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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Již od středověku je britská literatura ve velmi těsném vztahu s italskou kulturou a dějinami. Tyto motivy se promítají do děl G. Chaucera, W. Shakespeara a mnoha dalších pozdějších spisovatelů. Autorka se ve své práci zaměří na zobrazení Itálie a Italů ve vybrané britské próze a poezii 19. a 20. století (např. R. Browning, W. Collins, J. Ruskin). Cílem výzkumu bude zjistit, jakým způsobem tito autoři vykreslují Itálii, její kulturu, hodnoty, obyvatelstvo, apod. Analýza vystopuje nejdůležitější aspekty a témata: kromě důrazu na otázky náboženské (římskokatolické versus protestantské vyznání), bude autorka například sledovat funkce a povahu italských postav. V úvodu nastíní obecně historický a literárněhistorický vztah mezi těmito dvěma kulturami. Práce bude založena na relevantní primární a sekundární literatuře.

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- Forster, Edward Morgan. *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. London: Penguin Books, 2001.
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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

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Annotation

This paper focuses on the depiction of Italy and Italians in works of British authors of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. The first part provides information about changing attitudes to Italy and Italians in British literature throughout history. The second part analyses Italian characters in works of Wilkie Collins and E.M. Forster. The last part deals with an analysis of approaches to Italy in works by John Ruskin and Robert Browning.

Keywords

Italy, Italians, ruins, villains, reformation

Anotace

Cílem této práce je nastínit, jak byli Itálie a Italové vyobrazeni v dílech britských autorů 19. a 20. a počátku století. První kapitola pojednává o měnícím se postoji k Itálii a Italům v britské literatuře během historie. Druhá část se zabývá analýzou Italských postav v dílech Wilkieho Collinse a E. M. Forstera. Poslední část sleduje, jaký měli k Itálii postoj autoři John Ruskin a Robert Browning.

Klíčová slova

Itálie, Italové, trosky, padouchové, reformace

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0. Introduction

Italy has always been a country that attracted a lot of people and many were enraptured by the beauties of Italy. Picturesque and sunlit landscapes, sea, delicious wine, spaghetti, historical sites and many other things is what people usually associate with Italy. “‘Italy’ is a term that for any foreign people covers a wide variety of cultural interests: the Latin classics, medieval and modern literature, art, music, history, the land, ‘Wo die Goldorangen glühen’¹, the Italian themselves.”² Italy thus has something to offer. Moreover, throughout its history Italy has influenced a lot of nations.

The Italian peninsula used to be a home of the great Roman Empire which conquered a big part of the known world at that time. It was the centre of the civilized world which could boast latest inventions, sophisticated technology and its architecture. It was a country rich in philosophers and writers who laid the foundations of the sciences and civilization. While barbarian tribes dwelled in their humble habitations, the Romans already had amphitheatres, spas and roads that are a proof of the level of advancement of the Empire. The Romans spread their knowledge into the rest of the known world and laid the foundations of the European civilization. What remained of the grandeur of the Empire are ruins that remind us of what the glory of Rome might have been those days and what a civilized nation must have dwelled there. The ruins will probably never stop fascinating people.

Italy is also associated with Christianity for it is the centre of the Roman Catholic Church with the Pope as its head. The Church, as a spiritual leader, had an impact on educating people and spreading knowledge. Nevertheless, in the 16th century the English broke up with the Catholic Church and brought the Church of England into being with the king as its representative. The Protestant movement caused the change in attitudes to the Catholic Church as well as to Italy, which was often in a negative way. This was often reflected in literature too.

Italy was not only a spiritual centre but also a cultural and scientific centre for it was the place where the Renaissance movement was established. New discoveries and inventions made an impact on the development of modern Europe. The country on the Italian peninsula was also a place where some of the oldest universities in Europe were situated with the first university in Bologna. A great number of people thus went to Italy to study at local universities in order to gain knowledge.

¹Translation: Where the gold oranges burn

²Kent Roberts Greenfield, *Modern Language Notes* 51, no. 7 (1936): 480.

Italy has drawn an attention of various writers and poets and was glorified by them. Some of the English writers chose Italy as a setting for their pieces of work. Alternatively, some characters were Italians. The exotic scenery and surroundings, and different nature of Italians are probably some of the reasons why authors found Italy suitable for their works. The purpose of this paper is to outline different attitudes towards Italy and Italians in British literature and how the stance on Italy changed in the course of time.

The bachelor thesis is divided into three parts. The aim of the first chapter is to present different attitudes of some of the English writers and poets to Italy. Italy has enchanted English writers and played an important role in literature since Chaucer's time. William Shakespeare, the English bard, used Italy as a setting for some of his plays and even some characters are Italians. Next, in the 17th and 18th century some of the English started to undertake journeys to the continent, which was known as the Grand Tour. The country that drew most of the attention of the tourists was Italy. They were chiefly interested in the remains of the ancient world. Some of these tourists wrote about ruins. The Grand Tourist writers mentioned in this paper are, for example, Joseph Addison, John Dyer, Ann Radcliffe. For each of them Italy was an embodiment of something else and it is the purpose of this paper to show it.

The second chapter deals with the way Italians were depicted in the works of two English writers. The first novel is *The Woman in White* by a Victorian writer Wilkie Collins. The character which is analysed is the Italian called Count Fosco. The second work by an early 20th century writer E.M. Forster *Where Angels Fear to Tread* also has an Italian character called Gino Carella to whom the attention is paid. The ways these two Italians are depicted in books are examined.

The third part is focused on the depiction of Italy by John Ruskin and Robert Browning. At first, the attitude of the art critic John Ruskin to Italy is displayed in his work *The Stones of Venice*. The second part of the third chapter shows what a Victorian poet Robert Browning imagines under the term Italy in his poem *The Englishman in Italy*.

1. Italy in British literature from Chaucer to Byron

1.1 Geoffrey Chaucer

An author who was undeniably influenced by Italy and Italian writers was Geoffrey Chaucer, a medieval poet who belongs to the best English poets during history. When he worked at a court as a diplomat, Chaucer undertook a diplomatic mission to France and Italy a few times. The first time he was in Italy, which was in 1372 and 1373, he encountered the Italian language and literature which had a significant influence on his future writing.³ In 1378, Chaucer was sent to Italy again, which changed his way of writing and the journey is said to have been a turning point of his writing to the Italian phase.⁴ He drew inspiration for his works from books written by Italian authors. Chaucer appreciated classical authors such as “Virgil, and Ovid whom he loved, and Lucan and Claudius whom he admired.”⁵ Nevertheless, the authors who cast a spell on Chaucer were his contemporaries like Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio.

At the time when Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio wrote their masterpieces, it was common to write in Latin. Nevertheless, each of them decided to use vernacular instead. Independently of them, Chaucer chose English as a language of his works instead of Latin and French. Although to use the English Midland dialect rather than French may have seemed to be risky, the Italian writers supported Chaucer to follow in his so far language of writing. Next, Boccaccio, for example, made a great impact on the style of Chaucer’s writing. It is “the gift of story construction”⁶ what he learnt from the Italian author. According to Janet Hubbard, Chaucer thus acquired the technique to construct a plot, which helped him to develop into a better writer. Boccaccio’s *The Decameron* “bears deep structural similarities to the *Canterbury Tales*.”⁷ Similarly, Chaucer was affected by two of Boccaccio’s poems, *Testide* and *Il Filostrato*, which played important roles in developing Chaucer’s writing style. After some time the “*Testide* became the *Knight’ Tale* and (...) *Il Filostrato* bloomed into *Troilus and Criseyde*.”⁸

³Janet Hubbard-Brown, “Chaucer in Dual Roles,” in *Chaucer Celebrated Poet and Author*, (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2006), 58.

⁴Hubbard-Brown, “Chaucer in Dual Roles,” 61.

⁵Marchette Chute, *Geoffrey Chaucer of England* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 2013), 114.

⁶Hubbard-Brown, “Chaucer in Dual Roles,” 63.

⁷Tison Pugh, “Chaucer’s Sources and Influences,” in *An Introduction to Geoffrey Chaucer* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013), 172.

⁸Chute, *Geoffrey Chaucer of England*, 128.

Although the Italian impact upon Chaucer was mainly in terms of writing rather than describing Italy, one story from *The Canterbury Tales* is set in Italy. It is The Clerk's Tale and the clerk in the prologue describes Italian scenery:

Describing Piedmont, the Saluzzo vale,
And the high Apennines that one may see
Bounding the lands of western Lombardy;
And he is most particular to tell
Of Monte Viso, where, from a little well,
The river Po springs from its tiny source.
Eastwards it runs, increasing on its course,
Towards the Aemilian Way; Ferrara past,
It reaches Venice and the sea at last.⁹

Chaucer with high probability describes the countryside in Italy he saw with his own eyes and may have been impressed by the Italian countryside, especially by the "high Apennines" because there are not so high mountains in England.

1.2 Renaissance and Reformation

Chaucer, however, was not the only person influenced by Italy. In the 13th century a new way of thinking started to develop in Italy which is known today as the Renaissance. This style later spread to the rest of Europe. Nonetheless, the Renaissance became widespread in England no sooner than in the 16th century.¹⁰ One of the aspects that Renaissance brought was "a revival of individuality."¹¹ The stress on personality and free mind contributed to conducting researches in natural sciences and led to new discoveries and inventions. For example, the discovery in astronomy in which was found out that the Earth revolves around the Sun and not the other way around, as it was thought at that time, was completely a revolutionary idea. Next, the invention of the printing press later shown to be instrumental in spreading beliefs and knowledge. The Renaissance also led to rediscovery of ancient authors, art and culture of the Greek and Roman Empires. However, it was rediscovery mostly for the rest of Europe for Italy had never completely lost a contact with the ancient times owing to the invasions of other cultures.¹² Classical authors such as Vergil, Cicero, Ovid and Horace were read and they influenced other writers. Along with the ancient writers, contemporary

⁹ Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Clerk's Tale," in *The Canterbury Tales*, trans. Nevill Coghill (London: Penguin Books, 1977), 339.

¹⁰Michael Hattaway, ed., "Early Tudor Humanism," in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 15.

¹¹E.M. Hulme, *The Renaissance, The Protestant Revolution and The Catholic Reformation in Continental Europe*, rev. ed. (New York: The Century, n. d.), 74.

¹²Hulme, *The Renaissance*, 74.

Italian ones like Petrarch, Dante and Boccaccio were also read and made an impression on later authors. In addition, “English men went to study in Italy, and Italian scholars came to teach and write in England.”¹³

Nevertheless, at the same time England was affected by the Protestant movement which commenced with Henry VIII’s breaking away with the Catholic Church and appointing himself the head of the Church. His Reformation thus — in contrast to other European countries — “began not with interest in Protestant doctrines, to which he was resolutely opposed.”¹⁴ Only when Elizabeth I ascended to the throne did the English Protestantism fully manifest. This was accompanied by hatred for Catholics. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I anti-Catholicism advanced because people still remembered the persecution of Protestants by Mary, Elizabeth’s sister, and Catholicism was perceived as cruel and intolerant.¹⁵

The Protestant Reformation was a result of dissatisfaction with the abuses of the Catholic Church. Although not all people were displeased with the Church and still went to churches, the overall impression of the Church was negative. Some reformers like Martin Luther, John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli were against the corruption. John Wycliffe, the English scholar of the 14th century, whose beliefs were used by some reformers as a basis for their teachings, for example, demanded the Bible to be available to the laity.¹⁶ The Church found the availability of the Bible dangerous as it could possibly lead to a different interpretation of the Bible than the Church taught it.¹⁷ The Church demanded to blindly obey their teachings; they taught that “individuality was rebellion and sin.”¹⁸ Next, the Church and some of the Popes were perceived as corrupt. The Pope Alexander VI, for instance, was thought to be a “corrupt, worldly and ambitious pope.”¹⁹ He was criticized besides other things for nepotism when he proclaimed his son a cardinal.²⁰ Another Pope Leo X is connected with wealth and selling of indulgences.

The wars with France, his lavish support of the arts, the construction of St. Peter’s, and a projected Crusade against the Turks all contributed to the financial needs of the

¹³Hattaway, “Early Tudor Humanism,” 18.

¹⁴William E. Burns, “The Making of Protestant Britain (1529-1689),” in *A Brief History of Great Britain* (New York: Facts on File, 2010), 95.

¹⁵Burns, “The Making of Protestant Britain (1529-1689),” 101.

¹⁶A. G. Dickens, “The Abortive Reformation,” in *The English Reformation*, rev. ed. (London: Fontana, 1967), 41.

¹⁷Anthony Burgess, “The English Bible,” in *English Literature* (Harlow: Longman, 1974), 41.

¹⁸Hulme, *The Renaissance*, 60.

¹⁹Encyclopaedia Britannica “Alexander VI,” Last modified March 16, 2007, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Alexander-VI>.

²⁰“Alexander VI.”

papacy. One important source of revenue had long been the dispensing of indulgences (remission of the temporal penalty for sins) for money.²¹

The selling of indulgences was the main issue Martin Luther dealt with in his *95 Theses*. In the first thesis he stressed that people should repent all their life and not only when they commit a sin. He also mentioned in the fifth thesis that the Pope should not be seen as powerful. “The pope has neither the will nor the power to remit any penalties beyond those imposed either at his own discretion or by canon law.”²² In the sixth thesis he emphasised that the guilt can be remitted only by God, not the Pope. The 41st and 43rd theses were focused on the fact that it should not happen that people misunderstand the indulgences and will prefer them to acts, such as giving money to those who are in need, which is better than the indulgences.²³

These are just some of the issues that caused that the Protestants adopted the negative attitude to the Catholic Church and its believers. The Reformation thus changed the way Italy and Italians were perceived to a certain level. Italy was often associated with the Catholic Church, which is proved later in this chapter.

1.3 William Shakespeare

The author who is inseparably connected with Italy is William Shakespeare. He is best known for his *Romeo and Juliet* and their romantic dialogue on the balcony in Verona. However, *Romeo and Juliet* is not the only play by Shakespeare that takes place in Italy. Most of his early comedies and six out of ten tragedies have an Italian setting.²⁴ Some of them are *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Although it is not certain whether Shakespeare could speak Italian, he drew inspiration for some of his plays from Italian sources translated into English.²⁵

When reading Shakespeare’s works, readers visit various places in Italy. Each place is used for different purposes. “Different cities in Italy are chosen for different plays and given distinct qualities and associations.”²⁶ Verona, for example, is associated with love and

²¹ Encyclopaedia Britannica “Leo X,” Last modified February 9, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leo-X>.

²² Manchester University, “*The Ninety-Five Theses*,” accessed March 18, 2017. <http://users.manchester.edu/Facstaff/SSNaragon/Online/texts/318/Luther,%2095%20Theses.pdf>.

²³ “*The Ninety-Five Theses*,”

²⁴ Park Honan, “Služebník lorda komořího,” in *Shakespeare: životopis* (Litomyšl: Paseka, 2011), 189.

²⁵ British Library, “*Shakespeare and Italy*,” Accessed February 26, 2017, <https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/shakespeare-and-italy>

²⁶ “*Shakespeare and Italy*.”

devotion for it is there “where the true mutual love of Proteus and Julia is nurtured, before Proteus travels to Milan and betrays her”²⁷ in the *Two Gentleman of Verona*. Similarly, Verona is a place where forbidden love of Romeo and Juliet blossoms against the will of their parents. Venice, on the other hand, is connected with the image of the centre of international trade. In the play *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock makes a deal with Antonio. Shylock says to Antonio: “Then meet me forthwith at the notary’s; / Give him direction for this merry bond, / And I will go and purse the ducats straight.”²⁸ Additionally, “Venice was also thought of as a place where different nations and races met.”²⁹ For instance, there are Jews represented by Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* and Moors in *Othello* with Othello as their representative.

Shakespeare’s characters were Italians in some of his works. One of them is the merchant Antonio in the comedy *The Merchant of Venice*. Antonio is an affluent man who is treated with reverence by people in Venice. Most of the people in Venice consider him to be amiable and courteous. Salerio believes that there is not a more kind-hearted man in the world than Antonio.³⁰ Bassanio, to whom Antonio is passionately devoted, is of a similar opinion. He says:

The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best condition’d and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.³¹

Another trait of personality that fits to the description of Antonio is generosity. He provides loans to people without interest unlike the Jew Shylock who despises Antonio for it. When he sends Bassanio to inquire who would lend him money he says: “(...) no question make / To have it of my trust or for my sake.”³² He despises the idea of lending money for profit. To require extra money for his service appears to be against his nature. On top of that, Antonio saved Shylock’s debtors from sequestration more than once.³³ The merchant appears to be compassionate and willing to help. He shows that friendship should be based on love and kindness, for which he is admired by those who wish to borrow his money. The Jew Shylock,

²⁷ “*Shakespeare and Italy*.”

²⁸ William Shakespeare, “The Merchant of Venice,” in *The Works of William Shakespeare* (New York: Black’s Readers Service, 1937), 227.

²⁹ “*Shakespeare and Italy*.”

³⁰ Shakespeare, “The Merchant of Venice,” 233.

³¹ Shakespeare, “The Merchant of Venice,” 239.

³² Shakespeare, “The Merchant of Venice,” 224.

³³ Shakespeare, “The Merchant of Venice,” 239.

on the other hand, is greedy and hostile. Finally, Antonio can be described as unselfish as he is obliging to sacrifice his life in favour of his friend Bassanio. Believing it is the last day of his life, Antonio says to his best friend:

Repent not you that you shall lose your friend
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.³⁴

To sum up, in *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare views the Italians via Antonio as benign, fair and selfless tending to behave well towards other people.

The tragedy *Othello* written a few years later than *The Merchant of Venice*, on the other hand, shows a shift in an attitude to Italians. The Italian character to whom the attention is paid is Iago. While Antonio is perceived as a kind man willing to sacrifice his own life for his friend, Iago plays a villain. The driving power that leads Iago to commit crime and to revenge is his hatred for Othello. He suspects Othello of sleeping with his wife. However, it is not probably the only reason for his hatred. In secrecy Iago schemes against the Moor to revenge, but on the outside he pays considerable attention in order not to raise suspicion. He thinks:

And what's he, then, that says I play the villain?
When this advice is free I give and honest,
Probal to thinking, and, indeed, the course
To win the Moor again?³⁵

His plan succeeds because other people speak highly about him. Othello, for example, says "Honest Iago"³⁶; Cassio says: "I never knew / A Florentine more kind and honest."³⁷ Additionally, Iago manipulates people; he tells lies and flatters people. He gives the impression that he desires to help but in fact he does it for his own sake. He is also aware of the interests and flaws other people have and is able to utilize them. For instance, the villain makes use of Othello's gullibility, which is the reason of his tragic end. "The Moor is of a free and open nature, / That thinks men honest that but seem to be so; / And will as tenderly be led by the nose."³⁸ Iago inconspicuously suggests Othello that his wife Desdemona may love another man. Trusting the villain and being unwilling to admit that Iago may deceive him, Othello starts to suspect Desdemona. Furthermore, Iago is capable of killing in order to

³⁴Shakespeare, "The Merchant of Venice," 244.

³⁵ William Shakespeare, "Othello," in *The Works of William Shakespeare* (New York: Black's Readers Service, 1937), 1186.

³⁶ Shakespeare, "Othello," 1178.

³⁷ Shakespeare, "Othello," 1187.

³⁸ Shakespeare, "Othello," 1179.

achieve his goal. What makes Iago seem to be more repugnant is the fact that readers cannot do anything to stop him but watch his next steps.

1.4 The Grand Tour

After the Reformation, which changed the way the English perceived Italy, England did not lose contact with Italy. In the 17th century the concept of undertaking journeys to the Continent started to formulate and became popular mainly in the 18th century. Such trips to the continental part of Europe were known under the name the Grand Tour and were primarily taken to France and Italy. Initially, the Grand Tour was undertaken mostly by young men who came from wealthy families. Nevertheless, it later became common among women to go on the tour as well. What the tourists appreciated most in Italy were “the remains of the ancient world.”³⁹ Among the most popular cities for the tourists ranked for example, Florence, Verona, Venice, Naples and Rome. Some of the visitors enchanted by the beauties of Italy put their impression on the canvas or wrote about it.⁴⁰

One of those who used a pen and ink to summarize their impressions Italy made on them was Joseph Addison. In his *A Letter from Italy* he focuses on the greatness of ancient Rome. For him “what mattered in Italy was the grandeur it had lost, and not the artistic and natural wealth it still possessed.”⁴¹ Addison mentions that although there is much to envy Italy in terms of warm climate, “blooming mountains and her sunny shores”⁴², wine or olives flooded with oil, hardly anybody can really enjoy it “While proud Oppression in her valleys reigns, / And Tyranny usurps her happy plains.”⁴³ It is freedom that is of more importance to Addison than the splendid country and the hot and humid weather. Freedom that used to domain the Apennine peninsula is gone now. Instead, it is Britain that takes pride in liberty. Although the life in Italy may be more joyous and easier, when there’s no liberty it is not worth it. “Tis Liberty that crowns Britannia’s isle, / And makes her barren rocks and her bleak mountains smile.”⁴⁴

Another author who grieves over the glory of the old times is Lord Lyttelton. In *An Epistle to Mr. Pope from Rome* the author deals with the decadence of contemporary Italy.

For now no more these climes their influence boast,

³⁹ Gresham Colledge, “*The Grand Tour of Europe*,” Last modified April 5, 2009, <https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/the-grand-tour-of-europe>

⁴⁰ “*The Grand Tour of Europe*.”

⁴¹ Kenneth Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 2.

⁴² Thomas Tickell, ed., “A Letter from Italy,” in *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison: With the Exception of His Numbers of the Spectator*, vol. 5-6 (New York: William Durell & Company, 1811), 221.

⁴³ Thomas Tickell, ed., “A Letter from Italy,” 221.

⁴⁴ Thomas Tickell, ed., “A Letter from Italy,” 223.

Fall'n is their glory, and their virtue lost;
From Tyrants and from Priests the Muses fly,
Daughters of Reason and of Liberty.⁴⁵

He claims that art flourishes when the country is liberal. Italy used to be the cradle of knowledge, art, and science and influenced the world. However, wealth and luxury were one of the reasons of the end of the ancient civilisation. It is still the ruins reminding of the grace of old days that is worthy of lauding than contemporary art and architecture. "Those hallow'd ruins better pleas'd to see / Than all the pomp of modern luxury."⁴⁶

The theme of ruins is connected with another author John Dyer in his work *The Ruins of Rome*. Unlike the previous authors, Dyer, according to Kenneth Churchill, "stresses not the achievement of the Romans but the significance of 'luxury' as a cause of their decline."⁴⁷ A life full of opulence which promised to enjoy all the pleasures life can offer has lured a lot of people. Nevertheless, revelry often entails a decline of values, corruption and the consideration what really matters in life. Needless to say, the abundance of affluence has changed not one man and his values. Luxury also has power over the heads of states, which is the case of the Roman Empire, for example. Dyer says about luxury: "O luxury, / Bane of elated life, of affluent states, / What dreary change, what ruin is not thine? / How doth thy bowl intoxicate the mind!"⁴⁸ Dyer also makes an appeal to the British for not forgetting that Rome used to be a liberal country which Britain is now but avarice blinded the ancient state and led to its fall. "Tyranny howe'er / Deigned to walk forth awhile in pageant state / And with licentious pleasures fed the rout."⁴⁹

The theme of Italy was also popular among Gothic writers (which often suited them as a mystic place). One of them was Ann Radcliffe whose romance *The Italian or the Confessional of the Black Penitents* is situated in Italy and the characters are of Italian origin too. Radcliffe herself never visited Italy. Therefore, she had to rely on second-hand sources such as guide books, topographical art and also her own imagination to give readers an idea of Italian landscape.⁵⁰ "Of all the sensational pictures of Italy none was so impressive or so influential as Mrs Radcliffe's."⁵¹ She often gives a detailed and vivid description of the

⁴⁵Lord Lyttelton, "An Epistle to Mr. Pope from Rome," in *The Poetical Works of Lord Lyttelton* (London: 1788), 76.

⁴⁶Lyttelton, "An Epistle to Mr. Pope from Rome," 77.

⁴⁷Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 4.

⁴⁸John Dyer, "The Ruins of Rome," in *The Poetical Works of John Dyer* (Edinburg: 1779), 37.

⁴⁹Dyer, "The Ruins of Rome," 38.

⁵⁰Ann Radcliffe, *The Italian or the Confessional of the Black Penitents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), ix.

⁵¹Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 16.

countryside around Naples and Rome that it appears that she visited Italy and saw the splendour of the countryside on her own. For example, there are “pinnacles and vast precipices of various-tinted marbles, intermingled with scanty vegetation, such as stunned pinasters, dwarf oak and holly, which gave dark touches of the many-coloured cliffs.”⁵² The scenery has soothing power on the character Elena. “Her spirits being gradually revived and elevated by the grandeur of the images around her”⁵³, she ceases to meditate on her miserable life for a while. Radcliffe also admires the magnificence of the remains of ancient Rome. “(...) some of those mighty monuments of Rome’s eternal name, those sacred ruins, those gigantic skeletons, which once enclosed a soul, whose energies governed a world!”⁵⁴

Mrs Radcliffe’s Italian character called Schedoni is not, on the contrary, depicted in such an appealing way. She shows the ambivalence of British stance on Italy and Italians when Italy is perceived both splendid for its landscapes and repugnant and terrifying for their people. It was Jacobean tragedy that contributed to the negative perception of Italians seen as passionate and cruel.⁵⁵ The reason is that Italy is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church which was perceived as “the epicentre of spiritual corruption.”⁵⁶ Although not all characters are depicted as callous, the character of the confessor Schedoni is. He is the villain of the narrative whose crimes are gradually revealed to readers. Schedoni does not have a good reputation among his associates; they rather despise him and are afraid of him that love him. He is corrupted and sees “only evil in human nature.”⁵⁷ Schedoni desires to get promotion at any cost and he sees an opportunity in helping Marchesa, who has a high social status and to whom Schedoni serves as her confessor. To reach his ambitious goal, Schedoni is capable of doing anything, even killing. When Marchesa needs to get rid of innocent Elena, it is Schedoni who comes up with “the only possible” way, which is to kill Elena. Fortunately, he finally does not kill her. Nevertheless, the fact that he can conceive such an atrocious crime and intends to commit it reflects his violent and immoral character. This is confirmed at the end of the story when readers get to know that many years ago he killed his brother to gain his wealth, position and wife. Schedoni’s wife treated with cruelty thus never accepts him as a person she could love. Schedoni, at that time known as Count di Bruno, attempts to kill his wife as well. Either way, the Confessor arouses the feeling of terror and aversion. Besides

⁵²Radcliffe, *The Italian*, 62.

⁵³Radcliffe, *The Italian*, 62.

⁵⁴Radcliffe, *The Italian*, 195.

⁵⁵Radcliffe, *The Italian*, xii.

⁵⁶Radcliffe, *The Italian*, xiii.

⁵⁷Radcliffe, *The Italian*, 52.

Schedoni, other friars in the book are depicted as ruffians unable or unwilling to show compassion, especially those working for the Inquisition. There is a description of Inquisitors:

Their visages, with few exceptions, seemed stamped with the characters of demons. Vivaldi could not look upon the grave cruelty, or the ferocious impatience, their countenances severally expressed, without reading in them the fate of some fellow creature, the fate, which these men seemed going, even at this moment, to confirm.⁵⁸

This quotation confirms the negative attitude of the English to the Catholic Church and its clergy, which has affected the way Italians

Italy was also attractive for some of the Romantic writers, for example, George Gordon Byron who lived in Italy. The strong impression Italy left with him is visible in his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* Canto IV. What he is mainly fascinated by are ruins. Italy for Byron, more specifically Rome, is full of remains of the Roman Empire and it represents former greatness of Rome, which used to be a world empire that conquered a significant part of the world. At the time when Rome was in its heyday, it overshadowed other states with its latest inventions, knowledge and imposing buildings which were regarded as eternal. Unfortunately, its glory was temporary as well as the glory of other civilizations. The ruins remind us of fragility of the imperial power.⁵⁹ Byron says: "A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay."⁶⁰ Time passes inexorably and what was once great is now just a memory. Empires could gain unbelievable power and influence, however, they could lose it in a moment, though. "Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee — / Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?"⁶¹ All of these empires used to be majestic but they met their ends and now they are nothing but skeletons as Byron calls them. In addition, Byron compares himself to the ruins. "But my soul wanders; / I demand it back to meditate amongs decay, and stand / a ruin amidst ruins."⁶² According to the poet, a man is similarly vulnerable like civilizations. A man has his own aspirations to do wonderful things but he also has his own limitations. Time passes and others get a chance to accomplish something. Nature is everlasting, according to Byron. "These days are gone — but beauty still is here. / States fall, arts fade — but nature doth not die."⁶³ For Byron nature is beautiful and powerful. A man in comparison with nature is nothing. Nature can show people its power through natural

⁵⁸Radcliffe, *The Italian*, 197.

⁵⁹Cecilia Enjuto Rangel, "Introduction," in *Cities in Ruins: The Politics of Modern Poetics* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2010), 10.

⁶⁰George Gordon Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto the Fourth," in *The Complete Poetical Works of Byron* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, c1933), 66.

⁶¹Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto the Fourth," 82.

⁶²Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto the Fourth," 59.

⁶³Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: Canto the Fourth," 55.

disasters like earthquakes, floods and fires. Nature could even threaten colossal buildings that are said to be built for many generations

2. Italians in the Works of British Authors

2.1 Italians in *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins

This chapter focuses on the novel *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins. The main attention is paid to an Italian Count Fosco living in England and the way he is depicted as an Italian in the book. Fosco “represents the Italian identity mandated by the Victorian society, embodying the bourgeoisie depiction of the Italian.”⁶⁴

As the name “Count Fosco” implies, Fosco is a nobleman. “The title ‘Count’ emphasises the nobility of his birth, and ‘Fosco’ in Italian means ‘Dark, Gloom’. Hence, ‘Count Fosco’ in this context suggests a ‘dark’ character of ‘noble’ birth.”⁶⁵ Furthermore, the title “count” does not exist in Britain. However, this title was mainly used for villains, for example, Stoker’s *Dracula*.⁶⁶ People with a title in their names (whichever it was) were usually connected with power and money.

Throughout the novel Fosco mostly makes an impression of a villain. Andrew Elfenbein uses the word “corrupt”⁶⁷ to describe Count Fosco. According to the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, to be “corrupt” is to be “willing to use their power to do dishonest or illegal things in return for money or to get an advantage”⁶⁸. This description perfectly fits Fosco. He is a very powerful man who has a “desire for profit”⁶⁹ and does whatever is needed to achieve his goal. A person almost blinded by the vision of becoming rich is capable of doing things that other people would regard as immoral. For instance, when it appears that Fosco’s companion Sir Percival is far from receiving money from his wife which he needs for “survival”, it is Fosco who comes up with a solution to this complicated problem. Fosco conceives to change identities of Laura Fairly and her half-sister Anne Catheric who resemble each other. When the right Anne dies, Laura is pronounced dead and Sir Percival and Fosco obtain money by fraud.

To achieve his goal, Fosco makes use of the influence he has on other people. Evidence of this is that Fosco has a considerable power over Sir Percival who is regarded as a quick-

⁶⁴Sean M Donnell, “*The Italian Ambivalence of Wilkie Collins in The Woman in White*,” Elcamino.edu. <https://www.elcamino.edu/faculty/sdonnell/collins.htm>.

⁶⁵ Donnell, “*The Italian Ambivalence of Wilkie Collins in The Woman in White*,”

⁶⁶ Sebastian Faulks, “Villains,” in *Faulks on Fiction: Great British Characters and the Secret Life of the Novel*, (London: BBC, 2011), 12.

⁶⁷Andrew Elfenbein, “Recent Studies in the Nineteenth Century,”

Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900 Vol. 42, No. 4, The Nineteenth Century (Autumn, 2002): 871.

⁶⁸ Oxford University Press. “*Oxford Learners Dictionaries*.” [Oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com. http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/corrupt_1?q=corrupt](http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/corrupt_1?q=corrupt).

⁶⁹Donnell, “*The Italian Ambivalence of Wilkie Collins in The Woman in White*.”

tempered and stubborn man who prefers being his own master to be answerable to someone. Consequently, Laura has a grudge against Fosco, because, as she says: “He has so much more power over my husband than I have.”⁷⁰ Laura is nothing but the source of money for Percival. Another example of Fosco’s way of manipulating people is to discover what they like. As an illustration, he finds out that Laura does not have a liking for him and at the same time he learns she adores flowers.⁷¹ According to Faulks, “In a novel, the villain is the one who knows what’s going on; he has the gen; he holds the keys to the plot, in both senses of the word.”⁷² Needless to say, nothing escapes Fosco’s notice. Sometimes he would not probably know everything if it were not for his wife, Madam Fosco, who is his puppet and does whatever he tells her to do. Before she met Fosco, she used to talk a lot but now she does not dare to speak without permission. She just “waits to be instructed.”⁷³ She is “utterly denatured by her husband, acts as a domestic spy betraying her nieces to family tyrants.”⁷⁴ This is proved by following sentences. Believing nobody follows her, Marian leaves house quietly so as to send secretly her letters. Unfortunately for Marian, Madame Fosco spies on her, reads the letters and informs Fosco of their contents. Therefore, Fosco has everything under his control and it is he who is the one upon them for most of the story.

Another way which enables Fosco to manipulate people and reach his goal is his exemplary behaviour towards women and servants. Little would Fosco have success if he were like Percival who flares up and is impatient. On the contrary, Fosco tends to be kind, patient and entertaining. “He has that quiet deference, that look of pleased, attentive interest, in listening to a woman, and that secret gentleness in his voice, in speaking to a woman, which say, his usual command of the English language necessarily helps him.”⁷⁵ Corrupted as he is, Fosco behaves well on the outside. He often even makes Marian laugh against her will. He seems interested in people’s lives, even the servants. For the servants it is a pleasure to work for the Count. Eliza Michelson says about him: “The only person in the house, indeed, who treated me, at that time or at any other, on the footing of a lady in distressed circumstances, was the Count.”⁷⁶ She also mentions that she had no reason to suspect the

⁷⁰ Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White* (London: Penguin English Library, 2012), 251.

⁷¹ Collins, *The Woman in White*, 244.

⁷² Faulks, “Villain,” 12.

⁷³ Collins, *The Woman in White*, 256.

⁷⁴ Peter Caracciolo, “Wilkie Collins's “Divine Comedy”: The Use of Dante in *The Woman in White*,” *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 25, no. 4 (1971): 398.

⁷⁵ Collins, *The Woman in White*, 240.

⁷⁶ Collins, *The Woman in White*, 399.

Count because she was absolutely convinced of his impeccable moral character.⁷⁷ Other servants have no reason to be dissatisfied with him as well. With regard to this way of treating people, Fosco in a way resembles Shakespeare's Iago. Both of them tend to conduct well on the outside in order not to raise suspicion. Each of the villains thus pretends to be somebody else so as to carry out their evil plans.

Moreover, it is also Fosco's neat and elegant appearance that contributes to the impression of Fosco being a decent, polite man instead of immoral and dishonest. The Count tends to maintain his appearance in order to look elegant all the time. Marian describes him as a man whose

complexion has a singular sallow-fairness, so much at variance with the dark-brown colour of his hair, that I suspect the hair of being a wig; and his face, closely shaven all over, is smoother and freer from all marks and wrinkles than mine, though (...) he is close on sixty years of age.⁷⁸

His cold grey eyes have something irresistible that forces people to look at him. Marian states that: "They are the most unfathomable grey eyes I ever saw: and they have at times a cold, clear, beautiful, irresistible glitter in them, which forces me to look at him and yet causes me sensations, when I do look, which I would rather not feel."⁷⁹ Although his figure is tall and stout⁸⁰, "his movements are astonishingly light and easy."⁸¹ Being a large person, he walks surprisingly noiselessly, which helps him to appear or disappear unexpectedly somewhere when he needs. Fosco at times resembles a cunning and wicked devil tempting to bad deeds.

As far as his Italian origin is concerned, he seems to be perfectly adapted to the English environment. No one would probably consider him to be a foreigner. Furthermore, he has perfectly acquired English language. Marian says about his English:

I had never supposed it possible that any foreigner could have spoken English as he speaks. (...) There are times when it is almost impossible to detect, by his accent, that he is not a countryman of our own; (...) He may construct his sentences, more or less, in the foreign way; but I have never yet heard him use a wrong expression or hesitate for a moment.⁸²

⁷⁷Collins, *The Woman in White*, 401.

⁷⁸Collins, *The Woman in White*, 240.

⁷⁹Collins, *The Woman in White*, 240.

⁸⁰ Collins, *The Woman in White*, 328.

⁸¹ Collins, *The Woman in White*, 241.

⁸² Collins, *The Woman in White*, 240.

Only on rare occasions when Fosco does something what an Englishman would never do — for instance, when mixes sugar and water⁸³ — it is possible to recognize that Fosco does not come from England.

In the novel *The Woman in White*, Fosco exemplifies the way the English perceived Italy and Italians. From what is said above it is visible that Fosco as an Italian is a sly, unscrupulous and corrupt person who stops at nothing. Collins probably wants to show the way the English in Victorian England perceived Italians. The negative attitude towards Italians has its root in the Reformation as it was said in the first chapter. Many people regarded the Catholic Church as corrupt and this manifested in associating Italy and its inhabitants with the Church. In the subchapter about the Renaissance and Reformation the dissatisfaction with the abuses of the Church is described. The clergy was considered to be paying too much attention to wealth and power. The Pope Leo X, for example, took advantage of his position to enrich himself. Next, the selling of indulgences also contributed to the displeasure with the Catholic Church and so that people longed for a change. Therefore, Fosco may be regarded as an embodiment of what the English connected with the Catholic Church.

2.2 Italians in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* by E.M. Forster

E. M. Forster in his *Where Angels Fear to Tread* deals with distinctions between England and Italy in a different way. He wrote a narrative which contains “an international conflict, a comedy in which England and Italy, reason and feeling, realism and imagination might be connected.”⁸⁴ While Collins’s Italian was depicted rather from a religious point of view, Forster focuses on cultural differences between the two countries.

At the beginning of the book, readers meet Philip Herriton, “an enthusiastic Italophile”⁸⁵, who has a passion for Italy. He has once visited Italy with his friends, however, his knowledge of Italy mostly stems from books. It is he who gives advice to Lilia, his sister-in-law, who goes to Italy about “where to stop, how to learn Italian, when to use mosquito-nets, what pictures to look at.”⁸⁶ From his words it seems that he envies Lilia her trip and maybe would like to go with her to admire local beauty. It is also Philip who says that Lilia should

⁸³Collins, *The Woman in White*, 357.

⁸⁴ S. P. Rosenbaum, "Towards a Literary History of Monteriano," *Twentieth Century Literature* 31, no. 2/3 (1985):182.

⁸⁵Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*,178.

⁸⁶ E. M. Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), 19.

“love and understand the Italians, for the people are more marvellous than the land.”⁸⁷ It is interesting that Philip believes that not only historical buildings but also inhabitants of Italy are worth getting to know.

Therefore, it is surprising how his attitude changes after the marriage of Lilia with an Italian man called Gino Carrela. Now “he was in a painful position. For three years he had sung the praises of the Italians, but he had never contemplated having one as a relative.”⁸⁸ To be connected in some way with an Italian was a nightmare for Philip and the rest of his family.

Although besides Philip none of the members of the Herriton family has ever visited Italy and spoken to an Italian, they all have negative associations with this southern country. For them it is “the enemy’s country, and everything—the sun, the cold air behind the heat, the endless rows of olive-trees, regular yet mysterious—seemed hostile to the placid atmosphere of Sawston.”⁸⁹

Even though they have never met Gino before, the Herriton family despises their new member of the family who married into their family against their will. Gino is a handsome young man, albeit “the English standards would find him too short.”⁹⁰ He is seen as a brutal and vulgar man. Philip said about him that he is a ruffian and a cad, whereupon Lilia answered to him using his own remark that there are no cads in Italy.⁹¹ This sentence demonstrates the change of Philip’s attitude to Italians. The English have prejudices against Italians and insist on the preconceptions without trying to meet Italians personally and either to confirm their attitude or change it.

Being enchanted by a good-looking young Italian man, Lilia marries Gino without thinking whether their relationship could last despite the differences between them. Their different background plays an important role in the marriage. While Lilia is a lady from the upper-middle class, Gino is a son of a dentist, which is not seen in England as a good match for a lady. Philip comments on the engagement: “It is not possible that you, a lady, accustomed to ladies and gentlemen will tolerate a man whose position is — well, not equal to the son of the servant’s dentist in Coronation Palace.”⁹² To have a person of a lower class in the family was intolerable for the Herritons so that they severed their ties with Lilia. Nevertheless, the

⁸⁷Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 19.

⁸⁸Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 31.

⁸⁹Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 34.

⁹⁰Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 36.

⁹¹Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 42.

⁹²Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 43.

marriage causes not only separation with the family but also differences in behaviour. While Lilia is accustomed to the life of a lady and the manners and behaviour connected with it, Gino has no experience with that and does not realize that the way he behaves is not suitable for a gentleman. “His morality was that of the average Latin, and as he was suddenly placed in the position of a gentleman, he did not see why he should not behave as such.”⁹³ Similarly, Gino does not care whether the people he meets are suitable to his social position or not. Lilia asks him why he speaks with people from a low class and does not care about his position.⁹⁴

The next point to be mentioned is the usage of the two towns in the book — Italian Monteriano and English Sawston — which help to point out the difference between mentalities of the two nations. Italy is presented as a place of openness and liberation from restrictions:

The contrast is between the well-off English suburban life of Sawston and the Tuscan hill-town of Monteriano. In Monteriano there is an atmosphere of beauty, while Sawston is drab; its inhabitants act spontaneously out of warm passion, while in Sawston actions are dictated not by feeling, but by an elaborate system of considerations as to what becomes one’s social standing. [...] In fact, Monteriano seems constantly in touch with an elemental life which has been etiolated to the point of disappearance in the process of elaborating the sophisticated social code of Sawston.⁹⁵

Monteriano represents a place where people can fully enjoy their lives without restrictions of the society. Therefore, there is no surprise why some of the English were attracted to Italy. Lilia believed that her life would improve in Italy where she is away from pretence and restrictions. She said to Philip: “For twelve years you’ve trained me and tortured me, and I’ll stand it no more.”⁹⁶ Nobody asked her what she really desires to do; she only had to do what was appropriate to her position without taking account of her passions. On that account, Lilia hoped for living her life in Italy without having to ask. Miss Abbott, who accompanied Lilia to Italy, said that she hated the “petty unselfishness” in Sawston. She believed that “every one [everyone] here spent their lives in making little sacrifices for objects they didn’t care for, to please people they didn’t love; that they never learnt to be sincere — and, what’s as bad, never learnt how to enjoy themselves.”⁹⁷ For this reason Miss Abbott, Philip and Lilia yearn for escaping the life in Sawston and replacing it with Italian openness. In comparison, Mrs. Herriton is of a different opinion:

⁹³Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 63.

⁹⁴ Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 53.

⁹⁵ Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 178.

⁹⁶Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 44.

⁹⁷Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 76.

To her imagination Monteriano had become a magic city of vice, beneath whose towers no person could grow up happy or pure. Sawston, with its semi-detached houses and snobby schools, its brook teas and bazaars, was certainly petty and dull; at times she found it even contemptible. But it was not a place of sin.⁹⁸

Mrs Herriton finds Monteriano as sinful just because her daughter-in-law married a man there and had a baby with him. Her opinion was that Monteriano was not an appropriate place for upbringing a baby. Lilia too was terrified of the thought of her child “Irma or any English child being educated at Monteriano.”⁹⁹

Another problem to be dealt with is contrast between Lilia and Gino, the North and the South. When the two got married, “no one realized that more than personalities were engaged; that the struggle was national.”¹⁰⁰

[The] marriage and the family appear to offer little love or happiness. Instead there is manipulation, deceit, isolation, apathy, crime and death. Some of this is the result of misunderstanding between the Northern woman and the Latin man, but much is inherent in the structures of English matriarchy and Italian patriarchy.¹⁰¹

While Lilia has money and thus feels superior to Gino, he has patriarchal attitudes and believes that it is him who should make decisions in his family because of being a man. Both of them come from different countries where different importance of the position of women is attached. They have different habits which they tend to apply to their marriage. Throughout the book it is visible that such a relationship cannot last; it just brings unhappiness. Lilia, for instance, misses the life in Sawston full of meetings, talking and company of other people. As a result, she intends to have English tea parties in Italy, which fails after the first session. In Italy it is not common to invite friends to come to somebody’s house but rather to go together to a café and talk there. As Gino’s meetings happen only “under the open air”¹⁰² or in a café and not at home, there are no people to keep Lilia company. Moreover, she does not speak Italian and thus she does not know anybody in the town and stays at home alone. She starts to regret not being in England where she would at least be surrounded by people. What Lilia also tries to do is to walk alone in the streets as she used to do in Sawston. Since it is not common among Italian women to go out alone, Gino forbids Lilia to do it. When she tells him that she normally does it in England, Gino replies that this is Italy.¹⁰³ He is not very surprised

⁹⁸Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 85.

⁹⁹ Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 51.

¹⁰⁰Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 67.

¹⁰¹Rosenbaum, “Towards a Literary History of Monteriano,” 188.

¹⁰²Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 54.

¹⁰³ Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 62.

because he knows that over the Alps women and men can do the same things and he has often met lady tourists on their solitary walks.¹⁰⁴ It seems that women in England have more rights than women in Italy who seem to be inferior to men and the Italian women cannot do whatever they want. Although Lilia is grateful to leave Sawston at first, she “is far more unhappy in Monteriano than she had ever been in Sawston. She learns too late that she cannot attain that apparent sensual fulfilment which she admires in Italian life and desires for herself, without making the psychologically impossible total sacrifice of her Englishness.”¹⁰⁵ The “different national life styles”¹⁰⁶ lead to nothing else but misunderstanding and a tragic end for Lilia.

To conclude, because of the differences between Lilia and Gino—different social position, habits, characters and attitudes to their lives—the intercultural marriage fails. The English reason and Italian way of enjoying life do not appear to go together. It appears that to live with an Italian is impossible for the English.

¹⁰⁴Forster, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, 54.

¹⁰⁵ Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 178.

¹⁰⁶ Rosenbaum, “Towards a Literary History of Monteriano,” 191.

3. Italy in the Works of British Authors

3.1 Italy in *The Stones of Venice* by John Ruskin

Italy is a fascinating country with stunning scenery and great cities. One of the cities is Venice. Venice is one of the most beautiful cities in Italy and many of people surely associate it with historical sites, carnival, glass and gondolas. What was John Ruskin mostly interested in was architecture in Venice.

According to Ruskin, all European architecture has its origin in Italy. He believes that “the two orders, Doric and Corinthian, are the two roots of all European architecture.”¹⁰⁷ This architecture was brought to antique Rome via Greece and then it was spread to the rest of Europe. Although there are other orders, the Doric and Corinthian are the basic ones. “All European architecture, bad and good, old and new, is derived from Greece through Rome, and coloured and perfected from the East.”¹⁰⁸ Italy thus laid the foundations of the European civilization; barbarian tribes out of the Roman Empire learnt to build more advanced types of buildings. While the tribes beyond the borders resided in less developed dwellings like huts, the Romans already had palaces, temples, amphitheatres and aqueducts. Not only architecture but also excellent artists, writers, philosophers had a tremendous impact on the development of Europe during antiquity as well as during the Renaissance period.

Being aware of the fact that huge cities and empires like Tyres were once so powerful and what remains is only a memory of their grandeur, Ruskin decided to preserve the beauty of Venice before it is too late and everything is destroyed. “Since the first dominion of men was asserted over the ocean, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the First of these great powers only the memory remains; of the Second, the ruin.”¹⁰⁹ Ruskin likewise Byron realises the fragility of empires and civilizations that experience decline after some time. What they had in common was “their shared enthusiasm for the beauty of Venice, their excitement at the grandeur of her history, and their concern for the sadness of her decay.”¹¹⁰ Moreover, Ruskin believes that the state of art is connected with the moral state of the country. When a country has high moral values and leads a pious life, art flourishes; when people start to be decadent and prefers pleasures to more serious things, the decadence is reflected in art. Unfortunately, this is the case of Venice. Venice, “as she was once the most religious, was in her fall the most corrupt,

¹⁰⁷John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Foundations* (Boston: Estes and Lauriat Publishers, n. d.), 28.

¹⁰⁸Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Foundations*, 27.

¹⁰⁹Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Foundations*, 15.

¹¹⁰Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 79.

of European states; and as she was in her strength the centre of pure currents of Christian architecture, so she is in her decline the source of Renaissance.”¹¹¹ The ways corruption is reflected in art is described below.

According to Ruskin, the requirement of perfection in art leads to the decline. He believes that the beauty of art resides in not demanding precision. The art critic suggests that “the first cause of the fall of arts of Europe was a relentless requirement of perfection.”¹¹² In Ruskin’s opinion, if a building, ornamentation or other objects has got a flaw in the design, it should not be regarded as a fault. On the contrary, imperfection should be inherent in every piece of art. The architectural style which is characteristic for imperfection is the Gothic style which Ruskin regarded as the best style. It is not important when there is a flaw in the rendition of the work of art. What matters is the feeling the artist reflects in the piece of art and the impact it has on others. The Renaissance, on the other hand, insists on perfection of art. Artists of this period tended to copy the reality precisely. Although a flawless piece of art may be pleasant to one’s eyes more than a rudely made art, it is rather “rigid, cold, inhuman.”¹¹³ Ruskin blames the enthusiasm for science during the Renaissance for requiring perfection that leads to the decline in art. He considers the usage of science in art as a mistake. While science pays attention to objects which can be measured and demonstrated, the role of art is “to stay what is fleeting, and to enlighten what is incomprehensible, to incorporate the things that have no measure, and immortalize the things that have no duration.”¹¹⁴ Fleeting things like emotions are what artists should be interested in and portray it in art. For instance, an artist’s aim in the 12th century was not to represent nature, but their piece of art was rather symbolic.¹¹⁵ Since the Renaissance originated in Italy, Ruskin believes that it is also in Italy where the decline of art commenced.

Another characteristic that noble art should possess in Ruskin’s opinion is changefulness. For Ruskin originality and variety in art is fundamental. Not many people would surely like to hear the same story over and over again or have exactly the same house like all the people in the same street. People usually rather tend to differ from others than to be a copy of somebody else, which makes the world more variable and interesting. If everything looked the same, we would surely get bored. Nature is also full of diversity and a

¹¹¹Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Foundations*, 39.

¹¹²John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Sea Stories* (London: Smith, Elder, 1873), 172.

¹¹³John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1869), 66.

¹¹⁴Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall*, 54.

¹¹⁵Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall*, 48.

man would find with difficulty two trees grown in the same way, for instance. Ruskin says that

change or variety is as much a necessity to the human heart and brain in buildings as in books; that there is no merit, though there is some occasional use, in monotony; and that we must no more expect to derive either pleasure or profit from an architecture whose ornaments are of one pattern, and whose pillars are of one proportion, than we should out of a universe in which the clouds were all of one shape, and the trees all of one size.¹¹⁶

Changefulness as an essential part of great art is fundamental to the Gothic style which is highly praised by Ruskin. The Renaissance, on the other hand, is perceived by Ruskin as monotonous and not original. He attributes the monotony to the return to the classical style. The Renaissance art is “marked by a return to pagan systems, not to adopt them and hallow them for Christianity, but to rank itself under them as an imitator and pupil.”¹¹⁷ According to Ruskin, the Renaissance style only copies what has already been made and comes up hardly with anything new. The fact that the rationalists returned to the classical style and teaching, of course, shows the impact the advanced Rome must have made on the Renaissance people. However, Ruskin regards it as not a good step. While the medieval artists had a free hand, later artists had to follow rules in order to imitate the Roman architecture. “Exactly so far as architecture works on known rules, and from given models, it is not an art, but a manufacture.”¹¹⁸ Kenneth Churchill in his chapter on Ruskin mentions that Ruskin was worried about the impact of industrialism in Victorian England and thus wrote a part in *The Stones of Venice* called *The Nature of Gothic*. Its purpose was to warn the English about the fact that they may come to the same end like Venice if they do not follow his advice. Saying that art based on rules is a manufacture, Ruskin in all likelihood refers to the mass production when the same products were manufactured in huge quantities. Nevertheless, in comparison with manufactured products, handcrafted products are hardly identical. Even if a craftsman makes, for example, chairs with the same decoration, it is highly probable that each chair differs a little bit for hands are not machines that are capable of a perfect copy. Moreover, handmade products may “contain” feelings and emotions of the person who made them. Every piece thus can be original. Manufacture relying on machines is less likely to come up with something original. As Ruskin was aware of the lack of changefulness and variety in art

¹¹⁶ Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Sea Stories*, 175.

¹¹⁷ Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Foundations*, 37.

¹¹⁸ Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Sea Stories*, 174.

in Venice which led, as he believed, to its decline, he thus wanted to show the English what awaits them if they do not follow his advice.

Next, what Ruskin regards as another cause of the fall of the art in Venice is luxury in decorations. The Gothic style in its peak is characterized by simplicity while in its decay opulence was used in art as it was the case of the Renaissance. According to Ruskin, “the two principal causes of natural decline in any school, are over-luxuriance and overrefinement.”¹¹⁹ By over-luxuriance Ruskin meant the “character of extravagance in the ornament.”¹²⁰ When people start to attach considerable importance to wealth and luxury, this often leads to decadence and corruption. As Ruskin believes that the state of art is related to the state of a country, it, therefore, has to manifest somewhere.

As an illustration of transition from simplicity to extravagance in decoration Ruskin uses Venetian tombs. The early tombs were “simple and lovely in adornment, severe and solemn in their expression.”¹²¹ The humble tombs were built for the Doges of Venice who contributed to magnificence of Venice. One of the reasons why simplicity was preferred to extravagance is that it is great deeds of the noblemen that matters rather than the pomp on the tombs. Nevertheless, tombs later “were erected for men who had lived only to impoverish or disgrace the state.”¹²² It appears that what mattered was not whether a person did something meritorious but if he was affluent and could afford luxurious tombs.

3.2 Italy in *The Englishman in Italy* by Robert Browning

Robert Browning in his poem *The Englishman in Italy* shows a new perspective on Italy which is completely different from the previous attitudes mentioned above. He is neither concerned with ruins like the Grand Tourist writers, nor he pays attention to the fragility of civilizations and people like Byron. It is not even the approach to Italy in terms of morality in art and state. What Browning deals with, is Italy as a country capable of enjoying life and pleasures that the sunny land offers. “His is a triumphant Italy, full of the optimism that fills his own verse.”¹²³ The poem is situated in an Italian village near Sorrento and the speaker demonstrates how people should live their lives.

One of the aspects that Browning uses for depicting Italy is food that appeals to people’s senses. Various kinds of exotic fruit are mentioned in the poem. Never crossing the

¹¹⁹Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall*, 4.

¹²⁰Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall*, 4.

¹²¹Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall*, 72.

¹²²Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Fall*, 73.

¹²³William Edward Mead, “Italy in English Poetry,” *PMLA* 23, no. 3 (1908): 464.

frontier of the British Isles, many of the British people may have not been familiar with these unusual kinds of fruit. Browning thus acquaints the British with the appetizing fruit that fruitful Italy is full of. The poem may seem to be advertisement in a guide book which should bring a lot of people to the sunny country. Browning, for example, mentions pomegranates. "Red-ripe as could be, / Pomegranates were chapping and splitting / In halves on the tree."¹²⁴ The pomegranates appear to wait for being picked and consumed. In a similar way, olives not ripe yet with their typical black colour "Tempt the stranger to pick up and bite them."¹²⁵ Being described in such way, Italy appears to have abundance of food and no one thus has to worry about suffering from hunger. If you are hungry, just go and pick something that grows near you. Moreover, if somebody becomes sated with pomegranates and olives, they can try figs and medlars instead. Not only in orchards fruit tempts people to eat it but also along paths in the country. When the speaker of the poem goes on a trip to the mountains, he "feasts on the myrtles / That offered, each side, / Their fruit-balls, black, glossy and luscious."¹²⁶ When a person makes a trip and he runs out of his food supplies, he does not have to fear to starve to death as fruit grows everywhere.

Next, it is also delicious meals that Italy offers and which are worth trying. After grape harvest, people in the poem feast. "With lasagne so tempting to swallow, / In slippery ropes, / And gourds fried in great purple slices, / That colour of popes."¹²⁷ The lasagne makes our mouth water. It is as if the meal would say: "Come and eat me". Browning is delighted about Italian food and describes it as a thing that can enrich one's taste buds with new flavour. His attitude is quite different from the Grand Tourists who focused on the ruins of ancient Roman Empire and did not pay much attention to the delights of everyday life Italy offers. According to Kenneth Churchill, "the modern traveller is likely to enthuse over the sun, the sea, the mountains, and the food and wine of Italy, all which to the eighteenth century were not merely uninteresting, but positive disincentives to going to Italy."¹²⁸ Similarly, the Herriton family in Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread* would in all probability not dare to try Italian meals if they visited Italy. Owing to their preconceptions about Italy and Italians, the Herritons would rely on their judgement of this country and would probably apply the same attitude to the food as well, without tasting it.

¹²⁴ Robert Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," in *The Poetical Works of Robert Browning* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 327.

¹²⁵ Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," 328.

¹²⁶ Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," 328.

¹²⁷ Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," 328.

¹²⁸ Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 94.

Another way a person can experience Italy is by means of wine which is inherent in this country. The poem takes place in autumn, a period of a year connected with vintage. Autumn is a period characteristic of fertility and abundance. It is usually joyous as people harvest gifts of nature.

Came our friends, with whose help in the vineyards
Grape-harvest began.
In the vat, halfway up in our houseside,
Like blood the juice spins.¹²⁹

The vintage may be regarded as a social event when a lot of people participate in gathering followed by the production of wine. After everything is gathered, a celebration usually follows and thanks for the harvest are expressed accompanied by feasting.

Browning thus shows another aspect of Italy, which is the enjoyment of life. Readers are also invited to a local feast, for example, the Feast of the Rosary's Virgin where music is played and bonfires are lighted. The celebrations as Browning describes them have become, according to Ernest Fontana, "a spectacle for the tourist gaze."¹³⁰ Browning's attitude is completely different from Ruskin in this way; for Ruskin the fondness for pleasures was one of the reasons of the decline of art and values whereas for Browning enjoyment of life is crucial. Kenneth Churchill says that Browning has

delight in those sensuous, pagan qualities which had remained scarcely changed since the days when they had inspired the classical poets themselves. It is this kind of delight in living which gives Browning his sympathy with the Renaissance, makes him different, and shapes a new type of interest in Italy.¹³¹

Italians likewise other southern nations seem to be capable of living their lives fully and rejoice. It is also for that reason why Browning admired this cheerful land.

At the end of the poem the speaker mentions current conditions in his homeland. He says:

Fortù, in my England at home,
Men meet gravely today
And debate, if abolishing Corn-laws
Be righteous and wise.¹³²

In comparison with Italy, England deals with serious problems which have a negative impact on its inhabitants who cannot afford to buy much grain because of high prices of corn. As it

¹²⁹Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," 327-328.

¹³⁰Ernest Fontana, "Sexual Tourism and Browning's "The Englishman in Italy"," *Victorian Poetry* 36, no. 3 (1998): 302.

¹³¹Churchill, *Italy and English Literature 1764-1930*, 96.

¹³²Browning, "The Englishman in Italy," 329.

was said above, Italy is a fruitful country where fruit grows almost everywhere and the locals thus have almost “no reason” to worry about anything in terms of food while the English handle where to “obtain” something to eat. While Britain due to the corn-laws deals with scarcity of grain and people have not much to eat, the Englishman in the poem takes advantage of abundance of the South.¹³³ Italy has favourable conditions for growing various types of crops whereas the crop in England is less diverse due to its harsher climate. “Nevertheless, England, the speaker’s home remains a place of political struggle and for him the site of rejected civic responsibility and duty.”¹³⁴ Italy for Browning appears to be the embodiment of a region where the sun beats down most of the days of the year and the pleasures it offers let people forget about their troubles.

¹³³Fontana, "Sexual Tourism and Browning's "The Englishman in Italy", " 303.

¹³⁴Fontana, "Sexual Tourism and Browning's "The Englishman in Italy", " 303.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to outline relations between England and Italy and the way the English perceived Italy and Italians. The attitudes to Italy were examined in the pieces of work of British authors.

The first chapter provided a theoretical background of the relations between the two countries. It was shown there that Italy and England had a close relationship for many centuries and that Italy had a tremendous impact on the development of England in terms of literature, architecture, science, religion and many other aspects. On the basis of the used works of the British authors who wrote about Italy and Italians, it is possible to outline the changes in attitudes. Italy served Shakespeare's purposes in terms of setting when he used it, for example, as a land of love and international business. His character of Antonio is depicted as a kind person while Iago as a villain. This probably reflects the growing power of Protestantism in England. After the Reformation, the English began to connect the Italians with the Catholic Church which they were opposed to. This is also reflected in *The Italian* by Ann Radcliffe whose character of Schedoni is the embodiment of evil. Next, the Grand Tourist writers were mainly interested in the ruins in Italy and the importance of liberty. Finally, for Lord Byron, Italy was a beautiful land full of ruins that are a remainder of the lost glory of a great civilisation, which reflected his own feelings.

In the second chapter two Italian characters Fosco and Gino were analysed. Collin's Fosco reflects the relation between Italians and the Catholic Church that the English connected with it. Gino, on the other hand, shows the attitude towards Italian by the English based on their prejudices towards the Italians. Both of these two characters are depicted rather as negative characters. Fosco is a nobleman while Gino is a son of a dentist who becomes a "gentleman" only thanks to his wife. What do they have in common is the desire for money. Although both are Italians who are usually perceived as lively and full of life, they have different personality traits. Gino is said to be brutal and vulgar. Fosco, on the other hand, tends to be courteous, polite, and often helpful. It may be his age that contributes to such an impression as youth is usually quick-tempered and easily loses control of their emotions while the older people like Fosco rather tend to control themselves. However, in Fosco's case it is probably not only about age. Fosco tends to behave well towards other people, for example, towards servants and acts as a gentleman so that hardly anyone suspects him of being capable of committing a crime. The character of Gino is also depicted in a negative way. Nevertheless, the negative attitude to him is caused mainly by the prejudices of the English

and their different nature. He only behaves in a way which is inherent in him. The distinct mentalities are the roots of the problem in the encounter.

Next, what Fosco and Gino share is the ability to manipulate people. They both tend to use their power over people in order to reach their goals. Fosco, for example, has a power over his wife who does whatever she is asked for. Gino has a control over his wife too; he tends to show her that he is the head of the family and it is she who has to obey him.

The third part examines attitudes of John Ruskin and Robert Browning to Italy. John Ruskin was enchanted by the beauty of Venice and decided to preserve it in his work *The Stones of Venice*. He gave advice about how a noble architecture should look like. He believed that the state of art and the country are interconnected; when a country is decadent, it reflects in the architecture as well. Ruskin considered the Gothic style as a style from which we should learn from while the Renaissance style as rather corrupt. He believed that the cause of decline in art lies, besides other things, in extravagance in decoration and fondness for pleasures rather than piety. On that example Ruskin wanted to demonstrate what happens to a state if it does not learn from the mistakes of Venice.

In contrast to Ruskin, Robert Browning did not perceive pleasures as bad and as a cause of a decline in values. To rejoice and enjoy life appeared to be fundamental for Browning. According to him, Italy was an ideal place for people who want to live their lives fully and enjoy everything the country offers. Italy offers enjoyment of life by means of food, festivals and the glorious weather and enables people to forget about their troubles.

The result of this paper is that Italy and England had a very close relationship throughout history. Italy had a considerable impact on the development of England. Italy was an inspiration for many of the English authors. In literature, Italians were depicted mostly as kind and honest at first, which is the case of Shakespeare's Antonio. However, the attitude to Italians started to change in the course of time and they were depicted rather negatively. The change is already visible in Shakespeare's Iago. What played an important role in the change of attitude was the Reformation and persecution of Protestants, which were reflected in literature, for example, in *The Woman in White*. Italians were also judged on the basis of prejudice the English had. The English virtually did not give the Italians a chance to show who they really were, as it was the case of Gino in *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. In comparison to the Italians, the attitude towards Italy was altogether positive. Every writer associated Italy with different aspects. What interested the Grand Tourist writers most were the remains of the Roman Empire. Byron was fascinated by the ruins too because they reflected his own feelings. In Ruskin's attitude Italy was in terms of architecture and the

buildings and monuments built in the Gothic style a synonym for noble architecture. Finally, Browning demonstrated that it is not only ruins that are worth seeing. According to him, people should go and sit down for a while with Italians, try their food and wine and rejoice.

5. Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zmapovat, jak byla Itálie a Italové vyobrazeni v dílech britských spisovatelů a jak se jejich postoj v průběhu let měnil. Analýza je zaměřena na dílech autorů z 19. a počátku 20. století.

Itálie vždy byla zemí, která přitahovala lidi po celém světě. Každý si jistě při zmínce na tuto sluncem zalitou zemi představí něco jiného — ať už to jsou památky, italské jídlo, víno, spisovatelé, jazyk, hudba, kultura a mnoho dalšího. Itálie je tedy rozhodně zemí, která má co nabídnout. Kromě toho tato země měla velký vliv na vývoj Evropy. Ve starověku se na jejím území rozkládalo Římské impérium, které si podmanilo velkou část tehdy známého světa. Filozofové a spisovatelé jako Ovidius, Cicero, a Vergilius ovlivnili nejen tehdy známý svět. Už v té době se tato vyspělá civilizace mohla pyšnit moderními technologiemi a vynálezy. Mimo jiné se stavěly chrámy, paláce, akvadukty, které zásobily města vodou, lázně a také měli vybudované sítě silnic. I když z velkolepých budov dnes zbývají povětšinou jen trosky a minimum z původních staveb se dochovalo v nezničeném stavu, nepřestávají nás udivovat a jsou ukázkou vyspělosti antického Říma a jeho majestátnosti.

V úvodní kapitole je čtenář obeznámen s tím, jak byli Italové a Itálie vyobrazeni v literatuře od středověku po začátek 19. století a s různými přístupy spisovatelů k tomuto tématu. Prvním autorem, který stojí za zmínku a jenž byl ovlivněn Itálií, je Geoffrey Chaucer. Tento středověký básník přišel do styku s Itálií poprvé v roce 1372, kdy byl vyslán na diplomatickou misi do této země. Pravděpodobně v tuto dobu se zde seznámil s díly antických a soudobých spisovatelů. Zejména soudobí autoři jako Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca a Giovanni Boccaccio na Chaucera zapůsobili a měli vliv na jeho tvorbu, ať už se jednalo o styl psaní nebo inspiraci pro děj svých děl. Nicméně Chaucer nesituoval svá díla do Itálie ani nepoužil Italské postavy. Výjimkou ale třeba je povídka z *Canterburských povídek*, která je vsazena do Itálie.

Na vývoj Evropy měla velký vliv renesance, která vznikla v Itálii ve 13. století. Toto hnutí, které bylo založeno na individualismu, což bylo opakem středověkého učení, vedlo k rozvoji přírodních věd a vedlo k novým objevům a vynálezům, jako například knihtisku. Renesance se také vyznačovala k návratu ke klasicistnímu Řecku a Římu, jejichž spisovatelům a architektuře se dostalo velké pozornosti. Do Anglie se tento myšlenkový proud dostal až v 16. století, který byl doprovázen reformací církve, která nakonec měla větší vliv. Reformace v Anglii byla započata odtržením od katolické církve a založením anglikánské, do jejíhož čela se jmenoval sám panovník Jindřich VIII. Dále vliv evropských

reformátorů jako třeba Martin Luther a Jan Kalvín vedl k distanci od katolické církve. Reformátoři vystupovali proti prohřeškům katolické církve, jimiž například byly korupce, vlastní obohacení jako to byl případ papeže Lva X a mnoho dalšího. Martin Luther se ve svém díle 95 tezí zabýval prodejem odpustků a tím, že papež by neměl mít takovou moc. Reformace tak přispěla k negativnímu nazírání na Itálii, jelikož byla Itálie spojována s katolickou církví, která v ní sídlí. To se pak promítlo i v dílech některých britských spisovatelů.

Dalším významným autorem, který je neodmyslitelně spjatý s Itálií, je William Shakespeare. Mnoho lidí si jistě při zmínce Itálie a Shakespeare vybaví balkonovou scénu ve Veroně v díle *Romeo a Julie*. Toto však není jediným dílem tohoto velkého básníka, které se odehrává v Itálii nebo jehož postavy jsou Italové. Většina jeho komedií a šest z jeho tragedií je spjata s Itálií. Mezi ně patří, například, *Zkrocení zlé ženy*, *Antonio a Kleopatra* a *Dva kavalíři z Verony*. Jednou z Italských postav je postava benátského kupce Antonia v díle *Kupec benátský*. Antonio je vyobrazen jako hodný a laskavý člověk, který je uznávaný lidmi v Benátkách. Půjčuje lidem peníze, aniž by požadoval úroky. Je ochoten vypůjčit si peníze od žida Shylocka pro svého kamaráda Bassania a nakonec i obětovat svůj život, když nestačí včas splatit dluh. Antonio je tedy vnímán jako milý a obětavý člověk. Oproti tomu Ital Jago v díle *Othello* vystupuje jako padouch. Jago potají intrikuje proti Othellovi, kterého nenávidí, ale navenek se chová ke všem hezky, aby nevzbudil podezření. Ostatní jej tak považují za čestného a hodného člověka. Jago je pro dosažení svého cíle ochoten udělat cokoli, dokonce i zabít. Umí dokonale manipulovat s lidmi a vnuká Othellovi myšlenku, že mu jeho manželka byla nevěrná, ačkoli to není pravda. Svou mazaností tak nakonec dosáhne svého. Tato negativní změna v charakteru Italských postav pravděpodobně nasvědčuje sílícímu vlivu Protestantismu.

Itálie se později také stala turistickým cílem Britů. V 17. a převážně v 18. století začali mladí muži z majetných rodin podnikat cesty na kontinent, kdy hlavními destinacemi byly Francie a Itálie. Později se i ženy vydávaly na tuto cestu. Tyto cesty na kontinent byly známy pod názvem Grand Tour. Mnozí z nich o svých cestách napsali básně či delší díla. Jejich hlavním tématem byly ruiny v Itálii. Jedním z nich byl i Joseph Addison, který ve svém díle *A Letter from Italy* zabývá slávou a velkolepostí, kterou se kdysi Itálie mohla pyšnit a kterou ztratila. Přestože je Itálie přívětivou zemí a život v ní by byl pravděpodobně lehčí než v Anglii, pro Addisona je mnohem důležitější svoboda. Dalším autorem je Lord Lyttelton a jeho dílo *An Epistle to Mr. Pope from Rome*, v němž se zabývá dekadencí současné Itálie. Podle něho umění vzkvétá, když je země svobodná. Avšak bohatství a přepych přispěly ke

konci velkolepé civilizace. Proto Lyttelton dává přednost troskám před přepychem. Tématem ruin a bohatství, které přispěly ke zkáze Římského impéria, také přistupuje spisovatel John Dyer ve svém díle *The Ruins of Rome*. Přepych byl lákadlem pro nejednoho panovníka a mnohdy vedl k úpadku státu. Dyer taktéž klade důraz na svobodu, jež by měla být součástí každého státu, ale která se velmi snadno může změnit v tyranii, jako to byl případ Itálie.

Itálie byla také populární mezi autory píšícími gotické romány. Mezi tyto autory patřila i Ann Radcliffe, jež napsala milostný román *The Italian or the Confessional of the Black Penitents*. Přestože tato autorka nikdy Itálii nenavštívila a informace o této zemi tak čerpala z děl jiných spisovatelů, mnohdy detailně popisuje italskou krajinu, jako kdyby Itálii bývala sama navštívila. Na rozdíl od italské krajiny, kterou zdá se byla uchváčena, je postava Itala Schedoniho vykreslena v negativním světle. Tento katolický mnich a zpovědník je nenáviděn svými společníky a mnozí se ho bojí. Schedoni prahoucí povýšení je ochoten udělat cokoli, dokonce i zabít nevinného člověka, což svědčí to o jeho ďábelské povaze. To, že je tento Ital vyobrazen, jako padouch je důsledkem toho, že Římská katolická církev byla považována jako ohnisko duchovní zkaženosti, k čemuž pravděpodobně dopomohl i Jakobínský převrat.

Posledním autorem zmíněným v první kapitole je básník Lord Byron a jeho *Childe Haroldova Pout'*, zpěv čtvrtý. Byron, jemuž Itálie učarovala, se v tomto zpěvu zabírá tématem ruin a dočasností velkých civilizací, které po nějaké době podlehnou úpadku. Kromě toho, přirovnává Byron sám sebe k ruinám vědom si toho, že lidé jsou podobně zranitelní a omezení.

Druhá kapitola je věnována analýze dvou autorů z období Viktoriánského a počátku 20. století, jimiž jsou Wilkie Collins a jeho dílo *The Woman in White* a E. M. Forster a jeho *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. Pozornost v obou děl je upřena na její Italské postavy a jak byly vykresleny.

V díle *The Woman in White* je postava Itala zvaná Count Fosco, který je šlechtic. Tento Ital se navenek chová hezky, ale potají spřádá své ďábelské plány. I jeho vždy upravený vzhled nedává znát tomu, že by byl Fosco ve skutečnosti špatný člověk. To však je jen pro to, aby nevzbudil podezření ostatních lidí. Fosco je zkorumpovaný člověk, který prahne po penězích a neštítí se ničeho. Dokonce i prohodí identitu dvou velmi podobných dívek a prohlásí jednu za mrtvou, čímž získá vytoužené peníze s pomocí svého společníka Percivala. K tomu, aby dosáhl svého cíle, Fosco využívá své schopnosti manipulovat s lidmi. Svou manželku má skvěle ochočenou, je jen loutkou v jeho rukách a čeká na příkaz. Tato žena dokonce dělá vyzvědačku a je ochotna pro svého muže podrazit i svou příbuznou. Fosco má také schopnost

vynořit se zrovna tam, kde je potřeba a je ve všem krok napřed přede všemi. Má tak přehled o všem, co se děje, což mu pomáhá k plnění svých hanebných plánů. Fosco pravděpodobně zobrazuje Itala jako křesťana, kterého si Angličané spojovali s katolickou církví a jejími prohřešky. Katolická církev byla, podobně jako Fosco, vnímána jako zkorumpovaná. Mnozí papežové využívali svého postavení pro obohacení sebe sama, což mělo za následek reformaci církve. Nenávist ke katolické církvi se zdá přetrvávala a Italové tak byli vnímáni spíše negativně.

V druhém díle *Where Angels Fear to Tread* je taktéž Italská postava, která se jmenuje Gino Carella a je taktéž vyobrazena v negativním světle. Na rozdíl od Collinse, který vyobrazuje Itala z náboženského hlediska, se Forster zaměřuje na kulturní rozdíly mezi Anglií a Itálií. Angličanka Lilia se vydává na okružní cestu po Itálii, kde si proti očekávání všech vezme za manžela Itala, výše zmiňovaného Gina. Lilianina rodina v Anglii, bez toho aby někdy v Itálii byla a mluvila s nějakým Italem, vidí Gina jako surovce. Foerster zde poukazuje na předsudky, které měli Angličané vůči Italům. Podobně i Lilianina rodina přistupuje k Itálii, kterou vidí jako nevhodné místo pro výchovu dítěte. Mimo to se dozvídáme, že Gino, jakožto výrazně mladší a chudší než Lilia, si ji vzal pro peníze. Kromě předsudků problém také tkví v rozdílu mezi těmito dvěma kulturami. Jak Lilia, tak Gino se snaží aplikovat na jejich manželství zvyky svých zemí, což však, zdá se, nejde dohromady. Například, v Anglii je Lilia zvyklá chodit na procházky sama, kdežto v Itálii není běžné, aby dáma chodila sama ulicemi. Spolu s dalšími rozpory mezi těmito kulturami je toto mezinárodní manželství odkázáno k zániku.

Obě tyto Italské postavy, Fosco a Gino, jsou záporné. To, co tyto dva spojuje, je touha po penězích a vlastním obohacení. Taktéž jsou oba schopnými manipulátory. Jejich povahy se však v něčem liší. Zatímco Gino je vyobrazený jako pravý Ital, temperamentní a bouřlivý, Fosco vystupuje s klidem, elegancí a rozvahou a je to spíš on, kdo usměřňuje ve výbušnosti ostatní.

Poslední kapitola vypovídá o tom, jaký přístup měli k Itálii autoři John Ruskin a Robert Browning. Pro Johna Ruskina považoval Itálii za krásnou zemi. Ve svém díle *The Stones of Venice* se zaměřuje hlavně na architekturu v Benátkách a jeho cílem je zaznamenat krásu Benátek, než bude pozdě a zbude nám jen vzpomínka na ni. Jako základ evropské architektury považoval dórský a korintský řád, které se do starověkého Říma dostal z Řecka. Později se tyto řády rozšířily po Evropě a byly různě upravovány, ale základ byl položen v antice. Dále Ruskin věří, že to, v jakém stavu se umění nachází, souvisí s morálními hodnotami státu a lidí. Pokud se lidé věnují vyšším cílům, umění vzkvétá. Avšak když lidé dají

přednost přízemním věcem jako záliba v radovánkách a přepychu, tedy i úpadek se odráží v umění. Ruskinův přístup k Itálii a její architektuře je v tomto ohledu hlavně z hlediska morálního. Na vrcholu slávy Benátky svou krásou a zbožností vyčnívaly, kdežto v jejím úpadku byla poznamenána dekadencí. Ruskin chtěl zabránit, aby totéž postihlo Anglii a tak napsal několik rad k tomu, jak by měla krásná architektura vypadat a co vede k jejímu poklesu. Architektonický styl, který považoval za vrcholný a od něhož se lze učit je gotický styl. Renesanci, která se vrátila ke klasickému Řecku a Římu, vinil za úpadek. Ruskin věřil, že to, co vede k úpadku umění je, když je snaha dělat umění dokonalé a vytrácí se originalita. Je-li umění založeno na nějakých pravidlech, tak je to podle něho manufaktura, čímž narážel na industrialismus, který měl za následek masovou výrobu výrobků, které byly jeden jako druhý a originalita se vytrácela. Umění by se podle tohoto autora taky mělo vyznačovat jednoduchostí. Pokud si lidé hoví v extravagantní dekoraci a přepychu, je to špatně. Demonstroval to na příkladu hrobek v Benátkách. Rané hrobky, stavěné pro představitele státu, kteří se něčím zasloužili, se vyznačovaly jednoduchou dekorací. Pozdější hrobky naopak byly přemrštné výzdobou. Vypadá to tedy, že pompa na hrobkách je mnohem důležitější než skutky lidí, co něco dokázali. Když se tedy lidé upnou víc na bohatství a přepych než na vyšší hodnoty, je to s velkou pravděpodobností počátek jejich úpadku.

Robert Browning se ve své básni *The Englishman in Italy* na rozdíl od Ruskina nezabývá morálkou lidí a umění, ale tím, jaké skvosty Itálie nabízí. Itálie pro Browninga byla zemí nabízející potěšení a radost ze života. Tuto zemi vnímal jako velmi úrodnou, nabízející rozmanité druhy exotického ovoce, jako granátová jablka a fíky. Ovoce roste všude, takže třeba když se Angličan v básni vydá na výlet do hor, nemusí se obávat, že bude mít hlad, jelikož se ovoce nachází na každém rohu. Podobně jako ovoce popisuje i italské jídlo, např. lasagne, které lákají k nakousnutí a na něž se sbíhají sliny. K Itálii kromě lahodného jídla samozřejmě patří i víno. Báseň se odehrává na podzim, kdy se sbírá víno a dělá se z něho chutný mok. Vinobraní je doprovázeno pitím a hodováním. Mluvčí básně taky upozorňuje na různé svátky a oslavy, kterých je v Itálii plno. Autor tak poukazuje na to, že v Itálii si lidé umí užívat života s plnými doušky a se vším, co tato úrodná země nabízí. Na závěr básně autor porovnává plodnost Itálie se situací v Anglii, kde se lidé vypořádávají se nedostatkem obilí, kvůli zákonům vydaným v Anglii.

Ačkoliv Ruskin a Browning byli oba okouzleni Itálií, každý z nich k ní má jiný přístup. Pro Ruskina se Benátky na svém vrcholu mohly chlubit noblesou, ale záliba v radovánkách a přepychu však podle něho znamenala úpadek. Browning si oproti tomu Itálii

spjoval s dovedností Italů užívat si života. Radost ze života se zdá být tedy pro Browninga velmi důležitá.

Výsledkem této práce je tedy zjištění, že Itálie a Anglie měly po staletí blízký vztah a Itálie měla obrovský vliv nejen na vývoj Anglie, ale i na její spisovatele, které Itálie přitahovala a byla pro ně inspirací. Italové byli zpočátku vyobrazeni spíš v kladném směru, jako to je případ Shakespearova Antonia. Později však je možné sledovat spíš negativní přístup k Italům, což je možné vidět už v *Othellovi*. Velký vliv na záporném postoji k Italům měla reformace a persekuce Protestantů, což se odrazilo i v literatuře, například na postavě Fosca. Angličané také vnímali Italy na základě svých předsudků, aniž by Italům dali příležitost prokázat, jestli takoví opravdu jsou, jako je možné vidět v díle *Where Angels Fear to Tread*. Oproti Italům se zdá být přístup k Itálii celkově kladný. Pro každého autora Itálie symbolizovala něco jiného. V případě Shakespeara to byly různé asociace s městy v Itálii, jako třeba Verona byla spojována s láskou. Pro spisovatele, kteří jsou zařazováni pod pojem Grand Tourists, byly hlavním stimulem ruiny a zašlá sláva velkolepého Říma. Byron taktéž podlehl kouzlu ruin, ruiny však pro něj byly odrazem toho, co cítil. Ruskin viděl Itálii hlavně skrz architekturu a památky postavené v gotickém stylu pro něj představovaly vrchol. Poslední analyzovaný autor Robert Browning ukázal, že Itálie nejsou jen ruiny, co stojí za to vidět. Podle něj stojí za to posedět s Italy, ochutnat jídlo a víno a těšit se ze života.

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