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UNHOLY FEAST: CARNALITY AND THE VENETIAN INQUISITION

In 1648, before the Roman Inquisition in Venice, one monk from the monastery of San Francesco della Vigna denounced another. He reported that Father Lunardo bought veal from a dealer, Zanon, and cooked it in the kitchen of the monastery, from whose garden he also gathered the requisite herbs, and «he cut into veal and cooked capon and other meat cooked *in umido* [stewed] and often I was aware of the odor [...] and the window was open [...] near the terrace [...] and I easily saw them eating».¹ The record of this accusation, and others like it, does not offer great insights into the politics or theology of Venice and its Inquisition, the Sant'Uffizio. The technical charge of eating in defiance of church strictures can, however, offer insights into current foodways and to the role food played in the consciousness of the era.

The history of food, and of its lack, has just begun to be written as social rather than economic history;² before this it has been

¹ VENEZIA, *Archivio di Stato* (hereafter ASV), Sant'Uffizio (hereafter SU), b. 103, *processo* against fra' Leonardo Draghi, July 18, 1648: «che haveva comprato da Zanon, il quale è uno che vende vedello [...] et lo viddi con occasione che andavo in horto a tuor delle herbe, et lo vedevo dalla fenestra di detta sottoscala, vedendolo a rompere la carne cotta et mangiarla [...] et rompeva vedello, et caponi lessi, et era robba soffegata, et qualche volta mi accorgevo dall'odore [...] et la fenestra della sottoscala era bassa verso terra che nell'inchinarmi a cavar la salata facilmente lo vedevo sentato a mangiare».

² An example of this is WILLIAM C. JORDAN, *The Great Famine: Northern Europe in the Early Fourteenth Century*, Princeton 1996. Anthropologists have always been concerned with the meaning of food, as was, e.g., CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS in *Le cru et le cuit*, Paris 1967, and in *L'origine des manières de la Table*, Paris 1968, and as are anthropologists today, cfr., HELEN MACBETH, *Food Preferences and Taste: Continuity and Change*, Providence-Oxford 1997, and P. WEISSNER and W. SCHIEFFENHOVEL, *Food and the Status Quest: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, Providence-

treated marginally, as were witchcraft and sexuality decades ago.³ Part of the problem is that it has been easier to work with objective, quantifiable economic data than to find sources that allow the historian a glimpse at earlier attitudes toward food, at the more subjective side of food history. As is the case with other fields, such as gender history and the history of sexuality, new questions must be asked of old documents, and new readings of standard texts be made to yield information often beyond their stated purpose.

The hearings before the Inquisition in Venice provide one opportunity to understand attitudes toward food. Recently historians have used the records of the Roman Inquisition, the Sant'Uffizio, and its peculiarly Venetian branch, to investigate more obvious areas of spiritual life. The weeding out of heresies – individual⁴ and collective,⁵ the investigation of possible erroneous

Oxford 1996. However, food here stands for something else, it is symbolic. Historians need to add their hard data and deal with the realities of food and hunger. The *Annales*, having a more material base than does current interest in literary theory, dealt with food, witness. "Food and Drink in History" Selections from the *Annales Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, Robert Forster and Orest Ranum eds, Baltimore 1979, but this never started a trend. E. LE ROY LADURIE also began with a study of food patterns: *Histoire du climat depuis l'an mil*, Paris 1967, but subsequently headed in different directions. Currently, Italian and French scholars seem to be more involved with the history of food than are Americans, cfr. *Storia dell'alimentazione*, Jean Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari eds, Roma-Bari 1996, and *Archivi per la Storia dell'alimentazione*, P. Carucci and M. Buttazzo, eds, Rome 1995. American authors deal with important individual texts, both cookbooks and health treatises: TERENCE PETER SCULLY, *The Vivandier of Taillevent. An Edition of all Extant Manuscripts*, Ottawa 1988; ID., *The Neapolitan Recipe Collection. Cuoco Napoletano*, Ann Arbor 2000; KEN ALBALA, *Eating Right in the Renaissance*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 2002; ROBERT APPELBAUM, *Aguecheek's Beef, Belch's Hiccup, and Other Gastronomic Interjections. Literature, Culture and Food among the Early Moderns*, Chicago 2006.

³ This is not to appear ungrateful to Piero Camporesi, whose various works were the early seeds of my own interest in the reality of hunger in early modern Europe: PIERO CAMPORESI, *Il pane selvaggio*, Bologna 1980; *Il paese della fame*, 2nd ed., Bologna 1985; *La Carne Impassibile. Salvezza e salute fra Medioevo e Controriforma*, Milano 1994, *Governo del corpo. Saggi in miniatura*, Milano 1995. However, he never achieved mainstream acceptance; cfr. William C. Jordan's characterization of *Pane Selvaggio* as «a strangely repellent book». (WILLIAM C. JORDAN, *The Great Famine*, p. 149).

⁴ DARIO MARCOTTO, *Il processo inquisitoriale di Lorenzo Davidico (1555-1560)*, Firenze 1992; MASSIMO FIRPO, *Inquisizione romana e Controriforma: Studi sul cardinal Giovanni Morone (1509-1580)*, Brescia 2005.

⁵ In Italy, DELIO CANTIMORI, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento*, Torino 1992. In Venice, JOHN JEFFRIES MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies: Italian Heresies in the Renaissance City*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1997; MASSIMO FIRPO, *Artisti gioiellieri, eretici. Il mondo di Lorenzo Lotto*

belief,⁶ the institutional limning of the contours of a Catholic⁷ Reformation spirituality,⁸ issues of sanctity and possible feinting of such,⁹ all fulfilled the more obvious purpose behind the establishment of the institution and of its Venetian branch in 1547.¹⁰ As Reformation woes and wars waned, cruder spiritual issues such as witchcraft and magic required its attention as well.¹¹

In the context of these major concerns, one of the minor offenses with which the tribunal dealt was labeled *cibi proibiti*, or "forbidden foods", mainly eating things denied by the Church during vigils and holy days.¹² While earlier in the Cinquecento eating in

tra Riforma e Controriforma, Roma 2001; FEDERICO BARBIERATO, *Politici e ateisti. Percorso della miscredenza a Venezia fra Sei e Settecento*, Milano 2006.

⁶ FEDERICA AMBROSINI, *Storie di patrizi e di eresia nella Venezia del '500*, Milano 1999.

⁷ The use of "Catholic" Reformation is an acknowledgement of the current state of its historiography, thanks to scholars like M. Firpo, J. O'Malley, A. Prosperi, amidst many others.

⁸ F. TAMBURINI, *Santi e peccatori. Confessione e suppliche dai Registri della Penitenziaria dell'Archivio Segreto Vaticano (1451-1586)*, Milano 1995; ADRIANO PROSPERI, *Tribunali della coscienza. Inquisitori, confessori, missionari*, Torino 1996.

⁹ A. PROSPERI, *Tribunali*, pp. 431-465; ANNE JACOBSON SCHUTTE, *Aspiring Saints. Pretense of Holiness, Inquisition, and Gender in the Republic of Venice, 1618-1750*, Baltimore 2001.

¹⁰ Massimo Firpo characterizes recent developments in Inquisition studies, as he chastises who would ignore them: «a partire dai fondamentali studi di Federico Labod e di Delio Cantimori la storiografia riflette da decenni[...]. I molteplici e impegnativi lavori che ne sono scaturiti hanno saputo rinnovare profondamente non solo le nostre conoscenze, ma il modo stesso di guardare a quei decenni, non più visti solo nella prospettiva della Riforma in Italia o dei martiri dell'Inquisizione, ma piuttosto della Riforma italiana e delle origini della Controriforma nel quadro delle profonde trasformazioni politiche, sociali e culturali di quei decenni.» M. Firpo, review of C. RUSSELL, *Giulia Gonzaga and the Religious Controversies of Sixteenth Century Italy*, «Rivista Storica Italiana», 99(2007), fasc. 1, pp. 473-477.

¹¹ In general, A. Prosperi, *Tribunali*, pp. 368-399; In Venice and the Veneto: CARLO GINZBURG, *I Benandanti. Stregoneria e culti agrari tra Cinquecento e Seicento*, Torino 1966; RUTH MARTIN, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice 1550-1650*, Oxford 1989; SALLY SCULLY, *Marriage or a Career? Witchcraft as an Alternative in Seventeenth-Century Venice*, «Journal of Social History», 28 (1995), no. 4, pp. 857-876; FEDERICO BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza dei circoli. Clavicula Salomonis e libri di magia a Venezia nei secoli XVII e XVIII*, Milano 2002.

¹² MASSIMO MONTANARI, *La fame e l'abbondanza. Storia dell'alimentazione in Europa*, Bari 1993, p. 99. Ecclesiastical norms imposed abstinence for something like 140-160 days each year; Thursday and Friday (then only the latter), vigils of holidays, great and little Lent. The number of vigils and holy days in the Church's calendar was not negligible. There are 140 days on which not only meat, but also animal products (eggs, cheese, *olio untuoso* [lard]), are not to be eaten without a special "license" from the Sant'Uffizio. On meat as part of pre-Christian ritual practices, see CRISTIANO GROTTANELLI, *La carne e i suoi riti*, in, *Storia dell'alimentazione*, pp. 83-96.

defiance of doctrine had been considered a clue to a doctrinally suspicious life,¹³ later accusations and hearings solely for food offences were hardly ever central to the tribunal's Counter-Reformation task.¹⁴ Unlike prohibited books, *libri proibiti*, the reading of which was heretical,¹⁵ *cibi proibiti* offenses were at most a symptom, not a source, of heresy.¹⁶ Perhaps for this reason, the latter hearings have not often been read, much less exploited by historians. Yet they can, with some license and interpretation, provide just that glimpse into the concerns and obsessions of the early modern period that can help round out food history.

An historian's careful and plausible reading of the Venetian *cibi proibiti* trials reveals an attention to detail which can indeed be described as lascivious and salacious, as well as the kind of hyperbole characteristic of these hearings. A wish to pursue the narrative, and not just name the deed, indicates that the act of telling may be as important as the outcome of the judicial process. This linear style,

¹³ F. AMBROSINI, *Storie di patrizi*, e.g., food violations of Antonio Donà (p. 195), Marco Ghisi (p. 196), Pier Antonio Battaglia, who violated the days of abstinence with an accomplice friar (pp. 200-203). Yet among their multiple offenses, food was considered a minor symptom of general skepticism and libertine lives: «come l'eterodossia avesse contaminato stile di vita e opinioni religiose» (p. 198). While the eighteenth-century index to the Sant'Uffizio identifies Donà's offense as *cibi proibiti*, the offense of Battaglia was *scandali in confessione*. That of Ghisi was *cibi proibiti*, but his two cohorts, Bernardo Palavicino and Giorgio Greco were accused of "luterismo" (ASV, Index 303).

¹⁴ The number of "*cibi proibiti*" trials forms 1.6% (i.e. 56), of the total 3,592 trials/hearings of the Sant'Uffizio, which lasted in Venice from 1547-1789, the demise of the Republic, using the very useful chart of JOHN A. TEDESCHI, *Toward a Statistical Profile of the Italian Inquisition*, in ID., *The Prosecution of Heresy: Collected Studies on the Inquisition in Early Modern Italy*, Binghamton, N.Y. 1991, pp. 89-126 (citation at p. 105). Using the Venetian Archives' Sant'Uffizio index 303, I came up with the same number, but my perusals produced a few more trials.

¹⁵ A. PROSPERI, *Tribunali*, p. 318; F. BARBIERATO, *Nella stanza*, p. 146 ss. In general, PAUL F. GRENDLER, *The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605*, Princeton 1977.

¹⁶ See FEDERICO BARBIERATO, *Luterani, calvinisti e libertini. Dissidenza religiosa a Venezia nel secondo Seicento*, «Studi Storici», 3 (2005), pp. 793-844, for the dimming of the Protestant threat and of the knowledge of its theological particulars. As Barbierato shows (p. 808), drawing on the *processo* against Giacomo Milton (In ASV, SU, b. 126), Calvinism was equated simply with the eating of meat. And in another instance meat eating defined Lutheranism: «sul fatto che fosse luterano non erano dubbii, perché mangiava di grasso le viglie e non tollerava gli venisse nominato la Madonna» (*ibid.*, p. 827). The majority of the offenses labeled *cibi proibiti*, however, include no hint of heresy.

this exaggeration and almost ritualistic specificity from trial to trial, is itself a signal that the agenda is not simply the quest for religious orthodoxy or purity. The recurrence of these patterns often has more in common with others forms of contemporary texts, by which the reading can be verified, than with other records of Inquisition proceedings. Such features, for example, are not typical of Sant'Uffizio trials for witchcraft, which, although sometimes offering an opportunity to specify and delimit sexual acts, do not deliver on this. In the appetites of the early modern period food was more important, more extraordinary, than sex.

It might be argued that food practices, especially pertaining to meat, were part of a religious definition of Counter-Reformation Catholicism, as they had been in the early Church.¹⁷ However, the *cibi proibiti* trials, which stretch from 1547 to 1794, almost the duration of the Venetian Inquisition, demonstrate that meat was not a theological marker but a marker of desire. The carnal desires and carnal knowledge of this period were not those which the twentieth century assumes. The reality of life in Europe in general, and even more in the Mediterranean than in the North, was a diminishing of meat consumption from ca. 1550 until 1850. Famine accompanied this shrinkage, affecting Europe with notable intensity in the seventeenth century,¹⁸ but the period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries was the grand epoch of conflict for food.¹⁹ It was counterminous with the spate of *cibi proibiti* trials.

In the era between 1550 and 1750, perhaps particularly in Venice, it is highly unlikely that anyone ate meat daily. Venice had a sufficient supply of meat. Mainland towns such as Padua were obliged to send a hefty proportion of their total meat production to their island overlord.²⁰ There was a slaughterhouse on the Lido for

¹⁷ See VERONIKA E. GRIMM, *From Feasting to Fasting, The Evolution of a Sin: Attitudes to Food in Late Antiquity*, New York 1996, for the most current discussion of the early theology of meat.

¹⁸ M. I. ASCIONI, *Non di solo pane*, in *Archivi per la Storia dell'alimentazione*, vol. II, pp. 1234-1249, speaks of a world-wide tendency which first manifested itself in Naples in 1585. FERNAND BRAUDEL, *The Structures of Everyday Life: Civilization and Capitalism. 15th-18th Century*, New York 1981, vol. 1, pp. 194-199.

¹⁹ M. MONTANARI, *La fame*, p. 135.

²⁰ FRANCESCO VECCHIATO, *Il tema di dazio sulle carni*, in *Il sistema fiscale veneto. Problemi e aspetti (sec. XV-XVIII)*, Giorgio Borelli, Paola Lanaro, Francesco Vecchiato, eds, Verona

animals arriving by boat from Dalmatia.²¹ Yet, fish was more readily available, fresher and indigenous, and, in a Europe regrettably retreating from being carnivorous, more likely to be a staple of the Venetian diet. The accused who ate meat in this hyperbolic mode – always, everyday, continuously – were arguably a projection of the accusers' desire.

Before this, from 1350 until 1550, Europe had known a very positive period in the availability of meat and other foodstuffs;²² Braudel calls it a European "carnivore period".²³ This earlier period was nostalgically perceived as a Golden Age. It had established meat as an indicator of class, of the good life, even of health; witness that the sick could obtain a license from their priest or the Sant'Uffizio allowing them to eat meat during periods of fast, giving licentiousness a new meaning.²⁴ Thus people in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries not only were often hungry, they felt deprived.

Literature displayed, concurrently, the increasing importance of hunger and of food in Europe's fantasies. The theatrical *Battaglia fra Quaresima e Carnevale*, «Battle Between Lent and Carnival», a standard part of carnival festivities which enjoyed great popularity in Europe during these centuries, ends with the victory of meat eating. The justification is that the poor have need of meat, while the rich have access to other delicacies.²⁵ Popular health manuals, such as *Il Perché*, began and ended with advice about diet.²⁶ Some Fou-

1982, pp. 319-369. A book similar to ANDREA ZAGLI, FRANCESCO MINECCIA, ANDREA GIUNTINI, *Maladetti Beccari. Storia dei macellai fiorentini dal Cinquecento al Duemila*, Firenze 2000, remains to be written for Venice.

²¹ FERNAND BRAUDEL, *Capitalism and Material Life, 1400-1800*, New York 1973, p. 129.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 129. A. GRIECO, *Alimentazione e classi sociali nel tardo Medioevo e nel Rinascimento in Italia*, in *Storia dell'alimentazione*, pp. 371-380 *passim*.

²⁴ The license must be applied for on a yearly basis and is often invoked by defendants. This is why the accusers inevitably make the point that the accused appeared "sano", or in good health.

²⁵ *Battaglia fra Quaresima e Carnevale*, M. Lecco, ed., Parma 1990; G. VENTURELLI, *Forme Arcaiche del teatro carnevalesco in Toscana: Le Buffonate Versiliesi*, in *Il Carnevale dalla tradizione arcaica alla tradizione colta del Rinascimento*, M. Chiabo and F. Doglio eds., Roma 1989, pp. 253-319.

²⁶ GIROLAMO MANFREDI, *Opera nova intitolata il Perché, Utilissima ad intendere le cagioni di molte cose et massimamente della sanità et phisionomia*, Venezia, per Alessandro de Viano,

cauldians see in the injunctions for moderation of *the Trattato della vita sobria*, written by the Venetian noble Alvisè Cornaro in 1558, a discipline and punishment of the early modern body.²⁷ However, given the economic context, it may be that a simpler interpretation is more likely: there was less to eat, therefore eating less was advocated.²⁸

Other popular medical manuals of the era concur in both the centrality of food, especially meat, and in advising moderation. G.B. Zapata talks expansively of the merits of cooking with rosemary; its primacy is shared with wine: «wine [...] when drunk moderately, is the most restorative remedy for the human body [...] it is almost able to raise the dead!».²⁹ But only a little wine, and it should be taken temperately. Wine should be used with meat, and in the section *Del mangiare e del bere*, Zapata luxuriates in his description of the meats which aid good health: «Cibi si di carne di castrato, d'agnello, di capreto, e di volatile (game birds) non molto grasso... lodole, tortre, capponi, fagian, colombi, pernici, tordi, beccafichi e simile, e parimente con ove fresche e tenere».³⁰

Health is associated with meat and meat products, carefully described. Arnold of Villanova, translated into Italian in 1549, also advocates wine and meat with its broth.³¹ Platina, a Mantuan, writes *On Right Pleasure and Good Health*, and the sixth book of his treatise often reads like a recipe book: "Roast chicken"; "On Veal"; "On

1567, p. 1 recto: «Prima il cibo» (first, food!). He goes on, in his first section, to address which foods are better cooked than raw, and vice versa (pp. 11v-24r). The vegetarianism of Antonio Cocchi (1695-1758) seems the final development of this tendency.

²⁷ B.S. TURNER, *The Discourse of Diet*, in «Theory, Culture and Society: Explorations in Critical Social Science», 1 (1982-3), pp. 23-32.

²⁸ Both Manfredi, *Il Perché*, and Alvisè Cornaro (see below) advocate moderation, which, of course was an old stoic-Christian injunction. Cfr. ALVISE CORNARO, *La Vita sobria*, Arnaldo di Benedetto ed., Milano 1991, pp. 45-46, 49, where Cornaro advocates eating like a sick man, giving the body just enough to live. He describes a life of the appetites as one of "concupiscenza", referring here to lust for food.

²⁹ GIOVANNI BATTISTA ZAPATA, *Li maravigliosi secreti di medicina, et chirurgia, novamente ritrovati per guarir ogni sorte d'infermità, raccolti dalla pratica dell'eccellente medico e chirurgico Gio. Battista Zapata da Giuseppe Scientia chirurgo suo discepolo*, Roma 1577, p. 37.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³¹ ARNALDO DI VILLA NOVA, *Opera utilissima di conservare la sanità, pur hora tradotta di latino in buona lingua italiana*, Venezia 1549, pp. 38v-44.

Meat, Roman style"; "Meat Sausage".³² Zefiriele Bovio speaks of a doctor who knew the secret of rapid recovery, for he gave his own wife soup and capon – essentially chicken soup. He does not extend the same treatment to other patients, he explains, for then he and his wife would "die of hunger" for lack of business. The author claims that doctors know the source of health, "good meat and eating well", but keep this to themselves for professional reasons.³³

In literature meat also takes stage center during the early modern period; apparently the audience responded to such ploys. The tradition of the Land of Cockaigne, originating in France in the twelfth century, began as a paradise that included all elements of the good life. By the fifteenth century, in Italy as the land of Cuccagna, all other features of luxurious excess, such as sex and riches, had given way to the alimentary theme – *ventresco*, a land of the stomach. Italian maps of the imaginary land were dominated by such features as the «a table where it rains guinea hens, partridge, pheasant, [another kind of] partridge, capon and every sort of bird» and a field of «cows who have a calf (*vitello*) every day».³⁴ The excitement of the descriptions seems to be in the piling up of detail.

The two most famous giants in early modern Europe – Gargantua and Morgante – share in this fascination with food. Samuel Kinser delves into the sexual meaning of the sausage men in Rabelais' carnival, but this may be a twentieth century imposition on a sixteenth century device. Granting the intended double entendre, sausages were primally exciting in their own right, something

³² See M.E. MILHAM, *Platina: On Right Pleasure and Good Health*, a critical edition and translation of *De Honesta Voluptate et Valetudine*, Tempe 1997: «Roast Chicken, On Véal, On Meat, Roman Style, Meat Sausage», p. 275; «Crayfish Pie in Lent, Eel Pie», p. 373; and *passim*.

³³ ZEFIRIELE TOMASO BOVIO, *Flagello de' medici rationali di Zefiriele Tomaso Bovio nobile veronese; nel quale non solo si scuoprono molti errori di quelli, ma s'insegnan ancora il modo d'emendargli, & correggerli*, Venice 1583, p. 23: «Eras la moglie del Medico, il buon marito la tene per tre pasti leggiera, & et al quarto cibo, le portò una buona suppa francese, & un buon capone innanzi, facendogli buon animo al nutrirsi [...] se io facessi così con gli altri amalati, noi moriremmo di fame [...] Comadre mangiò, bevè, & presto risandò ...».

³⁴ GIUSEPPE COCCHIARA, *Il paese di Cuccagna e altri studi di folklore*, Milano 1980, p.162, Tavola 13: «Stano a tavola piovonno galline d'india, pernici, fagiani, starne, capponi et d'ogni sorte uccelli»; tavola 14: «Vache che hano ogni giorno viteli».

Kinser ignores.³⁵ Two of Pantagruel's followers are called «Maul-Sausage and Chop-blood pudding!» Meat is central to Rabelais' imagery. The *cibi prohibiti* hearings indicate that this centrality was a fact of life, not of an author's fancy.

In the fifteenth century, the Florentine Luigi Pulci introduces only one new character into the Roland/Morgante tradition – Margutte, who represents the appetite for food.³⁶ When asked by Morgante whether he is a Christian or Saracen, Margutte, indifferent to theology, responds «I do not believe more in black than in blue, but in capon, or boiled meat, [...] and I believe further in butter, in beer... and I believe in the *torte* and in *tortello*, one is the mother, the other her son, and the true Father [*paternostro*] is *fegatello* [pieces of liver].»³⁷ A twentieth century critic attempts to make Margutte's fascination with food into a metaphor, and speaks of Margutte's appetitive wit.³⁸ The real appetite which Margutte represents is thus abstracted by taking the text out of its social and eco-

³⁵ SAMUEL KINSER, *Rabelais' Carnival: Text, Context, Metatext*, Berkeley 1990, ch. 4: «What Makes Sausage People Fight?», pp. 93-110; L. MARIN also treats the blood-sausage issue somewhat abstractly in his interesting essay, «Roast Blood Sausage, or the Gush of Performatives (*Ridiculous Wishes*)», in ID., *Food for Thought*, Baltimore 1989, pp. 126-132, as he does in the whole collection (cfr. also «Butcher's Meat and Game, or the Culinary Sign Within Generalized Communication» (*Tom Thumb*), *ibid.*, pp. 175-186, where he treats food as part of a semiotic system, rather than a narrative end in itself.

³⁶ H. WILKINS, *A History of Italian Literature*, Cambridge 1954: Morgante «reappears in Canto XVIII with the demi-giant Margutte, the first thoroughly developed picaresque figure in European literature», p. 159; «In his mocking creed, which he states at length in response to Morgante's question as to whether he is Christian or Saracen, he takes not sides. He believes primarily in what is eatable or drinkable». *Ibid.*, p. 160. CONSTANCE JORDAN, *Pulci's Morgante: Poetry and History in Fifteenth-Century Florence*, Washington 1986, p. 120, on the invention of Margutte.

³⁷ «Io non credo più al nero ch'a azzurro, / ma nel cappone, o lesso, o vuogli arrosto; / e credo alcuna volta anco nel burro/ nella cervogia [...] e credo nella torta e nel tortello, / l'uno é la madre, l'altro suo figliuolo; e 'l vero paternostro è il fegatello [...]». Canto XVIII.115-116. LUIGI PULCI, *Morgante e Lettere*, ed. Domenico De Robertis, Firenze 1984, p. 448; «I believe also in the cake and pie – the mother, one; the other is her son; the true *Our Father* a liver stew, which makes three dishes, two, or only one, from the same liver generated». Canto XVIII.116-119. LUIGI PULCI, *Morgante. The Epic Adventures of Orlando and his Giant Friend Morgante*, trans. Joseph Tusiani, Bloomington, 1998.

³⁸ C. JORDAN, *Pulci's Morgante*, p. 110. For some reason, Jordan spells *cappone* «caponne» and translates it as «fish». Although it can mean fish, its first meaning is «capon», and, again, in historical context, this seems to be the preferred meaning, both literally and symbolically.

conomic context. The meaning, again in the light of the *cibi proibiti* trials, of the addition of Margutte into the legend is clear. The fifteenth century is on the cusp of Europe's decline into scarcity and sometimes famine, and any theology of food is lost in the immensity of deprivation and desire.

Other popular figures are also more meaningful given this context. The figure of Pulcinella, always hungry because of his trade, could appeal to those themselves in want of food because of inexplicable economic cycles and agricultural failures.³⁹ Pulcinella had a widespread appeal: even though the tales were originally Neapolitan, many manuscripts, including those illustrated by such artists as Domenico Tiepolo, existed in Venice. An important part of his appeal could be explained by popular identity with the itinerant entertainer's constant search for, and preoccupation with, food. Menocchio, who thanks to the efforts of Carlo Ginzburg has achieved a kind of modern notoriety, shares in this focus on food. He posits a paradise of food, analogous to Cuccagna, and his strange cosmology gives ontological primacy to something central to his professional life as miller and monger, cheese.⁴⁰

There is new fascination with food and meat in the art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The still lifes of fruit and flowers are decorative, but those of meat can be seen as beautiful only by the hungry.⁴¹ However, if the ownership of the latter can be viewed

³⁹ L. Satriani and D. Scafolgio, *La Fame di Pulcinella*, in *Archivi per la storia dell'alimentazione*, vol. II, pp. 1191-1215: on p. 1192: «Vorace e insaziabile, la ricerca del cibo, oltre che da una spinta edonistica, è orientata da un'istintiva economia dell'accumulo, nella prospettiva del rischio incombente della carestia»; on p. 1213: «Nel linguaggio amoroso di Pulcinella il sessuale, insieme alla sfera dell'affettività, sembra rivolgersi quasi interamente nell'alimentare» In the conflation of sex and food, food wins!

⁴⁰ Carlo Ginzburg, *Il formaggio e i vermi. Il cosmo di un mugnaio del '500*, Torino 1976, pp. 89-91 for a paradise of food. Cfr. *Domenico Scandella detto Menocchio. I processi dell'Inquisizione (1583-1599)*, Andrea Del Col ed., Pordenone 1990, p. 63 for Menocchio's Lentan habits; p. 79 for paradise as a "festa".

⁴¹ Reference can be made to the paintings displayed in the exhibit *La natura morta a palazzo e in villa. Le collezioni dei Medici e dei Lorena* at the Pitti Palace, Florence, Summer 1998. Its catalog by the same name, edited by Marco Chiarini, Livorno 1998, pp. 54-55, 94-95 and 100-101, offers examples of food still lifes. The latter two are by P'Empoli (Jacopo Chimenti), painted in 1621. Their titles, «Pantry with head and feet of a pig, feet of veal, and wild game [and] Pantry with casks, wild game, meat and set of dishes», indicate accurately their content; they are "kitchen paintings" typical of the entire oeuvre of this Florentine painter (p. 100).

as a form of conspicuous consumption, as John Berger would have it,⁴² they fit into their place alongside the descriptions of Cuccagna. The Milanese Giuseppe Arcimboldo's (1527-1593) playful heads, composed of fruits and vegetables, exist alongside his physiognomies constructed from animals, meats and fishes.⁴³ The evidence of art is, of course, soft data. Surely it is just an accident that the standard of female beauty during this era can be characterized by a well-fed plumpness absent earlier.⁴⁴ And it can be only impressionistic to claim that the food at biblical feasts, the Last Supper, dinners at Levi's, Emmaus', and in Cana, is also increasingly ample.⁴⁵ Yet the aesthetic of the period does shift toward fantasized, projected images of plenty and plenitude which were corrections of the straitened economic realities of the period 1500-1700.⁴⁶

Against this background of the economic, literary and artistic history of the period of the Venetian Inquisition – roughly the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – the charges of *cibi proibiti* allow themselves to be read in a new light. They were not a distant extension of paleochristian and medieval practices, where doctrine had been defined by food. In fact, a real ignorance of religious food signifiers was demonstrated in many cases where a knowledge of the meat practices of other faiths, and therefore of the boundaries of one's own, could have been expected.

The trials for *cibi proibiti* also were rarely a concern of the Counter-Reformation ecclesiastical establishment: most of the hearings were initiated by a confessor's promptings or by a spontaneous confession. Only a few came to full trial, and still fewer ended with more than a few prayers for penance. Although the Inquisitors' man-

⁴² JOHN BERGER, *Ways of Seeing*, New York 1972, e.g., p. 99, and *passim*.

⁴³ DIANA CRAIG, *The Life and Works of Arcimboldo*, Bristol 1996, p. 28: *Earth* (1570); pp. 30-31: *The Cook* (1570); p. 62: *The Admiral* (n.d.).

⁴⁴ Reference is obviously to Pieter Paul Rubens' women, but all women seem to be getting chubbier; compare Tintoretto's women, e.g., with those of the earlier Renaissance in Venice.

⁴⁵ The dinners get bigger and the canvases themselves are huge; cfr. Veronese, *The Feast in the House of Levi* (before 1573).

⁴⁶ In ROBERT APPELBAUM, *Auguecheek's Beef, Belch's Hiccup, and Other Gastronomic Interjections. Literature, Culture and Food among the Early Moderns*, Chicago 2006, Chapter 4, «The Food of Wishes, from Cockaigne to Utopia», discusses the role of food in early modern utopian projections and schemes, pp. 118-154.

uals had defined eating forbidden foods on fast days a possible indicator of heresy,⁴⁷ even here, the meat has to be eaten conspicuously and admittedly in contempt of the Church. To be heretical the consumption must be public. The Church was not very interested in this particular offense unless it was a clue to a wider pattern of deviance. Very few accusations met the fairly rigorous specifications of the Inquisition's definition. The trials are not themselves theologically significant.

In the context of the economics of these centuries, the cycles of real famine and the continuous shrinkage of the availability of meat, and of the popular literary forms that were evoked by these crises, the texts of the *cibi proibiti* reveal new meanings. Some of the same characteristics seen in the literary epics and dramas are often present in the legal depositions, perhaps pointing to similar promptings. The consistent use of hyperbole, the unusual specificity of insistent detail, the unsolicited narratives, together send a kind of encoded message of the sense of desire and privation in the form, if not always obvious in the content, of the hearings for *cibi proibiti*.

Hyperbole is displayed in the trials as if the land of Cuccagna really existed: the accused ate meat "indifferently every day", "continually", "always". Throughout the hearings for this offense similar claims abound; desire can be measured by the superlative and the absolute. Ship captain Ferdinando Alborante ate meat "continually" every Friday and Saturday and for all of Lent, during the eight months they were out at sea. His sailors were scandalized; obviously of much more tender sensibilities than the stereotypical sailor.⁴⁸ Cecilia Ongarato ordinarily ate meat on prohibited days, a kind of voluptuary charge,⁴⁹ as did Carlo Levason, too well off for his own

⁴⁷ JOHN A. TEDESCHI, *The Organization and Procedures of the Roman Inquisition*, in ID, *The Prosecution of Heresy*, pp. 127-203, 153-154.; CESARE CARENA, *Tractatus de Officio Sanctissimae Inquisitionis et Modo Procedendi in Causis Fidei*, Cremona 1642, pp. 214, 216.

⁴⁸ ASV, SU, b. 120, *processo* against Ferdinando Gabrieli detto Alborante, July 21, 1678: « nelli sudetti 7 mesi e mezzo l'ho veduto al venerdì e il sabato a mangiar carne in detti giorni e per tutta la Quadragesima[...] et perché noi altri marinari alle volte scandalizzati dicevamo: Guardate come mangia carne il venerdì e t sabato.» They claim he lived like a Turk: « ho inteso che esso si era fatto turco, e poi dopo ritornò in Malta, che poi anchora viva da Turcho o no, io nol so».

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, b. 142, *processo* against Cecilia Ongarato, December 9, 1738: «et à sempre mangiato carne in giorni proibiti.»

good.⁵⁰ Giovanni Battista Gardelino ate meat "almost ordinarily during Lent", and, what is more, with another patrician, Pietro Bembo.⁵¹ A troupe of actors, newly returned from France, lived together and ate during Lent, "del continuo", frittate, as well as doves, pigeons, *polastro* – attenuated chicken – veal and eggs.⁵²

A denunciation claimed that Marc'Antonio Carlotto led a dissolute life, eating "everything" all Lent;⁵³ a second accuser added that he did so "always and continuously", only then adding that Marc'Antonio also kept a concubine in his villa.⁵⁴ A cook in his employ had prepared a dove for him during Lent and Carlotto had a license from the Sant'Uffizio to eat it because of his indisposition.⁵⁵

This hyperbole is typical enough of these accusations to make them seem wistfully voyeuristic, a glimpse of a presumed land of plenty. Father Nicolò Balbi was accused of eating meat indistinctly whenever he pleased, «chicken and veal and other similar meats», respecting no times prohibited by the holy mother church. Again, it is secondary that he kept a *puttana*.⁵⁶ Father Lelio from Piacenza «customarily ate eggs, cheese products and meat during Lent».⁵⁷

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, b. 114, *processo* against Carlo Levason, September 6, 1668: «all'aperto disprezzo et scialacquamento di mangiar sempre carne...»

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, b. 89, *processo* against Giovanni Battista Gardelino, November 23, 1632: « ha manzà carne in casa del lustrissimo Piero Bembo[...] ha magnato la quaresima passata 1632 quasi ordinariamente carne».

⁵² *Ibid.*, b. 38, *processo* against some actors, June 6, 1574.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Marc'Antonio Carlotto, June 21, 1622: «tiene dissoluta vita mangiando tutta la quadragesima, tempori et comandate dalla Chiesa, vigilie et anco venerdì e sabato santo carne et suo latesini».

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Marc'Antonio Carlotto, June 23, 1622: «che Carlotto suo patrono mangiava sempre carne eccetto li venerdì e sabati, ma nel resto del tempo continuamente anco le vigilie et la quaresima et tutta la settimana santafino a tutto il zioffa santo».

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Marc'Antonio Carlotto, June 23, 1622: «che detto Carlotto mangiava carne di quaresima con licentia per le sue indisposizioni [...] in quel giorno si faceva cusinar un colombin». See *ibid.*, b. 98, *processo* against Gregorio Amalteo, June 26, 1642, for a rare example of a license entered into evidence.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, b. 33, *processo* against pre' Nicolò Balbi, May 5, 1572: «et de più mangia indistintamente a suo comodo et quando li par e piaci poli, carne et vitallo o altre simile carne non havendo rispetto a vigilie, tempori, o ad altre prohibitioni della santa madre chicsa».

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 39, *processo* against fra' Lelio da Piacenza, November 19, 1575: «ma ho inteso dir assertivamente da tutti che loro ne mangiano per consuetudine».

Proof of Camilla Leoni's licentiousness is that she ate meat and other *cibi di grassi* all during the past Lent, and this without a license.⁵⁸ Giovanni Grison, a sausage-maker, ate meat Saturdays and Sundays, ate *animali* and as much as he could get into his mouth.⁵⁹ Bortolo Bortolan was accused of eating almost an entire prosciutto one Saturday night (no mean feat).⁶⁰ No *cibi proibiti* trial mentioned the other essential of fasting, that meals, regardless of content, should be sparse. No one is ever accused of overeating by consuming a huge loaf of bread, but a whole *prosciutto* is another story. Possibly encouraged by the probing questions, and aided by notarial padding, the accused who ate meat in this hyperbolic mode were nonetheless also a projection of the accusers' desire.

The second feature, which the trials share with the other literature about food excess and consumption, is delight in detail. Rarely is the offense left at eating generic meat or abstract illicit substances. Rather, the specific manifestations of the desirable substance roll trippingly off the tongue. *Faraona* and *prosciutto* were eaten,⁶¹ as were snails, eggs, and chestnuts stuffed with meat.⁶² Veal and chops were often specified,⁶³ as were eggs and lard.⁶⁴ Chicken, veal and

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, b. 86, *processo* against Camilla Leoni, June 27, 1628: «el mal esempio che dà a tutta la vicinanza, tutta questa quaresima passata ha mangiato carne et altri cibi di grasso senza causa di malatia ne licentia alcuna».

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, b. 45, *processo* against Giovanni Grison (from Grigioni), *luganegher*, March 10, 1580: «mangiar li cibi grassi mangi animali» «et ho visto che in ditto tempo lui manzava de la carne el venere et sabbado [...] et mangia de boni bochoni» [“bochone” is as much food as you can get into your mouth]. See J. J. MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies*, p. 194, n. 35, for a mention of Giovanni in another context.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, b. 22, *processo* against Bortolo Bortolan da Cessalto, April 18, 1567: «et ha mangiato uno sabato di sera, et fu adì 5 instante, uno persuto quasi intiero».

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, b. 22, *processo* against Bortolo Bortolan: «in casa del quale [...] fu tolto et mangiato detto persuto dal sopradetto. Elle farano quella provisione».

⁶² *Ibid.*, b. 26, *processo* against Giuseppe, *scaleter*, November 1569: «che lui mangiava carne et diceva: “Va’, cucina quelli buovoli».

⁶³ *Ibid.*, b. 35, *processo* against Marc' Antonio Armano, 1572: «dicendo a una sua donna che l'ha anchora in casa, la qual ha nome Perina: “Va’ e cusina due bresuole di vitello».

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 32, *processo* against Guido Antonio Pizzamano, December 4, 1571: «ma quello che è pegio, mangiano continuamente carne il vener et il sabato, et il santissimo giorno di la passion dil nostro Signore formagi et ovi et altri cibi proibitti [...] questa quaresima passata [...] el vidi a magnar il venerdì santo dell'ove e tonto sotil». (One of the most interesting of the trials for *cibi proibiti* is that of a group of bakers who were accused – by their competitors,

other similar meats, were eaten at pleasure;⁶⁵ *frittate* were eaten continuously, along with doves and meat – the reporter is unsure if the latter was chicken or veal.⁶⁶ One poor schoolmaster, while eating cheese, tried to convince the on-looking students that it was already midnight and the vigil was over; this ruse obviously did not work.⁶⁷ Either *macaroni* or *lasagne* was served to a “Marchese”, the question arising whether the gentleman had a license to eat meat, butter and eggs, or just eggs.⁶⁸

Veal was often the meat of choice,⁶⁹ as were doves,⁷⁰ “galli de India” [pheasants],⁷¹ chickens,⁷² and capons;⁷³ one accuser talks of a pair of capons (one roasted, one poached) accompanied by tongue

to be sure – of baking with lard and animal products during Lent. *Ibid.*, b. 107, *processo* against some *scaleteri* Grisoni, 1654).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 33, *processo* against pre' Nicolò Balbi, May 7, 1572: «et de più mangia indistintamente a suo comodo et quando li pari e piaci poli, carne di vitello o altre simili carne». *Ibid.*, b. 103, *processo* against fra' Leonardo Draghi, June 18, 1648: «è uno che vende vedello [...] fa cucinar la carne fuori di convento [...] et rompeva vedello et caponi, lessi, et era robba soffegata».

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, b. 38, *processo* against some actors, June 6, 1574: «la quaresima passato mangiavano di continuo delle frittate [...] manzava della carne, non so se fosse polastro o vedello [...] manzò delle ove [...] e credo fossero colombini». *Ibid.*, b. 98, *processo* against Anna Chinciola, August 16, 1643: «havendo cucinato dei polastri». *Ibid.*, b. 150, *processo* against Carlo Galvani, August 14, 1794: «si fece portare un pollastro et voleva che io mangiassi insieme con lui». See G. BOERIO, *Dizionario del Dialetto Veneziano*, Venezia 1856, p. 517 for readings of “polastro”.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 63, *processo* against Ambrogio Mazzoni, January 21, 1598: «messer Ambrosio fece metter sopra la mensa che cenavimo del formagio [...] ma egli ne mangiò dicendo che essendo tardi era passata la vigilia».

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, b. 39, *processo* against fra' Lelio da Piacenza, November 19, 1575: «fanno portate de cena di macaroni o lasagne».

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, b. 64, *processo* against Angelo *marangon*, May 16, 1589: «ma li altri giorni non la mangiava, che io vedesse, ma l'ho visto molte volte di domenica mangiar il pane asciuto, e questa che mangiava era carne di vitello». *Ibid.*, b. 86, *processo* against Camilla Leoni, June 30, 1628: «l'ho veduta a lavar carne di vitello et pollame morto per metterlo a cucinare». *Ibid.*, b. 35, *processo* against Marc' Antonio Armano, 1572: «con spedi di boni carne et polli il giorno del venerdì santo».

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Marc' Antonio Carlotto, June 23, 1622: «et l'ho veduto a mangiar columbini et carne anco la settimana santa [...] de venerdì de quaresima a mangiar ovi».

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, b. 40, *processo* against Marco Ghisi, May 5, 1576: «venero la settimana santa guora et manzorno un galo d'India» and this for numerous times!

⁷² *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Gentile detta Arzentina, bolognese, March 27, 1621: «et era carne de polastri et altre carne».

⁷³ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Gentile detta Arzentina, bolognese, March 27, 1621: «et erano diverse carni, hora di polastri, hora di vitello, et hora di capponi et simili carni».

and by various cuts of veal, also cooked in diverse ways.⁷⁴ *Prosciutto* and sausage – *luganega*, *sopressa*,⁷⁵ *salami*⁷⁶ – took their place among the processed meats.⁷⁷ Lamb, *castrato*, was eaten somewhat more rarely,⁷⁸ although someone witnessed a defendant at the table with half a cooked lamb.⁷⁹ Goat took its place alongside lamb and veal: «he ate veal, goat, lamb and similar things».⁸⁰ The actors were accused of eating not only veal, but also what the observer thought to be *columbini o piccioni* [doves or pigeons], and *frittate* of eggs, continuously.⁸¹

This troupe of defendants illustrates not only the first two aspects of *cibi proibiti* accusations, hyperbole and detail, but also allows the surmise that this era gave food more voyeuristic value than it did sex. During the hearing it was mentioned that Soldino, the sixty-year old leader of the “*commedianti*,” had had a child with the sixteen-year old actress Isabella. She had been his mistress for seven years, but this is not as important to the accuser as the fact that she ate (forbidden pieces of meat)⁸² on Fridays, Saturdays, and during Lent. The inquisitor warns the two that they live in a state of

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 15, *processo* against Giacomo dall’olio, March 13, 1560: «dò pera de caponi, uno rosti et uno lesò. E’ sta tagliato cadauno in quattro pezzi per far tre piatti et da dodese in quatordec de carne de vedelo, tra rosto et lesò, et una lengua salà».

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 121, *processo* against fra’ Vincenzo Garzoni, September 5, 1679: «vidi che su la finestra di sua camera vi erano alcune fette di sopressata».

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, b. 43, *processo* against Voicho, dal Montenegro, January 28, 1578: «che mangiavano a tavola della carne salata, de quella che vien de Dalmazia». G. BOERIO, *Dizionario*, p. 592: “salado” means the same as “salame”; “saladon” is a big sausage.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 88, *processo* against Silvestro Gallo, February 12, 1632: « suo marito Silvestro haveva portato delle bresiole [...] che il medesimo Silvestro suo consorte gli haveva detto di haver mangiato della salsiza o luganega un venere avanti quel Nadal » *Ibid.*, b. 125, *processo* against Lelio Muneghina, April 18, 1689: «li portassimo del persutto e soprassata [...] carne o sopressa, salami».

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, b. 89, *processo* against Matteo de Lonardis, October 31, 1633: « un giorno di sabato dove erano anco molti Greci, ci fu dato da detti Greci della carne da mangiare, e tutti i sudetti Compagni ne mangiavano [...] non havendo se non biscotto da manziare, manziassimo della carne fresca, credo fosse di castrato, in giorno di sabbato».

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, b. 40, *processo* against Marco Ghisi, , May 5, 1576: «et così mi andai. Et trovai che havevano mezo agnello cotto in tavola lesso».

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, b. 120, *processo* against Ferdinando Gabrieli detto Alborante, July 19, 1678: «et mangiava vitello, capretto, agnello e cose simile».

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, b. 38, *processo* against some actors, June 6, 1574.

⁸² *Ibid.*

mortal sin and should not take communion; they reply that they always confessed first. Then he, too, returns to the real issue: they had eaten forbidden food.⁸³

The rather remarkable, to a modern audience, sexual exploit of a fifty-two year old man beginning and maintaining a physical relationship with a ten-year old girl received little attention. In another hearing, similarly, a witness tries to deflect the inquiry, saying that the accused, «ate meat and little doves during holy week, and he had a bastard». The questioner rushes by this gratuitous intervention of a sexual issue and asks if others had seen the accused eat meat during the same time period.⁸⁴ The eating of meat was the offense; the sexual transgression was secondary to the gastronomic. The negative reveling in the constancy of the transgression, and the delicious lists of the misdeeds, are characteristic of the prurient and sensual nature of all these hearings.

The third feature that many of the *cibi proibiti* trials share is an apparently unsolicited need to recount the deed in a narrative replete with sensual detail. In a theatrical mode, the meat is acquired, the meal is cooked, the table is set, and the meat is eaten. Silvestro Gallo brings some *bracciole* (chops) home and demands that his wife cook them for him. His in-laws and accusers live in the rooms below them. The in-laws are in bed, «and we smelled the aroma of these chops which Silvestro ate». A voluptuous experience to be sure.⁸⁵

The case accusing Father Lunardo of San Francesco della Vigna has the same narrative elements. The table is arranged: wishing to speak with someone, a man enters an empty room where, «the table was set; there was one game bird on a serving plate and half of

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Marc’Antonio Carlotto, June 23, 1622: « et l’ho veduto a mangiar colombini et carne anco la settimana santa, [...] ma l’ho visto dei venerdi di quaresima a mangiar ovi [...] nel qal tempo sta quasi sempre fuora».

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 88, *processo* against Silvestro Gallo, February 12, 1632: «che già erimo in lecto mio marito et io, la sudetta mia sorella, la quale sta nella medesima casa in una stanza sopra di noi, a pigliar la gradella dicendo che suo marito Silvestro haveva portato delle bresiole [...] ritornò di sopra a cuocere la sudette bresiole, et noi sentissimo l’odore. Quali bresiole detto Silvestro mangiò».

another on a cutting board, and another on a skewer far from the fire [...] they also ate cheese [...] the room's resident returned with wine». ⁸⁶ The meal is eaten: «I went, being familiar with the house, into the kitchen one Friday and one Saturday and saw them cooking [...] and I went to the table and saw them eating bread, meat and white cheese. ⁸⁷ I was importuned to eat. His maid, named Perina, cooked the veal and carried it to the table [...] a full lunch». ⁸⁸

The trials for *cibi proibiti* can take their place alongside the literature of the period – of carnival and the fantastic epics, be they those of Cuccagna, Morgante, Gargantua, Menocchio. In their hyperbole, specificity and sensual detail, they participate in the heightened sense of excitement and desire which food evoked, the lunge toward pleasure and physical satisfaction. They are immediate, specific, total, and sensual in their narrative. The voyeurism, lasciviousness, salaciousness, all are markers of a society which was actually or psychologically deprived and desirous of food.

Yet, among the first trials for *cibi proibiti* there are those which indicate that the theology of meat, operative in the early Church, ⁸⁹ might be a theology for the simple in an age of religious confusion. Consubstantiation and the *plenitudo potestatis* were beyond the man on the *calle*, but a visible sign of a Protestant was that he ate meat on Friday and Saturday. Perhaps the trials of *lutherani* or *protestanti* who ate forbidden meat had reinstated food as a theological determinant in Counter-Reformation Europe. ⁹⁰

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, b. 103, *processo* against fra' Leonardo Draghi, July, 16 1848.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 95, *processo* against Anzolo Rinaldini da Rimini, December 1, 1639: «son andato, per esser familiar di casa, in cucina in giorno di venerdì et sabato, né ho visto che in vi si cucinassero altro che carne, anzi alcune volte anco andato alla tavola dove solevano mangiare detto Daniele et Anzolo che erano insieme a sedere e mangiavano et guardai in tavola, né vidi altro che pane, carne et da una banda formaggio e pomi».

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, b. 103, *processo* against Marc'Antonio d'Armano, July 16, 1572: «et fece che la sua massara (ma più tosto concubina, nominata Perina) cusinasse delle brasole di vitello, le quali portate in tavola se ne messe a mangiare».

⁸⁹ See V. E. GRIMM, *From Feasting to Fasting*, for the most current discussion of the early theology of meat.

⁹⁰ CAROLINE WALKER BYNUM, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, Berkeley 1987, talks about food, and especially meat, as defining Christianity, using a medieval example of a crypto-Moslem apostate who ate meat on Friday (pp. 40-41). Yet the argument of her book is that the strength of this definition declined after the twelfth century.

The *cibi proibiti* trials which carry the accusation of Lutheranism or Protestantism are few. ⁹¹ In 1569 a denunciation of Giuseppe *scaleter* (confectioner) called him a Lutheran and heretic, saying immediately that he eats meat every day during Lent, consuming veal, chicken, and eggs, claiming they were snails according to the statement. ⁹² This was the extent of his Lutheranism. Guido Pizzamano, who *inter alia* fathered a child by Veronica Franco, was said to be like a Lutheran in that he ate meat, and eggs with lard, on Friday, Saturday and “always” in times of vigils. ⁹³ Alvise de Leonibus' accuser denounced him as a bad Christian who ate meat Friday and Saturday, ⁹⁴ while Stefano Dusarello had the reputation of a Lutheran because he ate meat every Friday and Saturday. ⁹⁵ Alessandro, accused of Lutheranism, not of eating *cibi proibiti*, ate meat on prohibited days. ⁹⁶ Davide Loschi, a Vincentine noble who lived “as a Lutheran” in Germany for seventeen years, ate meat on Fridays and Saturdays. ⁹⁷

⁹¹ The absence of *calvinismo* as associated with eating too much is interesting. Perhaps the dour nature of Genevan practice was unconsciously registered. See F. BARBIERATO, *Luterani*, p. 808, for a rare, and peculiarly late, example of a convinced Calvinist who therefore ate meat on prohibited days ASV, SU, b. 126, *processo* against Giacomo Meliton da Rotterdam, October 21, 1685.)

⁹² ASV, SU, b. 26, *processo* against Giuseppe *scaleter*, November 1569: «carne di vedello et galline dando nome di moronella di montagna et a gli ovi nome di buovoli, con scherno et irrisio delle leggi».

⁹³ *Ibid.*, b. 32, *processo* against Guido Antonio Pizzamano, January 3, 1572: «che l'ha mangiato il venerdì santo ove et formaio». The fact that he apparently got three women pregnant at the same time is, of course, incidental: «Io ho havuto un putto con una Veronica Franco, secondo il ditto di essa, il qual vive»: cfr. MARGARET F. ROSENTHAL, *The Honest Courtesan. Veronica Franco, Citizen and Writer in Sixteenth Century Venice*, Chicago 1992, p. 83, p. 298, n. 66.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 33, *processo* against Alvise de Leonibus, march 2, 1571: «che mangiasse il venere et il sabato e negli altri giorni prohibiti [...] è stato messo in prigion per luteranismo».

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 39, *processo* against Stefano Dusarello, September 15, 1573: «magnando della carne il venere et il sabato, zorni ad ogni bon cristiano zorni proibitti».

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, b. 65, *processo* against Alessandro Glisenti, September 7, 1589: «Io non ho tolto licenzia da nessuno, credendo che nella malatia per la necessità ogn'un ne possi mangiare senza licenzia».

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 39, *processo* against Davide Loschi, September 10, 1575: «manza carne il venere et il sabato, essendo sano [...] ha detto voler ritornar in Alemagna [...] cerca far dinari per questo effetto di ritornar in Germania».

Also suspect, and from Germany, Anna lived in a house with Flemings and Germans who ate meat Friday and Saturday, in particular, on the vigil of the Madonna. When she was eating meat inside, she closed the door with rope so that it could not be opened.⁹⁸ The final mention of *protestantesimo* and meat is in the trial of Argentina Bolognese, who ate meat "continuously" without a license. She went to church and took communion after eating an egg, and ate diverse meats, «now chicken, now veal, now capon»; the accuser volunteered these types gratuitously. A more sympathetic landlady said that, poor, tired, and old, Argentina might have gnawed on the bones left by the sick Frenchmen for whom she cooked. It was for this that Argentina had been accused of being a Protestant sympathizer.⁹⁹ This 1621 hearing contains the last mention of Lutheranism or protestantism among *cibi proibiti* hearings. The trials which yield this accusation are few and begin only in 1569, well after the reality of the Lutheran threat. Yet, long after Lutheranism ceased to be an issue, meat continued to be one.

These were the only trials specifically labeled *cibi proibiti* where *protestantesimo* and *luteranesimo* are related/equated with meat eating practice.¹⁰⁰ Were a simple theology of meat really in operation here among the Venetians, one would expect two other categories of Inquisition offenses to rely on gastronomic markers as doctrinal determinants: accusations of Moslem affiliation and of *giudaismo*, of lapsing into either Moslem or Jewish beliefs and practices. One of Venice's central works of art, the San Marco mosaics depicting the apostle's body being smuggled out of Alexandria wrapped in the pork so distasteful to Moslems,¹⁰¹ should have established for all Venetians the primacy of meat prohibitions to a

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, b. 64, *processo* against Anna *todesca*, August 26, 1589: «et che quando ne mangiano fanno levar via la cordella della porta acciò non si possi aprir la porta per di fuori, et che la mangiano intorno alle 16 hore».

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, b. 77, *processo* against Gentile detta Arzentina, bolognese, March 27, 1621: «li francesi stavano molto male et mangiavano della carne qualche volta, et erano tanto poveri che pestavano anco li ossi».

¹⁰⁰ Although in a non *cibi proibiti* trial, printer Pierre de Huchin was secretly a Calvinist and ate meat on Fridays and during Lent. J. J. MARTIN, *Venice's Hidden Enemies*, p. 135.

¹⁰¹ See OTTO DEMUS, *The Mosaic Decoration of San Marco, Venice*, Chicago 1988, p. 34, figure 17, for a depiction of this.

fundamental understanding of Eastern religious practices and theological distinctions.

There are many trials, under the rubric of *muselmano*,¹⁰² of baptized Christians who were kidnapped by Turks, often living the lives of Moslems for many decades. Upon their return to Venice, they appear before the Inquisition to make a fairly ritual abjuration of their coerced defection from Catholic practice. The penitents all claim they did this under force and that in their hearts they had never embraced Islam or left Christianity. One logical proof of this covert rejection of the eastern religion might easily have been offered, that the slave had secretly eaten pork. Yet in all the *muselmano* accusations before the Sant'Uffizio, only one man used the eating of pork to establish his continual Christian orthodoxy.¹⁰³

Other trials of baptized Christians living in Venice and sliding into Moslem practices did not use the criterion of refusal to eat pork as a part of the accusation, although the eating of meat on fast days was considered evidence in some trials. A Spanish soldier from Madrid was accused of eating meat at the house of Turks on Friday and of going about town dressed like a Turk.¹⁰⁴ One penitent had been taken by the Turks and sold as a slave; he lived four years as they lived, «eating meat indifferently».¹⁰⁵ A doctor was denounced as eating meat Friday, Saturday and during Lent, but equally important as evidence of his embracing Islam was his grand black moustache and beard.¹⁰⁶ A food vendor, who had once punched a noble

¹⁰² This is one instance in which the usually reliable index 303 is faulty. A survey of the various *buste* reveals trials for *muselmano* which are not indexed. Perhaps the confession and abjuration were so routine on this eastern edge of Western Christianity, that the necessity of entering each in the index was not compelling.

¹⁰³ ASV, *SU*, b. 77, *processo* against Domenico De Zorzi, November 23, 1621: «io mangiavo carne di venere et di sabbato, come facevano tutti li altri Turchi et facevo le ceremonie che fanno loro, che me le facevano far per forza [but later] di nascosto de Turchi mangiavo con cristiani della carne di porcello».

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, b. 88, *processo* against Giovanni Lopez da Madrid, June 5, 1631.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, b. 89, *processo* against Martino Velincovich, June 12, 1642: «et se ben vivevo come loro esteriormente mangiando carne indifferentemente».

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, b. 89, *processo* against Giuseppe Strupioli, medico, May 6, 1632: «che tornato di Turchia mantiene vita da Turco, mangiando carne così di venere, come li sabati, et quadragesima, vigilie [...] che è grande con una barbazza negra, et mustachioni grandi, che ha ciera di Turco».

and subsequently fled Venice for Turkey, was accused upon return of eating meat Friday and Saturday.¹⁰⁷ Eating meat on fast days could be a sign of defection, but a more doctrinally subtle accusation of a refusal to eat pork was never hurled.

The same lack of theological sophistication is demonstrated in the trials against those accused of being Venetian *conversi*, backsliding Jewish converts to Christianity, or of being Christians newly embracing Judaism. Pietro Periti was a Jew who had converted to Christianity, but backslid, for he «ate meat indifferently, Friday, Saturday, during Lent and on other days forbidden by the Church».¹⁰⁸ This was not theologically astute, for Jews could hardly eat meat indifferently. Felician Diaz, daughter of a Spanish Christian father and Portuguese Hebrew mother lived in the Venetian Ghetto with Jewish relatives; she ate meat on fast days rather than let them know she was a Christian.¹⁰⁹ On the first day of his arrival in Venice, another Spaniard with Jewish relatives, went to the Ghetto to get money from a false (he claims) Jewish uncle; it was Saturday night and he was offered meatballs, *polpette*, but he demurred and requested *cibi magri*.¹¹⁰

As had often been the case with *muselmano* offenses, dressing like a Hebrew was as significant a sign as was the eating of meats, or abstinence therefrom. In the long trial of Solomon De Cameo, accused of being a *converso*, what was at issue was whether he refused to work on Saturday and wore the red hat of the Jews, changing it only occasionally for the black hat of a Christian. Only once was food mentioned: he himself said that he worked on Saturday, ate with Christians, and lived the life of a Christian.¹¹¹ None of the possible judaizers was

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, b. 89, Ceternocci, Pietro, May 11, 1632: «che lui mangi carne di venire et sabato, ne mai vada a messa».

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, b. 92, *processo* against Pietro Periti, April 16, 1636: «e mangia carne indifferente-mente il venerdì et il sabato, la quadragesima et altri giorni vietati da santa Chiesa».

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, b. 92, *processo* against Felician Diaz, April 5-17, 1635. She, like many, received only a simple penance.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, b. 107, *processo* against Francesco Valenza, medico spagnolo, November 4, 1654: «nella qual sera fu portato in tavola carne, in particolare delle polpette, ma io non ne volsi mangiar professando d'esser buon Cattolico, et puoi mi providero de cibi magri.»

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, b. 89, *processo* against Salomone De Cameo di Roma, September 7, 1632: «io ho lavorato il sabato, ho mangiato nel magazzino, con cristiani, et son vissuto da cristiano». On all the Jews who were involved with the Venetian Inquisition in any way, it is necessary to con-

accused of refusing to eat pork; none of the accused offered a story of the eating of pork as a defense. However, working on Saturday, wearing a black hat, not dressing like a Jew, were all considered appropriate rebuffs to the accusation of *giudaismo*.

Even those who might have known better seemed totally unaware of the doctrinal significance and theological nuances of eating or not eating meat. The distinctions among faiths, and thus the possibility that food defined faiths, were lost. Father Lelio Muneghina was being conducted from his monastery near Padova to the Sant'Uffizio, before which he had been accused of claiming the Virgin Mary was his mistress, inter alia. He began to demand to eat meat, although it was Friday, and rushed away to the Osteria di Porto where he had *sopressa* and *prosciutto*, shouting that he wished to be like a Hebrew or a Turk and to live in their mode.¹¹² The guards claim to have let him do this in order to quiet him, a rather enlightened response. That a Jew or a Moslem would look with horror on eating pork sausage or ham was not mentioned.

It was undoubtedly ill advised to escape one's guards on the way to an Inquisition hearing, and to flee to an *osteria* to eat forbidden meats.¹¹³ Most remarkable, however, was the misunderstanding of meat practices of Hebrews and Turks, especially in an arena and among persons who might be expected to have had more accurate information. Even other Christian religions, such as the Greek Orthodox, were understood only to be able to do that, "eat everything", which Roman Christians ruefully could not.¹¹⁴

sult the magisterial work of PIER CESARE IOLY-ZORATTINI, *Processi del S. Uffizio di Venezia contro Ebrei e Giudaizzanti*, vols. 1-15, Firenze 1980-1993.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, b. 125, *processo* against pre' Lelio Muneghina, May 16, 1688: «disse che assolutamente ne voleva mangiare, che haveva già datta l'anima sua al diavolo già quattordici anni [...] non fu possibile acquietarlo, ma disse di voler far all'Ebraica o alla Turca et voler viver a suo modo.»

¹¹³ This is the only instance where a *cibi proibiti* charge spills over into other spiritual areas. Barbierato makes the observation, if not scientific diagnosis, that Lelio was a "frate pazzo" (p. 232): F. BARBIERATO, *Immaginarsi la guerra: la follia di fra' Lelio Muneghina, in Venezia e la guerra di Morea. Guerra, politica e cultura del '600*, M. Infelise and A. Stouraiti, eds, Milano 2005, pp. 232-241.

¹¹⁴ ASV, SU, b. 66, *processo* against Isabella Polo, June 5, 1590: «ello me lo fece confessar e comunicar alla greca e nel mangiar ho mangiato alla greca [...] lui andò via e me ha lasciato sola che me consumò ogni cosa.»

This was not a popular theology of meat for the simple: what was known about other religions, or what seemed significant about them, was that they were permitted to eat meat when Catholics were not. That the others had meat restrictions more stringent than those experienced by Catholics was either unknown or ignored. If this was a theology of the simple, it was indeed quite simple: what is known about Lutherans, Moslems and Jews was that they could eat meat on Fridays, Saturdays and other Catholic fast days. Meat was the marker of desire, not of doctrine, and attitudes toward it were a projection of fantasies.

While the *muselmano* and *giudaismo* trials do not display any sophistication about doctrine and theology when it comes to meat, what they do have in common with the *cibi proibiti* trials is a way of describing and dealing with meat that is evidence of deprivation and desire, of history, class, and a nostalgia for times past. They share this with contemporary literature and its fantasies, and with historical reality. Invented or projected, orgies are more often gastronomic than sexual. People were hungry, whether physically or sensually, for the flavors and aromas of the past.

For the past several decades the body, with its specific parts, has been a particular focus of early modern historians. The *corpus* has often been dissected, a fragmentation sometimes ignoring the whole.¹¹⁵ The body whole is viewed as form rather than function; if function is focused upon, it is predominantly sexual. However, this concentration may be a reflection, more of post-Victorian attitudes than of the interests and preoccupations of early modern Euro-

¹¹⁵ Recent examples: FRANCIS BARKER, *The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection*, in the series: *The Body in Theory: Histories of Cultural Materialism*, Ann Arbor 1995; SHEILA DELANY, *Impolitic Bodies: Poetry, Saints, and Society in Fifteenth-Century England: The Work of Osbern Bokenham*, Oxford 1998; VITO FUMAGALLI, *Solitudo carnis: Vicende del corpo nel Medioevo*, Bologna 1990; *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporality in Early Modern Europe*, David Hillman and C. Mazzio, eds., New York 1997; DALIA JUDOVITZ, *The Culture of the Body: Genealogies of Modernity*, Ann Arbor 2000; JEAN LOUIS SHEFER, *The Deluge, The Plague: Paolo Uccello*, in the series: *The Body In Theory: Histories of Cultural Materialism*, Ann Arbor 1994. In ANDREA CARLINO, *Books of the Body: Anatomical Ritual and Renaissance Learning*, Chicago 1999, the body is treated literally rather than figuratively. LINDA NOCHLIN, in *The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity*, New York 1995, addresses the deeper significance of the current concentration on the body.

peans.¹¹⁶ Carnality could then be defined as overwhelming desire for meat, or *carne*, rather than sexual carnality. It was food in general, and meat in particular, which seemed exciting, to invite the onomatopoeic adjectives "salacious" and "lascivious". In research on the body, modern scholars have overlooked the truism, *Il faut manger!* They thereby miss the observation that the early modern body was inhabited by someone who was, in many instances, hungry, whether physically or sensually, for the flavors and aromas of the past. The records of the Sant'Uffizio offer this important corrective to contemporary scholarly research.

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¹¹⁶ Only CAROLINE WALKER BYNUM, whose writing on the body began with a work on women and food, may understand the priorities of the subjects of research. Of course, the title of the present study is an homage to her *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*. She gave precedence to the food which fuels the body whole, its proto-energy, before going into the body's breakup, in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion*, New York 1992, and reassembling in *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 1200-1336*, New York 1995. Cf. EAD, *Why All the Fuss About the Body*, «Critical Inquiry», 22 (Autumn 1995), pp. 27-31.