'The seed that we have sown will remain': Giuseppe Mazzini and the 'hero' of Arthur Hugh Clough's *Amours de Voyage*

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'Poetry will sing to us the joys of martyrdom; the immortality of the vanquished; the tears that expiate; the sorrows that purify; the records, hopes, and traditions of the past world twining around the cradle of the new', the Italian statesman and writer Giuseppe Mazzini expounds in his 1835 essay 'Faith and Future.'[1] According to this poetic manifesto, Arthur Hugh Clough's *Amours de Voyage* would be considered an abject failure in its depiction of an English anti-hero in Rome who rejects 'martyrdom.' However, I will suggest that parallels in action and thematic concerns between the two principal plots of Clough's 'five-act epistolary tragi-comedy, or comi-tragedy' presage an association between the protagonist Claude and Mazzini in terms of their shared obsessions.[2] The chronological framework of Clough's *Amours* largely coincides with the French siege of the short-lived Roman Republic. The latter was established in February 1849 when 'the elected assembly in Rome [...] opted to constitute a new republic and declared the temporal power of the papacy

1. W. Clarke (ed.), *Essays: Selected from the Writings, Literary, Political, and Religious, of Joseph Mazzini*, London, Walter Scott, 1887, p. 54.
2. B.S. Clough (ed.), *The Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*, 2 vols, London, Macmillan, 1869, I, p. 232.

to be at an end.'[3] At this time Mazzini returned to Italy (from London) and, while initially reluctant to participate in the foundling government, strong encouragement from the assembly led him to agree to govern as one member of a triumvirate.[4] 'So began the hundred days that were the one period in his [Mazzini's] life when he had practical experience of government', Denis Mack Smith writes, and a period during which Mazzini's faith in an ideal Roman republic appeared to translate into reality.[5] Yet, despite his rule winning Mazzini more 'widespread support' than he had ever enjoyed,[6] the fledgling, independent state lasted only a few months. France's President, Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, sent General Charles Oudinot to assume control of the city in April and, while Giuseppe Garibaldi's volunteer army temporarily resisted the siege, the French forces prevailed at the end of June by, controversially, bombarding the city.[7]

Clough himself travelled to Rome in April of 1849 and his personal experience of the siege of Rome prompted the composition of *Amours*. However, his protagonist Claude's response to this struggle is often treated as subordinate to that of his love affair. As Stephanie Kudak Weiner has observed, Claude's hopeless romance 'has received the lion's share of attention from the poem's critics' to the detriment of 'the comparatively neglected contexts of his renunciation of politics and his despairing conclusion that even "Art is delusion."'[8] In contrast to this dominant approach, I treat the Roman Republic plot and the love plot of *Amours* as intimately related, exploring the way in which their action and thematic concerns parallel each other.[9] Several critics have referenced intersections between the two narratives. Walter Houghton observes how when Claude 'hears of the fall of Rome and the Republic, counterpointing the collapse of his love affair, [he] is swept again with ennui.'[10] Matthew Reynolds

3. D.M. Smith, *Mazzini*, New Haven, Yale U.P., 1994, p. 64.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
7. A.J.P. Kenny, *Arthur Hugh Clough: A Poet's Life*, London, Continuum, 2005, p. 159, and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
8. S.K. Weiner, *Republican Politics and English Poetry*, New York, Palgrave, 2005, pp. 116–117.
9. Some critics, such as Weiner (p.122), have described a third plot in the poem—one concerning art—however I will be focusing on those two that I consider to be most central.
10. W. Houghton, *The Poetry of Clough: An Essay in Revaluation*, New Haven, Yale U.P., 1963, p. 153.

comments that a 'light' connection between Claude's romance and the siege was 'suggested by the fact that Georgina's enquiries about Claude in the last letter of Canto I are immediately followed in the first letter of Canto II by the news that the French army has arrived at the gates of Rome.'[11] And Weiner contributes two further examples: the opening of Canto II when Claude's 'political awakening' fuses with his alertness to love, and in the following letters in which his disillusionment in the Roman Republic coincides with his disillusionment in love.[12] However, no critic has comprehensively described how pervasive these parallels, between Claude's response to the Roman Republic and to Mary, are.[13]

In the first section of this paper, I briefly address the prominence of the Roman Republic plot in Clough's conception of *Amours*. In the following section, I investigate how the action of the two plots progresses in tandem for the first three cantos. Christopher Keirstead describes the poem as being centrally concerned with a 'cosmopolitanism of negation: one that deconstructs false or specious connections—but one that also endeavors to craft modes of affinity *out of* juxtaposition.'[14] Claude investigates forging an affinity with the cause of the Roman Republic, on the one hand, and with Mary, on the other, and fundamental to the poem is a concern with the motivations for action and how to decipher whether these are 'true' (5.2.20)—my principal focus in section III.[15] Finally, in the last section of this paper, I explore how the close association of the love plot with the Roman Republic plot foregrounds correspondences between Claude and Mazzini himself. As far as I am aware, these have never been addressed, which is, perhaps, unsurprising given how dissimilar the fictional English anti-hero and historical Italian statesman appear to be. However, there is a strong case to support the idea that Clough, who was 'full of admiration' for Mazzini after meeting him,[16]

11. M. Reynolds, *The Realms of Verse 1830–70: English Poetry in a Time of Nation-Building*, Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2001, p. 145.
12. Weiner, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
13. Christopher Keirstead, in *Victorian Poetry, Europe, and the Challenge of Cosmopolitanism*, would, I think, come the closest, although he tends to describe Claude's obsessions as successive, rather than parallel, as I think they are (for most of the poem).
14. C. Keirstead, *Victorian Poetry, Europe, and the Challenges of Cosmopolitanism*, Columbus, Ohio State U.P., 2011, p. 39.
15. All canto, letter, and line references to *Amours de Voyage* refer to: J. Phelan (ed.), *Clough, Selected Poems*, London, Longman, 1995.
16. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

intentionally associated the two figures through a correspondence of certain personality traits and, more importantly, shared motivations and obsessions.

I – Clough's first born: the Roman Republic plot

As mentioned above, Clough's personal experience of the end of the Roman Republic provided the setting for his composition of *Amours* and the resemblances between Clough's letters home, in which he describes the events of the French invasion, and Claude's are striking. As Renzo D'Agnillo has put it, 'whole sequences [of *Amours*] are basically literal transcriptions for Clough's letters.'[17] One conspicuous echo, which D'Agnillo mentions, is Clough's first letter to his mother from Rome, dated 18 April 1849:

> St Peter's disappoints me: the stone of which it is made is a poor plastery material; and, indeed, Rome in general might be called a *rubbishy* place; the Roman antiquities in general seem to me only interesting as antiquities, and not for any beauty[...] The weather has not been very brilliant.[18]

Compare these lines with the opening to Claude's first letter to Eustace: 'Rome disappoints me much,—St Peter's, perhaps, in especial;/ This, however, perhaps, is the weather, which truly is horrid' (1.1.13–15) and, a little later in the same letter, 'Rome disappoints me much; I hardly as yet understand, but / *Rubbishy* seems the word that most exactly would suit it' (1.1.19–20). This example is remarkable in its repetition of that incongruous piece of slang—'rubbishy'—but there are many other instances of shared opinions and common descriptions of various episodes.[19]

17. R. D'Agnillo, '"Now in Happier Air": Arthur Hugh Clough's "Amours de Voyage" and Italian Republicanism', in *The Victorians and Italy: Literature, Travel, Politics and Art*, A Vescovi, L. Villa & P. Vita (eds), Monza, Polimetrica, 2009, p. 101.
18. Clough, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 140–141.
19. For example, both display contempt for the Counter-Reformation leader and founder of the Jesuit order Ignatius of Loyola. In a letter to a friend, dated June 1849, Clough writes 'A bomb, I am thankful to say, has left its mark on the façade of the Gesu [a Jesuit church]. I wish it had stirred up old Ignatius' (B.S. Clough, I, p. 155). Claude expresses similar disdain for Ignatius when he compares him to the 'barbarians' who 'killed' and '[r]avaged' in Rome (1.5.102–106). Claude also inherits his maker's disdain for the English newspapers' reporting of the siege. In a letter to his mother from April 1849, Clough complains, 'I see the "Times" tells very odd stories of

This is not to suggest, however, that there is a direct comparison to be made between Clough and Claude—the latter is, ultimately, a poetic construction used by Clough to satirise the figure of an indecisive intellectual. In contrast to his fictional protagonist, Clough was known as a 'thoroughgoing republican' in the late 1840s,[20] his strong views earning him the moniker 'Citizen Clough.'[21] It is almost impossible to imagine Claude attracting such an epithet. The poet's more sincere and profound engagement with republican politics is also evident in letters in which he aligns himself with the Roman Republic through the use of first person plural pronouns (he refers to 'our driving back the French' and the French attacking 'us'[22]) and in which he unashamedly praises the Roman forces' success on 30 April 1849 as a 'fatto d'armi gloriosissmo' ('a most glorious military action').[23]

What the letters do illuminate, however, is the integral nature of the setting of armed struggle to the poem's genesis. It is instructive that Clough's first version of the poem comprised solely descriptions of various episodes of the French siege of Rome. According to Clough's most recent biographer, Anthony Kenny, the poet first 'wrote a number of self-standing descriptions of the sights of Rome and episodes of the siege [... and t]he love theme seems to have developed later than the war theme.'[24] Clough's compositional process, therefore, suggests that its historical setting is essential to *Amours*—not a mere backdrop to the romance—and it is instructive to treat it as such. In this respect, it resembles Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Casa Guidi Windows*, which

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Rome [...] the story of the proposed sale of the Belvidere [sic] Apollo to the Americans is as simply a joke' (B.S. Clough, I, p. 141). Claude also pokes fun at '*The Times*' and its 'error' in 'proclaim[ing] as a fact that Apollo was sold to a Yankee' (1.1.26–28). Finally, and although the episodes recounted are not precisely the same, Clough's letter to F.T. Palgrave on 4 July 1849, appears to have inspired the famous seventh letter of Canto II. In the former, Clough is walking towards the Condotti when he witnesses a crowd 'buffet [...]' someone who may have expressed sympathy with the French and he associates this event with the death of a priest (B.S. Clough, I, p. 157). In *Amours* this experience is recast as a more dramatic scene—in the same part of Rome—where Claude thinks that he may have witnessed a priest's murder, 'although (he) can hardly be certain' (2.7.163).

20. Weiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–120.
21. S. Markovitz, 'Arthur Hugh Clough, *Amours de Voyage*, and the Victorian Crisis of Action,' *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, 55 (2001), p. 448.
22. Clough, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 147, 150.
23. *Ibid.*, I, p. 148.
24. Kenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–171.

also sprung from the poet's correspondence home about events in the Italian *Risorgimento*, and which also invokes Mazzini.[25] This is not to suggest that I prioritise the narrative of the embattled Roman Republic, rather I think it can be read as being closely related to the story of doomed courtship, in which critics have traditionally been more interested.

II – Correspondences between war and love in the first three cantos

In the opening letters of Canto I, quoted above, Claude expresses a strong ambivalence with reference both to Rome and to the Trevellyns—the family of his love interest, Mary. Claude is especially bothered by the eclectic litter that prompts him to label Rome 'rubbishy': 'All the incongruous things of past incompatible ages, / Seem to be treasured up here to make fools of present and future' (1.1.22–23), and he feels 'like a tree [...] buried under a ruin of brick-work' (1.2.38). The protagonist's initial distaste for lousy Rome is mirrored in his disdain for the 'rustic' Trevellyns (1.7.136). In letter VI of Canto I, he snobbishly critiques this 'mercantile' English family:

> Middle-class people these, bankers very likely, not wholly
> Pure of the taint of the shop; will at table d'hôte and restaurant
> Have their shilling's worth, their penny's pennyworth even:
> Neither man's aristocracy this, nor God's, God knoweth! (1.7.125–128).

Yet, while his disappointment in Rome (and in his fellow tourists) lingers, Claude begins to 'adapt' (1.2.35) himself to his situation in the following letters. Initially he struggles to recognise the embodiment of 'Christian faith' in Rome's churches (1.4.70–71), but Claude soon begins to appreciate the beauty and philosophy invested in classical architecture. His emerging sympathy pivots on the Dome of Agrippa, as he calls the Pantheon, which he recognises as exuding a 'positive, calm, Stoic-Epicurean acceptance' (1.4.76). Claude's blossoming partiality for the pagan temple is evidenced in letter VII of Canto II in which he describes 'daily' visits (1.13.260–261) that he spends gazing at its belfries: 'I repeople thy niches, / Not with the Martyrs, and Saints, and Confessors, and Virgins, and children, / But with the mightier forms of an older, austerer worship' (1.8.157–159). Claude's kindling attraction to Rome is accompanied by his desire to 'reconcile Ancient and Modern' (1.10.200).

25. M. Stone and B. Taylor (eds), *Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Selected Poems*, Peterborough, O.N., Broadview Editions, 2009, p. 234.

Notably, this same desire was part of Mazzini's republican project: his 'doctrine of the Risorgimento assumed the existence of a national spirit, connecting past ages with the present and leading on into the future.'[26] Thus Claude's sympathetic attachment to Rome's classical architecture is politically inflected with sympathy for the Roman Republic—a point to which I return in section III in relation to Claude's obsession with 'juxtaposition' and 'affinity.'

Claude's nascent enthusiasm for Rome is paralleled by his tentative steps towards acknowledging the attractions of domesticity—in fact, the two attractions are placed alongside each other in letter IV of Canto I. Having praised the 'Stoic-Epicurean acceptance' of the Pantheon (1.4.76), Claude abruptly turns to contemplating 're-entering society' (1.4.83)—a reference to his acquaintance with the Trevellyns. Despite the derogatory tone of his first portrait of the family, Claude soon admits that he enjoys their company, and specifically that of the Trevellyn women: 'Yet it is pleasant, I own it, to be in their company; pleasant, / Whatever else it may be, to abide in the feminine presence' (1.9.168–169). Thus, in Canto I, Claude's seduction by the classical art and architecture of Rome (and, by extension, the project of the Roman Republic) occurs in tandem with his seduction by the Trevellyns, which is described in adjoining letters.

Although Claude makes little explicit mention of contemporary Roman politics in Canto I, this junction of his dalliance with Roman republicanism, on the one hand, and Mary, on the other, fully emerges in the second. The opening of Canto II, according to Weiner, resembles 'a sort of political awakening, even a conversion experience' for Claude: 'For a moment, [the] harmony of art, love, and politics seems within Claude's grasp.'[27] Claude's aroused interest in the fate of Rome is signalled in the elegiacs that function as a preface to this Canto: '*Is it illusion? or does there a spirit from perfecter ages, / Here, even yet, amid loss, change, and corruption abide?*' (2.1–2). In these lines, the 'yearning for a pure spirit residing within the urban degradation of Rome contrasts with Claude's initial sense of its uselessness and decay', as D'Agnillo observes, and this 'shift in attitude anticipat[ed] his sudden transition from indifference to a fervent sympathy for the Mazzinian cause.'[28] In the first letter of Canto II, Claude, having heard of the arrival of the French General Oudinot's troops, writes that he could 'shed / One true

26. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 142
27. Weiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 122, 123.
28. D'Agnillo, *op. cit.*, pp. 105–106.

tear' (2.1.21–22) for the Roman Republic, signalling a distinctly new attitude. This warm feeling is inflamed in the third letter in which Claude day-dreams about joining Garibaldi's army: 'Whisper it not in thy courts, O Christ Church!—yet did I, waking [...] Dream [...] of great indignations and angers transcendental, / Dream [...] of a sword at my side and a battle-horse underneath me' (2.3.58–62). While Claude's waking vision might seem little more than idle fantasy, in his preface to the poem Joseph Phelan describes this debate over fighting as 'not entirely fanciful', noting that 'a number of foreign students and artists resident in Rome participated in the defence of the Republic.'[29] This is especially convincing given Clough's friendship with an American feminist and writer, Margaret Fuller, who was herself involved in the Roman Republic's cause: Fuller 'had been secretly married for nearly two years to one of the Italian officers in charge of Rome's defences [... and] had been helping to run the Monte Cavallo hospital.'[30] Consideration of chivalrous action on behalf of Rome quickly transitions to a consideration of taking similar action on behalf of the Trevellyn women, revealing how closely these two obsessions are linked in Claude's mind. He asks, 'Am I prepared to lay down my life for the British female?' (2.4.66) and, while this line is obviously comic in its pompous rhetoric and use of the sterile term 'female', its humorous awkwardness may be symptomatic of Claude's self-consciousness in considering ostentatiously chivalric action. He is clearly troubled by the question of what action he should take and returns to this debate later in the letter: 'What I cannot feel now, am I to suppose that I shall feel? / Am I not free to attend for the ripe and indubious instinct?' (2.4.83–84).

Claude's blossoming sympathy for the cause of the Roman Republic, and its army's struggles, coincides with his burgeoning interest in Mary, although neither is untempered. 'VICTORY! VICTORY!' Claude expostulates in the opening line of Canto II's sixth letter, celebrating Garibaldi's 'embarrassing defeat' of Oudinot's troops on 30 April.[31] Similarly, in letter IX of Canto II, while Claude presents a stereotyped portrait of the Italians as passionate and irrational, a people who may '[b]oil into deadly

29. Phelan, *Clough*, p. 9. Kenny, on the other hand, has suggested that contemporary youth were not particularly attached to the Roman cause: 'Young English intellectuals did not feel called on to fight for the Risorgimento in the way that they felt called to volunteer, nearly a century later, in the service of the Spanish Republic' (p. 174).
30. Kenny, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
31. Phelan, *Clough*, p. 76.

wrath and wild homicidal delusion' (2.9.242), he does express an apparently sincere wish for the Italians' 'redemption' (2.9.246) and praises Mazzini (albeit for containing this 'wrath'): 'Honour to speech! and all honour to thee, thou noble Mazzini!' (2.9.249). And, as though his enthusiasm for one ignites his enthusiasm for the other, Claude's subsequent letter is devoted to praise of Mary. While he demurs on the question of whether he is in love, he extols the charm of her company:

> It is a pleasure indeed, to converse with this girl. Oh, rare gift,
> Rare felicity, this! she can talk in a rational way, can
> Speak upon subjects that really are matters of mind and of thinking,
> Yet in perfection retain her simplicity (2.10.253–256).

As Claude's enthusiasms crescendo in tandem, both collapse more-or-less simultaneously. Having jubilantly declared 'VICTORY!' for the Roman army at the beginning of letter VI, his fervour deflates beneath him. 'Doubtless [the "kings of the earth"] marvelled to witness such things, were astonished, *and so forth*' (my emphasis—2.4.146), Claude says, as though he cannot be bothered describing the impression of the battle, the excitement of which is soon over (2.4.152–155). However, Claude remains 'thankful [the Italians] fought, and glad that the Frenchmen were beaten' (2.6.161), and his deflation seems to reflect his self-consciousness and his inability to sustain an exulted tone. This also seems to be the case in his concomitant, rapid diminution of excitement regarding Mary. Having lauded her conversational abilities in letter X of Canto II, by letter XIII he has convinced himself that courting her is hopeless: 'She doesn't like me, Eustace; I think she never will like me' (2.13.283). As Weiner puts it, 'Claude relegates his enthusiasm to the realm of fantasy'; just as love is a delusion, so is 'faith' in the 'future' Roman Republic.[32]

Claude's declared abandonment of Roman politics, near the beginning of Canto III, accompanies his neglect of Mary. The closing letter of Canto II invites Eustace to meet the young woman, who is 'certainly worth [his] acquaintance' (2.14.315), in Florence—where Claude intends to join the Trevellyns. However, Canto III opens with the revelation that Claude has remained in Rome. At this point, neither Mary (3.1.17) nor the reader understands why Claude has terminated his pursuit of her, but it is soon evident that the protagonist has also forsaken Roman politics:

32. Weiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 123–124.

'Farewell, Politics, utterly! What can I do? I cannot / Fight, you know; and to talk I am wholly ashamed' (3.3.60–61). In these lines, Claude conflates his sense of futility in engaging with the Republic's ideals with the excruciating embarrassment that he has suffered on being questioned regarding his intentions toward Mary. The reader does not discover that this is what has prevented Claude from going to Florence until letter XII of this Canto, but the reference is clear in retrospect. The delay in the reader's reception of this vital information, which spans almost an entire canto, has the interesting effect of imposing upon the reader Claude's own avoidance of the issue. Talk of politics and Mary gives way to metaphysical rumination in Canto III; as Reynolds comments, 'all the Canto's philosophical speculation about "juxtaposition", "Aqueous Ages", etc., interesting though it may be in the abstract, is in context primarily a way for Claude to talk about something other than his hurt, and implicitly to argue himself out of it.'[33] But it may also be a way of confirming his resolve not to intervene in the preservation of the Roman Republic.

These persistent parallels and intersections between the two plots suggest that it cannot be mere coincidence that the crisis precipitated by the onslaught of General Oudinot's troops, near the end of Canto III, synchronises with Claude's personal crisis of action. At the close of letter XI, Canto III, Claude reveals that he is surrounded by the general's 'weary soldiers' who are about to 'reinstate Pope and Tourist' (238–239). Clough positions news of the impending French invasion alongside the revelation that George had clumsily intervened in Claude's relations with Mary (3.12.240–241). This discovery is reiterated in Claude's correspondence: in letter XIII the reader senses the protagonist's high state of agitation ('How could I go? Great Heaven! to conduct a permitted flirtation / Under those vulgar eyes, the observed of such observers!'—3.13.278–279), but also Claude's determination to find Mary: 'Twice I have tried before, and failed in getting the horses; / Twice I have tried and failed: *this time it shall not be failure*' (3.13.291–292—my emphasis). Hence, as the Roman Republic stages its final assertion of independence, Claude launches his campaign to find Mary, and his two passions, at this point, diverge.

III – 'Juxtaposition' and 'affinity' in war and love

The double plot of *Amours* is not merely a clever structural device, nor is it intended simply to reinforce the mood, whether elated or

33. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

depressed, of the poem, nor to foster its ambivalent nature as a 'comi-tragedy' or 'tragi-comedy.' Instead, each plot dramatises and reinforces thematic concerns that are crucial to both, and prepare the ground for the connection between Claude and Mazzini that I discuss in the final section. As stated in the introduction, both plots investigate the possibility for authentic, committed action; as Claude puts it himself, '*Action will furnish belief*,—but will that belief be the true one? / That is the point, you know' (5.2.20–21). Markovitz has written at length about the poem's concern with action, which she considers typically Victorian: 'Complications arising from the decreased legibility of action in a world without conviction in Providence [...] led in the nineteenth-century to an increased emphasis on a literature of inaction.' Markovitz links this 'focus on inaction' to a generic shift away from epic literature towards the novel and posits that *Amours* 'stands on the edge of this shift.'[34] Although I question Markovitz's claim that Claude is paralysed by his lack of a 'belief in an end',[35] her concerted focus on action is instructive for my analysis. Claude is obsessed with two key concepts: 'juxtaposition' and 'affinity', and he deploys these in his discussion of the possibility of justifying action, whether in support of the Roman Republic or in pursuit of Mary. In his introduction to his edition of Clough's selected poems, Phelan lucidly and concisely explains the contemporary use of these terms:

> Elements which manifest a natural tendency to unite with one another are described as having an 'elective affinity'; juxtaposition, on the other hand, is the enemy of affinity because it leads to the formation of a permanent bond between weakly compatible elements which would otherwise have formed attachments to different partners.[36]

In section II, I noted how Mazzini's conception of an independent Roman Republic relied on the idea that there was a natural co-existence between the ancient and modern elements of the eternal city, and that a new republic would not simply be the result of 'juxtaposition', of a weak, impermanent bond between the old and new civilizations. However, Claude's first impressions of Rome deny the possibility of such an affinity between 'past ages', leaving Claude 'nonplussed', as Reynolds puts it.[37] Rome's lack of continuity with previous ages is, perhaps, most

34. Markovitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 477–478.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 449.
36. Phelan, *Clough*, p. 15.
37. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

perfectly expressed in Claude's self-consciously learned joke: '"Brickwork I found thee, and marble I left thee!" their Emperor vaunted; / "Marble I thought thee, and brickwork I find thee!" the Tourist may answer' (1.2.49–50). The antimetabole of these lines emphasises the disjunction between past and present through the technique of inversion: the city was once transformed into marble from bricks, and has since degenerated from marble back to 'brickwork.' Thus, Claude's expostulation: 'Utter, O some one, the word that shall reconcile Ancient and Modern!' (1.10.200), presages his tentative interest in the conception and defence of the Roman Republic, which will attempt this 'reconciliation.' Troubled by Rome's disjointed nature, Claude contemplates participating in the fusion of an independent Roman Republic as a soldier and his debate on this point dominates letters II, III, and IV of Canto II. In letter IV, however, Claude laments the expectations that people involve themselves in actions on the basis of mere juxtaposition, a feeble bond based on proximity: 'Must we [...q]uit our own fireside hopes at the alien call of a neighbour' (2.4.90–492), he asks? This tentative conclusion is confirmed in the opening of Canto III when Claude attributes his decision not to 'fight' to his lack of affinity with Rome: 'And what's the / Roman Republic to me, or I to the Roman Republic?' (3.3.66–67). (Interestingly, Claude again uses antimetabole to reinforce the lack of a bond between two proximate entities.)

At the same time that Claude grapples with the decision whether to engage in Roman politics, he wrestles with his feelings for Mary. 'Despite Claude's realization of the limits of cosmopolitan engagement and his disavowal of the fruits of political activism, he remains troubled by the isolation that presents itself as the only alternative', according to Keirstead.[38] Claude's 'isolation' may prompt his pursuit of Mary, but she does not resolve his concerns about the genuineness of motives (although a successful union with her might have allayed them). Claude expresses the fear that he and she exist in a relation of juxtaposition similar to that which defines his relationship with Rome. As Keirstead observes, 'Claude's fear is that nobody really knows anybody else': the poem makes the 'connection between the conditions of modern mass culture—with its trains and steamers—and the sense that one daily has more contact with people but remains, paradoxically, even more isolated.'[39] In other words, Claude's anxiety is that the 'modern world is one of masses

38. Keirstead, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

of people *juxtaposed* with one another, with nothing drawing them together other than chance.'[40] Claude elaborates upon these concerns in one of Canto II's closing letters: 'There are two different kinds, I believe, of human attraction; / One which simply disturbs, unsettles, and makes you uneasy, / And another that poises, retains, and fixes, and holds you' (2.11.264–267). In his commentary on these lines, Phelan notes that '[a]ttraction was occasionally used instead of affinity by contemporary chemists to designate the force behind the combination of particular elements.'[41] Thus, the first variety of 'attraction' that Claude describes, which 'disturbs' and 'unsettles', is the equivalent of juxtaposition, while the 'attraction' that Claude seeks is that which 'retains' and 'fixes' you—true affinity. Claude 'trembles' for fear that his bond with Mary is 'factitious' (2.11.271) and he intuits that Mary is 'repelled' by him: 'my manner offends; my ways are wholly repugnant; / Every word that I utter estranges, hurts, and repels her' (2.14.298–299). Phelan compares Claude to a 'scientist conducting an experiment on himself; having placed the elements [i.e. himself and Mary] together, he is waiting for unmistakable signs of a positive reaction before continuing.'[42]

Although Phelan reads the experimental results as 'negative',[43] Claude actually identifies Mary's refusal to artificially force a connection, allowing him the time and opportunity to discover whether it truly existed, as the most appealing aspect of their courtship:

> [...] it was this above all things,
> This that charmed me, ah, yes, even this, that she held me to nothing.
> No, I could talk as I pleased; come close; fasten ties as I fancied;
> Bind and engage myself deep and all would be forgotten the next morning
> (3.9.196–199).

In addition, and more importantly, despite Claude's anxieties regarding the nature of their attraction, he is more active in his pursuit of Mary than either Phelan or Weiner, who refers to his 'final inaction',[44] intimates. Claude determinedly pursues Mary throughout Canto IV, travelling to Florence, and then Milan, Bellaggio, the Splügen, the Stelvio, Porlezza, back to Bellaggio, then to Florence, to Pisa, and back to Florence

40. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
41. Phelan, *Clough*, p. 111.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
43. *Ibidem.*
44. Weiner, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

again. The distinctly ironic tone of the first three Cantos, as well as the political and metaphysical speculation, drops from the letters that comprise the fourth Canto. Instead, Claude straightforwardly describes his practical attempts to catch up with the Trevellyns and to reunite himself with Mary, resulting in the shortest canto of the poem due to its lack of digressions. Ultimately, while Claude exhaustively explores the motivation for each action—whether fighting on behalf of the Roman Republic or for Mary—in terms of juxtaposition or affinity, displaying an obsession with deciphering the true nature of our impulses, he is willing to make a leap of faith in pursuit of Mary, but not in pursuit of the Republican ideal.

IV – Claude's and Mazzini's seed of heroism

While critics, such as Markovitz, Phelan, and Weiner perceive Claude as mired in epistemological confusion, Clough himself did not intend his protagonist to be read as entirely unheroic, something that he indicated in response to criticism that J.C. Shairp levelled against Claude. In this letter, dated January 1850, Clough refers to Claude as that 'unfortunate fool of a hero' and then continues, 'I have no intention of sticking up for him, but certainly I did not mean him to go off into mere prostration and defeat.'[45] While Clough's intention cannot be read as evidence of what he actually achieved in *Amours*, his observation does suggest the potential for an interpretation of Claude's actions as, at least, equivocally heroic. Prompted by Clough's own defence of Claude, I suggest that, despite prominent differences, the poet obliquely associates his protagonist with Mazzini. Mazzini is inspired by ambition for Rome and Claude appears to be directionless; Mazzini administrates a new Republic and Claude is a lone traveller; Mazzini pursues the liberty of an entire nation and Claude marriage. Yet, they both engage with and obsess over the same philosophical and ethical issues, and there are strong parallels in their narratives and accomplishments.

Claude is a young, Oxford scholar who ruminates on politics, morality, and metaphysics, and Mazzini was similarly engaged with the first two of these concerns as the theoretical architect of the short-lived Roman Republic (and the *Risorgimento* more broadly). Specifically, both were obsessed with the notion of duty. This is most evident in Claude's debate regarding whether to fight for the Roman Republic, which emerges in letters II, III, and IV of Canto II, and which re-surfaces in the third

45. Clough, *op. cit.*, I, p. 168.

letter of Canto III. However, Claude is also concerned with the way that notions of obligation can interfere in a man and a woman's attempt to know each other: 'I tremble for something factitious, / Some malpractice of heart and illegitimate process; / We are so prone to these things with *our terrible notions of duty*', he laments (3.11.271–73—my emphasis). Mazzini too was obsessed with defining duties, according to Stefano Recchia and Nadia Urbinati, the editors of his collected writings (I. 7). 'Mazzini's entire political thought pivots around duties: toward oneself, the family, the nation, and humanity as a whole', they write, concluding that 'it would not be too far-fetched to identify Mazzini as the prophet of a "religion of duty."'[46] In 'Faith and Future' for example, Mazzini describes duty as the 'the sublime theory which brings man nearer to God, lends to the human creature a spark of omnipotence, overleaps every obstacle, and converts the scaffold of the martyr into a ladder of triumph.'[47] His faith in duty is, as Recchia and Urbinati imply, apparently religious: '[s]ocieties based upon Duty would not be compelled to have recourse to force; duty, once admitted as the rule, excludes the possibility of struggle; and by rendering the individual subject to the general aim, it cuts at the very root of those evils which Right is unable to prevent, and only affects to cure.'[48] Ultimately, Claude and Mazzini's conclusions regarding what constitutes a man's duties diverge: whereas Claude decides not to fight on behalf of Rome, Mazzini would argue that he should, and their divergent conclusions rest on their different conceptions of affinity. Where Claude asks: 'what's the / Roman Republic to me, or I to the Roman Republic?' (3.3.66–67), Mazzini would respond that the Romans are his brothers. 'In whatever land you may be, wherever a man is fighting for right, for justice, for truth', Mazzini writes in 'On the Duties of Man', 'that man is your brother. Wherever a man suffers from error, injustice, or tyranny—that man is your brother.'[49] Despite their differences, however, it is telling that the two men ponder the precise same moral dilemma.

Through his protagonist, Clough debates another of Mazzini's key messages: that of the primacy of action. As Recchia and Urbinati noted in their introduction, the spring of 1849 during the Roman Republic was

46. S. Recchia and N. Urbinati (ed.), *A Cosmopolitanism of Nations: Giuseppe Mazzini's Writings on Democracy, Nation Building, and International Relations*, Princeton, Princeton U.P., 2009, p. 8.
47. Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
49. Recchia & Urbinati, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

'the only time during his entire life that he held any kind of political office.'[50] In other words, like Claude, Mazzini was not predisposed to undertake ostentatious action, although, again, Claude is the more sceptical of the two. In 'Toward a Holy Alliance of the Peoples', Mazzini writes, 'We must act, for action is like a divine revelation to the multitudes'[51] and in 'Records of the Brothers Bandiera' he criticises those who obsessively contemplate the nature of action to be taken instead of simply doing something.[52] Mazzini's abhorrence of 'neutrality' is evident in the essay 'Europe: Its Conditions and Prospects' in which he writes that '[a]ction is the thought of the people, as thought is the action of the individual' and describes it as a 'sudden revelation confirming all the presentiments of science, all the aspirations of faith.'[53] In Claude's discussion of action in Canto V, he is more circumspect. Claude acknowledges, in a similar vein to Mazzini, that '*Action will furnish belief*' (5.2.20), but he persists in prioritising the nature of the belief rather than allowing, as Mazzini does, that action itself will reveal 'belief': 'What one wants, I suppose, is to predetermine the action, / So as to make it entail, not a chance-belief, but the true one' (5.2.22–23). However, shortly afterwards, Claude does assert the importance of doing, rather than thinking: 'Ah, the key of our life, that passes all wards, opens all locks, / Is not *I will*, but *I must*. I must,—I must,—and I do it' (5.8.134–135). Furthermore, the clearest demonstration of Mazzini and Claude's unity on this point is the latter's pursuit of Mary in Canto IV, and how this (albeit failed) attempt at action reflects the Italian statesman's failed attempt to defend the Roman Republic.

Correspondences between Claude's and Mazzini's concerns are dramatised in the correspondences in the action that they take in the second half of the poem; as already described, Mazzini and Claude's respective missions intersect at a critical moment at the end of Canto III. As Claude witnesses General Oudinot's troops waiting to invade Rome in a final (successful) manoeuvre, he simultaneously receives the news that prompts him to follow Mary northwards through Italy. In addition, Claude and Mazzini's respective missions fail at the same moment within the poem. Claude announces that 'Rome is fallen' (5.6.113) in the sixth letter of Canto V and, in his very next letter, he declares his intention,

50. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
52. A.A. Venturi (ed.), *Joseph Mazzini: His Life, Writings, and Political Principles*, New York, Hurd & Houghton, 1872, pp. 242–243.
53. Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

finally, to leave Florence and to cease chasing Mary. The connection between these two endings is implied in letter VI when Claude ponders: 'Whither depart the souls of the brave that die in the battle, / Die in the lost, lost fight, for the cause that perishes with them?' (5.6.118–119). The 'lost, lost fight' and the 'cause that perishes' with its proponent perform the double function of referencing both the French siege and Claude's energetic pursuit of Mary. In addition, when Claude asks again, at the close of the letter, 'Whither depart the brave?—God knows; I certainly do not' (5.6.128), he expresses a lack of certainty regarding not only the fate of 'brave' souls, but also regarding his own next step. He is unsure where to proceed and this suggests a further parallel between the situation of Claude and Mazzini since, subsequent to the feats of the Roman Republic, the latter spent a relatively aimless six months in exile in Switzerland where, '[u]nable to move freely, he read and sometimes played chess.'[54]

Both Phelan and Reynolds have observed how, during Clough's interview with Mazzini, the latter openly acknowledged his belief in the inevitability of the failure of the Roman Republic.[55] Clough's impressions of the occasion are recorded in a letter to Palgrave, dated 23 April 1849, in which he writes, '[t]hey have got about 22,000 troops, and mean to have 50,000, so as to be able to take the field, at any rate not in mere desperation. But he [Mazzini] expects foreign intervention in the end, and of course thinks it like enough that the Romana Republica [sic] will fall.'[56] The fact that Mazzini's ambition did not incorporate a permanent Roman Republic is telling. Instead of attempting to erect a lasting, independent Italian state, Reynolds explains, the 'defenders of Rome were consciously *enacting valour*, so as to leave an example of Italian heroism to future revolutionaries.'[57] Or, as Phelan puts it, 'Mazzini's aim in defending Rome was, as he later admitted, largely rhetorical; he wanted to offer a '*morituri te salutant*' from Rome to the rest of Italy as a way of giving substance to his claim that the city could recover something of its antique virtue.'[58] Mazzini's admission of the above can be found in his writing. In 'Concerning the Fall of the Roman Republic', he suggests

54. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 77.
55. J. Phelan, 'Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Casa Guidi Windows*, Arthur Hugh Clough's *Amours de Voyage* and the Italian National Uprisings of 1847–1849', *Journal of Anglo-Italian Studies*, 3 (1993), p. 146 and Reynolds, p. 146.
56. Clough, *op. cit.*, I, p. 143.
57. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
58. Phelan, 'E.B.B's *Casa Guidi Windows*', p. 147.

that the 'unequal struggle that went on for two months in Rome' may have 'borne fruit' in acquiring support for the cause of the Risorgimento.[59] And, albeit in the context of a different battle, Mazzini articulates a similar notion in 'Records of the Brothers Bandiera', when he writes, 'the seed that we have sown will remain; God will cause it to germinate beneath the soil sanctified by the blood of our martyrs; and should it blossom only over our graves—still, blessed be God—we shall rejoice elsewhere.'[60]

In light of Mazzini's description of his peculiar mission, it is possible to interpret Claude's futile pursuit of Mary in Cantos IV and V as reflecting the Italian patriot's futile assertion of Rome's independence. While neither succeeds in his attempt to establish affinity, either between ancient and modern Rome or between young lovers, both men might be read as having 'sown' the seed of a heroism that may germinate at another time. Interestingly, Mazzini himself explicitly links military action with romantic action in 'Records of the Brothers Bandiera': 'The faith for which such men seek death as eagerly as the lover seeks his betrothed, is neither the frenzy of culpable agitators, nor the dream of deluded men; it is the germ of a religion, a providential decree.'[61] Claude's pursuit of Mary is, I argue, this 'germ of a religion.' As already noted, Cantos IV and V are refreshingly free of Claude's habitual intellectual posturing and his irony; instead they are marked by a tone of determination: 'Five days now departed; but they can travel but slowly;—/ I quicker far' (4.1.13–14), 'Turn, however, I must, though it seem I turn to desert her' (4.5.51), and a criticism of his earlier hesitancy: 'Pitiful fool that I was, to stand fiddle-faddling in that way' (4.3.38). In addition, the very intensity of Claude's 'depression' (5.8.151) in Canto V, in which state he describes the '[r]emembrance of hope' as a 'sword in [his] soul' (5.8.142–44), is, at the very least, evidence of an un-ironic engagement with the world. Thus, I differ to some degree with Phelan's conclusion that Clough's knowledge that the Roman Republic was 'doomed to failure' instilled the poem with a 'strikingly sceptical point of view adopted towards the events in question' and that Claude remains coldly detached from the events that he witnesses.[62] Claude's action in the latter part of the poem is associated with Mazzini's in its futility, but it is also presented, I believe,

59. Recchia & Urbinati, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
60. Venturi, *op. cit.*, p. 267.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 264.
62. Phelan, 'E. B. B's *Casa Guidi Windows*,' pp. 146–147.

as a type of moral achievement—or at least the seed of one.

According to Reynolds, '[w]hat is remarkable about the double plot of *Amours de Voyage* is that it presents us with a drama of which we may very well expect the two parts to correspond, but then refuses to satisfy that expectation.'[63] This statement echoes an earlier one of John Goode, who describes *Amours* as the 'enactment of incoherence.'[64] In this paper, I have taken issue with the idea that there is no affinity between the two, principal plots that comprise Clough's long poem. Instead, I have attempted to demonstrate how close the correspondences in action between the Roman Republic plot and the love plot are in the first three Cantos, and how they share thematic concerns related to the justification of action that are expressed, in each, via the fundamental concepts of 'juxtaposition' and 'affinity.' In addition, I have suggested that Clough's 'unfortunate fool of a hero' is subtly associated with Mazzini himself and that his failed pursuit of Mary should be read, like the failed Roman Republic, as the 'germ' or 'seed' of an emerging heroism. Phelan suggests that Claude's 'journey from the garden of infinite choices towards the seas of actual and positive existence [can be read] as a chronicle of maturity, or at least of the first faltering steps towards maturity.'[65] I suggest that, in light of the parallels that are carefully traced between the Roman Republic plot and the love plot, and between Mazzini and Claude, this reading is most sympathetic to what the poem achieves.

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63. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
64. J. Goode. '"Amours de Voyage": The Aqueous Poem,' in *The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations* I. Armstrong (ed.), Lincoln, U. of Nebraska P., 1969, p. 289.
65. Phelan, *Clough*, p. 19.