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IL GUSTO DELLA MODERNITÀ: AESTHETICS, NATION, AND THE
LANGUAGE OF FOOD IN 19TH CENTURY ITALY

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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My dissertation “*Il Gusto della Modernità: Aesthetics, Nation and the Language of Food in 19th century Italy*,” explores the cohesive pedagogic and nationalistic attempt to define Italian *taste* during the instability of an unificatory Italy. Initiating with an establishing European taste paradigm (e.g. Feuerbach, Fourier, Brillat-Savarin), my research demonstrates that there is an increasing number of works composed within the developing “Italian” context, which reflects and participates in the construction and the consumption of a national identity (e.g., Rajberti, Mantegazza, Guerrini, Artusi). Conversely, this budding taste genre finds itself in sharp contrast to the economic paucity and social divisiveness endured by a large sector of the populace and depicted by the literature of the day (e.g., Collodi, Verga, Serao). It is precisely this lack of confluence between that which is scientific and literary that marks this process of taste ennoblement and indoctrination, defining more than ever the nuances that encompass *il gusto italiano*.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Bonnes à manger, bonnes à penser
-Claude Lèvi-Strauss

Philosophy, art and food, how do they merge? Through *taste*. Taste is a term that encompasses a wide scope of connotations simultaneously bridging and expanding the breach between these fields throughout the centuries. Yet, aside from taste's polysemous nature, one notion is clear: there is a fundamental relationship between places and tastes. Whether we define peoples by food, fashion, art, or philosophies, the taste of a people defines territories. Therefore, nationalists who sought to merge diverse vernacular traditions did so by appealing to cuisine as a non-menacing cultural unifier.¹ As respective bourgeoisies sought to diffuse a sense of national identity, gastronomic literature surged and along with it, promulgated notions of country. Cuisine then is not only the simple manipulation of food; it is language, art, science, but also tradition, agriculture, and *terroir*. Cuisine is identity, and yet whether national cuisines exist is an important question. *Imagined* as national communities may be, as Benedict Anderson has noted, it can be contended that national cuisines are but artifices for the food practices of a collection of people within arbitrary boundaries. Nevertheless, it is of great significance that along with national construction, there is taste refinement.

The dissertation will focus on tracing the advent of this modern theoretical and philosophical ideal of taste, finding a thread that initiates in France, England and Germany before moving to Risorgimento Italy. It is this period that sees a proliferation

¹ This is a European pattern that can easily be traced to France, England and Italy, but also to postcolonial nations, who default to European cultural patterns. See Jeffery Pilcher's discussion of postcolonial cuisines in *Food in World History*, New York: Routledge, 2006.

of texts that focus on the development of taste through cuisine, its hygiene and the analysis of its social ramifications. As consequence, these issues enter the literary discourse of the period with food becoming emblematic of a particular social reality. Food here becomes revelatory of a multitude of worlds that reshape text and context, and the form and function of these many gastronomic identities create a narrative that positions the individual squarely within the body politic of this time. It becomes an agent of power or oppression, as well as a means of exchange and community. It is indicative of archetypes and paradigms that permeate the modern consciousness, precisely in a period in which what it means to “eat Italian” begins to form what it means to be Italian. Whether as desire or transgression, whether corporal or spiritual— the representation of food becomes an integral part of the attempt to create an *italianità*. The period during which Italy becomes a nation (at least politically speaking) is precisely when it strives towards a definition of taste.

Taste, gusto, goût, Geschmack,...

Before beginning our literary narrative of taste, it is important to understand the complexities associated with the word itself. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary has sixteen listed definitions for *taste*, while Garzanti has twelve listed for the nominal and verbal forms of *gusto*. Consequently, we are dealing with a term that has come to encompass a multitude of concepts throughout the ages, both scientific and artistic, ephemeral and sublime. It is a term laced with incongruities and contradictions, concurrently pertaining to the jargon of aesthetes as well as to the language of the commoner, connoting both cognition and corporeality. We will focus on two main uses

of the word: taste, in its literal significance, indicating one of the five human senses, or, rather, man's gustatory perception; and taste as metaphor, or as aesthetic sensitivity.

According to Douglas B. Light, the most important aspect to our sense of taste is that it allows us to determine whether the items we place in our mouth should be swallowed or rejected. He, in fact, points to the Latin origin of the term, *taxare*, which has as one of its meanings "to judge"(34), underlining its discriminating quality and permitting a possible metaphoric use of the term. There are various opinions as to when the term was first actually applied to aesthetic discernment. Anthony Blunt attributes one of the first uses to Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472).² Others cite Balthasar Gracian y Morales'(1601-1658) description of *elevated taste* as the first application of the term,³ or even William Caxton's (1415-1492) use of the term to mean "the fact or condition of liking or preferring something."⁴ Origin notwithstanding, Voltaire (1694-1778) helps corroborate a fundamental point: aesthetic philosophy finds basis in taste as sense.

This sense, this capacity for discriminating between different foods, had given rise, in all known languages, to the metaphorical use of the word 'taste' to designate the discernment of beauty and flaws in all the arts. It discriminates as quickly as the tongue and the palate, and like the physical taste it anticipates thought.⁵

² See: *Artistic Theory in Italy. 1450-1600*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. The quote he produces is as follows: "Many... say that our ideas of beauty and architecture are wholly false, maintaining that the forms of buildings are various and changeable according to the taste of each individual and not dependent on any rules of art. This is a common error of ignorance, to maintain that what it does not know does not exist."

³ See, *The Lost Secrets of Fame and Fortune: How to Get and Keep Everything You Desire*, Translated by Joseph Jacobs, Los Angeles :Mega Niche, 2009, 74.

⁴ See: Melville, Peter, "A 'Friendship of Taste': The Aesthetics of Eating Well in Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*" in *Cultures of Taste/Theories of Appetite: Eating Romanticism*, Edited by Morton, Timothy, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004. P 203.

⁵ See: d'Alembert, Jean Le Rond, Denis Diderot, Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu, and François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire. "Taste." *The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project*. Translated by Nelly S. Hoyt and Thomas Cassirer. Ann Arbor: MPublishing, University of Michigan Library, 2003. Trans. of "Goût," *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, vol. 7. Paris, 1757.

Thomas Reid similarly (1710-1769) writes:

This correlation is of great import because it defines the germs of a modern aesthetic of taste. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) demonstrates as early as 1684, in his short essay *Meditations on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas* that all knowledge is not attained through rational analysis. The senses, and in particular taste (as well as smell), are significant acquirers of a knowledge that is both *clear and confused*: “We recognize colors, smells and taste, and other particular objects of the senses clearly enough, and we distinguish them from one another, but only through the simple testimony of the senses” (24).⁶ Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-1762), widely considered the father of modern aesthetics, similarly fuses sense and metaphor in the precursor to his renowned *Aesthetica* (1750), *Reflections on Poetry* (1735). The work is credited for coining the term *aesthetics* with the revival of the Greek term *aisthesis* (sensory perception), while simultaneously isolating the new science that would focus on the bodily senses:⁷ “The Greek philosophers and the Church fathers have already carefully distinguished between *things perceived (aistheta)* and *things known (noeta)*. It is entirely evident that they did

That power of the mind by which we are capable of discerning and relishing the beauties of Nature, and whatever is excellent in the fine arts, I called taste.

The external sense of taste, by which we distinguish various kinds of food, has given occasion to a metaphorical application of its name to this internal power of mind, by which we perceive what is beautiful and what is deformed or defective in the various objects we contemplate.

Like the taste of the palate, it relishes some things, is disgusted with others; with regard to many, is indifferent or dubious; and considerably influenced by habit, by associations, and by opinion. These obvious analogies...in all or most polished languages... give the name of the external sense to this power of discerning what is beautiful with pleasure, and what is ugly and faulty in its kind with disgust.

See: *Essays on the Powers of the Human Mind*, London: Tegg, 1827, p 368. The analogy is used in six different occasions in his essay on *Taste*. Essay VIII. See pages 368-370 and in Essay II, *Of the Will*, pages 472-474. The assertion that there was a corresponding internal sense that mirrors our gustatory experience was similarly proclaimed by others of the day such as Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746) and Alexander Gerard (1728-1795), for example.

⁶ See: *G.W. Leibniz Philosophical Essays*, Translated by Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber, Hackett Publishing Company Inc., 1989.

⁷ See Plate, Brent, *Walter Benjamin, Religion and Aesthetics: Rethinking Religion through the Arts*, New York: Routledge, 2005: p 20.

not equate *things known* with things of the senses.” He therefore goes on to decree a new science of perception as *aesthetic*. (78)⁸

David Hume (1711-1776), in his essay *Of the Standard of Taste* (1757), posits one of the more famous examples of the synergy of tastes.⁹ He recounts the story of a wine-tasting contest from Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* in which the two kinsmen of Sancho Panza are endowed with an exquisitely delicate taste, and asked to sample the contents of a hogshead of wine. Both decreed the wine to be exquisite save for two imperfections: the first claiming a slight metallic taste, while the second a trace of leather. The others laughed since they only tasted wine, yet when the hogshead was opened and emptied, an iron key with a leather thong was revealed to everyone’s amazement. Hume’s anecdote serves to illustrate the fulfillment of his requirements for the discerner, who must have strongly developed senses of the mind and body. In this instance the focus is on a sensory taste that is so fine that it allows nothing to escape it, an ability only gained, in Hume’s words, with the constant perfecting of the acuteness of one’s faculties. What Hume’s theory demonstrates is that in this early brand of aestheticism there is no clear qualitative divergence between the two spheres of taste. It is, however, a notion that transforms with Kantian ideals.

Immanuel Kant’s (1724-1804) aesthetic theory becomes the starting point for romantic and post-romantic artistic production as well as for its perception. Even opposition to Kant’s theories, such as those set forth by Friedrich Schelling (1775-1854) and Georg Wilhem Hegel (1770-1831), is more of a reaction to Kantian thought than

⁸ *Reflections on Poetry*, Translated and annotated by Karl Aschenbrenner and William B. Holther, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954.

⁹ See: Gigante, Denise, *Taste: A Literary History*, Yale University Press, 2005; p 57, and Korsmeyer, C. *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999; p 52.

autonomous theoretical construct.¹⁰ Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (1790) takes aesthetics in a different direction—as far as possible from that which is corporeal, and into a critique of beauty that is exclusively of the intellect and reason. Consequentially, this new philosophy of art rejects the sensory incarnation of taste, as its product is no longer perceived as knowledge. Ultimately, the convergence of sensorial and aesthetic taste that was once so integral to the nascent philosophical aesthetics of the 18th century, now vanishes under Kant's *disinterested, universal, contemplative, and reflective* purposive beauty.¹¹

For Kant, both sensory and aesthetic tastes are based on an individual's subjective experience with pleasure; however with gustation there is neither *reflection*, nor *contemplation*: just immediate response. Our judgments on food and drink are based on how we find the pleasures they produce “agreeable” or “disagreeable,” and thus the gastronomic experience fails because it by nature allows for subjective assessment. Conversely, the fine arts (paintings, music, etc..) are not judged by immediate response but by *contemplation* of the object. We do not respond to whether the pleasures produced are agreeable or not, but, rather, we focus on its capability to engage our cognitive processes. Because food is not able to do this, according to Kant, it fails to provide a necessarily *universal* form of aesthetic appreciation.¹² For sensory appreciation to be

¹⁰ See Zoeller, “Rereading Kant's Critique of Judgment: 1790-1990” in *The Iowa Review* Vol 21, Issue 2, Spring-Summer, 1991: p 47.

¹¹ Burnham, Douglas. *An Introduction to Kant's Critique of Judgment*. Columbia University Press, 2000: pp 73-74.

¹² “For though a man can enumerate to me all the ingredients of a dish and remark that each is separately pleasant to me, and further extol with justice the wholesomeness of this particular food, yet am I deaf to all these reasons; I try the dish with my tongue and my palate and therefore (and not according to a universal principles) do I pass my judgment” (94). Additionally, Kant uses food as an example to illustrate this notion: some *know* about food (especially in France and Italy) and experts make food taste good. But, their knowledge is particular to a certain palate, therefore some judgments of food are better than others. See

considered aesthetic, it must also fulfill another requirement: *disinterestedness*. For an object of aestheticism to be *disinterested*, we must judge it by “mere observation” and not on its existence. As an example Kant uses architecture (28). If we enjoy a building, in his example a palace, not solely based on its appearance but also because we have some sort of attachment to the fact that it exists (e.g., we are its owners), then the experience is not aesthetic. Kant additionally references “Iroquois *sachem* who was pleased in Paris by nothing more than cook-shops” (28).¹³ His pleasure is not in the *presentation* of the shops, i.e. their appearance; therefore it is not an aesthetic pleasure. Food itself struggles to be a *disinterested* object because we consume it based on hunger (33). When we eat it we are interested in the object because we are satiating our desire,¹⁴ and whether we consume one thing over another may be determined by other factors such as health, digestion, etc... This ultimately leads Kant to ask: “How could it have happened that modern languages in particular have designated the aesthetic faculty of judging with an expression (*gustus*, *sapor*) that merely refers to a certain sense organ (the inside of the mouth) and its discrimination as well as choice of enjoyable things?” (*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, 139).¹⁵ If for 18th-century aesthetics gustatory taste served as model for aesthetics, then Kant decisively breaks the correlation between *tastes*.

Zangwill, Nick, "Aesthetic Judgment", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/aesthetic-judgment/>>.

¹³ Kant refers to a 17th-century chief (*sachem*) of the former confederacy of North American Indian peoples (*Iroquois*) who went to Paris and was more impressed by the rotisseries than by the architecture.

¹⁴ “Everyone says that hunger is the best sauce, and everything that is eatable is relished by people with a healthy appetite; and thus a satisfaction of this sort is not directed by taste” (33).

¹⁵ In his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant further addresses this topic and clarifies what he believes to be a taste disparity. Gustatory taste is an external sense which focuses on a given object, either *differentiating* and/or *savoring* it, but rarely is it *universal*, i.e., something with a bitter taste may be *pleasant* to me but it may not be for all (136). Conversely, the sensible faculty of judgment is not solely an individual choice based on sensation, but on sentiment, that must be valid for all (137). As Peter Melville writes, the above question holds an ancillary position in the work, yet it allows for the most gratifying tableau of enlightened anthropological life, the dinner party. Though the convivial setting is a

Martha Naussbaum claims that it is thanks to Kant that a Platonic philosophical tradition persists to this day,¹⁶ and as consequence so does its sensorial hierarchy, encompassing two distinct classes.¹⁷ The inferior class is comprised of the “bodily senses”, in particular taste and smell, which are bound up with the chemical physiology of the body,¹⁸ and associated with the dangers of excess that corrupt the development of moral character. Due to their physical nature, the pleasures they provoke are quantitatively considered less gratifying as they may seem, and qualitatively less valuable than other pursuits— mainly as those of the “noble senses”, vision and hearing.¹⁹ The denigration of taste then finds root in a philosophy that aspires to the development of reason over the senses, and of the elevation of the mind over the body. Therefore, the etymological correlation between sensorial and aesthetic taste remains merely linguistic, and the divergence between the two begins once again to broaden after Enlightened aesthetics with Kantian thought. Consequentially, the discerning practice of the gustatory sense necessitated a new terminology of its own, but can gustatory taste disassociated from aesthetics then be considered an art form?

substantially limited metaphor for aesthetics, as deemed to be in the *Critique of Judgment*, we find the author in *Anthropology* taking pleasure in formulating a recount that has a clear pedagogical purpose: the cosmopolitan man’s cultivation of taste. Therefore, despite his stifling of the metaphor, even Kant himself dedicates splendid theoretical pages to consumption, anticipating the way *taste* will be perceived from this point forward: taste as aesthetic science of the reason and taste as gastronomy. See: Kant, I., *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, edited by Robert B. Louden, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

¹⁶ See Telfer, Elizabeth. *Food for Thought*. Routledge: London, 1996: p 35.

¹⁷ See Kant’s *Anthropology* : Of the latter class are a) *taste (gustus)* b) *smell (olfactus)* (46). Light highlights the biological connection between the two senses that defer to each other in the act of gustation. See p 46. For a comprehensive study on the historical perception of the senses and its hierarchy see: Jutte, Robert, *A History of the Senses: From Antiquity to Cyberspace*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005.

¹⁸ “Gustation, the sense of taste, is conducted by the chemoreceptors that respond to chemicals dissolved in watery solution in our mouths.” (Light, 34)

¹⁹ Vision and hearing are considered higher senses because perception is not physically associated with the body. They are the senses that allow for the discernment since they allow for the ingress to the mind of art in its highest form, whether it be figurative, visual art, or aural forms such as music.

Food as art?

The question of food as art has received increasing attention over the past decades. We are beginning to see food philosophy enter into academic institutions, not only in food science programs, but also in traditional philosophy departments; not to mention its pertinence in literary, historical and other cultural fields. The result is that the discussion around food, its sociological, economic, anthropological, cultural and aesthetic significance has become progressively common as subject matter for academia. With all this attention garnered, it is fair to ask if there have there been any conclusions about food as a viable art form.

As early as 1982 Jean-Francois Revel (1924-2006) dissects “two sources of gastronomic art, which is produced by their subtle and indispensable intermingling” (24). The first is *popular*, regional and seasonal, in tune with the cyclical manner of nature, and pertaining to a long tradition using age-old skills. The second is *erudite*, the cuisine of the chef, which is “based on the invention and reflection” (180). It is a distinction that the author parallels with that of home decoration and fine art painting, making gastronomy in its erudite form true art with the “goal of perfecting cuisine itself” (189). Of this art, the author contends, we have valuable traces: “The great cookbooks are obviously the fruits of study, of invention, of reflection of a change...”(24).

Elizabeth Telfer (1996) claims that it would be *implausible* to maintain that food never constitutes art, yet there are clear restrictions. She claims that one can, in fact, compare the creator of a recipe to a composer and the cook to the musician or performer. However, she points to certain conditions that limit the aesthetic experience of food: the

fact that each person cannot enjoy the complete dish (as example she uses a pie) or no two people can enjoy the same exact dish (i.e., they consume different representations of the dish), are problems particular to food; she also points to the ephemeral experience that it produces, “how can there be works of art which are destroyed by the very activity, eating, which is necessary for contemplating them?” (50). She goes on to conclude that food is indeed an art form, but a minor one, because it is transient and because according to the author, it lacks the meaning provided with major art forms (58-59).

Andrea Borghini, conversely, concludes that there is in fact a way of ascribing aesthetic value to food without confining it to the margins of a minor art form. He initiates by distinguishing three manners in which food and art are intertwined: food in art; art in food; and food as art. In the first case we are dealing with food as subject matter, not art. It is not the focus of the artistic value. The second is the use of artistic skills in creation of dishes, such as the architectural cakes or gastronomic carving. The problem here lies in the fact that the artistic experience is not exclusive to food. The skills incorporated were first used with other art forms in mind. The third, rather, food as art, are instances where the sentiment is uplifted. Here gastronomic experiences challenge and transform us as art does, a quality others such as Telfer and Carolyn Korsmeyer deem not attributable to food.²⁰ He goes on to use the art of Andy Goldsworthy, which does not use food as a subject, to demonstrate how aesthetics and food can converge when we take

²⁰ See Telfer, Elizabeth. *Food for Thought*. Routledge: London, 1996: p 59. And Korsmeyer, C. *Making Sense of Taste: Food and Philosophy*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999, p 109.

into consideration the “agricultural component” of a dish, that is, the “ecological relationship” that we have to the food we consume.²¹

Nicola Perullo, in *Filosofia della gastronomia laica* (2010), looks at the pleasures of taste from a different angle, attributing a philosophical importance to the sense, while not voiding it of its material connotation. Taste does not need to be placed in the “empire of the intellectual senses” for it to be considered an art form. He proposed a change of perspective from which the quotidian is revaluated and reformulated as a *layman’s philosophy*, one in which we ponder the most common of experiences, such as a coffee and croissant at the bar, or sampling of a restaurant’s specialties. He is careful to warn of a trend that is all too diffused in the foodie culture, that of *anti-gastronomy*, as he deems it: the excessively pedantic nature of food enthusiasts who try too hard to *sublimate* their food. Instead he calls for philosophy based on a *saggezza gustativa*, which gives respect to the knowledge and pleasure that gustatory taste affords us.²²

This is a topic that continues to provoke a multitude of viewpoints, however it is becoming rather evident that cuisine is losing its connotation as a *tout court* art form, for very specific purposes. The ultimate goal is to raise food to the status of cultural nobility, to render it an object dignified enough to merit intellectual debate on level with the products of literature, painting, and music. Whether we agree with this trend of an “artified” food or not, is not as significant as the fact that today’s technological culture has given nearly everyone the voice to be a food critic. From whole television networks

²¹ See Borghini’s soon to be article, *Cibo, arte e natura*, which was presented at the conference *Cibo, Filosofia e Arte* (April 4-5, 2013) at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo, Italy where he teaches.

²² Emily Brady posits a similar argument. Instead of ennobling food to the stature of fine art she concentrates on an “aesthetics of everyday”, which holds smells and taste as paramount senses. See: Brady, Emily. “Smells, Tastes and Everyday Aesthetics” in *The Philosophy of Food* edited by D. Kaplan. University of California Press, 2012: pp 69-85.

and innumerable programs, to personal recipes and dishes now posted everywhere on the blogosphere, and websites that focus on personal restaurant reviews, television and internet have given anyone who has access to them the capability to boast about, scrutinize, and even philosophize food. Clearly, the vast majority of what is being written is not academic, but this phenomenon renders society all the more food conscious, and, in many instances, patrons more educated about what and how they eat.

It is precisely this type of society that has institutionalized, like no other, *science in the kitchen and the art of eating well*.²³ We need to look no farther than to the *Slow Food* movement to comprehend how food has become a philosophy of livelihood, or the diffusion of molecular gastronomy to understand how art and chemistry collide in the kitchen. With workshops that continue to take place throughout Italy and abroad, and with the goal of a “permanent sensory education” of taste, *Slow Food* and its founder Carlo Petrini²⁴ have made it their mission to disseminate “a vocabulary of flavor,” transforming “pleasure that evolves into knowledge and knowledge that turns into pleasure” (*The Case for Taste*, 76-77). With the same gastronomic foresight, Pierre Gagnaire, the architect of molecular gastronomy and one of today’s most celebrated chefs, writes:

It is traditionally accepted that music is an art, that painting is an art, that theater is an art— no less than literature and, for more than a century now, the cinema. Why not cooking? Its essential function of providing nourishment has caused us to forget that, in the hands of a great cook, a meal is capable of touching us as a love song does, of giving us joy, occasionally even of moving us to anger...and insofar as its purpose is to stir the emotions, cooking— which alone among the

²³ A reference to the most famed Italian cookbook, *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene* (1891) by Pellegrino Artusi.

²⁴ Here is a list of a few of Petrini’s works in English: *Slow Food: Collected Thoughts on Taste, Tradition, and the Honest Pleasures of Food* (2001); *Slow Food Revolution: A New Culture for Eating and Living* (2006); *Slow Food Nation: Why Our Food Should Be Good, Clean, And Fair* (2007), *Terra Madre: Forging a New Global Network of Sustainable Food Communities* (2010).

arts stimulates all of the senses at once— cannot be excluded from their company.
(*Cooking the Quintessential Art*, 9)

I reference *Slow Food's* didactic mission and reproduce Gagnaire's lines because they are contemporary to us and, yet, they are relative to a cohesive gastroaesthetic endeavor that dates back two hundred years. Despite the drastically different social, political, economic and cultural situations, we can trace a comparable trend of taste ennoblement in the 19th century; one that in part results from the philosophical shift that occurs with the rise of Kantian aesthetics, but also from socio-political events that drastically change the European gastro-scape. This discussion of food as art and philosophy, so vibrantly present in contemporary discourse, finds precedent in the aftermath of upheaval, more precisely, the French Revolution. And it is in the ashes of the *ancien régime* that we first encounter *gastronomie*.

Gastronomie

Since ancient times, taste has been metaphorically linked to the lower somatic regions, as evidenced by Plato who comments on the stomach as being “like a wild animal which was chained up with man, and must be nourished if man is to exist” (in Gigante, *Taste*, 11). Therefore, the prejudice against gastronomy and the pleasures of food, which are considered neither true science nor true art, and the gastronomic event neither a rational nor aesthetic experience, have existed from the advent of Western philosophical thought. The question that remains is whether the condemnation of taste as gustation finds reprieve.

With the codification of the word *gastronomie*, from the Greek meaning laws (*nomos*) of the stomach (*gastro*), we see the terminology needed to denote the culinary

creativity valorized by society and discerned through gustation. It is widely believed that Joseph de Berchoux (1765-1839) was the first to employ it in a poem from 1801, “La Gastronomie, ou L’homme des champ à table”. Interestingly enough, the poem is void of gastronomy or the art of cookery. It consists of over a thousand verses divided into four cantos and provides rules for proper conduct at the dinner table. Berchoux surely invents little. Gastronomy, as it is to be known, is already an elaborated art form during this period, and he functions more as a scribe than as an innovator. Nevertheless, his use of the term is demonstrative of the emerging philosophy of food that sweeps France at the turn of the century.

Gastronomy, as seen, expands from the eighteenth-century discourse of aesthetic taste, just as aesthetics had once spawned from a focus on the gustatory sense. It is established as the product of the split between Neoclassicism and the burgeoning ideals of the gourmand, who points to an aesthetic disinterestedness (the personal objectivity needed to discern art)²⁵ as catalyst for a taste revitalization. Food, which could not be product of an artistic endeavor, now needed to be judged with the utmost attention. The renowned Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826) degrades those who “swallow the choicest morsels with culpable indifference or sip an odorant and limpid nectar with a sacrilegious distraction” (*Epicure*, 136). For the illustrious gastronome, and his predecessor Alexandre Balthazar Laurant Grimod de la Reyniere (1758-1837), gourmandism was the remaking of aesthetic taste as a gustatory phenomenon.

Grimod composes the text that is considered the founding work of modern gastronomic literature, the *Almanach des Gourmands* (edited and published through

²⁵ For further development of the role of aesthetic disinterestedness, see: Stolnitz, Jerome, “On the Origin of *Aesthetic Disinterestedness*,” in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol 20 (Winter 1961): 131-143.

1803-1812),²⁶ in which food becomes object of appreciation and analysis. He writes in a post-revolutionary France characterized by questions of identity and by a new manner of food perception. The Revolution and the political events of the 1790's directly result in the development and expansion of the restaurant, which went far in professionalizing cookery as an art, while gourmands such as Grimod worked towards professionalizing the public towards proper food consumerism. With the disappearance of the *ancien régime*, aristocratic chefs were left without work and hence turned to the *nouveau riche* and the new predominant class, the bourgeoisie. Grimod senses this development and composes his *Almanach* touting gastronomy and its chef visionaries as equivalents to most illustrious artists, such as Raphael, Michelangelo, Rubens...²⁷ — a tendency that becomes a leitmotif of the century's gastronomic writing — while providing clarification on how a gourmand should be truly defined:

If one were to believe the Dictionary of the Academy, *Gourmand* is a synonym of Glutton and Gobbler, and *Gourmandise* of Gluttony...The term Gourmand has in recent years, in polite society, gained a far less unfavorable, and dare we say noble meaning.

The Gourmand is more than just a creature whom Nature has graced with an excellent stomach and vast appetite...he also possesses an enlightened sense of taste... an exceptionally delicate palate, developed through extensive experience. All his senses must work in concert with that of taste, for he must contemplate food before it nears his lips. Suffice it to say that his gaze must be penetrating, his ear alert, his sense of touch keen, and his tongue able. Thus the Gourmand, whom the Academy depicts as a coarse creature, is characterized instead by extreme delicacy; only his health need be robust. (12)

²⁶ The *Almanach* is published yearly and Grimod is very clear about its content: “the *Almanach of Gourmands* is not a cookbook; our obligation is to try to stimulate our readers’ appetites; it is up to artists alone to satisfy them”(in Schehr and Weiss, 56).

²⁷ For example: “There are no practitioners today who can rival Réchaud, Morillion, or Robert, who so distinguished themselves in their art...and who like Raphael, Michelangelo, and Rubens, founded three major schools in the art of fine dining” (38-39).

Grimod's description demonstrates how gourmandism is aestheticism in its original significance, or, rather, a science of sensorial perception in which knowledge is received by a communal functionality of the senses. Consumption is to be understood as a cognitive process contemplated in the most lofty of fashions; a notion that eradicates the Platonic-Kantian model of an "irrational" corporeality. The author's premise is extremely modern and sets the standard for the 19th century's food aestheticism, while establishing himself as the single most important founding father of a literary gastronomy.

Grimod's message was as nationalistic as it was aesthetic. While making it the personal responsibility of gourmands such as himself to promulgate an exalted gastronomic discourse, he simultaneously disseminated national esteem. This process entailed the reformulation of the culinary experience, which in turn meant overturning a tradition that was linked to the old regime. As Katherine M. Faull indicates, the progression of the dissemination of a nation gastronomy mirrored Napoleon's politics of territorial expansion, and just as the Napoleonic *Code Civil* manipulated the codes of civility, Grimod's articulation of proper table manners worked to reconfigure important new social behaviors (110). Therefore, the gourmandism that spread throughout the French middle classes in the 19th century is as much a political endeavor as it is a philosophical one, and the figure that has the farthest reach is Brillat-Savarin.

Physiologie du goût (1825) is written in a moment when *gastronomie* was on everyone's tongue in Paris and when new-found *professors of taste* were establishing themselves as prominent cultural figures. The work exceeds Grimod's *Almanach* on a spatial and temporal level, as it becomes well-known throughout all of Europe and beyond, never ceasing print since its first publication. Many of the themes first divulged

by Grimod are present throughout the work, and an aesthetic of food rooted in *intelligent knowledge* and the capacity of qualitative discernment are the foundation for his food ideals: “Gastronomy is the intelligent knowledge of whatever concerns man’s nourishment,” while “*Gourmandise* is an act of judgment, in obedience to which, we grant a preference to things which are agreeable, over those which have not that quality” (61, 15). Brillat-Savarin also emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of gastronomy, contending that it encompasses natural history, physics, chemistry, cookery, and business, while extolling its pertinence to the political economy as a source of revenue and a means of exchange between nations (ibid). Therefore, matters of gustatory taste transcend mere biological urges. For the author, man possesses “the most perfect sense of taste” and it is his level of intelligence that differentiates he who consumes solely for satiation from he who is conscious of the vast aesthetic capabilities of his tongue (53).

Physiologie is above all distinguished by Brillat-Savarin’s witty and conversational style, which is marked by an aphoristic and anecdotal tendency²⁸ that introduces another element to the gastronomic paradigm: the reader. Whereas until then gastronomy was exclusively about the cook and diner, now Brillat-Savarin’s work renders it a truly literary endeavor. The material product, i.e. dishes, is not of primary concern, culture is. He is convinced that with the development of a new French society led by academics, gastronomy will have its “own academicians, its professors, its yearly courses and its contests for scholarship,” taking its rightful place among the premier arts and sciences (64). And although few could afford truffles and luxurious wines, the

²⁸ The most famous of which being, “Tell me what you eat, and I shall tell you what you are.” (15)

gourmand's emphasis on *gastronomic tests* accommodated every budget (182-187), in an attempt to render his message applicable to the largest possible audience.

Gastronomy was to be open to all as an accessible form of French nationalism, as a fundamental appreciation of cuisine that was to become a source of collective pride for the middle classes. Despite the problematic nature of this notion, since this gastronomic culture was highly cosmopolitan and more specifically Parisian, gastronomy spread its way throughout Europe becoming synonymous with France. As will be the case with Italy, the promulgation of a unified French identity comes to fruition at the detriment of regional loyalties, and becoming fluent in *gastronomie* was an endeavor in and of itself. There was a new jargon to acquire, a new language of food that was not accessible to all, however, it became accessible to those who forged a new France, that is, the bourgeoisie, thanks to the lessons of their gastronomic aesthetes.²⁹

Gastronomie crosses the channel

This branch of food aesthetic literature, however, is not exclusive to France. England finds itself a gastronomic beneficiary of the French Revolution as well. Many of the now unemployed French chefs of great households are lured across *la Manche*, either as political refugees or attracted by the high salaries.³⁰ England had become, as John Burnett claims, an “acquisitive society” fostered by industrialization, and therefore a

²⁹ In addition to the *gourmandize* preached by Grimod and Brillat-Savarin, there are chefs such as Marie-Antoine Carême (1783-1833) and Georges Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935) who through their food expound so many of the themes fundamental to food aesthetics and to the promotion of Frenchness through the notion of *terroir*. Both Carême and Escoffier were aspiring artists turned chefs. For more on Carême, see: Kelley, Ian, *Cooking for the Kings: The Life of Antoine Carême, The First Celebrity Chef*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2003. For more on Escoffier see his memoirs: *Auguste Escoffier: Memories of my Life*, edited by Reinhold, Thomson Publishing, 1997.

³⁰ Denise Gigante states that in 1890 there are more than 5000 French chefs employed in London only (xxix).

logical destination for *men of taste*. Simultaneously, there is an explosion of gastronomic literature that mirrors the French ideals of a philosophy of food. William Kitchiner (1775-1827), a British physician, adopted the French physiological approach to cookery, treating food as fine art in his *Apicius Redevivus; or The Cook's Oracle* (1817).³¹ The work, part recipe book, part gastronomic treatise, is as innately literary as any gastronomic text. With allusions to poets such as Milton, Pope and Byron, Kitchiner fuses food, literature, and aesthetics while stressing economy with an efficacy not encountered with his French counterparts:³² “I have...given directions for preparing the more composite and elaborate made dishes, still keeping constantly in mind, not to make either the stomach or the purse suffer for the pleasures of the palate” (370).

In juxtaposition to Plato's *beastly* representation of the stomach, is Kitchiner's new “philosophy”: “The stomach is the mainspring of our system. If it be not sufficiently wound up to warm the heart and support the circulation, the whole business of life will in proportion, be ineffectively performed” (19). With the stomach as the center of our livelihood, the author proposes a set of *cardinal virtues* of cookery that must be followed for every preparation to ensure its proper care: “cleanliness, frugality, nourishment, and palateableness” (17). Additionally, the recipes for his text are not chosen haphazardly. To counter Grimod's famous “tasting jury,”³³ Kitchiner assembles an *enlightened*

³¹ *Apicius Redevivus*, or *Apicius Revived* is an allusion to the M. Gavius Apicius and his Roman book of cookery *De re coquinaria*: For more information on Apicius see: Dalby, Andrew. *Food in the Ancient World from A to Z*. New York: Routledge, 2003: p 16-17.

³² A trait already evidenced by the subtitle: “combining economy with elegance; and saving expense to housekeepers.”

³³ Grimod was renowned for setting up a “tasting jury,” who would award gastronomic certificates to foods or dishes presented to them. The jury was always comprised of famed gourmands. One such member, Gastaldy was a doctor who expired at the table when he was about to turn one hundred. See Cousins and Gillespie, *European Gastronomy into the 21st century*, Elsevier Ltd. 2001: p 51.

“Committee of Taste,” comprised of “thorough-bred grand gourmands of the first magnitude” who render his text a collection of empiricist experiments (17).

If Dr. Kitchiner represents the first attempt to render gastronomy a significant bourgeois art form in England, then the text that remains the most original attempt to “stimulate the powers of discriminating appetites” and “to direct the taste” belongs to the pseudonymous Launcelot Sturgeon: *Essays, Moral, Philosophical, and Stomachial, on the Important Science of Good-Living* (1822) (10). Referencing “that very erudite work, the *Almanach des Gourmands*,” the author posits a work that is intent on “illuminating the paths of epicurism” (2), while rendering one point loudly clear: “in spite of all the Stoics can say, every one must admit, that a stomach which is proof against all the trials is the greatest blessing; and it would be easy to demonstrate, that it exercises an extended influence over the moral destinies of life” (ibid). Sturgeon’s text, as opposed to Kitchiner’s, is not a recipe book. Therefore, it breaks the mold of the traditional English gastronomic compositions. It does not deal with issues of cookery, but, instead with philosophies on appetite and proper procedures for sound *gourmandize*. In doing so, the ideal critic is outlined: a) “a delicate susceptibility in the organs of degustation, which enables him to appreciate the true relish of each ingredient in the most compound ragout and to detect the slightest aberration of the cook”; b) “a profound acquaintance with the rules of art”; c) “an enlightened judgment on their several merits, matured by long and sedulous experience; and (d) “in him, all the senses should be in unison with that of taste”(4). Sturgeon’s describes a Man of Taste, perfectly aligned with the precepts of his French counterparts and with a true aesthetic of food. There is, therefore, perfect

confluence between the gastronomic philosophies in both nations and ample evidence for a nascent paradigm that leaves an important imprint Europe-wide.

Ultimately, in the first quarter of the century, there is a renegotiation of the meaning of food and taste that is innately political. Food in all its aesthetic splendor and decorum, becomes symbol of a new freedom that finds expression in the individual's consumer power. Therefore, just as much as these new gastronomic ideals are a product of a philosophical turn, i.e. the break of sensory taste with aesthetics, they are also the product of a new sensibility that needed to be constructed. Lacking the refinement and delicacy of the *ancien régime* aristocracy, the middle classes needed theoretical and linguistic instruction so they too could refine their taste. Consumption, therefore, assumed a new meaning; rather than a manner of flaunting one's riches, it was instead a manifestation of the individual's pursuit of pleasure. And with the passing of the century, and the further rise of the middle classes and consumerism, matters of taste became ever more present in European society. Taste, from a disinterested appreciation of the arts, acquires a set of principles for consumers seeking to distinguish themselves culturally.³⁴ Thus, together with an aesthetic of food, we see an aesthetic of fashion and figures such as the Dandy who bring taste's material nature to the forefront. Nevertheless, mass consumption did not limit itself to these "lower" material goods. As Stana Nenadic comments, there is a mass consumption of art in the early 19th century that is promoted through middle class institutions (211). Hence, the societies that we have referenced thus far were marked by a blurred aesthetic line; traditional and non-traditional art forms became highly commercialized commodities, and it was precisely one's developing *tastes*

³⁴ See Gigante's introduction in *Gusto: Essential Writings in Nineteenth-Century Gastronomy*.

that “signaled an attachment to a national identity that was commonly achieved through possessions” (217).

Gastrosophy

The advent of an aestheticized food for thought comes as the convergence of the varying factors: philosophical, political, and commercial. Yet, its ideals do not remain exclusive to the gourmand. As the century progresses, traditional philosophy begins to address matters of sensory taste. If we have thus far seen a preached unity of the senses for the sake of an ennobled degustation, then Charles Fourier (1772-1837) goes farther by eradicating the traditional sensory hierarchy. In *The Passions of the Human Soul*, the philosopher classifies the senses from top to bottom, as *active*, *passive*, and *neuter*, with a position of prominence given to taste:

Taste is evidently the first in rank...; you can exist though deprived of the active use of each of the four senses, but you cannot live without eating, without the active exercise of the sense of taste. It is consequentially the first as to the uses of necessity; perhaps it is so too in regard to pleasures; for it is the first and the last enjoyment of man. (Vol 1, 29)

For Fourier, taste, along with touch,³⁵ embody the highest social value, and can provide the intellectual development and stimulation necessary for an ideal future. Furthermore, gourmandism is a lauded practice in spite of traditional philosophical prejudices, which associate the stomach to animalistic urges:

The moralists, to support their attacks against gormandism, pretend that it assimilates us to beasts, which are slaves of the belly...The subjection of animals and of men to the sense of Taste is a sign of the eminent rank that sense ought to hold.... (Vol 1, 32-33)

³⁵ Touch is fundamental to humanity, ranking second in Fourier's hierarchy. Since without love and procreation humanity would cease to exist. See *The Passions...*, 29.

Fourier is first and foremost a Utopian: in his view, taste becomes an important foundation for ideal *harmony*, a utopia in which gourmandism

will be the magnetic needle of health and of wisdom; it will be a title of honor as a path of science; it will only lead man to work to satisfy the senses of others, at the same time he is satisfying his own, and securing health to all. It will constitute the science called Gastrosophy, which will place good cheer in strict alliance with honor and the love of glory. ...it ought to be a chief agent of wisdom in future harmony, where all concurs to satisfy the collective passions by the development of the individual passions. A clever gastrosopher, expert in the three functions of Gastroculture and Gastrohygiene, will be revered as an oracle of supreme wisdom. (Vol 1, 33)

Gastrosophy is Fourier's invention — an art of “refined gluttony” in which the author shows disdain for those before him that preached gastronomy as a superficial science. As Bee Wilson demonstrates, *Gastrosophy* can be broken down into 5 different components: 1) agriculture 2) preservation 3) cooking 4) gastronomy and 5) hygiene (257), all of which work in unison to create a new brand of gastrosophic gourmandism.³⁶

In the reconfiguring of gastronomy and taste as principal endeavors, the author's ideal epicure seeks the pleasures of taste as a means of rationality. For Fourier, *gastrosophy* is philosophy. However, sensory ills are a product of society that allows itself to be entrapped by the maladies of consumerism and by the obsessive accumulation of wealth to the detriment of its well-being. In addition to an unhealthy consumerism, living factors also contribute to the terribly impoverished senses of his day,³⁷ to the extent

³⁶ Harold Lemke notes the Eugen von Vaesrt (the German author and scholar, 1782-1855) posits seven areas of gastrosophy: “1) The Teachings of the Joys of Food. 2) Theory and Praxis of the Culinary Arts. 3) The Aesthetics of Eating. 4) Physiology and Chemistry of All Edible Substances and Creatures as well as Most Drinks. 5) The Principles of (good) Table Manners. 6) The Study of Dietetics, a Critical Casuistry of Anorexia and Obesity. 7) The strictly regulated control of all social and economic means of production...” See Lemke, Harold. *The Ethics of Taste*: http://www.haraldlemke.de/texte/Lemke_Gastrosophy.pdf (4).

³⁷ “...whilst the philosophers cry out about the perfectibility of the sensations of perceptions. They have never passed through these sickening streets in which the French populace dwell; and where the din of the trades, of the hammers, quarrels and beggars, the sight of the hanging rags, of the dirty dwellings and unpalatable labors of the poor, the stifling smell of the drains in which they swarm, so painfully affect the

that society has become accustomed to taking pleasure in their state of deprivation.³⁸ It is precisely here that taste, along with touch, holds eminence, because in society “people would by no means perpetrate crime to slake the three other senses, —to procure pictures, perfumes, or concerts....The mob requires to be fed and clothed. Everything is sacrificed, with the people, to these two senses (32). Ultimately, with Fourier’s theories we encounter a sensory taste that is placed at the very top of the hierarchy, both in ideal (or in this case *harmony*) and in practice (in contemporary society) despite class or social status. Whether referring to the populace in need of the barest essentials, or to the opulent, who require taste “as a goad to gluttony” (33), Fourier demonstrates that the sense is a fundament to both his utopian sensuality and to the livelihood of civilization.

A similar ennobled narrative of taste can be traced in Ludwig Feuerbach’s (1804-1872) *Die Naturwissenschaft und die Revolution (Natural Science and Revolution)* (1850), which also attacks traditional philosophical thought by holding in high regard the lower senses, in particular taste: “Ich beginne meine Denunciation mit der Philosophie und behaupte, dass diese Schrift, obgleich sie nur von Essen und Trinken handelt, den in den Augen unserer supranaturalistischen Scheincultur niedrigsten Akten, doch von der höchsten philosophischen Bedeutung und Wichtigkeit ist”³⁹ (*Gesammelte Werke*, X, 356-357). Food and drink hold philosophical import and the author’s *denunciation* finds root in his concept of the nature of man. For rational thought is not the only faculty that

sight, hearing and smell, and so well belie the boasts of the perfection of the sensations of perception that our ideologists find in their *belle France*!” (47-48)

³⁸ See page 58 where Fourier writes about the pleasures seen in “naked and hideous mountains,” “regged beggars of town,” and “dirty cabins of Picardy, Champagne”, etc. This discourse is also extended, for example, to hearing dissonant music, etc...

³⁹ *I begin my denunciation with philosophy and I affirm that this writing, although it deals only with food and drink, the most humble actions in the eyes of our supernaturalist pseudo-culture, nevertheless assumes the highest meaning and importance for philosophy.*

distinguishes man from animal; taste serves this very function as well: “even the stomach of man, which we view so contemptuously, is not animal but human because it is a universal being that is not limited to certain kinds of food... Leave man his head but give him the stomach of a lion or a horse, and he certainly will cease to be a man” (*Principles of the Philosophy of the Future*, 69-70). As result, Feuerbach finds fault with a philosophy that attributes savage qualities to the stomach, since, in turn it consigns man in his integrity to bestiality (*Principles*, 70). Therefore, Feuerbach’s essay begins with the fundamental declaration that man and food are metaphysically connected.

Feuerbach’s materialist philosophy places significance on man’s sensory perception, as it is not only the external world that is object of the senses, but man himself. This notion of the senses as vehicle to the philosophical self can only be attained through a significant starting point— food: “Der Anfang der Existenz ist aber die Ernährung; die Nahrung also der Anfang der Weisheit. Die erste Bedingung, dass du etwas in dein Herz und deinen Kopf bringst, ist: dass du etwas in deinen Magen bringst”⁴⁰ (*G.W.*, X, 359). Food, however, is not only prerequisite for the *heart* and *head*, but human fare is also sentiment and the basis of culture:

Wir sehen zugleich hieraus, von welcher wichtigen ethischen sowohl als politischen Bedeutung die Lehre von den Nahrungsmitteln für das Volk ist. Die Speisen werden zu Blut, das Blut zu Herz und Hirn, zu Gedanken und Gesinnungsstoff. Menschliche Kost ist die Grundlage menschlicher Bildung und Gesinnung. Wollt ihr das Volk bessern, so gebt ihm statt Deklamationen gegen die Sünde bessere Speisen. Der Mensch ist was er isst.⁴¹ (*G.W.*, X, 367)

⁴⁰ *Food is therefore the beginning of wisdom. The first condition to put something into your heart and into your mind is this: that you put it into your stomach.*

⁴¹ *From this we can also ascertain what important ethical and political significance the study of the categories of food has on the people. Food becomes blood, blood the brain and the heart, and the essence of thought and sentiment. Human food is the base of human culture and sentiment. If you want to improve the people, give them, instead of declamations against sin, better food. Man is what he eats.*

Aside from the famed, or notorious, aphorism (depending on perspective), “Man is what he eats”,⁴² Feuerbach makes an association that is of extreme importance in various contexts within the century: a fundamental way to improve humanity is to improve its diet. This is most relevant to the working classes in the contexts of nationhood and modernity, within which the author strictly associates a poor worker’s diet with a poor social future — a groundbreaking concept for the period. The way to improve their condition is through organization and revolution, and diet plays an essential role. Food is not only the foundation of wisdom, as previously stated, but of the *muscle* and *strength* essential for change (“Die Diät ist die Basis der Weisheit und Tugend, der männlichen, muskelkräftigen, nervenstarken Tugend; aber ohne Weisheit und Tugend gedeiht keine Revolution”).⁴³ Feuerbach, in fact, goes on to lament the *rotten potato blood* of German people, who need to embrace food chemistry in order to lay the foundation for a proper revolution (368). With this exhortation, the author references the failed revolutions of 1848, partially blaming a diet heavily dependent on potatoes for a lack of success. He proposes an alternative foodstuff, urging those interested in another revolution to propagandize beans as a more nutritious commodity for the populace, but more importantly, he promulgates the rational study of nutrition as an intelligent course of action. If the author’s doctrine is “die Aufgabe des Menschen ist eben, den Grund der Empfindung zu entdecken, den Gegenstand der Empfindung zu einem Gegenstand des Wissens zu erheben. Nicht mit Gebet, mit Erkenntniss zu geniessen, ist menschlich”⁴⁴

⁴² Massimo Montanari provides an interesting linguistic analysis of Feuerbach’s phrase in his work *Let the Meatballs Rest*, commenting on its paradoxical translation (1).

⁴³ *Diet is the foundation of wisdom and virtue, of a virile, muscular, and sinewy virtue; but, without wisdom and virtue no revolution can thrive.*

⁴⁴ *The task of man is precisely to discover the basis of sensation, to ennoble the object of sensation as an object of knowledge. It is of man to take food not with prayer, but with knowledge.*

(368), then *knowledge* needs to further be explored through science, and in this case food science, since it is drastically capable of altering areas of human activity.

Ultimately, Feuerbach does not concentrate on the chemical relation between food, mind, and muscle. His concern is based on the philosophical, ethical, and political implications of food. This area of Feuerbach's thought has been largely criticized and even ridiculed by critics for its difficult placement within the author's production. Yet, Sidney Hook and Peter Caldwell claim the legitimacy of Feuerbach's theories in *Die Naturwissenschaft und die Revolution*. Hook claims that Feuerbach was "deadly earnest" in his intent and proposes a literal reading that is affirmation of materialistic metaphysics (267). Caldwell simply believes that despite a possible sarcastic vein, there is no reason to believe that Feuerbach feigned his theories, attributing it once again to a materialistic phase (123). Melvin Chernobyl goes beyond a literal, hence materialist interpretation. He examines "man is what he eats" not as the culmination of Feuerbach's theories, but as a lamentation of traditional philosophy which is all too separated from the tribulations of man (403). Chernobyl believes that the author's discussion of food and humanity, in addition to his demand to substitute beans for potatoes as the German staple, "is an argument concerning socio-political misery and the proper way to deal with it, an argument ending with a recommendation of scientific inquiry as the way to social justice" (403). Whether his essay is a product of literal materialism or whether it holds some other purpose, what is evident is that Feuerbach demonstrates that all things man consumes are of his own nature. Because all nutrients already chemically exist within man, the way we eat is fundamental in maintaining the body, the mind, and on larger scale the family and the nation.

With Fourier and Feuerbach, gastronomy becomes a lofty sensory experience that is fed by a knowledge based on a connection between man and food, taste and society, with *gastrosophy* as “a profound and sublime theory of social equilibrium”(Oeuvres, 4:130). Along with the French and British gourmands before them, the philosophers demonstrate that there is a cohesive attempt to foster rationalized eating within various sections of society, from the middle classes to the literati, all the way to the average worker. With a variety of subtexts, from nationalism, to revolution, to philosophical anarchism, and scientific promulgation, these works become integral to the 19th century, as many of them are interdisciplinary, tackling themes such as cookery, nutrition, etiquette and hygiene. They supply parameters to new generations no longer confined to the courts of the aristocracy, and aspire to enhance the sensory experience for the largest possible portion of society. The question that needs to be asked is whether this interdisciplinary genre finds development within the Italian Ottocento.

E la cucina?

The connection between food and France is evident. The global domination of *haute cuisine* from the 19th century onward is nothing short of remarkable. It is also to be said that, more than anywhere else, in France the culture of fine eating divulged to the middle classes becomes a literary endeavor which requires research in various branches of knowledge and poetic sensibility, while simultaneously reaching the masses through restaurants. Restaurants become a site of culture from which almost no one is excluded. Even workers find a way to put aside money for that special occasion that allows them to celebrate reveling in the finest creations of their *gastronomie*. Therefore, a

connoisseurship of taste⁴⁵ synonymous with *cuisine*, unique to France, has been created and sustained ever since Grimod and Carême. However, the cultural association between *cucina* and Italy is no less significant.

Historically, it was Italian gastronomy that dominated the European landscape. The Renaissance, an era known for its intellectual endeavor, artistic creativity, and international Italian prestige, was also vital for *la cucina*. Intellectuals and elite worked together to refine the table, and as consequence Italian gastronomy was practiced in many of the major European courts; as the Italian Renaissance spread throughout Europe, so did its way of eating. Teofilo Folengo's (1491-1544) *Baldus* (1517), the macaronic narrative poem, emphatically describes a banquet to celebrate the end of a joust by the King of France, in which all the food was Italian. The author notes that, "the land of Abruzzo had sent its hams. Naples had kindly provided headcheese, and Milan its golden *offelle* pastries and fresh sausages," attesting to the status of *la cucina* (in Capatti and Montanari, 16). The Renaissance also produced the likes of Bartolomeo Sacchi (1421-1481), better known as Platina, who composes *De honesta volupate et valetudine* (*On honorable pleasure and health*, 1475), becoming "the first greatest cookery writer of the new era" (Dickie, 61). Platina was a Humanist scholar who published works on the Gonzaga family and popes, certainly not a chef. Nevertheless, his text transforms recipes and other culinary information present in the earliest important cookbook of Italian history by Maestro Martino da Como (c.1430-unknown) —*Libro di arte coquinaria* (c. 1465)— into a widespread European doctrine, while opening an important window on the Italian Quattrocento. Bartolomeo Scappi (1500-1577), the legendary "secret chef of the

⁴⁵ "Connoisseurship of taste" is an expression used by Roger Haden. See *Lionizing Taste: Toward an Ecology of Contemporary Connoisseurship*, p 257.

popes”⁴⁶ publishes the most important culinary treatise of the era (*Opera di Bartolomeo Scappi*, 1570), comprised of over one thousand recipes and references to foods that will eventually become staples in the Italian diet, e.g. *parmigiano* and an assortment of pastas: *tagliatelli*, *tortelletti*, and *ravioli*.⁴⁷ His work represents “the most complete and mature testimony” of the splendor of 16th-century Italian cuisine (Capatti and Montanari, 106).

It is precisely with the Renaissance that an enduring Italian culinary model is established. Platina’s and Scappi’s texts continue to circulate throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, with *De honesta voluptate e valetudine* translated into French, English and German, and Scappi’s *Opera* heavily plagiarized by French and German writers (Sabban and Serventi, 32). The widespread belief is that this model gives birth to the French tradition of *haute cuisine* in the 17th century, and there are many theories to how *la cucina* infiltrated the French kitchen. Many point to the marriage of Catherine de’Medici to the duke of Orléans in 1533 (eventually crowned King Henry II) as an important turning point. At the time of her arrival in Paris, Florence already had reached the epitome of gastronomic arts and had established the first modern academy of cookery, the *Compagnia del Paiolo*. It is said that sweets, such as *zabaglione*, sorbets, tarts, along with new fruits and vegetables, dazzled the French courts. The Florentine *capo cuochi* that accompanied her also introduced a new utensil to the French table: the fork (Morgan, 8). How much influence Catherine de’ Medici had on transforming the French gastro-scape is unclear and aside from the menus that were left, there is little evidence of her lasting effect. However, there were more and more Italian chefs migrating to France with their

⁴⁶ See: Schino and Luccichenti, *Il cuoco segreto dei papi: Bartolomeo Scappi*, Roma: Grangemi editore, 2011.

⁴⁷ See: Dickie, John, *Delizia: The Epic History of Italians and Their Food*, New York: Free Press: pp 100-125

employers. As written by Stephan Mennell, we have an account of one of these Italian cooks through Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), who documents a conversation with a cook who accompanied a Cardinal, his employer:

I made him give an account of his responsibilities. He gave me a discourse on this science of supping with grave and magisterial countenance, as if we were speaking of some grand point of theology. He unraveled differences in appetite for me: the appetite one has at the outset, and that which one has after the second and third courses; the means of sometimes appealing to it in simple ways, sometimes reawakening and stimulating it; the rules regarding sauces, first in general and then particularizing the qualities of ingredients and their effects; the different salads according to their season, what must be served hot and what cold, and the ways of decorating and embellishing them to make them even more pleasing in appearance. After that, he embarked on the order of the courses, full of important and fine considerations...And all this bloated with grand and magnificent words, such as one might use in describing the government of an empire. (Montaigne in Mennell, 70-71)

This description could have easily been extrapolated from a 19th-century French or British text, yet it is not. Instead we have a wholly modern perception of cuisine that renders Italians *pioneers* in the field (as Mennell notes), espousing theories of good taste in a much less modern epoch, while demonstrating the sophisticated thought already given to the matters of the table.

Whether there was a specific event, such as Catherine de' Medici's Parisian transfer, that ushered Italian culinary ideals across the Alps or not, it bares little relevance to the fact that food as aristocratic art form finds its germs in Italy before entering France. This is mostly likely attributable to a reciprocal relationship that characterized the two territories historically. There has always been an artistic and intellectual exchange that of course does not preclude gastronomy, and as the Italian Renaissance greatly influenced France, in turn, France greatly influenced the Italian Ottocento, which finds itself without a culinary identity. Vincenzo Gioberti (1801-1852) writes an influential book in 1843,

On the Moral and Civil Primacy of Italians, that despite being banned in parts of the peninsula sells 80,000 copies (Duggan, 112). In a thousand pages he recounts centuries of Italian culture in order to demonstrate how it was predestined to redeem Europe and the world. According to the author, Italians were leaders in nearly every discipline imaginable, from philosophy to political science, art and music to language; nevertheless, there is absolutely no mention of food or cookery. Albeit just one work, it does acquire an emblematic connotation, since the Ottocento is a century that brings about so many questions and uncertainties, and it is no different for *la gastronomia*.

The tables of the upper classes in 19th-century Italy are adorned almost exclusively by French creations. From Torino, to Milano, to Naples, the menus of banquets and formal gatherings not only consisted of French dishes but were also written in French. If therefore *cuisine* dominates formal Italy, then questions loom about the bourgeois paradigm of food aesthetics. Does the literature that explodes in France and then England find a manifestation in Italy? Does a philosophy of food make its way through the middle classes? And what implications, if any, does it have on the newly formed nation?

A scientific art and an artful science: an Italian literature of gastronomy

This dissertation will trace a paradigm of aestheticized food as it emerged in Ottocento Italy. Even though we may find that the genre of literature through which it is spread has roots in the European model, once introduced into the Italian context, it takes on an identity of its own. It helps define a land that struggles with questions of unification and its subsequent cultural reformulation, while targeting the class responsible for

political change, the bourgeoisie. Chapter 2 will focus on two particular *medics in the kitchen*: the Milanese Giovanni Rajberti and Paolo Mantegazza, who expound a theory of food, art, etiquette, and ennobled conviviality to two different generations. With the former we can identify the first great text of a budding alimentary genre: *Galateo*, philosophical ramblings, and a national call to arms all at once, Rajberti's work promotes the table as an important agent of unification. The latter, renowned anthropologist, ethnographer, novelist, and best-selling author, looks at science for inspiration to create a rational philosophy of food that can be practiced from the highest to the lowest sects of society, with an ultimate goal of a physiologically driven national renewal.

Chapter 3 will conversely focus on two *literati* who find their calling in *gastronomia*, simultaneously historicizing and narratologizing *la cucina*, and creating food texts both for the intellectual and the cook: Olindo Guerrini and Pellegrino Artusi. Guerrini, *verista* poet of a generation, was also the first Italian scholar of gastronomy as well as *gastrosopher*. Artusi, on the other hand, is the Italian cookbook writer par excellence. Despite his only text, Artusi's fame transcends centuries for accomplishing what no other person or initiative could: cultural unification through cuisine. Chapter 4 will then look at these authors' non-gastronomic writings and determine how their theories on taste can also be traced in fictional narratives and poetry. This last chapter will also focus on the apparent paradox between science and fiction— between a literature of taste and a literature of realism— in which the ideals of the former, whose intended audience is widespread, are too abstract for the prevalent social reality. Conversely, it is the literary realism of the Ottocento, fictitious in nature, that represents

regionalities largely ignored, defining that which Artusi, Guerrini, and Mantegazza fail to address within their theories, and providing an alternative meaning for *il gusto italiano*.

The terms of a genre

During the 19th century gastronomic literature produced compound words that pervaded food literature. A glossary of terms is provided for English readers by the anonymous work *Gastronomy: or, the School for Good Living* (1814), some of which I use throughout the dissertation:

<i>Gastrology</i>	The Science of Eating
<i>Gastronomy</i>	Precept for Eating
<i>Gastrophilism</i>	The Love of Eating
<i>Gastrophilist</i>	One Who Loves Eating
<i>Gastropolitetechnical</i>	The Various Arts for the Gratification of the Belly
<i>Gastrophilanthropic</i>	The Benevolent Purveyor for the Belly of Others (24) ⁴⁸

According to the *Dizionario tecnico-etimologico-filologico* of 1828/1841, various terms are part of the Italian vocabulary as well:

<i>Gastrofilo</i>	Amico del ventre, dedicato alla gozzoviglia
<i>Gastrologia</i>	Sinonimo di <i>Gastronomia</i>
<i>Gastrologo</i>	Sinonimo di <i>Gastronomo</i>
<i>Gastronomia</i>	Arte cucinaria...e di fare buona-tavola ⁴⁹

⁴⁸ In Gigante, Denise, *Taste: A Literary History*, Yale University Press, 2005: p 57. It is a text that addresses the major European nations from an gastronomic point of view, and there is ample space given to Italy and its masters of culinary art: from Scappi, Il Valente, Pandini, Stefani, to lesser known chefs such as Rosetti, il Cavaliero, and Mattei, See *Gastronomy: or, the School for Good Living*, London: J.Gille, 1814; pp 110-146.

⁴⁹ See Marchi, Marco: *Dizionario tecnico-etimologico-filologico*, Milano: Tipografia Luigi Pirola, 1828, Vol I, 392; and Marchi, Marco: *Supplemento al Dizionario tecnico-etimologico-filologico*, Milano: Tipografia Luigi Pirola, 1841: p 119.

I will also be using terms that have become commonplace in modern taste and food studies with the *gastro-* prefix, such as: *gastro-studies* and *gastroaesthetics*, for example, in addition to those already covered in this introduction such as *gastrosophy*.

Chapter 2

Medics in the Kitchen: Giovanni Rajberti and Paolo Mantegazza

Nell'amore il prima è spesso un prurito che fa male o un uragano che schianta gli alberi e rovina le messi. Il mentre è dolcissimo, ma ahimé, dura troppo poco. Non dirò coll'epicurea francese, che cela ne dure que le temps d'avalere un œuf, ma dobbiamo pur confessare, che il mentre si misura non a giorni, né a ore; ma coll'orologio a minuti secondi.

Il poi, poi, è ora acido, è ora amaro: nei casi più fortunati è un languore, cioè una forma di stanchezza. Nei casi più disgraziati, che pur son frequenti, è un dolore o un pentimento o l'uno e l'altro insieme.

Nella gola invece delizioso è il prima, più delizioso il mentre, deliziosissimo il poi. (Elogio della vecchiaia, 78-79)

- Paolo Mantegazza

Nineteenth-century Italy establishes a genre of literature that adheres to the European paradigm of food-centric literary and philosophical texts discussed in chapter 1. They are texts that reflect and participate in the construction of a sought out national identity. From recipe books, to nutritional treatises, to manuals on food hygiene and etiquette, there is an evident proliferation of gastronomic literature that places itself in a dialogic interplay with the other branch of taste studies, aesthetics. It is precisely this interaction between taste as sense and as metaphor that constitutes a novelty in Italy during a period of revolution and the subsequent struggles of unification. Consequentially, gastronomy and food studies are practiced as serious philosophical endeavors, while simultaneously defining new aesthetic ideals. Characterized by a substantial moral and epistemological current, as seen throughout much of the gastronomic literature that developed in France and England,¹ these Italian texts become a vibrant, engaging genre of their own, calling for the direct participation and, in some instances, input of the reader. Defined by a constant interplay between art and science,

¹ See Gigante, Denise. *Gusto: Essential Writings in Nineteenth-Century Gastronomy*. New York; Routledge, 2005; pgs xvii-xli.

these alimentary works are conceived by a wide range of authors, from literary critics to scientists, and from poets to medics, each contributing to the unique form and substance of this budding genre.

This chapter concentrates on the figure of the medic as (1) gastroaesthetic author seeking to ennoble taste in its various facets, while (2) simultaneously creating a literature that reveals a nationalistic metanarrative. I analyze both of these trends in two manifestations of the century's taste literature: the *galateo* (focusing on Giovanni Rajberti) and manuals of hygiene (Paolo Mantegazza). I also take into consideration their vast and varied production (particularly that of the latter), in order to demonstrate the continuity of their ideals. The role of Italian women within the context of these authors' emerging ideals is fundamental; therefore, the chapter also explores the significance of the *padrona di casa* as *gastrophilanthropic*,² who is a marginalized as discerner of taste.

A first glance at nineteenth-century gastronomic writings reveals that there is a vast dissemination of published *galatei*, or manuals detailing proper societal etiquette.³ This is particularly the case during the last decades of the century when there are hundreds of such manuals printed, indicating the quest for a cohesive social model of comportment, specifically within the newly emerging middle classes.⁴ The peninsular unification raises all sorts of questions of identity on an individual, class, and national

² *Gastrophilanthropic*: The Benevolent Purveyor for the Belly of Others (*Gastronomy: or, the School for Good Living*, 24).

³ See: Botteri, Inge, *Galateo e galatei. La creanza e l'istituzione della società nella trattatistica tra antico regime e Stato liberale*, Bulzoni, 1999; Tasca, Luisa, *Galatei. Buone maniere e cultura borghese nell'Italia dell'Ottocento*. Le lettere, 2004; Turnaturi, Gabriella, *Signore e signori d'Italia. Una storia delle buone maniere*, Feltrinelli, 2011.

⁴ Some of the more popular *galatei* of the period are: *Il galateo popolare*, by L. Gattini (1869); *Galateo della borghesia*, by Emilia Nevers (1883); *La gente per bene*, by Marchesa Colombi (1889); *Il codice delle persone oneste e civili* by Giacinto Gallenga (1883); *Le buone maniere. Libro per tutti*. by Pigorini Beri (1893).

level, and the scope of these *galatei* is to provide answers to the pending behavioral uncertainties. In doing so, these texts advance the parameters of conduct through which the middle classes are to identify themselves, while reflecting a very important trend of the century: in comparison to their precedents, the *galatei* of the Ottocento provide an increased attention to matters of gastronomy.⁵ The table becomes an arena of self-expression, the venue for the communication of the social markers acquired; consumption and conviviality become modes through which the individual can consciously convey identity. There is no author that serves more as a model to both the divulgation of ennobled taste ideals and societal etiquette at the table than Giovanni Rajberti.

Giovanni Rajberti, the medic-poet, the translator of Horace, the author of humorous and striking satires,⁶ is one of the first examples of a figure of both science and letters that dedicates himself to the field of gastronomy. My study concentrates on two texts I contend to be at the *avant-garde* of modern Italian taste studies: *La prefazione alle mie opere future* (1838), and *L'arte di convivare* (1850, 1851). Throughout both of these works we see a paradigm of taste that brings ideals of ennoblement, aesthetic legitimacy, and nationalistic aspirations to a slowly forming middle class. Rajberti's texts anticipate the sublimation of the culinary arts that characterizes the food texts from the unification onward. While establishing themselves as essential to the importation of certain gastronomic ideals and the creation of others, these works also develop a keen relationship between food and satire that articulates a quasi-Rabelaisian vein of gastro-

⁵ For more on this notion see Gabriella Turnaturi's *Signore e signori d'Italia. Una storia delle buone maniere*, 21.

⁶ The most popular of which is *Sul gatto, cenni fisiologici e morali* published in 1845. It is a work that is characterized by its subtle irony and for the physiological nuances with which the feline protagonist is portrayed.

allegory. These pioneering elements of Rajberti's writings mark a turning point in the development of what will become a bourgeois taste.

I. *The preface of all Rajbertian prefaces*

La prefazione alle mie opere future is one of Rajberti's earlier works. Penned by his metonymic pseudonym *Medico-Poeta*, the *scherzo in prosa* (as Rajberti defines it) inaugurates the jocose approach that the Milanese author espouses throughout many parts of his literary production. The medic himself clarifies: "...abbiate per inteso che io vi do una prefazione e non un libro: è una minaccia di libri che verranno poi,... di tutte le opere che farò, e di quelle ancora che non farò mai" (7-8). And to anyone that may question the integrity of a preface as a complete work, Rajberti says: "E perché no? si fanno tanti libri senza prefazione, e non si potrà tentare una prefazione senza libro?"(7). Despite this lighthearted nature, *La prefazione* is a vehicle through which the author expresses his ideals, criticisms and defenses—allowing Rajberti to weave in and out of topics as he sees fit, and with little concern for the construction of a fully cohesive narrative. From the comparison of Horace's classical Rome to Romantic Milan (12), to the *uomini maligni* that try to find superhuman beauty and knowledge even in Dante's worst verses (13), it is evident that the text is also a commentary on the modern literary society.⁷ Notwithstanding the *Medico-poeta*'s propensity to write on any topic that he may deem proper, the preface of all Rajbertian prefaces is of great interest in taste studies. I examine how the text draws upon the juxtaposition of two eras, that of antiquity and contemporary

⁷ This is further indicated by the definition of the poet that is nothing more than "l'interprete, il rivelatore del progresso dell'epoca propria" (17).

nineteenth-century society, to formulate two main emblems of taste: (1) the chef as sublime artist and (2) a Rajbertian universal history aptly deemed *Gastronomico*.

After commenting extensively on his famed translation of *Ars Poetica* in Milanese, Rajberti alludes to his desire to find another satire to *dress in sweet and sour sauce* (“condire in salsa agrodolce”) (12). He finds in the works of his *vecchio maestro* (i.e., Horace), the delightful account of Nasidienius’s banquet,⁸ which in turn leads him to evoke Lucullus (27). Lucullus, a figure of admiration for Rajberti⁹ for “la gloria di quelle cene famose,” functions as the classical archetype to which the *miserie* of modern gastronomy cannot compare. It is precisely from this optic that *La prefazione* continues, developing a framework in which the figure of the chef rises to prominence.

Regardless of the advances that could have been made in gastronomy thanks to the new discoveries in the colonies, the advances in chemistry and the natural sciences,¹⁰ Rajberti looks to the figure of the *cuoco* in order to alleviate the impoverished state of “il gusto della buon tavola”— a *cuoco* that needs to be a *sublime artista* (33). In order to achieve this title it becomes indispensable to focus on education, and the implementation of a university degree that encompasses rigorous exams and the study of disciplines such as Greek and mathematics. The author (a doctor himself) justifies this laborious process by reminding his readers that it is already a requisite of medics, “di cui non ci serviamo che non con ribrezzo e diffidenza in alcune digraziate circostanze: e siamo più indulgenti

⁸ “*Ut Nasidieni juvit coena beati? Ecco un bel tema, la descrizione di una cena romana*” (26).

⁹ “uomo grande fra quanti tramanderanno il loro nome alla più tarda posterità!” (28)

¹⁰ Throughout the first half of the century there are advancements in food science in Europe that have a large impact on cuisine. Seemingly, the most significant was conceived by Nicolas Appert in the book, *Le livre de tous les ménages, ou l'art de conserver pendant plusieurs années toutes les substances animales et végétales* published in 1810. For more see Capatti, “The Taste for Canned and Preserved Food” in *Food: A Culinar History from Antiquity to the Present* edited by Flandrin and Montanari, New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

col cuoco, al quale affidiamo con tanto abbandono l'affare sommo della nostra conservazione, e che è il vero medico e speciale di tutta la vita? ” (33). Hence, a chef in the Rajbertian view must dedicate himself fully to the sciences as well as to the arts (an idea that will be developed throughout the century by writers such as Paolo Mantegazza, Olindo Guerrini, and of course Pellegrino Artusi). As exemplum, he praises a chef who “fired his Lord” in order not to follow him to a city where there were no Italian opera theaters. To this gesture Rajberti exclaims, “ecco finalmente un cuoco!” (33). It is he that serves as a sort of emblem for the aesthetic sensibility needed to be a chef.

Addressing this figure the writer states:

Tu assisti alla Sonnambula di Bellini, e la semplicità di quei cori pastorali, l'abbandono e la dolcezza di quelle melodie campestri ti ispirano per l'indomani un pranzo squisitamente leggero e grazioso, tutto sparso dei doni di Pale e di Pomona, con miele, con crema, con foccaccine, un idillio mangiabile. Tu palpiti alle divine note del Mosè, e nel giorno seguente vi saranno sulla mensa il capretto degli Ebrei, la manna del deserto, le quaglie per chi è sazio dalla manna, il vitello servito in piatto d'oro simbolo dell'idolatria... (34)

The chef is legitimized by aesthetic discernment, which becomes a fundamental prerequisite for Rajbertian gastronomic endeavors. For nature and the arts serve as font of inspiration as well as a direct link with a cultural lineage, which, when internalized, allow the Rajbertian *cuoco* to surpass mere cookery and achieve *sublimity*. This is of significance, inasmuch as it indicates the convergence of two areas that were previously considered mutually exclusive in Italian thought: taste as sense and taste as metaphor. The chef as a connoisseur of art can likewise be the creator of art, thereby transforming gastronomy into a form of aesthetics, an *idillio mangiabile*.

From *profonde meditazioni* on this *idillio mangiabile*, Rajberti discovers that the anthropological perspective can illuminate history through a gastronomic lens,

consequentially he composes a universal history dubbed *Gastronomico* (35).

Appropriately commencing with a famed Brillat-Savarin aphorism, “dimmi cosa mangi e ti dirò chi sei”, the medic posits a narrative that distinguishes epochs and civility based on consumption and food practices. Within this chronicle, the reader encounters concepts that serve as precedent not only for generations that followed, but in certain cases, for notions established in our contemporary society. From its very inception *Gastronomico* is decisively modern as it strictly links human development with that of cuisine; *uomini selvaggi* that feasted on raw meats became civilized when they began to “far cuocere i cibi ed a condirli” (36)— a theory that has found recent success as a result of Richard Wrangham’s anthropological study, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made us Human* (2010) and also in Massimo Montanari’s *Food Is Culture* (2006).¹¹ Of great interest is the role that taste as sense has in this development; for it is precisely flavor that stimulates man’s industrious quest to create new ways of cookery and consumption. Taste became the impetus for man to develop new techniques, and to improve upon and advance novel flavor profiles inspired by, as Rajberti puts it, “amore del buono, del bello, insomma delle arti”(36). Hence, this notion further promulgates the *Medico-poeta*’s concept of taste convergence, eradicating the traditional distinction between aesthetic and sensual pleasures, while once more elevating gastronomy from an applied to a *fine art*. Moreover, Rajberti directly links gastronomy to other traditional fine arts by delineating post-*pranzo*

¹¹ Wrangman discusses the biological effects cooking had in early humans, while denoting taste as the key factor in man’s decision to consume cooked as opposed to raw foodstuffs. The advent of cookery becomes the catalyst for human civilization as man physically and intellectually begins to develop thanks to the increased calories that cooking afforded them (83-88, 91, 121-127, 190-194). This is also a concept found in *Food Is Culture* by Massimo Montanari. Food as, Montanari states, is human activity *par excellence* and the conquest of fire represents the constitutive and foundational moment of human civilization and the kitchen, used to control fire, became a fundamental constituent of human identity, as well as the main element of the evolution from a wild to a civilized state (29-30, 33).

convention; from the fervent literary discussions, to the trips to the theater, to the ceremonious toasts conducted by poets,¹² the meal becomes simultaneously subject of *beauty*, as well as foretaste of *beauty*. What then distinguishes the aesthetic meal from the ordinary act of nutritional consumption?—conviviality.

Wrangman regards the act of gathering as a direct result of the advent of cuisine, marking conviviality as the precedent to communities and to social institutions such as marriage.¹³ In *La prefazione*, Rajberti similarly demonstrates how this human convivial necessity influences our social conventions, arts and sciences: from the inception of marriage, to the advents of the kitchen, the *cantina*, and the dining room, food and cuisine are the origin of human industry and particularity of architecture, poetry and the *arti di imitazione*, or, rather painting and sculpture. For the medic, the root of human activity is based in all respects on man's desire to consume and the subsequent refining of this primordial urge (37-38). As a result of this quest to perfect and to find variety in taste, man crossed mountains and seas, met new peoples, learned from them. In turn this spurred the establishment of roads, marinas, commerce, monetary systems, wars, etc... In

¹² The act of toasting in verse at a banquet seems to find origin in classical tradition, where jovial verses were recited to enliven diners, as indicated by the latin word *prosit*. It then becomes fashionable again starting in the sixteenth century as indicated by the *Galateo* of Giovanni Della Casa. The *brindisi* finds various forms as with Giosuè Carducci (and his *Brindisi funebre*), Paolo Rolli, who Carducci attributes to have first brought the *chanson à boire* to Italy, Mario Crescimbeni and his complete volume of toasts in form of *canzonetta*, etc. Not to mention those that have had great influence on Rajberti, such as Giuseppe Parini (despite having satirized the use of verses at the dinner table, has a number of beautiful examples), Vincenzo Monti and Giuseppe Giusti. (See *Brindisi* in *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti* and in *Dizionario enciclopedico di informazioni*)

¹³ Wrangman explains how cooking was a key element in the formation of communities, because it spurred social interaction. Dropping food in fire created a fragrance decipherable for up to twenty miles, in turn prompting social gathering, and the eventual establishment of communities and roles within them. Wrangman states that cooking enforces a pattern of distribution that is localized, therefore this prompted social rules and roles in which women cooked for husbands and husbands protected women from the danger of having their food taken away (129-130, 148-149, 153, 167-170).

other words, it is the innate desire to perfect taste that spurred, either directly or indirectly, the formation of our societal structures (38).

A comparison between Wrangman's text and *Gastronomico* is by no means an attempt to categorize the Rajbertian work as an arduous anthropological study, as it is far from such. The text, although demonstrating an interesting logic, is underdeveloped and in many cases flawed according to modern anthropological and sociological standards. Nevertheless, it does reveal a novel set of notions in Italian thought that is far ahead of its time. While it is necessary to acknowledge the significance of *Gastronomico* in nineteenth-century Italian taste theory, it is also important to consider how Brillat-Savarin serves as precedent for *Gastronomico*. The Frenchman, within his *Physiologie du gout*, delineates his very own *Histoire philosophique de la cuisine* (283-312), which is conceptually comparable to Rajberti's *universal history*. From the references to the glorious days of classical banqueting and to a revival only possible through the "second coming of Lucullus," the parallels are clear. Brillat-Savarin's text is far more developed and vast, yet Rajberti's work constitutes a significant novelty within the Italian context.

La prefazione as a whole, concentrates on a myriad of concerns, and insists on an education founded on the classics,¹⁴ while at the same time laments the frivolous nature of his *Italy*, whose *grave sin* (as he puts it) is to have money for all except books (54). Yet, within this amalgam of principles, criticism, and wittiness lies a core that serves as foundation for a new century of taste— a century whose ideals diverge from enlightened aesthetics and aristocratic gastronomy, and inaugurate a new genre that works towards

¹⁴ For Rajberti the classics are fundamental to the development of culture. Having a solid classical basis is essential for both the poet and the gastronome. The writer must translate the classics, according to the medic, in order to develop a writing style. Of interest is the sheer number of explicit references that fill the pages of *La prefazione*. Despite this propensity, Rajberti does not take sides on the debate between Classicists and Romantics of his epoch.

the formation of an Italian taste. Despite the moderate success of this work, Rajberti's gastro-philosophy will find an ample audience in a text that will be published twelve years after *La prefazione*.

II. *From Dantean steak to meatballs: Rajberti's Italian art of conviviality*

This section examines the following elements of Rajberti's manual of etiquette *L'arte di convivare*: 1) its narrative and classification; (2) food as literature/food as art; (3) food as satire and nation; (4) the French paradigm; and (5) Rajberti's dialogue with the middle class.

1) *L'arte di convivare's narrative and classification*

The convivial act is an imperative¹⁵ in the Rajbertian theory of the art of taste, and what serves as inspiration in *La prefazione* finds a sort of codification in *L'arte di convivare*.¹⁶ *L'arte di convivare* is a modern convivial and alimentary *Galateo*, "ossia l'arte di vivere in società" (53), that does not limit itself exclusively to the divulgation of proper mealtime etiquette and comportment. The text, as in the case of *La prefazione*, is an apparatus through which the author entwines narratives, employing a robust and jocular prose while simultaneously touching a wide scope of arguments. From philosophy, which he gives away "gratis....giacché i filosofi raccomandano il disprezzo del denaro" (62), to morals, in which "il libro...nuota dentro come un peperone nell'aceto"(62), to the profane aspects of food consumption, the book shows very little

¹⁵ "I conviti stanno fra le migliori costumanze del consorzio civile, giovano a perfezionare l'educazione pel contatto promiscuo e spontaneo della gentilezza, dell'ingegno, dei modi squisiti"; tenendo a diminuire le disuguaglianze fittizie dei vari ceti, avvicinandoli nell'allegro e cordiale soddisfacimento d'un comune bisogno" (291).

¹⁶ *L'arte di convivare* was published in two separate volumes in 1850 and 1851.

discipline and respect for traditional boundaries. Furthermore, the author's inclination to write copiously on whatever argument he elects, is as engaging as it is onerous.¹⁷ It is a text that has been referred to as an *antilibro* as consequence of its proclivity to write for narration's sake in a continuously self-reflective manner, making writing the true subject (Biasin,12).¹⁸ While the work's narrative may very well lead to this conclusion, the content itself cannot to be ignored as a byproduct of applied writing. Therefore while *antibook*, I contend that the work can simultaneously be considered the Italian novel of conviviality, illustrating the very dichotomy present in many of the works that become a product of this gustatory genre. Regardless of the difficulties the reader finds in categorizing *L'arte*, it is a logical extension of *La prefazione* (which the author himself defines as a literary fragment), permitting us to anomalously define *L'arte* as a *fragmentary novel*.¹⁹ The disjointed nature of the text reveals a constant oscillation between topics and themes that somehow (to the astonishment of the reader her/himself) cohesively work to produce a theory of taste, conviviality, and nationhood.

2) *Food as literature/Food as art*

Taste is at the core of Rajberti's prose and in this text there is a constant interplay between the depiction of *Italian* literary society and the newly postulated ideals of a

¹⁷ This is further evidenced by the fact that it takes approximately sixty pages for the author to arrive at the topic of *pranzo*.

¹⁸ Gian-Paolo Biasin referring to Rajberti's text writes: "[è] un antilibro in cui l'argomento dichiarato è solo ed esclusivamente un pretesto alla scrittura, e in cui la scrittura stessa è l'argomento di sé, in un continuo gesto autoriflessivo.." (12). Biasin quotes a passage that refers to the publication date of the work to illustrate this point: see "Fra poche settimane ... cinquantuno" (*L'arte*, 63-4).

¹⁹ The fragmentary novel is a genre that has particular success in early German Romanticism [for example Novalis' *The Blue Flower*" (1802)], however here I apply the term to a different sort of text. In *L'arte*, in contrast to the Romantic fragmentary novel, there is no plot; it is not a work of fiction (although, it does contain fictional elements). The text is a manual of etiquette that has blocks of narratives, in some cases not evidently connected, yet strung together by the reader.

gustatory aesthetics. While presenting methods to make a *pranzo* different from the ordinary, the *Medico-poeta* associates certain dishes to authors from the Italian literary canon. Like Roland Barthes, Rajberti deems steak's supremacy as the foodstuff par excellence:²⁰ hence analogically substituting beef as the main course of meal is the greatest of Italian authors, Dante Alighieri.²¹ In an envisioned dialogue about a less than favorable meal the author writes:

S'è pur mangiato da cani, ve'! — Si capiva fin da principio che la doveva andar male: che broda lunga era quel Passeroni! — E il Dante poteva essere più duro e indigesto? l'ho ancora sullo stomaco che non mi vuol passare. — Sai perché? ritengo che non fosse Dante, ma Beatrice. — Mi sentii tutto a consolare quando capitò in tavola il Metastasio: ma anche lui è riescito troppo molle e dolciastro. (163)

As occurs in much of Rajberti's comical prose, there is a socially driven subtext. Albeit contrived, this is an attempt, as the author states himself, to relate the physiology and individual character of the great poets to a population otherwise incapable of literary cognition (162).²² In doing such, Rajberti advances a trope of lettered foods,²³ depicting the poetic as gastronomic and vice versa, in an attempt to render that which is mundane as fine art. Thus it is the Milanese who develops a credo that will endure for generations, one that is generally credited to Pellegrino Artusi, but already clearly outlined in *L'arte di*

²⁰ The supremacy of steak intellectually is also expounded by Barthes: "For intellectuals, steak is a redeeming food, thanks to which they bring their intellectualism to the level of prose and exorcise, through blood and soft pulp..." (*Mythologies*, 62)

²¹ "Sì, il manzo è il Dante delle mense, come un ghiotto pasticcio di tartufi e selvaggina ne sarebbe l'Ariosto,..." (162)

²² "In forza di quella armonia che lega tutte le opere di natura, non che tutti i lavori dell'arte per i rapporti incomprensibili alle menti volgari, ogni grande scrittore può ragguagliarsi a qualche vivanda, dalle più semplici alle più complicate: con che, senza tante sottigliezze cachettiche, e pedantesche dissertazioni, s'impronterebbe nella memoria del popolo l'indole, la fisionomia, il carattere individuale dei sommi nostri poeti. Che bel progresso sarebbe questo di non designare le pietanze col loro nome prosaico!" (162).

²³ Giancarlo Passeroni, the 18th-century poet and composer of the *Il Cicerone* composed of 110 canti in octaves is "broda lunga". Dante is of course *manzo*, the most substantial and ubiquitous of foodstuffs. Ariosto is *tartufi e selvaggina*, representing prestigious and alluring qualities of the poet. Metastasio, not preferred by Rajberti for his ties to Arcadia; a *molle* and *dolciastro* dessert representative of his morose sentimentality.

convitare: “...l’uomo deve essere enciclopedico e sapere apprezzare il bello e il buono dovunque si trovi” (164).²⁴

It is precisely this philosophy that permits Rajberti to develop his theories of the art of taste, as subsequent *ottocentisti* will, on the foundation of an aesthetic discourse which finds inspiration in a realistic depiction of the material world.²⁵ Consequently, one need not look farther than the dinner table for *beauty*:

...fra tutte le arti che si dicono belle, perché intese a soddisfare l’intelligenza e gli affetti, questa si dovrebbe chiamare bellissima, perché mira ad appagare e la mente e il cuore e il senso, e perfino il ventre, che è pur tanto prosaico. .. Ed io tento di perfezionare l’arte dell’anfitrione... (103)

This is to say that the art of a host can be perfected, using the words of Galileo, *provando e riprovando* (104). In addition to the practical need of repetition, it is a necessary prerequisite to understand “quanta estetica contenga la sola minestra, e in qual torrente di filosofia logica possa nuotare un salame”(153). Moreover, a key element to ensure a meal of *buon gusto* is to see it as an “esposizione artistica, ove fra tante cose si va ad ammirare l’opera d’un cuoco” (156). If this is how a meal is to be envisioned, then it takes an educated palate to discern and judge, “come abbisogna un occhio esperto di artista a discernere una tela originale da una buona copia”(239). With this understanding true art can be achieved, forming a paradigm of food aesthetics. However it is necessary to clarify that, as his French precedents, Rajberti tows the line between the complete

²⁴ The famous quote attributed to Artusi seems to be derivative of Rajberti’s: “Amo il bello e il buono ovunque si trovino”(La scienza in cucina e l’arte di mangiar bene, 9). The quote is so associated with Artusi that in Forlimpopoli there is bronze bust with it inscribed outside la Casa Artusi. The phrases allude to a Kantian definition of the totality of knowledge that is based on the relationship between beauty, good, and truth.

²⁵ This is an idea reflected in other Rajbertian works as well. For example, while describing a painting of a banquet by Paolo Veronese he exclaims, “Quello sì, che è un pittore! Senza tanto culto al bello ideale, ci dà il più sublime del bello effettivo e veramente vero.” (Il viaggio di un ignorante; ossia, Ricetta per gli ipocondriaci, (126).

aestheticization of food and the celebration of the carnal aspects of consumption. Just as the author ennobles taste and the role of the chef, the realities of his middle class shape his gustatory principles. He, therefore, warns of the excess and haughty grandeur of the aristocratic banquets, which cannot serve as aspiration (156). Rajberti's taste paragon does not trickle down from aristocratic forms of consumption (as may be traced in the French model), but he advances a bourgeois art of banquetry which considers the means and limitations of its constituents, simultaneously apprising the reader of the consequences of a vulgar Epicureism (156). Admonitions notwithstanding, Rajberti's significance lies in a novel ideological foundation of a taste convergence (i.e., the sense of taste which becomes fruit of aesthetic discernment) for a newly developing class.

3) *Food as satire and nation*

Rajberti's writings reflect an age in which that of the writer "è il più arrabbiato e povero dei mestieri" (189), in an *Italy* abundant with *filosofini* and *filosofoni* (54). Thus it is the poet's duty to reflect on a disillusioned modernity, in which conviviality constitutes one of the few true *moral pleasures* (76). The author who here defends himself from the accusations of indulging in moral frivolity and even in the trifle, questions: "Perché mo s'ha da trovar futile lo sviluppo di un tema che, oltre all'aver pure la sua buona parte di istruzione pratica, serve di pretesto a mettervi sott'occhio varii schizzi di costumi e profili di caratteri non ancor tratteggiati?" (176). The poet's discourse is, as he states, based on *il vero*, and at times on *il vero non frequente* as the scope of true art — an art, in his case, that has been misconstrued as exaggeration (177).

Here we find a function of food that can be explored throughout Rajberti's writings— food as component of a satirical allegory.

Food imagery becomes a veil of satire that works as commentary of contemporary society. As we see with the crown of *salsiccia fina* that Rajberti envisions adorned by Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869), food takes on an ironic significance meant to produce laughter while simultaneously caustic in nature. Lamartine, whose infamous verses refer to Italy as “la terra dei morti”, should not be persecuted according to Rajberti. For the author, it is clear that the Frenchman was referring to all the pigs that are slaughtered and find “la più degna e gloriosa morte” throughout the peninsula. Therefore, Lamartine should be offered a national gift that consists of *mortadella di Bologna*, *salame crudo* from Verona, *due salami cotti* from Milan, as well as the *salsiccia fina* from Monza to incoronate the “poeta delle armonie” (146). In this instance, this Rabelaisian use of foods has diverse functions: we see the condemnation of French literary society while using regional gastronomic products as an expression of national patriotism.

Rajberti's conspicuous attempt to harmonize his art of taste with an acrimonious contemporary literary society, leads to the expression of a nationalistic metanarrative, which anticipates a discourse that comes to fruition nearly forty years later with Artusi's *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*. In an effort that is fundamentally an attempt to form a sort of *italianità* around the dinner table, the medic aims to ennoble a dish that he sees as inherently *Italian*— an effort to combat the fad that reduces “la nostra cucina ad essere imitatrice servile della cucina francese.” (220). It is through *le polpette*, a dish (*vivanda*) which the author brands as “tutta italiana e nostrale”, from which

Rajberti draws nationalistic inspiration: “non difenderemmo fino all’ultimo respiro la nazionalità e l’indipendenza...almeno nelle polpette?” (221). Although humorous in nature, it is a comment that is embedded with a message that rings clearly throughout much of *L’arte*. Whether it is the call to purge mealtime of Gallicisms from a language that he equates with *ignoranza*,²⁶ and to center it on ravioli or risotto, “che sono parte integrante del nostro orgoglio nazionale”(80); or the concept that *la patria*’s fruits are wasted for the “sugo di straniere salse,”²⁷ the medic communicates unambiguously: “tutto noi abbiamo in Italia, tutto...fuorché l’Italia” (240).²⁸

4) *The French paradigm*

Rajberti’s disdain for the French model is rooted in the culinary stronghold established throughout much of the peninsula and is as far reaching as French literary society. Whether it be the aforementioned incoronation of Lamartine, or his critique of de Staël for not depicting one convivial scene in the four tomes of her novel *Corinna* (290-1),²⁹ it is rather evident that the text individuates in the French, a foe to an *Italian*

²⁶ *Il viaggio di un ignorante; ossia, Ricetta per gli ipocondriaci* (27).

²⁷ This concept is expressed in the verses written by Giuseppe Giusti that Rajberti quotes. (221)

²⁸ This is a concept that can be found in much of Rajberti’s production: in his lyric; in his famous Brindisi to Rossini, for example, he references Italy as “povera donna strapazzata/serva strasciada che la perd i tocch” (*L’arte*, 265); in *Il gatto* he speaks of “quella sublime fraternità italiana”, while referencing all that is beautiful in the peninsula (23); in *Il viaggio di un ignorante* we see the poet that laments the fact that, “*Italia* si riduce a una parola puramente poetica e vuota di senso... rassegniamoci all’idea che l’Italia non ci sia... non c’è mai stata” (193, 201). In *L’arte*, while referring to Melchiorre Goija’s *Nuovo Galateo*, a text that serves as precedent to *L’arte*, Rajberti affirms the necessity to maintain an Italian physiognomy while claiming that one of Gioja’s faults is to praise all that is foreign (57). This concept is also seen with critique of menus that are written in French and English, “giacché in lingua italiana non è permesso nemmeno di mangiare” (157). The medic also touts the supremacy of Italian wines to their French counterparts, calling Italy “il più meraviglioso giardino nell’universo” (239).

²⁹ Of interest is how Rajberti categorically judges literary production based on the representation of the act of consumption: “Non v’è né poema né romanzo dall’*Iliade* ai *Promessi Sposi* dove non si mangi e non si beva” (292). This a concept that is further developed by Barthes. He mentions how we see characters eating in certain authors such as Proust, Zola, and Flaubert, while in others such as Stendhal Laclos, and

cultural cause.³⁰ Despite this antagonism, it is important to acknowledge the French presence in the text, particularly that, again, of Brillat-Savarin. From the very first chapter it is clear that the *gourmand* serves as a source of inspiration and it is precisely the Frenchman that inaugurates *L'arte* —“Convier quelqu'un, c'est se charger de son bonheur pendant tout le temps qu'il est sous notre toit” (71). An aptly chosen quote as it is the final of the twenty *Aphorismes du professuer* that open his *Physiologie du gout*, and in turn it commences the main theme of the Rajbertian text. It is also pertinent as it serves as an extremely important symbolic gesture: Rajberti is in many ways the father of these ennobled ideals of taste in Italy, much as Brillat-Savarin was in France³¹, and it is Rajberti that begins to transpose the Frenchman's overarching notions, in an attempt to render them palatable for the Italian *ottocento*. Whether referencing *Les classiques de la table*³² (132) when discussing the amount of space to be left in between guests at the table or when referring to *un sapientissimo autore* when speaking about *noia* at the dinner table, the allusions to Brillat-Savarin are numerous. Aside from a conceptual correspondence, it is of interest to note a stylistic parallel as well; both are witty and affably verbose, demonstrating an encyclopedic approach to their discourse, while delving into what seems to be a never ceasing plethora of digressions and tangents. If this is a style, as Chevalier states, that reflects the features of French essay writing

Fromentin we do not. He states that the alimentary detail is the “enigmatic supplement of meaning (of ideology)” (*Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, 125).

³⁰ Another example is from *La prefazione*, where Rajberti speaks of Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo and their *lambiccate atrocità*. (22)

³¹ It is necessary to mention the role that Grimod de la Reynière had in taste studies in France as antecedent to Brillat-Savarin. However, it is the latter that has an enormous far reaching success due to his representative status as a middle class man of taste, bringing taste ideals to a much wider audience.

³² *Les classiques de la table* is an eclectic collection of gastronomic writings, from menus to alimentary history, to philosophy and anthropology, that includes authors such as Grimod de la Reynière, Brillat-Savarin, and Berchoux. Included are various passages from classical texts, such as *Le souper de Nasidienus*, which holds a privileged status in *La prefazione*.

beginning with Montaigne (*Encyclopedia of the Essay*, 659), then it is clear that this approach to narrative finds a certain success in nineteenth-century Italy as well, particularly in the developing alimentary genre.

Within the peninsula there was the strand of essay writing that was a direct descendent of the previous century, characterized by a semi-serious tone and a de-centered fragmentary prose laden with sarcasm and, as we see with Rajberti, as well as others such as Paride Zajotti and Carlo Bini, a capricious and unpredictable piquancy.³³ However, it is Rajberti that becomes the privileged precursor of the *scapigliati*, influencing to a great extent Iginio Ugo Tarchetti and Carlo Dossi, amongst others,³⁴ while proposing a prose that finds roots in the likes of De Maistre and Sterne. What Rajberti's whimsical narrative does is set the scene for the series of contradictions that so adamantly define his prose: from moments of lucid narrative cohesiveness, as seen in so many of the different anecdotal recounts and portraits; to the moments of anti-narrative, where the prose is the goal in itself, it is Rajberti's taste for paradox that defines *L'arte* and that is conveyed to future generations. This allows the reader to draw various and even contrasting paradigms from the same fragments of text. An appropriate example would be the linguistic, philological and aesthetic discussion that Rajberti pursues over the name of *grana* cheese (268-273). This highly intellectualized and lofty conversation from one point of view further sustains the Brillat-Savarin model of taste and gastro-aesthetics, inasmuch as it brings a food into scholarly discourse. Yet, the same extract can be understood as conveying the exact opposite meaning; Rajberti, anticonformist in

³³ For more on this thread of essay writing, see Tellini, Giorgio. *Il romanzo italiano dell'Ottocento e Novecento*. Milano: Mondadori, 1998; pp 83-88; and Foti, Francesco, *Storia del saggio*. Roma: Ciranna, 1965; pp 40-44.

³⁴ For Rajberti and *Scapigliatura* see Mariani, Gaetano. *La storia della Scapigliatura*. Roma: Salvatore Sciascia Editore, 1971.

so many senses, very knowingly chooses *grana* to satirize the rampant overacademicization of his day. The *Medico-poeta* demonstrates a keen ability to juxtapose the ironic use of food with its aestheticization in order to produce a contrast that becomes a defining characteristic of *L'arte*.³⁵

5) Rajberti's dialogue with the middle class

The allusions to Brillat-Savarin, and the *gourmands* in general, are indicative of the fact that the Milanese is fully conscious of the attention that gastronomic ideals are finding elsewhere in Europe. We find evidence of this already in *La prefazione*: “L’entità di questa scienza pare che cominci ad essere sentita dai Francesi e dagli Inglesi... a Parigi si depositano in opere voluminose le sudate esperienze dei fornelli” (33). And it is this knowledge that allows him to purport these taste ideals for an Italian audience within a text that follows a successful history of precursors. However, in true Rajbertian style, *L'arte* is injected with a humoristic irony that makes it truly his own and part of the Ottocento.³⁶ What we see with his convivial manual of etiquette is a text that is, for the first time in this genre, directed to an Italian bourgeois audience. Moreover, it is

³⁵ This is a contrast that is apparent in previous examples cited. For example, an analogous scenario can be outlined in the aesthetic discussion that takes place in Chapter V with *minestrone* and *zuppa*.

³⁶ The precursors, discussed by Rajberti himself, are the *Galateo* by Giovanni della Casa and the *Nuovo Galateo* by Melchiorre Gioja. Both are quickly disregarded; the former for no longer being read and the later, heavily, if not excessively criticized for pages on end for an incessant internationalism (“il suo libro è così poco italiano”) and for an excessively formulaic structure (53-60). Gioja’s text is of interest since it attempts to trace the model of civilized man and as Gabriella Turnaturi notes, the *Nuovo galateo* is the only point of reference for well manners for the first half of the century, even though it was known more as a literary and political work (38). Despite the fact that the text itself is extremely copious, it is one of the more far-reaching *galatei* of the time period, with numerous editions and reprints throughout the century. Therefore, despite Rajberti’s criticism, Gioja’s text is an extremely important precedent that deserves further analysis within scope of nineteenth-century studies of behavioral identity. Other contemporary precedents include Alexandre Balthazar Laurent Grimod de la Reyniere’s *Manuel des amphitryons* (1808) and Thomas Walker’s *Aristology, or the Art of Dining* (1835) which serve as foreground in European gastro-etiquette literature.

demonstrative of his attempt to disseminate a taste exclusively formulated for his class. From the opening sentence of the first chapter Rajberti specifies that his goal is to reach the *caro popolo*, which he specifies as the “ceto medio ... cioè alla classe di mezzana fortuna”(71, 73). Rajberti insists on this point throughout *L'arte*, addressing his *popolo* in fifty different occasions, initiating a dialogue in which none of his Italian precursors partake, while praising his own position in the bourgeoisie.³⁷ To further construct a rapport with this audience the author employs a language of commerce that is constitutive of the daily reality of those to which the work is aimed. As when justifying the price of his work, and explaining how he is going to lose *qualche milione* in order to publish it (63), *L'arte*'s self-reflective narrative evinces itself as an economic commodity that needs to be peddled and commercially justified.

Rajberti, friend and admirer of Alessandro Manzoni,³⁸ attempts to engage the same middle class reader as his illustrious companion, aiming to spur an Italian bourgeois identity through a gastronomy that is grounded on *buon senso* and *buon gusto*. It is a class identity that the author propounds through the convivial aesthetics of taste and functions as foundation for a nationalist ideal. However, this nationalist narrative remains in part a subtext due to the reality of Austrian censorship. In the second preface, the author explicitly raises the topic, and to those that had expected the biting satire of his other texts, he answers: “Non lo sapete che pei libri c'è ancora la così detta

³⁷ “Sono del popolo anch'io, e me ne vanto” (75). Rajberti further establishes his impartial disposition to the middle class by naming those such as Gaspere, Bertoldo, and Zaccaria as *matti* if they believe that this text for them (74-5).

³⁸ Rajberti refers to Manzoni in the first preface of *L'arte* as “il più grande lirico delle epoche tutte” (64). Conversely, as N. Mariani writes in the occasion of festivities to honor Rajberti in Monza in 1875, Manzoni sends Rajberti a copy of the *Promessi Sposi* with a message inscribed; “Al buon medico e buon poeta/ Ricordo di amicizia / di Alessandro Manzoni” and in the second volume he similarly writes: “Al buon Medico e buon poeta/Alessandro Manzoni” (*Onoranza a Giovanni Rajberti*, 3).

censura?”(172). Yet, he declares with irony the existence of the censure important since its goal is to “impedire che un incauto si faccia del male” (ibid). Rajberti, in fact, previously bared the brunt of censure because of his famous toast to Rossini in 1838— a poem which is partly published in *L’arte* and that is decisively patriotic in tone.³⁹

Therefore, in *L’arte* the reader finds a somewhat subdued Rajberti. Nevertheless, the author who makes a career based on dialectical poetry and a prose defined as *arte salutare*,⁴⁰ becomes an advocate of “il bello anche puro e semplice che si farà sempre lume da sé” (180). Moreover, for Rajberti there is no beauty simpler and more pure than the refined art of the cook. As in *La prefazione*, *L’arte* advances a theory that sees food enter aesthetics as foundation not only for fine art, but for historical and societal development, while transporting a European wide gastronomical paradigm, as a philosophical and literary genre into a decisively *Italian* context. If food is a semiological system and a mode of communication, as the likes of Barthes and Montanari deem it, then what Rajberti teaches us is that the semiotics of food is only effective within a convivial framework because, “il pranzar bene non basta, ma bisogna pranzar in buona compagnia” (76).

III. *Food science as philosophy of thought: 1850*

The year 1850, in which the first volume of *L’arte* is published, is of great interest since we also see the publication of two other key texts in taste theory. While previously

³⁹ Rajberti’s toast to Rossini, is among the medic’s most famous patriotic lyrics, and as Maffei states, Rajberti was one of the preunification writers that was most highly pursued by the Austrian censor, so much so that at one point he decided to leave Milano for Monza since he was constantly burdened by the Austrian police (231).

⁴⁰ An art whose goal is to “far morire di ridere” (*Il viaggio di un ignorante*, 46). To quote Rajbert’s epitaph, which continues this idea: “aiutò gli intenti/ dell’arte salutare apprestando agli spiriti/ il farmaco / della sapiente gioivialità.” (in *Onoranza a Giovanni Rajberti*, 16)

reserved for the plumes of gastronomes and *gourmands*, food enters into a philosophical discourse of a different bent. In that same year Jacob Moleschott's *Lehre der Nahrungsmittel* (*The Chemistry of Food*) and Ludwig Feuerbach's *Die Naturwissenschaft und die Revolution* (*Natural Science and Revolution*) are published, demonstrating from a different perspective, that of natural philosophy, how the science of food can be the basis for humanity.⁴¹ Moleschott's text represents the first foray into naturalist dietetics, providing the *people* with a text that is an amalgam of scientific interests, physiological study, as well as a foundation for a materialist-humanist discourse. As such, the work's intent is to diffuse appropriate modes of consumption while demonstrating the effects of different foods on the body. Political by nature,⁴² *Lehre* is a self-help book in every sense, with the goal to aid in the development of a stronger, more educated populace. The text is far-reaching and influences the likes of Feuerbach, who finds in the outlined revolutionary principles of food chemistry a basis for a unity between mind and body, spirit and nature.⁴³ The same year, Feuerbach's review of the text is published, (*Die Naturwissenschaft...*) providing space for the philosopher to develop analogous ideals. "Die Speisen werden zu Blut, das Blut zu Herz und Hirn, zu Gedanken und Gesinnungsstoff. Menschliche Kost ist die Grundlage menschlicher Bildung und Gesinnung"⁴⁴ (*Gesammelte Werke*, X, 367). Throughout the essay, Feuerbach affirms Moleschott's notions, while defining food as a precondition for thought, as it is nutrition that determines how man thinks. It is in this essay that the philosopher develops the

⁴¹ Another text published in the period of *L'arte* is *Gastrosophy, the joy of dining* by Eugen von Vaerst, a Prussian author which expounds 7 categories of Gastrosophy, or rather a philosophy of food.

⁴² See: Gregory, *Scientific Materialism in 19th-Century Germany*. Gordrecht: D. Reidel, 1977: pp 35-39.

⁴³ Hook, Sidney. *From Marx to Hegel: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx*. Ann Harbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971: p 268.

⁴⁴ *Food becomes blood, blood the brain and the heart, and the essence of thought and sentiment. Human food is the base of human culture and sentiment.*

apophism that becomes synonymous with his name: “Der Mensch ist was er isst” (*Man is what he eats*) (*G.W.*, X, 367).⁴⁵

The newly established scientific and philosophical ideals of the second half of nineteenth century allow food to enter into an erudite gastronomic and scientific discourse; it is no different in Italy. However, most of these authors are writing for others such as themselves— medics, pathologists, anthropologists, philosophers, etc. Those who have the greatest impact on the development of taste theory in Italy are the authors that follow Moleschott’s ideal of populace empowerment. As aforementioned, there is a quest for a cohesive social model of comportment that leads to an explosion of *galatei* published in post-unification Italy for the greater public, and a constitutive element of this expounded etiquette is hygiene. Hygiene and hygienism become significant inasmuch as they serve as a basis for propriety and good citizenship, and along with *galatei* that tackle hygiene of various kinds, manuals and periodicals⁴⁶ are published whose goals are to establish criteria for good health and beauty.⁴⁷ If Rajberti serves as father of ennobled bourgeois gastronomic ideals, and as a model for the convivial setting as arena of self-expression and identity, then it is another medic, Paolo Mantegazza, who works to diffuse many of these same ideals, as well as a gastro-hygiene that is sound for the stomach as well as the mind.

⁴⁵ This phrase has been used to discredit Feuerbach’s philosophical credibility (See Hook, 267). Like Rajberti’s works, *Der Naturwissenschaft* is laden with a sharp sarcastic vein and is reflective of the period in which they are perceived. Others have condemned Feuerbach’s text as mere jest, however, as Peter Caldwell indicates, despite the sarcasm, there is no evidence that Feuerbach did not believe what he wrote (123).

⁴⁶ *Giornale della società italiana d’igiene* , Milan 1879; *Annali dell’Istiuto di igiene sperimentale della R. università di Roma*, 1891; *Annali d’igiene sperimentale*, Roma 1895; etc...

⁴⁷ To see how Victorian England underwent a similar process, see Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, Harvard University Press, 1968.

IV. *The Italian didactic gastronome: Paolo Mantegazza*

To the plurality of roles attributed to the medic (anthropologist, pathologist, senator, writer, etc.), there is one yet to be explored: Mantegazza as gastronome or, rather, didactic gastronome. In the attempt to combat what he considers the anti-hygienic conditions plaguing the nation, the medic inaugurates a pedagogic process that, in ideal, would lead to the formation of the *Italian* citizen. Through his numerous manuals on hygiene and physiological studies, Mantegazza the Positivist is determined to actively participate in the edification of his nation. This entails the regeneration of its citizens from the bottom up, denoting the educative intent of imparting a gastronomic, as well as gastrophonic (i.e., a language of food), lesson to those who may seem incapable of partaking in such endeavors due to economic constraints. With the goal of creating a stronger and more capable Italian populace, the author goes to great lengths to provide guidelines for maximizing nourishment through the humblest of foods, in addition to ennobling cuisine as fine art. Ultimately, I contend that Mantegazza's analysis of food as a fundament of subsistence, as well as an aesthetic subject, can be defined as a unique brand of pedagogic gourmandism, integral to the propagation of a social model of comportment that defines the Positivist framework of biological and nationalistic renewal.

To initiate our examination of Mantegazza's taste contributions, it is essential to consider a very important precedent: Rajberti. As evident through an analysis of Mantegazza's work, there are overarching notions, that are directly or indirectly traceable to *La prefazione delle mie future opere* and *L'arte di convivere*, suggesting that the medic from Monza is working, at least in part, within a Rajbertian paradigm of taste.

Notwithstanding the differences in style and structure of their respective prose, there are points of ideological convergence that need to be explored, allowing Mantegazza to continue the taste discourse initiated by the *Medico-poeta*, who happened to have a correspondence with Laura Solera Mantegazza (1817-1873): mother of Paolo and one of the many notable women who espoused the cause of independence. Aside from her political activism, she was an avid promoter of woman's and children's rights. Fredrick Starr, in an article in *Popular Science* of August 1893 refers to her as a "remarkable woman—well known for philanthropy and patriotism" (549) and Mantegazza himself writes a volume honoring her: *La mia mamma* (G. Barbera; Firenze, 1866). Her correspondence with Rajberti is in part documented by Pigatto (6 and 51), who sees it as a further evidence of Rajberti's liberal leanings.⁴⁸ Writing of his mother's friend he states:

Il Medico-poeta ha lasciato cose, che vivranno e i nostri nipoti lontani, ritorneranno ad assaporare e a studiar le sue opere, nelle quali egli ha lasciato una pagina di critica umoristica dei nostri tempi. Nella storia della satira italiana il Rajberti deve avere tutto per sé un capitolo, che gli renda il dovuto onore... conosceva le più riposte bellezze della nostra lingua, e raggiungeva sempre facilmente quello scopo...di farsi leggere e rileggere cento volte...[È] un modello inimitabile di stile e di gusto.⁴⁹

This passage is significant because it corroborates the admiration Mantegazza has for the author of *L'arte di convivere*. Moreover, the choice of the synaesthetic *assaporare* becomes emblematic of the gustatory framework in which we are to view both these authors.⁵⁰ In order to underline the continuity between the two medics, and to

⁴⁸ See also Pacifici, VG. "Mantegazza, Laura..The Garibaldi Supporter without a Gun" in *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento*. Jun 1, 1993, Vol. 80, Issue 2: p 261.

⁴⁹ On June 5, 1875 Mantegazza writes a letter honoring Rajberti for the festivities to be held in Monza. His entire letter is reproduced in the volume, *Onoranza a Giovanni Rajberti*, held in the Berlin State Library in Germany.

⁵⁰ Mantegazza's reverence for Rajberti is also reflected in the various citations utilized to illustrate either appropriate table etiquette or taste ideals. In *Igiene di Epicuro*, for example, Mantegazza, through

demonstrate the important role that Mantegazza occupies within nineteenth-century Italian taste theory, I will explore volumes from his immensely popular *Almanacco igienico popolare*:⁵¹ *Igiene della cucina* (1866), *Igiene di epicuro* (1872), *Igiene dei sensi* (1874), *Piccolo dizionario della cucina* (1882), *L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande* (1887); as well as the manual *Elementi di Igiene* (1871),⁵² and texts of a more physiological and philosophical nature: *La fisiologia del piacere* (1880), *L'arte di essere felici* (1886), and *Epicuro: un saggio di una fisiologia del bello* (1891). With these works we will be able to establish a taste narrative that oscillates with great command from gastronomy to gastrology,⁵³ forming an amalgam that is unique to this part of Mantegazza's production. I will analyze his food theory from the following interwoven perspectives: 1) the anthropology of cuisine, 2) food as health and hygiene, 3) gastronomy as an art form for all, and (4) the artistic elements of the author's scientific writings. I contend that these themes work in unison within the author's production, with the ultimate goal of creating a stronger and more economically viable Italian nation.

1) *The anthropology of cuisine*

To commence the Mantegazzian narrative of taste, it is important to consider cuisine as a subject of anthropology; after all, it is Mantegazza who is famed for founding

Rajberti's words, invites yawning as it is a privilege of animals of intellect and man, especially of an highly civilized man (44).

⁵¹ The *Almanacco* was a series of manuals on hygiene that Mantegazza published annually from 1866-1905. Additionally, Mantegazza founded *L'igea. Giornale di igiene e medicina preventiva* in 1862 in Milan.

⁵² The edition that this study will be drawing from is the fifth edition published in 1871. The first edition of the work was published in 1864. The text is not exclusively gastronomic; it deals with various forms of hygiene, from physical (such as skin and muscular hygiene) to mental care (such as hygiene of the intellect and sentiment). However, it is important to note that that nearly half of the work (the first 230 pages) explicitly deals with gastronomy.

⁵³ Term defined as "the science of eating" as opposed to 'gastronomy' which is defined as "the precepts for eating" in *Gastronomy: or, the School of Good Living*, 19. See Gigante, xxxvi and xliii.

the first *cattedra di Antropologia*, in addition to the *Museo Nazionale di Antropologia ed Etnologia* and its subsequent periodical and society.⁵⁴ It is through this optic that the author establishes the very same premise that was the subject of *La prefazione delle mie future opere*, and more specifically *Gastronomico*: that is, cuisine as civilizer.

Referencing his *La filosofia del piacere*, it becomes clear that food preparation and consumption serve as an anthropological marker for the distinction between man and brute. The key differentiator lies in the refinement of the pleasures of taste and the development of gastronomy, which defers to reason for regulation and distribution (73). In the early centuries of human evolution, “l’appetito supplì all’arte”; however, with rational development, comes “l’intelligenza e l’arte,” as Mantegazza indicates, which drove man to search to multiply flavors, while refining his gustatory capabilities. The brute, conversely, consumes with irregularity and with consideration for neither time nor measure, allowing his primordial impulse to govern, with no propensity for rationing or conservation. Mantegazza, in fact, dedicates an entire volume of his popular *Almanacco igienico popolare* in 1887 to *L’arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande*, accentuating evolved man’s conscious effort to preserve food, as well as divulging all of the techniques that the modern sciences have afforded him.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Aside from his numerous anthropological studies that see Mantegazza travel to Latin America in 1854 (Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, and Brasil), Lapponia (1879), and India (1882), etc... See: Puccini, Sandra. *I viaggi di Paolo Mantegazza: Tra divulgazione, letteratura e antropologia*. He also founds the *Archivio per l’antropologia e la etnologia* in 1871.

⁵⁵ It is also of interest to note how the binomial antiquity-modern day, that both Rajberti and Brillat-Savarin illuminate, yields different results with Mantegazza. Evoking the same Rome of Augustus as Rajberti (*La prefazione*, 18), Mantegazza renders homage to antiquity for the “tesori dell’arte” while affirming the potential of his contemporary gastronomy and its power to render even the most temperate Roman a glutton in a modern day *trattoria* (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 64). According to the author, his society has neglected most of the senses, while indicating taste as one of the only two that have been perfected by modernity. The other is the sense of touch. This concept of the perfection of taste and touch by modern society is prevalent throughout his work. In *Igiene dei sensi*, for example, he declares, “la società ha fatto impeggiare l’olfatto, l’udito e la vista, e ha perfezionato il gusto e il tatto...il tatto si affina col vestito e si perfeziona

2) Food as health and hygiene

It is within this text that the medic proclaims: “Se i medici conoscessero un po’ più gli alimenti, le loro diverse virtù e i diversi vizii...potrebbe far guarire chi è malato e...impedire che i sani si ammalino!”(*L’arte di conservare gli alimenti...*, 62). This theme of cuisine as panacea is prevalent throughout Mantegazza’s food writings, and, in *Igiene della cucina*, the author insists that a medic is more effective in the kitchen than he could ever be in the pharmacy. For cuisine can “prevenire molte malattie e curarne molte altre...[può] trasformare uno scrofoloso in un uomo robusto...la cucina può guarire un’indigestione, una febbre, una tisi” (63). This ideal of the “medic in the kitchen” serves as an archetype to which anyone can aspire, for the manuals are not destined for colleagues, but for the *mater familias*, who, in adopting the author’s advice, become, in essence, *medicus familias*.⁵⁶ It is a concept that finds precedent with Rajberti; however, Mantegazza’s work constitutes the first conscious endeavor to promulgate the means by which this concept can be realized.⁵⁷

all’esercizio delle arti: all’educazione del gusto pensano il cuoco, la gola, ecc...” (11). With this theory Mantegazza echoes, in part, Fourier and the belief that taste and touch as fundament to modern society. Yet this proposition of cuisine as key to the development of man (which resonates with more efficacy from Mantegazza because of the gravitas with which the medic approaches anthropology) is not the only ideal that reflects *La prefazione* as paradigm. The Rajbertian proclamation that a chef/cook is just as, if not more effective, than the medic in questions of health (33) is also clearly reflected by Mantegazza, indicating the significance of alimentary nourishment in adequate hygiene.

⁵⁶ Of interest is the economic connotation with the “medic in the kitchen”. For example Mantegazza asserts that those who are able to take away from his texts a profound understanding of the science of nutrition and apply it with consistency to their daily lives will notice “alla fin d’anno troverebbe di aver dato ben pochi quattrini al medico e allo speziale”(*Igiene della cucina*, 63).

⁵⁷ Others that follow suit, as the author of *La cucina degli stomachi deboli, ossia piatti non comuni, semplici, economici e di facile digestione. On alcune norme relative al buon governo delle vie digerenti* (1886), do so anonymously because of the perception that such a topic may be an undignified undertaking for a man of medicine.

Domestic health and hygiene are, for the author, issues that transcend the family unit. As Comoy Fusaro demonstrates, Mantegazza is determined to partake in the construction of Italy (194); hence, the scope of his alimentary message can also be interpreted as chiefly nationalistic. The construction of an Italian nation leads Mantegazza to promulgate the message of cuisine as nutrition for all sectors of Italian society, from the proletarian to the aristocrat to the peasant, and, for the lower classes, he sees in the humblest of foods the possibility for regeneration. Throughout his manuals of nutritional hygiene, as well as his texts of a more gastronomic inclination, the author goes to great lengths to provide guidelines for maximizing nourishment to create a stronger Italian citizen. For the lower classes,⁵⁸ there is an insistence on techniques that may ensure suitable nutrition. Such is the case when he writes of the benefits of salt; the medic states, “Un pizzico di sale di più nella pentola del povero, vuol dire tanti globuli rossi di più nel suo sangue, e quindi tanto di forza nelle vene di tutto il popolo italiano” (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 100).⁵⁹ In the instance of polenta, Mantegazza identifies a foodstuff that transcends class; however, he is quick to note that the pale, poorly cooked, and salted polenta consumed by rural citizens, which had led to pellagra, is a far cry from the one enjoyed by the elite. With this realization, the medic calls for action: “Tocca a

⁵⁸ If there were any doubt that Mantegazza was striving to reach the lower classes with his texts, he addresses that specific audience in many occasions. For example: “Leggete questo libro e vedete come senza esser ricchi si possa mangiar meglio di quel che si faccia di solito dai contadini e dagli operai” (*Igiene della cucina*, 9).

⁵⁹ Another example is the author’s instance on the basic necessity of clean, potable water: “Noi senza di essa [acqua] non possiamo nutrirci, non possiamo muoverci, non possiamo pensare” (*Igiene della cucina*, 55). Mantegazza goes as far as categorizing different types of water, such as well water and river water, denoting their benefits and disadvantages (*Elementi di Igiene*, 67-89). With this in mind it becomes evident that Mantegazza concentrates on the needs of the workforce. He is conscious of the direct affect that insufficient alimentation has on the workforce; for example; “Ora io so questo di sicuro, che se l’alimentazione del popolo fosse più nutriente, le braccia dell’operario e del contadino lavorerebbero con doppia energia, e procurando alla borsa più quattrini, darebbero anche al ventricolo cibi migliori” (*Igiene della cucina*, 10)

noi, tocca all'economia sociale, all'igiene fare che la polenta sia per tutti una benedizione e non un veleno" (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 89). It is this social conscience that is exemplified in Mantegazza's gastronomic writings, prompting him to divulge methods through which the nutritional gap between the social classes can be bridged.⁶⁰

As stated by Gabriella Armenise, Mantegazza's concept of hygiene is identified with the *art of physiology* (90), and, therefore, many of Mantegazza's food studies are, in the majority of cases, physiological in structure and content. Food types, appetites, aromas, ingredients, scales of digestibility, and nutritive capability, as well as a superfluity of other alimentary subject matter, are categorized in an attempt to diffuse knowledge that would allow the reader to become a more informed consumer.⁶¹ Within his physiological tendency, Mantegazza utilizes a largely plurilateral and international model to convey his pedagogic gourmandism.⁶² The medic becomes an advocate for a

⁶⁰ The medic demonstrates this social conscience in other instances as well; for example: "Sicuramente un terzo degli abitanti d'Europa mangia meno di quanto dovrebbe; né il superfluo della lauta mensa del ricco basterebbe a ristabilire un giusto equilibrio" (*Elementi di Igiene*, 208).

He understands that whereas the lower classes need to strive to include a more varied array of nutritive foodstuffs to their meals, simplicity and moderation are key to the upper echelons, because, ultimately, excesses of taste can lead to adverse reactions, as "l'uomo che ha voluto...gustar troppo, finisce poi per non poter...assaporar nulla" (*Igiene dei sensi*, 19). Other examples of this trend in Mantegazza's work are: He claims that moderation and simplicity "convengono alla salute e alla longevità" (*L'arte di essere felici*, 43); when discussing meat as the presumed perfect food, and its excess in the English model of consumption, he advises "Ai ricchi...non troppa carne, non sempre carne, distinguete, misurate, pesate" (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 33).

⁶¹ For example see, the categories of different types of hunger and the families of *alimenti* listed in *Igiene della cucina* (3-28); *Elementi di Igiene, Parte Prima* 15-230.

⁶² An important model for Mantegazza, as was for Rajberti, are the French. Rajberti, on the one hand, demonstrated a sort of *anxiety of influence* in regards to the French; from one point of view, franco-gastronomic ideals played a large role in the development of his very own, simultaneously, he was rapid in rejecting French gastronomy's stronghold over Italy. Mantegazza, on the other hand, is very much unambiguous in regards to the Italy's transalpine neighbors. For the medic "la miglior cucina è incontestabilmente la francese", since it is excellent in both form and substance and highly cosmopolitan; a meal prepared by "un allievo della scuola francese" is considered "assai più igienico" than many of the habits rampant in Italy (*Elementi di Igiene*, 218, 211). Equally positive are the comments reserved for "il brillante autore della *Pysiologie du gout*", as well as the author of the book described as "piacevolissimo alla lettura, e eccellente per un cuoco e un sibarita" — the *Grand Dictionnaire de cuisine* by Dumas (*Elementi di Igiene*, 207; *Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 42).

rationally governed gluttony that includes the enjoyment of a myriad of ingredients from all the corners of the globe. Science has a fundamental role in this mode of consumption, as it is the ancient art of alimentary preservation that permits foods to travel, and the advancements of Mantegazza's epoch lead him to claim its perfected status (*L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande*, 39).⁶³ The author is a proud advocate of the splendor that modern progress has afforded gastronomy: "È in questa maniera, che seduti in una comoda poltrona e circondati da tutte le leccornie del lusso europeo, possiamo in un solo pranzo mangiare del bove ucciso nei matadores di Buenos Ayres o in Australia, del salmone pescato in Lapponia e delle aragoste cresciute nei mari dell'America del nord" (39).

This transnational, physiological *modus operandi* is indicative of Mantegazza's pertinence to the greater Positivist culture that comes into fashion in the second half of the century.⁶⁴ His framework has precedents in Italy in other authors, many doctors and

Mantegazza, as opposed to Rajberti, considers the strive for an "Italian cuisine" to be of less importance to a national cause. He prioritizes the consumption of that which he considers the most evolved of cuisines for its nutritional and artistic value; he is clearly not alone in touting the supremacy of French fare, after all one need not look farther than the cuisine of Italian royalty and aristocrats of the day to see exactly what dishes were prized: To see an example of the dominance of French cuisine see Musci, Domenico. *Abbufate reali; La storia d'Italia attraverso I menu di Casa Savoia*.

⁶³ Mantegazza individuates some of these progresses, For example Nicolas Appert's food preservation in sealed bottles, which Mantegazza deems a true triumph of science— "io ho mangiato al mezzo del oceano lepri e tordi...come se fossero venuti allora dal mercato" (*Elementi di Igiene*, 103). He also lists the advancements of countless others such as Gamgee, Boillot, Voigt, Schub, Castelhag, Laignel, Malyepyre, etc.... The medic's ultimate goal is to provide a documentative discourse that allows the reader to fully understand what methods are available and how to benefit from them.

⁶⁴ With the bourgeois expansion in the second half of the century, due in part to the liberal revolutions of 1848, but also to industrialization and capitalization, Positivism becomes the hegemonic culture of Western Europe. With its strong emphasis on scientific progress and technological advancement and its tendencies towards realism, its influence is seen throughout the arts and sciences. With the creation of new pedagogical standards, such as the Coppino Law of 1877 which renders elementary education obligatory, and its general emphasis on the dissemination of knowledge, Positivism disseminates in Italy during a period in which the questions and consequences of nationhood and identity are predominant. For the Positivist discourse on education see: Ascenzi, Anna. *Tra educazione etico-civile e costruzione dell'identità nazionale*. Milano; Vita e Pensiero, 2004; Marciano, Annunziata. *Alfabeto ed educazione: I libri di testo nell'Italia post-risorgimentale*. Milano; Tipomozza; 2004.

pathologists in their own right, who attempt to convey a similar ideal of food nutrition. Salvatore Tommasi, for example, dedicates numerous pages to the topic of consumption, because “[si] frutterebbe senza fine alla pubblica ed alla privata igiene” (105). Angelo Camillo De Meis goes as far as envisioning a world in which Positivist ideals come fully to fruition and chemistry capable of fabricating *materiale alimentare* that would satisfy all the nourishment requirements of the masses—specifically speaking of a “cibo saporoso, odoroso, squisitissimo” and a “vino chimico eccellente...da digradarne il Chianti” (*Per la solenne inaugurazione degli studi nella Università di Bologna*, 43).⁶⁵ In short, Mantegazza represents the trend of food science that enters Europe through Moleschott and Spencer and that is mirrored in Italian contemporaries. They show how the progressive ideals of disseminating education and a heightened faith in the possibilities of science and technology can be espoused in matters of food and taste. However, it is Mantegazza who, more than any other, prolifically reshapes this discourse for the masses, while ennobling the art of cookery to the sphere of aesthetics.⁶⁶

3) *Gastronomy as an art form for all*

Italian figures such as Salvatore Tommasi, Pietro Siciliani, Angelo Camillo De Meis, and Roberto Ardigò become the leading proponents of Positivist ideology in Italy, referencing other thinkers such as August Comte, Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer and Thomas Robert Mill.

⁶⁵ An ideal that anticipates the *futuristi*, who envision a world where government subsidized pills are distributed for nourishment, therefore stripping gastronomy of any bodily necessity, allowing it to become a form of art. Mario Morasso is another author who continues this ideal of gastropia at the turn of the century. He envisions a *Metropoli* that offers the bounty of the banquets of imperial tables, and of Lucullus's and Trimalchio's famous dinners daily in its streets (*L'imperialismo nel Secolo XX...*, 363). Describing his ideal he states: “Non si ha un'idea delle frutta perfette, quasi che non la natura ma un artista amoroso le abbia modellate con un soffio, della selvaggina rara, del polame stupendo, dei pesci, dei dolci, dei pasticci, dei vini, delle carni di ogni specie in quantità stragrande, che sempre si possono trovare in qualsiasi di questi ricchi depositi di cibi” (363).

⁶⁶ Roberto Ardigò, the prominent Italian Positivist, also makes reference to a refined food aesthetic. Although he does not enter into the lofty discourses in which Mantegazza partakes, he does speak of the cook as emblem for the aesthetic fantasy needed for an artist: see *Opere filosofiche di Roberto Ardigò*, Vol. VIII, 162-3.

In addition to a nutritional gap between the classes, the artistic qualities of gastronomy seem to be exclusively for the upper strata, while the lower classes are relegated to subsist on inadequate provisions. Yet, Mantegazza seeks, in many instances, to create fare out of the most meager of ingredients. A germane example is the medic's ennobling of the humble egg, which he claims to be the most democratic and aristocratic of foodstuffs, offering "i suoi tesori di forza e di salubrità al povero proletario, come al più Creso dei Re...e rimane sempre al disopra di ogni più complicato intingolo gastronomico" (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 113-115). This attempt to bridge the gap of artistic intent between aristocratic fare and the scant rations of the majority of the peninsula is significant, because it denotes the pedagogic intent of imparting a gastronomic lesson to those who may seem incapable of participating in such endeavors because of social status. It is an effort, as demonstrated by the gourmands and gastronomes who preceded Mantegazza (such as Brillat-Savarin), to introduce the middle classes to a world that previously excluded them: that of food as art. Mantegazza, however, goes even farther; it is evident that part of his audience is incapable of relishing such undertakings, since their condition is far from opulent. Yet, the medic is keen on conveying the strategies necessary to optimize available foodstuffs and render them *arte culinaria*. In addition, he also provides a foodway towards intellectual/artistic production.

Mantegazza sustains the importance of gastronomic literacy for mental stimulation; he refers to a category of foodstuffs, which are of particular benefit as *alimenti nervosi*. The idea that consumption directly affects our thought is not new; Feuerbach and Moleschott, for example, advanced similar theories. However, Mantegazza's application is wholly different. For the author, *alimenti nervosi* "hanno una

storia molto simile a quella delle nuove scuole di pittura, della nuova musica, dei nuovi stili architettonici!” (*Epicuro: Un saggio di una fisiologia del bello*, 162). They are among the most noble of foodstuffs, allowing man to have a heightened control over his intellect and sensibility. If foods are the vapor that moves the locomotive, as Mantegazza indicates, then the *alimento nervoso* is the vehicle through which we can govern its movement (*Igiene di Epicuro*, 13-14). The author categorizes more than a hundred of these stimulants throughout his works; when balanced and used in moderation, “L’uomo incivilito...nel brillante sviluppo della sua intelligenza [consume] in un sol giorno i succhi fermentati delle vigne del Vesuvio, la birra nebbiosa dell’Inghilterra, il cacao dell’America, e il té dell’estrema China” (*Elementi di Igiene*, 60). The introduction of such substances into the body and, as a result, into the bloodstream, awakens the intellect, causing new sensorial and cerebral activity that is most advantageous for the mind.⁶⁷

Following the example of Rajberti, the aesthetic nature of gastronomy becomes paramount to Mantegazza’s theory of taste ennoblement. Once again, in the *Fisiologia del piacere*, the author delves into a theoretical discourse that analyzes how the pleasures of taste are brought about, elevating the traditionally mundane act of consumption while rendering food an analogue of music. The pleasures of taste are divided into two key elements: *harmony* and *melody*, which together forge a paragon that allows the medic to assert the *sublimity* of gastronomy. It is a sublimity that finds expression in the concatenation of dishes and pairings that encompass a *pranzo*, which the author describes

⁶⁷ If, as Rajberti and Mantegazza indicate, cuisine separates man from brute, then the *alimenti nervosi*, further broaden such a divide. For it is only civilized man that makes use of them, and despite the fact that he can live without them, he makes a conscious choice to stimulate his mind through their use instead of living “without enthusiasm,” as Mantegazza puts it. See, *Igiene d’Epicuro*, 11-19; *Igiene della casa*, 29-48; *Elementi di igiene*, 59-63; 138-185. Within these pages Mantegazza delineates the various benefits of moderate use of these foodstuffs: “Le fatiche dell’intelletto sono più presto ristorate da una tazza del caffè, mentre gli alcoici dispongono meglio il lavoro dei muscoli., etc...” (*Elementi di Igiene*, 62).

as “un concerto d’armonia e di melodia del gusto... che viene poi portato alla massima perfezione dal genio dell’artista” (65). A meal, for Mantegazza, is to become a plurisensorial event: “Una festa ai piaceri del gusto, ai quali si associano quelli dell’odorato, dell’udito, della vista... elevati a un certo grado dalla perfezione dell’arte e dal sentimento del bello” (76).⁶⁸ A *pranzo*, therefore, is not just the mere satisfaction of hunger, but, rather, as indicated in *Elementi di Igiene*, a feast in which the superior joys of *sentiment* and *intellect* participate, transforming a simple primordial urge into one of the most fruitful, sociable, and educational sources of merriment (214). To achieve this consummate communion of the senses, the medic indicates that: “vanno rispettate alcune leggi immutabili, fondamentali, direi quasi matematiche” (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 65). The rules to which Mantegazza defers, could be only be codified by one author, and his “frammento prezioso di musica di morale gastronomica” (ibid): Giovanni Rajberti.

The highly intellectualized, sensorial communion proposed corroborates Mantegazza’s modernity and anticipates the paradigm of the *futuristi* by more than fifty years. Furthermore, the physio-aesthetic narrative constructed by the medic is wholly unique and certainly worthy of praise. It is an ideal that is continued in the *Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, a work based on Alexandre Dumas’ *Grand Dictionnaire de*

⁶⁸ For Mantegazza, all human knowledge and action originate through the senses: “tutto quello che sappiamo, tutto quell che possiamo, tutto quell che facciamo ci viene dall’umile scaturigine dei sensi” (*Igiene dei sensi*, 15). Therefore, it is evident that this ideal of sensory communion is found elsewhere in his work. For example see: Mantegazza’s aphorism in *Fisiologia del piacere*: “Così come i colori, gli odori e i sapori non esistono da soli; così il piacere si appoggia sempre sopra un momento del sentire” (404); A meal is for the author “un vero divertimento complesso” in which “i piaceri dei sensi si associano in mirabile accordo alle delizie del sentimento” (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 74). See also *Igiene dei sensi*: “Tutti I sensi riuniti si aiutano, si correggono l’un l’altro e a guise dei molti tentacoli d’un polipo ci permettono di metter in intimo contatto della natura delle cose i nostri organi nervosi centrali, così avidi di sentire e di imparare” (15).

cuisine.⁶⁹ Here, Mantegazza invokes conviviality as prerequisite for the realization of this gustatory symphony. Therefore, the communal setting, with its psychological value becomes premise to a meal that can be classified as fine art, distinguishing it from an act of mere satiation. The author indicates that *l'uomo perfetto* makes it his goal to attain *la gioia perfetta* in the convivial setting, by invoking “l'angelo della poesia e l'arcangelo dell'effetto” (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 9). Using a language tinted with clear spiritual connotations, Mantegazza makes of the dinner table a sort of laic altar that can be created from the “desco dell'operario e del contadino, come alla mensa dorata del milionario e del re” (8).

4) *The art of Mantegazza's science*

Mantegazza's goal is to ameliorate the stagnant Italian dietetic circumstances. This leads the author to conceive of texts that have success within the Italian context, not only because they fill a void and help answer questions both of a pragmatic⁷⁰ and sumptuous nature, but also because they exude an innate literariness. Due to the various digressions into which the author delves, it is this literary quality that Nicoletta Pireddu points to as protagonist of *Fisiologia del piacere* (*Ethnos/Hedone/Ethos*: Paolo

⁶⁹ Mantegazza's work is proliferate with references and citations to various gastronomes and thinkers who have in some form written about food and taste throughout the centuries. It has a heavy reliance on classical and French cultures, aside from his contemporary Italy. Of all the sources indicated, none are cited to the extent that Dumas is, explicitly named in 12 occasions. Throughout the work it is apparent that the Italian relies heavily upon the *Grand Dictionnaire* as inspiration for his text in structure and in content, seeing in the work a fruitful and supple tool to mimic for the Italian masses. However, it is of interest to note that the Dumas publishes in 1882, the same year of Mantegazza's *Piccolo dizionario*, a condensed version of his work—the *Petit dictionnaire de cuisine*.

⁷⁰ The practical aspect to Mantegazza's gastrologicaland gastronomic writings are found also in the many domestic topics that he covers. Whether it is the proper mode of maintaining cookware (*Igiene della cucina*, chapter 6), or the how to factor water when choosing a home (*Igiene della cucina*, 58), or the references to a cuisine for weak stomachs (*Elementi di Igiene*, 229), it becomes rather evident that Mantegazza considers even the mundane aspects of domesticity.

Mantegazza, antropologo delle passioni, 140).⁷¹ This notion can easily be extended to a vast majority of Mantegazza's texts, particularly those utilized within our narrative of taste. In Mantegazza, even the most scientific of material is presented with anecdotes and literary references that make his works palatable for a large portion of his audience: the numerous anecdotes, such as the account of the comical events of a masquerade ball where a host concocts a boisterous ruse (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 107); or the innumerable aphorisms that lace the pages of his texts, such as "conviene che ogni effetto abbia il suo pane, e che ogni ambizione legittima abbia il suo vino" (*L'arte di essere felici*, 36); or the multitude of literary and philosophical references, such as those to Dante and Parini (*Igiene dei sensi*, 33; *Igiene della cucina*, 31).

It is important to frame Mantegazza's success within his contemporary society. According to the author, man "abbraccia quanto può e quanto sa dell'universo che lo circonda, e dice: *tutto questo è mio*." (*Igiene d'Epicuro*, 13). It is this moral that the author intends to diffuse; advocate of Darwin in Italy,⁷² Mantegazza promotes and practices the nascent sciences that biological Darwinism generates, particularly those of anthropology and sociology, in addition to being a medic and a literary writer. This philosophy of embracing all as man's capital is what defines Mantegazza's interests and production; from literary novel to scientific treatise, from manual of hygiene to philosophical text, from almanac to dictionary, the medic's works are as varied as can be found from a single author. And it is because of this eclecticism that the author's production has been defined as *schizophrenic*— marked by a continuous flux between

⁷¹ "L'appassionato uso della letterarietà che permea il testo mantegazziano diviene protagonista incontrastato nelle frequenti digressioni in cui l'autore concede libera espressione alla sue meditazioni estatiche (140)."

⁷² See: Giovanni Landucci, *Darwinismo a Firenze. Tra scienze e ideologia (1860-1900)*, Firenze: Olschki, 1977.

artistic and *scientific* production. This eclectism, that justly denotes the medic's work, is, I believe, the reason for his success. He becomes one of the few figures of the period to engage his audience in an open dialogue, making this "sacerdote della scienza" an "apostolo per le vie e per le piazze" (*Almanacco Igienico Popolare 1868: Igiene del sangue* in Marciano, 84). With his ability to shift from societal to domestic issues, and from first person to dialogic narratives with ease, the author creates accessible pedagogical texts that are meant for immediate application. However Mantegazza's work may be defined, it is evident that its hybrid artistic/scientific nature, and its intent to educate, articulates a trend that is already present in the century — a trend that will bring to the development of the most widely famed gastronomic Italian text of the 1800s; *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*.

Notwithstanding the variety of approaches from which Mantegazza postulates his theories, food and taste are analyzed by Mantegazza from a Positivist standpoint — they are seen as a fundamental instrument to man's progress and advancement, because ultimately "si deve mangiar bene per viver bene" (*Igiene di cucina*, 8). This idea of eating well is particularly salient in a Darwinist epoch given that, "La metà dei viventi vive, divorando l'altra metà. I grandi mangiano i mezzani e i mezzani mangiano i piccoli; e i piccolissimi poi, più forti di tutti, mangiano grandi, mezzani, e piccoli... A noi non resta che a mangiar bene, con scienza e coscienza, tutto il mangiabile." (*L'arte di conservare gli alimenti...*, 37). Therefore, the author preaches throughout much of his hygienic production that the manner and mode of alimentation directly affects mental processes, or rather our way of thinking, acting, and being — appropriating cuisine as an intellectual affair despite the biases confronted, because "L'arte di preparare i cibi non

solo li rende più saporiti, ma anche più digeribili e più nutritivi, e la cucina in tutta la perfezione della civiltà moderna è altamente igienica.” (*Elementi d’Igiene*, 211). From “la poesia della cucina” that can be achieved (*Igiene di cucina*, 29), to the “piaceri del sentimento e dell’intelletto” satisfied (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 66), Mantegazza propagates an ideal of culinary art that needs to attain three essential goals: first, it needs to supply a maximum variety of foods and flavors; second, it must facilitate the digestibility of foods without diminishing their nutritive value; finally, it must educate both the sense of taste as well as the sentiment of *beauty* (*Elementi di Igiene*, 211). With these prerequisites, it is clear that the medic’s conceptualization of taste consists of both lofty aesthetic ideals and a more pragmatic, positivist framework of biological necessity and nationalistic renewal. As Armenise indicates, the author partakes in a process of *alfabetizzazione culturale* and *sanitaria* (99). If this is the case, then it is evident that the divulgation of a gastronomic ideal of regeneration, moderation, and beauty is fundamental. It is with this in mind that Mantegazza reminds his reader, “Studiate a fondo la vostra cucina, occupandovi assai di ciò che mangiate e del come mangiate,” adding, with the zeal that characterizes much of his prose, “Non vergognatevi mai di essere saviamente golosi!” (*Elementi d’Igiene*, 214).

Encapsulating the author’s role as didactic gastronome is a quote that helps define Mantegazza’s witty and direct approach; as he has done on various occasions, he ennobles simple foods, in this case squash, by playing with the ambivalent meaning of *zucca*:⁷³ “Anche le zucche più vuote di questo mondo poi possono elevarsi a pretesa di

⁷³ *Zucca* (squash), colloquially, is used as metaphor for the human head. The *Dizionario generale de’ sinonimi italiani* (Giovani Romani, Milano, 1826) indicates that “secondo, la Crusca, nel proprio, è una pianta erbacea, che produce pampani e frutti maggiori di qualsivoglia altra pianta, presentando sovente una

aristocrazia culinaria, quando si faccia loro un ripieno.” Leaving the author to question, “Non è forse tutta quanta la pedagogia un’arte di mettere un buon ripieno nelle zucche umane?” (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 119).

V. Gastronomia?: *the role of women in the newly founded ideals of taste*

I discuss the role of women within these newly forming taste ideals, focusing on: (1) how women are to behave in the convivial setting (within *L’arte di convitare*) and (2) the preached ‘physiological inferiority’ of the *fairer* sex (within Mantegazza’s writing). The ideals reflected in these authors’ works ostracize the Italian woman by preserving an exclusively masculine realm of taste.

Rajberti’s and Mantegazza’s work become paramount in establishing a new paragon of Italian food studies. However, for all the progressive and democratic elements that they represent (e.g., education, political and cultural unification, etc.) there is a conservative trend that is evident in both these authors and in the societies they are reflecting; a trend which attempts to ostracize the female figure’s role, or at very least demonstrate her as ancillary to the gastronomic cause. A fundamental author, from this perspective, is Antonio Rosmini (1797-1855). In his *Filosofia del diritto* (1845), a seminal text in the construction of the roles of men and women during the Risorgimento, the philosopher defines the natural qualities of the Italian woman: she is “timida dolcezza, graziosa debolezza, attenta docilità: [la donna] è delicata, tranquilla, casalinga, paziente” (in Re, 171).⁷⁴ Man conversely, has qualities that render him “atto a comandare,

forma simile alla testa degli animali; e fu talvolta impiegata, per similitudine, per *Testa*” (372). The metaphor is already seen in Dante: “Ed egli allor battendosi la zucca” (*Inferno*, XVIII; 124).

⁷⁴ Man conversely has the qualities which “lo rendono atto a comandare, coraggio, forza, attività, mente ferma o certo più sviluppata” (ibid).

coraggio, forza, attività, mente ferma o certo più sviluppata”(ibid). If a woman is seen as intellectually inferior to man, as Rosmini indicates, then for our taste authors, she is inferior in all matters of taste. Her role is clearly delineated: she is to endure the difficulties of preparation, in addition to the duties of hostess, yet, in the convivial setting she must carve out a space for herself in the background. She is expected to artfully divest herself from her function as housewife and become, for all intents and purposes, a *Signora*, that is, a figure of perfect decorum. It is precisely in this oscillation between one role and the other that women are condemned to a convivial subordination reflected in the expected modes of comportment and consumption.

1) *Rajberti's padrona di casa: dissimulation and the indecency of eating*

As Gabriella Turnaturi indicates, the table is the arena for “i più grandi pericoli paventati dalla borghesia italiana dell'Ottocento, ovvero la naturalità, la spontaneità, la sensualità.” (76) Therefore, as consequence, the manuals on etiquette preach moderation, restraint and equilibrium for the convivial setting, focusing particularly on the continence needed by women in the context of a meal. Rajberti, for example, while referencing *Cuoco piemontese* and *Serva istruita*, admonishes⁷⁵:

Dico che la padrona di casa con queste lezioni si spoetizza, qualunque fisionomia o età che abbia: perché non vi è solo nella donna la poesia e la bellezza, dei vezzi, dello spirito, ma v'è anche quella di padrona di casa che noi invitati vogliamo immaginarci seduta in sala e occupata in opere gentili, e non ai fornelli a lavorare. (*L'arte di convivere*, 212)

⁷⁵ *Cuoco piemontese* seems to be referencing the *Il cuoco piemontese perfezionato a Parigi* (1766), a text that is nothing more than a collage of French texts, which is reprinted in the 19th century several times, and is largely successful. References to *Serva istruita* are few, but as noted in the 7th volume of *Società e costume* it is, along with *Il cuoco piemontese*, two cookbooks that are in vogue during the epic (88).

The woman of the household portrayed here needs to maintain a level of propriety that conceals all the workings behind the composition, arrangement, and organization of the meal. Rajberti goes as far as stating: “Stia pure in cucina tutto il giorno, se abbisogna: faccia anche il desinare colle proprie mani: ma non ce lo racconti, perché queste sono cose che noi non dobbiamo saperle.” (ibid) Also underscoring this expected mode of conduct is Ida Baccini, who in her *Lo spirito del galateo – il galateo dello spirito* (1893)⁷⁶ asserts, as Rajberti does, that, “È mancanza al primo dovere verso l’ospite il lasciargli scorgere il dietro le scene del teatro domestico” (in Turnaturi, 81). In the *mise en scène* of this *domestic theater*, the difficulty of the production, no matter how arduous, need not transpire: that is, *sprezzatura*⁷⁷ becomes the rule of thumb. The hostess must not divulge the difficulties of her convivial endeavors to her guests, in order to demonstrate the upmost regard for them, as well as elegance in her ways. This behavior, however, is followed by a decisively more dangerous expectation—the idea that Piero Meldini calls the *indecentcy of eating* (“A tavola e in cucina,” 451).⁷⁸

Throughout the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, the concept that women should suppress their hunger, and that a healthy appetite is a vulgar quality, becomes increasingly widespread. If we believe that eating habits are largely developed

⁷⁶ Ida Baccini, a prominent female writer of the epoch (1850-1911), is a composer of children’s books as well as *galatei*. See: Colella, Anna, *Figura di vespa e leggerezza di farfalla: le donne e il cibo nell'Italia borghese del fine Ottocento*, Milano: Giunti Editore, 2003: pp 86-87. Turnaturi, Gabriella, *Signore e signori d'Italia*, Milano: Fetrinelli, 2011.

⁷⁷ The term *sprezzatura* originates from Baldassare Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* (*The Book of the Courtier*, 1528), and can be defined as the ability to disguise one’s true feelings and thoughts behind a certain nonchalant guise for sake of good etiquette. For an interesting analysis of *sprezzatura* see: D'Epiro and Desmond. *Sprezzatura: 50 Ways Italian Genius Shaped the World*, Anchor Books: 2001: p 201- 209. For a more detailed analysis of the origin of *sprezzatura* see: Ricci, M.T., “Grace and sprezzatura in the works of Baldassare Castiglione,” Jan 1, 2003, Vol. 65, Issue 2: pp 233-248.

⁷⁸ Anna Colella also discusses this phenomenon in the chapter “Il rifiuto del cibo, il rifiuto nel cibo” pgs 190-261.

through socio-culture and not biological factors—in other words, that our taste is a product of upbringing and heritage as Montanari, Lupton, and Korsmeyer claim⁷⁹— then it becomes rather evident that societal propriety, and as consequence the *galatei* and manuals of etiquette, go far in shaping modes of consumption. Such texts in the 19th century promote a female etiquette at the table that is marked by a lack of self-fulfillment, which works to subdue her individuality. Behind the act of consumption there are symbols and messages communicated, and if women are to subjugate their desire to consume at the table due to a presumed *indecentcy of eating*, then the societies contemporary to Rajberti and Mantegazza construct a gastronomic space that continues to be predominantly masculine. The feminine role is important, as its primary responsibility is to ensure the happiness of others at the table. For example, Rajberti states: “Raccomanda poi alle tue donne che, se necessitano loro alcune assenze, queste sieno brevi e rare: che infine non si mostrino seriamente occupate che di noi, per renderci accorti che faremmo loro una grazia particolare ad andar via” (*L’arte di convivere*, 288). In the same manner that a hostess needs to dissimulate the work involved in preparation, the act of a feminine rationed eating, becomes connoted as an affirmation of her availability and willingness to serve: particularly for her masculine counterparts.

The need to demonstrate a public disinterest in consumption for the sake of proper feminine decorum, leads to clear subversive consequences. As Tamar Heller claims about Victorian England: “Anorexia becomes a Victorian phenomenon” (99).⁸⁰ Anna K.

⁷⁹ For example, Massimo Montanari see chapter “Taste is a Cultural Product” (61-70) and “Taste Is a Product of Society” (71-74) in *Food is Culture*; Deborah Lupton see chapter “Tastes and Distastes” in *Food, the Body, and the Self*; Carol Korsmeyer see “Culture and Taste: The edible and inedible” (89- 102).

⁸⁰ For another study that demonstrates the connection between the Victorian period and the birth of feminine anorexia, see Craton, Lillian. *The Victorian Freak Show: The Significance of Disability and Physical Differences in 19th-Century Fiction*. Cambria Press, 2009; p 91-97; Heywood, Leslie. *Dedication*

Silver asserts that anorexia and the idea of self-starvation is central to a Victorian femininity, making the case that Victorian gender ideology can be read through an “anorexic lens” (3). It is precisely in this time period in both England and France that the first diagnosed anorexic cases were confirmed by Sir William Gull (who coins the term *Anorexia nervosa*) and Ernest Lasègue (who publishes a report on the condition he called *anorexie hysterica*).⁸¹ This phenomena is widely present in the Italian Ottocento as well, according to Ludovica Costantino. In *La ricerca di un'immagine. L'anoressia mentale*, the author isolates in the figure of Elizabeth of Austria (more commonly known as Sissi, 1838-1898) an emblem of the *new woman* (63). Due to a fixation with exercise and sport, the empress demonstrated that one could be thin without recourse to a corset. Her obsession with her body dominated her life, leading Costantino to claim that she, “Cercò una sua identità personale per tutta la vita, sperando di trovarla nel culto del corpo,” therefore, “ella divenne capostipite delle moderne anoressiche” (63). With the empress we see the birth of a fashion of thinness that transforms the *new woman* of the 19th century into a pale and emaciated figure, replacing the opulent *mater familias* as the new ideal of femininity (64). Moreover, the ideal of femininity diffused, in particular by those who espouse the new taste ideals, is of a woman who abstains from the indulgences of the lower senses of taste and smell. While her male counterpart finds in the pleasures of these senses new art forms, she is to uphold the traditional sensorial hierarchy by engaging only the *moral* senses of vision and hearing.

to *Hunger: The Anorexic Aesthetic in Modern Culture*. University of California Press, 1996; Lexander-Mott; Barry. *Understanding eating disorders: anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and obesity*. Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1994: p 24.

⁸¹ See: Brumberg, J. *Fasting girls: the History of Anorexia Nervosa*. Cambridge: Vintage Books Press, 2000 and Morey, J. *Living with Anorexia and Bulimia*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991.

Along with this new female ideal, the notion of food consumption, and the satiation of one's appetite, conflates with that of the satisfaction of one's carnal appetite. In her groundbreaking work on the origins of *Anorexia nervosa*, Joan Brumberg confirms through Sigmund Freud and Pierre Janet that there is in fact a link between consumption of food and female sexuality, which contributes to cases of anorexia in the late 19th century (213). Brumberg demonstrates, mainly citing Freud, that eating or not eating becomes a proxy for a sexual appetite.⁸² As abovementioned, Turaturi identifies the dinner table as the site for the expression of the bourgeoisie's worst fears, or, rather, the expression of an inhibited spontaneity (including sexuality) that contrasts proper middle class conduct. It is then apparent that the suppression of one's appetite suggests the repression of one's carnal urges, becoming further impetus for a feminine convivial fasting in the period.

The *galatei* of the Italian Eighteen Hundreds become a large proponent of this new feminine ideal, further propagating the image of a woman who should never enjoy the pleasures of food openly. If Rajberti is the model par excellence for societal etiquette at the table, a model to which all *galatei* that tackle etiquette at a meal aspire, then traces of this tendency can already be found within *L'arte di convivare*. For example, Rajberti writes of woman who went as far as condemning the act of nourishing oneself all together: "Giunse a dirmi che le parve sempre cosa strana e inconcepibile come a questo mondo si debba aprire bocca per quella trivialità tanto prosaica del mangiare e bere" (132). Moreover, for Rajberti dissimulation in every facet of the convivial experience is

⁸² See Brumberg, *Fasting Girls: The History of Anorexia Nervosa*, 213-223.

mandatory,⁸³ despite any possible unexpected occurrence; and when writing of a hostess that is restless, the *Medico-poeta* assures that, “siamo una mano d’amici venuti a godere la vostra compagnia e a mangiare insieme un cappone: e se il cappone sarà duro, tireremo più forte: e se una pietanza sarà capovolta sui carboni, avremo in compenso un aneddoto e una risata di più” (122). Dissimulation, therefore, is as, if not more important than any other aspect of the woman’s presence at the table.

2) “È troppo poco egoista per analizzare e prediligere questi piaceri sensuali”: Mantegazza’s “delicate” woman

If the propagated fashion of thinness that prevails is the creation of the later part of the century, coinciding with the medic’s foray into the kitchen, then it is important to examine how the Positivist medics, such as Mantegazza, are telling women how to consume. Susan Bordo claims that to achieve the *new woman*’s look, it was necessary to follow a specific praxis of “straitlacing, minimal eating, reduced mobility,” which rendered the female body incapable of participating in activities outside the roles designated to her by society (181). It is precisely this routine that Mantegazza forwards through a biological analysis of the sexes.

Ideologically speaking, 19th-century discourse automatically privileged men physiologically for their gustatory abilities, leaving women disadvantaged from the start. For example, Mantegazza writes of the differences between the perception of the pleasures of taste in the sexes, stating:

...l’uomo fu anche un questo privilegiato dalla natura...La donna, quantunque sia più sensibile del maschio, pure è troppo poco egoista per analizzare e prediligere

⁸³ “la dissimulazione [è] arma perpetua e indispensabile della convivenza” (123); “Bisogna nascondere l’arte coll’arte” (123) “La dissimulazione è poesia e prosaccia la verità” (124); and “la dissimulazione, celando mille disgustose verità, è la virtù massima dell’incivilimento” (125).

questi piaceri sensuali. D'altronde la delicatezza de' suoi organi digerenti e le tante specialità dei suoi gusti bizzarri le precludono il più delle volte i piaceri più intensi. (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 62)

Here Mantegazza is ratifying the prominent image of a woman, who is incapable of partaking in the gastronomic endeavors of her male counterparts, due to what he implies as an innate deficiency. The fact that the author refers to woman's nature as "troppo poco egoista" to be able to *analyze* and *privilege* the sense of taste, corroborates a feminine inferiority in defining the self, which is key in the development of the sense of taste⁸⁴. Conversely, this selflessness characterizes woman in her role as caretaker, as a figure who is always at the disposition of others—analogous to the image sought by Rajberti with the *padrona di casa*.

A notion of a masculine taste superiority stems from what is purported to be the male's biological advantage in the body's processing of alimentary material. For example, Tommasi asserts that "le funzioni digestive siano più pronte ed efficaci nell'uomo che nella donna..." who is "più sobria e moderata" (*Istituzioni di fisiologia*, 524). Once more it becomes evident that the projected societal image of a temperate femininity is further sustained by the divulged Positivist science of the day. With an aphorism Mantegazza encapsulates both the epoch's characterization of male and female tastes, as well as enhances the problematic notion of a continent female: "La donna delicata e gentile si esilara con poche gocce di acqua di fior d'arancio; il marinaio incomincia a ridere dopo aver tracannato un litro di alcool avvelenato da un pizzico di pepe" (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 405). Here we have a portrait of a woman who

⁸⁴ Mantegazza also relays similar judgments in regards to woman's capacity to enjoy the pleasures of the other senses. In the instance of hearing, Mantegazza proclaims that woman is more capable of enjoying the pleasures produced by music, however, "essa [woman] rimane assai al disotto dell'uomo nel godimento de tesori intellettuali che spettano a questi piaceri" (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 85).

emblemizes the lack of taste fulfillment so aptly expected from her. She is intoxicated by the most delicate of flavors, representing the delicate and underdeveloped nature of her gustatory sense. The sailor, conversely, represents the polar opposite, the sense brought to its excesses, exemplifying as Mantegazza preaches: he who wants to taste everything ultimately tastes nothing at all.⁸⁵

Even when not focusing on taste, Mantegazza divulges a concept of womanhood that condemns her to be a creature of vanity, which finds recourse in dissimulation: “La donna, vana per eccellenza, studia se stessa in tutti i suoi movimenti ed in tutti i lineamenti esterni della sua persona, cercando di trarre l’interesse più alto dei capitali a lei concessi dalla natura, e di nascondere con tutti gli artifici i difetti” (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 169). It is the same figure of continence and grace that *L’arte di convivere* aimed to construct—a woman who does not allow for the perception of any indiscretions, particularly in convivial settings. However, it is necessary to clarify that Mantegazza goes even farther than his precedent; he links female comportment with that of male children, and even brutes. Such is the case when he writes of women’s capabilities of consuming *alimenti nervosi*. He warns against the dangers of ingesting alcoholic beverages due to woman’s weak wills and penchant for addiction,⁸⁶ yet in other instances he declares them as fundamental to heightened mental production in man.

The association between women and boys (and also brutes), as evidenced in this instance, is of great interest because it is a notion that becomes a sort of *leit motif* within the Mantegazzan paradigm. For example in *Fisiologia dell’odio*, Mantegazza states, “La

⁸⁵ “l’uomo che ha voluto...gustar troppo, finisce poi per non poter...assaporar nulla” (*Igiene dei sensi*, 19).

⁸⁶ “L’ebrezza alcoolica è più pericolosa, nel fanciullo, nella donna, e nell’uomo selvaggio... e solo chi ha una volontà di ferro può provarli senza correre sull’irrestibile china verso del vizio.” (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 125).

donna nell'odio rassomiglia al fanciullo e al selvaggio, che alla lor volta si rassomigliano fra di loro" (32). In another instance, the medic goes as far as linking the physiognomy of women and children: "La fronte della donna ha quasi sempre (almeno nelle razze superiori) debolissime o mancanti le arcate sopraccigliari, è stretta ed ha marcate le gobbe frontali; tutti caratteri del cranio infantile" (*Fisionomia e mimica*, 43). Mantegazza also connects the two psychologically: "Essa nelle sue forme generali rassomiglia a un uomo giovinetto... che anche psicologicamente gli si avvicina" with "un carattere infantile e soprattutto atavico" (*Fisiologia della donna*, Vol. 1, 93, 292)

This tendency derives from Darwin, who indicated in *The Descent of Man* (1871) that woman was evolutionarily inferior to man. She was "in essence, a stunted man," associated to the *young* of both sexes.⁸⁷ We can trace this thought in other Italian writers as well. For example, Cesare Lombroso, the famed Positivist criminologist, claims: "La donna, come il bimbo, è, notoriamente, infatti, misoneica;⁸⁸ conserva gli abiti, i costumi..." (*Il delitto politico e le rivoluzioni...* 221). Describing youth, he declares, "L'impulsività che si nota nella donna si riscontra anche nei fanciulli" (*Il delitto politico e le rivoluzioni...* 232). In his text, *La donna delinquente: La prostituta e la donna normale*, Lombroso goes on to biologically outline differentiating characteristics of the

⁸⁷ Jerry Bergman in his article "The History of Teaching Human Female Inferiority in Darwinism" demonstrates how Darwin and his followers contended that "female evolution progressed slower than male evolution". As consequence, women were regarded as inferior on nearly every account. The link between female and the *young* is therefore seen in other Darwinist authors that Bergman cites. One such example is Carl Vogt (a professor of natural history from Geneva) who contended that women, in intellect and personality were closer to "both infants and the lower races". See "The History of the Teaching of Female Inferiority in Darwinism." *Cen Tec J.* 14(1), 2000: pp 117-126.

⁸⁸ *Misoneismo* is a term attributed to Lombroso, used to describe a certain refusal towards anything new or innovative. Here it is used to denote a certain placated conservative thought of women who fear a change in their routine. This applied to political thought as well. In his criticism of the utopian ideals of anarchists he proposes a social reform that is slow precisely so it would not destroy antecedent work and would prevent the counter-movements of new thought. See Knepper and Ystehede, *The Cesare Lombroso Handbook*, New York: Routledge, 2013; p 51.

sexes, concluding, that, “in complesso la donna [normale] è più infantile dell’uomo,” later on condemning her as possessing a smaller brain and lacking originality (48, 161).⁸⁹ Another text that demonstrates this trend is published in 1886 by Francesco Tanini, *La donna secondo il giudizio dei dotti e dei proverbi di tutti i popoli*. It is a work that defines an epoch’s depiction of the woman, by anthologizing proverbs and phrases that characterize their physical, psychological, and physiological nature. Within this accumulation of sayings from throughout the centuries, Mantegazza alone is quoted 42 times. For example, while discussing the pleasures of the table,⁹⁰ Tanini references the medic to demonstrate how “i piaceri del gusto e della gola sono più sentiti dal maschio che la femmina” (38). Furthermore, this collection indicates that this infantile female connotation is widespread.⁹¹ In twenty-nine cases the statements anthologized by Tanini demonstrate this link, leading the author to surmise the following:

Si trovano dei grandi rapporti fra il sesso femminile e l’infanzia mascolina: hanno tra loro dei punti comuni di sensibilità e passioni in tutto somiglianti. La tessitura dei loro organi è ugualmente molle ed umida; le loro membra sono delicate e tondeggianti; i loro cuori sensibili e mutabili; lo spirito d’osservazione poco profondo...la donna è un fanciullo adulto, ed ha bisogno dell’aiuto morale e materiale dell’uomo. (112, 363)

The overtones are of interest, because, as seen with Mantegazza, the connection enters into matters of taste. With this connotation, woman lacks the refinement, the maturity and the intellect to enter into the judgment of art, whether gastronomic or otherwise.

⁸⁹ Lambroso analyses the differences in taste between men and women, concluding by quoting the above cited judgment of women being *too selfless to analyze and prefer the pleasure of taste* (54). Of interest is how Lambroso finds in the comparison between *donne normali* and *donne criminali* a difference in the sense of taste. He notices that female criminals have a much more *obtuse* sense of taste (*Le più recenti scoperte della psichiatria e antropologia...*, 161).

⁹⁰ “La deliziosa gioia che in un lieto banchetto trabocca fra il vapore dei vini, le risa e le scintille dello spirit conferisce alla salute...” (38).

⁹¹ For example: “La donna, presso i selvaggi, è una bestia da soma; in Oriente un mobile; in Europa un fanciullo male allevato - Melhan” (267); “secondo Montesquieu, [la donna è] un fanciullo piacevole” (449).

Mantegazza creates an image of a woman, who is to nourish herself according to the restricted parameters prescribed to her— by her dictated societal roles. Despite the medic declaring that he wants a woman to be *robusta*, as he does in *Igiene dei sensi* (27),⁹² the alimentary guidelines he provides depict a different image. In *Igiene della cucina*, for example, Mantegazza differentiates between a male and female diet on separate occasions, indicating that because man's "cervello e... muscoli lavorano più attivi," he needs to consume more meat and *alimenti nervosi* (6, 80). A women's diet, for the medic, is more vegetarian and *frugivorous* than that of her male counterpart; specifying that the vegetables comprised are *innocenti*, in other words that have the trait, "di non far male né bene" (24); later on stating that "Dante le metterebbe tutte in fascio di limbo" (24). Within this feminine food regimen, the author finds that in diet a woman is "avvicinandosi ...al fanciullo e all'antropomorfo" (*Fisiologia della donna*, Vol. 1, 103). However, it is not only in what she consumes, but how she consumes, that this infantile connotation is conjured: "Essa mangia meno di noi, ma preferisce mangiar più spesso...Anche questo un carattere della dietica infantile" (ibid).

Ultimately, Mantegazza's view of women is appropriately summarized by Armenise, who states: "Mantegazza ha una visione della società dove la donna si occupa della materialità della casa che deve ubidire al marito e tenersi intorno alle loro mille esigenze, che è quasi mai libera, che non può e non deve fare quello che vuole" (94). In answering a question posed by himself in regards to the nature of females, he solidifies

⁹² "Io voglio la donna sana, ma la voglio anche bella; la voglio robusta, ma non spartana." Mantegazza also describes the beauty of Italian women although he believed that there no specific type existed. See Grundle, Stephan. *Bellissima: Feminine Beauty and the Ideal of Italy* 44, 54-57. Grundle quotes a passage from *Fisiologia della donna* in which the medic attempts to generalize characteristics of Italian women. In this passage, which Grundle translates, the ideal Italian woman is *grassoccia* (chubby) (56). See *Fisiologia della donna*, p 182.

this notion of women living for men: “La donna è un angelo o un demonio?— Né l’uno né l’altro: essa è la femmina dell’uomo” (*Fisiologia della donna* vol. 1, 1).⁹³ Afterall, Mantegazza is explicit in condemning the fairer sex as intellectually inferior in various occasions,⁹⁴ and as consequence, women’s taste is perceived in a similar fashion; as subordinate and in service to her male counterparts. Moreover, for the medic, women are biologically structured for passivity: “nella femmina abbiamo la tendenza di ricomporsi delle molecole, cioè una corrispondente inattività o passività. Il maschio spende l’energia, la femmina la accumula” (*Fisiologia della donna*, Vol. 1, 104). This innate inactivity fosters a specific manner and mode of consumption, as much as it suppresses her possibilities for active societal roles. Her passivity is both cause and product of the manner in which she nourishes herself. Furthermore, the medic’s postulated female diet by nature promotes an image of woman that is to be delicate and consume little—an image that certainly can be seen to promote thinness. Therefore, despite any ideal of beauty advanced by the Positivist, it is clear that he is further propagating a trend of female complacency and physical slenderness that is developing within his society. Additionally, the medic contributes to the necessity of this image of a slender femininity by condemning the use of the corset.⁹⁵ Despite the fact that his denunciation is based on medical reasons— mainly the restriction of the air passages, and its damaging effects on

⁹³ “La donna non è che la metà di un uomo, cioè è l’uomo femmina” (*Fisiologia della donna*, Vol. 1, 253)

⁹⁴ An example, see *Fisiologia della donna* Volume 1, p 292. Here he claims that women are inferior on the evolutionary scale than men, stating that the difference “è troppo palese per poterla negarla.” See also *Fisiologia della donna* Volume 2 p 190-1, where he claims there exists “un carattere sessuale anche nel pensiero” that envisions women’s *ingegno* to be found only in the maternal role, or when asserting that men are more uncertain than women “perché l’intelletto più alto e soprattutto più critico gli fa vedere i due lati della questione...” (294).

⁹⁵ See. *Fisiologia della donna*, Vol.1, 199-201. Mantegazza reproves the use a corset, speaking of the extremes of the fashion historically. He writes of Catherine de’Medici and “busti corazzati di ferro.. e delle stecche di balena”(199).

the digestive system—the abandonment of the corset leads to a necessary alimentary deprivation for the sake of fashion.

Notwithstanding, Mantegazza is conscious that a non patriarchal culture would permit women to develop on various levels. He underscores the fact that it is due to a *male despotism* that women cannot indulge themselves in their tastes. The author adduces Paraguay as exemplum, as women there have an advanced use of this sense and enjoy *alimenti nervosi* such as coffee, tea and tobacco, since their male society does not condemn it (*Fisiologia della donna*, Vol. 1, 103). He goes even further by stating that women could even equal men in physical labor, citing the peasants of Liguria and Lago Maggiore as examples (105). Despite the fact the Mantegazza comprehends that the *tyranny* of man, as the medic calls it (ibid), stagnates female societal progression, he does very little to alter it. On the contrary, his image of women is reflected in a nutritional inferiority that only works to further widen the taste gap between the sexes.⁹⁶

Ultimately, there is a vein of alimentary literature, which dictates that women are to eat and act in a certain fashion at the table, limiting the role of bourgeois women in society. The “medics in the kitchen” make great strides to portray new gastronomic and gastrologic ideals while acting as national unifiers. Yet, their work does very little to include women in the convivial sphere. The aesthete and gastro-philosopher are to be males. Females are to prepare and organize, assimilate, dissimilate and serve, yet not partake. Their identity is constructed upon the social parameters that preclude them from self-expression and indulgence, which result in lasting psychological and physical effects

⁹⁶ Of great interest is that Mantegazza’s mother was a very independent and strong female figure in her epoch (see footnote 43). The respect he shares for her can be seen in his works such as *Le donne del mio tempo* (1905) and *La mia mamma Laura Solera Mantegazza* (1876), yet it does not have an effect on his view of what women’s role should be in society.

for their persona. Woman is caretaker, cook, *gastrophilanthropic*, and hostess, but never gourmand.

Conclusions

Despite these limits, Rajberti and Mantegazza, both represent a fundamental shift in the conceptualization of taste within their respective contemporary societies. Various of their texts realize the four elements that Stephan Mennell attributes to the genre he identifies as *gastronomic literature* (270-271); whether it be the correct meal procedure which Rajberti conveys with *L'arte di convivere*; the focus on the nutritional elements and preparation that we see throughout the various gastrological manuals of Mantegazza, from *Igiene della cucina* to *L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande*; the intermingling of myth and history that characterizes so many of the stories and anecdotes that both conjure; and the evocation of memorable meals that both share in *La prefazione alle mie opere future* and in *Piccolo dizionario della cucina*. In short, this genre that Mennell attributes to France and that Denise Gigante attributes to England, has yet to be ascribed to the Italian context. It is rather evident that there are texts being produced within the peninsula that make of the sensual pursuit of cuisine a literary and intellectual endeavor. They are characterized by an insatiable rhetoric for that which is artistic, scientific, aesthetic and nationalistic — a true “gastrosophy”, to use Fourier’s and von Vaesrt’s term, a philosophy of food in the making. With Rajberti we see its initial stages, but by the time of Mantegazza it becomes quite clear that this form found full expression in Italy, particularly when considering two significant contemporaries, Olindo Guerrini and Pellegrino Artusi.

Chapter 3

Literati in the Kitchen: Olindo Guerrini and Pellegrino Artusi

When we no longer have good cooking in the world, we will have no literature, nor high and sharp intelligence, nor friendly gatherings, no social harmony. (L'art culinaire au XIXe siècle)
- Antonin Carême

With Giovanni Rajberti and Paolo Mantegazza, Italy is introduced to gastronomic and gastrologic ideals that generate an elevated attention to food aesthetics. Both authors find themselves at the forefront of a proliferation of alimentary texts that span a rather extensive range, from etiquette to hygiene manual, and from cookbook to treatise. They are at the avant-garde of the nascent *self-helpism* in the nineteenth century and attempt to resolve the prominent uncertainties about the period, demonstrating that food consciousness equals identity on various levels — from domestic to societal. This chapter will focus on two authors that are also instrumental *gastrosophers* of the post-unificatory period: Olindo Guerrini and Pellegrino Artusi. The former is noted more as a poet than a gastronome, yet with further analysis, it will become apparent that he holds a paramount role in the taste discourse initiated by Rajberti and Mantegazza. In many regards, Guerrini eclipses both medics, introducing a philological approach that was yet to be seen with gastronomic studies in Italy, as he does more than any other to solidify cuisine as fine art. Artusi is praised as the cultural unifier of the peninsula, and is claimed to be successful where systematic political initiatives were not.¹ With a collaborative spirit that

¹ “L’importanza dell’Artusi è notevolissima e bisogna riconoscere che *La Scienza in cucina* ha fatto per l’unificazione nazionale più di quanto non siano riusciti a fare *i Promessi Sposi*. I gustemi artusiani, infatti, sono riusciti a creare un codice di identificazione nazionale là dove fallirono gli stilemi e i fonemi manzoniani.” (Camporesi, *La Scienza in cucina e l’arte di mangiare bene*, xvi)

makes Artusi an emblem for a class, *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene* (1891) privileges a dialogic propensity, which is defined by a series of conversations: the first with the respective aesthetes and *buongustai*, Mantegazza and Guerrini; the second with his audience, formed not exclusively by housewives and cooks, but the literate as well. Ultimately, the interplay among the triad Mantegazza, Guerrini, and Artusi is what fashions the most far reaching conceptualization of modern Italian *taste*, producing a paradigm that finds its utmost propagation in *La scienza in cucina*.

This chapter will structurally reflect the vivid and contemporary dialogue present in the works, the correspondences, and the exchange of ideals that characterize Guerrini's and Artusi's production. Therefore, works will be presented in chronological order, since it most aptly echoes the conversations these gastronomes had with each other, Mantegazza, and the greater public.

I. *An ebbrezza of taste: La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV (1884) and Frammento di un libro di cucina del secolo XIV (1887)*

If Lombardy served as fount for the “medic in the kitchen”, then we now move our attention to Emilia-Romagna as provenance for the “literati in the kitchen”. Olindo Guerrini is an intriguing figure in this role, as he represents what I contend to be the very first Italian gastro-scholar, demonstrating the same erudition concerning the art of cuisine as he does with his literary studies. Guerrini— librarian,² poet, literary critic, polemicist, not to mention bibliophile— sees in cuisine and food texts a literary patrimony worthy of preservation and study, as well as a potent tool for artistic, philosophical, and nationalistic stimulus. As a poet, Guerrini obtains great popularity: as Mauro Novelli

² Guerrini was the director of the library of the University of Bologna for thirty-eight years before transferring at the age of seventy-one in 1914 to Genova, where he remained until the year before his death in 1916.

states, “Guerrini per cinquant’anni e più è stato tra i poeti preferiti — il preferito forse — dal popolo italiano” (26).³ Admirer and friend of Giosuè Carducci — whom he calls as “un arco trionfale”⁴—Guerrini’s collection of poems, *Postuma*, outsells Carducci’s *Odi barbare* (published both in 1877) with 4000 copies in its first four months of publication and over 12000 in three years (Novelli, 14). Notwithstanding the great success that Guerrini garners during his epoch, he is nearly forgotten, as commonly believed, due to Benedetto Croce’s critique for having an “ebbrezza eccessiva dei sensi”.⁵ In recent years there has been a renewed interest in the author’s work starting with *Postuma* (the most famed of his literature), but also reaching much deeper into his literary production.⁶ It is a production that sees the author publish a wide range of texts that go from lyric poetry to parodic satire all while employing an assortment of pseudonyms: from Lorenzo Stecchetti, the young poet who passes after a bout with phthisis;⁷ to Argia Sbolenti, the single and mordacious cook; to the Shakespearean named Mercutio, with which Guerrini finds his first success; to the satirical Marco Balossardi; each providing the author a

³ Novelli documents various contemporary fonts to demonstrate the enormous success Guerrini had, in particular with *Postuma*. For example Carducci himself serves as testimony: “Il lavoro di Guerrini, come lavoro tipografico, è piaciuto moltissimo” (15). Explaining the Guerrinian canzoniere’s success is Giuseppe Chiarini in 1907: “[chi] gustava i versi dei *Postuma* scorrenti come un giulebbe, quelli delle *Odi Barbare* dovevano di necessità parere duri, sversati, sgarbati” (29).

⁴ See Biblioteca Archiginnasio Bologna; Autografi Pallotti XV, 962.

⁵ See Croce, Benedetto. *La letteratura della nuova Italia*. Bari; Laterza & Figli, 1921: pgs 129-144. His judgment of Guerrini was later disputed by Stefano Cavazzuti, who defends Guerrini in an article titled “A proposito dei giudizi di Benedetto Croce su Olindo Guerrini e Francesco Domenico Guerrazzi” from 1922.

⁶ Whether it is the recent editions of *Nova Polemica* (2011, Il Ponte Vecchio), *La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XV e XVI* (2009, La Vita Felice), *Il libro dei colori. Segreti del secolo XV* (2007, Quattroventi), *Sonetti romagnoli*, (2004, Il Ponte Vecchio), *L’arte di utilizzare gli avanzi della mensa* (2003, Longo Angelo), etc..., or the numerous secondary literature published such as *Olindo Guerrini e la biblioteca popolare di Sant’Alberto* (2005, Longo Angelo), *Il verismo in maschera. L’attività poetica di Olindo Guerrini* (2004, Il Ponte Vecchio), etc...

⁷ Lorenzo Stecchetti is the most popular of Guerrini’s *noms de plume*, so much so that he was mysteriously resurrected to write the preface to Argia Sbolenti’s collection of poems.

different perspective from which to conceive his art.⁸ This contributes to Guerrini's mystique, to the splitting of his persona, or rather to a *sdoppiamento* of the author, as stated by his friend and collaborator Corrado Ricci.⁹

If Guerrini, as seems rather evident, is characterized by this propensity to create his art behind the guise of a *nome de plume*, with the probable scope of repudiating traditional boundaries while creating a sense of liberty in his writings, it is also apparent that it becomes a mode to conceal (or preserve, depending on perspective) the Guerrinian persona. In contrast to this tendency, Guerrini's gastronomical texts are penned by him, giving an interesting weight to this phase of his production. This should be of no surprise, since Guerrini is the first to dedicate himself to the collection and recuperation of Italian gastronomic works, creating a library that boasts a vast collection of documents and texts from the Middle Ages to his modern day, and that becomes reservoir even for contemporaries such as Artusi.¹⁰ Guerrini espouses the history and the future of Italian gastronomy disseminating, along with texts and recipes that span the spectrum of cuisine on the peninsula, an aesthetic of food that breaches traditional boundaries and ventures beyond his precedents.

The second half of the nineteenth century establishes a trend in which Medieval and Renaissance gastronomic texts are recuperated, edited and republished, and Guerrini

⁸ Other pseudonyms include *Giovanni Darenì, Pulinera, Bepi*.

⁹ "Era un uomo soggetto a un singolarissimo sdoppiamento, un uomo a due anime: l'una sensata e mite, l'altra sprezzante di ogni riguardo. Quantunque la prima fosse in lui tanto più radicata, nullameno si lasciava vincere dalla seconda. Sembrava quasi che volesse nascondere ciò che egli era in effetti..." This is a part of a quote that Umberto Pagnani reproduces in *Olindo Guerrini uomo e poeta*, p 21.

¹⁰ Guerrini's gastronomic library was comprised of over 250 texts, which were stored in a summer estate on the Bolognese hillside: *Villa di Gaibola* (Information from Biblioteca Comunale Olindo Guerrini di Sant'Alberto). It was later on gifted to University Library of Genova, where Guerrini was director between 1914 and 1915. It is from this collection that Guerrini draws inspiration and from which he extrapolates recipes (as we will see) to suggest to Artusi, as well as to create his very own *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzi della mensa*.

is at the forefront of this philological approach. The first of such texts published is by Francesco Zambrini, *Il libro della cucina del secolo XIV: Testo di lingua non mai fin qui stampato* in 1863. Zambrini uncovers the manuscript in the University of Bologna's library and publishes it for a very specific motive: as he states, "Niuno si faccia a credere che, nella pubblicazione di questo libro, io abbia avuto in animo porgere ammaestramenti di buona e gentile cucina", instead his desire is to "accrescere sempre più la messe di vocaboli, spezialmente domestici e di cose attinenti alle arti..." (v). Clearly, Zambrini's scope is not as gastronomic as it is linguistic, in fact he adds a glossary of unknown terms as an appendix in order to impart a vocabulary that had gone lost.¹¹ Following Zambrini are authors like Salomone Malpurgo, Domenico and Giacomo Zanichelli who publish *LVII Ricette d'un libro di cucina del buon secolo della lingua* (1890), as well as Ludovico Frati's *Libro di cucina del secolo XIV* (1899). Then there is Guerrini, who becomes a great exponent of this renewed interest in works of historical cuisines, as evidenced by his contribution to the Exposition held in Turin in 1884, entitled *La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV*; in addition to the manuscript discovered by him and published under the title *Frammento di un libro di cucina del secolo XIV* (1887).

¹¹ The text coincides with the reprint of a work by the juriconsult and theologian Giuseppe Averani (1662-1738), *Del vitto e delle cene degli antichi*, first published in its entirety posthumously in 1766. The work, which has little success during its epoch, finds new life in 1863 with Daelli e Comp.'s publication (Milano) as historical account of the manners of feasting, both in private and public convivial settings, in addition to the description of the consumption habits of the ancient Romans. Averani, famed for his endeavors in the philosophical and the legal sciences, becomes emblematic of a trend that comes about more than a century later, of men of science and letters who dedicate part of their productions to the study of gastronomy. Some of Averani's other works include: *De libertate civitatis Florentiae, ejusque dominii*.(1721); *Mémoire sur la liberté de l'état de Florence*. (1721); *Nova eaque plena assertio juris, quod S. Caesareae Maj. ac S. Imperio in magnum Tusciae competit ducatum, sive, Confutatio scripti, nuper pisis ex aulae Florentinae jussu editi, De libertate civitatis florentiae ejusque domini*, MDCCXXV(1725); *Josephi Averanii Interpretationum juris libri quinque : in quibus multa cum juris cicilis, tum aliorum veterum scriptorum, loca nova ratione illustrantur : multa item ex Antiquitate Romana Graecaque docte pertractantur* (1753).

La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV constitutes a watershed moment in Italian gastronomic and taste studies, inasmuch as it represents a serious attempt to (1) theorize and (2) historicize cuisine in its basic, as well as its loftier functions. The essay serves as a modern conceptualization of the sensorial and artistic viability of taste, preaching about its vital pertinence and ennobling the endeavor of cuisine in a fashion that clearly breaks from the traditional philosophical view, while expanding the gastro-aesthetics of Rajberti and Mantegazza. Guerrini ably demonstrates the eccentricities, complexities, and nuances of 14th and 15th-century cookery and banquetry — writing a text that boasts the refined penchant of a literary critic in addition to the delightful idiosyncrasies of an epicure. From culinary to societal rituals (from the mode and manner of food preparation to its consumption), to references to those excesses of the most famous of families (which he so promptly condemns), Guerrini expresses views that link modern day to an Italian ancestry that is filled with as many literary references as gastronomic. With this amalgam of food, history, and literature, Guerrini undertakes a work that draws from a cultural patrimony that is clearly *Italian*, from a glorious past that references those who are most revered: Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, as well as Apicius and Platina.

The author's scope is rather explicit: "Se vogliamo sapere come mangiarono quelli che visser prima di noi, dobbiamo frugare qua e là nei vecchi libri, nei manoscritti ingialliti, raccogliere documenti e ingegnarci alla meglio. La storia della cucina non c'è!" and therefore, "C'è tutta una storia da fare, c'è tutta una filosofia da applicare"(13). Although Guerrini's attempt is not to outline a detailed history, since that would take volumes to reproduce, he aims to draw attention to the "campo aperto e inesplorato e

ricco di fiori e di frutti [che] aspetti ancora chi lo coltivi e lo faccia conoscere...” (14).

The poet’s message is extremely significant, since it can be considered the moment in which true Italian gastronomic studies are conceived. This does not take away from the contributions made by Rajberti and Mantegazza, yet, although the latter, in particular, was extremely apt in referencing texts of a gastro-historic significance, Guerrini’s text is the first meticulous study of its kind. Additionally, from the point of view of taste convergence, or rather food as aesthetic subject, Guerrini leaves a very distinct mark.

In the aesthete’s attempt to (1) theorize cuisine he goes directly to the philosophical roots of the question of taste. Humanity has been unjust in regards to the senses because, as he says, there are *black sheep* and *white sheep*; in others words, there are senses that are privileged and others that are disregarded. Vision and hearing are held to be noble, because they are associated with the intellect and the “sacro nome di arte”—as per traditional philosophy (11). As a result, Guerrini decries the fact that the pleasures of the other senses are regarded as distant from intellectual production. Continuing the discourse of cuisine as civilizer present in Rajberti and Mantegazza, Guerrini makes clear that: “L’uomo non si nutre come i bruti, ma prepara, condisce e cuoce il suo cibo; anzi l’uomo non si distingue mai bene dal bruto se non quando trovò il fuoco per cuocere e le bevande fermentate” (11). Barbarism, for Guerrini, is linked to an absence of measure and proportion and is a symptom of the deficiency of culture that characterizes the blind voraciousness of the *preistorici*. Civilized man cannot but use intellect in matters of taste, since as Guerrini claims, it takes an educated and refined sense of taste to discern, judge, and evaluate foods and beverages. Hence, it is absolutely necessary to abolish the

prejudice that deems cuisine as vulgar, because “non è volgare quel che serve a una voluttà intelligente ed elegante” (12).

If the pleasures of taste have properties that are founded in the intellect, then Guerrini, as his precedents, elevates cuisine from applied to fine art. With Rajberti we see a paragon of food and painting,¹² with Mantegazza food and music¹³—Guerrini makes a parallel of a more literary bent:

...grande artista sarebbe chi potesse far gustare ai lettori il sapore di un cibo, come un poeta fa loro vedere con evidenza la calma di un paesaggio o la tempesta di un'anima... e augurare il giorno in cui il poeta abbia co'suoi ritmi l'arte di dipingere con pari evidenza una levata di sole e una colazione, la malinconia d'un tramonto e il sapore di una cena. (12-13).

Taste as poetry and a poetry of taste functions as the *ne plus ultra* of Guerrini's gastrosophy. With a synaesthetic intermingling of the senses, the poet advances an art in which word, brush stroke, and food blend into one gastro-sensist climax, depicting a poetry that satisfies our taste as much as the other “intelligent” senses. Food, for Guerrini, becomes a polyvalent medium through which various aesthetic and sensorial pleasures are satisfied. The fusion of elements of vision and taste, and of nature and food (*una levata di sole* and *una colazione*; *un tramonto* and *una cena*) become pinnacle for the *grande artista*.

Guerrini's attempt to (2) historicize cuisine yields as one of its fruits *La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV*: a study in which the author characterizes the culinary sensibility of each of the centuries in question. For instance, he critiques the 14th century as barbaric: it is characterized by a prevalently pompous irrationality that leads to the

¹² Rajberti sees a meal as an “esposizione artistica, ove fra tante cose si va ad ammirare l'opera d'un cuoco”(L'arte di convivere, 156) and the diner must be able to discern “come abbisogna un occhio esperto di artista a discernere una tela originale da una buona copia”(239).

¹³ Mantegazza sees a meal as “un concerto d'armonia e di melodia del gusto... che viene poi portato alla massima perfezione dal genio dell'artista” (Fisiologia del piacere, 65).

abuse of spices and aromatics, reflecting the utter absence of good taste and refinement. The 15th century, on the other hand, with society and culture beginning to flourish, sees the first progresses of a cuisine of intellect and of an art of living and eating well— an artistic endeavor that Guerrini considers perfected in his day. However, the perfection of cuisine does not find a linguistic equivalent, according to the poet, for a vocabulary that is able to express the nuances and the gradations of tastes is wholly absent: “pel senso di gusto non abbiamo nemmeno un dizionario sufficiente” (12).¹⁴

Guerrini's nonpareil strive to attribute an historical significance to gastronomy is further substantiated by a manuscript of a medieval recipe book that he recuperated and edited in the occasion of the matrimony of Laura Gnaccarini, Giosuè Carducci's daughter, in 1887.¹⁵ With “alcune pagine del trecento...forse non inutili alla storia della lingua e degli usi antichi”, as stated in the dedication to Carducci,¹⁶ Guerrini demonstrates a philological approach absent from gastronomic discourse (93-94). The author notes how there was another part to Zambrini's manuscript (Manuscript 158, Biblioteca Universitaria Bologna) that was disregarded. He considers it to be a work of a different author than *Il libro in cucina...*, yet scribed by the same hand. Guerrini's paleographic study concludes in this fashion by examining the orthography and by considering the

¹⁴ Mantegazza is just as adamant about the perfected status of modern gastronomy. See *L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande*, 39; *Fisiologia del piacere*, 64; etc... Of note is that Guerrini's comment on the lack of dictionaries encompasses Mantegazza's *Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, which was published two years previous, in 1882.

¹⁵ Codice 158 of the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna, same font as the earlier published manuscript by Zambrini. See Roversi, Giancarlo. *Sapori e profumi del medioevo; Ricette, civiltà della tavola e piante aromatiche in uso nel '300*. Bologna: Atesa Editrice, 2003: p 13. In this volume Roversi publishes three texts, Guerrini's essay from 1884 and *Frammento di un libro di cucina del secolo XIV*, as well as document a piece of a Pier de' Crescenzi's treatise *De Agricultura* entitled *Piante aromatiche in uso nel Medioevo*. It is this edition of *Frammento...* that this study will reference (Roversi, 93-143).

¹⁶ Within the Guerrini-Carducci relationship, a gastronomic dialogue can be found. For example in a series of Guerrinian letters published by Elio Melli in *I Quaderni del Cardello* (Volume 15, 2006) is a letter held in Casa Carducci, in which the author of *Postuma*, the collection of poems which was in direct competition with the *Odi Barbari*, sends the great poet a recipe for baccalà.

idiomatic consistency of the documents, while dating the manuscript back to the second half of the 14th century, as the language and style are older than the calligraphy itself (95, 98). Guerrini is then able to identify the author of one of the documents; Zambrini's codex is attributed to Niccolò Salimbeni, the 13th-century alchemist quoted in Dante's *Inferno* XXIX, concurrently noting that the scribe filled the text with non-Tuscan dialectal forms (100-104).

It is with this philological approach that Guerrini posits a requisite relationship between a literary gastronomic past and modern gastrosophic principles that together define the poet's model of taste. It is a paradigm that is deeply rooted in a scholarly praxis of *gourmandism* governed by a bourgeois pragmatism and the ideals of contemporary Positivist culture. This bipartite theory of gastronomy is a trend that Guerrini espouses, and together with his gastronome colleague, Pellegrino Artusi, it becomes a paradigm of social gourmandism, rooted in theory as well as nation-building. What Guerrini illustrates, more than any other, is that a predilection for a cuisine in its modern form need not deter from an historical appreciation, nor from an erudite restoration of a culinary national lineage. Ultimately, “non solo l'arte ma anche la storia ha dimenticato la cucina” and Guerrini is the first to bring this concept to the forefront, in the attempt to rectify it (12). The poet's taste theory is one that is in continuous development throughout his career, and with the passing of years it seems to occupy a greater space within his production. This is particularly the case once he begins interactions with Artusi.

II. *The Artusi Effect*

Artusi, considered by many as the father of *Italian* gastronomy due to the enormous success of *La scienza in cucina*, was first and foremost a literary critic. Author of *Vita di Ugo Foscolo* (1878) and *Osservazioni in appendice a trenta lettere di Giuseppe Giusti* (1881),¹⁷ Artusi had modest success in this arena, but these publications are important as they account for the literary propensity that defines *La scienza in cucina*—the work with which Artusi-gastronomer, as well as Artusi-aesthete, gains the fame that is afforded him in modern day. Whether it is the festivities for the hundredth anniversary of his death,¹⁸ the numerous international restaurants that bare his name, or the success of various editions of his text published in recent years, it is evident that within the last year or so the Artusi brand has become a cultural icon, long after the success of his book. This is attributable to the achievements of his text, which are extraordinary in the panorama of Italian literature: along with the *Promessi sposi* and *Pinocchio*, it has become the best selling Italian publication.¹⁹

The book was written and first published in a crucial nexus of Italian history that saw in the newly developing middle classes an expansive domain of new experiences, particularly in matters of taste. The work disseminated a new repertoire of recipes as well as further educating the bourgeoisie on a plethora of topics, from manners to hygiene, and

¹⁷ In his autobiography, Artusi recounts how he was destined to be a merchant as his father wished, however, because of poor instruction he was taken out of school to assist in his father's travels. At a certain point in his life Artusi regrets not having taken up classical studies. Therefore, he becomes a self-taught man of letters, arduously dedicating himself to literary study. Artusi's inclination for letterariness is also demonstrated by his *Zimbaldone*, 19 volumes held in the *Archivio comunale di Forlimpopoli*, which is an interesting collection of literary quotations, excerpts, and notes.

¹⁸ To commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Artusi's death in 2011 there was a pilgrimage, which coincided with the annual *Festa Artusiana*, from Forlimpopoli (the author's birth-place and residence of youth) to Florence (where Artusi spends his adult years). There were also simultaneous celebrations held in conjunction with the *Casa Artusi* in the United States to honor Artusi, such as the conference held in The New School in New York on March 31st, 2011.

¹⁹ See Massimo Montanari's article *Leggere il cibo: un viaggio nella letteratura gastronomica in La Cucina Bricconcella*, p 33.

culinary dexterity to philosophical wisdoms. However, it is clear that this alone does not explain the gastronomic text's vast diffusion and influence. Artusi himself boasts in his final edition of 1909, to having sold 52,000 copies (*La scienza in cucina*, 9), and by the centennial of its publication, the number reaches close to 2 million (Alberini, 96). It is this book that defines a tradition, as indicated by Piero Meldini,²⁰ that permeates, whether consciously or unconsciously, the psyche of generations of cooks, mothers, and wives. Its recipes become part of an anthropological reality and archetypes of a multiplicity of regionalisms and micro-territorialisms that are so much a part of the Italian way of life. If these claims are valid, then there are certain questions that need to be addressed: firstly, how does the cookbook genre develop in the 19th-century leading up to the publication of the Artusian text?; secondly, what are the contributions made by Artusi's gastronome/gastrosopher contemporaries?; thirdly, what sort of *Italian* identity does the work put forth?; finally, what are the elements that contribute to its success? I explore these questions in the following 6 sections which address: 1) the Italian cookbook boom of the 18th and 19th Centuries; (2) what the title of Artusi's work reveals; (3) Mantegazza as the *science* and (4) Guerrini as the *art* in *La scienza in cucina*; (5) Artusi's attempt at constructing a national identity and (6) his work's literary narrative.

1) *The Italian ricettario*

In a paper presented on the occasion of the first *Festa artusiana* in 1997,²¹

Massimo Montanari focuses on the development of regional cuisine.²² According to the

²⁰ See, "La 'cucina del nonno', ovvero: Artusi inventore della tradizione"; a paper given on the occasion of the first *Festa artusiana* in 1997.

²¹ The *Festa artusiana* are celebrations in honor of Artusi held annually in Forlimpopoli, birth place of the gastronome and residence until 1852. According to his autobiography, the infamous *Passatore* (Stefano

gastronomic historian, although it may seem that regional cuisines are atavistic, the reality is quite different, as they are the conception of a much more modern epoch. The notion of dishes (single recipes), conversely to that of a cuisine (a *togetherness* of dishes with rules of preparation), has always existed (25). The classical and medieval gastronome's intent was to unite on a single table the most varied tastes and experiences possible. Even though there may have been a tendency to gather products that were relative to certain territories, the goal would have then been to mix, meld and fuse them. It is only when national identities begin to consolidate, generally between the 18th and 19th Centuries, that regional identities begin to establish, simultaneously garnering attention for their culinary traditions. Therefore it seems that the literature of food, just as much as traditional literature, becomes reflective of regionalities in the very moment that their autonomous traditions and cultures are endangered by centralizing forces.²³

In this period, Italy begins to see an increase in the publication of cookbooks that coincide with a prolific gastronomic era in France. Books such as *Il cuoco piemontese perfezionato a Parigi* (1766), and *L'economia della città e della campagna ovvero il nuovo cuoco italiano secondo il gusto francese* (1772) are nothing more than assemblages and translations of French counterparts during the other French revolution,

Pelloni) and group of his bandits raided the town theater and the wealthier homes, including Artusi's. The damages were not only economic, as it is speculated by various historians that one of Pellegrino's sisters, Gertrude, was later institutionalized because of the psychological ramifications of that night of January 25, 1851. It is believed that she was physically violated by members of the brigade. Pelloni held all the well-off families of the town hostage in the theater forcing them to pay a ransom to obtain freedom. As consequence of the subterfuge, which signaled a turning point for the 31 year old, Pellegrino decides to leave for Florence the following year, with his family that follows. See: Artusi, Pellegrino. *Autobiografia* a cura di A. Capatti e A. Pollarini. Milano: Il Saggiatore, 1993: pp 76- 83. All presentations from the *Festa artusiana* are held in the *Biblioteca comunale di Forlimpopoli*, starting from 1997.

²² Montanari's paper is entitled, *Artusi e la cucina delle regioni*, and is found on pages 74- 82 of 1997's *Festa artusiana*.

²³ This is a process that takes place in Italy during the *Risorgimento*, and can be evidenced in the gastronomic authors covered in this chapter, as much as the proponents of the 19th-century Realism, which reflects the reality of specific localities throughout the nation.

this one culinary.²⁴ It is a revolution that is marked by a shift towards a cuisine touted by a bourgeois audience, with texts such as Vincent La Chapelle's *Cuisinier moderne* (1733), François Marin's *Les dons de Comus ou les délices de la table* (1739), and Menon's *Cusinière bourgeoise* (1745). As Bemporat states, in the last thirty years of the 1700s, the Italian peninsula, albeit clearly fragmented, is benefiting from a political and economic period of relative stability, which is reflected in the gastronomic literature produced; for the first time texts show what *Italy* is and what it will eventually become (267). There is now the propagation of a cuisine that is humble and provincial, indicative of the regionalities that will eventually be culturally and culinarily established. Recipe books such as the Neapolitan *Il cuoco galante* by Vincenzo Corrado (1786), *Il cuoco maceratese* (1779) by Antonio Nebbia, and the Roman *L'Apicio moderno ossia l'arte di apprestare ogni sorta di vivande* (1790) by Francesco Leonardi, are all works that leave a significant imprint demonstrating the seeds of provincial cuisines, while introducing gastronomy to a new audience, the bourgeoisie. Corrado, Nebbia, and Leonardi published multiple significant gastronomic texts during the period,²⁵ each bringing distinct styles and contributions: Corrado applies Pythagorean theory to gastronomy, while insisting on the use of local foods; Nebbia introduces a very immediate, almost conversational language with a dose of fantasy; Leonardi is probably the most far reaching figure of his time, with numerous publications in which he

²⁴ The French texts from which these works are derived are Menon's *Cusinière bourgeoise* (1745), however it is of note that the translator adds a new chapter copied from La Chapelle's *Cuisinier moderne* (1733), *l'Oeconomie générale de la compagne* di Louis Liger. For a study which traces the advent of regional cuisine in France see: Csergo, Julia. *The Emergence of Regional Cuisines in Food: A Culinary History*, 500-515.

²⁵ Corrado publishes various recipe books following the success of *Il cuoco galante: Il credenziere di buon gusto, Il cibo pitagorico ovvero erbaceo per uso de' nobili e de' letterati, La manovra della ciccolata, Il trattato delle patate per uso di cibo, and I pranzi giornalieri*. Leonardi publishes, *Il dizionario ragionato degli alimenti, Apicio moderno ossia l'arte del credenziere, Gianin ossia la cuciniera delle Alpi, Tonkin ossia il credenziere cinese, and Il pasticciere all'uso moderno*.

undertakes cuisines from various regions such as Lazio and Tuscany, while demonstrating a keen commercial sense and an extremely vast culture encompassing varied interests. Yet despite the advancements made with these authors, particularly in comparison to many of their precedents and contemporaries, we are still in a period in which the representation of regionalities is at a very early stage and quite fragmentary.

With the advent of the 19th century, the recipe book as a genre continues to expand and cookbooks are now increasingly being created for a more varied regional middle class audience. Texts from Piedmont, Lombardy, Liguria, as well as Lazio and Campagna, are becoming profuse, and are farther reaching. Vincenzo Agnoletti, for instance, publishes *La nuova cucina economica* (1803) and *La nuovissima cucina economica* (1814), which are texts that are encyclopedic by nature (4 tomes), providing an alimentary science that is also culinarily practical. What is evident in Agnoletti's texts is that there is a newfound attentiveness on economic matters of the kitchen — a concept that seems to permeate a large quantity of contemporary gastronomic publications. Cookbooks such as *La cucina casereccia per istruzione di chi ama unire al gusto la economia* (1817), *Il nuovo cuoco milanese economico* (1829), *Cucina economica moderna* (1843), *La cucina sana, economica ed elegante* (1846), *Cucina teorico-pratica* (1836) are texts whose main goal is to provide recipes that may aid in bourgeois frugality, while coming from cities such as Napoli, Milan, Bologna, and Torino. It is becoming evident that recipe books are experiencing an important shift, from an exclusively aristocratic, francophonic and francophilic genre, to a genre that begins to reflect a certain *Italianess*; an *Italianess* which is not comprised of one hegemonic or

homogenized culture, but of an assortment of traditions and values that encompass the peninsula.

The cookbooks of this period, which proceed from the gradually burgeoning regionalization, have a relatively restricted target public. They are released by local publishers and are intended for local audiences. For example, a text such as Ippolito Cavalcanti's²⁶ *Cucina teorico-pratica*, published in Naples and written in Neapolitan in 1846 (after an edition in 1837 composed in a failed linguistic concoction that can only be called an Italianate French jargon with regional touches) is for an audience which can, on the one hand, comprehend the work linguistically (i.e, Neapolitans), as well as have access to ingredients that are associated with the territory. It is, however, to be noted that many texts, despite provenance of publication and language, are gastronomically a coalescing of various sources with little regard for cohesion or originality. This creates an uncertainty in gastronomic identity, blurring the line between regional and foreign, while it becomes a salient element of the genre.

As the century progresses, the economic aspect of cookery becomes a necessary tool for commercial viability. An all out publication war seems to develop, and texts work to find ways to evince frugality with more gusto than their precedents, simultaneously attempting to expand their audience to new classes. Works such as Giovanni Vialardi's *Trattato di cucina, pasticceria moderna, credenza e relativa confetteria. Basato sopra un metodo economico, semplice, e borghese* (Torino, 1854), begin to lose commercial plausibility confronted with later published texts as *Il cuiniere moderno ossia metodo facile economico salubre per cucinare le vivande*

²⁶ Cavalcanti is a figure of interest, because he is an aristocratic figure attempting to compose a text that preaches the "practical" values of cuisine. The work is signed "Cav. Sig. Ippolito Cavalcanti Duca di Buonvicino", a clear indication that the author has no intention whatsoever to hide his privileged status.

(Milano, 1864), *Il cuoco pratico ed economico, ossia l'arte di fare una buona cucina con poca spesa* (Livorno, 1864), *Manuale del cuciniere italiano moderno, ovvero l'amico dei ghiotti economici e dei convalescenti* (Livorno, 1867), *Il cuciniere moderno indispensabile ad ogni ceto di persona* (Milano, 1871), or *Il cuoco per tutti. 1000 piatti economici* (Milano, 1873).

Aside from an insistence on economical practicality, there are other trends that can be traced within the genre of recipe books that lead up to the publication of *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*. Part of the evolving regional identities is a new emphasis on seasonality: publications such as *Il cuoco napoletano, 672 vivande per pranzi giornalieri secondo i prodotti delle quattro stagioni dell'anno* (1865), prescribe a priority for products in season, which deems local foods as foundation for a regional culinary identity. In juxtaposition to this tendency of a regional gastronomic identity, there is a trend toward a modern cuisine of an international status as represented by *La cucina economica e salubre, cucina francese, lionese, provenzale, tedesca ed italiana* (Milano, 1844),²⁷ *Il cuoco sapiente ossia l'arte di piacere ai gusti degli italiani con cibi nostrali e stranieri* (Firenze, 1871), and *Il re dei cuochi, ossia l'arte di mangiare al gusto degl'italiani con cibi nostrali e stranieri* (Firenze, 1881).

Another trend that begins to evolve is linked to the domestic aspect of cookery — cuisine intended for the family. If texts were at this point published in large part for the middle classes, then they are more precisely geared towards bourgeois, particularly the *mater familias*. In many ways anticipating a trend that will take place in the 20th century,

²⁷ Of interest is how this text groups up German cuisines and Italian cuisines as singular entities, yet when it comes to French gastronomy there is an emphasis on the cuisines of different regions and territories. This seems to be reflective of the culinary reality in which the text is written; as French regional cuisines are being fully developed and recognized, whereas it is a process that is still in a puerile state within Italy.

texts are beginning to acknowledge a female presence in cuisine, albeit marginalized, as domestic nurturer and manager. *La cuoca di famiglia* (Venezia, 1877), *Il memoriale della cuoca o il modo di preparare la cucina di famiglia con poca spesa e buon gusto* (Milano, 1879), *La cuciniera in famiglia. Ricette, consigli, precetti d'economia ed igiene domestica* (Milano, 1888), *Cucina di famiglia* (Milano, 1890), and *Il piccolo Vialardi, cucina semplice ed economica per le famiglie* (Torino, 1890), etc... are directed to wives and mothers, functioning just as much as manual of etiquette as they do as cookbooks. In the instance of *Il piccolo Vialardi*, the work begins with a section entitled, *Doveri della donna di casa*, in which tasks, modes of comportment, and practical decisions (such as tableware) are addressed to ensure the organization, quality and the ultimate success of a proper dinner.

There is a relatively constant flow of cookbooks being published on a yearly basis within the peninsula during the eighteenth hundreds,²⁸ and as consequence *cuciniere* are replaced by *vere cuciniere*, and *cuciniere moderne*; *il cuoco milanese* is replaced by *il nuovo cuoco milanese*, etc... As a positivist culture of pedagogy expands in the second half of the century, thus augmenting the production of hygienes as well as *galatei*, the recipe book as a genre expands rapidly and, as a result, it is elevated. As with the other genres, cookbooks become of great importance in the formation of class and national identity, while additionally aiding in the construction of regional identities — Artusi's text is no exception. If Rajberti is the purveyor of an etiquette at the table that defines food as fine art, Mantegazza the disseminator of an alimentary science that is to benefit every sector of society, and Guerrini the erudite gastrosopher *par excellence*, than Artusi

²⁸ According to *Casa Artusi* there are 123 traceable recipe books made for domestic use published between 1800-1900. See *Casa Artusi Quaderno n.4*, 2010.

through *La scienza in cucina* is a sort of amalgam of all these characteristics, as well as the delightful eccentric.

2) *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene: title and form*

For an understanding of the cultural intricacies that construct the form and substance of Artusi's work, it is important to initiate our analysis from the title itself. Wholly positivist and indicative of the two approaches that characterize the text—*la scienza* and *l'arte* are also reflective of the new cultural attention bestowed on gastronomy. In the years subsequent to the unification, publications of a scientific nature increase rapidly, so much so that they surpass the number of literary publications. This denotes the prominence of positivist culture, particularly within the petty and middle bourgeoisie of the north (where there were signs of economic progress), who saw in the reading of these texts an educative progress that would allow for the fulfillment of a better *Italian* life. Therefore, as Filippo Mazzonis indicates, the texts whose goal is to “fare gli italiani” through a *pedagogic-moralistic literature* (as in the case of Mantegazza) become the epoch's best sellers.²⁹ It is no different with Artusi. It is a period in which aesthetes comprehend the laws of science in every facet of life, transporting them into the kitchen; chemistry, or rather alchemy, becomes a sort of culinary prerequisite, joining another science that defines Italian Positivism—hygienics.

La scienza in cucina is in every sense a dialogic text, as indicated, at least superficially, by its original title of 1891: *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene: igiene, economia, e buon gusto. Manuale pratico per le famiglie*. Whereas *economia* and

²⁹ Mazzonis, Filippo, *Divertimento Italiano. Problemi di storia e questioni storiografiche dell'unificazione*, Milano: Franco Angeli, 1992: p 273.

buon gusto are distinctly present in the titles of dozens of cookbooks throughout the century,³⁰ *scienza* and *igiene* are for the first time included in an Italian recipe book title. If the title consciously invokes the positivist muse of science, then it is evident that Artusi's work is indebted to a positivist literary production. After all, it is perfectly logical that the author would look towards a physiological approach for the expression of his gastronomic ideals, following the likes of Brillat-Savarin and Mantegazza, inasmuch as it would guarantee appeal. From physiological literature and studies such as Rajberti's *Il gatto: cenni fisiologi e morali* (1845), to the many published by Mantegazza, [from *La fisiologia del piacere* (1880) to *L'arte di essere felici* (1886)], to overtly gastronomic texts, such as Rajberti's *L'arte di convitare* and Mantegazza's *Piccolo dizionario della cucina* (1882) and *L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande* (published while Artusi is working on the first edition of his text in 1887), it is evident that the *medics in the kitchen* help formulate Artusi's vision of *La scienza in cucina*.

3) *The poligamo delle scienze and Artusi*

Artusi has an excellent rapport with his gastronome contemporary and self defined "poligamo delle scienze,"³¹ Mantegazza. In a publication from the *Archivio per l'antropologia e la etnologia*³² in Florence, which was founded and directed by the scientist, Artusi is listed as an advising member of the board as well as associate.

³⁰ For example, *Il cuoco per tutti, ossia l'arte di ben cucinar con economia e buon gusto* and *Il vero re dei cuochieri, ovvero l'arte di cucinare con economia al gusto degli italiani*, both by Giacomo Pirelli (1885 and 1890). There are those that will follow Artusi as well: for example, *L'arte di mangiar bene e con economia* (1922) and *L'arte di mangiar bene. Manuale pratico per le massaie* (1923).

³¹ Mantegazza often references himself in this fashion. An example is in his final work *La bibbia della speranza* of 1909, p 1.

³² Is produced by the *Museo di Antropologia e Etnologia*. This specific publication is the 35th volume of the journal; Tipografia di Salvatore Landi, 1905.

Archived at the museum is also a letter from Artusi to Mantegazza from April 25, 1890 in which he regretfully declines a position offered to him within his organization due to a recovery that leaves him bedridden. The significance of this letter is found less in subject matter than tone, as Artusi writes with complete reverence for his colleague, and with a marked spirit of camaraderie and utter respect. Unfortunately, the epistolary correspondence between the two has for the large part gone lost. It is possible, however, to gather some indication of their interactions through other texts, which document their gastronomic communication. For example, Mantegazza in his diary *Giornale della mia vita*,³³ thanks his friend for advising him in the choice of a cook:

La nuova cuoca Orsolina è la migliore di quante ho avute in tutta la vita. Ogni giorno cambia piatti e son tutti o quasi tutti eccellenti. Ogni giorno benedico l'amico Artusi che me l'ha procurata. (*Giornale della mia vita*, 10 dicembre, 1894 in *Autobiografia*, 136)³⁴

After the many difficulties Artusi had to endure in publishing *La scienza in cucina*, a self-financed project, it is Mantegazza that encourages him, declaring “Col darci questo libro voi avete fatto un’opera buona e perciò vi auguro cento edizioni” (*La scienza in cucina*, 5). From 1902, the section *La storia di un libro* of *La scienza in cucina* reserves acknowledgements and praise for the “uomo di genio” that promotes his recipe book, recommending it “all’uditorio in due delle sue conferenze” (*Autobiografia*, 135).

What Mantegazza sees in *La scienza in cucina* is an instrument that furthers his pedagogic ideal for nationalistic renewal, offering a developing Italian society various

³³ Mantegazza’s *Giornale della mia vita* is a sort of diary/zibaldone written by the author. The manuscripts (60 volumes) are stored in the *Biblioteca Civica di Monza*.

³⁴ Mantegazza describes how he and his wife would go out in the morning and purchase food, to then allow Orsolina to create dishes. He cites a Christmas menu prepared by the cook that becomes emblematic of her frugality and creativity. It encompasses dishes from *Minestra alla portoghese* to *Salmi di tordi e starne* to *tartufi* to *Carciofi fritti* and *Stracotto*.

tools for cultural regeneration. The work, encyclopedic in nature, follows in the tradition of Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du gout* and Rajberti's *L'arte di convivare*, with its witty and charming prolixity. Its narrative is expository and immediate, in addition to whimsical and amusing, and arises from a movement rooted in the will to ennoble and enable *taste* — a tradition recognized and assimilated by Mantegazza himself. By the congratulatory letter that Artusi publishes in the fourth edition of *La scienza in cucina* of 1899, composed by Maria Fontoni Mantegazza (the medic's wife),³⁵ it is evident that after a difficult start the *elogi* became more frequent (24).³⁶

Artusi's text is very much the production of his epoch, and just as Mantegazza becomes one of its very first admirers, the scientist's brand of Positivist gastronomy greatly influences *La scienza in cucina*. The first traces of such influence can be evidenced in the section entitled *Alcune norme d'igiene*. Artusi starts by corroborating the ideal of cuisine as preventive medical care. As both Rajberti and Mantegazza claim, diet is the means through which man can govern himself and keep his health in perfect equilibrium. For Artusi this notion is no different, as his guidelines of hygiene target nervous and oversensitive persons, or, rather hypochondriacs (14). Germane to this discourse is Mantegazza's publication of 1887 entitled *Il secolo nevrosico*, in which the author declares food as tool for reestablishing proper equilibrium: so that "il *nervoso* se ne va per la stessa strada per cui era venuto" (7). *L'uomo nevrosico*, a man who possesses not five senses but "ne ha cinquecento, ne ha cinquemila" is understood to have a specific ailment, one that occupies many pages of the text: "l'inferno dell'ipocondria" (77). For

³⁵ The letter decrees Artusi's work as *utile* and *caro* and Maria F. Mantegazza thanks Artusi for having composed it.

³⁶ Another surviving letter from Mantegazza's daughter is stored in the *Archivio del comune di Forlimpopoli*. The letter is Pussy Mantegazza informing Artusi about her father's state of health, which is ameliorating. (1199a, b, c)

Artusi, it is this hypochondriacal figure that makes food an ordeal, not due to the quality of ingredients, but because of the repercussions perceived in consumption. He states that the afflicted, who eats too much, becomes so worried of possible impending disasters that he seeks recourse in an excessive abstinence, which conversely has its own negative consequences (15). However, Artusi's hygiene does not limit itself to cuisine. As in Mantegazza, the way one dresses is essential to maintain good health.

Mantegazza speaks of taste and touch as the crowning achievements of modern sensorial perfection, and while taste refinement is left to the cook and the gourmand, touch has been honed through modern clothing and the perfection of the *arts (Igiene dei sensi, 12)*. The medic insists that hygienic clothing should be “molto leggero, cattivo conduttore del calorico, molto poroso e, per quanto si può, bianco o di colore molto chiaro” (*Elementi d'Igiene, 332*). Clothing has a very specific role in good health, as it defends us from the cold and contagion, maintains our skin and absorbs perspiration, while giving the sense of touch sensations of warmth or airiness. Furthermore, Mantegazza insists on the importance of porous fabrics for the reason that impermeable materials are “dannose assai alla salute” (334). For Artusi too, good health is also ensured through appropriate wardrobe. Within this discourse the author implores mothers to start dressing children lightly from infancy, as to assure that as adults they will be less sensitive to sudden changes in atmospheric temperature and less susceptible to illness (15). He insists that the habit of bearing too many clothes when not necessary, as done for example on the first cool days, is an unhealthy practice. Furthermore, a healthy house is one that is full of light and well ventilated, therefore Artusi's praxis is one in which the elements and the seasons are not feared, but welcomed. He directly addresses

the overcautiousness that characterizes the hygiene of his time by declaring it, in essence, *unhygienic*. This may not have been a point of great salience had it not been developed in a cookbook, but its presence in such a text demonstrates the author's intent to make his work an amalgam of the pressing issues of his day — a tendency that characterizes so much of Mantegazza's work as well as the Artusian dialogicism.

La scienza in cucina is, first and foremost, a cookbook and its hygiene of food is simple and direct, “Avvezzatevi a mangiare d’ogni cosa,” however, the author warns “non vi fate schiavi del vostro stomaco” (16). Artusi's heed is against the *vice* of gluttony, preaching that the immediate gratification of excess will later lead to a diet of a convalescent. It is a message that mirrors Mantegazza's notion of rational gluttony: from one point of view all the delicacies available are to be savored and valued, yet moderation and simplicity are key to good hygiene and longevity. From breakfast procedures, to mealtimes, to digestive stability, Artusi's *health guidelines* once again reflect a Mantegazzian paradigm. Whether it is the convivial feast that ought to characterize *pranzo*,³⁷ the broad range of foods that are to be consumed,³⁸ or the importance of proper mastication³⁹ to assure proper digestion, it is clear that Positivist ideology, particularly the gastro-hygienic ideals of its greatest Italian exponent, Mantegazza, informs Artusi's work.

³⁷ See for example *Elementi di Igiene*, p 227, and *La scienza in cucina*, Artusi (for example) defines *pranzo* as “una festa di famiglia” (18)

³⁸ “Nel desinare devono essere rappresentati tutti gli alimenti. Nel pane, nella minestra nelle patate, etc” (*Elementi di Igiene*, 227); “Più e diverse qualità di cibi, dei due regni della natura... contribuiscono meglio a una buona digestione...” (*La scienza in cucina*, 18).

³⁹ “Il masticare è il primo atto meccanico che prepara i cibi alla deglutazione e alla digestione e vuole essere fatto con una certa cura, perché il ventricolo abbia meno a faticare e i denti non abbiano a soffrire” (*Elementi di Igiene*, 37); “...la prima digestione si fa in bocca, quindi non si potrebbe mai abbastanza raccomandare la conservazione dei denti, per tritare e macinare convenientemente i cibi che ...si digeriscono assai meglio di quelli tritati e pestati in cucina...(*La scienza in cucina*, 20).

Ultimately, Artusi's alimentary hygiene goes well beyond the section *Alcune norme d'igiene*. Looking at the text as a whole it is possible to derive a systemic nutritional comportment that is balanced and promotes variety and measure as foundation to a cuisine that is to be an "assemblaggio armonico di odori, sapori e colori, di educazione di gusto estroso" (Sangiorgi and Toti, 107).⁴⁰ This dietetic awareness allows the author to directly engage contemporaries and discuss the different alimentary benefits of foodstuffs. In one instance, Artusi quotes Mantegazza, who declares that "il caffè non favorisce in modo alcuno la digestione" (683).⁴¹ To this notion, Artusi makes a distinction, claiming that this may be true for those nervous systems indifferent to the beverage, however for those affected, "è un fatto innegabile che digeriscono meglio..." (683).⁴²

Artusi, as an icon of Positivism, comprehends that *scienza* needs the same attention in the kitchen, as it garners in other facets of life. The chemical reactions of cuisine⁴³ in addition to the fully conscious hygienic endeavor, allows the text to occupy a gastrologic sphere wholly its own, ensuring the passage, as Medagliani and Migliari state, from an *empirical cuisine* to a *scientific cuisine* (61). With Mantegazza as a fount of both inspiration and morale, and an epoch whose cultural edifice is constructed on the premise of scientific knowledge, it becomes rather evident that *scienza* would ultimately find

⁴⁰ For a study that demonstrates the dietological usefulness of the manual for modern day, see Sangiorni and Toti's study in *La cucina bricconcella*. (107-116)

⁴¹ Even Fillippo Lussana in his manual, *Il caffè* (1872), uses the same quote to characterize Mantegazza's viewpoint regarding the digestive properties of coffee; see p 49.

⁴² Nevertheless, Mantegazza's position, in reality, is rather similar to his colleague's. While the quote used by Artusi is extrapolated from *Igiene della cucina* (1866), Mantegazza addresses the topic on various occasions and in *Piccolo dizionario della cucina* (1882), Mantegazza's tone is quite different: when coffee is taken warm "i nervi del ventricolo subiscono un eccitamento..." and therefore digestion is aided due to the effects of the *alimento nevoso*, however "Per molti ventricoli anzi il caffè rallenta o arresta la digestione" (28).

⁴³ For an example, see recipe 786 *Olive in salamoia*.

prominence in the title and in the fabric of a cookery book. Nevertheless, it is not to be neglected that the work propagates the artistic, or rather gastronomic, aspect of cuisine as much as its scientific qualities. After all, it is the epoch of taste ennoblement, of a sensorial aesthetic of taste as art. It is an inevitable process that finds root in Italy with Rajberti in a pre-unificatory era, only to find culmination with the *triad of taste* (Mantegazza, Guerrini, and Artusi). Therefore, if we can see in Mantegazza inspiration for *scienza*, then the premise of *arte* in the title cannot go without exploration, and in order to do so it is paramount to return to Olindo Guerrini.

4) *Guerrini and the art of La scienza in cucina*

As previously described, Rajberti, Mantegazza, and Guerrini develop an analogical paragon of taste through food as figurative art, music and poetry respectively, however Guerrini's ideal is of a more profound nature. Through a letter quoted in *La scienza in cucina* (10-12), Artusi calls attention to the Guerrinian fundamentals for a new theoretical gastrosophy: the human race is founded on the satisfaction of two primordial and instinctual desires, that of *preservation* and *reproduction*.⁴⁴ The term satisfaction, in and of itself, implicates the gratification of a *pleasure*— a notion so aptly analyzed by Mantegazza not only in *Fisiologia del piacere* but, also in various other texts, such as *Le estasi umane* (1887). The pleasures of *preservation* find basis in the sense of taste, while *reproduction* in the sense of touch. If Mantegazza adjudicates modernity as the perfecter of taste and touch, then Guerrini decrees the two senses as the most essential to humanity,

⁴⁴ It is an ideal already seen with Fourier and Mantegazza. In Fourier's utopist application of the senses, taste and touch, as Howes writes, "are the basis for valuable intellectual stimulation and development (230). The Frenchman also emphasizes the importance of these two senses to the masses: "The mob requires to be fed and clothed" (Classen, 27). Mantegazza underscores their significance in preservation and reproduction: "vivere vuol dire nutrirsi e generare" (*Elementi di Igiene*, 15).

with particular attention to the former. As seen in his other writings, the poet takes aim at the traditional hierarchy of the senses, which deems vision and sight prominent, while the other ‘bodily’ senses are condemned: “si può vivere ciechi e sordi, ma non senza l’attività funzionale degli organi del gusto.” (11). This leads Guerrini to question the validity of our traditional aesthetic interpretation:

Come è dunque che nella scala dei sensi i due più necessari, anzi indispensabili alla vita ed alla sua trasmissione sono reputati più vili? Perché quel che sodisfa gli altri sensi, pittura, musica, ecc., si dice arte, si ritiene cosa nobile, ed ignobile invece quel che sodisfa il gusto? [...] i sensi che si dirigono alla cerebrazione sono stimati più nobili di quelli che presiedono alla conservazione, e sarebbe ora di cassare questa ingiusta sentenza. (11-12)

This passage is characterized by the Sensist ideology that on the one hand, becomes target for criticism for the author,⁴⁵ but on the other, foresees a sensorial renewal. For Guerrini reminds us, “Non vergogniamoci dunque di mangiare il meglio che si può e ridiamo il suo posto alla gastronomia. Infine...questa società malata di nervi finirà per capire che, anche in arte, una discussione sul cucinare l’anguilla, vale una dissertazione sul sorriso di Beatrice” (12). Whereas Rajberti and Mantegazza look to ennoble taste, rendering gastronomy, and even gastrology, fine art production, Guerrini goes as far as securing it a position of preeminence: with a tone that goes beyond Positivism the author states, “Non si vive di solo pane, è vero; e l’arte di renderlo più economico, più sapido, più sano, lo dico e lo sostengo, è vera arte”. Then, in a final exaltation he implores: “Riabilitiamo il senso del gusto e non vergognamoci di soddisfarlo onestamente, ma il meglio che si può...” (12).

⁴⁵ Luigi Alberti, a contemporary of Guerrini, sees in Guerrini, as well as Carducci, “un sensismo dannoso e riprovevole per ogni rispetto”; Alberti, Luigi, *Praefatio*, Firenze: Pei Tipi dell'Arte della Stampa, 1878: p 5.

In addition to this letter, the reader finds published in its entirety a response to Artusi's gifted edition of *La scienza in cucina*, in which Guerrini demonstrates his gastro-historic proclivity as well as the satirical vein that defines much of the epoch's prose, including Rajberti's gastro-writings. In this letter Guerrini parodies the courtly chef and recipe book composer, Giovanni Vialardi, whose francophonic language and pompous style is representative of the incomprehensibility and general incongruity of the aristocratic tradition of cookbooks.⁴⁶ Comparatively, the Artusian model, both in style and ideal, presents itself as an antithetical parallel to which Vialardi can only appear antiquated and irrelevant for the modern developing nation. The excessively ornate franco-piemontese language adopted by Guerrini in the letter while conceiving the recipe *Grillo abbragiato* is also, as indicated by Giulio Manetti, evidentiary of another controversy — the occurring *piemontessation*, which saw *Italian* as a forgotten language, while Piemontese was alternated with French.⁴⁷ Guerrini is in fact lamenting the lack of identity and autonomy that plagues the art of *Italian* cuisine: “non abbiamo che traduzioni dal francese o compilazioni sgangherate. Per trovare una ricetta pratica e adatta per una famiglia bisogna andare a tentone, indovinare, sbagliare. Quindi Benedetto l'Artusi!” (23). For Guerrini, just as Mantegazza, Artusi's manual marks the foundation of a cuisine for the middle classes, preaching food as art as well as the necessary frugality essential to the Italian family. It is through this vehicle that an identity can be purveyed, through the *volgarizzazione*, as Guerrini puts it, or, rather the

⁴⁶ Vialardi, after 20 years as chef at the Casa Savoia, publishes the text, *Trattato di cucina, pasticceria moderna, credenza e relative confetteria* in 1854, containing 2000 recipes divided in 19 chapters.

⁴⁷ See Manetti (15) for a discussion of how Artusi's *Italian* becomes a point of pride nationally contrasting this model of Piedmontese.

diffusion of these precepts of taste to the audience that is also responsible for nation-building—the middle classes.

The inclusion of these letters in *La scienza in cucina* is indicative of both Artusi's desire to further promulgate Guerrini's ideals, and also of the framework under which Artusi crafts theory and text. In addition to this letter, Artusi cites the poet's conference in Turin of 1884⁴⁸ as premise for the future of gastronomy, whose responsibility is to "allevare delle giovani cuoche le quali, naturalmente più economiche degli uomini e di minore dispendio, troverebbero facile impiego e possederebbero un'arte, che portata nelle case borghesi, sarebbe un farmaco alle tante arrabbiate che spesso avvengono nelle famiglie a cagione di un pessimo desinare" (51-52). Here the role of women is central as it was in Rajberti's and Mantegazza's works, not as *gastronoma* but as caretaker and preparer. For the gastronomes, it is through women that the art of cookery should be disseminated; in stark contrast to the French and British models, where the chef was the key figure, here it is the *padrona di casa*. Her culinary education is fundamental to the construction of a new Italian society, since it is the most effective manner of influencing the bourgeois household. Along with Guerrini's essay stands the Rajbertian/Mantegazzian notion of the medic in the kitchen (*farmaco*), which together assume an emblematic value for the text on a whole; it is a passage that serves as microcosm for the Artusian union of *cucina come arte* and *cucina come scienza*. Artusi's

⁴⁸ "È necessario che cessi il pregiudizio che accusa di volgarità la cucina, poiché non è volgare quel che serve ad una voluttà intelligente ed elegante. Un produttore di vini che manipola l'uva e qualche volta il campeggio per cavarne una bevanda grata, è accarezzato, invidiato e fatto commendatore. Un cuoco che manipola anch'esso la materia prima per ottenerne un cibo piacevole, non che onorato e stimato, non è nemmeno ammesso in anticamera. Bacco è figlio di Giove, Como (il Dio delle mense) di ignoti genitori. Eppure il savio dice: *Dimmi quell che tu mangi e ti dirò chi sei*. Eppure i popoli stessi hanno una indole loro, forte o vile, grande o miserabile, in gran parte dagli alimenti che usano. Non c'è dunque giustizia distributiva. Bisogna riabilitare la cucina" (51).

art aspires to the lofty ideals of food aestheticism spearheaded by Guerrini, which, in conjunction with a Mantegazzian Positivism, produce the text that becomes the summit of Italian gastronomy—a text that embraces the ideals of an epoch, of a new *century of taste*.

With the established binomial between *scienza* and *arte*, and the influence of Mantegazza and Guerrini, Artusi's text transforms cookbookery, bolstering the triad's role in Positivist dissemination. Within this intertextual dialogue, it is Guerrini's role as gastro-aesthetic historian that pushes the boundaries of Artusi's work more than any other. It becomes rather apparent through their letters that Guerrini takes it upon himself to impart a gastronomic history lesson on Artusi. It is after all Artusi that says about his colleague: “essendo bibliotecario dell'Università, ha modo di prendersi il gusto istruttivo... di andare scavando le ossa dei Paladini dell'arte culinaria antica per trarne forse delle illazioni strabilianti...,” finishing by stating that is to “...far ridere i cuochi moderni” (*La scienza in cucina*, 86).⁴⁹ Artusi's remark is a good example of the tone of conversation between the two.

Much of this conversation can be traced to their epistolary correspondence. Piero Meldini⁵⁰ and Giovanna Tagliati,⁵¹ (who based her comments on the former's observations) are the only studies to reference their epistolary contacts. Tagliati in her

⁴⁹ This comment introduces the recipe from *L'arte di ben cucinare* (1662) by the famed Bartolomeo Stefani (Bolognese cook at the court of Gonzaga), sent to him by his fellow Romagnole.

⁵⁰ See: “Tra cucina e università: Olindo Guerrini bibliotecario e gastronomo” in *Bologna Grassa*, pp 85-90. The only two people that have had access to the letters are Andrea Pollarini and Piero Meldini. I have been in direct contact with Piero Meldini, who has indicated to me that the letters in manuscript form have been lost or are in private collections.

According to Meldini the letters total 19, spanning a ten year period from 1896-1906. In his brief article, the gastro-historian summarizes the content of some of the more compelling letters between the two gastronomes.

⁵¹ See: “La nascita de ‘L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzi della mensa’. L'influenza artusiana sull'opera di Olindo Guerrini.”

work deems Artusi *il maestro* in the rapport. I, however, contend that despite the fact that Artusi conceives and publishes the text before direct contacts with Guerrini, the nature of the their interactions may lead us to conclude differently: it is an open dialogue in which Guerrini strives to convince Artusi to make various additions to *La scienza in cucina* in order to render its gastro-ideology ever more prominent. Guerrini becomes a brazen supplier of observations regarding cooking times, ingredients, and a fervent disseminator of his theories on taste. His ultimate intent is the inclusion of more recipes from the Italian gastronomic patrimony, while bringing up on various occasions the need to promote a new aestheticism.

Artusi in part rejects Guerrini's historical revival of Italian recipes, since he does not deem them to be practical. The likes of Stefani and Panonto that serve as representatives of an eclipsed cuisine, characterized by a profligate use of ingredients and excess of spices can be difficult for a modern audience. Notwithstanding Artusi's reservations, Guerrini continues to introduce authors and recipes that he deems appropriate for admittance to *La scienza in cucina*. Despite the poet's generally reverent tone, there are a number of letters that depict an adamant Guerrini, committed on retouching aspects of the Artusian text. For example, the second letter dated September 24th, 1897 is filled with various notes and suggestions for modifications, described by Meldini as "formalmente rispettosi ma severi nella sostanza"(87).⁵² It is precisely in this forum that Guerrini substantiates the depth of his knowledge to Artusi, in many cases giving outright lessons of various sorts to his colleague. The poet's sensorial hierarchy, for instance, is a topic that Guerrini presents to Artusi in more than one occasion, and

⁵² In this letter Guerrini imparts a lesson on eels (*anguille*) that references the contemporary study done by Giovan Battista Grassi. He returns to this topic in the third letter in which he adamantly protests the practice of covering the eels in oil before roasting them (Meldini, 87).

aside from the above-stated letter cited from *La scienza in cucina*, Meldini mentions that the topic finds new life in the third letter of January 8th, 1898 (87). Simultaneously, Guerrini cites a plethora of cookbook authors from Apicius to Scappi, and from Leonardi to Vincenzo Corradi,⁵³ while extending his references from the gastronomic to the literary by citing authors such as Dante, Berni, La Fontaine, etc. Meldini notes that in the letters he has in his possession there are fourteen recipes that Guerrini sends to Artusi, of which half are used.⁵⁴ It therefore can be concluded that Guerrini's push for a more historically conscience *Scienza in cucina* is somewhat effective, despite any hesitations that Artusi may have had in presenting *antiquated* recipes to his modern audiences. As the editions of the cookbook advance, it becomes clear that the consciousness of an Italian gastro-historic relevance is ever more apparent. Coalesced with this Guerrinian paradigm of historical cookbookery is the nationalistic narrative that propagates, as his Italian gastronome precedents, a form of identity that can be constructed around the table.

5) La scienza in cucina: *National Identity*

In order to examine the nationalistic narrative in *La scienza in cucina*, we must look at the language, the foreign presence within the fabric of the text, and the manner in which Artusi deals with these elements within the work.

⁵³ For example, in letter number three, Guerrini references his vast cookbook collection, which encompasses practically all the principal works produced throughout the Italian patrimony, providing a long list for Artusi, which can only assume is a sort of suggested reading list. In contrast, Pollarini notes in his edition of Artusi's autobiography that the Forlimpopolitan's collection of gastronomic texts found in his library was meager: 8 books found in the corner of a shelf (128).

⁵⁴ See recipes in *La scienza in cucina* numbers: 53 *Zuppa alla Stefani*, 268 *Pollo alla Marengo*, 334 *Polpette di trippa*, 467 *Contorno di filetti di sogliole a un fritto dello stesso pesce*, 495 *Anguilla in umido all'uso di Comacchio*, 656 *Prugne giulebbate* (89).

The first indicator of an attempt to construct identity is evidenced by the choice of language:

Dopo l'unità della patria mi sembrava logica conseguenza il pensare all'unità della lingua parlata, che pochi curano e molti osteggiano, forse per un falso amor proprio e forse anche per la lunga e inveterata consuetudine ai propri dialetti. (399)

Artusi clearly takes a stance on the so-called *questione della lingua*, favoring the implementation of a singular standardized Tuscan language as tool for nation building. Camporesi's statement that *La scienza in cucina* has had success where *I promessi sposi* fails,⁵⁵ has an important implication: *Italianness* is constructed around the table before language. However, it is interesting that Artusi attempts to adhere to the statutes of *manzonismo*. The language of his youth, Romagnole, is discarded for the new national language, and although it is, in moments, a somewhat forced and unnatural Tuscan, it is certainly accessible.

In a book whose goal is the dissemination of a national identity and whose language transmits an ideal of homogeneity and purity, it is significant that there are 157 direct references to other nations or regions.⁵⁶ How does this then lead to a unified sense of Italianess? Or conversely does it not? On the one hand, it can be said that there lies a certain tension within the text between the Tuscan language (official choice of the nation since 1863)⁵⁷ and international and regional content. The author attempts to project a

⁵⁵ The quote was previously cited in footnote 1: "L'importanza dell'Artusi è notevolissima e bisogna riconoscere che *La Scienza in cucina* ha fatto per l'unificazione nazionale più di quanto non siano riusciti a fare i *Promessi Sposi*. I gustami artusiani, infatti, sono riusciti a creare un codice di identificazione nazionale là dove fallirono gli stilemi e i fonemi manzoniani." (*La Scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiare bene*, xvi)

⁵⁶ France, 51; Spain, 31; England, 28; Germany, 13; Portugal, 9; America, 8; China, 6; Arabia, 5; Russia, 4; Japan, 1 and Africa, 1

⁵⁷ See *Relazione sull'unità della lingua italiana* by Ruggiero Bonghi and Alessandro Manzoni (1863); *Dell'unità della lingua e dei mezzi di diffonderla* by Alessandro Manzoni (1868)

national homogeneity through the representation of a pluralistic reality, which potentially works to deconstruct the very ideal identity he posites. The Artusian model is plurilateral and inclusive, particularly confronted with its precedents. However, it still doesn't account for much of the new nation. There are whole areas of the peninsula that are completely missing from the text while others are underrepresented in favor of the two regions that garner much of the author's attention: Tuscany and Romagna.⁵⁸ Therefore, culinarily speaking, there seems to be an unbalanced distribution that fails to systematically define *Italianness*.

On the other hand this tension, in part, may best define what it means to be an Italian during this epoch. It may be precisely this ability to comprehend a reality that agglomerates what is foreign with what is regional; accepting rather than rejecting diversity; disseminating an image that is at the both linguistically pure and culturally contaminated. This is in contrast to the nature of the Italian state, which was rigidly centralizing, despite the great variety of traditions, customs, languages, and socio-economic conditions of the numerous Italian provinces and regions.⁵⁹ *La scienza in cucina* can therefore be perceived in direct contrast to this tendency that rendered local autonomy practically inexistent.

To further understand how Artusi develops his Italian identity, it is important to once again reference the European culinary model par excellence— *la cuisine française*; the same model which Rajberti targeted with a sort of *anxiety of influence*, and

⁵⁸ Tuscany, 102; Romagna, 51. In contrast Sicily is only mentioned 5 times and others like Apulia are not referenced at all.

⁵⁹ An example of the government's centralizing efforts is the *legislazione sabauda*, which in its attempt to unify, concentrated power to a restricted minority of the nation (approximately 2% of the nation), since the vast majority was excluded from the political process. A widening of the electoral base occurs in 1876, however without substantial changes in the structures predominantly elitist political hierarchy. See Lacava, Pietro, *Sulla riforma della Legge elettorale*. Napoli: Morano Editore, 1881.

Mantegazza exalted as the most hygienic. As accepting as Artusi is of the contributions of other nations, it becomes evident that his stance against the French paradigm is carefully constructed to incite nationalistic fervor; as can be similarly found in *L'arte di convivare*. This devised antipathy roots itself in the ancient *diaphora*⁶⁰ between the two lands, but in particular in the French culinary dominance that arises in the 17th century. While Italian cuisine is limited to the regions and lower classes, aristocratic gastronomy was, to a great extent, a French affair. Therefore, if we believe in a sociological *trickle down theory* (as applied by Simmel to fashion) or a “social emulation theory,” it then can be asserted that lower classes strive to obtain and copy not only the cuisine itself, but also its language. As a result, throughout the text there is an open attempt to purge the Italian culinary language of its francophonic elements (an attempt that can be traced back to Rajberti). This is evident in many instances, such as in the recipe for *Zuppa sul sugo di carne*, where the author states:

Certi cuochi, per darsi aria, strapazzano il frasario dei nostri poco benevoli vicini con nomi che rimbombano e non dicono nulla, quindi, secondo loro, questa che sto descrivendo, avrei dovuto chiamarla zuppa *mitonnée*. Se [...] avessi infarcito il mio libro di tali esotiche e scorbutiche voci, chi sa di qual prestigio maggiore avrebbe goduto! Ma io, per la dignità di noi stessi, sforzandomi a tutto potere di usare la nostra bella ed armoniosa lingua paesana, mi è piaciuto di chiamarla col suo nome semplice e naturale. (72-73)

Accompanying his franco-culinary linguistic contempt, Artusi distinguishes himself from the *gourmandism* so admired and disseminated by Italy's Alpine neighbors.

From the incipit of *La scienza in cucina* the author states:

⁶⁰ I use the term used by Luigi Ballerini in his introduction to an English translation of *La scienza*: Artusi, Pellegrino. *Science in the kitchen and the art of eating well*. translated by Murtha Baca and Stephen Sartarelli. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003: p xix.

Non vorrei però che per essermi occupato di culinaria mi gabellaste per un ghiottone o per un gran pappatore; protesto, se mai, contro questa taccia poco onorevole, perché non sono né l'una né l'altra cosa. (9)

This passage is quite significant because Artusi is by association branding the gourmand (*ghiottoni*), as a glutton—an accusation that the gourmand, albeit with little success, went to great strides to avoid. This attribution given to the gourmand is of particular interest, especially if we take into consideration the lofty aesthetic qualities that Artusi preaches expressly through Guerrini's words. This juxtaposition between the utmost prominence bestowed upon the artistic nature of gastronomy along with a heed of moderation is indicative of the Positivist call to a rational gluttony preached first and foremost by Mantegazza⁶¹ and already demonstrated in *La scienza in cucina*'s hygienic message: “La temperanza e l'esercizio del corpo sono...i due perni su cui la salute si aggira;...la moderazione del cibo è indispensabile virtù per prolungare la vita”(19).⁶² Artusi is very much a pupil of his epoch and his text, as consequence, is fundamentally a pedagogic work that is simultaneously characterized by the whimsical unpredictable nature of his prose. In many ways, these two aspects of his text make it a logical extension of both the model established by Brillat-Savarin with the *Physiologie du goût* and the physiological tendencies of the epoch. As with his Italian counterparts, Artusi's goal is to extend these newly formulated ideals of food identity to the domestic setting and in doing so, Brillat-Savarin becomes an obvious point of reference.

If the French model becomes a sort of antagonist to the Italian cause, as already demonstrated by Rajberti, then Brillat-Savarin paradoxically not only is a model to which

⁶¹ “Non vergognatevi mai di essere saviamente golosi!” (*Elementi di Igiene*, 214).

⁶² References to those who partake in the excesses of taste are abundant throughout the text. For example: referencing “quei divoratori”, Artusi says that those who consume in excess are like “lupi, che non sanno distinguere...una torta di marzipane da un piatto di scardiccioni...”

aspire, but an adversary as well. Aside from the obvious structural similarities due to the physiological nature of the gastronomes' texts (e.g., a prolix and amusing prose with a penchant for aphorisms and anecdotes), it is evident that the convivial precedent established by the Frenchman is to be admired, as Artusi directly cites him; "Invitare qualcuno è lo stesso che incaricarsi della sua felicità per tutto il tempo che dimora sotto il vostro tetto" (149). However, the formalities of Savarin's French society are a point which Artusi attacks, such as the *visita della digestione* that becomes so prominent in nineteenth-century Europe.

Artusi condemns the customary *visita della digestione* (or *visita del chilo*, as Rajberti deems it). It is a practice that Charles Dickens described in *All Year Round*, the British periodical he founded. His description is as follows:

In France ...[a guest] is expected to seek, instead of waiting to be sought. After dinner, a ball, or evening party, you should call on your entertainer within the week following. This is...spoken of as a 'visite de digestion'" (618).

Dickens then proceeds to denote proper procedure on such a visit, emphasizing, for example, how "you should knock or ring very gently—just sufficiently to be heard." He goes on to speak of the option "to scratch at the door," which "at present" may lead to the "risk of being mistaken for the house-dog" (618). It is precisely the formulaic nature of this visit that Artusi attacks: "Quella seccatura di una visita a termine fisso e a rima obbligata, che non parte spontanea dal cuore, è una vera balordaggine" (149).

This critique indicates a shift that characterizes the Italian brand of pedagogic gastronomy: one that foresees the family, and as consequence the mother, as the bastion of the ideals of food, art and conviviality. The triad's ideals are constructed for the middles classes which are to aspire to create a domain of domesticity that promotes a

festive, and most importantly, nutritive environment for family and guests. For the gourmand culture of Brillat-Savarin and others, such as his predecessor Grimod de la Reynière, the goal is to introduce the beauties of a pre-revolution aristocratic life to the middle classes. As consequence, the restaurant functions as a “Paradise indeed to any gourmand” allowing him to consume exactly what he wanted and how much he wanted (315). The restaurant begins to diffuse in France in the decades subsequent to the revolution, allowing the middles-classes to appreciate a cuisine that previously excluded them. As a result of the revolution, elite chefs and pastry cooks trained in the kitchens of French aristocracy found themselves without work once nobility fled France to protect their lives. With no aristocratic patronage, chefs were now flooding the open market of Paris and becoming restaurateurs. Consequentially, the restaurant was elevated to new heights of refinement while catering to a new bourgeois clientele.⁶³ In Italy, conversely, the restaurant in Artusi’s period is practically non-existent.⁶⁴ Instead, the *osteria* (in rural settings) and the *trattoria* (in urban centers) are the types of eateries that find success in the epoch. Therefore, Artusi references them in *La scienza in cucina*, albeit in a not so positive light. For instance, the author recounts one experience: “Mi rammento che una volta fui a pranzo con alcune signore in una trattoria di grido la quale pretendeva di cucinare alla francese- troppo alla francese...nel mangiare quella pietanza...si sentiva che lo stomaco non l’abbracciava.”(296). For the gastronome, this establishment becomes further confirmation that an Italian culinary identity was yet all too dependent on its

⁶³ See Gigante, Denise, *Gusto: Essential writings in 19th-Century Gastronomy and Taste: A Literary History* for a comprehensive analysis of the development of the restaurant in 19th-century France, which is in sharp contrast to the previous century’s inn.

⁶⁴ See p. 232, Capatti and Montanari, *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999. As indicated by Capatti and Montanari, it is not until the 1970’s that the restaurant in Italy begins to understand how to be profitable (172).

French neighbors for inspiration. In another occasion, Artusi speaks of a wretched occurrence in a trattoria in Livorno, in which he contracted cholera from a *minestrone*, leading him to vow: “Maledetto minestrone, non mi buscheri più!” (82). Then there is the famous trattoria to which he was invited by a friend, which served him a woodcock with such a putrid *fetor*, rendering him wholly incapable of even tasting it, and leaving Artusi “col dolore di non aver potuto aggradire la cortesia dell’amico” (457). Hence, despite the fact that *trattorie* could be, as Mantegazza states, an arena for “i tesori più dell’arte delicate e squisiti” (*La fisiologia del piacere*, 64), it is evident, as seen with travelers of Grand Tour in the previous century that not all *trattorie* produced the epitome of cuisine.⁶⁵ Therefore, the alternative was to bring the culture of these *tesori* into the Italians’ home, and this is precisely the goal of the Italian gastronomes. Whereas in the French model the public sphere became arena for the feats of taste (i.e., the Juries of Taste, the restaurant, etc), *gastronomia* is conceived within a domestic context as the most effective way for cultural unification.

It is this desire to impart on the *mater familias* the tools to cultivate the necessary *arte* to reproduce gastronomic splendors that defines and distinguishes the Italian triad from their French counterpart, Brillat-Savarin. Artusi, in particular, makes it his goal to transport the humble and domestic cookery that defined so many regions of the nation, eaten in so many of the *trattorie* and *osterie*, to the masses. He does this by reproducing recipes that he himself most enjoyed in his travels. For example, recipe 222 for

Saltimbocca alla romana is from *Le Venete* in Rome, or recipe 384 *Fagiuoli*

⁶⁵ For an account of the negative reactions to food by travelers during the Grand Tour see: Dickie, John. *Delizia! The Epic History of the Italians and Their Food*. New York: Free Press, 2008: pp 146-149; Black, J. *Italy and the Grand Tour*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003: 75-80; Black, J. *The British and the Grand Tour*. New Hampshire: Taylor and Francis Routledge, 2011: pp 41-59; Chard, C. *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999: pp 50, 58, 109, 246.

all'uccellini, one which he encounters in various Florentine *trattorie*. Artusi uses his experience in *trattorie* to shape the recipes of his text. In certain instances the author includes dishes simply because he hears them ordered frequently: “Poiché spesso sentesi chiedere nelle trattorie il filetto alla parigina,... bisognerà pure dirne due parole e indicare come viene cucinato” (315-6). Frequenting these eateries becomes a formative experience to share with his reader, in moments linguistic as well as gastronomic:

Che linguaggio strano si parla nella dotta Bologna! I tappeti (da terra) li chiamano *i panni*; i fiaschi, i fiaschetti (di vino), *zucche*, *zucchette*; le animelle, *i latti*. Dicono *zigàre* per piangere... Nelle trattorie poi trovate la *trifola*, la *costata* alla fiorentina ed altre sifatte cose da spiritare i cani. (201-2)

Artusi here concentrates not only on general dialectal differences, he focuses also on the local language of food. A language which Artusi attempts to render comprehensible to those who may not speak it, one that reveals the characteristics of a people, of an engaging candor, of civility and good manners. Through Boccaccio's words, Artusi expresses his love for a city, its language and its people: “se io avessi degne lodi da commendarti, mai sazia non se ne vedrebbe la voce mia” (203).

This trend in the Artusian text to reveal characteristics of food, language and people throughout the peninsula denotes the gastronome's conscious effort to bring the reader on a voyage throughout Italy, offering traveling advice while suggesting must-sees: “Se vi trovate a Napoli non mancate di fare una visita all'Acquario nei giardini della Villa Nazionale, ove fra le tante meraviglie zoologiche, osserverete con piacere...” (423). As consequence there are organized toponymic and gastrotponymic geographic indications to be gathered from the text, which allow the reader to further comprehend the Italy Artusi is intent on portraying to his audience. As Alberto Capatti establishes in a presentation for the first *Festa artusiana* of 1997 entitled “Ricette e rotaie,” *La scienza*

in cucina gives “uno spettro abbastanza fedele degli ornamenti spaziali e gustativi di una codificazione” (82). This spectrum reveals, in Capatti’s view, the names of places mentioned in the titles of the recipes (gastrotoponyms) interlaced with other toponyms present in the text of the recipes themselves. In the categorization of localities present both in the title and the text of recipes, the reader gets a better understanding of Artusi’s didactic intent, and of his text’s success, or, lack thereof, as a gastronomic text of nationhood.

Capatti’s findings help us corroborate the paradoxical nature of *La scienza in cucina*, which is theoretically more effective than it is in praxis. It is clear that Artusi does not aim towards a cultural centralization and this is reflected in the fact that there are only two dishes that are gastrotoponymically cited to Italy (*tortellini* and *lesso rifatto*). The references are, instead, to regions and cities, and heavily cited are the localities most present in the gastronome’s life, Romagna and Tuscany, in particular Bologna (31 gastrotoponyms and 11 toponyms) and Florence (9 gastrotoponyms and 31 toponyms). In total only ten regions (of the twenty) are mentioned within the work and in instances, such as with the Veneto, there are no gastrotoponymic references, as there are no toponymic references for “Genova” and Sicily. Moreover, whole parts of the peninsula are completely neglected as is evident in the case of the north-western and eastern sections. Therefore, it is quite apparent that we do not have a text that comprehensively accounts for the nation, despite the author’s intent. So why does the work gain such popularity as an icon of Italian national identity? To further understand the success of the text, it is of upmost importance to look at an element of the work that has been thus far overlooked—the work’s literary narrative.

6) La scienza in cucina: *Literary Narrative*

The author creates a recipe book that is constructed on a narratological thread that runs through the entire work, developing a new paradigm that drastically transforms the normative structures of cookbookery. Even though it is true that Artusi's narrative is a product of amalgamated ideals and themes of his day, the author's gastronomic prose creates a sense of dynamism entirely absent in cookbooks until this point. Such is the case also because Artusi is omnipresent within his work, and is largely an autodiegetic narrator. One cannot read *La scienza* and not be enthralled by the dialogue that Artusi initiates. It is precisely here that the author succeeds, metonymically weaving himself in the fabric of his work. He is able to draw on an explicitly Italian literary tradition, quoting and referencing on various occasions Dante, Boccaccio, Goldoni, and other canonical writers, while maintaining a robust autonomy.⁶⁶ In doing so the author is clearly attempting to appeal to a diverse audience— one no longer comprised only of chefs, but an audience that is decisively more copious, ranging from the home cook to the literary savvy, while carving out a niche in the middle class.

In certain cases Artusi's recipes stand alone as enclosed narrative structures where the sole goal is to instruct on procedure. In these occasions, his text already constitutes innovation since the normative structure of the recipe was generally constructed as a list and not as a narrative. Furthermore, in many instances the actual recipe is ancillary and gives way to narrative capsules that distinguish the Artusian paradigm. The recipe then becomes valued only in its functional quality, allowing the narrator to recount in any way

⁶⁶ Recipe numbers 194, 597, 733, 776 and appendix.

he sees fit. A pertinent example of this is the story of Carlino allocated in recipe 7, *Cappelletti all'uso di Romagna*. After indicating the preparation of the dish and sharing little known facts about Romagnoli and their desire for a life of leisure, Artusi seizes the opportunity and says, “A proposito di questa minestra vi narrerò un fatterello, se vogliamo di poca importanza, ma che può dare argomento a riflettere”(46-47). Carlino’s father wanted his son to become a lawyer, and after much deliberation within the family over the possibility of separation, the decision was made to send Carlino to Ferrara to continue his studies. With a “cuore gonfio di duolo” his parents take him there. Less than a week passes and Carlino’s mother prepares the *minestra di cappelletti*, places it on the table and sighs, commenting on how much her son loves the dish. As she speaks those very words there is a knock at the door and a cheerful Carlino springs into the room exclaiming, “il marcire sui libri non è affare per me...”. His mother enthusiastically exclaims the wise old adage, “meglio un asino vivo che un dottore morto” (48).

It is rather evident that this passage contributes very little to the preparation of the dish, however, it is fundamental in the narratological scheme. On an aesthetic basis, Artusi’s account takes up more than twice the volume than the recipe itself. Consequentially, extrapolating the passage from the text, one finds a closed narrative structure that varies little from the traditional form of the *racconto* or *novella*. If we look at the novella at the most rudimentary of levels we will see that Artusi’s tales do touch upon many of the elements that characterize the genre in its original form.

The novella prevails as medium of entertainment, “that is rooted in the belief in the recreational function of both hearing or reading stories”(Clements and Gibaldi, 9). The genre, historically, strictly adheres to the principle of brevity and as Clements and

Gibaldi state, it depicts a range of characters and characterizations, images of society and social classes. These are all elements that are found in Artusi's stories. The novella *ottocentesca* finds in the genre different vehicles and modes of expression, form and communication, developing in a realistic, humoristic, or even fantastical direction. However, if at its historical core the novella's purpose is to produce delight, than Artusi succeeds. The recipes accompany clever frescos of personalities, societies and professions such as the noisy priest, Don Pomodoro (153-4); leisure and frivolous Romagna (38); the drunken merchant (21); and the contemptible Count, etc . Within these socio-cultural vignettes are various elements typically associated with the novella—for instance, the *motto* (as seen in the aforementioned recount of Carlino) and the *beffa*, as in the recipe of *Tordi colle olive* (280). Fundamentally, the importance given to the art of storytelling in these recipes becomes emblematic of an approach that demonstrates Artusi's proclivity to let his dialogical text be strung together by his ability, or vice, depending on prospective, to loose himself in his narration. This is particularly the case in the recipe for *Pavone* (550), which leaves the reader wondering exactly how to prepare the fowl, since there is no actual recipe to be found.

Pasticcio di maccheroni (349) is another recipe that can serve as a representative construct to be analyzed in the most basic of narratological terms. In the *Grammaire du Decameron*, Todorov delineates the structure of Boccaccio's short stories while codifying the entire genre. He begins by indicating that the protagonists of Boccaccio's tales are in instances reduced to a *substantive*, that is, they do not have a proper name (e.g., *gentleman* in II,6; II,8; III,9) in order to reflect a single property of the character (in this case being well born). The objective is to shape the character's identity in the perception

of the reader. This is the case in Artusi's *Pasticcio di maccheroni*, where the protagonist is simply referred to as *il mangiatore*, for his voracious appetite. Tolorov goes on to compare the organization of the novella to a math problem, dividing it into two parts: the first part containing the data, which reflects the desire, and the second part providing the solution, which echoes the change (76). The data in the Artusian tale is reflected in protagonist's desire to have his meal paid for by consuming an entire *pasticcio* made for 12 people. Having done so, the *mangiatore* now has to suffer the consequences of tossing and turning because of a stomach that is stretched as tight as a drum, making him behave "come se avesse da partorire". The solution is constituted by a man with a rolling pin who comes to his aid, deflating his belly, working on the patient "a guisa di chi lavora la cioccolata". This solution also reflects what Todorov declares in "The Grammar of Narrative", as it returns the protagonist from a state of *disequilibrium* to his original state of *equilibrium*, leaving the narrator to contemplate *il mangiatore*'s belly by declaring: "chi sa poi quanti altri pasticci saranno entrati".

It is also noteworthy to understand, in brief, the development of short narrative forms in the period in which Artusi is composing *La scienza....* Edmondo De Amicis (1846-1909) writes in 1880:

Si nota in Italia, da qualche anno a questa parte, un sensibile aumento nella produzione di novelle, e bozzetti, e scenette, e schizzetti, e raccontini... Ora la *bozzettomania* ... piglia ogni giorno più serie proporzioni e i novellieri non conoscono ormai freno di sorta. (in Cerina, 12)

This proliferation of the short narrative is of interest since Artusi composes a gastro text that is enlaced with vignettes and short narratives, becoming as innately literary as it is gastronomic. Due to the *bozzettomania* that characterizes the second half of the century, the gastronome composes a work that becomes significant in a post unified Italy, with a

narrative that takes the reader on a voyage to different parts of the peninsula. As Cerina states, “è attraverso la diffusione della novella, più che attraverso le inchieste parlamentari o giornalistiche, che il grosso pubblico compie il suo ‘viaggio in Italia’: milanesi e fiorentini conoscono il contadino siciliano e i bassi napoletani, etc...” (11). Therefore, Artusi partakes in a process that takes advantage of a prevalent literary trend to communicate his ideal of Italian gastronomy, while participating in this process of regional and microregional dissemination, hereby rendering his text as valid in the library as it is in the kitchen. It is the Artusian amalgam of the ennobled taste and literary prowess that characterizes this singular most famed Italian gastronomic production: a text that Camporesi deems “una specie di romanzo della cucina” in his famous Einaudi introduction to the work (xlix). This idea of *La scienza in cucina* as a gastronomic novel, is extremely interesting, however, it can be added that the text could also be read as a collection, which coalesces the various *bozzetti*, *novelle*, and anecdotes underneath a very precise and distinct cornice: that of a *ricettario*.

Ultimately, it is Artusi’s mesh of literariness, Positivist pedagogy and gastro-philosophical ideals that contributes to the eventual success of the *La scienza in cucina*. If we believe as Homi Bhabha that nationhood is inseparable from storytelling, because nation and narration are intrinsically intertwined,⁶⁷ then *La scienza in cucina* has certainly found a place within the Italian narrative as the reverberant gastronomic bible of a nation, formulating a model of recipe books that was to mark the turn of the century and beyond. Indeed, writers such as Vittorio Agnetti, who publishes *La nuova cucina delle specialità regionali* (1909), expand upon the Artusian notion of regional cuisines, claiming from the

⁶⁷ See chapter 1 “Narrating the Nation” in Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, New York: Routledge, 1990.

title page to be “accuratamente compilata con speciale riguardo alle tradizionali e caratteristiche abitudini delle regioni d’Italia.” It is precisely this notion of a varied, culturally acentric peninsular reality that characterizes the premise of his work, and in the preface Agnetti states:

L’Italia, per la divisione secolare in cui furono tenute le sue regioni, è diversa e varia nei suoi costumi e nelle sue tradizioni, fra i quali non deve trascurarsi il modo di mangiare. Ecco perché, dagli abitanti dei Friuli, che sono un po’ tedeschi, agli abitanti della Sicilia, che sono un po’ arabi, è fra noi la più grande varietà, così nella struttura fisica come negli abitudini del gusto... Riunite insieme poi, rivelano nella cucina italiana, diremo così, dei tesori nascosti, ignorati dalla maggior parte di noi, e riescono eziandio a dimostrare che la nostra cucina nazionale... supera di gran lunga, per varietà e bontà, la ormai celeberrima cucina francese. (5-6).

With this text Agnetti demonstrates an unparalleled attention for the differences that encompass Italianness at the table, exceeding in praxis what Artusi attempted theoretically, and dividing the work into 11 different sections based on region. Yet, the texts that follow *La scienza in cucina* historically have little, or no weight, comparatively speaking. Whether it is *Come posso mangiar bene* by Giulia Ferraris Tamburini (1900) (which is the first work of its sort published by a female author) or *Il re dei cuochi* revisited and reprinted in various editions by Giovanni Nelli, no work withstands the test of time to the extent of *La scienza in cucina*. Ultimately, there are recipe books that are more comprehensive, more culinarily practical and precise, and it could even be said more gastronomically astute. However, none of these works have the charm, the creativity, the theoretical intent, and intrinsically literary quality that takes the reader from philosophy to history, from biology to alchemy, from Dante to Scappi, and from Boccaccio to Maestro Martino. It is the product of a writer that wrote on Foscolo and

Giusti, and that sensed the pulse of the reader, working and reworking the 14 editions of his text, with direct input of his reader.

The open dialogue in which Artusi participates is evidenced in the countless number of letters⁶⁸ from readers requesting specific editions, suggesting recipes, lamenting changes made (or to be made) within the various editions of the work. For example, in letter 322 from 1910 a woman complains, “mi meraviglio di non trovare la ricetta delle famose raviole di S. Giuseppe,” then requesting “Vuole essere Lei così gentile di farmela avere?” In other instances the readers themselves offer recipes to the gastronome: in letter 122 the self defined “cuoca di casa”(126) states “Voglia...scusarmi se ardisco inviarle una ricetta d’uova insegnatami da una signora Toscana, e che riesce assai gradita per gusto e per forma.” It is a recipe that finds its way into the *La scienza in cucina* as *Rossi d’uovo al canapé* (142), permitting Artusi to condemn the title of the dish: “Come mi ripugna di dare alle pietanze questi titoli stupidi e spesso ridicoli! Ma è giuocoforza sequire l’uso comune per farsi intendere” (164).⁶⁹ It is this sort of dialogue that emblemizes the interchange between Artusi and his audience, and in turn the continued revision of *La scienza in cucina*, which goes from an initial edition of 475 to the final edition of 790 recipes. Artusi’s legacy, notwithstanding his death in 1911, does not end with *La scienza in cucina*, for it was his gastronomer colleague that composed a text that is fully intended to be an extension of the work written by the man who “[ama] il bello e il buono ovunque si trovino” (*La scienza in cucina*, 9).

⁶⁸ There are 1,821 letters written to Artusi stored in the Archivio Storico del Comune di Forlimpopoli, as well as the 9 volumes of his *Zibaldone*, which is an interesting collection of citations and random thoughts composed throughout the author’s life.

⁶⁹ This same home cook, Adelina Balasso, offers another recipe to Artusi in letter 125 for *Salsa del Signor Tiziano*, which goes ignored by Artusi.

III. Guerrini's *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzi*

There is a Guerrinian proposition that remains disregarded in his correspondence with Artusi: in Guerrini's first letter, published by Artusi (*La scienza in cucina*, 22-23), the poet mentions his intentions to create a national cookbook with the publisher Hoepli, a work of *volgarizzazione* for the masses. Due to financial complications and the publication of the Artusian text, Guerrini abandons the project. In the sixth letter (July 9th, 1898) Guerrini implores Artusi to add an appendix on leftovers (*gli avanzi*) to the sixth edition of his text; a request that repeats in the seventh and tenth letter (August 1st, 1898 and February, 1900). It is a suggestion that Artusi ignores, consequentially spurring Guerrini himself to undertake the endeavor, and to transform an intended appendix into an extensive gastronomic text. It is a work that the author describes as his "*canto del Cigno*", and as indeed, his friend Alfredo Testoni testifies, it is a text that Guerrini works on with determination and vigor throughout his final years (137).⁷⁰

Guerrini is first and foremost an erudite scholar and it is precisely this approach that defines the composition of *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzi della mensa*. The poet's culinary library becomes a fecund fount for the arrangement of the *ricettario* and a source of great pride for Guerrini: "Non faccio per vantarmi, ma pochi possiedono una biblioteca così interessante e ricca!" (Tesoni, 139). Therefore, *L'arte di utilizzare* becomes the most comprehensive anthology of its kind, boasting 770 recipes, which reflect an extensive

⁷⁰ The text *Lorenzo Stecchetti, Mercurio- Sbolenti- Bepi con ricordi autobiografici* is a work published after Guerrini's death by Zanichelli as tribute to the poet. It encompasses personal anecdotes and biographical content written by friends and colleagues, in addition to autobiographical passages. The text was intended to be published for Guerrini's 72th birthday to "festeggiare una giovinezza di spirito e una alacrità d'ingegno che sfidarono il tempo e lo vinsero" (ix). It was to demonstrate to Guerrini in his final days, the love, admiration and well wishes of friends, however, because of complications the text was not published, with great regret, until after his death. Alfredo Tesoni, the poet and playwright, writes about an encounter that he has with Guerrini in his study, where he finds him working on *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzi* (137- 141).

spectrum of cultures, tastes and historical periods. It is a work like no other Guerriani text: a fusion of satire, jocularity, and a gastronomic chronicle of how to transform that which is usually discarded into a viable culinary artistic product. It reveals a pragmatic Guerrini who states: “Ho scritto in vita mia una quantità di sciocchezze... e desidero di lasciare almeno un libro utile al prossimo” (Tesoni, 137). The author believes that with *L’arte di utilizzare* he has done just that, referencing the text as, “l’opera più utile e seria compiuta nella mia vita” (Tesoni, 139). Guerrini finishes the recipe book just days before his death, and in the act of concluding the book, he concludes his career and his life:

Ed ecco siamo alla fine. Molti rideranno, ma se il libro può essere utile qualche volta a qualcuno, sarò contentissimo. Venuta l’ora, dico fine anche a me e buona fortuna a chi legge.
Addio!

Bologna 5 ottobre 1916 (334)

The poet passes away sixteen days later, and his career goal of writing a practical gastronomic manual *of popularization* comes to fruition. Notwithstanding the likelihood of an unfavorable reaction by colleagues and critics, the gastronomer bestows a particular significance upon *L’arte di utilizzare*. Despite all of Guerrini’s success as poet, satirist, and critic, he aspires to leave a legacy that distinguishes him as conduit of gastronomy for the masses. However, the author is not able to see the publication of his text, published posthumously by his son Guido in 1918.

If Guerrini’s influence helped shape various editions of *La scienza in cucina*, then Artusi and the Artusian paradigm is clearly evoked within Guerrini’s cookbook: there are nine explicit references in the work to the poet’s “*compianto Pellegrino*”, who had passed in 1911. They are allusions to “l’autore meritamente celebre del più pratico libro di cucina familiare che forse esiste in Italia...,” who encouraged Guerrini to undertake the

composition of *L'arte di utilizzare* (2). Following his dear friend's example, Guerrini omits doses, measurements, and cooking times from his recipes, elements "che rendono così utile e prezioso il libro dell'Artusi" (6). The author intends his text to be an extension of his colleague's,⁷¹ therefore read as a *continuum*—as a sort of practical gastronomic encyclopedia for the nation. However, *L'arte di utilizzare* is a work that its author declares imperfect: "Dico imperfetto anche perché non è originale, ma è una raccolta, una antologia, un sillabo di ricette spigolate qua e là nei libri stranieri, o nei giornali di cucina dove sono sparpagliate"(6). It is a judgment that could be levied against *La scienza in cucina*, which is not, despite its enormous success, a collection of original recipes.

Aside from the direct recipes taken from *La scienza in cucina*, such as *Le polpette* (102), *Il migliaccio alla romagnola* (170), and *Zuppa di Visciole* (279), the Artusian paradigm can easily be traced. Within the work Guerrini continues to promulgate ideals found in *La scienza in cucina*. For example, when speaking of *Lesso in insalata*, the poet writes: "Trovo questa insalata di carne avanzata col nome pomposo di *insalata parigina*" (62). Guerrini, as Artusi and Rajberti before him, is a proponent of a cuisine that is "purified" of its francophonic elements. It is a tendency that we have already seen in the instance of the poet's first letter to Artusi, published in *La scienza in cucina*, where he satirizes Vialardi's franco-Piemontese. However, it is interesting to note the innate lack of literariness of Guerrini's cookbook in comparison not only to *La scienza in cucina*, but to many of Mantegazza's works, as well as Rajberti's *L'arte di convivere* and *La*

⁷¹ For example: in defense of his fellow Romagnole, as well as himself, from pedants who labeled them as gluttons, the author stresses the moderation with which both ate and drank—referencing a Sicilian poet during the epoch of Alessandro Magno which was deemed *un ghiottone*, Guerrini writes, "così gli stessi pedanti stimeranno l'Artusi e me, se questo libro avesse qualche fiato di vita; e Dio sa se mangiavamo poco e bevevamo meno!" (6).

prefazione alle mie opere future. There are references made to literary authors, and for the author of *Studio e polemiche dantesche* (1880), it is of no surprise that the reader encounters Dante's name in three occasions (4, 6, and 320). Aside from a mention of Franco Sacchetti, Francesco Petrarca and Carlo Goldoni, the text is not heavily characterized by a literary tendency. Paradoxically, the literariness that becomes such an integral component of the works we have covered thus far—texts written by medics and a modest literary critic— finds in the author who is by far the most literary of all, the most scientific expression. Guerrini conceives his text as a traditional recipe book, and notwithstanding the occasional aside in the introductions to different sections, his text remains concise, direct and for immediate application. Recipes break from instruction only for anecdotal comments of a gastro-historical nature; and, generally, they even demonstrate how procedural elements were handled in different epochs. Therefore, Guerrini's text is characterized by the utter absence of the creative narrative that his gastronomer colleagues adopted with such alacrity in the formation of a genre that so aptly blends scientific and literary qualities.⁷²

We can conclude that the sublimation of cuisine in *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzi* becomes ancillary to the pragmatic Positivist pedagogic framework. Since it was Guerrini, more than any other, who engaged in the loftiest gastronomic rhetoric in his previous works, it is of great interest that his recipe book is conceived with the intent of *utility* above all others. Guerrini's goal of a practical text, which is to be fulfilled by the active and daily participation of the reader, can only be brought to fruition if there is an

⁷² There are references made to literary authors, and for the author of *Studio e polemiche dantesche* (1880), it is of no surprise that the reader encounters Dante's name in three occasions (4, 6, and 320). Aside from a mention of Franco Sacchetti, Francesco Petrarca and Carlo Goldoni, the text is not heavily characterized by literary references, as with his colleagues' works.

audience whose goal is domestic implementation. It is for this reason that Guerrini prescribes *economia* as the cornerstone for the family. Economy, as a rule of *oikos* (i.e., the household), becomes a prevalent motif throughout the work, which is present even before the reader opens the text. The cover itself, which prominently displays a Guerrinian caricature, has multiple elements that characterize the work and its author (see illustration p. 148). Guerrini-poet is represented by the pen and inkwell situated on the desk that is in the forefront. Guerrini, as Positivist-gastronome, is portrayed with a plate in his hands, which contains a book with “ECONOMIA” inscribed on its spine. It is precisely this message that Guerrini is attempting to disseminate, making it his goal to impart a very important lesson of frugality: “un bon pasto o dûo (dura) trei giorni” (6). This Romagnole proverb is the basis on which the poet constructs the work. We see suggested procedures sacrificed for the sake of prudence. For example, when delineating specific components of recipes, the poet often suggests: “per economia si possono omettere senza danno” (171).

Despite the insistence on *economia* throughout 19th-century gastronomic writings, a work that deals exclusively with leftovers is wholly absent from the Italian context. To find a precedent to Guerrini’s work, we would have to look to France for the anonymous *L’Art des accommoder les restes* (1866). Therefore, the poet’s attempt does indeed constitute an important novelty; a novelty through which the author boasts the vast wealth of his gastronomic knowledge. In reading *L’arte di utilizzare gli avanzi*, the reader cannot help but be captivated by the number of references to Italy’s glorious culinary past. Recipes make way for detailed accounts of how the likes of Bartolomeo

Scappi (referenced 10 times),⁷³ Domenico Romoli (referenced 6 times),⁷⁴ and Bartolomeo Stefani,⁷⁵ dealt with certain ingredients and dishes. For example, before providing a recipe for *Sangue di maiale*, pig's blood, Guerrini references how many of the historically famed gastronomes have dealt with the ingredient; and grouped with Scappi, Panonto, and Sacchetti is *il caro Artusi*, who for Guerrini has already entered the gastronomic literary canon (171). In the section on *Torte* (318- 324), Guerrini takes the opportunity to impart another historical lesson, which brings the reader from Platina's *Torta alla Contadina* to Panonto's *Torta di fagiani*, to Scappi's *Torta d'uva moscatella*, and to Stefani's *Torta di visciole*.

This historical mindfulness leads Guerrini to understand that there are clear parallels between the art of cuisine and that of poetry. He is aware that the art of cuisine is “refrattaria al futurismo” (1). Guerrini clarifies that it is an art with limited mediums, in other words, “la materia da trattare è sempre quella. Sono sempre le stesse carni, gli stessi ortaggi sia lessati, sia arrostiti, sia in umido, mascherati, sì, con gusto industrioso, ma in fondo sempre quelli” (1). It is with this in mind that Guerrini promotes a

⁷³Scappi, was the famed Renaissance chef of Pope Pius V who published *Opera dell'arte del cucinare* in 1570. Very little is known of the author's life and career, however his work is successful in the peninsula as much as abroad. For a detailed account of the success of the cookbook see: Ballerini and Ciavolella, *The opera of Bartolomeo Scappi (1570): The Art and Craft of a Master Cook*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008. For Guerrini's references to the chef, see pages, 1, 133, 171, 241, 320, 321, 322, 330, and 331.

⁷⁴ Guerrini gives a precise account of Romoli (better know as Panonto), who was a chef from the end of the 16th century famed for the volume *La singola dottrina* (1560). His nickname references the fact that Romoli was famed for preparing the humble dish of *Pane unto*, a recipe which Guerrini includes in his work (29). See pages, 29, 171, 233, and 320-321. Of note is how David Gentilcore uses Panonto as example of the “medical fears of vegetables,” quoting *La singola dottrina*: “For the maintenance of health, neither fruits nor plants must a man use as food, because they dampen the humors and do not give nourishment”. See Gentilcore, David, *Pomodoro!: A History of the Tomato in Italy*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.

⁷⁵ Stefani is the 17th-century author of the treatise *L'arte di ben cucinare* (1662) and chef for the Duke Carlo II of Gonzaga. Of interest is that Stefani is the first cookbook author to offer a section on *vitto ordinario*, or, rather a section on cuisine that is practical, including prices of ingredients, which are reduced to modest proportions for family use, For a study on Stefani see Turrini, *La cucina ai tempi dei Gonzaga*, Milano: Rizzoli, 2002. For Guerrini's references to Stefani see pages 320-321.

scholarship of gastronomy as means of refining and reinterpreting the ingredients that are common throughout the centuries, making techniques that have gone lost applicable to modern tastes with modifications. This is no different for a poet, who, just as a cook, has a limited amount of words that are part of a given language; art is found in the novelty of combinations and the renewal of those words. Therefore just as a poet has to master the classics, so does the gastronomer in order to truly advance his/her *arte*. It is with this notion that Guerrini brings a Rajbertian ideal to fruition. In *La prefazione delle mie opere future*, the medic advances an emblem of the ideal chef, who requires rigorous scholarly preparation in order to fully express cuisine as aesthetic venture (32-33). Guerrini, though epicure and not chef, is intent on conveying this ideal to the everyday consumer. If Rajberti strives to exemplify the role of the cook as learned purveyor of an aesthetic cuisine, then Guerrini is attempting to disseminate how these ideals can be of familial application. Like the pioneer doctor, Guerrini demonstrates that gastronomy is an art “per provare e riprovare,”⁷⁶ and despite an emphasis on a scholarly foundation, he makes clear that this art, and his text, is for everyone: “L’asino modesto e che ha giudizio sa fare le polpette, ma tanti professori che fingono di averne, ahimé no!” (7).

Conclusions: The alimentary genre as national literary genre

Ultimately, the works that we have touched upon in this chapter have demonstrated that the acts of cooking, eating, and writing down recipes, are all “texts” loaded with social, cultural, and even literary significance. Read in the particular context of post-unification Italy, these works take on a heightened relevance in our interpretation

⁷⁶ Guerrini clearly reflects Rajberti’s ideal of reaching the perfected status of culinary art by “provando e riprovando” (*L’arte di convivare*, 104).

of that society's development. As the product of a Positivist culture of science as art and art as science, food becomes subject of aesthetics, history, literature and most importantly a fine art to which all can aspire. With the creation of a new sensorial hierarchy, of a historicized focus on gastronomy, and of a new mode of recipe book composition, the final decades of the 19th century revolutionized taste studies. In Italy the splendors of the art of cooking and eating become treasures offered to the new middle classes with the primary intent to create a spirited sense of family, community, and nation.

Whereas the French model of food aesthetization finds propagation through the public sphere — through aristocratic and intellectual classes, through journalists and the explosion of newly developing restaurants in the nineteenth century, the Italian model advances through domesticity. It is geared towards mothers, sisters, and servants, who as caretakers of the home become prominent purveyors of an attempted *italianità*. As Lucia Re states: “The economy of the home, and women's role in it were increasingly envisioned as a source of healing for the society at large...” (163). Women as nurturers of the domestic space, cultivate the larger social body and, in turn, this was to spur a sense of national community (163). The authors we have discussed show that food becomes a national tool that is to be divulged through the “fairer” gender. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the *medics in the kitchen*, in particular Mantegazza, explicitly promote a society in which woman is subordinate and not capable of matters of taste compared to her male counterparts. With the *litterati in the kitchen*, instead, there is no explicit reference to an inferior feminine taste. This, of course, is not to imply that they may have not held similar beliefs, yet Artusi and Guerrini (with *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzati*), are clearly aware of who their primary audience is, and therefore

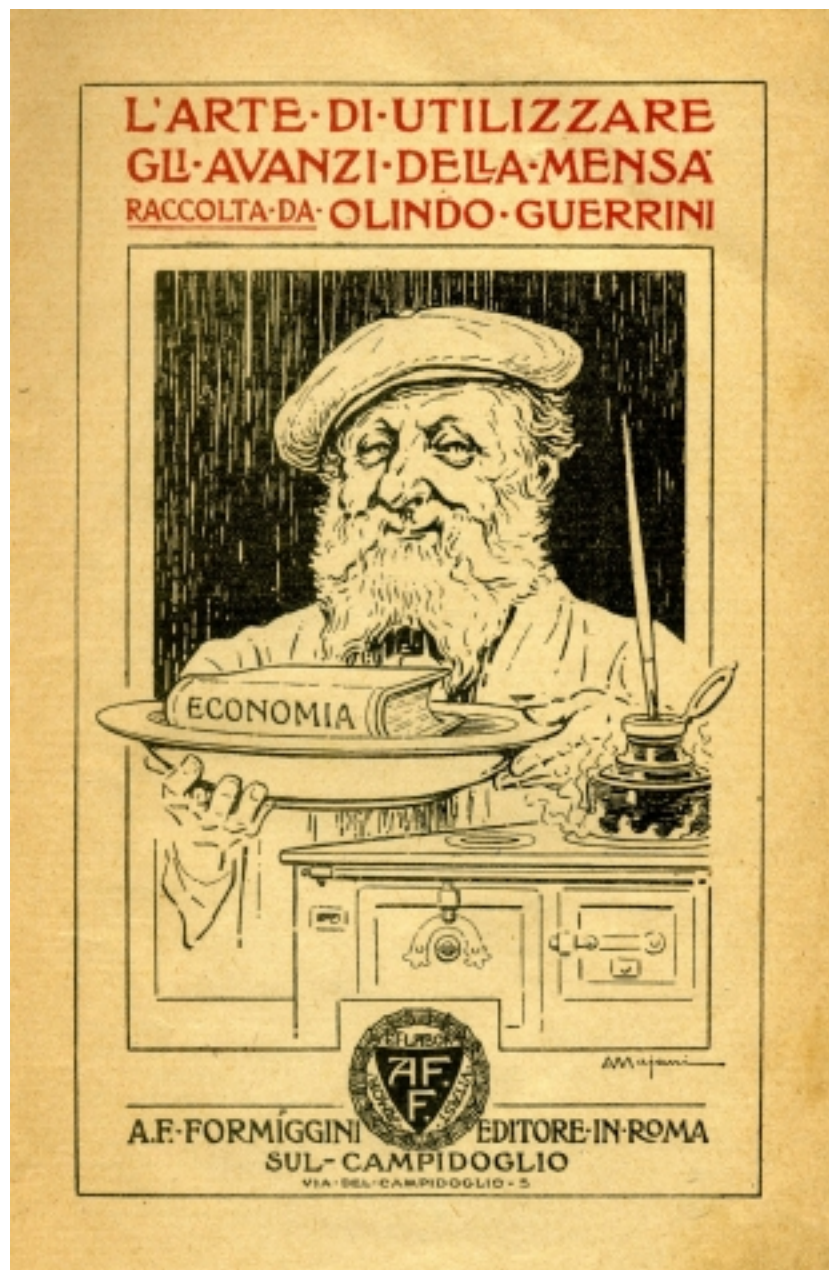
such references are never made. Women are the provider of cuisine, and since food preparation and consumption “involves the production of meaning and identities,” (Ashley, Hollows, Jones and Taylor, 59), women’s role in 19th-century Italy is paramount. Whether they may be capable of partaking in the splendors of the table or not (and as demonstrated by Rajberti’s *padrona di casa* and Mantegazza’s *donna delicata e gentile*, they were clearly not) detracts very little from their fundamental role in matters of taste. Women, who were often excluded from the political forum, could now participate in the creation of a larger national community by helping to generate a cuisine from the home for the nation.

Cuisine is indicator of nationhood, regional and territorial provenances, and above all of relationships with fellow citizen and family alike. Food, in instances, delineates the “I”, the “us”, and the “them” in ways that may transcend political and linguistic endeavors. After all, Montanari tells us: “the table is a metaphor for life, it represents in a direct and exacting way both membership in a group and the relationship defined in that group” (*Food is Culture*, 95). Although this is a notion that may begin to lose plausibility in a modern globalized society, in 19th-century Italy it was indeed an effective tool for cultural appropriation. Despite the lack of a clearly delineated *Italianness* due to a slew of historical and cultural divides never fully reconciled by the unification, food, its preparation, and the manner of its consumption, become modes through which Italians see a reflection of themselves. Notwithstanding the unification serving as catalyst for the formation of regional identities in cuisine, as Montanari reminds us, it was through an appreciation for *i maccheroni napoletani*, or *il risotto alla milanese* that Italians come to learn about each other. Texts like *La scienza in cucina*, which introduce various regions’

foods, provide a valuable space for the reader to learn to appreciate the heterogeneous cultural state of the nation.

It is through the efforts of the likes of Rajberti, Mantegazza, Artusi and Guerrini, who comprehended that food and nation are intrinsically interwoven, that we see the development, not of a national cuisine, as so often suggested, but of a culinary narrative that takes us through different spatial, class, as well as temporal spheres: from the north to the south, from the bourgeois to the proletarian, and throughout the centuries, in an attempt to introduce *Italy* to its newly forming citizens. Cuisine is innately human: along with the development of man came the manipulation of food. Therefore, the authors that we have covered have demonstrated that there is no better non-threatening way of transcending class, politics, and regionalities than to appeal to the Italian citizens through the ennobling of the art of the “good table”. The idea of a national Italian cuisine is to this very day largely debatable, and just as Benedict Anderson has referred to nations as “imagined communities”, it can be contended that national cuisines too are but imaginary constructs for the food practices of a collection of people within arbitrary boundaries. However, regardless of whether we believe in an Italian national cuisine or not, the coalescing of Italian cuisine was part of the nation-building process. One needs not look farther than Italy’s transalpine neighbors, who similarly underwent the formation of a culinary identity as its absolutist monarchy was replaced by a republican government. Moreover, studies like Jeffrey Pilcher’s demonstrates how postcolonial cuisine, such as those in India, Australia, and Palestine, for example, turned to European cultural patterns by default, “as nationalists sought to unify diverse vernacular traditions and to nationalize elite cuisines” (114). The creation of a *cucina democratica*, as Gian Luigi Beccaria

deems it (14), therefore becomes a defining moment in nationalization. This is exactly where the triad of taste leave their mark. Though each author has different characteristics, styles and messages, what unites them is the belief that it is through the science, art, philosophy, and literature of food, that a population can be regenerated, that a citizen can relate to his fellows, and that a *gusto della modernità* can be formed. What is left to understand is the ways in which their message was received.



Chapter 4

Idealistic Science and Realistic Literature

messer Gaster ester de tous arts le maistre... Au mandement de messer Gaster, tout le ciel tremble toute, le terre bransle . Son mandement est nommé Faire le faut ou mourir.

-Rabelais, *Pantguel IV*

I. The sacerdoti di Epicuro: *Rajberti, Mantegazza and Guerrini's Literary Manifestations of Taste*

Rajberti, Mantegazza, Guerrini and Artusi, along with the explosion of cookbooks, treatises and *galatei*, demonstrate that the Ottocento is indeed a new *century of taste* wholly different from any precedent. As seen in the previous chapters, the triad is particularly significant to this burgeoning thread of aesthetics, which foresees the divulgation of a popularized brand of aestheticism for consumption of the masses. No longer is it vision and hearing alone that judge *beauty*, but a philosophy of art that is steeped in Sensist ideology. Taste, or, rather, an art of eating, becomes a manner in which man is linked to his fellow, notwithstanding provenance or politics. Therefore food as art, within Italy as opposed to France, finds a different mode of propagation. French gastronomic ideals use traditional aesthetics to judge the product of chefs. A paramount example is Antonin Carême (1783-1833) and the architects employed to render his creations sculptural. This trend later finds birth in Italy with Futurism, through Marinetti and Fillia's *Cucina futurista*. One only needs to see the Futurist *Polyrhythmic Salad*¹ to

¹ Fillia's *Polyrhythmic Salad* is an example of how Futurist recipes incorporate all the senses. Waiters bring each diner a box with a crank and a china bowl. The bowl contains undressed lettuce, leaves, dates, and grapes. Without cutlery, guests use the right hand to feed themselves from the bowl while they turn the crank with their left hand. The box emits music and the waiters dance slowly with grand geometrical gestures in front of the tables until the food has been consumed. Futurism brings a totally unique artistic interpretation to gastronomy and conviviality which strays from mainstream thought, but leaves an imprint for its creative energy and desire to abolish the tradition, aiming at those who represent Italian cuisine, particularly Artusi.

realize how vision, as well as hearing and touch, forms the basis for a meal that places art above nutrition. What the triad promotes, however, is entirely different. Taste as sense is diffused as exclusive discerners, rendering it an art for the populace. Humble foods, simple dishes without finesse and flare are to be considered in the artistic realm for their wholesomeness, nutritional value, and flavor. The cuisine of the middle classes is the cuisine disseminated, but it is important to indicate that Italian bourgeois gastronomy is quite different from their alpine neighbor's. The food of grandmothers, mothers, and in more privileged cases, a hired female cook, becomes the food of aestheticism. It is a cuisine, as Montanari indicates, that is highly influenced by the poor rural ingredients notwithstanding its middle class standing.² Therefore, cuisine is judged by a unique aesthetic of poverty that renders the Italian context different from French gourmandism. Food, from this point of view, stands for not only nation, but first and foremost family. Dishes prepared indicate pertinence to a greater national community, although they are primarily *nonna*'s recipes.

With this in mind, it is important to understand how well the triad's message is received. If what Montanari states is true, then we have a middle class cuisine that is heavily influenced by the lower classes; consequentially, nationhood is disseminated by a cuisine constructed from the bottom up. Therefore, the question that needs to be addressed is whether or not an aesthetic cuisine as emblem of family and then nation is recognized. Rajberti's message of gastronomic *beauty* was in the early stage of the budding alimentary genre, and therefore was of a more difficult diffusion. Mantegazza,

² See the yet to be released "Le ragioni di un successo"; an article emphasizing a poor peasant cuisine as basis for an aristocratic Italian gastronomy throughout the centuries. Montanari suggests that the prominence of rural ingredients and recipes can be particularly traced in *La scienza di cucina...*, contributing to the success of Artusi's text, in comparison to many of its contemporaries.

Guerrini and Artusi's message, on the other hand, was at the height of the genre's popularity and it is therefore important to comprehend the extent of its success during this period.

In the *Igiene dei sensi*, Mantegazza lauds a philosophy immersed in a sensorial acquisition of knowledge ["Tutto quello che sappiamo, tutto quel che possiamo, tutto quel che facciamo ci viene dall'umile scaturigine dei sensi." (15)], while encouraging the banishment of the traditional sensory hierarchy, suggesting: "Tutti i sensi riuniti si aiutano, si correggono l'un l'altro e a guisa dei molti tentacoli d'un polipo ci permettono di mettere in intimo contatto della natura delle cose i nostri organi nervosi centrali, così avidi di sentire e di imparare" (15). It is precisely in this work that Mantegazza promotes a sensory communion no longer defined exclusively by intellectual faculties, while associating himself to a Guerrinian paradigm of Sensism. However, it is also in this text in which the author is forced to defend himself:

I miei almanacchi, perché popolari, son creduti da alcuni critici destinati soltanto al contadino o all'operario e son quindi accusato di occuparmi dei ricchi e son quindi maltrattato, perché insegno al popolo precetti igienici, che possono sembrare una crudele ironia per chi non abbia molti quattrini in tasca.

Ma c'è dunque bisogno ancora di ripetere per la millesima volta a questi aristarchi, che il popolo non è fatto di soli operai e di soli contadini, ma è composto di tutti noi; e che quando si scrive un libro *popolare*, convien farsi un'idea empirica e *media* di un popolo *medio*, a cui non appartengono né i dottissimi, né gli analfabeti? ...Perché sia utile, basta che si attagli alla statura media dei cervelli umani e che tutti, l'altissimo come il piccolissimo, vi possan beccare qualche granello di cibo...(26-7)

Mantegazza's defense, which echoes Rajberti's in *L'arte di convivere*,³ is significant since it is within a text that advances the extremely modern premise of an aesthetic reordering of the senses. This juxtaposition sheds light upon the difficulties of the

³ See pages 71-73 in *L'arte di convivere*.

alimentary genre in an epoch where hunger is perceived as much more prevalent than opulence. The author's words are not aimed to defend his food writings exclusively, but his hygienic works in general. Nevertheless, it is evident that the existing nutritional gap, with large portions of the nation malnourished, renders many parts of Mantegazza's pedagogic gourmandism unattainable for many new Italians. The message of a national regeneration of the citizen via food and cuisine is problematic in practice if economic conditions do not allow for the essential staples. The medic addresses this notion in

Elementi di igiene by stating:

So pur troppo che per molti e molti il pranzo si reduce a polenta, a sola minestra condita col lardo o a patate; ma che potrebbe contro queste miserie un libro d'igiene? Tutt'al più consigliare che nella minestra si mettano più fagioli, più ceci, più piselli che riso; che si preferisca il pane di segale a quello di frumentone. L'igiene del povero è questione di economia politica. (228)

Mantegazza insists that his texts are to be of aid even to the poor, despite the reality of illiteracy and misery in which they find themselves. The intended audience of his gastro-hygienic ideals, however, remains largely the middle classes. As such, the author exalts the role of the *donna di casa*, who has to always make it her goal to vary foods for purposes of nutrition. Doing so does not mean sacrificing money, since “Una passeggiata al mercato non toglie dignità a nessuno, e il crescere la salute e il buon umore deve essere uno scopo ben alto e ben simpatico per una madre di famiglia” (220). The presentation of such notions to the Italian *mater familias* elicits the contrast that is found particularly in the medic's food writings: his intent of a regeneration of the populace from the bottom up is in conflict with the author's preached bourgeois rational gluttony. So how are these notions received?

To further clarify the reception of these authors' ideals, we will begin by examining how their theories on taste enter into works that are not of a gastronomic nature, and in many cases of larger appeal.

1) *Grapes, a Venetian Painter, and a Cat: Food and Art in Giovanni Rajberti's Satire*

In this section I analyze two Rajbertian texts *Il viaggio di un ignorante: ossia Ricette per gli ipocondriaci* (1857) and *Sul gatto: Cenni fisiologico-morali* (1845) to demonstrate that Rajberti glorifies matters of taste in his literary works in two different manners: a) he continues the food aesthetic paradigm and (b) develops a physiological analysis in order to laud his protagonist's gustatory supremacy.

Giovanni Rajberti's *Il viaggio di un ignorante: ossia Ricette per gli ipocondriaci* (1857) is a narrative that is typical of the *medico-poeta's* prosaic production. It serves as a platform from which the author conveys opinions, criticisms and outright condemnations of his contemporary society. Within it, food holds a privileged position, as it becomes a vehicle through which modern artistic practices are satirized, while simultaneously functioning as a work of art in itself. Rajberti, as seen in his gastronomic texts, portrays the quotidian as sublime, and this motif is once again encountered within these pages: the correlation of food and fine art, which is fundamental in the Rajbertian gastronomic production, is here ever present. The author writes:

Comincio a premettere che la pittura mi fa l'effetto d'uva. Se in febbrajo alla fine del pranzo compare sulla tavola un piatto d'uva, ognuno le fa festa, la si gusta acino per acino, e la si ricorda con piacere anche dopo varii giorni. Così quando inaspettatamente mi trovo in faccia a un bel quadro in casa d'amici, mi dà nel genio, lo esamino con attenzione, rimarco il colorito, i giochi di luce, la prospettiva, il disegno, le varie movenze, l'espressione dei volti; entro nelle intenzioni dell'artista: insomma, arrivo perfino a illudermi che sarei capace di scriverne un articolo abbastanza ragionevole.

Ma chi può essersi dimenticato della noja orrenda originata dall'assistere per un giorno alla gioja d'una grossa vendemmia?...Se ne assaggia un grappolo, e poi lo si getta via per un altro, e poi si prova la bianca, e poi la nera, e poi la moscatella,... Il fatto è che tutta quella uvaccia finisce a infastidire la vista, a inacidirsi nello stomaco, a rivoluzionare le budella, e a rendervi inetti all'unica vera consolazione di un buon desinare... fate conto che per me una grande esposizione di quadri equivalga a una vendemmia tremenda. Non si sa da qual parte incominciare: bisogna fermarsi ogni momento a fingere l'entusiasmo davanti a qualche gran nome... (112-114)

Here Rajberti evokes the gustatory splendor of a specific fruit, grapes, to convey the beauty of a painting. Therefore, we once again see a blurring of traditional sensory boundaries, as taste and vision are equated. However, the author also suggests the act of harvesting this fruit leads to an oversaturation of the senses, conversely leading to tedium. Because of this overexposure, the pleasure of its consumption and its visual beauty is completely lost, turning the grapes (*uva*) that are relished one by one (*acino per acino*) into a dreaded site (*uvaccia*), which bothers (*infastidire*) one's vision and sours (*inacidirsi*) the stomach. This effect parallels the overwhelming tediousness of a large exhibition, which is analogically equated to a large grape harvest.

This correlation is also found when Rajberti suggests that a large exhibit becomes an invitation to all other nations ("Che cosa è il programma d'una grande Esposizione? è l'invito che una Nazione dà alle altre tutte..." 186). This is likened to a new tavern (*osteria*) that opens for a *sagra* (a festival of food): "Chi può indovinare se quel giorno, secondo lo stato dell'atmosfera e il capriccio del popolo, s'avrà a dare da pranzo a cento persone o a due mila? A buon conto si prepara molta roba; ma può venir l'ora che non bastino nè camerieri, nè le stoviglie, nè le tavole... e che l'oste smarrito in quel parapiglia, grattandosi la zucca maledica il troppo concorso" (186). For Rajberti food is a language woven into the fabric of his satiric prose, and a narratological apparatus with

the ultimate function of rendering food as mode of literary communication. The food-art parity predominant within this work, finds no more evident expression then with the author's lauding of the Venetian Renaissance painter Paolo Veronese.

After questioning the greatness of the likes of Raffaello ("Nelle proporzioni, quanto dovrebbe valere una Madonna qualunque di Rafaello, che mi obbliga quasi a inginocchiarmele davanti per venerazione e tenerezza?"), Rajberti comments on a Veronese painting of a large dinner (*gran pranzo*):

Quello sì, che è un pittore! senza tanto culto al bello ideale, ci dà il più sublime del bello effettivo e veramente vero. Vi mette a tavola il Veronese: capite? e in numerosa compagnia di leggiadre donne e di uomini giocondi, all'aria fresca, con servidome, suonatori e cani. E non è la prima volta... si mangia e si beve allegramente a un altro suo convito: insomma, ne ha imbanditi molti; e i lauti pranzi e le sontuose cene sono il suo forte. Eppure non ho mai sentito che per questo gli abbiano dato del *triviale*... (126-127)

As seen with Rajberti's comment on Raffaello, the author questions traditional forms of aesthetic beauty in an attempt to demonstrate that a new wave of art needs to reflect that which is *truly real* (*veramente vero*). The convivial scenes in Veronese's paintings, referenced by Rajberti, are emblematic of the direction in which modern art needs to progress. Thus, food and conviviality become the ideal model for artistic representation, and agent of the realism to which he and all artistic production should aspire.

Rajberti's use of food imagery as basis for a societal criticism is also evident in the most famed of his works; a text that also finds success in the 20th century with Aldo Palazzeschi's 1946 edition: *Sul gatto: Cenni fisiologico-morali* (1845). In *Il secolo tartufo* (1888), Mantegazza writes about the work, deeming it "un quadretto... dipinto da un grande maestro... che oggi dimentichiamo; ma ai posteri sarà collocato fra più grandi umoristi della letteratura italiana" (6). The fact that Mantegazza uses the metaphor of a

painter to refer to the *medico-poeta* is significant, since Rajberti himself utilizes the same image in numerous occasions to convey his gastronomic ideals. According to Mantegazza, the *painter* (*pittore*), or, rather, Rajberti, perfectly depicts the nuances of human behavior through his analysis of cats, and as example he cites an interesting passage from *Sul gatto* that occupies two pages of his text. Here are some parts from the excerpt, which I reproduce for pleasurable reading:

E qui duolmi che io sia così lontano da quell'eccellenza che il gatto raggiunge nell'arte di soddisfare all'acquisività. Egli ha per questa bisogna un'attitudine, un talento così speciale, che rivela l'assoluta vocazione. Figuratevi una cucina tutta in movimento pei preparativi del pranzo. Vi è cuoco, vi è guattero, vi è fantesca con altra gente che va e torna. Sulla tavola c'è del pesce, e il gatto, che n'è ghiottissimo, vi ha già fatto sopra i suoi conti, e ha deciso fermamente di darsi una grande scorpacciata di pesce crudo. Come si fa con tanti occhi intorno? attendere e dissimulare... Egli gironza con un'aria di svogliatezza e indifferenza, come se non avesse un desiderio al mondo. Va sul focolare, si accovaccia presso la cenere, finge di sonnecchiare e sbircia furtivamente la sua preda. Se lo avvicinate è tutto ingenuo, buono, carezzevole fino a darvi di cozzo nelle gambe. Che guardi verso la tavola? Oibò, egli non sa nulla, non è capace di certi pensieri, e trovasi là solo per godere la vostra compagnia. Finalmente arriva il minuto, l'istante esploratissimo in cui tra assenti e distratti si può tentare il colpo. È l'affare di un lampo, balzare sulla tavola, pesce in bocca, e via a furia per l'uscio del cortile rustico... a far tranquillamente il suo pasto. Allora accorgetevi pure del fatto, ch'egli non se ne inquieta... Gridate, minacciate, scagliategli delle buccie di cavoli o de' sassi, egli mangia e non si muove nemmeno. (*Il secolo tartufo*, 8-10/*Sul gatto*, 62-63).

Rajberti's cat encompasses all that is good and bad about society, since it is he, out of all the beasts, which most resembles man (25). It is through the author's analysis of feline life that the cat assumes emblematic characteristics. He is symbol of a liberty and of an independence which man can never strive to attain.⁴ He is a philosopher, passing his

⁴ "Le bestie o sono in istato di libertà, o cadono in potere dell'uomo... Ma il gatto! Oh, il gatto ha saputo scegliersi il miglior posto possibile nella storia naturale. Egli si è così ben collocato in mezzo alla più raffinata civiltà e alla più selvaggia indipendenza..." (28,31); "gli uomini sono indegni della libertà, in qualunque modo si voglia intenderla, perché sono incapaci di goderne..(36).

days *in ozio*, dedicated to the contemplative life.⁵ Compared to the likes of Niccolò Macchiavelli and Talleyrand,⁶ he is a tactician who during the hunt reflects “il bello ideale dell’atrocità!” (58).⁷

All of these characteristics, which are chosen to comment on human deficiency and satirize societal perception of various topics, work to construct a character that attains moral implications. Rajberti’s beautifully crafted description of a cat that moves, ebbs and flows, in order to deceive those around him, waiting for the right moment to jump at the supreme goal of his gluttony (the fish on a dinner table), is a commentary on man’s concept of “simulazione e dissimulazione” (simulation and dissimulation).⁸ Yet, ultimately, what Rajberti reflects on the most is his cat’s gastronomic capabilities: “nessun animale assapora il cibo meglio di lui”(63). On account of biological

⁵ “...coll’età adulta si modificheranno in placida e composta serenità di spirito conducente all’ozio e alla vita contemplativa. Vedetelo: egli si trastulla anche da solo, perché il gatto d’ordinario basta a sé stesso.” (33); “D’ordinario poi, quando non sappia che far di meglio, egli concede a sé stesso le delizie soave e lunghissime di un ozio tutto filosofico e contemplativo./L’ozio non (perdonatemi una breve digressione che però strettamente si collega alle abitudini del gatto e alle simpatie dell’uomo), lo’zio non è già il padre dei vizii, come asserisce l’ignorante volgo, ma è figlio di tutte le virtù...(45); “Rifutata dunque come assurda l’idea dell’ozio assoluto, non resta che l’ozio filosofico, caro privilegio degli esseri che hanno in questo mondo la missione di godere la vita; e in cima a costoro sta il gatto. Nella bella stagione egli è capace di passar tutto il giorno sui tetti, a godere l’aria pura e il sole...” (49).

⁶ Niccolò Macchiavelli (1469-1527) is the Italian Renaissance philosopher, diplomat, and historian who is widely known as the father of modern political science, and is most famed for the treatise *Il Principe* (The Prince). Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754-1838), better known as Talleyrand, was regarded by many as one of the most versatile and skillful diplomats of his time, while simultaneously holding a reputation as an opportunist who reverted quickly to betrayal if necessary. Rajberti while equating the cat with the famed figures, deems Macchiavelli and Talleyrand the supreme theorist and pragmatist. Writing to the cat, the medic writes: “Tu sei il filosofo della vita reale: tu stai tramezzo al sommo teorista Macchiavelli e al sommo pratico Talleyrand, e, salvo il ridurre le loro massime dalla vita pubblica alla privata, li rassomigli entrambi: anzi sono essi che rassomigliano a te, perfino nella fisionomia...”(53).

⁷ Referring to the defeat of his mortal enemy, the mouse, which is done by the act of ingestion, Rajberti notes that in the cat “e prima e dopo tutto è voluttà.” A characteristic which separates him from man, in which “tutto è dolore” after “un momento di sinistra compiacenza.”(58).

⁸ Simulation and dissimulation from the Latin *simulatio* and *dissimulatio* come to mean “to give or assume the appearance or effect with the intent to deceive” and “to hide under a false appearance” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Simulation is, therefore, exhibiting false information, while dissimulation is concealing the truth. These forms of human comportment are addressed from antiquity by thinkers such as Cicero and Quintilian, and in the Italian context by Renaissance writers such as Niccolò Machiavelli, Baldassare Castiglione and Torquato Accetto.

conformation of a cat's oral cavity he can concentrate on nothing else while consuming: "questa studiosa cura che non gli permette né di andare, né di guardare intorno all'atto di masticare, che anzi lo obbliga ad una sola positura concentrata, concentra anche tutte le sue facoltà nell'esclusiva sensazione del gusto" (64). Rajberti goes on to further dissect felines' biological gustatory advantages by speaking of its mouth and tongue structures, ultimately regarding the cat as the most enviable of all epicures: "Oh il felicissimo, oh il più invidiabile degli epicurei, che può dedicarsi a tutti i piaceri della gola"(64). It is the cat that can "tramandare all'anima tutta la voluttà della vivanda nella sua più intensa e concentrata efficacia" (64). Therefore, within his piquant commentary Rajberti dedicates abundant space towards lauding the figure for its gustative attentiveness and supreme epicurism, but all the while sharply critiquing man's inability to differ from animal when it comes to his need to simulate and dissimulate.

2) *Anthropology as Fiction and Utopia: The Food Aesthetics of Mantegazza the Novelist*

In chapter 2 we discussed the ideals that Mantegazza propagated throughout his gastronomic works and his manuals on hygiene. Here, we look at the author's fiction to see what images of food and taste are conveyed. I examine three of the author's novels, *Un giorno a Madera* (1868), *L'anno 3000: Sogno* (1897), and *Il dio ignoto* (1876), to demonstrate how food is anthropology, utopia and even the basis for an Epicurean spirituality.

We begin with the popular *Un giorno a Madera* (1868),⁹ the story of a 22-year-old medic who embarks on a trip to South America— more specifically Brazil. With

⁹ The novel was quite popular when released, and was in fact made into a film directed by Mario Gargiulo in 1924. It starred Livio Pavanelli, Carlo Reiter, and Tina Xeo.

clear autobiographical references, since it is Mantegazza who is renowned for voyages throughout various South American countries, the author pens a heartbreaking tale of an impossible love. The narrator meets a young Englishman, William, whom he befriends on his voyage. William and the narrator remain in contact, and with a final letter and package, both the narrator and the reader discover the details of the Englishman's love affair with his beloved Emma. The package contains all the letters between William and Emma, and as other famed epistolary novels (such as Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, 1774, and Ugo Foscolo's *Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis*, 1801) the life, love and death of the two protagonists unfold through the reading of the lovers' correspondence.¹⁰

The author dedicates the work to the electorate of Monza, and to them he states:

Ognuno di noi deve aprire un solco in quella terra in cui i figli hanno a seminare il pane dell'avvenire. Questa terra bagnata di sangue l'abbiamo a fecondare del nostro sudore; e chi ebbe dagli elettori la più alta missione che si possa affidare ad un cittadino, ha maggiori doveri degli altri di preparare la terra per una Italia migliore. E quando dico un'Italia migliore, voglio dire degli Italiani più sani e più onesti, prima di tutto, poi più operosi e più sapienti, che è quanto dire più ricchi e più potenti. (7)

The theme of national regeneration that we covered in the author's manuals and gastronomic works is plainly evident in the dedication to his co-citizens. The imagery utilized by Mantegazza of a land, or rather a nation, that needs cultivation for future

¹⁰ Angelo Camillo De Meis publishes in the same year (1868) his own epistolary novel. His work is the story of the young Giorgio Fumincervello, poet and medic, who after years of studying the natural sciences feels a void, which comes from the realization that his studies have not successfully answered his deepest ponderings on life. All of this is discovered through a series of letters to his older friend Filaete Chiappanuovole. Their exchanges reveal existential discussions on religion, literature, the sciences, and positivist philosophy. For a study on the Italian Epistolary novel, which was for long overlooked, see: Romani, Gabriella, "From Letter to Literature Giovanni Verga, Matilde Serao, and the Late Nineteenth-Century Epistolary Fiction", in *Modern Language Notes*, January 2009, vol. 124(1): pp 177-194. Also see: Traversa, Vincenzo, *Three Italian Epistolary Novels: Foscolo, De Meis, Piovene*, Peter Lang Publishing Inc.: New York, 2005.

generations is by no means a new metaphor. It is, along with the imagery of bread (*pane*) a *topos* that is recurring throughout the centuries (from the Bible to Dante to Foscolo). Mantegazza makes it clear that it is through hard work (*sudore*) that the nation, for which men died (*terra bagnata di sangue*), will be renewed. Furthermore, it is significant that when Mantegazza writes of a better Italy (*un'Italia migliore*), the very first requirement listed is for healthier Italians (*Italiani più sani*)— a clear reference to the need for better nourishment and hygiene among the public.

Food is not prevalent in the text, since it is a story of tragic love. However, the narrator does reference food in a way that is quite different from the ideal of food as basis of national regeneration that is alluded to in the dedication. Instead we encounter the gastronomic ideal of food as a vehicle for thought stimulation, as seen in texts such as *Elementi di Igiene* (1871), *Igiene di Epicuro* (1872), *La fisiologia del piacere* (1880), and *Epicuro: Un saggio di una fisiologia del bello* (1891). As repeated innumerable times throughout so much of Mantegazza's more scientific writings, a key to stimulate cerebral activity is through the consumption of *alimenti nervosi*. The narrator, upon his arrival in Madera, describes his breakfast (*colazione*), which he regards as “un raggio di poesia”:

...un bicchiere di antico vino di Madera, di quel vino che in quell'epoca era già morente e che si sorbillava con gelosa avarizia da quei fortunati che lo conservavano nei segreti archivi delle loro cantine; e poi una tazza di caffè, come confesso di non aver bevuto mai in nessuna parte di Europa, d'Africa o d'America. Mentre lo stavo sorbendo con voluttuoso raccoglimento mi ricordo di aver fatto una serena meditazione sulla efficacia dell'educazione. Quel caffè non era di Moka, non era di Yungas: era modestamente cresciuto nell'orto cittadino del signore che mi offriva la sua cortese ospitalità, ma egli stesso con amorosa cura ne aveva veduto maturare i grani ad uno ad uno; ad uno ad uno egli stesso li aveva raccolti, quando la sua lunga esperienza glieli aveva mostrati degni di entrare in quelle sue tazze dorate che venivano dalla China.

Pochi momenti dopo aver sorbito quel caffè ed aver fatto quella filosofica meditazione sull'onnipotenza della scuola a migliorare le cose di questo mondo,

mi trovava a cavallo... (19)

The author savors the local wine and coffee along with its anthropological pertinence. He understands the significance of the ancient process and care that goes into developing them, allowing the *nobility* of these *alimenti nervosi*¹¹ to stimulate *philosophical meditation* on various topics. Therefore, we encounter a fictional narrator who does precisely as Mantegazza-gastronome advises in his non-fictional literature: he consumes this “food-group” in order to allow the intellect to flourish, letting “un raggio di poesia” filter through the consumption of this Maderian wine and the cup of coffee whose beans were cultivated with care in an *urban garden* (*orto cittadino*).

The narrator also studies the *bottegucchie*, the little shops, from which the locals purchase all their necessities. On each, there is a sign posted on the door that states exactly what these necessities consist of: “Sulla porta di ogni *vendas* stanno scritte tre iniziali cabalistiche P. A. V. che rappresentano i grandi bisogni della vita umana: *Paó, Aguardente, Vinho* (pane, acquavite e vino)” (19). These *vendas*, as they are called, are described as places where old women go and purchase all of their *alimenti nervosi*; and as we would expect from Mantegazza-anthropologist, but not from Mantegazza the novelist, the narrator provides a rather comprehensive list of the most popular ones. This attention given to these *alimenti* in an epistolary novel demonstrates how fundamental they are to Mantegazza’s production— scientific, gastronomic and non. The focus on their consumption in the Brazilian context serves as an ideal to which aspire, rendering anthropology as scientific documentation a font for fiction, and food a conduit for art.

A second fictional novel composed by Mantegazza, *L’anno 3000: Sogno* (1897), is

¹¹ See *Epicuro: Un saggio di una fisiologia del bello*, 162

by today's standards science fiction in genre, and envisions a future utopian society in which the author's Positivist ideals come to fruition. It is a text that surely leaves an imprint on the *fin de siècle*, as it becomes reflective of a new way of perceiving modernity and demonstrative of how science could better civilizations for the future. Within the work it is impossible to ignore Mantegazza-anthropologist, as the social, cultural and even physical aspects of man are described within this new society. The two protagonists, Paolo and Maria (not coincidentally the names of the author and his wife), undertake a voyage from Rome to the future civilization of the island of Ceilan, which is now the capital of the *United States of Europe*. Their voyage brings them to visit the two major centers of Ceilan: "la grande officina dinamica e il mercato, cioè i due grandi centri, dai quali partono la forza e l'alimento." (90). The description of this market is significant, since it is indicative of the alimentary aspirations of the author. This market occupies a whole hillside of Andropoli (one of the cities on their itinerary). To arrive one needs to take a funicular, which is used both for the transportation of humans and foodstuff. However, for the sake of hygiene the narrator describes in great detail the cars that are designated for food transportation, which are sealed by glass for two purposes: to allow the content to be visible as well as to preserve its freshness. His description of the bounty that is the market of the future is as follows:

Tutto quel movimento di treni, che salgono e scendono senza posa, tutti quei carri di fiori, di frutta, di selvaggiume, di pesci, di carni, formano uno spettacolo... Sull'alto del colle si distende in distinti edifizii si vendono qua i pesci, là le carni: più in là le verdure, i legumi, le frutta, i fiori...[Paolo e Maria] vedono e ammirano raccolti in una stessa bottega le fragole, i lamponi, i manghi, i mangostani, le banane di cento varietà, i cocchi, gli ananassi, le cirimoie,¹² e le

¹² Cherimoya is a fruit that is native to South America, particularly to Peru and the Andes region, however, it is found in Colombia, Ecuador, and other South American countries as well. Mantegazza came in contact with the fruit, which during his time was not readily available in Europe, in his travels, and he includes it here to stress the globalized nature of food in the future.

pere e le mele e tanti e tanti altri frutti, che il secolo XIX non conosceva ancora. Fra essi la *pata*, che un argentino ha saputo strappare alle foreste vergini della sua patria e coltivare in Europa, facendone un frutto, per profumo e per sapore rivale della pesca. Eppure un certo Mantegazza l'aveva fin dal secolo XIX additata come un frutto Silvestre del tutto sconosciuto agli Europei. (98,105)

Once again there exists a perfect confluence between Mantegazza's alimentary works and his fiction. As stated clearly in *L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande*, among other works, the author has a predilection for a gastronomy in which foods from all over the globe can be consumed,¹³ demonstrating that modern science was working towards a more globalized society, at least when it came to foodstuffs. This ideal becomes even more evident in this passage, since a Mantegazzian utopian world is one in which there are no boundaries for ingredients. That which was at one time South American (such as the *Pata*)¹⁴ becomes commonplace even in the future Ceilan. The author thus conceives gastronomy as an art in which products are not confined to regions, nations or continents, but readily available to all of Earth's citizens.

Arrived to the City of Equality, where a socialist utopia has been created, Paolo and Maria stop at a random house to request nourishment. A kind egalitarian offers them a meal, which allows the couple to study the manner of its preparation along with the convivial habits of the family they have encountered. The meal is prepared not by a servant or maid, but by the family itself with the greatest ease and scant effort thanks to "congegni ingegnosissimi di meccanica e di chimica" (35). However, it is not only science that benefits the family's daily gastronomic endeavors, but as the "master of the house" indicates, food is a direct concern of public health in their society. The first of the

¹³ See page 39 in *L'arte di conservare gli alimenti e le bevande* for example.

¹⁴ Stressing once again this ideal of food-globalization, Mantegazza references *Pata*. *Pata* is a fruit native to central and northern South America. It is of a yellow to orange color and contains a hard fine pulp. Much to Mantegazza's demise the fruit today is not cultivated but grows wild, therefore, it never reaches fame in other parts of the world.

month, all the heads of family propose different foods that are to be consumed for each meal, they are pooled and then become law for all. All the inhabitants consume the same meals based on the seasons and on public health (36). Despite the overtly political connotations, many of which are satiric, Mantegazza once more shows how nutrition and alimentation are concerns not only for the family, but for the greater society. The image projected by Mantegazza is very similar to the one that will be popularized by the Futurists and *La cucina futurista*; that of a world where chemistry will enter the kitchen to facilitate and enhance the preparation of foods, as well as a government that supplies adequate nourishment for all through subsidized pills.¹⁵ In Mantegazza's and the Futurists' utopian visions, nourishment is no longer of concern because it belongs to public policy. It is, after all, the same Mantegazza who incites on various occasions, such as in the case for polenta, the need for social intervention on questions of malnutrition.¹⁶ It is, therefore, of no surprise that his utopian future society would end these struggles.

In the novel *Il dio ignoto* (1876), another Mantegazzian ideal encountered in his manuals of food and hygiene is evident: the abolishment of a hierarchy of the senses for a sensory communion. *Il dio ignoto* is a memorialistic novel that reflects, at least in part, the author's voyages, particularly those to India and Argentina. The narrator, Attilio, is in search of something more than the ideals of the hypocritical bourgeoisie, and therefore embarks on a journey which sees him encounter Indian and South American tribes in search of *il dio ignoto* (*the unknown god*), or in other words, a yet to be defined ideal. The experiences of this journey shape Attilio's vision of aesthetics, as the new cultures to

¹⁵ See "Invito alla chimica" in *La cucina futurista*, pp 29-30.

¹⁶ See *Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 89.

which he is exposed provide him with different notions of *beauty*. The pleasures of the senses ultimately result as a primary component to Attilio's new Epicureanism:

-L'ho trovato, l'ho trovato!
 -Che cosa avete trovato?
 -Il vostro *Dio Ignoto*
 -E qual è? Ditemelo subito.
 -E il bello; è il bello senz'altro. Il bello ha tutti i caratteri di un Dio; è invisibile; è onnipotente ed è intangibile. (510-511)

What does this *bello* then consist of? With the character of Giovanni, the narrator's companion and the other protagonist, the *dio* which the pair aspires to find is ultimately discovered in simple earthly pleasures. Giovanni states that he is content "col pane, e col cacio...l'innamorarsi di una rosa e inebbriarsi con un mazzo di viole," because he perceives it as "un ideale così alto, così bello, quanto sognare un regno o una gloria immortale" (101). With Giovanni, taste becomes a subject of *beauty*. Humble bread and *cacio* cheese are designated as lofty—equally beautiful as the ideal of an immortal kingdom. Attilio's *beauty* finds culmination in the sensual figure of Eva, confirming that ultimately the pleasures of the senses are triumphant in the duo's search for the unknown (*ignoto*).

3) *From the Altar to the Tavern: Guerrini as the Verist Gastrosopher*

Reflecting the same Sensist ideology is Guerrini, who beseeches for a new *real* art in which *beauty* is reinterpreted. Drawing from Baroque literary thought the author writes:

Non vogliamo escludere Beatrice, ma vogliamo che sia accettata anche Fiammetta... l'arte nuova è carnale, oscena, brutale...la donna vera colle sue debolezze, la figlia di Eva come la fece madre natura, era esclusa dal tempio dell'arte come gli scomunicati una volta...in arte bisogna essere del proprio

tempo o morire...non è l'arte che fa la società ma la società che fa l'arte in sua immagine e somiglianza. (*Nova polemica*, 18-19, 29-30)¹⁷

It is easy to then comprehend how new more “earthly” concepts of beauty would then find in food a new medium for art. Guerrini, just as Mantegazza, allows his theories of aesthetic food enter his literary ventures. In works such as *La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV* (1884), the poet exalts a society in which gastronomy is given its proper place of prominence in sensorial discourse as well as in artistic endeavor, and many of his literary writings follow suit: food, in its terrestrial and mundane nature becomes poetic matter. I look at four different poetic collections written by Guerrini’s cast of pseudonyms: *Postuma* (1877), *Nova Polemica* (1878), *Le rime di Argia Sbolenti* (1898), and *Sonetti romagnoli* (1920), in order to illustrate how food accompanies the poet through hedonism, love and its desolution, while taking on a spiritual and poetic significance. In many cases food is humor, and in others it is literary ideal, but it is also (for the first time in his production) regional pride and class warfare.

A first example is *Postuma*, a collection of poems published in 1877 under the soon to be famed pseudonym Lorenzo Stecchetti. Stecchetti is Guerrini’s feigned cousin who passes of phthisis at the age of thirty. The collection documents the life and slow death of Stecchetti in “un diario struggente, una sorta di romanzo epistolare” (Novelli, 118). The success of the 86-poem collection was enormous, outselling his contemporary *Odi barbare* by friend and mentor Giosuè Carducci; a success to which the editor Domenico Zanichelli testifies: “il successo fu enorme, forse il maggiore che avesse raggiunto un volume di poesie in Italia dopo la formazione del regno” (in Greco and

¹⁷ Also see *Esser donna vorrei, gobba, schiofosa* in *Nova Polemica*, which delineated the characteristics of this new poetic image of woman. She is a direct descent of movements such as the 13th Century and Comic-Realist poetry and Baroque lyrical poetry, and also a reflection of Guerrini’s modern day Realism. Traditional forms of female beauty are overturned and everything becomes beautiful, even ugliness.

Monda, 337).¹⁸ Guerrini becomes one of the most relevant and imitated poets of the time, on parallel with the likes of Carducci and Pascoli, and it is because of this collection that Guerrini warrants attention. It is also because of *Postuma* that the poet is criticized by Benedetto Croce for an “ebbrezza eccessiva dei sensi”¹⁹ — a critique to which many attribute Guerrini’s absence from the 20th-century canon.

Within *Postuma*, what brought fame to the character of Stecchetti²⁰ and what Croce critiques are both evident. If Stecchetti is excessively sensist, then taste is one of the senses we see brought to its extremes. Stecchetti’s writings are vehemently anticlerical, at times anti-Catholic, and heavily hedonistic. An example is the sonnet XVII *Ebbro (intoxicated)*. In *Ebbro*, Stecchetti, as Mantegazza does in *Il dio ignoto*, founds a spirituality based on Epicureanism. The first quatrain establishes this premise immediately: “Noi d’Epicuro i sacerdoti siamo,.../Noi l’opulenta mensa abbiamo per ara/ E i cantici di Bacco al ciel leviamo” (XVII, 1,3-4). With Epicurus as deity, an *opulent table* as an altar, and wine lifted to the sky in honor of Bacchus, the convivial banquet becomes font of divinity. The church is banished for the table, which becomes the locale for congregating worshipers, in a religion whose only ritual is laughter: “Noi non abbiam per rito altro che il riso” (v 9).

In *Memorie bolognesi* (XXXVIII), Stecchetti composes a sort of urban idyll, an ode to Bologna, which he composes in his courtyard while dining under a *blackening* fig

¹⁸ Explaining the Guerrinian canzoniere’s success is also Giuseppe Chiarini in 1907: “[chi] gustava i versi dei *Postuma* scorrenti come un giulebbe, quelli delle *Odi Barbare* dovevano di necessità parere duri, sversati, sgarbati” (in Novelli, 29).

¹⁹ See Croce, Benedetto. *La letteratura della nuova Italia*. Bari: Laterza & Figli, 1921: pp 129-144. His judgment of Guerrini was later disputed by Stefano Cavazzuti, who defends Guerrini in an article titled “*A proposito dei giudizi di Benedetto Croce su Olindo Guerrini e Francesco Domenico Guerrazzi*” from 1922.

²⁰ I refer to Stecchetti instead of Guerrini, since the author is writing behind the guise of his fictitious character. Throughout Guerrini’s production many themes repeat, however, each of the characters that are developed through the various pseudonyms have different backgrounds, goals and therefore writing styles.

tree. The fig tree, directly connected to Adam, as his *albero sarto*, becomes symbol of all that is human and as consequence mundane (1-3). This is the scenario that introduces the component and which leads to the exclamation, “Vecchia Bologna, t’amo!”(4). Hence, Bologna replaces Eden and is troped as a terrestrial paradise in which gastronomy (among other things) holds a place of prominence, despite certain difficulties: “Ma questa carne di somaro infame/ La pago per vitella, / Questo carton lo pago per salame.../ Oh cara mortadella!”(65-68). Furthermore, the poem, which is an epistolary lyric since it is written to G. Vigna Da Ferro, a friend now in North America, illustrates once again Stecchetti’s insistence on a frank poetizing of food. To the streams and forests which Vigna Da Ferro encounters in America, Stecchetti juxtaposes urbane elements of his dear city, rendering even Ottone (a local beer brewer) who “Versa birra gelata”(85), poetry: “Questa è la poesia, la vita, il moto/ Che la mia mente sogna.../È pieno il mio bicchier— senti?—Lo vuoto/ Per te, vecchia Bologna!” (100-104).

If Stecchetti focuses on Bologna as a new Eden in which *salumi* and beer become poetic subject matter, then an ode to Venice demonstrates a similar tendency. *A Venezia* (XXXVI), however, toes the line between *laudatio* and a light-hearted satire which pokes fun at the imperialistic tendency of Venice’s great past: “Amo, Venezia, le tue vie gioconde,/ Già testimoni de’ domati imperi,...V’amo, trofei rapiti al mussulmano/ Di Candia e di Morea:...”(3-4;12-13). Ultimately, the poet decides to end the sonnet by glorifying, (or satirizing, depending on perspective) a particular Venetian dish and product: “...v’amo, v’adoro,/ Sogliole fritte e vin di Conegliano.” (12-13). Stecchetti’s decision to end the composition in this manner, makes this regional gastronomic comment resonate more than any other.

If food is indicative of geographical provenance, then it is also love in both its most sensual and profound connotations. Women and wine are often correlated: component XVIII, for instance, equates the inebriating effect of love with that of wine—“Il tuo vino era buono e m’è piaciuto” (11). Yet this association does not stop with wine. The most apparent example of love and gastronomy converging is LIII:

Emma, ti lascio a tavola
Ed io ritorno a casa a prender fiato.
Bevi, bevi a tuo comodo,

Sta tranquilla, ch  il conto   gi  pagato.
Son diventato pallido?
Ci son avvezzo: non   nulla, taci.
M’han guastato lo stomaco
Le polpette dell’oste ed i tuoi baci.

Within *Postuma*, the reader encounters various female figures, the two most prominent being Emma (for which the above poem is written) and Carolina (XLIX). They are indistinguishably real and lively women, and as we see with Emma, characterized by the verve with which she eats and drinks. The trattoria is the location where we see the poet leave his beloved Emma on two occasions (LIII and LXI). With component LIII, his disdain for her is paralleled by his disgust for their dinner (*polpette*). Food here becomes a vehicle through which the dissolution of their relationship is expressed and symbol for a transforming Stecchetti who now desires more than just simple carnal encounters:²¹ “Io mi volea l’amore/non la lussuria al fianco” (LXI, 4-5). Yet it is once more in a trattoria where he and Emma part ways, this time permanently:

Io ci voleva un core
Sotto al tuo seno bianco;

²¹ Early components of the collection evidence Stecchetti’s desire for carnal and fleeing love: “Io non voglio saper quanto sei casta:/ Ci amammo veramente un’ora intera./fummo felici quasi un giorno e basta.” (12-14). See also XVII (discussed above), in which Stecchetti constructs an Epicurean religion that also has “Frine con noi sacerdotessa...”(5).

Ma tu la poesia
La cerchi nei conviti
Grassi alla trattoria.

Dunque finiam le liti.
Scappa, ragazza mia:
Noi non ci siamo capiti. (LXI,7-11)

In the process of leaving Emma, Stecchetti abandons his former self. He repents a youthful life that found its upmost expression in excess, and he sees in his lover's desire for a poetry fulfilled in banquetry and feasts a now rejected past. Emma is the expression of a way of life in which Stecchetti identifies himself, but now seemingly abandons. However, it is to be noted that despite this now tamed hedonist tendency, food's poetic stature is sustained throughout the work.

In *Neerland* (LXII), the poet expresses his desire to see Holland, because "Gli aranci m'han seccato,/ M'annoiano i gelati e il vin di Chianti;"(3-4). He desires a domestic life far away with "Una casetta, e il mare/ Vicino all'uscio e cacio in abbondanza,/ Una raccolta di bottiglie rare" (13-15). Food in this instance becomes impetus for voyage. Despite their regional provenance, products that are diffused throughout the peninsula, (oranges, gelato, and Chianti wine), are representative of the nation on a whole, and of a place where love was lost. There is a desire for renewal yet the author still seeks to indulge in cheese and wine in abundance, and fantasize about love while "La birra bionda spumerebbe.../nel boccal rilucente" (27-28).

Stecchetti, as constructed by Guerrini, is anti-conformist in every sense, living for food, wine, love, and satire. He is a character that is meant to make the reader laugh, cry, and sigh, and he accomplishes all of these with great effect. In *Postuma*, it is impossible to avoid a litany of wines and beer, as well as other alimentary references

such as steaks (*bistecche*) (XIII), polenta (LXXVIII), *frittura* (fried foods) (XXXVIII), etc..., making Stecchetti's work a brilliant example of a poetry of food in the making.

Stecchetti's follow-up to the *Postuma* was 1878's *Nova Polemica*. The work was purposefully controversial (as obvious from the title), and we see Guerrini's intent for polemics right from the *dedica*. The poet dedicates the collection to Otto Hoffmeister, a beer brewer in Via Farini in Bologna:

Mi vedrai tutte le sere seduto tranquillamente nella tua bottega...mi guarderai bere la solita razione di birra. Tant'è, nè le lodi sperticate nè le villanie letterarie mi leveran mai l'appetito. Sarà colpa della mia tendenza a metter pancia, ma è così. Rallegrati dunque che, per quanto i critici mi flagellino, non mi vedrai bere un bicchiere di meno...Otto mio, ti raccomando questo libro. Non lo lasciare sul banco tra i bicchieri e il salame... Amami e sii meno *idealista* nel mescermi la birra. Te l'ho già detto: dammi più liquido e meno spuma. (142-143).

The intent of the work is delineated in the last line of the dedication: "sii meno *idealista*."

What Guerrini declares in jest with Otto, by asking him to take more care when pouring his beer in order to have less head and more liquid, inaugurates Guerrini's attack of Idealism.

In the prologue, Guerrini articulates with great vehemence his stance on the debate of the day: with the artistic clash between *veristi* and *idealisti*, the poet proclaims that "La verità vera è che siamo tornati alla battaglia dei romantici e dei classici"(170).²²

²² The intellectual debate between *idealisti* and *veristi*, which Guerrini solicits in *Nova Polemica*, and in which he actively participates, is a wholly new literary discourse that sees in *Idealisti*, such as Giovanni Rizzi, Luigi Colonna, Gaetano Zocchi, and Luigi Alberti champions of the representation of more moral reality. The question between a poetic *idealismo* and *verismo* does not center itself on the ideals of those such as Fichte and Schelling or Giovanni Verga and Luigi Capuana. Instead Guerrini seeks inspiration in the likes of the Frenchman Charles Pierre Baudelaire and the Spaniard Victor Hugo. *Veristi* are those writers who represent a reality that is less concentrated on moralism, but focused on more terrestrial and material notions of contemporary society. Adhering to the Guerrian notion of realism is Ulisse Tanganelli, who composes *Bois: Pranzetto lirico di Eguardo Parolette* (1889), a work, as indicated in the title, which follows Guerrini's poetic theory of taste. Beginning with *Bois*, which means "tavern" in Milanese, and then speaking of his poems as *pranzetti* the gastronomic allusions are obvious from the start. To better understand the grounds for the debate from a contemporary from the period, see: Melucci, Pasquale. *Verismo e idealismo in arte*. E. Sarasino Editore: Modena, 1892.

After laying out the basis for a poetic Verismo,²³ Guerrini then goes on to proclaim that all of these labels (which he discusses previously in the prologue), *veristi*, *realisti*, *idealisti*, *scuola Manzoni*, etc... are nothing but “vain appearances.” (205). He ultimately declares: “Non ci sono né veristi né idealisti. Ci sono degli autori che scrivono bene e altri che scrivono male; ecco tutto” (217). Within this discussion on the different schools, what they encompass, and if they exist, Guerrini renders one notion clear:

Potete nell’ambito dell’arte trovare che il quadro è mal dipinto: potete nel calcolo delle intenzioni deplorare che si frequentino e si cantino le osterie dove il vino è buono, ma non potete dire che quell’opera sia brutta perché c’entra una osteria. Allora dove me ficcate i pittori fiamminghi? (212)

The *osteria*, locale of food and drink, cannot be discriminated. Art cannot be deemed anything less because of the presence of such elements, and as validated in *Postuma*, it needs to embrace conviviality and gastronomy as a poetic endeavor.

The desire to attack Idealism through a gastronomic metaphor, as seen in the dedication to Hoffmeister, is prevalent in the collection. *Alle ostriche* is a component in

²³ In the second half of the 19th century, there is the strive to counterpoise the extravagance and the inconsistency of the dominant literary trend, Romanticism. With an impetus given by Positivism and French Realism (Émile Zola, Gustave Flaubert, and the Goncourt Brothers), Italian Realism finds its major proponent through *verismo*. With the application of the principles of the natural sciences to literature, as dictated by Positivist doctrine, French Naturalism along with Italian *Verismo* attempt to evidence that which the Romantics had discarded from their production. In particular, the advent of *Verismo* brings about the observation and critique of the human condition, and it proclaims that *true art* needs to depict an objective reality—a reality in which food, and the absence thereof, has ample space. Because of this tendency, *Verismo* finds its upmost expression in the novel, which, from one point of view, allows for the largest public, and from another, is definitive of the very class to which the literature is directed, the bourgeoisie. However, *Verismo* is not a movement, and is not concentrated to one area of Italy. Instead it becomes a sort of generic label in which much of the period’s literary production is categorized. Therefore, Italian Realism is varied and is constitutive of numerous genres and perspectives that did not always align with those of Verga and Capuana. It is from this multitude of perceptions that Italian Realism is divided, and from which Guerrini characterizes himself as *verista* in opposition to *idealisti*; both intent on representing *reality*, however different forms of it.

Luigi Capuana’s *Giacinta* (1877), is a novel long-considered the Italian manifesto of *verismo*. Another work, which is commonly seen as a famed product of *Verismo*, is Giovanni Verga’s *I Malavoglia*.

which Idealists are compared to oysters: as oysters attach to poles and rocks, so do Idealists to their prejudices:

Ostriche ghiotte che aderiste a i pali
dove i nonni legarono
le navi trionfali,
intelligenti e nobili animali,
incarnazione e simbolo
di sublimi ideali,... (1-6)

Come piagnoni, v'incrostate forte
a quell'antico scoglio
che v'assegnò la sorte (19-21)

To these *sublimi ideali*, Stecchetti offers his verse, a poetry steeped in realism, which would work to render idealism more palatable. However, the poet laments the prejudices that prevent Idealists from considering Verist poetry such as his:

ne' flosci endecasillabi
non v'ebber mai presenti
nemmeno quando a'pranzi succulenti
di voluttà grugnirono
biasciandovi contenti,

ostriche verdi, a i miei bizzarri canti,
deh, spalancate docile
le valve stravaganti.
Ecco il pepe, il limone, il vin di Chianti.
I versi miei rallegrino
gli ultimi vostri istanti. (8-18)

The consumption of oysters, or rather, the feasting on sublime ideals, is likened to a sumptuous banquet (9) whose participants grunt (*grugnire*) and drool (*basciare*), content as they gently open their extravagant half shells (14-15). What Stecchetti offers, although unconsidered, are Verist verses that could make this experience all the more appetizing: as pepper, lemon and Chianti enhance the flavor of the oysters, so does realism enhance sublime ideals.

In *Nova Polemica*, Stecchetti also demonstrates a tendency of unexpectedly introducing a gastronomic element in components that seem to deal with more traditionally lofty arguments. In *Idealisti saggi, ho molto amato*, Stecchetti composes a sonnet against the criticisms levied by Idealists. Quoting an evangelic passage,²⁴ the poet claims that his “sins” will be absolved because he loved profoundly, stating that a heavenly woman will come down from the sky “a farmi le carezze e le frittelle/ che mi fa tanto buone a questo mondo” (13-14). Stecchetti again blends sublime and mundane, introducing the gastronomic, in this case *fritters* (*frittelle*), as a product of divinity,²⁵ in addition to lauding his new woman of poetry.

With another Guerrinian nom de plume, Argia Sbolenfi, a similar pattern can be traced. Sbolenfi is one of Guerrini’s most interesting personalities since she is female, and a sarcastic spinster who is not shy about her erotic desires. *Le rime di Argia Sbolenfi* is published in 1897 with a preface by none other than Lorenzo Stecchetti, the poet who had allegedly passed away thirty years earlier. In the opening poem (*Si describe un vago desio*) Sbolenfi reveals that despite her “...mestier de la cuoca / io compongo vicino a la fuoca / i miei deboli versi d’amor”(2-3). Notwithstanding (or perhaps because of) her profession as a cook, food is not as prevalent in her collection in comparison to those of Stecchetti. Nevertheless, references to food are not completely absent. For example there is the allusive *Inno al salame*, in which biblical figures, such as Solomon, are invoked as inferior to the *trionfator Salame* (6). Sbolenfi addresses *Salame* directly:

²⁴ “chi molto amò ne’l mondo è perdonato” (3) is directly referring to Mary Madeline, and it is this type of figure that Stecchetti is invoking: an earthly woman who was absolved of her sins because of her profound love for Christ.

²⁵ For other components that attack idealism and its writers see: *Ai poeti pinzocheri*, the corresponding components from and to Anselmo Guerrieri Gonzaga (the politician and diplomat who also had a poetic career) *Proposta* and *Risposta*, *A Ugo Bassini*, *A Felice Cavallotti*, etc...

a te, forte e gentile
 onor de'l genio umano
 e de'l mondo civile...
 Fatto con diligenza,...
 con l'ova sode o senza.
 Sempre tu sei divino (8-10,15, 17-18)

On the one hand the poem can be interpreted as a *laudatio* to the gastronomic product, clearly assuming comical connotations. On the other hand, as seemingly evidenced by the last strophe, the poem takes on much more erotic implications, naturally for the scope of humor. Regardless of interpretation, food is here a protagonist of poetry and the personified subject of a hymn.

To understand how food permeates Guerrini's poetry, it is important to look at his final published collection, the *Sonetti romagnoli*. This assortment of sonnets, written in the Romagnole dialect as praise of the local traditions, was arranged and published posthumously in 1920 by Guido Guerrini. It is a body of work that, for the most part, reflects the poet's travels with Tcci (*Touring Club Ciclistico Italiano*).²⁶ Cycling was Guerrini's other great passion, and the collection is filled with comments about the joys of biking:

Che bell andè, burdell, che bell andè
 In bicicletta cun la maia adoss
 Cun un bel dé, cun una bella strè,
 L'anma cuntenta e l'alegrí in t' agl'oss. (*Da Ivrea a Vercelli*, 1-4)²⁷

²⁶ Giovanna Tagliati in her article "Olindo Guerrini gastronomo" (http://www.storiaefuturo.com/it/numero_20/articoli/1_olindo-guerrini-gastronomia~1247.html), very thoroughly explains Guerrini's passion for cycling and his involvement with the Tcci, also referring to the *Sonetti Romagnoli* and *L'arte di utilizzare gli avanzì*.

²⁷ How beautiful it is to ride boys, how beautiful it is to ride/ a bicycle with my shirt on/ on a beautiful day, on a beautiful street./ With my heart content and joy in my bones/ Crossing towns and cities/ reading newspapers that we happen to find./ one understands what liberty is/ and it is attained in the open air at the first ditch. For a description of Guerrini's first attempt to cycle see *E' Ziclesta*.

Throughout the poems the reader follows the Guerrinian voyage pedaling through places such as Ravenna, Bologna, Milano, Val d'Aosta, Brescia, Verona, Trieste, Venezia, Ferrara, etc., and prevalent is a fresco of people, dishes and eateries. In these sonnets the reader encounters a variety of characters, such as the conservative Pulinera, the anticlerical Tugnaz, a peasant, a shoemaker, an art critic, etc. With a scathing pen, Guerrini creates them to both reveal and satirize his contemporary society.

Within his commentary there is a particular attention to food as regional identity, since we are introduced to locales and typical plates of the places he explores. This is precisely the case for Modena:

Da Bulogna a Piacenza a gli è zité
Indov che dimpartott i fa e' zampon
Mo quel d'Modna l'è quel piò accreditè
Che in parola d'unor l'è propi bon.

L'è una spezia d' cudghen mo l'è insaché
Int'un zampett svutè cun attenzion
Cundì cun una pratica d' cunzé
Ch'l'è mei che la bundiola nostra d'nò.

Andessom a magnè a la Mundadora
Ch'l'è un Risturan ch'l'ha credit e ch'um pies
Ch'e' zampon l'era cott allora allora,

I'ha pu una fatta d'ven mei d'e' sansves
Ch'l'ha nom lambrosch e ch'am l'arcord ancora...
Insomma Modna l'è un gran bel paes! (*Modna*, IV)²⁸

In such instances, which are rather numerous throughout the collection, Guerrini praises specific locations for their strong gastronomic traditions, providing a poetic travelogue of

²⁸ From Bologna to Piacenza there are cities which make pig's trotter, but Modena's is the most famous that, in the honor of truth, is really good. / It is a sort of *cotechino* [a large boiled pork sausage] stuffed in a cleaned and emptied pork leg with care and seasoned with wisdom, so much so that it is even better than our *bondiola* [a Romagnole version of *coppa*]/ We ate at the Mondadora, a famous restaurant that I like very much, arriving at the table when the pig's trotter was ready/ They have a wine that is better than Sangiovese that is called Lambrusco, which I still remember...In short Modena is a great town!

northern Italian cuisine. If Modena is praised for *zampone* and *Lambrusco*, then *Lehr Maggior* (*Lago Maggiore*) (VIII) is lauded for its *agoni* (a native fish), *Nuvera* (Novara) (XXX) for its biscotti, *Trevis* (Treviso) (XLV) for its sausage, etc... Furthermore, eateries such as Grand Hotel Miravalle (XXIV), Osteria Zabariona in Ravenna (L), Ristorante Mundadora in Modena and the Osteria dei Quattro Pelligrini in Bologna (II)²⁹ are immortalized for their exquisite delights, as well as a brewery and an *osteria* in Verona (XXXVI) for their shortcomings.

In addition to the poet as a poetic food-memoirist, we encounter food that reflects various roles, expresses profession as well as class. The poet has a section of poems that are dedicated to the description of characters in society, for example, the *cuntaden* (peasant), the art critic, the cleric and the anticlerical, and the shoemaker. One of these descriptions is for the *salsaminteri*. A *salsamenteria* was a type of *osteria* in the Romagna of the 19th century, in which a patron would be served a tasting of salumi and regional specialties accompanied by live music. With the attention towards gastronomy throughout the work, it is no surprise that the poet dedicates a sonnet, in a somewhat controversial tone, to the proprietor of a *salsamenteria*. As in Stecchetti's *Memorie bolognesi* (in *Postuma*), there is the lament of the pork products that were being contaminated by Equine meat, specifically donkey (much less expensive and considered inferior). It is an issue that Guerrini touches on more than one instance in the *Sonetti*, and it is no more forceful as it is in *E' Salsamintieri*: "Oh bella! Int'e' salam e in t'la susezza/

²⁹ Upon the arrival of the touring group *Pulinera* states: "Al do Torr? San Petroni? Chi s'n'infott! /Nò a cuessom ai Quattar Piligren /A magnè al parpadell cun e' parsott." (The *due torri*? San Petronio? Who cares! Let's rush to osteria dei Quattro Pellegrini to eat tagliatelle and prosciutto!). see Tagliati's article.

E' sumar l'è un artecol necessari” (2-3).³⁰ The poet goes further, protesting that “faseva schiv i mì cudeghen”³¹ because of the *salsaminteri*'s contamination (11).

In another poem based on a profession, *E' mestar* (the teacher), the issue of food as class struggle is evidenced. Soliciting Luigi Rava, the then minister of public education, Guerrini comments on the reality of food poverty:

Sono il maestro; sissignora e' Mestar
Che insegna ai vostri figli, ai vostar fiul,
Che non c'inviare mai gnanca un canestar
Di sarachina o, meglio, do brasul!

Noi campiamo la vita cun dal mnestar
Mica di parpadelle, mo d'fasul,
E se ci lamentiamo coi Minister
Ce lo danno di dietro, is dà in t'e' cul.

E un dé cun Reva che ci diei la molla
Ci dissi «Nò an magnè che son degli anni
Che un poco di piadotto e di cipolla». (*E' mestar*, 1-11)³²

There is a clear message about teacher salaries that Guerrini delivers through the foodstuffs consumed. Pappardelle (a fresh pasta) was a luxury that many could not afford and the foods mentioned, such as soups, beans, *piadotto*, and onions, comprised a diet associated with the peasantry. Therefore, Guerrini parallels a teacher's diet with that of the peasant classes in order to lament their less than privileged position.

The lack of food for the lower classes and the upper classes' overindulgence is a theme that resonates in *Lotta di classe* (Class struggle). In response to a statement by

³⁰ “Oh beautiful!” In salami and in sausage/ A necessary *article* (ingredient) is donkey”

³¹ “my *cottechini* were disgusting”

³² I'm the teacher; yes Ma'am, the teacher/ that teaches your children, your children/ you never send us even a can/ of sardines, or better two chops./ We live on soups./ not on pappardelle, but on beans./ and if we complain with ministers/ they give it to us in the rear, in the butt / And one day with Rava, without stopping myself/ I told him:”We haven't eaten anything in years/ but a bit of *piadotto* (a type of *piadina* made with corn meal) and onion.

Francesco Savigni (the then director of the “Corriere di Romagna”),³³ the poet angrily writes:

E la giosta? Lò e' magna dal brasul,
D'i gapon, di capplett e dal grustè...
E mè ch'a magn d' la zola e d'i fasul,..
Guerda i burghis! i mostra al su vargogn...
E al Guerdi als volta in la...
Dì so, ela giosta? E io povero somaro (1-2, 5,9,11-12)³⁴

The plight of the lower classes is here depicted through the dishes consumed, as in *E' mestar*. The meats, (*bracirole*, capons), pasta (cappelletti) and desert (*crostata*) are juxtaposed to the impoverished foods of the rural masses par excellence: onions and beans. Once again we see societal distinction through gastronomy.

Continuing this lament of the diet of the lower classes is *Con al boni*:

Quattar bulen d' salam? Quattar bulen?
Sangua!.... Ch'e' scusa, mo s'agli è tre fett?
E un cudghen? quant'a gostal, un cudghen?
Gostal zinquanta scud? Ch'a staga zett?

L'è vargogna, pardio, scané i purett,
Toi la camisa coma i' assassen... (1-6)³⁵

As in *Memorie bolognesi* and in *E' Salsamintieri*., there is lament of the prices of salumi, however, here Guerrini associates this price gouging to class warfare. The poet suggests that the shopkeeper's inflated prices make him an assassin (*assassen*), who is slaughtering (*scané*) the poor and stealing the shirts off their back. It is a message that, in

³³ “I pilastri che sostengono il muro della chiesa si prestano meravigliosamente a nascondere e così fra l'uno e l'altro sono ammucchiati fiori tutt'altro che profumati. A togliere questo inconveniente, almeno in parte, basterebbe che fino ad una certa altezza i vani che si trovano fra quei pilastri fossero chiusi da un muro”(Corriere di Romagna, 10 luglio 1903). Guerrini reproduces this quote directly before his sonnet.

³⁴ Is this just? He eats chops/ capons, cappelletti and tarts.../ and I eat onions and beans../ Look at the bourgeoisie! They show their shame.../ and the Guards look the other way.../ Is this just? And I a poor donkey.

³⁵ *With good manners*.- Four scudi worth of salame? Four scudi?/ Blood!...What, excuse me, but there are only three slices?/ And a *cotechino*? How much does a *cotechino* cost?/ Does it cost fifty scudi? Quiet? It's shameful to slaughter the poor./ to take their shirts like assassins ...

many ways, can be juxtaposed to his more historical and philosophical message of the art of cuisine, creating a contrast that allows us to understand the paradox that is product of the triad's age: an age in which scientific writings are more idealistic than the literary realist writings.

Guerrini toes the line between gastrosopher, man of an emergent philosophy of food (e.g.. his epistolary correspondence with Artusi, *La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV*, *Libro di cucina del secolo XIV*, etc), and the voice of the commoner (e.g. the *Sonetti romagnoli*). From one point of view Guerrini's message of food as art and poetry³⁶ is enthusiastically confirmed by his poems. We must not forget, however, that Guerrini represents a poetic realism that reflects the conditions of society itself. Therefore, food as ideal, and food as indicator of societal issues, are both readily traceable in his various collections. From a religion constructed around a banquet table as altar (adorned with all the luxuries of gastronomy) to the lament of the cost of salami, the poet's message is varied and seemingly incongruous. It can, therefore, be concluded that Guerrini's poetic voice takes the reader through a reality that his more historical and scientific writings do not confront: to the alimentary battles of the larger populace. The *Sonetti* are a depiction of what certain regions have to offer gastronomically, allowing us to partake on a journey that parallels Artusi's text, albeit in a poetic voice, while simultaneously attempting to represent the Romagnole commoner, who is incapable of enjoying the extravagances of the region's historically famed cuisine. This contrast, which is also evident in Mantegazza's scientific and literary writings, leads us to question

³⁶ e.g. "...grande artista sarebbe chi potesse far gustare ai lettori il sapore di un cibo, come un poeta fa loro vedere con evidenza la calma di un paesaggio o la tempesta di un'anima... e augurare il giorno in cui il poeta abbia co'suoi ritmi l'arte di dipingere con pari evidenza una levata di sole e una colazione, la malinconia d'un tramonto e il sapore di una cena." (*La tavola e la cucina nei secoli XIV e XV*, 12-13)

why the prominent Positivist food writings, scientific in nature, were more ideal, i.e. less indicative of reality, than the prominent literature of the day, of which Guerrini himself is an active participant.

II. *From Pasta Water to Moldy Bread: Nutrition and Literature in Post-Unification.*

*La gastronomie régit la vie tout entière: car les pleurs du
nouveau-né appellent le sein de sa nourrice; et le mourant
reçoit encore, avec quelque plaisir, la potion suprême.*
- Brillat-Savarin (*Physiologie du goût*)

This section will trace a narrative of hunger throughout works of Giovanni Verga, Matilde Serao, and Carlo Collodi, in which an impoverished litany of food can be recorded that situates characters geographically as well as socially within the newly formed body politic. They simultaneously define the individual and the collective battle for nutrition that is indicative of the immobility of the epoch, demonstrating how the search for food coincides and becomes revelatory of the search for what it means to be part of the new nation. In the following four sections I address: 1) the alimentary state of the nation in the period contemporary to the taste authors discussed and analyze works of three literary authors (2.Verga, 3. Serao, and 4.Collodi) to demonstrate how the taste genre examined in the previous chapters failed to address the nutritional malaise of the nation.

1) *The malessere alimentare*

To comprehend how the ideals of the triad of taste were received and to understand the reality depicted by leading Verist authors of the day, it is important to examine the context in which they were propagated. The poor socio-economic

conditions of the nation during and following unification have been extensively written on.³⁷ Paolo Sorcinelli, in particular, refers to a “malessere alimentare” that becomes a defining factor of the post-risorgimento epoch (52). Statistics support his argument. The diet of the majority of the nation is rural, pre-industrialized and poor. Italians were mostly consuming breads, produce and legumes. Meat was a luxury that was exclusively consumed on special occasions and holidays. A summary of historical data compiled in 1968 by ISTAT³⁸ reveals details of a diet in which the art of food is seemingly all but unattainable. In the first years of unification (1861-1870), the Italian diet is made predominantly of grains (nearly 55%) and produce (42%). Meat consumption constituted a small fraction of the diet, comparatively (a little over 3%).³⁹ By the end of the century the situation does ameliorate slightly and the percentages change. Between the years 1891-1900, overall consumption actually drops, however, this is most likely due to a change in the diet distribution. Grains now accounted for 48% (7% less than at unification) of an average Italian’s diet, while produce consumption slightly rose (46%). Meat consumption was now over 5%.⁴⁰ Despite a barely remarkable jump, the incorporation of more animal protein may account for the need for less overall consumption. The drop in overall consumption may also be explained by other statistics from ISTAT, which demonstrate that there is a rise in the consumption of certain

³⁷ For example see: Cassese, Sabino, *Lo stato introvabile: Modernità e arretratezza delle istituzioni italiane*, Roma; Donzelli editore, 1998; Mack Smith, Denis, *Modern Italy: A Political History*, University of Michigan Press, 1997; Zamagni, Vera. *The Economic History of Italy 1860-1990*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

³⁸ *Sommario di statistiche storiche dell’Italia: 1861-1965*, Istituto Poligrafico I.E.M.: Napoli 1968.

³⁹ Cereali (grains) divided into *frumento*, *Gran-turco*, *risone*, *segnale* and *orzo* equaled 205.5 chilograms per half year. *Prodotti ortofrutticoli* (produce) divided into *patate*, *legumi secchi*, *legumi freschi*, *ortaggi*, *frutta fresca*, *agrumi*, and *frutta secca* were consumed at a rate of 156.6 kilograms. *Carni* (meats) divided into *bovina*, *suina ovrina e caprina*, and *altra* was consumed at a rate of 14.8 kilograms. See *Sommario...* Tav. 105 p 136.

⁴⁰ Grain equaled 157.2 kilos, produce equaled 152, and meats 16.6 kilos (ibid).

products in the same time span. Dairy products, such as milk, cheese and butter, spike between the periods from 1861-1870 and 1891-1900 to nearly 66%.⁴¹ The use of *alimenti nervosi* (to use the Mantegazzian term) such as coffee, wine and, in particular beer, rise as well, going up 33%, 29%, and over 181% respectively.⁴² This rise may very well demonstrate a new pattern forming in the Italian diet; although, generally speaking, a true modification in the numbers is not perceivable until the 20th century, when the germs for a first industrial boom are planted, and even this is only temporary.

While there is a change in the style of the Italian diet, with certain foodstuffs being consumed more than others by the end of the century, it remains clear that it was still overwhelmingly poor compared to other European nations. Economically speaking, Italy's main industry, agriculture, was slow to rise. The arrival of American wheat at affordable prices becomes impetus for the modernization of Italian industrial agriculture starting in 1881. However, this process is slow and aside from northern industrialization, with mechanical production and a modest food industry that begins to expand as more Italians emigrate overseas, the majority of the nation suffers an agricultural and economical crisis.⁴³ Industrialization and urbanization remain modest and both the right

⁴¹ Milk goes from 6,574 tons to 10,459; cheese from 357 to 967 ton; butter from 80 to 221 tons. (ibid, Tav. 104, 0 135)

⁴² coffee from 113 to 150 hectoliters; wine from 22,721 to 29,239 hectoliters ; beer from 63 to 177 hectoliters

The drastic rise in consumption of beer can be credited to the advancements in the beer industry in Italy towards the late 19th century. Previous to this period, production was on a small scale and generally for local markets, and a demand was only remarkable in the summers. There were several innovations that allowed rapid production, such as low-fermentation beers, which spurred its industrialization. For a history of beer production in Italy see: Colli, Andrea. *Produzione e consumo di birra in Italia dall'unità alla seconda Guerra mondiale* in *Rivista di storia economica*, 1997, Issue 3, pp 283-326.

⁴³ Industrial development in Italy has been interpreted in different ways by economists and historians. The likes of Mori 1992, Giannetti, 1998, Vasta 1999, mark Italian economic development as discontinuous, rising due to the development of new "science based" sectors, such as chemicals and electricity, as the driving force. Others such as Cafagna, 1989 and Frederico, 1995, emphasize a more continuous nature of Italian economic growth, developing later than other countries due to sectors such as textiles. Renato

and the left wing governments were absent when it came to political action for the improvement of alimentary conditions. Because of this inaction, Carol Helstosky speaks of a *monotonous diet* marked by a scarcity of foods and inadequate nutrition (13). Bread, as seen in the above statistics, was the main staple, and as both Helstosky and Roberto Vivarelli indicate, wheat bread for the poor was just as rare as meat (14, 117). Instead breads made of cornmeal and chestnut flour were consumed, as they were much cheaper and easier to produce in the arid and rocky soil of most of the peninsula. Even more telling of the alimentary state are estimated percentages of the family budget spent on food. The economic historian Carlo Cipolla estimates that families in pre-industrial Europe are spending somewhere between 70% and 80% of their income on food. In Italy during this period, the percentage is even higher at 75%-85%, 60% alone going towards bread.⁴⁴

Due to this *mal della miseria*, as Sorcinelli puts it, there is an alimentary disparity that is found even within the same household between man, wife and children, and the only two meals being consumed in the household were being largely downsized (51,52). Hence, there is an evident broadened nutritional malaise that is further corroborated by the government-sponsored surveys. Perhaps the most famed example was the large-scale inquest initiated by Senator Stefano Jacini, which produced 15 volumes of studies and recommendations (1878-1883). From Jacini's inquiry (which is considered the most complete analysis of agricultural Italy), we learn much about the rural population's diet

Giannetti, in particular, credits the Giolitti age (1890-1913) with the "Italian catch-up", calling it the "second industrial revolution".

⁴⁴ See Cipolla, *Storia economica dell'Europa pre-industriale*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980, pgs 38-9; Dino Cinel, *From Italy to San Francisco: The Immigrant Experience*, Stanford University Press, 1982; and Helstosky, Carol. *Recipe for the Nation* in *Food & Foodways*, Apr-Sept; 11 (2-3), 2003, Routledge: p 123.

and hygiene,⁴⁵ as he concluded: “Lo stato generale non è soddisfacente; l’aria è cattiva, cattiva l’alimentazione e il vestito, le abitazioni poco salubri” (*Giunta per la inchiesta agraria*...56). Within the inquiry there are studies of specific areas in which the peasants’ alimentation is analyzed, with particular attention to the problem of spoiled flour. Jacini, commenting on the spread of pellagra, states:

...la pellagra ha fatto la sua comparsa nelle montagne dove un tempo era affatto sconosciuta, ed a coloro che dividono la mia opinione sulle cause di questo morbo ciò non potrà recar meraviglia...questa terribile malattia...si produce [con] uso di polenta o di pane composta di farina o granturco avariato, guasto, e quindi avvelenato...(Frammenti dell’inchiesta agraria..., 142)

From *proprietari* who, in the attempt to obtain staples at a fair price for their *coloni*, were essentially poisoning their constituents without even knowing it (207); to Jacini’s description “dove il popolo di campagna muore di fame” (94); it becomes evident that, in large part, rural Italy is deprived and lacking the hygiene of food that the likes of Mantegazza, Artusi and Guerrini were looking to diffuse.⁴⁶

In addition to the surveys, there are various scientific studies that point to the national dietetic paucity. I will briefly focus on two Positivists who deem malnourishment as the cause for Italy’s woes. Francesco Nitti (1868-1953), an economist and politician, follows in the footsteps of Mantegazza, and composes an article in which

⁴⁵ For example: “il cibo del contadino è, se non scarso affatto, per lo meno, poco sostanzioso...La carne di bue o di vacca raramente si mangia, I polli non servono che le grandi occasioni; e soltanto qualche volta, e più specialmente in estate quando fervono i più faticosi lavori, comparisce sul desco un poco di salame... Le forme sotto cui ordinariamente vengono consumate le sostanze animali sono: il alrdo con cui si condisce la minestra; le saracche; le uova; il latte; il formaggio scadente, e la *mascherpa* nelle masserie in cui si tiene qualche mucca. Ma fondamento dell’alimentazione sono i vegetali: patate, cavoli, fagioli, fave, olio delle qualità più inferiori per condire, il tutto prodotto sul fondo , riso acquistato, e una poltiglia di farina di segnale e di miglio mista del mais...prevalente a tutte le altre prese insieme, è la farina di granturco mangiata sotto forma di pane o di polenta” (*Frammenti dell’inchiesta agraria*..., 204-205).

⁴⁶ Other inquests, such as the *Inchiesta sull’igiene* conducted by Agostino Bertani, attempted to evidence the rural condition while sharing what other nations did to better their impoverished rural conditions, in particular focusing on England. See White Mario, Jessie, *Alberto Bertani e i suoi tempi*, Firenze: Tipografia di G. Barbera, 1888.

he develops the “necessario parallelismo fra l'alimentazione e la forza di lavoro,” as well as the link between nutrition and the intellect (540, 556).⁴⁷ In his study, the author concludes that there are obvious concerns with the nation's ability to nourish itself. Workers could not afford to eat well because compared to other nations, such as the United States, England, and France, food was too expensive. In an argument that greatly mirrors Mantegazzian thought, he claims that food costs had a vital effect on Italy's overall production. Malnourished workers were not adequate laborers. However, he goes even farther, declaring a fundamental relationship between nutrition and a stagnant evolutionary state. He claims that those who do not consume enough (in particular proteins) “deperiscono lentamente o non sviluppano” (440). Alfredo Niceforo (1876-1960), a Sicilian sociologist and criminologist, is even more explicit than Nitti. For Niceforo, “gli italiani si nutrono poco e male, sempre peggio...degli abitanti delle grandi nazioni di Europa” (166). He tells the tale of “two Italies,” in which physiological differences separate “le due razze”. With the utmost Postivist flair, he goes on to describe the disparity in features such as the cranium, and the recurrence of *pigmeismo*, which is *untraceable* in the north, but *quite frequent* in the south (27-29,38). According to the author, the *phenomena* are a sign of malnutrition and explains why southerners are formed with smaller craniums and are more diminutive in stature. He argues for biological and evolutionary stagnation as a differentiating marker for the *two races*, pointing to differences in their diet as the key factor: a southern eats in average half of the meat consumed by a northern— significant since it is “la pietra angolare di una nuova buona nutrizione” (191). The same is said for other fonts of protein such as eggs (192),

⁴⁷ See “L'alimentazione e la forza di lavoro dei popoli,” in *La riforma sociale* Anno I Vol II, 1894; pp 417-440 and 537-556.

while fruits and vegetables are consumed in equal amounts (194) and wheats and grains are actually consumed slightly more in the south (193). This disparaged southern diet and consequential recessed physical development is blamed for Italy's lack of production and economic woes. Despite their eccentric nature, these studies demonstrate how the plaguing alimentary problems are crippling the nation.

Notwithstanding the prominent condemnation of the country's nutritional maladies, starvation was rare, but studies did point to a permanent lack of food.⁴⁸ Therefore, within this climate of dearth, Italians learned to adjust accordingly. Luca D'Orazio refers to a certain *forma mentis* of the peninsula's inhabitants (123). He argues the housewife's need to be parsimonious becomes her most important virtue, establishing a sort of cultural *topos* of *risparmio* (saving). She has little and spends even less. Her frugality, therefore, shapes the family's mode of consumption. In 1912 D'Orazio reproduces the following words from the Roman historian Domenico Orano:

Centinaia di migliaia di famiglie fanno della minestra al battuto, composta di acqua, lardo, odori, conserva con pasta, il pranzo e la cena, il fondamento del cibo quotidiano. La carne [...] è cibo di lusso che si mangia nelle grandi occasioni e sempre o quasi nelle qualità di scarto. Ma può dirsi mangiar carne il mettere nella pentola una libbra di bue (ge. 330) per fare il brodo a 4,6, o anche 8 persone? È mangiar carne il consumare la testa di bue...? (123)

This cultural *topos* is easily traced in the cookbooks and gastronomic literature focused on in the previous chapter, at least in ideal. As we've seen, there was an outright consumer battle for cookbooks that proclaimed to be more "economical" than the previous. Therefore, it is clear, on the one hand, that women were searching for ways to cut spending, as they use and reuse ingredients and dishes as much as feasible. On the

⁴⁸ See: Bolton King and Thomas Okey, *Italy To-Day*, London: James Nisbet, 1909, p.77.

other hand, it is also true that these very publications (which were not exclusively cookbooks, but also hygienes and *galateï*) were working in turn to construct this very model of frugal domesticity.

Therefore, the *fin de siècle*'s alimentary conditions are defined more by deficiency than by the opulence you would expect in a century of aesthetic taste. The lower classes had a small and limited array of ingredients from which to choose, and those who could savor slightly more lavish delicacies were explicitly choosing not to do so for reasons of propriety, or rather, in the name of a parsimony that was a nationally preached duty. Therefore where does the triad's message fit in?

If this economic- nutritional reality is mostly ignored by the ideals of food aestheticism, then we see that the literature of the day, written under the influence of realism, and more specifically *verismo*, is paradoxically more "scientific" in its approach, i.e., more representative of the on-going nutritional aliments, than the food literature itself had been.

2) *Black bread for antiheros*

If we see Guerrini's Verist verse move from the aestheticization of food to the gastronomic voice for the commoner, then we see Giovanni Verga (1840-1922, the renowned interpreter of Italian Verism) champion the latter, or rather, a realism in which the alimentary conditions of his rural Sicily are intensely depicted. Verga's texts take on an anthropological significance that defines a cuisine, that of the traditions of Sicily's villages and its people. Throughout various works, from the *Novelle rustiche* to *I Malavoglia*, it becomes rather evident that Verga's realism serves as exponential

documentation of a nutritional vulnerability that is tightly woven within the fabric of his texts; from the moldy bread ingested by Jeli to the various bouts of famine endured by the Malavoglia family. Verga's gastronomy is that of the peasantry whose livelihood is defined by one overwhelming sensation: hunger. It is a hunger that is deep-rooted and ancestral, caused by a cuisine (if it could be classified as such) that lacks adjectives to describe its misery. Bread, onions, fava beans, *minestra* etc... become part of the litany of the impoverished diet of Verga's characters, bringing attention to the nutritional malaise of the Sicilian peasant, while simultaneously invalidating any preached aesthetics of food for an all but non-existent Sicilian bourgeoisie.

Despite the numerous characters encountered in Verghian narratives, hunger becomes a common destiny for virtually all. The constant fight for food becomes a recurrent motif of the author's writings, which articulate the intricacies and struggles imposed by the modern class system in post unification Sicily. The poor's battle for every morsel is as deftly portrayed as in any literature, and the contrast between this cruel subsistence and the elite becomes ever apparent. There have been two studies that focus on the relationship between Verga's narrative and food, both concentrating on the most famed of his texts, *I Malavoglia* (1881): Gian Paolo Biasin's *I sapori della modernità* (*The Flavors of Modernity*) (1991)⁴⁹ and Maria Ivana Tanga's *I Malavoglia a tavola* (2008). My study will focus on a part of Verga's production that has been generally overlooked when it comes to food studies— his short narrative. This is not meant to be a comprehensive analysis of Verga's short stories, rather I will analyze stories that are emblematic of his subjective gaze towards the *basse sfere*, or, the humble classes, and

⁴⁹ See the chapter *Come si fa lo stufato: Giovanni Verga , I Malavoglia* (*How to Make Stew: Giovanni Verga , I Malavoglia*)

their struggle for “il pane, le cipolle, il fiaschetto di vino” (*Vita dei campi*, 29): *Jeli il pastore* (1880), *Gli orfani* (1883), *Pane nero* (1880), and *I galantuomini* (1883).

With *Jeli il pastore* (*Vita dei campi* 1880) there is an evident juxtaposition of classes with its two protagonists: “il guardiano dei cavalli,” Jeli, and “il signorino,” don Alfonso. The characters are identified from the incipit of the novella by their social status: Jeli is described as diminutive in stature (21), evidence of his malnourishment, and seen putting his herd out for pasture; don Alonso, on the other hand, is seen *in villeggiatura* (a luxury only for those of a certain affluence), and possessing food to share: “...divideva con lui [Jeli] il suo pezzettino di cioccolata, e il pane d’orzo del pastorello, e le frutta...” (20-21). This convivial gesture transcends class: the act of breaking bread makes the two equals and is symbolic of a forming companionship, which ultimately finds the most horrific of demise. Initially the clash of two socio-economic worlds, which seems irreconcilable, finds resolution at the table. In addition to white bread, the most precious staple restricted from the tables of the poor, chocolate and other sweets are shared (78), treats not afforded by those such as Jeli, allowing the shepherd to taste a world distant from his own. Yet, as we see throughout the short story, this reconciliation is problematic in Verga’s modern Sicily. If Jeli (as the many other Verghian peasant-protagonists) becomes an anti-hero, a protagonist who is defined by his struggles, then food becomes a vehicle through which his degradation is illustrated. For sustenance, Jeli turns to roasting acorns and pieces of bread that “cominciava ad avere la barba di muffa” (28), demonstrating how “cuisine” is all but non-existent for the shepherd. Consumption is for survival and the concept of food preparation is an unconscionable luxury to which Jeli does not pay much heed.

In this tale of solitude, the reader discovers that bread acquires a particular significance; it connotes the desolation of the very protagonist who is largely estranged from his society. Jeli's life contemplating Mara, the object of his desires and the motive for his complete degradation into barbarism, is spent in silence and isolation with his sheep and that "pane muffito" (moldy bread) (78). Throughout the novella, it is ultimately bread that mirrors Jeli's state: the joy of his days with Alfonso consuming white bread and his inclusion into society; the beginning of his precipitous fall symbolized by the literal falling of bread out of his mouth (46), etc... It is precisely this moment in which Jeli loses his job and goes into isolation, culminating in the final blow to his humanity: the murder of the very man who exposed the shepherd to a society of white bread.

This connection between bread and Jeli is representative of the greater historic link between peasantry and bread. For the lower classes, bread was livelihood, it was the staple which sustained them. Peasant bread during this period and subsequently for the first half of the 20th century, was never white. As seen in innumerable studies such as those done by Camporesi, Montanari, etc..., the poor's bread is not made out of wheat, but other readily available regional ingredients. Breads made of cornmeal, chestnut flour, barley, rye, potato flour, linseed flour, bean flours (such as favas and chick peas) were much more commonplace than those made of wheats and grains because of the difficult cultivation in the rocky soils of much of the peninsula. Flours, and as consequence breads, were made out of what grew well in specific region's soils, leading to a distinction between dark and light breads. Light breads became an indicator of wealth and were still exclusively a luxury due to their highly processed wheat flour. The other

breads, dark because of the different minimally processed flours used, became the staple for the masses and representative of a precise anthropological ritual that is strictly associated to the peoples of a territory or region; it is a ritual that Verga himself consecrates in *Gli orfani* (*Novelle rusticane*, 1883).

The short story begins with the very image of bread being kneaded by one of the *comari* (a title used among neighbors), with her arms “nude sino al gomito” working the dough continuously with her fists on the *madia* (a chest used to make and storing bread). It is an image that is central to the tale since the whole plot unfolds during the process of bread making, however, it also assumes a greater significance to Verga’s production in its entirety. The author juxtaposes the symbolic nature of bread as livelihood and death, providing a tableau for the cyclical nature of life. As Comare Nunzia is on her deathbed, fed with her final communion, Comare Sidore (one of the bakers) breaks freshly made focaccia for her young daughter, who wants to desperately share it with her dying mother. Bread as sustenance from the early stages of life as well as in our final hours is evidenced, just as its consolatory nature with the arrival of Compare Meno (the now widowed father), who consumes the baked bread as he praises the qualities of his now passed wife: “il pane come lo faceva la buon’anima, nessuno lo sa fare. Pareva di semola addirittura”, lamenting that “ora mi toccherà a comprare il pane a bottega” (98). Bread, in addition to life, is love and family. The act of baking and breaking bread is the only constant throughout peasant life and, as demonstrated by Compare Meno, it is central to one’s identity. Meno’s remark on his wife’s bread tasting like *semola* (wheat middlings), is further indicative of the community’s bread status. The fact that Nunzia’s bread is

lauded for seeming like wheat byproduct means that it is not made of wheat at all, and functions as an instrument for social classification.

Another example of bread, or the lack thereof, and peasantry intertwining is *Pane Nero* (1880). Aside from the title's clear allusion to social class, bread, in this instance, also denotes the way of life and the hypocrisy of a community to which white bread is forbidden. If Jeli's precipitous fall is symbolized by a piece of bread on the floor, here the reader quickly discovers that the search for bread becomes synonymous with an incapacity for love; love, like white bread, becomes a luxury only for the classes that can afford it.

In *Pane nero*, the reader encounters Nanni, the head of the family who contracts malaria and ultimately passes away. His family's attempt to care for him, which leads to its ultimate economic demise, leaves them not only penniless, but devoid of love. On his deathbed, Nanni's children imagine the struggles ahead and therefore they are forced to make difficult decisions and befall different disgraces: Santo is warned, "pensaci prima di maritarti, che il pane è scarso, e i figliuoli vengono presto" (12); Lucia, doesn't go out and since she is now "senza dote," she loses the interest of the only young man who courts her; Carmenio returns to the fields because, "se voleva mangiar del pane, bisognava che andasse a buscarselo fuori casa, e trovarsi un padrone," and as consequence, he contracts malaria himself (3); another son marries a well-off widow "per l'amor del pane"(44). Ultimately, the text evidences that for the class of black bread, "buscarsi il pane ... è un mestiere povero"(37), yet it is one that guides every decision made in life, including amorous ones. Lucia, for example, decides to go into the "service" of a married rich man, Don Venerando, who out of his love for the young woman decides

to take Carmenio in and pay for his care. Sadly enough, Lucia falls in love with another servant. However, she gives into Don Venerando's advances not only out of fear for her brother, but also because "aveva pane e minestra quanta ne voleva, un bicchiere di vino al giorno, e il suo piatto di carne la domenica e le feste" (63). Since "povertà non è peccato", it becomes an obligation to obtain *pane* by any means necessary. Those who put matters of the heart in front of bread end up like Santo, who often curses the day he married a poor girl.

Conversely, if the vices of the black bread classes are justified, the gentry's are similar or worse, yet with less justification. The two worlds in Verga's works are symbiotically linked and in cases, this is evident on the dinner table as well. In *I galantuomini* (*Novelle rusticane*, 1883), for example, Verga focuses on the struggles between the peasants and their *padroni* (landowners). The contrast is between those who "dopo un anno di fatiche ..[hanno] la prospettiva dell'inverno lungo senza pane" (the lower stratum) and "voi che senza seminare raccogliete" (their lords) (214, 215). They are dependent on each other to earn a living. However, as Verga demonstrates, this bond is very fragile, and the lord's position of privilege is as tenuous as his workers' capability of obtaining bread. For the struggling Don Piddu, Don Marcantonio Malebra serves as an illustration of how all can be lost without hope of recovery. Malebra, after a fire destroys his lands, is incapable of recuperating since he doesn't know how to earn money in any other way. His descent into poverty is emblematic of the precarious nature of those who feast on white bread in Verga's Sicily. Don Piddu, in his own right, is festered by his debts (for which he has his furniture distrained and he is forced to take up a job as a guardian at the gates of Fiumegrande), his sick wife, his unmarried daughters, and

multiple other disgraces. The reader comes to understand, as do the peasants, that even the *padroni* have problems, that their stature depends as much on artifice as on wealth. At the end of the tale, while Don Piddu confesses his woes, the author makes one notion clear: “quando [ai poveretti] gli succede la stessa digrazia...stanno zitti perché son poveri, e non sanno di lettera, e non sanno sfogarsi altrimenti che coll’andare in galera!” (228). Verga shows us that the disgraces that befall the classes may in fact find common ground, just as their diet. At the table we see that ultimately, the land that the laborers cultivated is the land off which the gentry live, therefore many staples are in fact duplicated by the two strata: The *minestra di fave*, for example, which is “il cibo dei poveri per antonomasia” (Tanga, 9), is consumed by the likes of Don Marcantonio (221) and by the enriched Mastro Don Gesualdo (*Mastro Don Gesualdo*, 60).

Ultimately, if Verga’s short stories prove to be a fruitful source for a Sicilian narrative in which food and “l’amore del pane” take precedence over all, then the works of Matilde Serao take us through the streets of Naples, in a fresco of people and foods that have roots in the poorest of communities, while similarly demonstrating that class means nothing if there is no food for the next meal.

3) Pasta nerastra *for the popolino*

In this section I consider three different works from Matilde Serao (1856-1927), *Il ventre di Napoli* (1884), *Il paese di Cuccagna* (1891), and *La virtù di Checchina* (1884), that bring the reader through her contemporary Naples and Rome, while bringing to light the alimentary conditions of their citizens.

The realism of Matilde Serao (1856-1927) escorts the reader through the depths of another southern center, Naples. As Frank M Snowden indicates, in Naples during this time period there is an anxiety surrounding issues of public health: “In the half century ending in 1885, Naples had experienced twelve epidemics, four of typhoid and eight of cholera” (15). Snowden goes on to delineate the major causes of Naples’ troubles in the decades post unification: overpopulation, the absence of industry, high rents, low wages, the high burden of indirect taxation, and high food prices imposed by organized crime all contributed to an extensive increase in poverty and malnutrition (42). Before the cholera epidemic of 1884, the Neapolitan diet consists of macaroni, adulterated bread and pizzas, a large percentage of fruits and vegetables, which, in the interest of budget, were purchased either unripe or spoiled (43). It is precisely this nutritional regimen that helped the spread of cholera, both for the quality of the foods being ingested as well as for gastric effects it had, and to which Serao also testifies in *Il ventre di Napoli*.⁵⁰

Serao’s text is a direct account of the squalor of the *belly of Naples*, or rather, the streets of the *quartieri bassi*. She presents the people of her milieu with dignity, and despite their desperation, they are a people who look to each other for community and share charity. Naturally, she focuses heavily on the abhorrent alimentary circumstances in which they subsist. The very first place to which she draws attention is via dei Mercanti in the Porto neighborhood, a street she is convinced no government official has ever fully experienced:

⁵⁰ With the cholera outbreak of 1884, Prime Minister Agostino Depretis had rushed to Naples, and Mayor Nicola Amore had shown him the popular quarters of post-Bourbon Naples. Depretis commented, *Bisogna sventrare Napoli*: to cut three or four roads through the popular neighborhoods. Serao, who was in Rome during this period, took the phrase and polemicized it by writing an article *Il ventre di Napoli*, contending that Depretis had no idea what the *belly* of Naples really was. To combat the problems of the sectors, it was not sufficient to create roads but “bisogna rifare”. See Gisolfi, 81.

...c'è di tutto: botteghe oscure, dove si agitano delle ombre, a vendere di tutto...ogni tanto un friggitore, da cui esce il fetore dell'olio cattivo, ogni tanto un salumaio, dalla cui bottega esce un puzzo di formaggio che fermenta e di lardo fradicio...In sezione Mercato, niuna strada è pulita; pare che da anni non ci passi mai lo scopino; ed è forse la sudiceria di un giorno" (4, 8).

Aside from her description of the non-hygienic conditions of the markets and *botteghe*, Serao identifies, in great detail, the eating habits of the populace, who seldom purchased fresh foods to make at home since they lacked the proper facilities and utensils to do so. The few fresh goods they purchased were in a far from ideal state for the sake of economy, as in the example of fruit:

Il popolo è goloso di frutta: ma non spende mai più di un soldo alla volta... si hanno sei peruzze, un po' bacate, ma non importa; si ha mezzo chilo di fichi, un po' flosci dal sole; si hanno dieci o dodici di quelle piccole prugne gialle, che abbiano l'aspetto della febbre; ... si ha un poponcino giallo, piccolo, ammaccato, un po' fradicio; dal venditore di melloni, quelli rossi, si hanno due fette, di quelli che son riusciti male, vale a dire biancastri (*Ventre di Napoli*, 30-31).

Much of the food consumed was for all intent and purposes "fast food," and Serao delineates what was available at different price levels. The food par excellence available at "un soldo" is pizza:⁵¹

Il *pizzaiuolo* che ha bottega, nella notte fa un gran numero di queste schiacciate rotonde, di una pasta densa, che si brucia, ma non si cuoce, cariche di pomodoro quasi crudo, di aglio, di pepe, di origano: ...sono affidate a un garzone che le va a vendere in qualche angolo di strada, sopra un banchetto ambulante: e lì resta quasi tutto il giorno, con questi settori di *pizza* che si gelano al freddo, che ingialliscono al sole, mangiati dalle mosche. (23-24)⁵²

⁵¹ Other examples of foods that cost *un soldo* tend to be fried: little fried fish called *fragaglia*, *panzarotti*, fritters stuffed with either a small piece of artichoke, cabbage, or an anchovy fragment. From an *osteria* one could buy *la scapece*, fried eggplant and zucchinis with tomato and cheese, or *la spiritosa*, boiled "yellow carrots" served with oil, vinegar, oregano and chilies (26-27).

⁵² Serao in this instance is describing the pizza served in the poor neighborhoods described in *Il ventre di Napoli*. This description has been taken out of context as a condemnation of pizza in general by various authors: See Dickie, John. *Delizia: The Epic History of Italians and Their Food*, New York: Free Press, 2008: p 189.

Serao in fact praised 'A vera pizza napoletana., saying: *Non sarei napoletana verace se non mi piacesse*. She describes it as *chella fatta cu 'a farina mpastata cu ll'acqua d' 'o Serino, ca è limpida e rusecarella, condita cu 'a pummarola fresca, ll'uoglio, nu pizzeco arècheta...e basta! Chesta è 'a vera pizz napoletana, vesuviana. Cotta, però, cu 'a lampa d'e ppampuglie...Chella ca se magna addu Pietro a Chiaio p 'a*

When Neapolitans have *due o tre soldi*, they buy another famed regional specialty, *maccheroni*. *Osterie* set up booths outside and the image of these large boilers filled with pasta, pots filled with boiling tomato sauce and mountains of cacio cheese is beauty worthy of art, “con l’oste che sembra un pastorello di Watteau” (27). However, Serao quickly notes:

Ma per lo più [un napoletano] compra un *rotolo* di maccheroni, una pasta nerastra, di tutte le misure e di tutte le grossezze, che è il raccogliuccio, il fondiccio confuso di tutti i cartoni di pasta e che si chiama efficacemente la *mannezzaglia*: e la condisce con pomodoro e formaggio. (29)

The reference to this “pasta nerastra” is analogous to Verga’s black bread. It indicates a second class of foodstuffs, which is essentially scrap or waste, and with which the lower classes need to content themselves in order to survive. In her work, *La cucina del Paese di Cuccagna*, Loredana Limone indicates that *maccheroni* are a godsend for the populace; they consume them for breakfast, lunch and dinner (27).⁵³ However, it is important to note that not all *maccheroni* are the same, as Serao herself points out.

Poverty notwithstanding, Serao brings the reader into the psyche of a hungry and malnourished people who nonetheless demonstrate the utmost regard for humanity. In her recount of charitable acts, the chapter entitled *la Pietà*, the reader comes to understand the dire alimentary conditions which are alluded to throughout the work. A germane example is a woman who gives a neighbor her pasta water:

Un’altra faceva una carità più ingegnosa: essendo già lei povera, mangiava dei maccheroni cotti nell’acqua e conditi solo con un po’ di formaggio piccante, ma la sua vicina, poverissima, non aveva che due tozzi di pane secco, duro.

pizzeria sotto Port’Alba. E l’ m’ ‘a magno comme s’ ‘a magnano ‘ e faticature: chiàta a libretto! Accussì sento mmocca tutt’o sapore ‘e sta piatanza d’e’ puverielle c’avarria fatto alliccà ‘e ddete pure agli dei dell’Olimpo, se ll’avessero assaggiata! (De Caro, 47)

⁵³ Limone’s work is a collection of recipes based on the foods seen in the works of Serao, from various pizzas and maccheroni to the different deserts like *sfogliatelle* and *struffoli*.

Allora quella meno povera regalava alla sua vicina l'acqua dove erano stati cotti i maccheroni, un'acqua biancastra che ella rovesciava su quei tozzi di pane che si facevano molli e almeno avevano un certo sapore di maccheroni. (97-98)

If the reader encounters stories of poverty and malnutrition, then we also come to understand how far this Neapolitan diet is from the statutes of food aestheticism. Serao's questionnaire further clarifies how a touted bourgeois cuisine is unreachable for the *popolino*: "Carne arrosto? – Il popolo napoletano non ne mangia mai/ Carne in umido? – Qualche volta, alla domenica o nelle grandi feste- ma è di maiale o di agnello./ Brodo di carne? – Il popolo napoletano lo ignora./ Vino? – Alla domenica, qualche volta.../ Acqua – Sempre: e cattiva (31). Furthermore, Serao's depiction is additional evidence of how this regimen of extreme poverty and necessity, along with its unhygienic nature, is the main reason for the diffusion of Naples' epidemics. The anxiety to which Snowden alludes in regards to public health is clear within Serao's text, as processions of public prayer with weeping shouting parishioners were so plentiful that they would block each other in the streets (33-34).

Another text in which the malaise of the populace is central is the work Gisolfi calls "Serao's most ambitious bid for immortality as the novelist of Naples"(92): *Il paese di Cuccagna* (1891). The text explores many of the themes encountered in *Il ventre di Napoli*, in which, for example, gambling is seen as a corroding force.⁵⁴ The interplay between nobility, bourgeoisie, and the misery of the poor is apparent through the obsession over the lottery; however, the role of food and the manner in which it is described, as we will see, contains a paralleled significance. The reception in honor of the

⁵⁴ Serao dedicates two chapter to the lottery saying in *Il Ventre di Napoli*: "Il lotto è il largo sogno, che consola la fantasia napoletana: è l'idea fissa di quei cervelli infuocati; è la grande visione felice che appaga la gente oppressa; è la vasta allucinazione che si prende le anime. [...] Il popolo napoletano, che è sobrio, non si corrompe per l'acquavite, non muore di *delirium tremens*; esso si corrompe e muore pel lotto. Il lotto è l'acquavite di Napoli." (46-7, 54)

daughter of Cesare Fragalà's, a bourgeois pastry shop owner, demonstrates this contrast.

Serao's description of the gathering conveys this sense of excess, with the extravagant garb and jewelry of the guests accompanied by the feast of wines and sweets:

Ma ne arrivavano da tutte le parti, continuamente, diffondendo nel salone la letizia del desiderio che era per soddisfarsi, per la delizia di tutti quegli affamati di dolci, di quei golosi di roba dolce, uomini, donne, fanciulli, fanciulle, vecchi.

Ai gelati grossi e rotondi come la luna piena, duri da dovervi conficcare profondamente il cucchiarino, di crema, alla portoghese, di frutta, di fragola, di caffè di Levante, di cioccolatte, si alternavano le *formette*, gelati più piccoli, più leggeri, formati a sfere, a romboide, a noce di cocco e contenuti graziosamente in certe conchiglie rosee o azzurre di cristallo, dai filetti d'oro: agli spumoni, adorazione delle donne e dei ragazzi, succedevano le gramolate di pesche...di amarena, le granite di limone e di caffè, contenute in certi bicchieri di porcellana lattea... (37)

Among these guests is a pale and emaciated man, seemingly a beggar, who devours everything with such a fury that the floor around him is covered with the silver wrapping of all the treats. There is a sense that the feast of privilege and plenty is interrupted by this external figure of the *popolino*, "Chi sarà questo straccione?- domandò a se stessa Luisella Fragalà, presa da un senso di collera e paura" (43). He is a figure who incarnates the social contrast of opulence and hunger, while paralleling the two major themes of the novel: food imagery and the corrosive nature of the lottery. The man, eventually identified as "l'assistito," is believed to be aided by the spirits who revealed winning lottery numbers to him in dreams. *L'assistito* is welcomed and encouraged to eat and drink by the hosts, thus bringing together different classes around the *god* that is the lottery.

Food in Serao's Naples is also a public endeavor. Food and festivities are deeply connected as we learn from Cesare Fragalà's father who gives a list of all the sweet specialties consumed in different times of the year: "la pasta di mandorle o pasta reale a

Natale; il sanguinaccio a carnevale; il biscotto *quaresimale* in quaresima; il *mustacciolo* e la *pastiera* a Pasqua *l'osso di morto*, fatto di mandorle e zucchero candito, il giorno dei Morti; etc.." (30). Just as food divides classes and individuals into categories of haves and have-nots, the consumption of food during feasts and festivals, just as the lottery, works as an unifier. As in the instance of the carnival on via Toledo, Serao depicts a city in complete delirium, from the aristocrats to the *popolo*: "la grande città si era data a quell'impetuosa e gioconda fatica, non per l'amore del lavoro, in sé, per quel lavoro che è causa e conseguenza di benessere, che è in sé, fondamento di bontà e decoro" (90). The city undertakes this endeavor not to ameliorate its hygiene or industry, as Serao states, but all for one motive: "non altro che il carnevale, il carnevale sino all'entusiasmo, il carnevale sin al delirio!" (98).

Following the precedent of *Il ventre di Napoli*, Serao once again allows the reader to experience the colors, scents and aromas of the streets of Naples. The title's ironic allusion to Cockaigne, the mythical land of abundance, refers to the overall popular nutritional destitution that the reader encounters from the opening scene of the public lottery drawing. A variety of merchants consume large plates of *maccheroni*, porters sit on the floor with bread and accompaniments ("qualche companatico asprigno, zucchette fritte e immerse nell'aceto, pastinache in salsa brusca,...), etc. Two seamstresses, however, waiting for the *pizzaiolo* to pass in order to eat *pranzo*, are left disappointed to see that he has nothing left. They attempt to find another option and stumble upon a *cantina*, from which emanates a strong odor of spoiled wine. One of the seamstresses is approached by a shop boy who offers to serve her and the reader comes to understand that the *Cuccagna* of Naples has very specific limitations. She asks for two cents worth of

meat and is quickly rejected. Her response is, “vorrei cavarmi la voglia di mangiar carne, ogni giorno.”/ “Carne e maccheroni,” ribatté, ridendo, il garzone./ “Già: maccheroni e carne!” gridò trionfalmente la sartina./...”Mattina e sera!”(3-4). Food and class are intrinsically linked, and there are the few who consume *maccheroni* whenever they please, others who content themselves with some bread and accompaniments, and others who struggle to eat and yet desire that very *Cuccagna* that eludes them— the Naples famed for pasta and meat.

It is important to note that Serao’s commentary is not limited to the lowest stratum. *La virtù di Checchina* (1884) deftly portrays the struggles of the Roman bourgeoisie through the interior drama of its protagonist, which is revealed in the monotonous routine of her daily life. The story begins with the door to Checchina’s house opening. Her servant lets Isolina, Checchina’s beautiful and sophisticated friend, into her home, instantaneously allowing the reader into Checchina’s world— a world that is representative simultaneously of her internal struggle as well as the struggles of the greater middle class. When Isolina enters, she waits for her friend in the frigid parlor, furnished by a:

divano di *cretonne* giallina, a fiori rossi, molto duro, dalla spalliera diritta...quattro poltroncine coperte di stoffa simile a quella del divano...sei sedie di legno nero, dal colore smorto, che sembravano sempre impolverate...due scatole da confetti, vuote, vecchie, una di raso verde pallido, l’altra di paglia, a nappine...un piattino di frutta artificiali, anche questo in marmo, dipinte vivacemente, il fico, il pomo, la pesca, la pera e un grappoletto di ciliegie...(212).

The meticulous description of the Primicerio parlor represents the only sphere in which the protagonist revolves. It serves as a small prison in which she is restricted physically and socially.

Responsible for Checchina's limited and compliant existence is her husband, Toto, the prototypical repressive bourgeois. The reader encounters him for the first time as he informs his wife of his dinner invitation to the Marquise for the following Sunday. Toto is completely oblivious to the social and economic consequences that the invitation will have on his family, especially on Checchina, who is responsible to see that the illustrious nobleman guest is adequately accommodated. It is here that the author reveals the existent dichotomy within the middle classes: the economic troubles of the petty bourgeoisie are directly contrasted by the feigning of a social existence that is greatly above its actual means. The reality is that the Primicerio family is barely above indigence, and yet Toto's oblivion leaves the burden solely on Checchina. Despite the fact that she is missing many of the necessary utensils for the proper convivial setting,⁵⁵ she does not rebel, refuse to host the Marquise, or even ask her husband for money. She instead dedicates the whole afternoon to preparing a "luxurious" meal working within her means.

The narration of this tale is centered precisely on Checchina's attempt to prepare dinner for her husband's guest, emphasizing the kitchen as a domestic sphere in which social differences and sentimental neglect are highlighted. Toto manifests a complete inability to understand his social inferiority and his wife's psyche, thus rendering the dinner a complete disaster and provoking adulterous feelings between the guest and his hostess. As consequence, Checchina's femininity is reawakened. She, who only worried

⁵⁵ "Avevano un servizio di piatti solo per sei persone...e mancava la salsiera e l'insalatiera...Ci voleva una padella nuova o bisognava rinunciare al fritto. Le posate d'argento erano sei, ma una forchetta aveva due rebbi storti...E il caffè si dà in tavola...Appunto la settimana prima Bianchelli aveva fatto una grande esposizione di macchinette, tutte lucide, fiammanti, che parevano di oro e di argento. Ce ne voleva una" (Serao 216-217).

about grocery shopping, cooking, and the family budget, is allured by the Marquise's refined world. Ultimately, however, it is her mundane, small bourgeois routine which induces "a certain dull moral," as stated by Gisolfi (115), and protects Checchina from succumbing to the seductive advances of the Marquise and his elite ways.

With Verga and Serao, the reader is introduced to the struggles for sustenance and self-betterment that individuals from the peasant and petit-bourgeois families had to endure in the new Italy. In a period where Social Darwinism reigned, the individual had to cope with her/his circumstances often confronted with the possibility for an amoral course of action in order to put bread on the table. It is precisely this same struggle that Carlo Collodi illuminates, creating a timeless icon of children's literature that is marked by the complexities and the torments that define an epoch.

4) *La fame non ha capricci né ghiottonerie!*

In 1923 Giuseppe Prezolini writes, "Chi capisce la bellezza di Pinocchio, capisce l'Italia" (185).⁵⁶ If we hold this to be accurate, then it is important to understand the environment in which Pinocchio-puppet roams. If the period of Carlo Collodi's text (1883) is marked by the concern for national disaggregation and cultural fragmentation, then *Le avventure di Pinocchio* is one of the works geared towards the making of Italians.⁵⁷ With Alessandro Manzoni's *I promessi sposi* and Artusi's *La scienza in cucina*., it is considered one of the three fundamental works of "l'unificazione

⁵⁶ Prezolini was an Italian literary critic who taught at Colombia University and published many volumes in both Italian and English on Italian culture and literature. One such example is an article "The Author of 'Pinocchio'" published in *The Saturday Review* on February 17th, 1940, in which he discusses who Carlo Collodi (Carlo Lorenzini) was and the cultural relevance of *Pinocchio*. The text from which the above quote is drawn is *La cultura italiana*, Soc. An. Editrice "La Voce", Firenze.

⁵⁷ The translations of names and places from Collodi's text is based on Nicolas J Perella's edition of the work: University of California Press, 2005.

nazionale”.⁵⁸ As such, we will examine the ideals transmitted by the text through Pinocchio’s diet. The reader quickly comprehends that the bourgeois culinary world propagated by Artusi, Guerrini and Mantagazza is absent, at least for our protagonist. Instead, as per our previous examples, Pinocchio finds himself in a society where eating is a rare event. Food is almost never present, and when it is, it is practically non-commestible.

To comprehend the social significance of his nutritional struggles, it is important to understand that there is a symbiotic relation between the fabulous, magical elements of the text and its sharp realism. Collodi’s masterpiece is defined precisely by these two different worlds superimposed; by characters that somehow are both creatures of fairy tale and yet veracious depictions of contemporary life; by real world elements, such as school, the police, and the judicial system, melded with speaking animals, an enchanted fairy, etc. This amalgam allows the author to conceive of a text that is both children’s fable and social commentary, simultaneously fantastical and mundane, geared, above all, towards the Italian schoolchild.⁵⁹

Pinocchio’s hunger, therefore, is the hunger of a living puppet (a fantastical creation) and also of the youth of the populace, which suffers and combats a reality of misery. It is a misery that the reader encounters from the very beginning, since

⁵⁸ See *Alimentazione, folklore, società*. Pratiche editrice: Parma, 1980.

⁵⁹ As Rebecca West writes, Collodi was highly suspicious of the educational programs initiated after the unification, because he saw them as a threat to individual freedom. Therefore Collodi’s work, as Susanne Steinberg adds, is meant to spawn creativity and spontaneity, since Pinocchio is “a figure capable of educating while being educated”. See West’s afterword for a discussion of the type of education promulgated in *Pinocchio*. She points out a tension between “freedom-structured education” and “individualism”: Collodi, Carlo, *Pinocchio*; Translation by Geoffrey Brock; Introduction by Umberto Eco; Afterword by Rebecca West; New York Public Review, 2009. For Steinberg’s discussion on Pinocchio as a paradigm for childhood imagination see her introduction in *The Pinocchio Effect on making Italians, 1860-1920*.

Geppetto's lower class status is immediately established. From his nickname *polentina* to the description of his house (III), to the name he bestows on his magical puppet — “Lo voglio chiamar Pinocchio...Ho conosciuto una famiglia intera di Pinocchi...Il più ricco di loro chiedeva l'elemosina” (96) — it is evident that the author envisions a protagonist of the people, with humble and miserly means. Therefore food is scarce, to say the least, and the various bouts of hunger that Pinocchio endures become his most faithful companion during his adventures. As such, we will look at how the different spells of hunger are dealt with by the protagonist.

There are three stints of hunger throughout the novel, and in his quest to satisfy his famished needs, he is then lead to further misfortunes. With Geppetto and the Talking-Cricket (*Grillo-parlante*) no longer present, Pinocchio scours his father's home for anything that may satiate his hunger, only to be deceived by a painted kettle on the wall and by an egg found in the trash (Chapter V, 112-116). His hunger “cresceva, e cresceva sempre: e il povero Pinocchio non aveva altro sollievo che quello di sbadigliare...e dopo aver sbadigliato, sputava, e sentiva che lo stomaco gli andava via... O che brutta malattia che è la fame!” (112, 116). In desperation, the puppet decides to tempt his fate in a “nottaccia d'inferno,”(118) only to have a basin of water poured on his head and his feet burned off (VI).

Liberated from prison Pinocchio attempts to return to the fairy's house, intent on changing his life and becoming “un ragazzo ammodo e ubbidiente”(XX, 232). After a dangerous encounter with a snake which leaves him headlong in the mud, Pinocchio is not able to bear the “morsi terribili della fame” and thrusts himself into a field intent on stealing a few bunches of muscat grapes (238). As in the previous example, hunger leads

the puppet to another misfortune: he finds himself caught in a trap set by some peasants and is forced to become a watchdog— embroiled into a non-human animal world.

Begging for food outside the Fairy's house, he implores the Snail (*Lumaca*) to bring him food because, as he states, “mi sento rifinito” (XXIX, 340). After waiting a total of twelve and an half hours, Pinocchio is once again deceived, mistaking chalk, cardboard and alabaster for desirable foods, and as consequence, he faints from a combination of hunger and despair. Because of this, he once again loses another opportunity for his sought after transformation when he goes off secretly and meets Lampwick (*Lucignolo*), leading to a whole other series of mishaps (XXX).

Aside from leading him to rummage under tables and through waste to find any morsel (V)⁶⁰ and stealing (XX), we see hunger bring our protagonist to the despair of panhandling. In the Island of the Busy Bees (XXIV), Pinocchio's hunger “lo tormentava”, and despite his shame, he resorts to begging. He asks, to no avail: “Mi fareste la carità di darmi un soldo, perché mi sento morir dalla fame?” (274). We, therefore, read of Pinocchio's desolation and anguish due to no food, or fleeting food, but does he actually eat? He in fact does, and what he eats is of as much interest as what he leaves on the table. Notwithstanding the pangs of his incessant appetite, Pinocchio also rejects or leaves uneaten food. We can then divide the protagonist's food into three categories: there are meals that Pinocchio consumes out of sheer necessity, i.e., foods that are not of human diet, but pertain to the animal world; food of the human world; and lastly, food left on his plate.

⁶⁰ “Allora si dette a correre per la stanza e frugare per tutte le cassette e per tutti i ripostigli in cerca di un po' di pane, magari un po di pan secco, un crostello, un osso avanzato al cane, un po' di polenta muffita, una lisca di pesce, un nocciolo di ciliegia, insomma qualche cosa da masticare” (112).

Pinocchio's first occasion for consumption, and as consequence the first time he has his appetite assuaged, is upon Geppetto's return from prison. Geppetto finds his beloved puppet dying of hunger, and offers him three pears intended for himself. His son's reaction is not what the carpenter expects:

—Se volete che le mangi, fatemi il piacere di sbucciarle.
 —Sbucciarle? — replicò Geppetto meravigliato. —Non avrei mai creduto, ragazzo mio, che tu fossi così boccuccia e così schizzinoso di palato. Male! In questo mondo, fin da bambini, bisogna avvezzarsi abboccati e saper mangiar di tutto, perché non si sa mai cosa può capitare. I casi son tanti! (126)

Pinocchio eventually will eat the skins that provoke him such disdain, yet stumbles upon another obstacle with the cores. As the puppet is about to discard the core of the first ingested pear, his father exclaims: “Non lo buttar via: tutto in questo mondo può far comodo... Chi lo sa! I casi son tanti!” (126,128). Consequentially, he proceeds to consume all the cores as well, tapping his belly and exuberantly shouting, “Ora sì che sto bene!” (128). As Giovanni Gasparini writes, this scene is Geppetto's attempt to impart a “parsimonious lesson” onto his son (70). As the carpenter reiterates repeatedly throughout the chapter, it is a society of uncertainty, and his son demonstrates to heed the carpenter's advice in other instances in the novel.

With Geppetto's lesson, Pinocchio learns to consume that which is not of human consumption (mainly the pear cores) for the greater good of parsimony and prudence. There are two other moments in the text where the puppet consumes in such a manner. The first is subsequent to the feigned death of the Blue Fairy, in flight on the Pigeon who escorts him to find Geppetto (XXIII). Amidst their journey, a great hunger overtakes the puppet and having spotted some vetches, the pair decide to stop. Pinocchio “non aveva mai potuto patire le vecce, a sentire lui, gli facevano nausea, gli rivoltavano lo stomaco”

(262). Nevertheless, in this occasion Pinocchio ate so many that he *nearly burst*, because, as the Pigeon wisely recounts: “La fame non ha capricci né ghiottonerie!” (262). Drawing from the proverb, “In tempo di carestia è buono il pan di vecce”, Collodi once again highlights the leitmotif of frugality in times of difficulty, as he does in an ensuing episode with the transformed Pinocchio-donkey.

As a donkey, left alone and with the stable closed, “cominciò a sbadigliare dal grande appetito. E, sbadigliando, spalancava una bocca che pareva un forno.” (XXXIII, 390). With no other option Pinocchio resigns himself and consumes hay: “Alla fine, non trovando altro nella greppia, si rassegnò a masticare un po’ di fieno: e dopo averlo masticato ben bene, chiuse gli occhi e lo tirò giù” (390). As with the vetches, the puppet learns to appreciate the straw, since it is the only option for nourishment: “Questo fieno non è cattivo” (390). He does, however, clarify that it does not compare to *risotto alla milanese* nor *maccheroni alla napoletana*, or rather, to human fare, which appears to elude him, at least until this point.

Pinocchio does in fact have the opportunity to feast on gastronomic creations. While pandering, a kindly woman offers to feed him in exchange for work — specifically requesting that he carry one of her water jugs. After much consideration about the labor-reward ratio, he concedes. The kindly woman, who later reveals herself as the Blue Fairy, holds her word and offers cooked food such as bread, dressed cauliflower, and sugared candy (XXIV, 279). This is the first, and only, indulgence of the puppet in the novel, and “non mangiò, ma diluviò” because “il suo stomaco pareva un quartiere rimasto vuoto e disabitato da cinque mesi” (278). Pinocchio’s hunger is finally appeased by food that brings him into humanity, following a seemingly endless array of disappointments:

whether it is the aforementioned painted kettle (VII) and foods offered by the snail (XXIX) or those “dugento panini imburrati” that never were served (XXIX), Pinocchio’s series of fleeting gastronomic victuals serve as a formative experience, geared towards the puppet’s ultimate transformation into boyhood. This small feast, albeit modest in form, marks the entrance of Pinocchio-puppet from the sphere of fantasy into reality; from the miserly existence of the impoverished ways of a puppet whose internal motor navigates towards the troubled path, to the hope of validation and the foods to which all children should be entitled.

Collodi seems to consistently fill the protagonist’s mind with extravagant dreams permeated by a litany of foods to which he never has access. Therefore, all awhile, Pinocchio demonstrates, as Anna Vivarelli writes, to have “gusti, inclinazioni, opinioni e preconetti. Ha un palato fino e schizzinoso” (53). The puppet’s ideas on food are clear; he knows what he likes without ever having consumed it. His tastes are those of the triad, of Artusi who shares recipes for Pinocchio’s beloved *maccheroni alla napoletani* (recipes 85 and 86) and *risotto alla milanese* (78, 79, and 80), and of a bourgeois cuisine that is, however, practically unattainable. If Collodi’s message to the Italian schoolchild is to heed the call of sacrifice, necessary for both the collective and the individual, then food’s role in the novel is clear. It is a tool that aids Pinocchio’s education. It forces the puppet to deal with the reality of his socio-economic status, and to content himself with that which he finds. The struggles of the individual and of the collective in the fragmentary disaggregated new nation, is a reality of uncertainty that can only be transformed if everyone, in this case every child, works towards bettering themselves, i.e. attending school, working hard, and being a moral person. Hence, food serves as the fundamental

reward for Pinocchio when he demonstrates to have understood the importance of work (i.e., when he carries the jug for the Fairy, when he works day and night to support and nurse Geppetto, when he works to save money to purchase clothes for himself and turns it over to the Fairy without hesitation, etc.). The question that then remains is why Pinocchio does not eat when presented with the opportunity.

In the famed scene at the Crawfish Inn (XIII), which takes on a greater significance for the text on a whole, Pinocchio leaves food uneaten on the table. This dinner with the Fox and the Cat is symptomatic of the societal hunger on which Collodi comments throughout the novel, while it simultaneously expresses the paradoxical nature of a society in which the good sacrifice and the immoral eat. This sort of social Darwinism is prevalent throughout the work,⁶¹ and is central in this episode since the two parasitic characters feed at Pinocchio's expense. The disparity of food on the table is striking, as the Cat and Fox's bountiful plates are juxtaposed to the puppet's quarter of a walnut and small piece of bread crust. His petty and fraudulent dinner mates consume a grandiose meal like no other, surfeit of both food and drink. The Cat ingests thirty-five mullets and four portions of tripe *alla parmigiana*, to which he requests extra butter and cheese on three occasions. His foods are simple peasant foods brought to fabulous excess by portions and dressings. His companion, on the other hand, consumes a more lavish meal: he *limits* himself to a sweet and sour hare garnished with pullets and cockerels, and a fricassee of various game. What sets the Fox's meal apart from any other in the novel is

⁶¹ The fear of being eaten is seen in the novel. One obvious example is when Pinocchio arrives to the Island of the Busy Bees and asks, "Mi farebbe il piacere di dirmi se in quest'isola vi sono dei paesi dove si possa mangiare, senza pericolo d'esser mangiati?" (270). Other episodes that illustrate this Darwinist tendency in the work are when Pinocchio becomes "food" himself, such as with the Green Fisherman (and when he is swallowed by the Great Shark).

the quantity of meat, a characteristic which works to render Pinocchio's plate all the more miserly.

Collodi tells us that the poor boy “aveva preso un'indigestione anticipata di monete d'oro,” therefore, he does not eat (166). Clearly, Pinocchio's hunger was displaced, and the thought of his future riches leads him to envision a gluttonous reservoir of sweets:

— E se invece di mille monete, ne trovassi sui rami dell'albero due mila?... E se invece di duemila, ne trovassi cinquemila?...Oh che bel signore diventerei!...Vorrei un bel palazzo,...una cantina di rosoli e di alchermes, e una libreria tutta piena di canditi, di torte, di panattoni, di mandorlati e di cialdoni con la panna. (222)

The Cat and Fox's false promises of a Field of Miracles result in Pinocchio's illusion of grandeur, demonstrating, as done countless times in the novel, that only hard work and sacrifice will lead to the ultimate reward. In forming Italians, the famed scene ultimately demonstrates that he who is moral and sacrifices now, will later consume (as the puppet does); the immoral, conversely, end up losing everything. The comically egregious pair become deeply impoverished, with the Fox now lame and losing his tail, and the cat blind— the same aliments they once feigned in order to deceive the naïve boy, serving as a *contrappasso* for their immorality.

Ultimately, *Pinocchio* is emblematic of the many uncertainties plaguing the populace; from poverty to hunger, to the extremes of excess and deprivation. What afflicts the protagonist is his incessant quest; a quest that takes on various objectives and levels of interpretation, while manifesting itself above all as an alimentary search that simultaneously defines the self as much as it may ultimately lose it.

Conclusions

I believe that he who sows utopia will reap reality.

-Carlo Petrini (*Slow Food Nation*)

National cuisine?

It is evident that there was an attempt to construct an Italian cultural unity by preaching an ennobled national taste, but to what extent was this endeavor successful? Well, we must first define the parameters within which we will be judging success. If we look at book sales, then we can almost certainly say that the message is well received, at least among the Italian middle classes of the late Ottocento and the beginning of the Novecento. Mantegazza, Guerrini, and Artusi were immensely popular, and, therefore, their writings certainly did reach a literate audience. However, it needs to be said that this success is relative. Seventy-eight percent of the nation was illiterate at the time of unification (with certain regions seeing rates as high as ninety-one per cent).¹ Additionally, few people could consume the foods that were touted by the treatises of taste, and the Artusi effect is in actuality traceable to a much more modern epoch. The reality was that the bourgeoisie only encompassed 6.7 percent of the population.² Therefore a definition of *la cucina* and the theoretical reflection of taste that accompanies it, is a topic that remains confined to an all too small percentage of the population.

Did the Ottocento then yield a unified cultural cuisine? I believe that we can conclude it almost definitively did not. In 19th-century France, the gourmand's effort spurred a cuisine that was at once Parisian and national. In Italy, however, the situation is

¹ Sandra Chistolini, *Comparazione e sperimentazione in pedagogia*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2001: p. 46

² This statistic reflects an 1881 census that factors in both *la borghesia* and *la piccola borghesia*. See Adrian Lyttelton, "The middle classes in Liberal Italy," pp. 217–250, in John A. Davis and Paul Ginsborg, editors, *Society and Politics in the Age of the Risorgimento* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

wholly different. Although there are innumerable critics that claim Artusi's successful unification of cuisine, it seems that the author's death brings a halt to his national status and impact. An article from the *Corriere Milanese* from June 15, 1926³ speaks of Sabatino Lopez's (playwright and literary critic) remorse for a forgotten gastronome: that is, Artusi. Sabatini laments having researched the cookbook author's name in an encyclopedia, only to find Giovanni Maria Artusi (the music theorist), and no mention whatsoever of Pellegrino. In this period Artusi was believed to be a cook,⁴ an inaccurate but widespread assumption, and he goes on to declare: "la memoria degli uomini è più fedele ai ghiottoni che ai cuochi: ci si ricorda di Lucullo e Trimalcione, ma non dei loro cuchinieri...". He ends by contributing Brillat-Savarin's timeless success to the Frenchman's wife, who "mandò alle stampe senza nome quella *Fisiologia del gusto* dove aveva raccolte le sue meditazioni di gastronomia trascendentale, e che doveva al suo autore una saporosa celebrità traverso i tempi". His lamentation is that similar was not done for Artusi. After his death there is in fact a downturn in the number of published editions, likely because of two factors: the first, as Lopez indicates, a lack of posthumous management of his text; the second being due to political events of the Fascist era, i.e., the infamous *Battle for Grain* and Futurist ideology, which deemed Artusi a tradition to eradicate.⁵ We can conclude that it is Piero Camporesi (with his introduction of the

³ Biblioteca Saffi (Forlì): BC Fo, Raccolte Piberestelli, Sez. Carte Romagna, Busta 537/ 222.

⁴ The assumption was that since Artusi was a cook, he must have had been "riveduto e raffazonato da qualche letteratoide" because of it's "purezza di linguaggio". See the Roman *Il messaggero* (May 7th, 1927): Biblioteca Saffi (Forlì): BC Fo, Raccolte Piberestelli, Sez. Carte Romagna, Busta 537/ 223 (4).

⁵ The *Battle for Grain* was a Fascist economic policy during the 1920s that aimed to lower the necessity for foreign import of wheat and to boost cereal production at home, in an attempt to balance the trade deficit. It was, however, difficult to produce in the rocky soil of the peninsula, and since wheat imports were drastically cut, the nation found itself with scarce grains. The result was propaganda such as *Futurist Manifesto of Cookery*, which called for the abolishment of *pastasciutta* in favor of another national starch: rice. Artusi, who represented the tradition of Italian food, became a target for two reasons: the first being

Einaudi edition of *La scienza*, 1970) who is responsible more than any other for bringing Artusi into modern intellectual discourse, reviving the Romagnole's notoriety and helping his text become the cultural phenomenon it is today.

We can, therefore, also contend that it has been only within the past sixty years that the country has established the idea of a national gastronomy— with the aid of the economic growth following the Second World War. The sustained boom of the fifties and sixties, with its developments in infrastructure and wealth, allows for a more accessible nation; one in which regional boundaries begin to ease and Italians are now traveling from the north to the south for its natural splendor, and from the south to the north for work opportunities. This, of course, does not necessarily create a more unified notion of nation, but what it certainly does, is to allow the masses to discover what Italy is— including its regional food traditions. Whereas, before the boom it took the likes of Artusi (and literature in general) to introduce Italy to Italy, now people were experiencing it on their own. The new-found wealth also gave families access to *white* goods and all that they symbolize: the *pane nero* and the *pasta nerastra*, part of so many Italians' diet, begins to slowly confine itself to smaller and smaller portions of the populace. Meals traditionally reserved only for holidays become readily available and affordable on a majority of budgets, and statistics from INRAN (Istituto Nazionale di Ricerca per gli Alimenti e la Nutrizione) support this notion: we find that by the nation's centennial, the way Italians eat drastically alters. Consumption of proteins jumps markedly: fish and bovine consumption increase 300% and 420% respectively; cheese 620% and sugar an

that the Futurist movement was about eradicating all traditions for newly constructed modern society; the second being that Artusi's text was filled with pasta recipes.

incredible 1100%.⁶ The Italian diet is now slowly transforming: once characterized on a whole by nutritional paucity, Italians started to indulge in excesses. Therefore, I believe we can conclude that an Italian identity at the table begins to truly establish itself when the means are in place to do so. Yet, despite the economic upturn, the make-up of *la cucina* changes very little. The dishes put forward by 19th-century *ricettari* are in many instances held in their integrity. This is partly the reason that Artusi is as successful today as he has ever been. His recipes (which of course were a result of his travels and his contact with the people) still exist in the modern day,⁷ regional in origin but also seen as wholly Italian.

For the most part, Italians have learned to accept regional identities as part of a greater Italian culinary identity: e.g., *risotto* and *pizza* both originate in particular areas, but they have come to be seen as both regional and Italian, thanks to what happened outside of Italy more than within. With the great Italian diaspora (which saw forty million individuals leave in the years between 1880-1920 alone),⁸ what the world perceived as “Italian” was being defined by emigrants and their food practices. Therefore, despite new hybrid cuisines being formed in the countries with heightened emigration (in particular in the Americas, but also in Australia), Italian regional gastronomies were introduced to other continents forming a perception of what was

⁶ INRAN (2011) elaborates ISTAT and FAO statistics: see figures 2,3, and 4 in the pamphlet released for the 150th anniversary of the nation- http://www.inran.it/files/download/NEWS/newsletter_150_2.pdf. These statistics are also used by the Rai program *Cosmo: Il cibo italiano tra storia e scienza, tra biologia e Ogm*, airdate 4/1/2012. These numbers continue to rise and in the period between 2001-2007 bovine consumption increases 580%, fish 900%, sugar 1350%, and cheese 1580%.

⁷ A trip to the restaurant at *Casa Artusi* (in Forlimpopoli, the author’s birthplace) corroborates his vitality to Italian cuisine. The restaurant serves only dishes from the author’s cookbook, and they are as fundamental today as they have ever been.

⁸ See: Diner, Hasia, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish foodways in the age of migration*, Harvard University Press, 2001; p 23.

Italian cuisine. This perception worked to brand *la cucina*, and it, in turn, was then filtered back into Italy through globalization. It is a process that made (and continues to make) Italians, who were not content at the pizza and pasta binomial represented overseas, look inward at their Italy, in an attempt to redefine the terms of *gastronomia*. Therefore, Italian cuisine holds a somewhat anomalous position, somewhere between autonomist regional cuisines and highly coerced globalized versions of popular dishes. Ultimately, the ideal of a national cuisine can still be debated today; however, I contend that an Italian cuisine has cemented itself, at the very least as a brand, for the two abovementioned motives: the economic prosperity of the golden years and the backlash of Italians who saw their *cucina*, or at least a cuisine defined as Italian, brought back to them. I use the term *brand* because the *Made in Italy* is now a trademark exported all over the world, with *gastronomia* as its leading product.

Here the Ottocento's taste writers are fundamental, because they represented a cuisine that is both national and regional, and that is exactly why Artusi is more popular today than even in his period, and why the likes of Rajberti, Mantegazza and Guerrini deserve praise. With a blend of science and art, rooted in a steep Italian history, these writers promoted an Italianess that was ahead of its time. However, Italy, in many ways was not ready for their modernity, as demonstrated by the authors of *verismo*. From Collodi to Serao to Verga, we see how the vital necessity of nutrition dominates the consciousness of those who strive for survival. Hunger is identity — it is the primordial urge that strives to be satisfied by a cuisine that is determined by availability and the capacity to fill the stomach. It is a cuisine that distinguishes itself greatly from the cookery of bourgeois taste: from the pears devoured, core and all, by Pinocchio, to

Serao's description of Neapolitans who beg to ingest a neighbor's pasta water, the escape from hunger, therefore, becomes the identity that links so many new Italians. There is an inherent paradox between science and fiction of this period, between the taste treatises and *verismo*, in which the ideals of the former are too abstract for the existing social reality. Moreover, it is exactly *verismo*, fictitious in nature, that represents regionalities, defining areas ignored by taste theoreticians, and providing an alternative meaning for *il gusto*.

With this paradox in mind, how can an aesthetics of food develop?

An Italian aesthetics of food

I believe that the middle classes of the Ottocento did reap the benefits of an aesthetic ideal of Italian cuisine, yet, due to the socio-economic make-up of the nation, their experience is too isolated to be compared to that of the French or British bourgeoisie of gourmandism. Moreover, in France and England the ideals of a middle class of taste were diffused through restaurant culture; in Italy this does not occur. The restaurant is not a fundamental part of the Italian way of life. Whereas all strata of French society make it a moral imperative to save in order to celebrate at least that one special occasion in the finest possible restaurant, Italians have historically preferred to celebrate at home, or, in eateries that for all intents and purposes serve family cooked meals (*osterie* and *trattorie*). Today, new types of establishments are locales for social gathering, whether gastro-pubs or other foreign influenced diners; the meal, however, has taken an ancillary role when dining out. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the culture of food largely still remains at home. Therefore, an Italian art of taste is promoted through the household, and

through the requisite freshness, beauty, and simplicity of its ingredients. Italians' food, for the vast majority, was and is the food of *la nonna*, not of the chef. As a result, its aesthetics is promulgated in a wholly different manner, yet, no less prestigious or refined.

What is the ultimate value of the movement? Despite their less sweeping influence, the taste writers help instill into the middle classes and the populace an important notion: gastronomic pride. Whether expressed through Rajberti's analogical representation of famed national authors with the sequence of a meal, or through Guerrini's historization of what it means to eat Italian, pride in food was and is pride in the nation, regionalities notwithstanding. The formation of Italian taste was also the formation of the sense of what it means to eat in conviviality and as well as possible. Sharing food for Italians becomes the offering of a piece of oneself, of one's traditions, of one's soil. Whether the gastrosophic theories of these authors directly enter in the vocabulary of the masses is almost insignificant, because these theories draw attention to the art of food with a cohesion and concentration of publications previously never seen in the peninsula. As a result, we see the trickle down of certain paragons from the middle classes: as poor as a dish may be, even from the table of the peasant or the worker, it is shared with the utmost dignity and respect for what it represents and from where it came. This class interchange is logical, since as we discussed in Chapter 4, the cuisine of the likes of Artusi was very much a cuisine of the land and its peasantry elevated. The masses almost certainly could not comprehend or delve into a French model of food aesthetics, however they did experience their unique Italian version. *Gusto* is and never will be *goût*, and the converse also holds true; they are utterly different. What the Ottocento men of taste ultimately transmitted, was an art that everyone could afford at

any epoch: the *sentimento del bello*, as Mantegazza reminds us, is what makes a meal truly artful (*Fisiologia del piacere*, 76). Therefore, with gustatory taste as the discerner of beauty, nothing connects Italians more to the realities of *Italianità* than the flavors of the nation, a region, a *terroir*, and above all a family.

I contend that taste did in fact find prominence in Italian culture, and although it cannot be said that intellectuals in the 20th century espoused a reversal of the sensorial hierarchy (with exceptions being the Futurists and authors such as Mario Soldati), it can however be said that the layman did. If we were to construct a philosophy of our everyday experiences, as Perullo suggests, I believe we can trace taste as a driving factor of the Italian quotidian. This is precisely what the Italian gastrosophers preached: an everyday world where taste reigns, and where a trip to the market “[far] crescere la salute e il buon umore” (*Elementi di Igiene*, 229). The attention and care put into daily food rituals has been a defining characteristic of so many generations of Italians, who saw in their foods a way of sustenance, but more importantly love, family and territory. It is a mentality that was partly preached to the *mater familias* from unification onward, through propaganda, published text and political initiative— part of her role as family caretaker— but it is also indicative of a *forma mentis* that unites Italians. It is this mentality that saw peoples come together; proud to share whatever is *nostrano* (a word that finds difficult translation because of the weight it carries in Italian) with anyone willing to try it. Here the gastrosophers are fundamental. They are in part reflective of this mentality, which makes food central to daily life, transforming the quotidian into a philosophy through their positive and materialistic ideals, while solidifying in an epistemological fashion the dinner table as a laic altar from the “desco dell’operario e del contadino, come alla mensa

dorata del milionario e del re” (*Piccolo dizionario della cucina*, 8). Their initial limited influence notwithstanding, these philosophers of food exemplify what Carlo Petrini says: *he who sows utopia* ultimately may *reap reality*.

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