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Why can't I eat at Italian restaurants? Agnotologies and Biopolitics of Italian Food in Migration 1930-1940

By

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Abstract

Italo Americans socialists in the 1930s found themselves in the crossfire of fascist Italy and Capitalist America, undesirable on both sides of the Atlantic. Food as represented in the Italian Language Newspaper *La Stampa Libera* allows a look into the assimilative pressures faced by Italo American socialist on both sides. Meat Eating in particular because of it's ideological ties with both fascism and capitalism, became a point of contested assimilation, with the fascist majority of the Italian American community coming into meat eating with less resistance and the socialist minority with more resistance. At least until 1935 when a sudden change occurs in the relative assimilation and relative meat consumption of Italian Americans socialists. This sudden change reveals the biopolitical pressures under which Italian American socialist where living and its suddenness allows for some speculation on the reason for the sudden capitulation to them. Italian American Socialists, particularly the women had utilized food to maintain a separate political and ethnic identity against biopolitical assimilation, their acceptance of a change in foodways reveals this capitulation.

Over the last two centuries a shift has been happening in the way most people on earth define their identity. Partially as a result of the alienation that happened due to the rise of the consumer economy, labor has become less and less identity defining, and consumption has taken its place. This essay is interested in the way meat consumption undermined the specific identities of socialist Italo-American immigrants throughout the 1930s, with particular focus on a shift that happened in 1934-5 as seen in the daily newspaper *La Stampa Libera,* distributed in New York City, in Italian between 1931-1938. I argue that the change from quiet distrust of meat eating to fervent endorsement of the same seen in the periodical before and after 1935 results from a series of overlapping pressures to assimilate into American society. Because the central focus is consumption, including media consumption, questions of editorial intent or editorial change are simply not within the scope of argument. Which is to say that the argument does not hinge on the possibility that *La Stampa Libera* changed in response to changing sensibilities in the community it represented, but that it can act as an indicator of pressure to change being applied onto the community. It is also important to mention that the socialist Italo-American community provides only one window into a change towards more meat heavy diets that was affecting many other immigrant communities, first in mind the Chinese immigrant community. Still the Italo-American community offers an important view onto this change because it is currently fully integrated and assimilated into American society, showing the ultimate success of the pressures this essay wants to elucidate. Setting it in opposition to both the variety of Asian immigrant communities and the Black American community which were understood in the 1930s as inherently un-assimilable but only "civilizable", a barrier that still exists, if less clearly, to this day.

This essay seeks to reveal the ideological underpinnings of meat consumption and how they undermined the reproduction of the socialist Italo-American community. Geographically the focus is on the community living in New York City both because of its numerical size and its consumption of the only non-subsidized Italian language newspaper in America through the 1930s the aforementioned *La Stampa Libera*. The circulation of this newspaper throughout the 1930s in direct opposition to the Fascist regime in Italy makes this newspaper useful as it was the only daily published opposition to the much more widely read *Progresso Italo-Americano* which was directly subsidized by the regime[1] to bolster the image of Italians abroad[2].

Meat consumption was a vehicle for both capitalist and fascist ideology, which of course did not appeal to socialists. These ideological underpinnings, of course, did not exist detached from the material experience of Italo-Americans in New York City both as consumers of market commodities and laborers producing and transporting said commodities. Because of this material experience, I argue that Italo-American socialists, while certainly not fully aware of the larger picture they were part of, had a less obscured window onto it. This relative clarity was particularly poignant for the Italo-American women who were involved in the socialist cause and utilized food and the particular foodways learned back in the Old World as an organizing and unifying factor for the community against assimilation in the New World. Finally, this essay will conclude with an explanation of how those ideological underpinnings together with the advent of the Second Italo-Ethiopian War chipped away at the very existence of the community though both material and ideological biopolitics with the first sign of community disjointment beginning

[1] Bencivenni, Marcella. *Italian Immigrant Radical Culture: The Idealism of the Sovversivi in the United States, 1890-1940*. New York: New York University Press, 2014. p 96
[2] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution: Italian Women's Resistance and Radicalism in New York City, 1880-1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 216

to show in 1934-35. Ultimately, the community ceased to exist as a separate entity from American culture and fully integrated by the start of the second World War.

The ideological and material connection between capitalism and meat consumption, particularly in the Anglophone world, has already been thoroughly analyzed. While not focusing on meat consumption per se, Carolyn Merchant explains the modern European mindset on the interaction between nature and culture through a recovery narrative. She argues that the material outcomes of colonization were framed ideologically as an attempt to reconquer our way into Eden. This is a view also espoused by Richard Grove in "Green Imperialism"[3]. Merchant summarizes the subplots that underly her argument as "Christian religion, modern science, and capitalism"[4] . When speaking of the neo-Europes like America, she specifies that "the Baconian-Cartesian-Newtonian project is premised on the power of technology to subdue and dominate nature"[5], meat consumption being one of those instances where individual interactions could materialize this project of domination even for those away from the centers of power.

Similarly, Chris Otter dedicates a whole chapter of his book "Diet for a Large Planet", aptly titled "Meat" to illustrating the connection between an overarching colonial-capitalist ideological framework and meat consumption within the Anglophone world. He opens his argument by stating that British meat consumption outranked all other European countries and that "only the meat-glutted neo-Europes ate more"[6]. To be clear neo-Europes in this case is used to mean those places where British colonialism became settler colonialism: the British or once-

[3] Grove, R. H. (2003). Green imperialism colonial expansion, tropical island Edens and the origins of environmentalism, 1600-1860. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press. p.25
[4] Merchant, Carolyn. Reinventing Eden the Fate of Nature in Western Culture. New York: Routledge, 2013. p133
[5] Merchant, Carolyn. Reinventing Eden the Fate of Nature in Western Culture. New York: Routledge, 2013. p136
[6] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet: Industrial Britain, Food Systems, and World Ecology. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p.45

British colonies in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and to a lesser extent the Dutch Colony in South Africa all fit under this umbrella. Significantly, white Anglo identity was maintained in the neo-Europes though racial exclusion of immigrants[7]. Otter focuses particularly on the U.S. and Canada as providers for the increased meat consumption of Britain in the 1800s, adding Australia once refrigeration and technological advancements in maritime travels collapsed space enough to allow a similar relationship to form.

For a look into the same connection within the U.S. without the question of maritime trade, Joshua Specht brings into focus the anti-union actions of the Chicago slaughterhouses[8] that systematically butchered the meat that was then sent to New York for both "in house" consumption and trade. He asserts that "profitability of what happened inside Chicago's slaughterhouses depended on the throngs of men and women outside them hoping to find a day's or a week's employment […] packers could easily replace anyone who balked at paltry salaries, or, worse yet, tried to unionize"[9]. When challenged by butchers for their lost monopoly on meat consumption packers argued that was a small price to pay for the "democratization of meat"[10].

While Otter is far more materialist than Merchant, the ideological underpinnings of the meat trade between Europe and the neo-Europes are not lost on him. He explains that "the correlation between carnivorousness and economic development suggested that meat-eating and "civilization" were intimately, even causally, related"[11]. A New Heaven factory worker begrudgingly welcomed New Deal economic relief that allowed him to buy milk explaining

[7] Offer, Avner. The First World War: an Agrarian Interpretation. Oxford: O.U.P., 1991. p 3
[8] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic: a Hoof-to-Table History of How Beef Changed America. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p.180
[9] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p.184
[10] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. 205
[11] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p.45

"who wouldn't be sick?" comparing the milk-less and meat-less diet his pre-relief income could afford, thus connecting milk and other animal product consumption directly with health[12]. David Arnold too elucidates the same connections as both Merchant and Otter, explaining the colonial sentiment that "formerly the richest countries were those in which nature was most bountiful; now the richest countries are those in which man is most active"[13] . This distinction, once translated to the American landscape, negatively reflected on Italian immigrants, who lived under accusations of laziness as connected to their Catholicism in the view of Anglo-Americans who saw themselves as able to make bounty out of any landscape through work.

These were intimations Italians in NYC would have been highly familiar with as a series of campaigns to bring "nutritional education"[14] and, by extension, civilizing effects to immigrant groups were enacted throughout the 1930s within the scope of Depression relief. A particularly clear example comes from a female social worker who wrote "not yet Americanized. Still eating Italian food". Likely in reference to pasta and its perception held by her and "meat-and-potatoes-eating American[s]" as a low nutritional value food. A perception that saw pasta as incapable of meeting the standards she was to uphold[15]. Americans viewed Italians as traditional and claiming "they ate too little meat and too little milk; they drank too much coffee and alcohol […] and the women responsible for cooking meals knew nothing of order and routine"[16].

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[12] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p 62

[13] Arnold, David. *The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture and European Expansion*. Blackwell, 1996. p 25

[14] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: the Performance of Group Identity*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 42

[15] Civitello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: a History of Food and People*. Hoboken, N.J: Wiley, 2011. p 296

[16] Gabaccia, D. R. (2000). *We are what we eat: Ethnic food and the making of Americans*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. p 123

To explain why meat eating (as opposed to pasta eating) would be so important to an American social worker, it is useful to delve a little deeper into Otter's argument. The thrust of which is that in the Anglo world "animals became capitalist machines"[17] through a series of genetic alterations that commodified the animal[18] and created "new livestock breeds [that]were creatures of capitalism[…]designed to maximize their exchange value across global economic space, as countless hackneyed quasi-cartesian references to their mechanical nature attest"[19]. Interestingly these capitalist machines had already failed in Italy, where the British Shorthorn floundered[20]. This failure should not be attributed to the people who emigrated to the US since import of Shorthorns focused on northern Italy where there is ample space for pasture, while most immigrants to the US came from the south. However this failure is symbolic of a distaste or lack of need for the capitalist machines, not shocking when one remembers that they were imported at the dawn of the fascist regime which, as analyzed, shortly embarked in their own creation of technoscientific machines for their own ends. These different technoscientific machines serviced fascism instead of capitalism and were created to further the colonization of Ethiopia and, to a lesser extent, the civilization of southern Italians.

While it may not seem obvious, immigrant communities were central in the process of creating animal capitalist machines in the US both as a source of "cheap, reliable and desperate labor"[21], and as consumers for the now newly democratized meat, writing home "celebrating the United States' culinary bounty"[22]. Here it is important to stress that, while not entirely visible, for the socialist subsection of the Italian immigrant community these connections may have been

[17] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 67
[18] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 64
[19] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p.65
[20] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 58
[21] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. 184
[22] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. 220

less obscure. This was first and foremost because of their pro-unionizing work, their employment in the slaughterhouses[23] and their siding with the butchers in raising questions about the "health concerns"[24] related to industrial slaughterhouses. It is also important to stress that the change that happened in the socialist Italo-American community in 1934 was not from a meat free diet, or any other form of vegetarianism, onto a meat rich diet. For one, there is no evidence that Italian immigrants were at all adherent to the small movements, with largely religious inspiration, towards vegetarianism, and for another, they did consume some meat. The change that occurred was more subtle. Italian American diets were never meat free, but meat consumption was not as central to them as it became in the decades after the assimilationist pressures applied to them in the 1930s, A good example is the notion of milk as the only sufficient form of calcium when broccoli, imported originally from Italy and considered an ethnic vegetable long into its American journey[25], had traditionally taken that role in Italian cuisine.

In his seminal work "Dust Bowl" Worster also draws a specific connection between capitalism and meat consumption, looking particularly at the period leading up to the system breaking in both economic and environmental disaster[26]. While the dust bowl is generally understood as a failure in agriculture rather farming, in his chapter titled "Sodbusting" Worster points at the catastrophic precedent of "beef bonanza" pointing to an event of historical amnesia. He explaining "the world of cowboys, roundups, and cattle drives has been recalled many times, but not the ecological story. Whether they held title or not, the cattlemen pushed land as far as it

[23] Cinotto, Simone. Una Famiglia Che Mangia Assieme: Cibo Ed Etnicita Nella Comunita Italoamericana Di New York, 1920-1940. Torino: Otto Editore, 2001. p. 260
[24] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. 206
[25] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 239
[26] Worster, Donald. Dust Bowl the Southern Plains in the 1930s. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. p 5

would go, and then pushed some more"[27]. The epitome of that environmental exploitation came in 1886-87 with the "Big Die-Up" where inability to predict the cyclic nature of the environment on the plains lead cattle drivers to push thousands of cattle through a harsh winter that killed almost all the bovines[28]. Of course, it should not be argued that somehow it was the cattlemen almost 50 years prior to cause the dust bowl in the 30s, but it was the same ideological underpinning of vast land exploitation for an (at least imagined) inordinately gluttonous consumer base that drove both events. The same Cartesian underpinning that Merchant argues was inherently linked with capitalism.

The Great Depression affected Italian immigrants in interesting ways, although of course it was a period of hardship, by the end of it Italians had acclimatized to American meat heavy cuisine, Italian cuisine had entered the mainstream American menu, and Italian immigrants had also, and arguably therefore, been allowed to enter both whiteness and the middle class. In his analysis of the Covello papers, a series of documents collected by an Italian immigrant on the topic of Italian foodways in America, Simone Cinotto explains that during the 1930s there was a visible effect, even stated outright in interviews. At the beginning of the decade Italian American school children expressed shame at their own position in society because of the food they were consuming, while by the end of the decade that same food became a point of pride, with meats like sausages central to said pride. Medical experts at the time lamented that they had not found a way to alter the eating habits of large populations[29], which might have been true for them but on so much for the American Meat Institute and their publicity managers who achieved

[27] Worster, Donald. Dust Bowl the Southern Plains in the 1930s. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. p.83
[28] Civitello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: a History of Food and People*. Hoboken, N.J: Wiley, 2011. p 230
[29] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p 74

an overall increase in meat consumption between the 1929 and 1934[30], years that we imagine now as defined by scarcity. For Italian immigrants specifically, this came in the form of salted pork that was distributed to them directly from the government as a form of relief aimed at consumers[31], but really in place to maintain and help meat producers.

Simultaneously American diets began to include Italian foods, Women's magazines and home economists advised women to consider the relatively cheap diet Italians were following to remain within budgets during the Depression[32]. The Covello papers corroborate this explaining that one factor that brought pride through food to Italian schoolchildren was the fact that "even our American friends have learned to appreciate and enjoy those foods that often represent for us the real essence of Italy"[33]. However, these foods that were being marketed as Italian both to Americans and Italians were, in fact, a far cry from anything that Italians in the homeland would have eaten and even a far cry from what Italo-Americans were eating just previous to the 1930s[34]. The New Deal specifically benefitted Italians disproportionately relative to their non-white neighbors in Harlem. It was New Deal programs that guaranteed whites, now including Italians, access to funding necessary to leave segregated inner cities and empowered some trade unions at the expense of non-white, particularly Black, Americans' access to funding and workforce protections[35]. Italian women might have been particularly reticent to drop their old

[30] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p 25
[31] Covello Papers, appendix p1, information on federal relief food program with assurances of safety.
[32] Gabaccia, Donna R., and CAROL HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16, no. 1 (1998): 5-23. Accessed July 24, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29776455. P 18
[33] Cinotto, Simone. "Leonard Covello, the Covello Papers, and the History of Eating Habits among Italian Immigrants in New York." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 497. p 508
[34] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 68
[35] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 238

foodways and stronger ethnic identities[36], and it was only at the tail end of the 1930s that "Italo-American women's sense of themselves as whites would emerge"[37]. Slotting them with their newly achieved whiteness and middle-class status in the section of women who came out of the harshness of the depression "with enhanced feelings of mastery and self-confidence [while] working class women were scarred by the opposite feelings"[38]. This theme of Italian American leaving other oppressed groups behind is a major theme of the entire argument.

Alexander Cockburn builds on Merchant's argument[39] in his essay "A Short, Meat-Oriented, History of the World from Eden to the Mattole" putting into focus the importance of New York State in the conversation, explaining "there was more cattle – nearly a million- in New York State than anywhere else"[40]. This statement from Cockburn might seem surprising to anyone familiar with cattle raising in the US, which at least historically was focused in Chicago from the vast western states. However it was that exact decentralization of resources in Chicago's hinterland coupled with NYC's not-insignificant meat packing industry, but rather more insignificant hinterland blocked off by the Appalachians, that made necessary such a concentration of cattle so close to the disassembly site. Cockburn also introduces the connection between meat eating and fascism albeit a little counter intuitively. In his article he quotes Tiago Saraiva's "Fascist Pigs" extensively but remains a little fixated on Hitler's personal vegetarianism as somehow explanatory for the relation between fascism and meat eating. In this and so many other things Hitler was an outlier and fixating on him as a charismatic figure tends

[36] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 40
[37] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. P. 108
[38] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p 61
[39] Cockburn, Alexander. "A Short Meat Oriented History of the World." New Left Review, n.d. p 3
[40] Cockburn, Alexander. "A Short Meat Oriented History of the World." New Left Review, n.d. p 7

to hinder true understanding of fascism rather than help. On top of that, it is important to note that, while Hitler was vegetarian, the Nazi regime banned the vegetarian societies that existed in Weimar Germany[41]. Nonetheless Cockburn points out that "animal protection measures may have been a legal veil to level an attack on the Jews"[42] which opens particular avenues of analysis in differences between fascisms in 1930s Europe.

This is largely beside the point given that the fascism that interests me in this essay is Italian fascism. While there is some debate about Mussolini's direction as far as meat eating was concerned, given that in his bid for autarky he and his party did encourage "consumers to reduce wheat consumption"[43]. This policy placed particular stress on southern households that relied on wheat for sustenance more than the corn meal (usually served with meat) of the north. There is also, the ideological and aesthetic connection between the fascist regime in Italy and artistic movements like futurism which allows some firmness in the statement that the fascist regime mainly pushed towards more meat eating, if nothing else in the push to create stronger soldiers for the country[44]. The futurist movement however does need a moment's attention given that the "Futurist cookbook" by Marinetti (the founder of the movement) features some gems like an essay simply titled "against pasta"[45] and recipes of raw meat called "heroic winter"[46], and what can be generally described as English roast-beef and yet called "Synthesis of Italy Dinner"[47].

[41] Patterson, Charles. Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust. New York: Lantern Books, 2002. p. 127
[42] Cockburn, Alexander. "A Short Meat Oriented History of the World." New Left Review, n.d. p. 11
[43] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 11
[44] Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *The Futurist Cookbook*. London: Penguin Classics, 2014. p 53
[45] Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *The Futurist Cookbook*. London: Penguin Classics, 2014. p 36
[46] Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *The Futurist Cookbook*. London: Penguin Classics, 2014. p 102
[47] Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *The Futurist Cookbook*. London: Penguin Classics, 2014. p 127

Tiago Saraiva on the other hand builds a similar argument to Otter's albeit substituting capitalism with fascism and cows with pigs; that is to say he argues that in the same way cow standardization made them into capitalist machines, genetic tinkering of pigs (in Germany) and sheep (in Italy) made them into fascist machines. In his words "pigs performed the distinction […] between rooted Germans and uprooted Jews"[48]. I should mention here that fascism utilized these machines primarily in the scope of colonization both materially and rhetorically. Italy specifically utilized the genetic knowledge garnered by the farming of animals to create a plant based fascist machine in the form of modified wheat for use in the mainland[49]. Saraiva describes his own work as a study in "fascist ontology" through the lens of making and growing technoscientific organisms[50], dispelling early on the common misconception that fascism is simply hyper-conservative by explaining that fascism "is an all-encompassing modernist social experiment with the purpose of inventing new national community"[51]. This description clarifies the connection between fascism and artistic movements like futurism, with its obsession with masculinity and meat eating.

Once again these were all connections that might not have been completely obscure to the part of the population that emigrated to the U.S. given that "difficult access to credit and the larger investment demanded by the new strains only contributed to increasing the number of people who migrated"[52] both to urban centers and abroad, and possibly less obscure for those immigrants with socialist leanings as the new strains also "exacerbated social inequalities"[53].

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[48] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs Technoscientific Organisms and the History of Fascism. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p. 101
[49] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 28
[50] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p14
[51] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 5
[52] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 38
[53] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 38

Even more so for the majority of immigrants to America that came from southern Italy that tended to come back to Italy after a period of employment abroad. It was towards this group that in 1927 the fascist regime began a campaign aimed at convincing them to leave not for other countries particularly the US, but to leave for the new colonized territories in Ethiopia[54]

Saraiva also doesn't shy away from looking into the ideological connections between fascism and western capitalism[55], particularly in their shared venture towards colonization despite the claims by fascist regimes that theirs was a completely different kind of colonialism than that of 'plutocratic powers'. A colonialism spurred "not by capitalist greed but the establishment of settler colonies to absorb Italian population surplus"[56], which required not only human settler power but increasingly animal settlement. Specifically in the form of rabbits which Mussolini hoped would contribute to the national autarky which was effort greatly intensified after the start of the Ethiopian campaign, and pureblood rams and ewes to be supplied to the "brave Italian settlers to the Italian colonies" in north and east Africa[57].

Animals were also central in changing the ecological landscape of the New World upon the arrival of white settlers. Cockburn points out the importance of sheep and cattle in transforming both the social and natural world soon after the Spanish overwhelmed the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan in 1521[58]. All this is in line with Merchant's analysis that colonization of the New World "fulfilled the biblical mandate to make the desert blossom as the rose, while making land productive for capitalism agriculture"[59]. In Otter's terms, looking specifically at the

[54] Appadurai, Arjun. "How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, no. 1 (1988): 3–24. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0010417500015024. P 118
[55] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 12
[56] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p.208
[57] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 207
[58] Cockburn, Alexander. "A Short Meat Oriented History of the World." New Left Review, n.d. p 13
[59] Carolyn Merchant, Reinventing Eden the Fate of Nature in Western Culture (New York: Routledge, 2013). 143

British empire, colonialism denigrated cultures without meat heavy diets as less civilized[60] where settler colonialism did not take hold, while Alfred Crosby's portmanteau biota changed the landscape in the ones where it did take hold, which became the neo-Europes that fed the meat hungry metropole of London. Obviously, both the Capitalist[61] and Fascist[62] colonial exploits and market strategies to feed their people had devastating environmental effects.

Although, the main focus of this essay is on ideological connections more or less obscured for the subjects of the case study, the literal material aspect of those colonial exploits and market strategies, namely supply chains is, also worth looking into. Meat is not just one of the easiest ways to draw the relationship of a people to its environment, "meat was the most important basic foodstuff by value"[63]and it "was a marker of prosperity and status, of being one's own master"[64]. James Belich looks at the physical problems of nascent global markets with Britain at its center and what he calls "ghost acres" suppling the livestock and the feed for said livestock to Britain. He notes that by 1900 American ghost acres dried up "because the United States' own burgeoning population and living standards absorbed more and more of its agricultural output"[65], some of which of course was driven by the still increasing immigrant population, later stifled by the first quota-based immigration policy in the US in 1924. Belich points out that London and New York City were jointly the first two megacities of the modern world[66], and both extracted resources from their hinterlands, particularly though meat.

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[60] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 46
[61] Worster, Donald. Dust Bowl the Southern Plains in the 1930s. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. p. 83 (to only mention one)
[62] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p 23
[63] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p.437
[64] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 438
[65] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 450
[66] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 2

The importance of looking into the material when speaking of people who had systematically less access to power and education like migrants becomes even more glaringly obvious when looking into the ways the New World was described by people in different social strata of the U.S.. City boosters' settler rhetoric explicitly drew inspiration from biblical themes[67], while informal settler rhetoric, particularly immigrant rhetoric, instead spoke of the food available in the New World[68], particularly meat[69]. Worster too points to the importance of global food chains both in creating and drying up demand for American foodstuffs putting the farmers in the American west in an even tighter bind[70] even tying to this the birth of advertising as a means to convince Americans to consume at home what could not be consumed abroad any longer [71].

The material connection between the American hinterland's resources and the working hands and eating mouths of Italian immigrants is also remarked upon by William Cronon in his Monograph "Nature's Metropolis" on the role of Chicago as a necessary link between the American west and the American coastal and international markets. He stresses that the relationship was mutual; New York investors like Charles Butler invested their money betting on Chicago's growth[72], in exchange Chicago's growth connected western farmers to New York markets[73], at first though the Erie Canal and then though rail. Thus, while not in focus in this project, understanding the importance of Chicago in the world market, outside of the Italian immigrant community within and without the city is still crucial. The impact of European

[67] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 154
[68] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 156
[69] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 158
[70] Worster, Donald. Dust Bowl the Southern Plains in the 1930s. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. p. 92
[71] Worster, Donald. Dust Bowl the Southern Plains in the 1930s. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. p. 97
[72] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p.33
[73] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p. 60-1

demand on Chicago proper had "impressive effects"[74]. In this sense the "coast" becomes almost the metaphorical point of connection between European markets and the hinterlands of neo-Europes including the U.S.[75]. Much like the Exchange Building existed as a literal point of connection between the west and the coast, the New Yorker described it as the point at which "two classes of cattle men meet- those who collect cattle from the prairie states […]- and those who distribute the cattle to the Eastern Cities"[76].

Cronon creates two stories of meat products making their way through Chicago for New York Markets, the story of the pig, disassembled in the Chicago Stockyards, and the story of beef, shipped until much later whole for slaughter and disassembly in New York Slaughterhouses[77]. Both the Chicago stockyards and the New York slaughterhouses were mainly staffed by immigrants. After the advent of the railroad more and more slaughtering became centralized in either Chicago or New York[78] with meatpacking in New York only able to survive because of their growing in-home demand for meat[79].

Immigrants, including Italian immigrants, in New York city fueled the meat packing industry both with their labor[80] and their consumption. In a case study looking into the agricultural transition of New York State Donald Parkerson states "Migration not only affected the producer but the consumer as well"[81] explaining that those who had experienced migration

[74] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 115
[75] Offer, Avner. The First World War: an Agrarian Interpretation. Oxford: O.U.P., 1991. p 135
[76] From Nature's Metropolis. Parton, "Chicago," p 333.
[77] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 226
[78] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 241
[79] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 244
[80] Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. p 49
[81] Parkerson, Donald H. Agricultural Transition in New York State Markets and Migration in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America. Purdue University Press, 2002. p 46

were more likely to accept lower quality commodities. This would be doubly true for a people who migrated from a culture where meat eating was restricted to the upper-class and thus the know-how of buying meat would have been lacking at least at the start. This was precisely the case for Italo-Americans as even "the comfortable middle classes subsided on meatless dishes or organ meats"[82] while for peasants "meat was rarely on the menu"[83] at all. The *Almanacco Della Donna Italiana* of 1920, a blueprint for the well-to-do Italian woman, proposes daily menus that only advised meat for impressing guests[84] or when purposefully deciding to "desinare di grasso" which literally translates to "to eat fat". In this case fat still holds the pre fast food conception of rare voluptuous enjoyment, as opposed to "desinare di magro" literally "to eat thin"[85], however Mussolini's push for autarky would have begun to push Italy towards the international trend that lead us to today's conceptions of fat as undesirable and thin as desirable.

It's important to note here that the *Almanacco* was more likely produced by and for northern Italian eyes or for the select few landowners of the south. The rest of the southern population would not have had a choice since meat was not on the menu unless the landowner doled it out in the first place. Meat in practice was as much a nexus of class in the south, from which most Italian immigrants to New York came, as money itself; it was doled out by high class employers to low class workers[86]. Interestingly, these patterns reflected different health outcomes for Italians in America who suddenly had access to meat and developed more heart problems on average than those who stayed behind[87]. Even language reveals the different ways

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[82] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 14
[83] Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. p 30
[84] *Almanacco Della Donna Italiana*. Firenze: R. Bemporad & Figlio, 1920 p 8
[85] *Almanacco Della Donna Italiana*. Firenze: R. Bemporad & Figlio, 1920 p 52
[86] Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.
[87] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 252

Italians and Americans, or rather English speakers, relate to meat. Maureen B. Fant notes in her essay "The Italian Language of Food: Notes from a translator" the difficulties of translating, or when that is not possible describing as best one can, meat jargon from Italian to English. She notes the variety of names for cuts of meat, often localized and specific, and more often bypassed in common use by naming the animal instead. This leaft Italian immigrants to struggle in the new World whether they knew the Italian word for a specific cut of meat, as English might not have an equivalent[88], or had not interacted with meats enough to even understand that different parts would not be referred to the same as the whole living animal.

Larger American societal trends were also underway of course, standardizing the American diet more and more until where one ate was a better signifier of class than what one ate,[89] even as Taylorism "downgraded both the quantity and quality of food expected from [household] kitchens"[90]. The advent of Taylorist food, which is to say pre-prepared food, was in part a result of America's increasingly nomadic nature so that a moving family or individual could be assured to find the same food across the nation. It is this same nomadic nature of American Anglo society, where children were no longer necessarily expected to remain with the family nucleus after reaching maturity, that drove farmers to take on immigrants as labor[91] particularly in New York. During the Great Depression this had the mentioned effect of

[88] Kaufman, Cathy K., and Maureen B. Fant. "The Italian Language of Food: Notes from a Translator." Essay. In *Food and Language: the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery*. Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery, 2009. p 116
[89] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p 28
[90] Levenstein, Harvey A. (2003). *Revolution at the table: the transformation of the American diet*. University of California Press. p 83
[91] Parkerson, Donald H. Agricultural Transition in New York State. Purdue University Press, 2002. p 136

popularizing Italian food for its cheapness[92] but this popularization happened largely at the hands of non- Italians[93]

Another reason why these processes might have been less opaque to immigrant communities in general and the socialist Italo American community particularly, was the ongoing anxiety in the upper classes of America about the ability of working class women to prepare meat correctly for their working-class husbands[94]. This anxiety will later come back into play when tackling biopolitics as a means to chip away at the very existence of the Italian American community, particularly its socialist faction.

In discussing the great divergence Belich stresses the perceived importance of beef, and the anglophone acres that fed it, to avoid a "Malthusian crisis" in Britain. Although it needs to be stressed that Belich understands this as a reductive thesis at best and requiring a process of re-colonization in places like Ireland, something he dubs hyper-colonialisation. This is something that becomes glaringly important when he reminds us that "the main Anglophone British food supplier was of the later nineteenth century was the American west"[95] and then concludes that "hyper-colonialization," as he calls it, did not cause the industrial revolution but did sustain it[96]. Otter points out that, on some level the rising caloric intake for the average Briton, which by 1936 would include a lot more meat, was changing the health standards across the board, not only for the better, as diseases of want including infection and the obvious starvation gave way

[92] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 18
[93] Zanoni, Elizabeth. "Per Voi, Signore": Gendered Representations of Fashion, Food, and Fascism in Il Progresso Italo-Americano during the 1930s." *Journal of American Ethnic History*31, no. 3 (2012): 33. doi:10.5406/jamerethnhist.31.3.0033. p 49
[94] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p.178
[95] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 448
[96] Belich, James. Replenishing the Earth. OXford: Oxford University Press, 2011. p 451

to “heart disease, type-2 diabetes, and obesity, along with morbidities from tooth decay to constipation.”[97]

To bring us back to the United States, Cronon also points to the growing anxiety around growing cities and their urban population’s capacity to properly consume. He notes how Frederick Jackson Turner’s ideas of succession in the west from hunting grounds to pasture and farmland, to a city with a factory system never needed explanation because they relied heavily on “nineteenth century notions of social evolution”[98]. Notions which either excluded immigrants outright or viewed them as behind on an imaginary schedule. Here once again it is important to stress that Italian American immigrants only happen to provide a window into this current of thought, as even more often the ones at the worst end of the bargain in these conversations on meat and civilization were Chinese American immigrants “with the Chinese exclusion debate [framed] in terms of the civilizational conflict between meat and rice”[99].

Italian Americans, for their part, faced a complicated set of preconceived ideas from the wider American society often informed by the conceptions brough to the U.S. from the first waves of Italian immigrants. Initially most immigrants to New York city came from northern Italy[100] with a slightly more meat-eating culture (although meat was still rare on pre-immigration tables) and preconceived notions about their southern counterparts. It was these first immigrants that would embrace “Americanization Italian style”[101] most enthusiastically. By 1914 the trend had reversed and most Italian immigrants to the U.S. came instead from southern Italy[102].

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[97] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p.13
[98] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. 31
[99] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p.223
[100] Guglielmo, Jennifer. Living the Revolution. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. 66
[101] Zanoni, Elizabeth. "Per Voi, Signore" *Journal of American Ethnic History*31, no. 3 (2012): 33. p 34
[102] Guglielmo, Jennifer. Living the Revolution. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. 67

Therefore, it is useful to pivot momentarily into racial ideas from the recently unified Italian mother land, for the nutritional deficiencies that southerners had suffered under Bourbon rule were "offered as explanation for their 'moral' and 'biological' inferiority [trans.]"[103]. Lack of meat particularly was blamed even in Italy for southerners' "degeneration" and lower "height, intelligence, and psychology [trans.]"[104].

It is crucial to mention that by 1907 the distinctions between northern and southern Italian immigrant upon arrival at Ellis Island was literal with a set of codified distinction to separate the "Alpine" from the "Mediterranean"[105]. These distinctions were inspired by the same 'anthropological research' that informed Italian racial hierarchy which equated southern Italians racially with northern Africans.[106]. American immigration policy specifically did not draw the same connection[107] thus allowing the assimilation that took place over the ark of the 1930s which was always the aim of American immigration policy at the time[108]. In fact, in the same way the British Malthusianism described by Belich brought on the recolonization or hypercolonization of Ireland and later the American West, the fascist's regime's colonial exploits were to satisfy a similar Malthusian anxiety, except, much like in the German case, the mechanics of it was not to bring more food to the growing population of the metropolitan core but to export people to the colonial periphery. That is to say that Fascist Italy, starting in the 1930s, began curbing emigration to places like the US in favor of colonial migration[109] and understood the war of 1935

[103] Cinotto, Simone. Una Famiglia Che Mangia Assieme. Torino: Otto Editore, 2001. p 157
[104] Cinotto, Simone. Una Famiglia Che Mangia Assieme. Torino: Otto Editore, 2001. p 157
[105] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 89
[106] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 82
[107] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 89
[108] Zahra, Tara. *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017. p 103
[109] Zahra, Tara. *The Great Departure*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017. p 118

as part and parcel of the process of civilizing the south of Italy[110]. It was these ideas that twentieth century Italian immigrants found and lived through with "the young Harlem (at the time a majority Italian neighborhood) generations understanding at school that xenophobia against Italians found expressions in *un linguaggio alimentare (a food language)"*[111].

The War of 1935 became a crucial turning point for these racial tensions experienced in the US. This was particularly true for Southern Italians but for now we will momentarily look at more general trends in Italian community. By the end of the 1930s, both the majority fascist sympathizing faction and the socialist faction would be fully assimilated, in part because the war precipitated raising racial tensions within Harlem between the neighboring Italian immigrant community and the Black community. Italians who had previously been understood as racially other due to the notions carried over by their earlier migrating Northern brethren found admission through "embracing U.S. nationalism, including whiteness and negrophobia"[112] and, by the 1940s, that process had taken place for the majority of the community regardless of political affiliation. This change too was reflected in the foodways, or at least the conception of the foodways, that permeated Italian experiences before now, a new stronger line of demarcation fell between Italians and non-white Americans, who were deemed to have patently and innately dissolute food related traditions[113],while the demarcating line between Italo-American and American food became less visible. Fascinatingly even at the time Leonard Covello, an Italian

[110] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 87
[111] Cinotto, Simone. Una Famiglia Che Mangia Assieme. Torino: Otto Editore, 2001. p 157
[112] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 6
[113] Cinotto, Simone. "Leonard Covello, the Covello Papers, and the History of Eating Habits among Italian Immigrants in New York." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 497. p 517

immigrant and sociologist studying Italo-Americans, suspected and feared the Ethiopian war would bring the end of Italo-American foodways as he has known them[114].

Increasingly, the Black community of Harlem began pushing back, between 1935-6 "clashes began occurring which brought to the destruction of Italian foodshops (trans.)"[115]. After this, those who remained in the neighborhood as shop keepers erased any trace of "italianita"[116]. Of course as mentioned before Italians here were not the main victims, in the least, as the Federal government began redlining practices that allowed Italians into middle class whiteness and excluded Black and other non-white Americans.

1935 was also the turning point for *La Stampa Libera*. As mentioned above *La Stampa Libera* catered to a counter-cultural force in the Italian American community, largely socialists but also anarchists and other "Sovversivi" a catch all term utilized particularly by Guglielmo. It began publishing in 1931 with distribution in New York City and the surrounding areas, and it provided an alternative source for news in Italian to *Il Progresso Italo-Americano. Il Progresso* had a far wider audience especially after being bought in 1928 from its more centrist founders by Generoso Pope who began accepting direct funds from the Fascist regime.

Previous to 1935 *La Stampa* consistently published articles that throw a wrench in a simple story of Italian assimilation into white America. While explicit support for Black causes is sparce but present[117] there is a wealth of articles on workers' rights[118] which make no

[114] Cinotto, Simone. "Leonard Covello, the Covello Papers, and the History of Eating Habits among Italian Immigrants in New York." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 497. p 508
[115] Cinotto, Simone. Una Famiglia Che Mangia Assieme. Torino: Otto Editore, 2001. p 168
[116] Cinotto, Simone. Una Famiglia Che Mangia Assieme. Torino: Otto Editore, 2001. p 168
[117] La Stampa Libera, April 23 1933, article in support of Black prisoner on death row
[118] La Stampa Libera, December 9 1932, article in support of striking workers

distinction amongst the workers, except for distinction based on sex[119]. Maintaining this theme there are also a wealth of articles in support of women suffrage worldwide[120], no-fault divorce[121], and abortion[122], often packaged within a recurring column titled "Per Le Nostre Lettrici" (for our female readers). This recurring column also dispensed advice on food and how to feed a family where the general theme was less meat is better[123], with milk only advised for children[124], brining into question the production[125] and price of animal products[126]. One article goes as far as to compare the oppression faced by Italian immigrants to the suffering of animals[127] while another points the finger at veal rations for the end of a prison strike previously supported by the newspaper[128]. The importance of leftism or at least anti-fascism in the newspaper becomes obvious through the multiple long form articles against the Japanese invasion of Manchuria[129], Hitler's increasing warmongering, and of course, Mussolini's policies, including an article in remembrance of Matteotti[130] and an article explicitly decoupling Italian identity from Fascism[131].

After 1935 everything changes. For one the number of published issues goes down, or at least number remaining in the archive today. Suddenly every issue that does remain contains an advertisement for milk[132], and the feminist column "Per Le Nostre Lettrici" disappears, giving

[119] La Stampa Libera, December 9 1932, the majority of those arrested for the strike were women. November 17 1931 support for a women's union, February 1932 long form article on underpaid female meat canners. January 14 1933
[120] La Stampa Libera, Per Le Nostre lettrici, November 15 1931. "our Spanish sisters have gained the vote", February 25 1933 support for French women's suffrage
[121] La Stampa Libera, Per le Nostre lettrici, November 15 1931, introduction of no fault divorce in Spain lauded
[122] La Stampa Libera, Per Le Nostre lettrici, April 19 1932 article lauding Margaret Sanger for her work
[123] La Stampa Libera, Per Le Nostre lettrici, February 2 1932, advice to eat meat and fish rarely
[124] La Stampa Libera, April 3 1932
[125] La Stampa Libera, April 2 1933, picture of farmers dumping milk due to low prices.
[126] La Stampa Libera, November 4 1931, February 1 1933, April 14 1933, April 15 1933
[127] La Stampa Libera, may 21 1933, in the same issue a women's strike at a factory is announced.
[128] La Stampa Libera, April 28 1933
[129] La Stampa Libera, February 5 1933
[130] La Stampa Libera, march 23 1933
[131] La Stampa Libera, February 26 1933
[132] La Stampa Libera, starting October 26 1935

space to a myriad of advice columns no longer written by women for women but by men for women on how to incorporate more milk in the household diet, with a medical column touting the medical benefits of milk over spinach[133]. The low number of published or remaining issues does leave many questions unanswered, but it also reveals the deteriorating state of the socialist community, whether less issues where being published or less readership was keeping the issues long enough for them to and up archived. The striking presence of advertising for milk might not seem suspicious in an era when the US government was trying to create demand for these products that it had begun to subsidize during the depression; however, whether it was financial instability or direct government intervention that led to the addition it reveals the increasingly precarious position of the newspaper and by extension the community it informed.

So the question is why did the war affect the socialist community in such a drastic way even as the rest of the Italian community was going through the same shift over a longer time period. The answer might lie in socialist Italian women. In her monograph "the Sexual Politics of Meat" Carol J. Adams pushes the connection between meat and civilization in the west to include gender, explaining that when meat was scarce "cereals and fruits were lower than meat on the scale of evolution and thus appropriate foods for the other races and white women, who appeared to be lower on the scale of evolution as well"[134]. However, in periods of meat abundance like the one that the meat surplus in The U.S. created "all should eat it"[135] meaning that "the hierarchy of meat protein reinforce[d] a hierarchy of race, class, and sex"[136]. Adams even pushes this to what feels like the extreme of stating that "plant-based economies were more

[133] La Stampa Libera, doctor's rubric September 15 1936
[134] Adams, Carol J. The Sexual Politics of Meat: a Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory. New York ; London: Bloomsbury, 2019. p 53
[135] ibid
[136] ibid

likely to be egalitarian"[137]. The hierarchy of sex and meat eating not only commanded that meat go to men first with husbands "routinely consuming more meat than their wives"[138] but also that women, particularly lower-class and immigrant women for whom "modernization had come suddenly"[139] had to learn how to cook said meat for their husbands. It was women's groups in fact that lobbied most stringently against what they would come to call "embalmed meats"[140] citing health concerns about canned meats. This was reflected even on views like the ones expressed in the Chicago stock yard, heralded as a miracle of human ingenuity by most but leaving one particular female spectator indifferent; "her indifference seemed to Kipling the most frightening thing he saw in the stockyard."[141]

It was as the capacity to produce canned meats began and that for salted meats increased that the anxiety surround lower-class consumption of these products reached its apex. Italian households in New York City received de-salting instructions[142] and recipes for how to use the salted pork the city gave out in a bid to use government stock of meat that was going unsold and to feed the population. It was in part that same economic instability that fueled the shift that Cronon describes as "what seemed 'artificial and abnormal' at the end of the nineteenth century would look conventional in the twentieth"[143]. While this process was heralded by the Chicago stockyard whose packers "rightly argued they had democratized meat consumption"[144] and fueled by New York City both as the only other center of meat packing[145] and as the place of

[137] Adams, Carol J. The Sexual Politics of Meat. New York ; London: Bloomsbury, 2019. p 59
[138] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 46
[139] Cowan, Ruth Schwartz. More Work for Mother: the Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2008. p 1
[140] Civitello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: a History of Food and People*. Hoboken, N.J: Wiley, 2011. p 305
[141] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 208
[142] Covello papers, Appendix, instructions on how to de-salt pork and make pork stew
[143] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 247
[144] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. 205
[145] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p 241

demand[146] even after the 1924 immigration laws begun limiting the immigrant population as those fleeing the dust bowl arrived to urban settings[147]. The stockyard also had pushback particularly on the east coast from traditional butchers who opposed the idea cloaking it in health concerns and thus maintaining private interests while "appealing to consumer's collective good"[148].

Initially NYC's socialist faction of the Italian American population sided with traditional butchers harkening in their Italian language newspaper the importance of making do with little meat to maintain quality[149]. Socialist women particularly "expressed an understanding that their exploitation was directly tied to the emergence of industrial capitalism"[150]. All the while the immigrant population at large "wrote home celebrating the United States' culinary bounty"[151]. The newspaper article frames some meat consumption anxiety in terms of consumer concerns, but it is important to remember that this concern might have been only slightly more genuine coming from Italian Americans than that of traditional butchers. The reasons for this are twofold; first Italian socialist would not have sided with the anti-union Chicago Stockyards[152], but equally important was their own food entrepreneurship. Many Italians had found a market for imported Italian foods and would often advertise their business on *La Stampa Libera.* This is to say once again that this political move might have been less obscure to socialist Italo-Americans than other Italo-Americans or the general consumer; "cheap" after all "is a strategy, a practice, a violence that mobilizes all kinds of work – human and animal, botanical and geological- with as

[146] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p.53
[147] Worster, Donald. Dust Bowl the Southern Plains in the 1930s. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014. p 86
[148] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. p 206
[149] La Stampa Libera, article on health and safety April 3 1932.
[150] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 165
[151] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. p 220
[152] Specht, Joshua. Red Meat Republic. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020. p. p 180

little compensation as possible"[153]. This possibly marked Italian American socialist women as those for whom modernization came suddenly and as those who recognized that modernity was not serving them. This anti-capitalist pro consumer sentiment was also echoed in the abhorrence for the waste of animal products[154] which was seen as one of "the symbolic paradoxes of meat-packing in Chicago [and represented] the decline of corporate morality and the end of an earlier, more familiar and trustworthy way of life"[155]

It is not coincidental that after 1935 the columns dedicated to women were completely gone and were substituted with columns and articles pushing for more meat consumption and that this change is related to relative assimilation. Women were both the most reticent to incorporate meat in the family diets and the ones who decided whether the migration was temporary or not. In her article on food and immigration Zanoni describes the women of multiple ethnic groups creating a sense of ethnic kinship for their communities through food[156] and Italian women were no exception. In fact Italians had shown "perhaps the strongest wish to remain in solitary communities" according to sociologists at the time[157]. This was undoubtably in part because Italian men often came to the US only temporarily to go back home enriched[158] creating "deep gendered divisions"[159] in the migration experience and making the arrival of women following their male counterparts[160] both the symbol and the material reality of the choice to

[153] From Diet for a Large Planet, Raj Patel and Jason Moore, A History of the World in Seven Cheap Things: A Guide to Capitalism, Nature, and the Future of the Planet (London : Verso, 2018)
[154] La Stampa Libera, Aril 2 1933.
[155] Cronon, William. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997. p. 253
[156] Zanoni, Elisabeth. *The Routledge History of American Foodways*. New York: Routledge, 2017. chapter "Food and Immigration" p 280-4
[157] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 101
[158] Civitello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: a History of Food and People*. Hoboken, N.J: Wiley, 2011. p 296
[159] Reeder, Linda. *Widows in White: Migration and the Transformation of Rural Italian Women, Sicily, 1880-1930*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. p 5
[160] Reeder, Linda. *Widows in White*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. p 7

stay[161]. In practice following Mintz's analysis of sugar consumption, incorporation of meat in Italian diets in the U.S. might have had less to with sudden availability, although that was undoubtedly part of the equation, but instead as effect of migration and for the socialist faction a sudden desire for assimilation brought on by the Ethiopian war which signaled that Mussolini had become exactly what people feared he would[162].

Socialist Italian women in America in fact did not begin considering themselves fully white until the 1930s completing that process by the 1940s[163]. For them "preparing and sharing food […] offered a medium to resist assimilative pressures, to express themselves, experience pleasure, and build community"[164]. It is no wonder then that Elizabeth Gurley Flynn an Irish immigrant labor organizer proclaimed that women were not part of the Italian socialist movement as she only saw them "always in the background, cooking in the kitchen, and seldom even sitting down with men"[165]. Unbeknownst to her, for the women who often cooked her meals cooking was community organizing. Sometimes literally getting recorded in the background of interviews to their radical husbands organizing cooking get-togethers and worrying about the different tendencies, including political tendencies, of the invited[166]. The food prepared by those women not only allowed political get togethers for their husbands but often fed those same entrepreneurial food shops that Italians had opened. Such food shops, in turn, gave back during strikes extending credit and enabling "workers to strike beyond the limits imposed by their pocketbooks"[167]. Even more so Italian foodways and ways of eating were

[161] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p. 57
[162] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 206
[163] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 108
[164] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 133
[165] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 3
[166] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 134
[167] Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. p 64

literally disruptive of the nascent American agribusiness both through their union work and through their preference for each other's products than those sold through "fixed economic transactions that occurred in company stores in the New World"[168]. Italian women worked in the kitchen with "even the humblest of urban immigrants [being able to] parlay production for family into small business"[169]. It was only the coming of World War II that ended this process of ethnic food import which, after acceptance into middle class whiteness, Italian immigrants found "only fair"[170].

Italian women had learnt the craft of creating community though food because of migration, though not their own. Starting in the latter half of the 19th century Italian men (at first from the north and then overwhelmingly from the south) migrated temporarily to the US. It was only later that these men would be followed by women generally already betrothed or married to them. This created the phenomenon of widows in white in southern Italy, women whose husband was living but absent. It is in this absence that women gained access to a completely new social role that previously had been fostered by the state only for men in the hope of creating better soldiers[171]. Before male migration women were largely illiterate, but in their absence they "flocked to the schools"[172] and gained the skill and confidence paid through the remittances the absent men sent home[173]. All the while these women still lived in southern towns where cooking often blended public and private lives, with pots set on portable stoves outside, allowing every woman to assess herself against the cooking of other members of the community, and to receive

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[168] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 187
[169] Gabaccia, D. R. (2000). *We are what we eat: Ethnic food and the making of Americans*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. p 68
[170] Gabaccia, D. R. (2000). *We are what we eat: Ethnic food and the making of Americans*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. p 69
[171] Reeder, Linda. *Widows in White*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003. p 10
[172] ibid
[173] Zanoni, Elizabeth. "Per Voi, Signore" *Journal of American Ethnic History*31, no. 3 (2012): 33. p 36

and share the secret of each other's ability[174]. Leading Hasia Diner to state that "the basic residential pattern of Italy, fostered the spread of food knowledge"[175]. It was the women whose families and personal inclinations allowed for least conformity to previous gender roles that reaped the most benefit from this gender imbalance. It was those same women who would, once arrived in the new world often take charge of family meals and finances and were deemed by US assimilation authorities as "particularly resistant to change in foodways"[176]

Here we run the risk of painting too rosy a picture for Italian women, both in Italy and in the US and of any political inclination. While the temporary absence of men allowed for considerable growth even social mobility for a lot of them, the shadow of male violence and domestic abuse still loomed large. The same *cortili* which permitted food knowledge to be public spectacle were also the stages for public beating of wives who had or were thought of as unfaithful[177] by their temporarily returned husbands. The public nature of these acts was no accident, it created a sense of continued threat both for those on who harm was inflicted and those lucky enough to only know that it was always a possibility[178]. A relative luck. Women were also seldom at the tables they helped assemble, eating elsewhere, separate from their family both in Italy[179] and in the US. It was these aspects that informed, bought over by northern Italians, American xenophobic stereotypes for Italians, with women dubbed as demure and only interested in cooking and men easily volatile and passionate[180]. Immigrant socialist women often challenged these abuses within their family and communities, believing the revolution began at

[174]Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. p 37
[175] Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. p 36
[176] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 40
[177] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 24
[178] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 25
[179] Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. p 37
[180] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 5

home[181]. *La Stampa Libera* also fought back against the stereotype (not necessarily the abuse itself) publishing stories of violence that highlighted violence executed by men on men and shying away from sensationalizing the death of women, while publishing, at least until 1935 columns on the importance of equality in love and relationships[182]

Here too, meat consumption matters, Victorian English and American sensibilities dictated that food could arouse unhealthy appetites in girls and women, and meat was the worst as "it would surely lead to insanity, nymphomania or both"[183]. Holdovers of this ideology gave New World reasons for Italian husbands to maintain the systems of relative access to foods and particularly meat- continuously recreating the structure under which their wives had originally interacted with meat, as servants in higher class homes back in Italy. This was considered an honor, but also created and reinforced the division of classes in Italy and of gender in the Italo-American community.

Now this essay hopes to turn to the process that deteriorated the very existence of the Italo-American socialist community, namely biopolitical pressure. Of course, this is not to say that larger anti-socialist and anti-communist trends were not part this deterioration within our period of interest, the 1930s sit after all right in the middle of the two, if they can be called distinct, Red Scares. It was only because of the banning of more radical alternatives in fact that Italo American women turned en masse to reformist unions[184]. However, biopolitics is a particularly effective way to chip away at political communities with a cohesive ethnic sense of self. As a term it was widely analyzed by Foucault in his understanding of state power (which

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[181] Gabaccia, D. R. (2000). *We are what we eat: Ethnic food and the making of Americans*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. p 165

[182] La Stampa Libera, October 29 1931 and follow-up November 5 1931

[183] Civitello, Linda. *Cuisine and Culture: a History of Food and People*. Hoboken, N.J: Wiley, 2011. p 235

[184] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.p 206

fascism was a sublimation of) as an "extreme case of biopolitics."[185] However a useful definition can be found in "Geographies of meat" by Harvey Neo and Jody Emel who argue that "one can understand biopolitics as the process through which groups of beings are understood, quantified and governed"[186]. They also posit, important here, "that Biopolitics […] is essentially a series of deliberate tactics that aim to converge citizen subjects […] towards a broader social norm […] for the purposes of our book consumption patterns."[187] Food and lack thereof becomes the nexus of power that decides "who will live and who will have to die"[188] or at least assimilate into cultural death for the community.

Meat, particularly its grazing, of course has a long history in the Americas as a means to express biopolitical pressure on native populations[189]. Meat consumption also featured in a slightly roundabout way in one of the most common ideological packages for biopolitics, namely health and hygiene. An example of the use of hygiene as a form of biopolitics is the change immigration law of 1924, after which Mexican immigrants were 'sanitized' and deloused at the border in order for the government both local and federal to count, discourage, and otherize those that made it into the country. Famously, the 1924 immigration law, while affecting all immigrant populations was particularly targeted at Asian Americans, on the west coast "to maintain [Anglo] self-identity" [190], with dietary difference (or at least beef-less-ness) and hygiene as often deployed to excuse the discrimination. The twentieth century notion that "meat eating contributed to the western world's preeminence"[191] was to be upheld through exclusion of even

[185] Saraiva, Tiago. Fascist Pigs. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018. p1
[186] Jody, Neo Harvey Emel. *Geographies of meat: Politics, Economy and Culture*. Routledge, 2018. p 7
[187] Jody, Neo Harvey Emel. *Geographies of meat: Politics, Economy and Culture*. Routledge, 2018. p 7-8
[188] Mintz, Sidney Wilfred. *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past*. Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 2007. p 11
[189] Cockburn, Alexander. "A Short Meat Oriented History of the World." New Left Review, n.d. p 13
[190] Offer, Avner. The First World War: an Agrarian Interpretation. Oxford: O.U.P., 1991. p.3
[191] Adams, Carol J. The Sexual Politics of Meat. New York ; London: Bloomsbury, 2019. p 54

white non-meat eaters like Irish and Italian Immigrants. In other words in light of the important connection between the act of meat eating and the concept of whiteness and civilization, and the still strong connection between meat eating and good health, food became the main way to at first distinguish the unhealthy Italian immigrant, and then assimilate the now acceptably healthy, white, and middle class, Italian immigrant.

Italians were particularly affected by the new immigration laws because of their previous tendency to migrate only temporarily, and in fact most Italo-Americans did not even consider or begin the process of naturalization until after stricter immigration laws were put in place[192]. The years leading up to the 1930s in practice were a watershed moment where the choice had to be made by every individual and every family to stay or go back home, given that re-entry was not assured. On the long run, this may have reduced racial panic about the arrival of Italians, at least theoretically easing the process of eventual assimilation,[193] however the increased discrimination and injustice felt during the interim years not only was still very real but also led some Italians to subscribe to the Fascist-sponsored idea of Italian-ness[194]. If these pressures which would have had more effect on the decline of the socialist community were not enough, the pressure of an immigration law actually came sooner for socialists and other radicals in the form of the "anarchist exclusion act" of 1918,[195] leaving leftist Italians with no real choice but to naturalize and eventually assimilate as going back to Italy long term was increasingly dangerous as the fascist regime consolidated. In hilarious tragedy there is a family anecdote of a certain Margaret Di Maggio about her grandparents. Apparently, her grandfather had grown enamored with the

[192] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 102
[193] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 41
[194] Zanoni, Elizabeth. "Per Voi, Signore" *Journal of American Ethnic History*31, no. 3 (2012): 33. p 37
[195] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 311 (n18)

image he was getting of Fascist Italy and argued for a return of the family there, after much arguing between the grandparents Margaret bought him a one-way ticket to "go see how things were" within two months he wrote back begging for the return ticket[196].

Biopolitics can also be the best term to analyze what children are taught in school either in line with or against the lessons of their family. Once again Italo-Americans faced in the US a force attempting to assimilate them from an early age[197]. Food and hygiene were often the top of the list as far as priorities went for these schools[198] More than once source describes the specific experience, once again, of Leonard Covello, who was given and told to bring home some oatmeal as an example of a "proper breakfast dish"[199] leaving his dumbfounded father to shout that thy were sending kids home with animal feed! (Avena-oatmeal still holds the specific connotation of horse feed in Italy). Mintz also points at the importance of peer pressure, something I have already touched upon, but another story this time from one Covello's students explains that when his mother showed opposition to the teacher's recommendations about food, specifically milk, it made him very sad because it meant his dreams of becoming a "real American" were ruined[200]. Even more shockingly it was because of the school system that Leonard Covello ever held that name as he was born Leonardo Coviello, his name anglicized and a letter removed from his last name[201]. Years later now an activist in the progressive (though

[196] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 222-223
[197] Mintz, Sidney Wilfred. *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*. Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 2007. p 112
[198] Cinotto, Simone. "Leonard Covello, the Covello Papers, and the History of Eating Habits among Italian Immigrants in New York." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 497. p 501
[199] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. p 29
[200] Cinotto, Simone. "Leonard Covello, the Covello Papers, and the History of Eating Habits among Italian Immigrants in New York." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 497. p 515
[201] Cinotto, Simone. "Leonard Covello, the Covello Papers, and the History of Eating Habits among Italian Immigrants in New York." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 2 (2004): 497. p 503

reformist) part of the Italian community Covello wished this change had never happened and regretted taking it in such stride despite his parents' disappointment[202].

Increasingly personal family gardens were also becoming objects of otherness, both because they implied something about the cultivator's social class, and because they did not seemingly have a place in the urbanized and modern American landscape. None the less Italian immigrant of all walks of life were knows for their dedication to their gardens which sometimes included a couple back yard chickens. These gardens allowed Italians an alternative to commercially available foods, even leading some to only buy from the market staples like sugar, flour, salt, and growing and then conserving everything else[203]. More than anything, these gardens and the food produced were for Italians the connection the natural world that slaughterhouses were trying to erase. In the simplest of senses, the gardens were organized according to the different rhythms of watering needed by crops with the more needy in the back and the more resistant in the front allowing for an easier watering schedule[204]. This connection became almost poetic in the last letters of the anarchist radical Sacco who, when waiting for execution, remembered his own Italo-American garden as a place that transcended human bounds of injustice and intolerance and facilitated the connection with nature[205].

Meat consumption also took a biopolitical form once the immigrants were inside the border, "meat was no ordinary commodity. It didn't just 'power' them: it made them"[206] and it could remake them into more exploitable workers[207] more in other words like their ideal Anglo

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[202] ibid
[203] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 189
[204] ibid
[205] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 138
[206] Lee, Paula Young. Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse. Durham, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire Press, 2008. p. 89
[207] ibid

counterparts. The slaughterhouse itself, whether in Chicago or in New York, where animals were disassembled by the more efficient meat-fueled immigrants, explains Otter, "ideally looks like any other anonymous warehouse. It is an institution most [Anglos] find necessary but prefer to forget. In this regard it has certain affinities with the crematorium, the sewage plant, and the prison"[208]. The slaughterhouse too, like the immigrants working within it, was subject to new standards of sanitization in a bid towards more acceptable products, or at least to reduce any possible moral panic, in the same trajectory that prisons would have taken in the adoption of a panopticon model[209].

Biopolitics separates the acceptable from the unacceptable, the healthy from the sick, those who should be allowed to reproduce both literally and ideologically and those who should not be given that same right. Socialist Italo-Americans faced biopolitical erasure, of the ideological kind, even within leftist and socialist organizations. To explain this it is useful to briefly consider Argentina and Italian migration to Argentina to compare the experiences of the two immigrant communities. As mentioned before, Italian emigration happened in two waves, a first one largely hailing from the more urban north and a second one largely hailing from the more agricultural south. It is also important to note that the first wave was far more likely to later align with the fascist regime than the second given that The fascist regime never gained particular popularity in the south, never winning an election there[210] at least while elections were being held at all. Finally it is important to situate the two waves geographically, while individuals in both ended up both in the US and in Argentina, emigration to Argentina began

[208] Lee, Paula Young. Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse. Durham, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire Press, 2008. p 105
[209] Lee, Paula Young. Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse. Durham, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire Press, 2008. p 239
[210] Gambino, Richard. *Blood of My Blood: The Dilemma of the Italian-Americans*. Toronto: Guernica, 2000. p 66

sooner, reached its peak sooner, and concluded sooner, attracting the majority of northern Italian emigrants, but not a majority of Italian emigrants in general[211]. Argentina is a striking case because by 1900 it's population was 66% Italian. Currently 62% of the population has Italian ethnic origins.

Yet, despite the demographic differences between those Italians that emigrated to Argentina and those who emigrated to the US, it was Argentine Italians who participated more in unionizing work. Part of the effect is a quirk of numbers and percentages, but American union organizers instead assumed Italian laziness was at fault for their low engagement[212]. Jennifer Guglielmo argues that in fact Italians were involved in more radical movements than unions, at least before pressure from the red scare brought them to work with unions. Another explanation is differential assimilation, Italians in Argentina did not have to assimilate because they became the dominant social segment, taking the place of Anglo society had in the US particularly in relation to native populations.

> "In the United States the Italian immigrants had a major language problem, they were subjected to religious prejudice, and they had difficulty understanding the values of the dominant group in the society in which they were living and working. In Argentina and Brazil, the Italians did not have these problems, at least to the same degree, and therefore were better able to understand the host society, to organize, and to demand a greater share of the benefits they helped bring to that society"[213]

The fact that Italians in Argentina assimilated quickly, while Italians in the US maintained their own separation from the greater society[214] reveals the subversive and radical nature of anti-

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[211] Guglielmo, Jennifer. *Living the Revolution*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. p 60
[212] Baily, S. L. (1969). *The Italians and the Development of Organized Labor in Argentina, Brazil, and the United States 1880-1914.* Journal of Social History,3(2), 123-134. doi:10.1353/jsh/3.2.123 p 124
[213] Baily, S. L. (1969). *The Italians and the Development of Organized Labor.* Journal of Social History, p 127
[214] Klein, H. S. (1983). *The Integration of Italian Immigrants into the United States and Argentina: A Comparative Analysis*. The American Historical Review. doi:10.1086/ahr/88.2.306 p 329

assimilationism, which, in the U.S., so often took form through food consumption. It is no wonder that Argentine cuisine for all its Italian influence is now known for its meats.

The other important aspect of biopolitics is epistemological, or rather agnotological. Agnotology is a relatively new term coined for the purposes of exposing not questions of knowledge and knowledge creation, but lack of knowledge and obfuscation[215]. In the twentieth century, with the standardization of American diets meat consumers were "increasingly oblivious to the vast system which produced and distributed meat"[216]. Even inside slaughterhouses "animal and meat were 'handled as little as possible'"[217]. Even animal reproduction was beginning to be "by parcel post" with "aspiring inseminators[…] encouraged to practice in abattoirs on cows about to be slaughtered"[218]. For the vast majority of American society "it became impossible to stumble upon animal slaughter without trying"[219] tourism was no longer encouraged at the stockyard relieving both the amazed public and the unfazed female public.

For those outside the slaughterhouses this was a sanitizing of what previously would have been known to be a dirty unpleasant thing and obliteration of previously existent social relation between food and consumer.[220] Food became "faceless",[221] allowing the imagination of idyllic pastoral landscapes, and sublimating instead the environment and its reach into urban spaces

[215] Proctor, Robert N., and Londa Schiebinger. Agnotology: the Making and Unmaking of Ignorance. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008. p. 27
[216] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 44
[217] Lee, Paula Young. Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse. Durham, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire Press, 2008. p 96
[218] Otter, Chris. Diet for a Large Planet. Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2020. p. 66
[219] Lee, Paula Young. Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse. Durham, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire Press, 2008. p 239
[220] Jody, Neo Harvey Emel. *Geographies of meat: Politics, Economy and Culture*. Routledge, 2018. p 5
[221] Michael D. Wise. *The Routledge History of American Foodways*. New York: Routledge, 2017. chapter "Meat" p 97

both as a constraint that technology can surpass and a creator of the urban experience itself[222]. For those working inside the stockyard this was a means to conceal their labor as this separation "not only obscures the social relations between consumers of meat and food animals, it also renders invisible the workers who work with food animals and produce meat"[223]. The bodies human-animal and non-human-animal involved in this process become "interactions of organisms/environments/cultures"[224].

Finally, agnotology also has its place in the ways the traditions of immigrants were allowed to pass from practitioner to practitioner. Cookbooks have long taken center stage in cultural histories of food, however by their very nature they are unreliable and obscuring factors to look into the lives of Italo-American Socialists. Cookbooks represent a cultural anomaly away from culinary oral traditions, an anomaly that is particularly American[225] and they "appear in literate civilizations where the display of class hierarchies is essential to their maintenance".[226] While the second was true for southern Italy the first was definitely not. The Fascist regime was also enthralled by the idea of the cookbook[227] revealing a concern and desire to find or create a unifying hegemonic and transnational "high" Italian cuisine which did not exist and would never form[228]. Italo-American cookbooks were often written by non-Italians[229] in fact most recognizably Italian food was popularized by non-Italians[230] with important caveats in, for

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[222] Niel Prendergast. *The Routledge History of American Foodways*. . New York: Routledge, 2017. Chapter "Food and the Environment" p 262
[223] Jody, Neo Harvey Emel. *Geographies of meat: Politics, Economy and Culture*. Routledge, 2018. p 10
[224] Proctor, Schiebinger. Agnotology: the Making and Unmaking of Ignorance. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008. p. 111
[225] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 7
[226] Appadurai, Arjun. "How to Make a National Cuisine" 30, no. 1 (1988): 3–24. p 4
[227] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 10
[228] Appadurai, Arjun. "How to Make a National Cuisine" 30, no. 1 (1988): 3–24. p 5
[229] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 20
[230] Zanoni, Elizabeth. "Per Voi, Signore" *Journal of American Ethnic History*31, no. 3 (2012): 33. p 49

example, the amount of garlic suggested[231] (which gives new color to the assertion that one must measure garlic with their hearts since recipes always underplay its importance). Further these cookbooks would take, or take inspiration from, recipes overwhelmingly hailing from northern Italy[232], with its more meat heavy diet and its relatively more urban and literate population.

Quite suddenly for those for whom modernity came quickly, like southern Italian immigrants, "what mattered was the ability to differentiate between tenderloin and stew meat so as to not be cheated in the marketplace"[233] and cookbooks became both the blue print and the judge of self-regulating activity calling for "the 'most tender,' the 'largest,' and the 'best quality'"[234]. Creating through "the prevalent mechanism of accumulation, which adds noble ingredients to simple products [trans.]"[235] the sense of the cohesive cuisine Mussolini had hoped for. All the while Italian diets were not static and changing under Fascism and the pressures of war, so the cookbooks that attempted to reconcile Italian traditions with the categorically different material reality of immigrants[236] (more meat but less right until assimilated into whiteness) created a new cuisine all together[237]. And it is this cuisine created by non-Italians that would undermine the ways Italian American socialist women had used food to create community for which "eating bountifully did not mean eating like Americans"[238]. The cookbooks that were produced by the Italian community "emphasize connections among food, female expertise, and

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[231] Levenstein, Harvey A. *Paradox of Plenty*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2010. 29
[232] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 17
[233] Lee, Paula Young. Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse. Durham, NH: Univ. of New Hampshire Press, 2008. p 239
[234] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 12
[235] Montanari, Massimo. *Il cibo come cultura,* Editori Laterza, 2011. p 48
[236] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 8
[237] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 20
[238] Gabaccia, D. R. (2000). *We are what we eat: Ethnic food and the making of Americans*. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press. p 54

history"[239] they were fundamentally connected to family and relied on the cook having experienced the recipe before as "the amount of each ingredient is known not from the recipe book but from the memory of how it is supposed to be"[240]. It is important to note that deliberate suppression of knowledge is not necessarily the most important aspect of agnotology giving way to the importance of who benefits from the created lack of knowledge[241], and in our case the answer is simple: white Anglo America benefitted by asserting its capitalist ideology over the immigrant populations it wished to assimilate if they could not be expelled.

Meat consumption was a colonialist vehicle for both capitalist and fascist ideology, as such it undermined the specific identities of socialist Italian Americans. *La Stampa Libera* allows a window into the ways these identities suddenly gave in to the double pressure applied onto socialist Italian Americans. Food is a window into understanding the labor, racial, and gendered differences that existed within and between the Italian American community and the rest of U.S. society. The advent of the second Italo-Ethiopian war in 1935 added severity and imminence to the need for assimilation in line with the U.S.'s biopolitical pressure leading ultimately to the community ceasing to exist as a separate entity from American culture. Initially refusal, as seen in *La Stampa Libera*, to include meat in consumption was a way to maintain ethnic and political identity for socialist Italian Americans as informed by the material experience of both men as workers and unionizers and women due to their particular experience with sequential migration. This changed dramatically and suddenly after 1935 when, socialist Italian American women under advice from the same newspaper that previously disregarded meat eating completely began

[239] Gabaccia, HELSTOSKY. "Food, Recipes, Cookbooks, and Italian-American Life." *Italian Americana* 16 (1998): p 20
[240] Brown, Linda Keller. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Pr., 2001. p 189
[241] Proctor, Schiebinger. Agnotology: the Making and Unmaking of Ignorance. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008. p 152

incorporating meat and dairy products in their foods in masse, slowly losing among other things their community building apparatus, and allowing for a swift assimilation in American society. Resistance biopolitical and agnotological pressure in the U.S. eventually gave way creating a new unified Italo-American diet barely recognizable from an Italian perspective.

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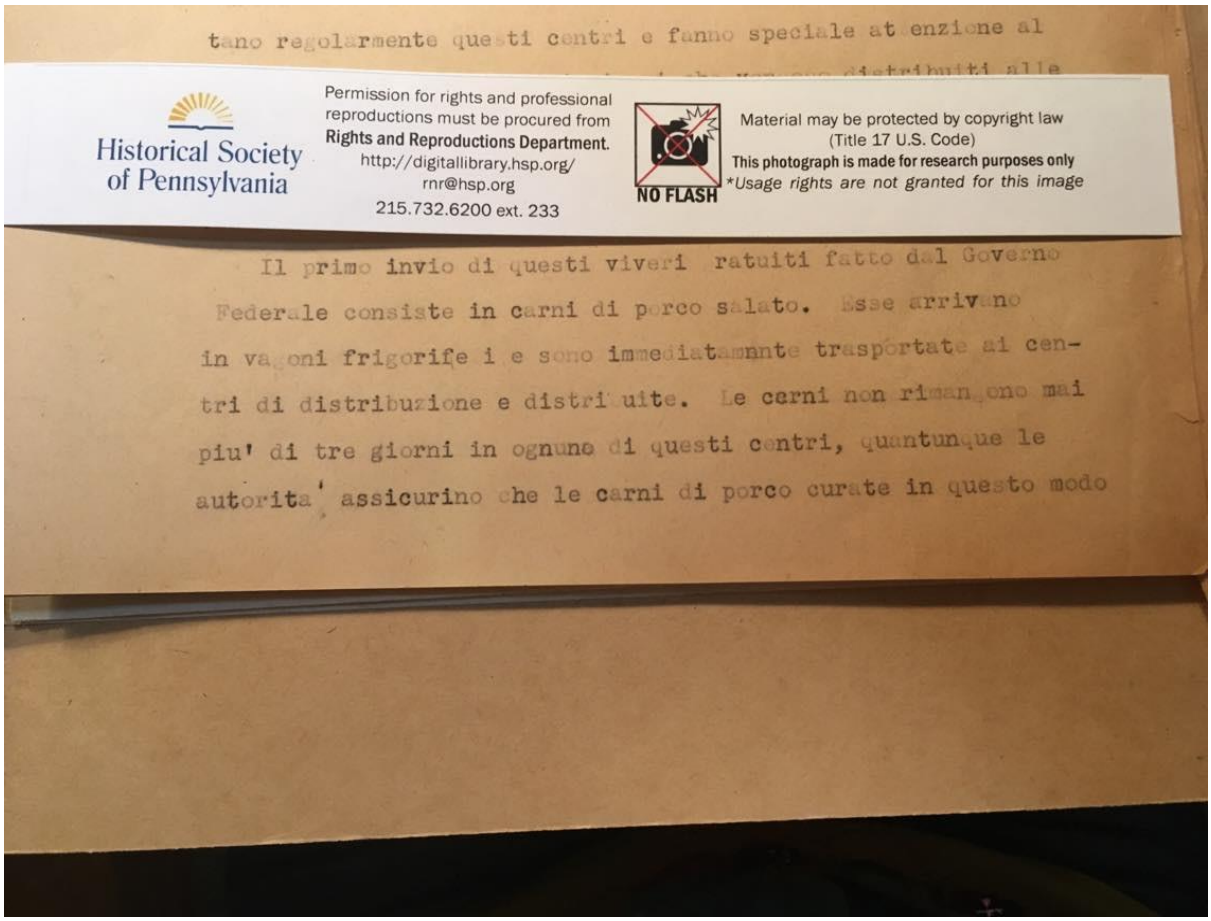
Appendix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Il primo invio di questi viveri ratuiti fatto dal Governo
Federale consiste in carni di porco salato. Esse arrivano
in vagoni frigorife i e sono immediatamnte trasportate ai cen-
tri di distribuzione e distri uite. Le carni non rimangono mai
piu' di tre giorni in ognuno di questi centri, quantunque le
autorita' assicurino che le carni di porco curate in questo modo

possono essere facilmente tenute per una settimana o piu' senza deteriorarsi.

Perche' questi carni riescano gustose e' necessario sapere come cucinarle. Dato che il sale viene usato come preservativo di queste carni, bisogna prima di cucinarle togliere quanto piu' e possibile di questo sale.

Sono stati suggeriti varii metodi come liberare le carni dall'eccesso del sale da coloro che hanno provato a cucinare queste carni in diverse maniere. Diamo qui alcuni di questi metodi:

1 - Mettete la carne di porco a bagno, avendo cura di aggiungere delle patate crude tagliate a fette. Le patate crude assorbono l'eccesso del sale.

2 - Mettete la carne di porco a bagno in acqua fresca alla quale e' stato aggiunto un pezzo di carbone di legno. Il carbone assorbe anche l'eccesso del sale.

3 - Mettete il porco a bagno in un recipiente qualsiasi, in acqua fresca per la durata da 18 a 36 ore, cambiando l'acqua tre o quattro volte. Ovvero - mettete la carne di porco durante la notte e la cottura parziale fatta successivamente in due aque la liberera' dall'eccesso del sale.

Il porco salato che viene distribuito e' di buona qualita' di animali giovani, ed e' un cibo sano a condizione che sia ben cucinato. Tutta la carne di porco deve essere interamente cotta. Questo punto e' della massima importanza. L' "Emergency Home Relief Bureau" - Ufficio di Assistenza per le famiglie bisognose - s'interesso' per avere l'opinione degli espertiin New York, che si offrirono a cooperare in questi saggi di cottura. Furono percio' mandati campioni al Mt. Sinai Hospital, al "Good Housekeeping Institute" e alla "Home

Service Division" della "Consolidated Gas Company". Diversi saggi fur no fatti ed altri nuovi che furono sperimentati saranno stampati e distribuiti a mezzo dei centri per la distribuzi ne dei viveri.

E' opinione degli esperti che eccellenti e gustose pistanze possono essere preparate colla carne salata di porco, come dai saggi fatti nei laboratorii. Essi pero' affermano che uno dei migliori piatti si puo' ottenere tagliando la carne a pezzetti, e mettendola poi a bagno nell'acqua fresca.

Ecco due metodi che furono sperimentati e trovati eccellenti. Credo che abbiate desiderio di conoscerli. Prendete carta e matita e ve li dettero'. - Siete pronti? -

SPEZZATO DI PORCO SALATO

1 1/2 libra di porco magro tagliato a cubi (3 mestoli)
6 piccole cipolle pelate
2 mestoli di patate tagliate a cubi
2 mesto i di carote tagliate a cubi
2 mestoli di rape tagliate a cubi
1/8 di un cucchiaino di pepe.

Mettete la carne cosi' tagliata in una grossa casseruola con coperchio, ed aggiungetevi tanta acqua quanto basta per coprirla. Fate bollire; poi scolate e risciacquate bene - coprite la carne con acqua fresca e fatela cuocere fino a quando sia diventata tenera per circa 1 1/2 ora. Aggiungete poi le verdure ed il pepe e fate cuocere,per una mezz'ora, finche' siano tenere, aggiungendovi dell'acqua se necessario. Una piccola mezza testa di cavolo, divisa in quattro, puo' venire unita alle altre verdure, secondo il gusto. Lo spezzato puo' anche essere reso piu' denso, coll'aggiunta di 3 cucchiai di fior di farina, badando di stemperarla completamente prima

Appendix translations

P1

The fist envoy of these free foodstuffs from the federal government consists of salted pork meat. They arrive in refrigerated train carts and are immediately taken to the centers of distribution and distributed. The meats don't stay any more than three days in any of these centers, although the authorities assure that pork meats cured in this way

P2

Can be kept for a week or more without deterioration.
So that these meats result tasty it is necessary to know how to cook them. Given that salt is used as a preservative in these meats, it is necessary before cooking them to take off as much salt as possible.

Various methods have been suggested to free the meats of the excess salt from those who have tried cooking the meats in different ways. We give here some of these methods:

1- Put the pork meat in water, being careful to add some raw potatoes sliced. The raw potatoes absorb the excess salt.
2- Put the pork meat in fresh water to which a lump of wood coal has been added. The coal absorbs the excess salt
3- Put the pork in water in any container, in fresh water for the duration of 18 to 36 hours, changing the water three or four times. Or – put the pork meet during the night and the partial cooking which will be done later in two waters will free it of excess salt.

The salted pork that is distributed is of good quality of young individuals, and it is healthy food so long as it is cooked well. All pork meat needs to be cooked entirely. This point is of the maximum importance. The "**emergency home relief bureau**" – office of assistance for needy families- became interested to have the opinion of experts from New York that have offered to cooperate in these cooking essays. Therefore samples were sent to the **Mt. Sinai Hospital**, at the **"good housekeeping institute"** and at the **"home**

P3

Service division" of the "**consolidated gas company**". Various essays have been made and new ones have been experimented and will be printed and distributed by way of the centers for the distribution of foodstuffs.

It is the opinion of experts that excellent and tasty foods can be prepared with salted pork meat, line in the essays made by laboratories. They affirm though that one of the best dishes can be made cutting the meat in little bits, and putting it in fresh water.

Here are two methods that have been experimented and found excellent. I believe you wish to know them. Get paper and pen and I will dictate them for you'. - Are you ready?-

Salted pork stew

1 ½ pound of lean pork cut in cubes (3 ladles)

6 small peeled onions

2 ladles of cubed potatoes

2 ladles of cubed carrots

2 ladles of cubed turnips

1/8 of a tea spoon of pepper

Put the meat so cut in a large casserole with lid, and add as much water as needed to cover it. Allow to boil; then drain and rinse well-cover the meat with fresh water and let it cook until tender about 1 ½ hour. Add then vet the vegetables end the pepper and let cook, for one half hour, until they are tender, adding water if necessary.