, if we see each other every day in this way, if I hear your voice, your conversations, if I see your ways, your movements, and especially your sufferings .... I know, I feel it, I am master of myself at this moment and until now, but soon I will not be, and I will love you perhaps more than my duty, than my father, that my God. I do not want that."

(Balbo 230).[214] Initially, it would seem the narrator's comments apply only to Carlo's miraculous recovery from his near-fatal illness; however, the ending of the novella suggests that the term 'miracle' applies also to Samuele and Regina. One morning, Samuele asked to speak with Carlo privately and said

> 'Carlo, ora tu puoi uscire, e non hai più bisogno di me, di noi. Io nemmeno non ho più bisogno di te. I lavori che mi facevi, lo scopo di essi almeno è compiuto… Il risultato fu che Samuele, già cristiano nell'anima da non poco tempo, aperse a Carlo la sua intenzione di professarsi cristiano in breve pubblicamente; e, come già potete pensare…gli diede la mano non isperata, non desiderata nemmeno della figlia…Il fatto sta, che anche prima che venisse Carlo in casa l'ebreo, questi aveva già molti dubbi sulla propria religione, e perciò studiava i propri e i nostri libri, e volle avere Carlo. La conversione si può, anzi si dee dir dunque venuta da Dio più direttamente, senz'anche forse l'intermediario…[215] (Balbo 232)

When Samuele says he does not need Carlo anymore, it becomes clear that the father is not referring strictly to the work he wanted the Christian man to perform; instead, it implies that he had hired Carlo specifically to help him with the process of conversion. When discussing the job, Samuele had explained that he wanted Carlo's help in writing and translating particular texts from Hebrew ("Scrivermi e tradurmi dall'ebraico quel che vorrò" Balbo 215). When Carlo wondered why, since Samuele certainly knew Hebrew, Samuele had replied: "This is none of your business" ("Questo non è affare vostro" Balbo 215). Carlo's job to act as a translator mirrored his role in the conversion of the family; just as he converted texts from Hebrew into Italian, he also converted the family's Jewish identity into a non-threatening "Italian" one.

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[214] "What can I tell you all? I believe in miracles, and, in fact, I believe it impossible to think that there have never been any and that they don't exist still today."

[215] "Carlo, you can go now, and you do not need me or us anymore. I don't need you anymore either. The work you did for me, their goal, at least, is accomplished…' The result was that Samuel, who had already been Christian in his soul for a long while, revealed to Carlo his intention to declare himself Christian soon in public; and, as you can already guess…he gave him the hand of his daughter that he hadn't hoped for or even dared to want…The fact is that even before Carlo came to the Jewish home, [Samuele] already had many doubts about his religion, and for that reason, he studied his own books and our books and wanted to have Carlo. One can say, no, one must say, therefore, that the conversion came directly, from God, perhaps without even the intermediary…"

Certainly, Balbo articulated for readers an explicit and "miraculous" path to a unified culture founded on a shared ethnoreligious identity. With this analysis, connections between Balbo's text and the socio-political questions surrounding Italian national identity are apparent; the text's emphasis on binary oppositions provide an ethnoreligious Italian identity unified not merely on the basis of shared history, but a shared religion. As a result, religious difference – and Jewish identity more specifically – was cast as Other against the emerging pluralist nationalist one which allowed for greater religious tolerance.

SECTION III: THE PLURALIST NATIONALIST PERSPECTIVE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR INCLUSION OF JEWISH IDENTITY

As we have seen, the thread of ethnoreligious identity promoted in *Daniele Cortis* and *L'Ebrea* can only be understood as part of a weave of nationalist thinking that also included writers who advocated a more inclusive, pluralist Italian national identity.[216] In particular, Vittorio Alfieri's *Saul* (1782) and Ugo Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (1802), when read in conversation with each other, reveal many intertextual connections. Their texts highlight the ways pluralist Italian national identity was being crafted against the ethnoreligious cause advanced by Fogazzaro and Balbo. Quite interestingly, where the threat of division caused by Jewish identity was an ever-present aspect of the texts (in section II) which purported an ethnoreligious Italian nationalism, such a *haunting* is entirely absent from texts which advance a pluralist ideal. Though the texts discussed here do seem to advance a form of religious pluralism by specifically referencing an inclusion of Jewish identity, the protagonist's suicide in each text raises important questions about the viability of a "nation" that embraces religious pluralism.

While scholars commonly point to the role of Alfieri's works in "arousing a strong national consciousness," his reliance on Jewish figures to create "national feeling and sentiment" is largely overlooked (Megaro 147). My analysis here provides previously undiscovered insights on these texts by emphasizing an often-overlooked detail, namely that Foscolo's Jacopo actually casts himself as Alfieri's *Saul* and references specific moments within the drama. Furthermore, I

[216] Although I focus here on non-Jewish writers who advocated for religious pluralism, many Italian Jewish writers continued to urge for religious freedom, including David Levi, Samuele David Luzzatto, and Luigi Luzzatti. See Salo Baron's "The Revolution of 1848 and Jewish Scholarship: Part I: France, the United States and Italy" in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*; and Francesca Sofia's "La Nazione Degli Ebrei Risorgimentali" in *La Rassegna Mensile Di Israel*.

read their discussions of suicides as a literary device which functions as a form of inclusion through exclusion of Jewish identity into a larger Italian nationalist one.

Many have cited Alfieri's works as early contributions to Risorgimento thought,[217] but have largely overlooked his reliance on Jewish figures. Alfieri's five-act drama, *Saul* was published in 1782 – the same year in which D'Arco interjected bias against Jewish communities into the national imaginary. This drama retells the famous biblical story of Saul, presenting readers with a divided 'country' that is at war with foreign invaders and at war with itself, much like 'Italy' in the moment in which he was writing. The text begins with David's return from exile to a divided kingdom under Saul and details their struggles to unite the people. Throughout the story, Saul is depicted as an unhappy ruler with a desire for unification that never comes to fruition. Upon realizing that such a reconciliation is impossible, Saul decides suicide is his only option to bring peace and unity to his people and end the political conflict. One of the most notable differences in Alfieri's retelling is that significantly more dialogue and mental reasoning is given to Saul, David, and the other characters which is not given in the original biblical story.

In fact, much of the text is fraught with political divisions, just like Fogazzaro's *Daniele Cortis*. The drama opens with David's return from exile after fleeing Saul's rage: "A morir vengo; ma fra l'armi, in campo, per la patria, da forte; e per l'ingrato stesso Saul, che la mia

[217] Gaudens Megaro, *Vittorio Alfieri: forerunner of Italian nationalism*: "Alfieri is universally remembered for the great part he played in arousing a strong national consciousness in Italy. In him we find not a doctrine of *nationalism but* the materials of *nationalism*; not formulas or syllogisms *but national feeling* and sentiment" (147). Others like Hans Ferdinand Helmolt in *The World's History: Western Europe* link Alfieri's ideas with those of other authors like Foscolo in claiming: "Their works gave passionate expression to the deep-rooted force of the desire for independence and for equality with other free peoples, to the shame felt by an oppressed nation…" (170). This text also comments on the role of priests in the nationalist movement without acknowledging their devotion was to an entirely different imagination of the nation – once which placed Catholicism at its core.

morte or grida" (Alfieri *Saul* I.II).[218] Readers immediately encounter a kingdom that resembles the Italian peninsula of the late 18th and early 19th century, divided and occupied by foreign rulers.[219] David is cast as a nationalist 'hero' who, like many Italian nationalists, is willing to return and fight for his 'country.'

Saul and David are cast, at the beginning of the play, as divided by their opposing positions in the face of the invading Philistine army. Saul hasn't been himself for a long time ("Saul, ben veggio, non è in sé stesso, or da gran tempo..." Alfieri *Saul* I.I); he seems complacent about the imminent threat of the Philistines. David, on the other hand, is ready to summon Israel (and its king) to fight against the Philistines ("Esci, Israël, dai queti/Tuoi padiglioni; escine, o re: v'invito/Oggi a veder …se ancor mio brando uccida" Alfieri, *Saul* I.I). In relation to the foreign occupiers of 'Italy,' David can be read as a nationalist eager to fight and unify against foreign oppression, while Saul is represented as one who would rather maintain the status quo and squelch the national cause. Important to note here is this text's divergence from Fogazzaro's and Balbo's later texts which will offer an emerging ethnoreligious identity; religion is not the central conflict causing the disunity within Alfieri's drama. Instead, the central conflict is the threat of foreign occupation and those who oppose a nationalist movement. Reading the play in terms of its divisions, secret plots, and duty to nation, we see how Saul's suicide – presented as the only possibility for future political unity – is emblematic of a larger perspective which places Jewish identity in a precarious position.

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[218] "I come here to die; But, like a hero, in my country's cause amid the clash of arms and in the camp, and also for ungrateful Saul himself, who now pursues me with the cry of death." All English translations come from Alfieri, Vittorio. "Saul. 1782." *The Tragedies of Vittorio Alfieri Volume II*. Edited and translated by Edgar Alfred Browning, George Bell & Sons, 1876.

[219] With the French Revolution and Austrian occupation predominantly in northern regions, Italy stood divided against foreign rule and divided in solutions to this issue.

Connections between David as a nationalist and details specific to Italian nationalism are also prevalent. For example, Saul is suspicious that David is engaging in secret plots against him. He asks Abner to modify every order of the "evil David, because, in every order, he conceals treason" ("…ogni ordin cangia dell'iniquo David; ché un tradimento ogni ordin suo nasconde" Alfieri *Saul* IV.IV). Alfieri's readers might easily understand these words to refer to the secret societies that would later come to be associated with Mazzini's *Giovine Italia*, but were already active in organizing patriotic thinking. In his study *Italy: From Revolution to Republic, 1700 to the Present*, Spencer Di Scala examines the influence of the secret societies:

> Originating in eighteenth-century Freemasonry, these societies had diverse political orientations, organizations, and rituals, but they became conspiratorial after 1794…In Italy, reactionary societies also existed, but the nationalistic-patriotic societies have particular importance because many active fighters for Italian unification would emerge from them. Especially active in the South during the Napoleonic period, they were the first widespread, influential groups advocating independence and a constitution (Di Scala 37-38).

It is important to note, in this context, the widespread participation of Jews in secret societies, represented also in the literary imagination by such works as Antonio Bresciani's *Ebreo di Verona* (1872), whose protagonist began his nationalist activities in the Carboneria.[220] Literary texts often portrayed Jews as supporters of these societies, precisely in order to stir fears in Catholic readers (Gunzberg 60-62), similar to those fears that Saul conveyed to Abner, in Alfieri's drama, to David's secret treason.[221] Thus, David's supposed secret plots that threaten Saul's rule clearly associate him with emerging nationalist ideals.

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[220] A book-length analysis would examine these texts alongside Bresciani's *Ebreo di Verona.* This text was not included here as it presents a reaction against the nationalist movement altogether and does not advance an ethnoreligious or pluralist national cause.

[221] Cf. D'Arco, who also accused Jews of plotting and conspiring against their (Christian) neighbors. Such negative associations with Jewish identity – from supposed secretiveness to a penchant for the conspiratorial dates back much further than 18th century Italy. In her text "The Transnational Wandering Jew and the Medieval English Nation," Lisa Lampert-Weissig notes this association with the Hebrew language dating back to Matthew Paris's *Chronica Majora* in 1252 in which "Hebrew is portrayed as a

David's sense of duty to fight for Israel might also be read in relation to the patriotic duty of young nationalists who later, following Mazzini, would see every action as "a pledge of duty."[222] In Act V, when Michal informs David of Saul's plans to kill him, David still feels a sense of duty to remain true to his convictions: "Oh quanto duolmi lasciar la pugna! Ignota voce io sento gridarmi in cor 'giunto è il terribil giorno ad Israéle, ed al suo re.'... Potessi! …pugnar non può qui omai più David." (Alfieri *Saul* V.I).[223] David's sense of 'duty' to remain loyal to his cause despite its consequences is similar to the type of nationalism seen in Fogazzaro's novel except the duty here is not to religion, but to a country.[224] As we shall see, it is David's duty to his country which allows for Saul's realization at the end of the drama and the unification of their people.

What complicates this image of David as a nationalist who opposes complacency to foreign oppression is that, even though he and Saul are often at odds with one another, they have the potential to develop a partnership in different moments of the drama. In Act III, for example, Saul begins raving like a madman, calling David a "cowardly traitor" ("Vil traditore! Alfieri *Saul* III.IV), lashing out in fragmented, grasping questions and exclamations that express his extreme desolation. In this moment, David calms Saul's rage with his song. At first, Saul finds that David's song, which depicts Saul as a warrior in years past who fought for his country, seems not only to reawaken him, but it brings him a sense of peace. Through the song, David is

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secret language, decoded through transnational Christian cooperation……the 'secret communications' of Jews facilitate their crimes…The Jew is always regarded as foreign, as a transnational element dangerously embedded within the nation" (776).

[222] "Every mission constitutes a pledge of duty. Every man is bound to consecrate his every faculty to its fulfilment" (Mazzini "Life and Writings" 31).

[223] "How much I grieve to leave the fight! I hear an unknown voice cry in my heart 'for Israel and its king the dreadful day has come'…If only I could … David now no more can combat here."

[224] A longer analysis would read David's references to exile as a reference to the segregation of Jewish communities from their surrounding Catholic communities.

inscribing Saul as the nationalist fighter he used to be and articulates their potential to be powerful and united against their common enemies. This calming moment is brought to a close when David's song suggests that the people of Israel have two swords (or leaders) in the battlefield ("Che due spade ha nel campo il popol nostro" Alfieri *Saul* III.IV). It is at this moment that Saul tries to kill David. Alfieri may be read here to suggest that this rejection of David and Saul's cooperation is emblematic of Italian nationalism; because these two ideologies divide Italy, like nationalism and sympathizers of foreign oppression, they are fundamentally incompatible together.

What seems strange, in this drama, is that David could have ended the political divisions among the Israelites by killing Saul, and yet, he refuses to do so. Instead, he tries to calm Saul and persuade the monarch to take up the nationalist cause. In acknowledging their different intentions for each other, David even wishes for Saul's success: "Ei [Saul] mi vuol spento; io'l voglio salvo, felice, e vincitor; ...ma, tremo oggi per lui" (Alfieri *Saul* V.I).[225] Why would David be so ready to see someone who has issued his death warrant triumph? It is because of these details that Saul can be read, not just as a biblical figure, but as a representation of the current state of Alfieri's divided Italy. It seems that David's persuading Saul – much in the way nationalists would persuade sympathizers to foreign oppression – that any peace can be restored. Thus, Alfieri seems to suggest that nationalism will only succeed if all those in the Italian peninsula can agree that it is necessary.

Though counter-intuitive, David's persistent hope for national unity is realized, at the end of the play, with Saul's suicide. According to the biblical story told in 1 Samuel, Saul kills himself out of fear of the invading Philistines. In Alfieri's version, Saul worries about his legacy

[225] " [Saul] wants me dead; I want him rescued from danger, happy, and triumphant…but today, I tremble for him."

and the future of his people. With the Philistines invading the territory, Saul realizes his death is imminent and questions the purpose of his life with the defeat of his people: "Ch'io viva, ove il mio popol cade?"[226] When Abner remarks that he has no more sons ("Ah! Più figli non hai" Alfieri *Saul* V.IV), Saul despairs at the loss of his legacy: "Ch'altro mi avanza?" ...Empia Filiste, me troverai, ma almen'da re qui... morto" (Alfieri *Saul* V.IV-V).[227] With these final words, it becomes clear that Saul's suicide also makes possible a unified future. David, as the play makes clear, will eventually defeat the Philistines and continue a prosperous life with Saul's daughter. Thus, the only obstacle to David's nationalist ideals is the competition between the 'two swords' of leadership. Had Saul not been swayed, at least for a time, by the song and the glory of his warrior past, he would have eventually murdered David. Instead, Saul's suicide in the face of the invading Philistines brings unity to his nation.

It is significant, of course, that Alfieri chooses to rewrite the story of Saul and David, in order to illuminate questions of competing political visions in his own time. If his David might be seen as a forerunner to followers of Mazzini and members of the Carboneria, then Alfieri's perspective allows for Jewish participation in the nationalist cause. Moreover, since Alfieri constructs many parallels between the people of Israel and his own forming nation, perhaps Alfieri is proposing an inclusive view of the future 'Italy' as a nation of religious pluralism. Or perhaps, on the contrary, since Saul's suicide seems to be a prerequisite for the future flourishing of a united Israel, Alfieri may be suggesting that the future 'Italy' will only flourish if Jews can be somehow suppressed in the vision of a unified nation. To explore these questions further, we now turn to a text that was very much influenced by Alfieri's *Saul* – Ugo Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (1802).

[226] "Shall I then live, while all my people fall?"
[227] "What now remains of me? …O then vile Philistia, me thou shalt find, but like a king, here…dead."

As noted by Rachel Walsh, in her study *Ugo Foscolo's Tragic Vision in Italy and England*, the young Foscolo studied the works of Alfieri; he even suggested that "Italians look up the prose of Alfieri as a model of style, particularly on political subjects" (Walsh 86). In particular, Costa-Zalessow has observed that Foscolo "…not only inherited the tendency to victimize from his great predecessor [Alfieri], but also took over the same technique of elaboration of his characters" (133). The influence of Alfieri is perhaps most apparent in Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere*, as its protagonist Jacopo is, like Alfieri's Saul, fraught with feelings of anxiety about his nationalist ideals and ends his own life in service of those ideals. When visiting the tombs of famous 'Italians' in Santa Croce, Jacopo himself even claims: "L'unico mortale ch'io desiderava conoscere era Vittorio Alfieri..." (Foscolo 111-112).[228]Although the question of religious pluralism is nowhere explicit in *Le ultime lettere*, Jacopo's explicit connections with Alfieri's character and his text, in the course of the novel, suggest that *Le ultime lettere* and Alfieri's *Saul* may be productively read together to present emerging pluralist Italian nationalist identity with a complicated view of the role of Jewish identity in the formation of 'Italy.'

Le ultime lettere tells the story of a young man, Jacopo Ortis, through his own letters to a friend named Lorenzo. Readers learn that Jacopo, persecuted for his nationalist ideals, retreats in exile to the Euganean Hills, where he spends his time reading and writing.[229] During this time, he meets and falls in love with a young woman, Teresa, who is already promised to another man

[228] "the only mortal whom I wanted to meet was Vittorio Alfieri…"
[229] Jacopo is originally from Venice, but leaves because he knows his name is on a 'lista di proscrizione.' In the late 1790s, Napoleon's forces occupied Venice and by October 1797 – just one week after the date of Jacopo's first letter – France and Austria signed the Treaty of Campo Formio which allowed Austria control over the region. Jacopo's exile after this event is likely influenced by the author's own life, as Foscolo also went into exile just after the treaty was signed because he viewed the treaty as a significant betrayal. For reaction to the treaty, see Margaret Plant, "Caged Lion: Austrian and French Rule" in *Venice: A fragile City*.

(Odoardo). Realizing their love will likely never come to fruition, Jacopo travels throughout a divided Italy that includes Milan, part of the Cisalpine Republic; Ventimiglia, part of the Ligurian Republic formed by Napoleon and ruled by the House of Savoy; and Florence, which was under Austrian control. When he learns that Teresa has married Odoardo, Jacopo returns to say goodbye to Teresa and then violently takes his own life. In relation to Alfieri's *Saul*, there are many indications that Jacopo is also a nationalist whose death seems prerequisite to a future unified nation

One of the reasons for his gloom and complex identity is the political division of his time. The division between the tyrannical leaders and the people of an emerging Italy is emphasized when Jacopo describes his own view of an Italian homeland and that of others around him. In his reflections on Teresa, he explains that, because Italy is under foreign rule and regionally divided, no Italian has a homeland either: "…Quand'anche l'amica mia fosse madre de' miei figliuoli, i miei figliuoli non avrebbero patria; e la cara campagna della mia vita se n'accorgerebbe gemendo... alle altre passioni che fanno alle giovinette sentire sull'aurora del loro giorno fuggitivo i dolori, e' più assai alle giovinette italiane, s'è aggiunto questo infelice amore di patria" (Foscolo 53).[230] Jacopo links a sense of divisions in 'Italy' to his division from Teresa, and the impossibility of union in both cases as the primary motive of his despair. Furthermore, the idea that his children would not have a homeland due to his ideological beliefs suggests that the strife caused from foreign occupation will not merely end with his generation and is a struggle which will continue to divide his people.

[230] "Even if my friend were the mother of my children, my children would not have a homeland, and the dear companion of my life would to her sorrow realise it'… To the other passions which make girls, and especially Italian girls, sorrow…is added this unhappy love of their homeland." All English translations of Foscolo's text can be found in: Foscolo, Ugo. *Le Le ultime lettere Di Jacopo Ortis*. Translated by J.G. Nichols, Hesperus Press, 2002.

These connections to Italian nationalism are further strengthened when Jacopo is depicted as an outsider in his own land. Politics and love are interwoven as Jacopo weeps for his nation: "Non accuso la ragione di stato che vende come branchi di pecore le nazioni... piango la patria mia, 'che mi fu tolta, *e il modo ancor m'offende*'" (Foscolo 50).[231] The italics, included in the original text, are a reference to Francesca da Rimini in Canto 5 of Dante's Inferno. Just as her love (Paolo) was taken from her (after their love affair), Jacopo here suggests that Italy's homeland was taken from him.[232] By invoking this tragic love story par excellence from the poet who was the first to conceptualize a national language, Foscolo both stirs emotional patriotism and longing for a united 'Italy' and, at the same time, foreshadows the inevitability of death and separation from this beloved nation.

In fact, from the beginning of the novel, Jacopo foresees that the only way he will be able to avenge himself against the foreign powers, that have "stripped, ridiculed, and sold" his beloved Italy ("spogliati, derisi, venduti") like a "prostitute and prize" ("terra prostituta premio sempre della vittoria"), is to add his own blood to the "shrieks" of his country: "Devastatori de' popoli, si servono della libertà come i Papi si servivano dell crociate. Ahi! Sovente disperando di vendicarmi mi caccerei un coltello nel cuore per versare tutto il mio sangue fra le ultime strida della mia patria" (Foscolo 11).[233] The divisions created by these 'devastatori de' popoli' are felt

[231] "I do not complain of reasons of state which lead nations to be sold like flocks of sheep…I mourn for my homeland, taken from me, '*in a way that still offends.*'"
[232] As a scholar of Dante, Foscolo published an illustrated version of the Divine Comedy 1842, a *Discorso sul testo della commedia di Dante* in 1825, and even an ode *A Dante* as early as 1795. Lansing has noted that "Dante played a central role" in Foscolo's writings "symbolizing the spirit of Italian unity and patriotism, the poet of exile, and uncompromising idealism" (Lansing 406). It would only seem natural that Foscolo, an author living in exile from his native region would identify with Dante, who also died in exile and was the first to theorize a unified vernacular language, an important component in the development of a nation.
[233] "To the ruin of whole peoples, [those in power] exploit what they call liberty as the popes exploited the crusades. Ah, how often in despair of vengeance I feel like plunging a knife into my heart to pour out all my blood amid the last shrieks of my homeland!"; This method of death is also similar to that of Saul in Alfieri's text.

by Jacopo as a violation that makes it illogical to go on living. In other words, it appears as though suicide for Jacopo offers some respite from the divisiveness, whether political or religious, that permeates his life. These conclusions are further strengthened when he writes "…un demone mi arde, mi agita, mi divora. Forse io mi reputo molto; ma e' mi pare impossibile che la nostra patria sia così conculcata mentre ci resta ancora una vita" (Foscolo 17).[234] Here, Jacopo personally identifies with his violated nation that makes its citizens despair of life.

He also identifies with those fellow citizens who would die if they had to keep secret their desire for a unified nation ("chiuder nel secreto il desiderio di patria"), because he understands this secret only destroys and bring grief to people's lives ("o strugge, o addolora tutta la vita" Foscolo 49). Jacopo counts himself among those who, instead of abandoning their desire for a unified nation, cherish the death that it might bring: "anzichè abbandonarlo, avranno cari i pericoli, e quell'angoscia, e la morte. Ed io mi sono uno di questi..." (Foscolo 49).[235] Parallels between the shroud of secrecy of Jacopo's ideals and the secret societies often associated with nationalists in the 19th century are apparent; Jacopo again points both to the secrecy in which people were forced to carry out their nationalizing activities. This quote is also significant because it reveals an inherent gloominess which hangs over the text, much like the ever-present despair in *Saul*. By indicating the he is one of those men who would rather die than 'abandon this desire,' Jacopo foreshadows his eventual death.

Death as a recourse to a divided homeland is a recurring theme in the novel. Jacopo concretely imagines the details of his death – his tomb, his mother coming to bless his ashes, Teresa who might come to say one more goodbye –and asks his friend Lorenzo, the addressee of

[234] "…a demon burns me, shakes me, consumes me. Perhaps I have a high opinion of myself, but it seems to me impossible that our homeland should be so violated while we are still living."
[235] "rather than abandon this desire, they will cherish the dangers, the anguish, and death itself. And I am one of these men…"

his letters, not to defend him, if someone questions his nationalist passions ("le mie ardenti passioni"), but to answer only: "He was a man and an unhappy one" ("non mi difendere, Lorenzo; rispondi soltanto: *Era uomo, e infelice*" (Foscolo 85). Jacopo does not withhold from the reader that this unhappiness was connected to his frequent feelings of feeling divided from his nation, feelings that made him want to scream: "grido quand'io mi sento insuperbire nel petto il nome Italiano, e rivolgendomi intorno io cerco, né trovo più la mia patria" (Foscolo 142-143).[236] This dissonance between his body and his reality in which there was no such corresponding nation made Jacopo feel excluded from his own identity as an 'Italian': "noi tutti Italiani siamo fuorusciti e stranieri in Italia... Per noi dunque quale asilo più resta, fuorché il deserto, e la tomba?" (Foscolo 116-117)[237] With these words, Jacopo expresses that it is his desire for a unified Italy that isolates and divides him. Finding no confirmation of this desire in life, death therefore becomes his only salvation.

Jacopo, however, does not view his suicide as *only* an exclusion from society. In a fictional conversation in Milan with the poet Giuseppe Parini (1722-1799), famous for his ideals of progress and republican reforms, Parini confirms Jacopo's plan for salvation while sharing his political pessimism. He suggests that Jacopo's ideals, because he has no power, will eventually be discredited by false charges or slander. Parini further claims that even if Jacopo and the nationalists were able to defeat foreigners and corruption to create an Italian republic, they would also end up having to use violence and force to achieve their goals: "Ma poniamo che tu superando e la prepotenza degli stranieri e la malignità de' tuoi concittadini e la corruzione de' tempi, potessi aspirare al tuo intento; dì? spargerai tutto il sangue col quale conviene nutrire una

[236] "I scream when I feel my chest swell with pride at the thought of being Italian, and then, looking around me, I look for and fail to find my nation."
[237] "we Italians are all political exiles and foreigners in Italy…and so for us what refuge now remains but the desert, and the tomb?"

nascente repubblica? Arderai le tue case con le faci della guerra civile? ... spegnerai con la morte le opinioni?" (Foscolo 125-126).[238] With phrases that emphasize Jacopo's property ('burn your houses') and physical body ('all the blood'), Parini is asking Jacopo if he is willing to give everything he has and to die for his ideas.[239] While questioning whether the young nationalist will 'shed all the blood with which a nascent republic must be nourished' may refer to bloodshed in battle, it could also represent a way of asking whether Jacopo would be willing to sacrifice his own life.

For Jacopo, suicide would not mean the end of his story. Though death presents an end to his suffering, it also presents him with the opportunity to be included in a long history of those who, like the Roman Cato, defended their political ideals. Idealized in literature since Roman times, Cato took his own life, because it was the only way left to express his love of Republican liberty under Caesar ("perché aveva prima tentato ogni via a non servire" Foscolo 53). Jacopo's reference suggests that merely dying for the love of liberty was not admirable; but suicide as a form of protest to avoid oppression and nourish 'a nascent republic' would be admired. It seems no coincidence that Dante's famous lines that paid tribute to Cato's love of liberty – "*Libertà va cercando ch'è sí cara/ come sa chi per lei vita rifiuta*" (Purgatory I, 71-72) – was the epigraph to the 1816 edition of the *Le ultime lettere*. Near the end of the novel, we learn that just before taking his own life, Jacopo came upon one of Teresa's paintings of him with the inscription citing the first part of Dante's tribute: "Libertà va cercando ch'è sì cara."[240] Jacopo removed the

[238] "But supposing you were able to aspire to your goal, overcoming the arrogance of foreigners, the malignity of your fellow citizens, and the corruption of these times – tell me, will you shed all the blood with which a nascent republic must be nourished? Will you burn your houses in the flames of civil war? ... Will you extinguish opinions with death?"
[239] It becomes even more apparent that Parini is referencing a death for Jacopo's nationalist ideas when considering that the Jacopo also uses the metaphor of fire early in the text to represent his desires for a unified Italy as a "demon [that] burns…consumes" him (Foscolo Trans. Nichols 11).
[240] "He looks for freedom, such a precious thing." (Purgatorio I.71).

glass for a moment, in order to add the rest in his own hand: “Come sa chi per la vita rifiuta” (Foscolo 165).[241] With this final gesture, it becomes clear that suicide presented a way for him to inscribe himself into a larger identity which he already felt had been taken from him. Only through his suicide could he be inscribed into a larger history of those who gave up their lives for the freedom to assert a secular Italian nationalist identity.

Critical to understanding how Foscolo and Alfieri’s texts can be read as a support of nationalist ideas is the context in which they were written. In their study *Voglio Morire! Suicide in Italian Literature, Culture, and Society 1789*-1919, Paolo Bernardini and Anita Virga provide compelling research that links the tradition of suicide to the nationalist cause in Italy, showing “how suicidal behaviors like melancholy and depression took political and social paths of a new nature and how suicide, not so much as philosophy of life…is deeply embedded in the construction of the Italian state, in the Italian ‘nation’ and in the rhetoric of liberation from foreign oppression” (Bernardini and Virga 8-9). Their analysis reveals that melancholy and suicide became viewed not as individualistic expressions of despair, but as public acts of resistance against unjust occupation and oppression.

Though the characters are frequently unhappy and dissatisfied with their current conditions, it seems a little unclear why suicide would be presented as a unifying factor. How could a social movement hope to sustain itself if it inscribed its members into a nationalist ideology through their own death? Citing Enrico Morselli’s “statistical and medical essay on suicide” (*Il suicidio: saggio di statistica morale comparata*. Milano, 1879), Bernardini and Virga note that rates of suicide spiked in the 19th century and that suicides were far more frequent for young men in northern regions, with Milan, Florence, Bologna, Venice, Padua, and Turin being

[241] “as they know who give up their lives for it.”

cities with the highest rates of suicide (173). As Bernardini and Virga suggest, these increased numbers specific to northern cities in Italy were no coincidence; these cities were most affected by foreign occupation and the nationalist movement. When considered in the context of these statistics, the works of Alfieri and Foscolo may have played a unique role; these texts were both shaped by social changes and helped craft a new narrative to describe them.

It would seem, according to Bernardini and Virga, that in the case of both Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere* and Alfieri's *Saul*, the suicide of each titular character brought political freedom and might be understood "as an act of virtue or public heroism" in defiance of the Catholic idea of suicide as a sin (Bernardini and Virga 6, 160). Since it is not clear how Alfieri's Saul would have committed a Catholic sin, it is important to investigate if Jacopo's suicide may have been understood as a subversion of Catholic authority. To explore this possibility, it can be fruitful to examine the ways in which Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere* may have diverged from its literary model, Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther*.

Since similarities between the two works have been sufficiently documented elsewhere;[242] I am interested here on how a comparison might reveal the ways Foscolo may have molded Jacopo to suit a specific Italian audience. In his book *Il Problema Dell'originalita Dell'Ortis,* Massimo Carlini argues that Foscolo inscribes the story of Werther into an Italian context as a way to "rivivere un'esperienza con occhi e sensibilità nuovi e con esiti artistici diversi, cioè prima non raggiunti" (71).[243] Certainly, the idea that Foscolo adapted the story to suit his country's political strife is not a novel concept; but Carlini's peculiar terminology raises

[242] Cf., for example, Glauco Cambon, "The Demon of Suicide and the Demon of Fiction" in *Ugo Foscolo: Poet of Exile*; Stefan Lindinger and Maria Sgouridou, "Looking for Love in Werther, Jacopo Ortis, and Leandros" in *Primerjalna književnost*; and Carlo Dapelo, "Il Werther e L'Ortis" in *Lettere Italiane*.

[243] "to relive an experience with new eyes and sensibilities and with different artistic outcomes that had not yet been reached."

an important question: what experience is Foscolo trying to 'relive…with new eyes' for his Italian readers? While Jacopo's status as an outsider in his own homeland might seem to refer exclusively to his status as a political exile, his Otherness may also have alternate implications when viewed in relation to his identifications in the text, in particular, his identification with Alfieri's Saul.

As we have seen, Jacopo explicitly expresses in the novel that he wants to meet Alfieri more than any other 'mortal.' But there are also other moments in which we learn of Jacopo's particular identification with Alfieri's character Saul. In a note to the reader, for example, we learn that a painter friend of Odoardo overhears Jacopo reciting verses from Alfieri's play:

> Una mattina il pittore stando a ritrarre la prospettiva de' monti, udì la sua voce fra il bosco: gli si accostò di soppiatto, e intese ch'ei declamava una scena del *Saule*. Allora gli riuscì di disegnare il ritratto dell'Ortis, che sta in fronte a questa edizione, appunto quand'ei si soffermava pensoso dopo avere proferito que' versi dell'atto II, scena I: 'Precipitoso / Già mi sarei fra gl'inimici ferri / Scagliato io da gran tempo; avrei già tronca / Così la vita orribile ch'io vivo (Foscolo 93).[244]

In acting out this scene the nationalist Jacopo casts himself as another nationalist figure – and a Jew – from Alfieri's work. These lines from *Saul*, foreboding the Jewish figure's impending suicide and portraying his unhappy life, serve a similar purpose in relation to Jacopo's mortality and despair. Moreover, as readers, we are invited to accompany the painter as a voyeur in witnessing Jacopo's secret performance, as he identifies with the Jewish figure of Saul.

This example is not the only one in which Jacopo is associated with Alfieri's nationalist text *Saul*. Again, the letters are punctuated by a note from an unknown narrator who explains

[244] "One morning the painter, who was engaged in depicting the mountains in perspective, heard [Jacopo's] voice from somewhere in the wood. He approached stealthily, and heard him declaiming a scene from Saul. That was when he managed to draw that likeness of Ortis which forms the frontispiece of this edition, exactly as he was when he paused in thought after having pronounced these verses from Act 2, scene 1: 'I would have hurled myself / Recklessly in among the hostile swords / a long long time ago; long since cut short / This dreadful life I am constrained to live.'"

that, in his last visit with Teresa's family, Jacopo picks up a book that Odoardo had been reading; again, it is a copy of Alfieri's play. He turns to the place where Odoardo had left off, Act III, Scene 4, and reads these lines from the play:

> Chi siete voi...? Chi d'aura aperta e pura
> Qui favellò? ... Questa? è caligin densa;
> Tenebre sono; ombra di morte... Oh mira;
> Più mi t'accosta; il vedi? Il Sol d'intorno
> Cinto ha di sangue ghirlanda funesta...
> Odi tu canto di sinistri augelli?
> Lugubre un pianto sull'area si spande
> Che me percote, e a lagrimar mi sforza...
> Ma che? Voi pur, voi pur piangete?... (Foscolo 152)[245]

This passage is part of a conversation in which Jonathan invites Saul to enjoy the clear weather, but Saul can only see 'thick fog' and the sun surrounded with 'a garland of disastrous blood.' Jacopo clearly sees himself in the darkness that clouds Saul's mind; putting down the book, he exclaims to Teresa's father that Saul's pain is "equal to his own" ("pari/Al dolor mio" Foscolo 152). Read in the context of the struggle for Italian nationalism, the clear air that Jonathan references might signify a certain future for the movement, which is a distinct contrast to the gloominess that clouds Saul's mind. Saul's rebuke in the passage and Jacopo's agreement implies path to a bright future is shrouded in bloodshed, much like the sacrifices that Saul and Jacopo both eventually make for the cause.

Given this identification of Jacopo with Alfieri's character Saul, is it possible to consider that Jacopo's temperament and hopes were shared also by Jewish communities who were also treated as exiles in their own homeland? After all, Jewish identity, as we have seen, was both

[245] "[Jacopo] glanced at one or two pages, then read in a loud voice: Who are you?...Who has spoken of the pure / And open air?...Like this? This is thick fog. / Shadows are here, and shades of death…Oh, look, / Come nearer. Do you see? The sun has round / Itself a garland of disastrous blood… / D'you hear the song sung by ill-omened birds? / A dismal sound of mourning fills the air / And strikes my ears, compelling me to weep… / But what is this? You too, are you too weeping?..."

linked to Italian nationalist struggles and cast as Other by those same struggles. Moreover, it is believed that Foscolo himself identified with the liberation struggles of Jews; in an episode of his youth, he "stormed the ghetto of Zante to liberate the Jews in the name of liberty and equality" (Vincent 4). As a young adult, Foscolo's writings were also greatly influenced by the French invasion of 1796 (two years before he began drafting *Le ultime lettere)*, which granted new liberties to Jewish communities across the peninsula. As we have seen, "the process of the Jews' emancipation occurred in conjunction with the emerging Italian nation: the Italian state liberated them and they in turn participated in the wars of independence to liberate and unite Italy" (Schächter 16). In this context, it is plausible to propose that Jacopo, a relatively well-assimilated individual who travels from one region to another in exile with no true homeland – and who identifies with the Jewish king Saul – might be productively read in relation to the figure of the Wandering Jew.

My understanding of the history of the Wandering Jew trope is indebted to the scholarship of George Anderson and Lisa Lampert-Weissig. In his study, *The Legend of the Wandering Jew*, George Anderson points out that the story of an eternal wanderer is common to many cultures. In fact, the wanderer is often portrayed as an exile with no real homeland who "blasphemed against the demigod Patriotism. The punishment of these sinners… was to remove them from the normality of mankind, usually to mark them apart from the society which they had flouted and to make them realize their predicament while realizing also that the conformists were prospering" (Anderson 2-3). In discussing Matthew Paris's depiction of the Wandering Jew in *Chronica Majora*, Lampert-Weissig notes that "The Wanderer is forced to linger, suspended in this moment of temporal collapse. He is, however, not only caught in an uncanny temporality, but also trapped between Jewish and Christian identities…" ("The Time of the Wandering Jew"

183). I would suggest that Jacopo can be read in relation to both characterizations of this trope. His physical navigation throughout the regions of Italy represent his psychological navigation in meditating on religion, as when visiting the tombs of Santa Croce in Florence. Though his negotiation is not necessarily between two religions, he is nonetheless 'trapped between' two different patriotic positions – one which recognizes the reality of a divided Italy, and the other which would forge a political unity for the emerging nation.

As we have seen, Jacopo often laments his status as an exile without a home: "Così noi tutti Italiani siamo fuorusciti e stranieri in Italia...Sbanditi appena dalle nostre porte, non troviamo chi ne raccolga" (Foscolo 116-117).[246] Certainly, without a home, Jacopo is constantly moving and traveling, both to flee persecution and to navigate his path to a noble, 'untainted' death. While his meanderings across the Italian peninsula certainly portray Jacopo as a wanderer, how does the text portray him as a wandering *Jew*? As Lampert-Weissig notes,

> The Wandering Jew's endless punishment reflects the uncomfortable spiritual stasis to which medieval Christians relegated their Jewish contemporaries…[he] embodies the denial of Jewish coevalness, presenting a Jew who is alive in the present, but never truly of it. Spiritually mired in a pre-Christian past, this Jew is preserved in a kind of spiritual stasis awaiting a prophesied Christian future (172).

Though Foscolo is not writing from a medieval Christian perspective, he presents Jacopo as a character stuck in the stasis of perpetual and irremovable gloom; despite his continual physical movements throughout northern regions of the peninsula, his mindset remains unaltered. Furthermore, Jacopo's unwavering gloom makes him 'alive in the present, but never truly of it;' though his voice is present through the act of writing his own letters, his detachment from any single locale and lack of a homeland suggests a sort of fractured identity. I suggest the religious connotations surrounding the certain connections between *Le ultime lettere* and Alfieri's *Saul*,

[246] "so all we Italians are political exiles and foreigners in Italy…The moment we are exiled from our own doors, we find no one to receive us."

together with these possible connections to the tradition of the Wandering Jew narrative, point to the fact that an anxiety over Jewish identity was haunting Foscolo's creation of his character Jacopo Ortis. These references, combined with Foscolo's personal desires to create a pluralist Italian identity and his favorable view of Jewish communities, suggests Foscolo may have secretly been invoking the struggles for freedom of Jewish communities to portray Jacopo's own struggles.

Reading Jacopo's suicide in relation to his status as a Wandering Jew may initially appear contradictory. If the character is an eternal wanderer, wouldn't suicide end this perpetual fate, thereby rendering his contribution to this trope inapt? For example, in discussing temporality of the Wandering Jew, Lampert-Weissig notes that his "…unnatural stretch of life marches along with Christian history, but he always remains trapped in his past, continually reliving the day he cursed Christ and sharing that experience with those he meets" ("The Time of the Wandering Jew" 176). Jacopo's eventual suicide would appear to negate this temporality and therefore pose a problem for envisioning him as another iteration of this trope. Instead, I suggest that his suicide casts Jewish identity in a unique space of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion; though suicide implies Jacopo's exclusion from a nationalist future, it also puts an end to treatment of Jewish identity as a narrative crutch to advance an ethnoreligious narrative. Whether or not we can ascertain that Foscolo was familiar with or may have been influenced by the trope of the Wandering Jew,[247] Jacopo's narrative – like that of Alfieri's Saul – suggests that Jewish identity

[247] Anderson cites that variations of the story are present in the Mediterranean as early as the 13th century (22). The narrative also gained increasing popularity after the novel *Juif Errant* was published in French by Eugene Sue in 1844. Lord Byron is known to have referenced the narrative and his contemporary, Ugo Foscolo is known to have cited the acclaimed British author on numerous occasions (Stabler 29-30) (Spector 173). Percy Shelley is also known to have written a poem on the Wandering Jew narrative in 1887, nearly a decade before Foscolo's *Ortis*. Given the proximity of these to Foscolo's writing, it is not impossible that he would have known about the narrative.

can be included into a larger, pluralist nationalist identity through a glorious death in support of such ideals. While Alfieri's Saul may present a future role for figures like David, who will live and carry on the ideals of the nation, both texts articulate the precarity of a pluralistic view in the making of a nation.

When reading Foscolo alongside other authors in this chapter, it is impossible to ignore the obvious references to the socio-political problems facing the Italian peninsula. In his article *Italy and the Incubus of the Novel*, Samuel Putnam suggests that most Italian literature is often at least indirectly affected by the political turmoil the country has seen since "Italy's cultural tradition…is marked by the presence of non-coherent and badly assimilated elements – to be explained in large part by the centuries of political disunity…" (396). As we have seen, these texts analyzed in this chapter could not provide a better illustration of the diverse ways in which 'non-coherent and badly assimilated elements' contribute to craft divergent forms of Italian nationalist identity – one which places the Catholic faith at its center and marginalizes Jewish identity and another which allows for religious pluralism without advocating for any one religious belief. The trajectory we have traced in the course of this dissertation from Sanuto to Foscolo suggests that these tensions have not yet been resolved. Thus, an understanding of these religious tensions gives us important tools for contextualizing the vestiges of this trajectory not only through the Risorgimento, but in the contemporary cultural moment as well.

CONCLUSION

> "Il gruppo dei Savi di Sion e Mayer Amschel Rothschild, l'abile fondatore della famosa dinastia che ancora oggi controlla il sistema bancario internazionale, portò alla creazione di un manifesto: 'I Protocolli dei Savi di Sion.'"[248]

Though the sentiment of this quote appears to belong in the pages of a history book, its most troubling feature is the fact that it was published quite recently. In early 2019, the prominent Movimento 5 Stelle Senator Elio Lannutti posted this now-deleted Tweet and a subsequent apology for suspecting Jews of controlling the international banking system, a centuries-old accusatory trope that was already widespread in the aftermath of the economic crisis of Venice in the early 16th century before the establishment of the first ghetto. In recent years,[249] Italy has begun to see a resurgence of nationalist sentiment of which the Movimento 5 Stelle party is merely one expression. Other instances include statements by deputy prime minister Matteo Salvini and prime minister Giuseppe Conte who have drawn criticism for their proto-fascist xenophobic policies.[250] Salvini even utilized the nationalist slogan 'Italy first' in

[248] "The group of Elders of Sion and Mayer Amschel Rothschild, the skilled founder of the famous dynasty that still controls the international banking system, led to the creation of the manifesto 'The Protocols of the Elders of Sion.'"

[249] The resurgence in nationalist sentiment can even be found in a popular, nationalistic football fan club. Cf. Arvid Larsson's article "The Irriducibili: a firm grip" on the Laziali webpage: https://thelaziali.com/2019/06/26/the-irriducibili-lazio-rome/

[250] Cf. Isabel Debre's article "Italy's Far-Right Minister Visits Israel, Drawing Criticism" (www.apnews.com/b73a687648bd4c7da37f068447638a30); Simone Somekh's article "Uproar after Italian Minister Wants to End Anti-Racism Law" (www.apnews.com/8b90ed5efd6948d7863513ba377953a7); or Jason Horowitz's article "Where Does Italy's Enfeebled Five Star Find Itself? At the Center of Power" (www.nytimes.com/2019/08/22/world/europe/italy-politics-five-star-democratic-party.html).

banning citizens from providing aid to immigrants who reach the country's shores.[251] This political rhetoric is perhaps made more troubling by the increase of antisemitic incidents in recent years. For example, the Osservatorio Antisemitismo (part of the Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea) has documented anti-Semitic episodes in Italy since 2012.[252] Their records indicate that, in only seven years, antisemitic incidents have increased by elevenfold. Especially notable are the recent threats made against Liliana Segre, an 89-year-old holocaust survivor and honorary Italian senator for life. Headlines across the world reporting these threats were, in part, a response to her advocacy in establishing an office of parliament dedicated to examining incidents of hate speech or racist rhetoric; the severity of the threats was such that she was assigned a permanent police escort everywhere in public.[253]

It is challenging to interpret and understand the genealogy of such incidents in the 21st century. Many scholars suggest that this type of violence and the rhetoric which inspired it was absent within the Italian peninsula before the 20th century because Jews were assimilated into their surrounding Christian communities (Weishouse 228-229, 246-247).[254] As noted in the

[251] For more information, see Sylvia Poggioli's NPA article "Italy's Matteo Salvini Hopes To Lead Nationalist Wave In Upcoming European Elections" (www.npr.org/2019/05/22/725023096/italys-matteo-salvini-hopes-to-lead-nationalist-wave-in-upcoming-european-electi).

[252] The Osservatorio defines antisemitism as "L'Osservatorio Antisemitismo classifica come episodio di antisemitismo qualsiasi atto intenzionale rivolto contro persone, organizzazioni o proprietà ebraiche, in cui vi è la prova che l'azione ha motivazioni o contenuti antisemiti, o che la vittima è stata presa di mira in quanto ebrea o ritenuta tale." For more information, see: L'Osservatorio Antisemitismo's website: www.osservatorioantisemitismo.it/episodi-di-antisemitismo-in-italia/.

[253] For further reading, see Sylvia Poggioli's NPR Article "Italian Holocaust Survivor Faces Threats After Calling For Investigation Into Hate." (https://www.npr.org/2019/11/11/778211815/italian-holocaust-survivor-faces-threats-after-calling-for-investigation-into-ha); and Claudio Lavanga's NBC news article "Italian Holocaust survivor under police protection after anti-Semitic threats" (https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/italian-holocaust-survivor-under-police-protection-after-anti-semitic-threats-n1078676).

[254] Weishouse essay is particularly interesting in its investigations of culinary traditions of Ashkenazi Jews in northern Italy. Though her analysis excellently details some similarities with culinary trends in Germany and their dissimilarity to those in Italy, her conclusion ultimately recognizes linguistic and cultural changes as a sign that the Jews were "left with little choice but to readjust their lives as the rest of Italy's Jews had done" and assimilate into a larger Italian community (246).

introduction, many scholars, like Renzo De Felice, even suggest that the origins of antisemitism in Italy can only be traced as far back as the 20th century. During Fascism, publications like *La Difesa della Razza* and cartoons for children published in *Il Balilla* often mocked Jewish communities and portrayed them as inherently different from the Italian people through a wide array of imagery. The literary analyses of my previous chapters illustrate a larger pattern at work in the Italian literary imagination; specifically, the continual reemergence of rhetoric fixated on the confinement or conversion of Jewish identity. In order to understand the re-emergence of anti-Semitism to the national stage in our current climate, we must challenge the scholarship that suggests that the origins of anti-Semitism can only be traced back to fascism and that before the 20th century, anxiety about the role of Jewish identity in the polity was absent from the thinking of writers and political officials.

My work is indebted to Remo Bodei who sees social identity as "composed of the braiding of many threads, each of which belongs to a particular history, that is more-or-less loosely connected to the others in space and time" (239). My research in literary texts reveals that one important thread of Italian social identity is a long-standing fear of participation of Jews in public life. If we cannot understand this thread, that goes back at least to the 16th century, it becomes impossible to understand the weave which came to constitute Italian identity in the formation of the nation or the eruption of anti-Semitism in the public arena today. As we have seen, literature presents a precious resource for identifying language, tropes, and narrative structures that still haunt Italy's political discourse today. Though the derogatory depictions of Jews as shadowy controllers of international banking systems, with which I began my dissertation and its conclusion, seem out of place in the 21st century, I would argue that it is not

at all surprising considering the representation of Jews in Italy's literary imagination, which is replete with such depictions.

Beginning my project with the establishment of the first ghetto in Venice, it was important to explore Sanuto's discourse on an early instance in which the preoccupation with Jewish difference led to the spatial segregation of Jews from their Catholic neighbors within their own home city.[255] Though many of Foucault's investigations, like those in *Madness and Civilization,* focused on the mid-seventeenth century, my readings showed that his thinking is pertinent to much earlier anxieties about relations between Catholics and Jews represented in Aretino's *Cortigiana* in which we witness a fear that Jewish thinking could somehow threaten to influence and contaminate an otherwise impermeable Catholic polity and in Copia Sulam's letters, in which we are able to witness an influential Jewish voice in her own defense.

It was also important to explore, in Chapter 2, the epidemic of forced conversions in 18th century Rome, unfounded fears of Jewish communities in northern regions, and Jewish voices that defended against such repression and fears. In this chapter, the diary of Anna del Monte and a polemical exchange between G.B.G. D'Arco and Benedetto Frizzi allowed us to explore, among other issues, the gendered dimension of anti-Semitism and the dynamics by which unfounded anti-Semitic fears could arise out of commercial relations between Jews and Catholics. The analysis of unfounded fears of Jews in 18th century discourse is crucial to understanding the historical roots of similar expressions of unfounded fears today.

[255] There have been some laws in the history of the Italian peninsula – even dating back to Theodosius II's Code of Law in 425 – which restricted Jews from living in certain regions, but these laws did not segregate the religious community into Jewish quarters. This is not necessarily true of the rest of Europe; for example, the Jewish quarter of Frankfurt was established in 1462. Cf. also Jordan Rosenblum, "Food and Identity in Early Rabbinic Judaism," who has argued that Jewish dietary restrictions represented an ideological separation from the gentile population of the Roman Empire. This argument could hypothetically be extended to suggest that any deviation from the faith in *any* region of the world in any historical moment could be interpreted as an ideological separation from a larger, non-Jewish society.

Finally, it was important to identify, in Chapter 3, the complex threads of national thinking that ultimately contributed to the making of Italy. Each text analyzed, from Carli's "Della Patria Degl'Italiani" to Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis*, allowed us investigate in detail the development of national identity as a never-ending tension between two competing views – one that advocated for Catholicism to remain at the center of politics, and the other that foresaw the prospects and the pitfalls of a pluralist nationalism. It was of crucial importance to discover, in this chapter, the precarious position of Jews even in a pluralist idea of the nation.

Without the historical understanding I have developed here in my research, it is difficult to understand, for example, Italy's current political climate surrounding immigration, particularly from largely Muslim countries. Though Italo-Muslim relations have a unique history which I would explore in a larger analysis, my work here on the historical roots of anti-Semitism in the making of Italy can lend itself to understanding the tensions facing other religious minorities in this largely Catholic nation. For example, Matteo Salvini's comments requiring ethnic shops to close early in the evening, insinuating that such locations were havens for drug dealers, stoked unfounded fears of (largely Muslim) immigrant communities.[256] Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte has called for an end to anti-racism laws like the 'Mancino' law, which allows for the prosecution of hate speech and violent racist acts.[257] Repealing this law would mean fewer protections for immigrant communities and religious minorities. Salvini and Conte have drawn criticism from Jewish and Muslim communities across Italy. Given these recent events, it would

[256] Cf. Angela Giuffrida's Guardian article "Italy's Matteo Salvini Says 'Little Ethnic Shops' Should Close by 9pm" (www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/12/italy-matteo-salvini-little-ethnic-shops-foreigners).
[257] Cf. Simone Somekh's AP News article "Uproar after Italian Minister Wants to End Anti-Racism Law" (www.apnews.com/8b90ed5efd6948d7863513ba377953a7); and Nick Robins-Early's Huffington Post article "Far-Right Italian Cabinet Minister Calls For Repealing Anti-Fascist Law" (www.huffpost.com/entry/italy-fascist-lega-far-right-mancino_n_5b6488dae4b0de86f4a0f5ce).

be important to research the ways in which both Jewish and Muslim communities have been represented in literary discourse throughout the history of the peninsula.

Despite these disturbing trends in recent years, there are also voices of dissent. The Union of Jewish Communities, a group which represents communities across Italy, has remained outspoken in protest against rising xenophobic language.[258] In particular, voices of protest have come from Collepardo, a small village south-east of Rome and the location of the Trisulti monastery. In 2018, the American nationalist Steve Bannon announced plans to convert the Trisulti monastery into a school for future politicians, the 'Academy of the Judeo-Christian West.'[259] As of 2019, citizens of this village effectively managed to halt his plans through continued protests and political activism, but plans for renovations may resume in early 2020 pending litigations.[260]

These expressions of protest are also nothing new in Italian history. Just as Asher Levi Meshullam spoke out against the establishment of the ghetto in Venice, Benedetto Frizzi protested G.B.G. D'Arco's unfounded beliefs about Jews and Risorgimento writers like Alfieri and Foscolo found a role for Jewish identity through its simultaneous inclusion to and exclusion from the nationalist movement. This trend continues to reemerge in current protests against anti-Semitic acts and language in Italy today. My research, which has revealed the 'threads' of religious tensions in texts extending back to the 16th century, shares the aims of Avery Gordon's

[258] Cf. Stephanie Kirchgaessner's Guardian article "Far-Right Italy Minister Vows 'Action' to Expel Thousands of Roma" (www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/19/italy-coalition-rift-roma-register-matteo-salvini).
[259] Cf. Tom Kington's LA Times article "Steve Bannon Hits Roadblock in Effort to Open School for Right-Wing Catholics in Italy" (www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-italy-bannon-school-20190531-story.html); and Spencer Sunshine's article "Steve Bannon's 'Washed Out' Antisemitism" (https://www.politicalresearch.org/2018/01/12/steve-bannons-washed-out-antisemitism).
[260] Cf. Cristina Ruiz's article "Steve Bannon Wins Again in Battle Against Italian Ministry of Culture" (https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/steve-bannon-wins-again-in-battle-against-italian-ministry-of-culture).

work in that it has "…gotten only so far as to insist on our need to reckon with hauntings and to ponder the paradox of providing a hospitable memory for ghosts out of a *concern for justice*" (60). In attempting to fill in the gaps which remain 'conspicuously absent' regarding the way Jewish identity has been portrayed in literature of the Italian peninsula, my work attempts to provide a more nuanced understanding of contemporary anti-Semitic rhetoric in Italy. Given the portrayal of Jewish identity which has haunted Italian literature, oscillating on a pendulum between inclusion and expatriation, I suggest the Risorgimento cannot be understood without making visible those religious tensions which were integral to the formation of Italy's national identity and will continue to influence the future for centuries to come.

APPENDIX

Removed May 2019. Thank you, Mayo Clinic Emergency Department surgical staff.

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