

The Voices of Italian Immigrant Radical Women in the United States, 1890-1930

By Marcella Bencivenni

In 1911, Bellalma Forzato-Spezia, an Italian immigrant who had settled in Hoboken, New Jersey, published a pamphlet entitled “Per le Nuove Generazioni” (For the New Generations) in which she promoted the educational philosophy of the Escuela Moderna (Modern School) advanced by the Catalan anarchist Francisco Ferrer in 1901. The Modern School’s goals were to promote rational, secular, and libertarian education and create “solid minds, capable of forming their own rational convictions on every subject.”¹ Forzato-Spezia became a passionate advocate of Ferrer’s educational objectives and teaching methods. Conventional schools, she wrote, instead of enlightening and elevating the minds of future generation, have become a powerful “instrument of domination and enslavement:” a means for the bourgeois state “to fabricate docile citizens, respectful of laws, authorities, and pre-established orders.” True education, she insisted, should rather free children “from the shackles of dogmatic education” and create a revolutionary milieu fit to preparing “a new generation of conscientious, free, and innovative men.” Her educational plan included among other things “the demolition of religious, patriotic, militaristic, and capitalist dogmas,” as well as the promotion of a “compassionate rationalism” conducive to fighting all social injustices and creating a better future.²

In 1913, intensifying her campaign to spread Ferrer’s teachings, Forzato-Spezia published another pamphlet entitled “La donna nel presente e l’educazione dell’infanzia” (Contemporary Women and Childhood Education). Here, she lectured the “figlie del lavoro” (labor’s daughters) about the importance of family education and the revolutionary role of motherhood in shaping the ideas and characters of their children. Articulating the thought of other radicals, she argued that women were in the unique position, as mothers, to sustain the revolution by passing on to their children their vision of a just and egalitarian society.³ “Come with us! – she urged her fellow female comrades – Give us in your

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children some rebels, some demolishers, some avengers, some barricade heroes.... And then, we will finally crush the bloody bulwark of private property, and, on its smoking ruins, we will hoist the red gonfalon of the newly civilization based on liberty and universal justice!"⁴

By the First World War, Italian immigrants had founded at least three Ferrer schools in the United States -- in Paterson, Boston and Philadelphia -- along with hundreds of other libertarian schools and circles.⁵ A primary instrument of working class education and consciousness, these schools were an essential aspect of the counterculture produced by Italian immigrant radicals in the world. As her pamphlets attest, Forzato-Spezia was an important agent of these educational endeavors. Her contributions to radicalism, however, did not stop there: Forzato-Spezia also gave dozens of lectures to socialist and anarchist gatherings and regularly wrote poetry and articles for Italian language radical newspapers that attacked capitalism and urged workers, particularly women, to rebel. Police records indicate that she was indeed extremely popular within the Italian American radical community of the early twentieth century. Yet, in most histories of Italian American radicalism she appears only as a peripheral actor.⁶

In the past two decades, exciting new works on women, migration and labor have helped correct such gender oversights. It has now become abundantly clear that, while Italian radical women constituted only a minority among their fellow immigrants in the United States, they were far from invisible, passive or silent.⁷ Italian women became pivotal in local labor struggles and in building and sustaining the networks of working class solidarity and political consciousness, particularly within the revolutionary Industrial Workers of the World and the garment unions.⁸ They participated alongside with men at political meetings, lectures, recreational activities, and played often a crucial role in organizing co-workers and raising funds for solidarity campaigns. In many cases, Italian women also organized their own separate propaganda groups, in which they discussed not only political ideologies but also feminism. Already by the 1890s, Italian women in New Jersey, New York, Boston, Vermont,

and Illinois had formed distinctive female clubs, such as the anarchist group "Emancipazione della donna," (Woman's emancipation), the "Gruppo femminile di propaganda," (Women's propaganda group) and the women's group "Luisa Michel," that aspired to promote revolutionary consciousness in conjunction with the emancipation of women.⁹

This paper joins this recent body of scholarship in recovering the "lost" stories of Italian immigrant women, and correcting the distortions and omissions of earlier historiography.¹⁰ My intention, however, is not just to make Italian immigrant radical women more visible, but to bring attention to the role of literature and cultural traditions in promoting and sustaining political activism. How, for example, did Italian radical women express their political beliefs through culture? What cultural and literary forms did they privilege? What themes and topics did they focus on? Did their writings change vis-à-vis the men in the radical movement? In short, what can we learn about women's radicalism from what they said and wrote?

Most current scholarship on Italian American radicalism has focused on the political and ideological aspects of the movement. But Italian immigrant activism was not confined to politics and ideology alone. Besides founding political clubs and working class organizations, radical men *and* women engaged in a wide range of cultural and recreational activities that shaped and defined their political culture. They also generated a wealth of artistic and literary works such as short stories, poems, plays, drawings and cartoons which were published in great abundance in radical newspapers. To date, however, this rich literary material has been almost completely ignored.¹¹

Bellalma Forzato Spezia was probably the most sophisticated literary voice of women's radicalism but she was not the only one. In the course of my doctoral research on Italian American radical culture I found hundreds of women's names in the pages of radical newspapers.¹² These names attest that women were contributors and subscribers of radical newspapers, active members of social, political, and feminist clubs, as well as authors of political articles, short stories, and poems.

Unfortunately, for the most part, no records exist about these names.¹³ Using police files, radical newspapers and other literary sources, this paper offers a glimpse into the political and literary world of a lost generation of revolutionary women.

Bellama Forzato-Spezia was born at Mirandola, a small village in the province of Modena, in Northern Italy, on January 1, 1877. From her police files in the Archive of State in Rome, we can assume that, since her father was a teacher, she had received a fair education. In 1891 she lost her parents and, a few years later, she married a certain Forzato from Naples and emigrated with him to America, settling in West Hoboken, New Jersey.¹⁴ There, she opened a bookstore on 416 Spring Street, which became renowned for its large selection of booklets of socialist propaganda and social novels. Soon her name became associated to that of important revolutionary socialists and syndicalists of the time, such as Edmondo Rossoni, Giacinto Menotti Serrati, Camillo Cianfarra, and Dino Rondani. It is unclear whether she was already a socialist in Italy, or whether she embraced revolutionary ideas in the U.S. In any case, by 1913 she had attracted the attention of the Italian Consulate in New York for some of her writings and lectures, particularly as a contributor to *L'avvenire*, the socialist revolutionary newspaper edited by anarcho-syndicalist Carlo Tresca.¹⁵

Forzato-Spezia's activism and ideas were part of a transnational radical culture that replicated the politics, traditions, and institutions of the turn-of-the-century Italy. Paralleling the ideological divisions of the Italian Left, hundreds of anarchist, socialist, and anarcho-syndicalist groups arose throughout the United States between 1890 and 1915. These groups published radical newspapers to express and give voice to their ideas; organized Sunday and evening schools that offered free classes and lectures on a wide variety of topics; and sponsored countless *circoli educativi* (educational circles) and self-organized *librerie rosse* (red bookstores) that made available to workers hundreds of books and pamphlets, ranging from literary classics and dramas to political essays and anti-clerical tracts.

Each group had also its own orchestra and dramatic society that organized weekly performances in local bars, circles, or hired halls in the city, attracting thousands of Italian immigrants and raising hundreds of dollars for radical endeavors. Other recreational activities included dances, concerts, picnics, and festivals such as the *festa della frutta*, a peasant festivity with raffles, games, and music that was held at the end of the summer.

While lesser in numbers, women represented a significant component of this radical subculture. As early as 1890s, socialist and anarchist Italian immigrant women published appeals to their *compagne, sorelle, and madri* (female comrades, sisters, and mothers), exposing their double oppression (by capitalism and by men) and urging them to join the revolutionary vanguard. Maria Roda's plea in 1897 was probably the most powerful of all calls to feminist action. "Let's show," she wrote, "to the man who suppresses our will, who does not allow us to think and act freely, who considers us inferior to him, imposing on us his authority, as father, brother and husband, and, believing himself stronger than us, tramples us, oppresses us, and sometimes even hits us Let's show him that we want freedom and equality too."¹⁶

In another powerful manifesto, "Alba" emphasized that: "we women, more than anybody else should be revolutionaries. Not only are we oppressed and despised like men, we are also haggled and weighted as pleasure flesh. We should be the first to support the anarchist-socialist-revolutionary movement because it only can bring peace to our hovels and free us from the yoke of the capitalist, the priest, the state, and the husband too."¹⁷ Women organizers powerfully denounced sexism, but they also blamed women for being vain, superficial, and interested only in mundane affairs and gossip. As they explained, their frivolity reinforced men's views of women as intellectually inferior, and represented a major obstacle for women's emancipation. "How can we gain the trust of men," wrote another woman under the name Titi, "if all we worry about is our aesthetic appearance?"¹⁸

Usually, the most outspoken women were anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists who were radicalized by their families or their partners. Maria Roda, for example, grew up in an intensely anarchist milieu. Her father was a textile worker and one of the most active anarchists of Como, Rodas' native town. His house – noted Italian authorities – served as a refuge for local comrades or anarchists just passing through. Faithful to his principles, he had educated his four daughters to the love of anarchism, encouraging them to sing anarchist songs as they walked on the streets.¹⁹ As a result of her father's teachings, Maria became a convinced anarchist at a young age and in 1891 was sentenced to five months in prison for seditious acts. Upon her release, she migrated to America and settled in Paterson, New Jersey where part of her family now lived. She married Pedro Esteve, the Catalan anarchist who along with Pietro Gori had established *La Questione Sociale*, and soon became very active in both local anarchist groups and feminist circles. Slender, with brown eyes and brown curly hair, she achieved great popularity among Italian and non-Italian anarchists alike, hypnotizing hundreds with her eloquence and beauty.²⁰ Even the famous Emma Goldman fell under the spell of this young Italian woman, "the most exquisite creature" she had ever seen.²¹

Maria Roda's activism was motivated and nurtured by family education, community solidarity, and sentimental ties to a man who shared her views and dreams. Clearly, in her case, familism did not translate into docile submission. On the contrary, her family culture served as a catalyst rather than an obstacle to class-consciousness and organization. But most women were not so lucky. Italian men, as radical women often complained, typically ridiculed and scorned women's political activism and feminism, instead of sustaining and encouraging them.²² For example, the founders of the feminist group "Woman's Emancipation," sadly commented that, after a year of intense organizing, they did not yet have the unconditional support of radical men. "Our good faith and intentions have been recognized by many male comrades who have assisted us with great, brotherly encouragement," they wrote. Yet, the author added, "they have never defended us from the angry persecution of many eternal

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malcontents who see in our efforts nothing but pride, in our actions nothing but mistakes, in our words nothing but orthography; and so they reward us with their malice, their jokes, their never ending derision of superior human beings.”²³

While many radical men, particularly the anarchists, expressed solidarity towards women's demands, their attitudes were filled with prejudices and masculine rhetoric. As Titi wrote, “There are many men who claim they are free thinkers, socialists, or anarchists but within the family they are the opposite of the propagandist, the apostle, the emancipated individual.”²⁴

Similarly, while feminists called for women's economic independence, most men insisted that the natural and most suitable place for a woman was the house. Echoing the views of Italian socialist Tullio Rossi-Doria, they argued that female industrial work represented a threat to the family as well as to men's employment, leading to a decrease of salaries and job competition.²⁵ Emphasizing women's alleged innate qualities, like sensitivity, gentleness, idealism, and altruism, men insisted that women's proper role rested at home.²⁶

Indeed, as the popularity of the notion of revolutionary motherhood suggests, it was difficult even for radical women to liberate themselves from the idea of domesticity and their traditional roles of wives and mothers.²⁷ On the other hand, the fiercely feminist articles published in radical newspapers show that the desire to overcome gender oppression proved in some cases more important than the gender limitations imposed by domestic culture. Similarly, the establishment of female separate groups demonstrated the capacity and desire of women to form their own revolutionary organizations apart from men and fight against the rigid system of patriarchy.

The radical press was of paramount importance in this struggle. Women used radical newspapers to voice their concerns, to educate and organize other women, and to spread their political ideas. Feminist issues were typically featured in a column called “*La pagina della donna*,” (the woman's page), which aimed at discussing “the wide and complex problem of the woman in relation to

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Ne pas citer sans accord de l'auteur. Do not quote without the Author's consent the modern times."²⁸ *L'Operaia* (1913-1919) was the first Italian working class paper designed specifically for women. It was launched as a weekly by Alfredo Consiglio and Luigi Antonini in 1913 through Local 25 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union to encourage unionism among Italian American women. Like other labor publications, *L'Operaia* functioned as the union's primary vehicle of information and propaganda. Its eight pages contained announcements of meetings and conferences, new accounts on strikes, labor reforms and movement activities, as well as working class literature and poetry. Its graphic logo featured a sensual, bare-breasted Roman-like woman, wrapped in a toga holding a burning torch in her left hand and a pamphlet of the Local 25 in her right hand. To a certain extent, this image betrayed traditional conceptions of womanhood, still defined essentially as feminine, delicate, and sensual. But in a world where images of male workers dominated union newspapers and radical magazines, constructing work and revolution as essentially male, *L'Operaia* marked a new sense of female empowerment.

Sold at 50 cents a year, *L'Operaia's* primary mission was to make women realize that they were being exploited and that only through unionism and solidarity they could improve their conditions. This message was perhaps best illustrated by a drawing that pictured a woman in the act of protecting with a sword her children from the attack of an aggressive eagle. The following phrase accompanied the drawing: "ITALIAN WOMEN! – Rise, you too, in defense of your children against the rapacious eagle that wants to starve us out: Capitalism!"

Bellalma Forzato-Spezia became the paper's most important female contributor. Like other radicals, she emphasized education and knowledge as a pre-condition to revolutionary organizing and emancipation. Consequently, most of her writings were meant to educate, inform and awaken the immigrants. She especially urged women to break free from the hegemony of the priest and the Catholic Church and attend union meetings and other political gatherings instead of the Mass. She showed how religion with its emphasis on women's acquiescence and submission to men was probably

the strongest deterrent to organizing Italian working women, and stressed education as the key to their enfranchisement and emancipation.²⁹

In other articles, she examined women and the law, showing how the legal code kept women under the authority of men on the assumption that they were “incapable,” “irresponsible,” and “weak.”³⁰ These views, she pointed out, were conveniently construed by men to keep women submissive, but she warned men: “your problems are the same that worry us.... The freedom and justice that you love, we love them too.”³¹ Clearly, Forzato-Spezia challenged conventional stereotypes of women as physically inferior, docile, and irrational. Yet, her position remained somewhat ambiguous: while she questioned the idea that the women's primary mission is to be “angels” or “queens” of the home, she also argued that women's special contributions to the socialist cause lay in their role as mothers and educators of tomorrow's generation.

In addition to writing articles, between 1907 and 1915, Forzato-Spezia also produced poetry, most of which appeared in *Il Proletario*, the official organ of the Italian Socialist Federation. As in her other writings, the major theme inherent in her poems is that of the importance of knowledge and education to emancipate the workers. With aggressiveness, she urges the masses to fight the prejudices and ignorance that keep them enslaved and follow the road of “Reason.”³² She especially defies religious faith (“the eternal despot”), insisting over and over that the rhetoric of resignation, inherent in the Christian discourse of Salvation, is one of the most powerful means to control the masses and justify class inequality.³³ Only after the workers have freed themselves from the yokes of religion, bigotry, and ignorance:

Sorgerà non remota	It will rise not distant
un'aurora sanguigna,	a bloody dawn,
e allor la scalza plebe,	and by then, the barefoot populace,
Niobe non più serva	no longer servant
a una schiatta proterva,	to an insolent race,

svincolerà rombando, will free itself roaring
sull'espugnata vetta, on the stormed top,
a volo la vendetta revenge will take off
e correran gli abissi and from the abysses of the air
dell'aria i gridi a flutti: will come running the screams in billows:
"salute o Terra, alfine Blessed thee oh Earth, at last
equa madre per tutti!"³⁴ just mother to all!

Forzato-Spezia's poetry clearly reveals the influence of Italian classical and humanistic tradition, exhibiting a careful attention to the form and the metrics, technical precision, balance, and emotional restraint. Contrary to typical working-class or socialist poetry, which is generally very accessible, Forzato-Spezia's poetic language is carefully chosen, studied and affected. Most of her poems are long and elaborate, filled with panegyrics, allegories and metaphors.

Often, her excessive affectation betrayed a bourgeois contempt for Italian immigrant workers or "plebeians" as she called them. For example, in "L'emigrato italiano in America" (The Italian Immigrant to America) she describes Italian immigrants as "squat, lazy, and slack," complaining that their coarseness has contributed to ruin the good name of Italy.

La regina un dì del mondo, ora è fatta avventuriera,
Olè! La sordida e pezzente, abbruttita e abietta Italia!
Mai nutrirono le Pampas dei selvaggi più vil schiera:
non son forse i nostri cani di meno ignobil schiatta?
Basta, basta, troppo è già!³⁵

Once the queen of the world, now she has become an adventurer
The sordid and imploring, ugly and abject Italy!
Never did the Pampas feed savages of a more cowardly kind:
Aren't perhaps our dogs of a less ignominious stock?
Enough, enough, this is already too much.

Forzato-Spezia's wounded nationalist pride would emerge openly with the outbreak of World War I, when she joined the group of syndicalists led by Edmondo Rossoni in support of Italy's intervention. In 1915 along with Rossoni and sculptor Onorio Ruotolo, she founded *L'Italia Nostra*, a fiercely nationalist paper. Her last articles of a feminist/socialist nature appeared in *Il Lavoro*, the organ of Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, in 1917. After the war she retreated from political activism and ceased to write for radical newspapers.³⁶ After the death of her husband in 1926, she returned to Italy, settling with her son in Rome and working as a translator. In 1936 she was officially registered in the Fascist Party, openly in favor of the regime, and her dossier was consequently removed from the police files.³⁷

Forzato-Spezia's ideological evolution from revolutionary socialism to nationalism and eventually Fascism was not entirely atypical: Mussolini himself had been an active and prominent socialist leader until the First World War and so were other immigrant radicals like Rossoni, Aldo Tarabella, Libero Tancredi and Semplicio Righi. As many scholars have demonstrated the question of Italian intervention in the war and the subsequent rise of Fascism provoked in many radical "a crisis of conscience as their leftism collided with their patriotic sentiments."³⁸ As Forzato-Spezia's experience reveals, women were not untouched by these conflicting feelings.

While Forzato-Spezia returned to Italy to cheer Fascism, new radicals were flooding the U.S. to escape Mussolini's regime and persecution. Among them was the anarchist poetess Virgilia d'Andrea. Born in Sulmona, Abruzzo, in 1880, she arrived to the United States in 1928 from Paris and settled in Brooklyn, along with her lover Armando Borghi, a well known anarchist and anti-Fascist. Short, petite, with dark eyes and dark short hair, Italian authorities described her as a woman of "good intelligence, culture, and education" but also "a violent type, of inconstant character and reprehensible moral behavior."³⁹ Her alleged immorality resulted from her contempt of social conventions and her belief in

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free love. In reality, as some of her autobiographical writings reveal, she was a very sensitive and idealistic woman "with the head full of dreams, fantasies and tears."⁴⁰

At a very young age d'Andrea lost her entire family and was forced to go to a boarding school run by nuns where she studied to become a teacher. Her only consolation there was reading: "I devoured," she recalls in one of her stories, "hundreds and hundreds of books; the poetry of Rapisardi, Leopardi and especially Negri were my favorite."⁴¹ Inspired by these readings, she gradually converted to anarchism, becoming, in the words of Italian authorities, a "dangerous propagandist and organizer of radical activities, which she disguised under the cover of anti-Fascism."⁴²

When she arrived in America she was already very well-known among the immigrants and revered by many. She conducted lecture tours in Florida, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Massachusetts, which, as the newspapers of the time reported, were always well attended, with people filling the conference rooms to their capacity. D'Andrea's popularity, however, was due to her poetic eloquence as much as her political activism. In 1922, she published her first book of poetry, *Tormento* (Torment), with an introduction by the Italian anarchist theorist par excellence, Errico Malatesta. The book sold 8,000 copies and was issued in a second edition in 1929 while she was in exile in France. Italian authorities promptly impounded the book on the ground that it "excited the spirits," and denounced her for incitement to rebellion. Her verses, noted the questor are "imbued with feline bile against Italy in her powers and her social system; they are verses written thoughtfully to instigate to break the law, to incite class hatred and to vilify the army."⁴³

Tormento consisted of nineteen poems in rhyme, many of which were originally published in *L'Avanti!*, the official organ of the Italian Socialist Party. The cover represented a winged woman in the act of freeing herself from the chains on her wrists, held by clutching hands of evident bourgeois imprint. As the title of the collection suggests, these poems recount the poet's personal anguish, grief,

and anger for the political defeats of the Left that followed the First World War. Most of her poems came in fact in the aftermath of the so-called *biennio rosso* (1919-1920), a time characterized by widespread social protests, strikes, and upheavals, when many believed that the Bolshevik revolution would naturally extend to Italy and the rest of Europe and socialism would finally triumph. Instead, to the disbelief of leftist radicals, in a few years Italy gave birth to the world's first Fascist régime while Germany established a Nazi party. In the years following Mussolini's seizure of power (1922), the Left in Italy was artfully silenced, its publications were banned and its prominent leaders either arrested or forced into exile.

Even in such a climate of terror, d'Andrea refused to give up her anarchist dream: her verses speak to the unredeemed and nonaffiliated on the fringes, providing at the same time a radical critique of the movement and a visionary aspiration. As Malatesta explained to her readers: "You will especially find the faith that does not die with defeat – the firm conviction and the sure hope."⁴⁴ This unshakeable devotion to the "Ideal," is perhaps best represented in these verses, written while she was held in prison in 1920:

No, non son vinta.	No, I am not defeated
Vibra, in me, più forte,	It lives in me, stronger,
L'ardente fede ne l'angusta cella,	despite the sad cell the ardent faith,
E frange i ferri e batte le ritorte,	And it transcends the bars and defeats the withes,
L'onda del sogno, che il mio cor flagella.	The dream wave, that scourges my heart.

Contrary to most Italian American radical poetry, which tended primarily to talk of general social and political conditions rather than individual experiences, d'Andrea's poems are very subjective and personal. Themes of revolutionary change and social inequality intermix with her inner feelings, while pessimism about the human condition is softened by the awareness of the power of love and the beauty of life. In this respect her verses display perhaps the influence of Leopardi's romanticism more

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Ne pas citer sans accord de l'auteur. Do not quote without the Author's consent than Rapisardi's or Negri's social protest. This subjectivity is particularly evident in her last book, *Torce nella notte* (Torches in the Night), published by her comrades in New York after her premature death from cancer in 1933.

A combination of prose and poetry, autobiography and history, remembrances and political commentaries, the book consists of sixteen stories, of which seven are tributes to the memory of anarchist martyrs and leaders -- the "torches in the night" to which the title implicitly refers. The book's cover depicts a naked figure of woman, handcuffed, in the act of hurling toward an imaginary abyss, her eyes closed in silent despair, symbolizing perhaps the fall of anarchism. But if d'Andrea recognizes the crisis of the anarchist movement, the anarchist ideal still remains her main source of inspiration:

Per una grande Idea;	For a great Ideal;
Di lotta in lotta, di prigione in prigione;	From struggle to struggle, from prison to
Discacciata dalla patria, attraverso	prison; Banned from my country, across
le vie del mondo,	the streets of the world,
senza mai la tua casa,	without ever a home,
il tuo nido di rifugio,	a nest,
senza mai un sicuro domani;	without ever a certain tomorrow;
In piedi, dove finisce l'ingiustizia e	standing up, where injustice ends and
dove passa la sventura;	comes by bad luck;
In piedi come oggi, tra i feriti, i caduti e	standing today, among the wounded, the dead
gli scampati d'una più feroce tragedia;	and those escaped to a fiercer tragedy;
Verso una visione d'umanità e di giustizia;	Towards a vision of humanity and justice;
Verso l'ostinato sogno di pace e di amore;	Towards the stubborn dream of peace and
Sotto le flagellanti burrasche della vita;	love; under the scourging storms of life;
E sempre a bandiera spiegata.	And always with flying colors.

Besides poetry, another interesting literary form used by Italian radical women was the short story. Called *novelle* or *bozzetti*, these tales ranged in length from about 1,000 to 5,000 words and were published in the last page of newspapers and magazines, appearing, if they were too long, in serial form in two or three consecutive issues.⁴⁵ Many of these stories were the works of renowned socialist novelists, such as Edmondo De Amicis or Leda Rafanelli Polli, but many others were written by common men and women, who often used pseudonyms or did not even bother to sign their works. While the plots and themes are not entirely original, one is nevertheless struck by the abundance of stories as well as the incredibly large number of common men and women who ventured into literary writing.⁴⁶

The themes were those typical of socialist literature: narratives of class oppression and social inequality, explorations into how “the other half” lived, dramatizations of the world of labor and immigration. The primary characters were working-class men and women, prostitutes, beggars, orphans, hoboes – in other words the oppressed, the poor, the outcast. Using the same literary strategies and narrative modes of muck-racking literature, these stories aimed at describing and exposing the bitter conditions brought by industrial capitalism, while at the same time giving expression to the struggle and aspirations of radical agitators. Realism, in this respect, was closely identified with social purpose.

Not surprisingly, immigrant life, with its degradation and hardship, was one of the most popular subjects. Struck by the poor living conditions of their co-nationals, many felt compelled to voice the disillusionment of life in the New World. For example, in “Scenes from the Street,” the author, an unidentified woman by the name of Fanny Barberis Monticelli, recreates the desperation of an immigrant mother who has no money to feed her children. A victim of capitalism, she is eventually arrested by a policeman for accepting a crust of bread from a kind passer-by.⁴⁷

Another unidentified woman, Matilde Bertoluzzi, wrote a story about a young Italian boy, “about ten years old, thin, pale, with big and intense eyes that revealed infinite sadness,” who is forced to sell plaster figurines in the rich neighborhoods of New York City.⁴⁸ The poor life of the child is set against the background of the indifferent, superficial world of the well-to-do families. The deliberate contrast served to emphasize the miserable living conditions of the immigrants; to arouse moral indignation, social criticism and compassion; and, above all, to expose the faults of capitalism. The story ended with a cliché of socialist literature: the cry for revenge and promise of justice. Describing the death of the boy, who is knocked down by the carriage of a rich lady, Bertoluzzi emphatically declares: “The blood of one of the many martyrs of civilization has stamped on the rich clothes the curse of the unfortunates who demand justice – and will get it!”⁴⁹

As these two stories exemplify, women's literary radicalism had its roots in the literature of protest, social realism, and naturalism that emerged in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. Zola's novels seem in particular to have been a source of inspiration and a model for many stories. The reading and admiration of Zola among immigrant radicals is evident by the widespread publication of his novels, famous citations, and critical reviews of his works. Like Zola, Italian American radical novelists paid great attention to the setting of the story and the milieu of the characters, providing specific names of streets, cities, as well as detailed descriptions of personalities. This literary pretense to objectivity and historical truth was often reinforced by the use of subtitles like “*storia dal vero*” (real story), meant to assure readers of the authenticity of the narration. Italian American radical stories came especially close to Zola in their attempt to illustrate the demoralizing effect of industrialization on human character and fate. For example, in “The anarchist and the prostitute” the author, a certain Ronchi, describes the condition of prostitution (the prostitute in the story is significantly named Nanà) as a cause/effect result of capitalist society.⁵⁰

“Amate!” (You Must Love!), another story written by Matilde Bertoluzzi, illustrates an additional characteristic theme of radical women's worldview: that of universal love and brotherhood. Elena is a woman destroyed by the loss of her beloved son. She feels she has no longer a reason to live, until, with the help of a socialist friend, she realizes that she can and must love again. “Love!... Love!...,” insists the friend, “Human beings were born to love infinitely, and the only law in our world should be love.”⁵¹ Expressions like this one, which dominate Italian American radical prose, shed light to the idealistic and humanitarian spirit of Italian immigrant radicalism. Italian socialists, and even more so the anarchists, believed that human nature is fundamentally good and that it is the environment that promotes hatred. Consequently, they assumed that after socialism replaced the harsh and unjust structure of capitalism love would certainly rule.

The belief in love, as the highest of all values, was consistent with their antimilitarism. Italian radicals had always been traditionally anti-military and anti-nationalistic. The reasons for their opposition were ethical, cultural, and, of course, political. Like other rebels, they traced the origins of militarism to economic and material interests, and considered it nothing more than an instrument of the established classes to oppress and suppress the working class.

Dozens of antimilitary stories were published in anarchist, socialist, and syndicalist papers.⁵² Most of these tales mocked patriotic and nationalist propaganda and, through the dramatic experiences of fictional soldiers, mothers, and wives, showed the real side of war: the pain, destruction, and suffering caused by warfare. These stories attacked the rhetorical language of heroism (expressions such as “sacred duty,” “holy war,” “crusade for democracy”), challenging the construct of manhood in terms of physical strength, impassivity, and virility, that the conservative press blatantly employed to encourage patriotism. Far from positive, these traits -- insisted radical writers -- incarnated the brutal, primitive and irrational side of men, destroying the most important element of human character, dignity.

The comments of Virgilia d'Andrea on the subject of the war are illuminating. When asked, at the outbreak of World War I, whether it was right to abandon the national fight of the Italian "brothers" of Trento and Trieste, she answered: "And the men of the rest of world, aren't they equally our brothers? Those Italians who are forced to go abroad to work, don't they feel more at home among the textile workers, the farmers, the miners in Germany than among the arrogant and insolent prominent men in our country?"⁵³

Radical stories also took the form of direct dialogue among workers. This narrative mode was first used by anarchists, notably Errico Malatesta, but became a very popular form of literary propaganda in all radical papers.⁵⁴ The dialogues involved two or more persons, either men or women, and recreated real or likely possible conversations among Italian immigrants. One of the speakers was a bigot, fatalist, skeptical of politics, and submissive; the other was instead rebellious, erudite, and aggressive. Using the question/answer format, the writer explained complex principles and theories of socialism and anarchism (such as the abolition of private property, the concept of class struggle, the importance of unions, or anticlericalism), clarifying some of the most widespread misconceptions about radical ideologies.

Two things are striking about this technique: the vivacity of the language, informal and yet very precise and alive, and the literary artificiality of the conversations despite their pretense to realism. This peculiar literary form was probably a response to the problem of education among Italian immigrants and peasants. It moved away from abstract theories and explained in simple words, in a language the workers could understand, the principles and goals of various radical ideologies, while deconstructing the prejudices and bigotry of Italian immigrant culture.

This literary strategy was especially used to educate Italian women to the principles of unionism and combat the problem of "scabbism." For example, the labor newspaper *Il Lavoro* had a regular column called "*Cose piane tra vicine*" (Soft Things Among Female Neighbors) run by Nerina Gilioli

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Volonterio, which employed the conversational format to encourage the unionization of women.

Drawing inspiration from genuine settings and characters, these dialogues used a "real" language, often characterized by ironic and satirical tones to accentuate the ignorance and naiveté of immigrants.

Religious bigotry and provincialism were also regularly ridiculed. For example, Clara Vacirca Palumbo, wife of socialist Deputy Vincenzo Vacirca who came to the United States in 1925 to escape Fascism,⁵⁵ wrote a short story entitled "Il Miracolo" (The Miracle), in which she described a mother desperately trying to marry off her three daughters.⁵⁶ To expedite her wish, she decided to go on a three days pilgrimage to an ancient sanctuary of "Our Lady of Sorrows" to ask for a grace. Tired, but full of hope, she returned home to find out that one of her daughter was pregnant and her lover had left her for America.

Clara Vacirca was also the author of an anti-Fascist serialized novel, *Cupido tra le camicie nere* (Cupid Among the Black Shirts), that narrated the pure and great love of two subversives against the adversities of Fascism.⁵⁷ What is interesting in this novel is the use of literary conventions and themes typical of popular romance and melodrama -- sensation, mawkish sentiment, bourgeois setting -- in combination with the principles of engaged, committed art. One could say that despite her contempt for bourgeois society, Vacirca was unable to break completely free from the canons of bourgeois literature -- intricate plots, suspense, and happy ending. However, the use of melodrama was not necessarily passive: the author may have very well consciously employed popular themes to attract more readers. The major goal was indeed to persuade the reader through the exemplary life of the hero, or heroine, to convert to radicalism.

The examples discussed above are only a few among the many women's voices that are lost in the pages of radical newspapers and periodicals. These voices took different forms and expressed a great variety of themes, ideologies, and messages that demand reassessment and more attention in both

immigration and radical history. Some messages were obvious, other more subtle. Among the major topics in their writings we find a critique of capitalism, patriarchy, and the church. Feminism came to occupy a special place, emphasizing different, at time contradictory notions, such as revolutionary motherhood, economic and sexual liberation, and a defiance of conventional gender norms. But above all feminism implied a critique of authority and privilege within the systems of capitalism and patriarchy and the belief that women's emancipation could not be separated from class liberation. Implicit was also the conviction that women's emancipation should begin with their own education.

Radical female voices, however, were not confined to women's issues. Ultimately, as the poems of Virgilia d'Andrea and the short stories reveal, the main focus of women's radicalism remained the same for both sexes: the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of better and more just world. In a sense, then, for all their differences about doctrine and feminism, Italian immigrant radical men and women shared a political vision that was rooted in the core values of the European Left: liberty, justice and equality. Perhaps more importantly, they all had the same dream: the establishment of brotherhood and social equality for every woman and man on earth.

¹ Cited in Murray Bookchin, *The Spanish Anarchists* (Ak Press, 1997), retrieved on line at <http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/scw/ferrer.htm>. Francisco Ferrer (1859-1909) established the first Escuela Moderna in Barcelona in 1901. In the next few years more than fifty such schools were created throughout Spain. Ferrer was eventually arrested on charges of sedition and executed in 1909, but the idea of the Modern School had a lasting influence among anarchist and socialist circles in both Europe and the US. In 1911 the first Modern School was founded in New York under the name of Francisco Ferrer Centre at St. Marks Place. See Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (Dover Publication), 456-458, 475.

² Bellalma Forzato-Spezia, "Per le nuove generazioni" (New York: Nicoletti Bros. Press, 1911), 12, 22, 27, 29. All translations from Italian are mine.

³ On the distinctive role of radical motherhood, see the article by Caroline Waldron Merithew, "Anarchist Motherhood: Toward the Making of a Revolutionary Proletariat in Illinois Coal Towns," in Gabaccia and Iacovetta, *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers in the World* (University of Toronto Press: 2002), 217-246.

⁴ Bellalma Forzato-Spezia, "La donna nel presente e l'educazione dell'infanzia" (West Hoboken, NJ, 1913), 22. An original copy of her pamphlets can be found at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

⁵ See Paul Avrich, *Sacco and Vanzetti* (Princeton University Press: 1991), 56 and *Anarchist Voices* (Princeton University Press: 1995), 107-112

⁶ Forzato-Spezia is acknowledged by many scholars but none, as far as I know, has attempted a real study of her life and work. See among others Michael Topp, *Those Without a Country: The Political Culture of Italian American Syndicalists* (University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 156-157.

⁷ Important work on Italian immigrant women and radicalism include: Colomba Marie Furio, "Immigrant Women and Industry: A Case Study. The Italian Immigrant Women and the Garment Industry, 1880-1950" (Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 1979); Luisa Cetti, "Donne italiane a New York: lavoro ed attività sindacali" *Economia e Lavoro*, XVII, 1 (1983), 159-164, and essays by Jose Moya, Caroline Waldron Merithew, Anne Morelli, Jennifer M. Guglielmo, Robert Ventresca and Franca Iacovetta, in Gabaccia and Iacovetta, eds., *Women, Gender and Transnational Lives*, Part III, 189-348. See also Jennifer Guglielmo, "Italian American Women's Political Activism in New York City, 1890s-1940s," in Philip V. Cannistraro, ed., *The Italians of New York* (The New York Historical Society, 2000), 103-113, and "Donne Ribelli: Recovering the History of Italian Women's Radicalism in the United States," in Philip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer, eds., *The Lost World of Italian American Radicalism* (Praeger, 2003), 113-142.

⁸ See especially Jennifer M. Guglielmo's dissertation, "Negotiating Gender, Race and Coalition: Italian Women and Working-Class Politics in New York City, 1880-1945" (University of Minnesota, 2003), Furio, "Immigrant Women and Industry: A Case Study. The Italian Immigrant Women and the Garment Industry, 1880-1950," Charles Zappia, "Unionism and the Italian American Worker: A History of the New York City 'Italian Local' in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, 1900-1933" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 1994), and Edwin Fenton, *Immigrants and Unions, A Case Study: Italians and American Labor, 1870-1920* (Arno Press, 1975).

⁹ These groups were regularly advertised in radical newspapers: see for example *La Questione Sociale*, January 4 and 11, 1902, 3 and 4. For a discussion of these groups see above all Jennifer Guglielmo's doctoral dissertation "Negotiating Gender, Race, and Coalition: Italian Women and Working-Class Politics in New York City, 1880-1945" (University Of Minnesota, 2003), chapter 3, p. 132-140. For a discussion of the Luisa Michel club see Caroline Waldron Merithew, "Anarchist Motherhood: Toward the Making of a Revolutionary Proletariat in Illinois Coal Towns," in Gabaccia and Iacovetta, eds., *Women, Gender and Transnational Lives*, 217-246.

¹⁰ For a historiographical essay on Italian women and immigration see Donna Gabaccia, "Italian American Women: A Review Essay," *Italian Americana* (Fall/Winter 1993), 38-61.

¹¹ The reasons for the lack of interest in Italian American literary radicalism can be attributed in part to objective difficulties inherent in the sources themselves (almost all writings are in Italian) but also to the marginal role that American and Italian American literary studies have traditionally given to radicalism. Although the legacy of the United States cultural Left is now under serious reconsideration (especially regarding the thirties), conventional approaches of literary professionals, with their emphasis on the aesthetic categories of "quality," "value," and "cultural achievement," have tended to treat literary radicalism as a subaltern phenomenon, dismissing it, often indiscriminately, as nothing but political propaganda, and assuming that the official attitude of socialists, anarchists, and communists towards culture was a negative one. Among the few scholars who have studied Italian American literary radicalism see Martino Marazzi, *Misteri di Little Italy: Storie e testi della letteratura italoamericana* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2001). Fred L. Gardaphè, "Left Out: Three Italian American Writers of the 1930s," in *Radical Revisions: Rereading 1930s Culture*, Bill Mullen and Sherry Lee Linkon, eds. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 60-77, and "Follow the Red Brick Road: Recovering Traditions of Italian/American Writers," in Philip V. Cannistraro and Gerald Meyer, eds., *The Lost World of Italian American Radicalism: Ideas, Politics, and Labor*. Another important contribution to the history of Italian American literature is the anthology in two volumes edited by Francesco Durante, *Italoamericana. Storia e letteratura degli italiani negli Stati Uniti, 1776-1880* (Milan: Mondadori, 2001), the second volume has not been published yet.

¹² Marcella Bencivenni, "Italian American Radical Culture in New York City: The Politics and Arts of the *Soversivi*, 1890-1940" (Ph.D. Dissertation, City University of New York, 2003)

¹³ Among the names that I was unable to identify are for example: Teresa Ballerini, Poem: "Ai Diatribi," *La Questione Sociale*, October 15, 1896, 2; Antonietta Bonelli, Poem: "I Pellagrosi," *Il Proletario*, December 7, 1901, 2; Elena Lavagnini, Poem: "Natale?," *Il Proletario*, December 25, 1904, 1; Hada Peretti, Poem: "La vita," *Avanti*, November 23, 1904, 2, Susanna Carruette, "La donna del domani," *La Questione Sociale*, November 6, 1901, 2; Virgilia Buongiorno, "Alle compagne lavoratrici" *La Questione Sociale*, October 15, 1895, 4; Matilde Bortoluzzi, "Sfruttamento e seduzione" *Il Proletario*, November 4, 1899, 1; Rosetta, "L'opinione di una donna sulle donne," *La Lotta*, March 27, 1909, 3, Argia Sbolenti, Poem: "Le elezioni" *La Lotta*, March 27, 1909, 3, Ines Oddone Bidelli, "La donna," *Il Lavoro*, April 21, 1917, 2, Oronzina Tanzarella, Racconto: "L'epidemia," *Lotta di Classe*, March 31, 1916, 3.

¹⁴ Bellama Spezia, Biographical file, CPC, busta 4908, ACS. Practically nothing is known of her husband. In her writing she never referred to him, and his name does not appear in radical newspapers of the time.

¹⁵ The Consulate to the Ministry of the Interior, October 31, 1913. Bellama Spezia, CPC, busta 4908, ACS.

¹⁶ The original text in Italian read as follows: "Facciamo conoscere all'uomo, che impedisce ogni nostra volontà, che non ci permette di pensare a modo nostro, di agire secondo il naturale nostro impulso, ma ci considera molto al disotto di lui, imponendosi sia la sua autorità di padre, sia quella di fratello, sia quella di marito, e come tale si crede più forte e ci calpesta, ci opprime, e tal volta la mano pesante di lui percuote la nostra guancia --- noi pure vogliamo la libertà e l'uguaglianza." Maria Roda, "Alle operaie," *La Questione Sociale*, September 15, 1897, 4. See also "Alle Madri," September 7, 1901, 2-3.

¹⁷ The original text in Italian read as follows: "Noi donne, più di qualunque altro dovremmo essere rivoluzionarie perché non solo siamo oppresse e disprezzate come l'uomo: siamo altresì mercanteggiate e calcolate carne da piaceri, noi per le prime si deve secondare con abnegazione e disinteresse il movimento socialista anarchico rivoluzionario, perché è il solo che apporterà la pace nei nostri tuguri e il solo, compagne di sventura, che potrà levarsi dal giogo del capitalista, del prete, del governo, e del marito stesso." Alba, "Alle mie compagne," *Il Grido degli Oppressi*, December 9, 1893, 2, and "Due metodi," December 30, 1893, 1. See also in *La Questione Sociale* Maria Barbieri, "Ribelliamoci!," November 18, 1905; Anna Maria Mozzoni, "Alle figlie del popolo," July 15, 1895, 3-4; Virgilia Buongiorno, "Alle compagne lavoratrici," October 15, 1895, 4; A. Ferretti, "La donna. Com'era, com'è e come sarà," February 29 1896, 2; Evening, "La donna e l'avvenire," and A. Guabello, "Alle donne," February 18, 1899, 1-2; Susanna Carruette, "La donna del domani," November 6, 1901, 2.

¹⁸ Titi, "Alle mie sorelle proletarie," *La Questione Sociale*, June 23, 1906, 1. She wrote regularly between June 9 and August 25, 1906.

¹⁹ Cesare Balzarini Roda, Casellario Politico Centrale (CPC), busta 4367, Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS), Rome.

²⁰ Maria Balzarini Roda, CPC, busta 4368, ACS, Rome. For a profile of Maria Roda see also Guglielmo's "Negotiating Gender, Race and Coalition," 133-135.

²¹ Emma Goldman, *Living My life*, 2 vols. (New York: Dover Publications, 1970, 1931), I, 150-151.

²² See for example these article in *La Questione Sociale*, "I gruppi femminili di propaganda," November 23, 1901, 1 and "Aiutiamoci a vicenda!" September 20, 1902, 3

²³ *La Questione Sociale*, "Aiutiamoci a vicenda!" September 20, 1902, 3

²⁴ Titi, "Alle mie sorelle proletarie," and "Alle donne: Emancipiamoci!," *La Questione Sociale*, July 7, 1906, 3.

²⁵ See above all: "Madre Operaia," *La Questione Sociale*, May 3, 1902, 1.

²⁶ Among other publications, *Il Lavoro* is a perfect example of the *soversivi's* ambiguous position towards the woman question. While it welcomed women as partners who should attend meetings and write articles, it was yet quite reluctant to support unconditionally suffrage for women or total equality between genders. See Benedicte Deschamps, "*Il Lavoro* (1915-1932)," *Italian American Review*, 8,1 (Spring/Summer 2001), 85-120.

²⁷ See Elisabetta Vezzosi, "Immigrate italiane e socialismo negli Stati Uniti agli inizio del Novecento," *Il Veltro: Rivista della civiltà italiana*, January-April 1990, 163.

²⁸ Isabel Bass, "La pagina della donna nuova," *Il Fuoco*, March 31, 1915, 7, and April 15, 1915, 12. Bellama Forzato Spezia, "Nel mondo femminile," March 10, 1917, 2; Ines Bidelli, "La donna," April 21, 1917, 2; R. Rende, "Sul femminismo," January 19, 2-3, all in *Il Lavoro*.

²⁹ Bellama Forzato-Spezia, "Alle madri proletarie," and "Emancipiamoci!," *L'Operaia*, September 13, 1913, 7 and January 10, 1914, 6.

³⁰ See in *L'Operaia*: "La donna nubile," July 14, 1907, 2, "La donna e la cultura religiosa," August 25, 1907, 2, e "La donna nella legislazione moderna," December 11, 1913, 4.

³¹ "La donna nel presente: assetto sociale," *Il Proletario*, June 16, 1907, 1.

³² See for example, "S'accendeva l'aurora!," *Il Proletario*, February 20, 1915, 1.

³³ See especially "O donna, vieni!" *Il Proletario*, March 11, 1911, 1-2.

³⁴ "Quel giorno," *Il Proletario*, May 1, 1908, 3.

³⁵ Published in *Il Proletario*, May 1, 1907, 2. Other poems by Bellama Forzato Spezia include "Al Salto del Niagara," *Il Proletario*, December 25, 1907; "Maggiolata nuova," *Il Proletario* May 1, 1909, 1; "Cavallo in fuga," *Il Proletario*, February 11, 1910; "Il Naviglio," *Il Proletario*, May 1, 1910, 6; "Bimbi mutilati," and "Il canto dei secoli," both in *L'Italia Nostra*, January 22, 1916.

³⁶ "Nel mondo femminile" March 24, 1917, 3.

³⁷ Bellama Forzato-Spezia, Police-headquarters, March 2, 1939, CPC, busta 4908, ACS.

³⁸ Philip V. Cannistraro and Geral Meyer, "Introduction" to the *Lost World of Italian American Radicalism*, 19.

- ³⁹ Virgilia D'Andrea, "Biographical sketch," CPC, busta 1607, ACS. An excellent article on D'Andrea has been written by Franca Iacovetta and Robert Ventresca. "Virgilia d'Andrea: The Politics of Protest and the Poetry of Exile," In Gabaccia and Iacovetta, eds., *Women, Gender and Transnational Lives*, 299-326.
- ⁴⁰ Virgilia D'Andrea, *Torce nella notte* (New York: 1933), 10.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 58.
- ⁴² Letter from the Italian Consulate, March 9, 1929, CPC, busta 3033, ACS.
- ⁴³ Questura di Milano, February 27, 1923, CPC, busta 1607, ACS.
- ⁴⁴ Errico Malatesta, Introduction to Virgilia D'Andrea, *Tormento* (Paris: La fraternelle, 1929, first edition 1922), 2.
- ⁴⁵ Significantly, as a modern genre, the novelette originated in the fourteenth century in Italy with Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, a collection of one-hundred short stories.
- ⁴⁶ "I monitori," unsigned, *La Questione Sociale*, July 24, 1906, 3; A. Alberti, "Barattin," *Lotta di Classe*, July 28, 1916, 3; Manfredi Bacciel, "Il suicidio di sua eccellenza," *Avanti*, June 25, 1904, 3; Adamo Zecchi, "Nobile cuore!," *Il Proletario*, August 2, 1902, 2-3.
- ⁴⁷ Fanny Barberis- Monticelli, "Scene della strada," *La Lotta*, February 20, 1909, 1.
- ⁴⁸ Matilde Bertoluzzi, "Il piccolo emigrato," *Il Proletario*, September 16, 1899, 2.
- ⁴⁹ Bertoluzzi, "Il piccolo emigrato."
- ⁵⁰ A. Ronchi, "L'anarchico e la prostituta," *La Questione Sociale*, March 24, 1906, 3-4.
- ⁵¹ Matilde Bertoluzzi, "Amate!," *Il Proletario*, November 25, 1899.
- ⁵² See for example Evening, "Una fucilazione," *La Questione Sociale*, November 19, 1898, 2-3; E. Perrella, "Ricordi," *Avanti*, July 23, 1904, 3; Duvicu (Ludovico Caminita), "La guerra," *La Questione Sociale*, June 2, 1906, 3; Titi, "Bozzetto militare," *La Questione Sociale*, January 26, 1907, 3; Arturo Giovannitti, "Come era nel principio," *Il Fuoco*, April 15, 1915, 6-7, "Il disertore," *Il Fuoco*, May 31, 1915, and "La lanterna verde," *Il Fuoco*, November 1, 1914 (originally published with the title "La Cantoniera" in *Il Proletario*, September 17- October 15, 1909), "Una voce nella tormenta," *Lotta di classe*, May 3, 1918; Oronzina Tanzarella, "L'epidemia," *Lotta di classe*, March 31, 1916, 3.
- ⁵³ Virgilia D'Andrea, *Torce nella notte* (New York, 1933), 31.
- ⁵⁴ Errico Malatesta, *Fra contadini*, and *Al caffè*. See for example "Dialogo tra mastro Onofrio e mastro Cola," *Il Grido degli Oppressi*, October 24, 1892, 2-3; "Tra padre e figlio," *Il Grido degli Oppressi*, March 18, 1893, 2-3; "Quattro chiacchiere," unsigned, *Il Proletario*, October 7, 1899, 2-3; Il villano, "Cristiani e socialisti," *Il Proletario*, October 21, 1899, 2-3; "La proprietà," unsigned, *Il Proletario*, November 4, 1899, 2; Paola Lombroso, "Il socialismo in salotto," *Il Proletario*, July 7, 1900, 2; "Il diritto del padrone," *Il Proletario*, August 16, 1900, 2-3; "L'alcool è veleno," *La Questione Sociale*, November 8, 1914, 3.
- ⁵⁵ Biographical information on Vincenzo Vacirca can be found in: "Personalità dei nostri tempi: Vincenzo Vacirca," *La Parola del Popolo* (December 1958-January 1959), 279-281, and G. Miccichè, "Vacirca Vincenzo," in *Movimento operaio italiano*, 160-163.
- ⁵⁶ "Il Miracolo," (*Il Solco*, February 27, 1927, 39-41.
- ⁵⁷ Published by La Strada Publishing Co., New York, 1938.