AZOREAN MIGRANT WOMEN IN CENTRAL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA: AN EMBODIED HISTORY OF LABOR DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

By

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Abstract

Leaning into new social history and microhistory, my thesis evinces the women of Azorean diaspora in the Central Valley of California with a particular focus on their embodied labor in dairy farms during the Great Depression (or, 1930s United States of America). With this embodiment framework, I attempted a narrative analysis and descriptive account of the subject by situating two oral histories and five autobiographies within archival data gleaned from government censuses, CALTRANS monographs, Department of Agriculture periodicals, newspapers, magazines, and films produced during this period.

My findings weave together the narrative of Anne Korte, my grandmother's sister, with her chores as the thread that stitches patchworks of rich, complex, and unique agricultural historical processes in California's Central Valley. Through my findings I explore a paradoxical hybridity: how the modernization and centralization efforts of federal and state programs furthered the dissolution of struggling migrant dairy farmers yet opened opportunities for Azorean women's autonomy. It is also my aim in this study to problematize labor, its value systems, what it really defines, and who gets to determine what it is. Lastly, it is my desire to antagonize the modernist discourse/epistemologies (maybe even cosmologies) of progress, naturalism, and technological advancement and their material affectations/consequences.

Acknowledgments

I would firstly like to thank my family for their support, knowledge, and guidance preceding and throughout the process of working on this thesis. You were and are a constant reminder that there are no minor roles in history. I know my stay overseas for you Mom was difficult in this seemingly eternal pandemic but be comforted in that it only crystalized further the idea of my future back home. Your unimpeachable strength is my strength. Always has been, always will be. Thank you to Dad and Carolyn for your ability to share to comforts and security of home by any and all means possible.

It goes without saying that without Grandma Josie this project would not have even been an idea let alone a material possibility. My initial curiosity stemmed in Los Banos from that time Steph, Jayme, and I drove you back to Merced from Santa Cruz. Towing in the trunk enough refried beans and tortillas to stockpile for the end-times, doing my best to stop you sliding pension money into my wallet, and listening to the stories of your grandma working in a SF diaper factory at the age of seventy, all with windows rolled down and Valley heat blowing, I would trade a lot to be there again. You always thank me for giving up my room as a young boy when you moved in with us. It could never hold a candle to what you've given me.

Thank you to my supervisors Emese Lafferton and Nadia Jones-Gailani. No matter your personal demands and stresses, especially ones amplified by a global pandemic, your guidance and help both with the thesis and outside the thesis has been critical to my project and wellbeing. Like a *sopas*, you gave me all the best ingredients and tools to make it. You were inspirational, I feel incredibly lucky to have had your interest and direction.

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Introduction

California's admittance to the United States of America on September 9, 1850 coinciding with the Gold Rush boom prompted large-scale migrations from continental USA and abroad to the Golden State. Fabled as the final frontier of Western civilization, many were drawn to the promises of boundless opportunity and discovery. What early settlers soon discovered was that these frontier promises were fable. While history often celebrates the bravery and achievements of California's Anglo-American settlement and extractive enterprises, it neglects those who were confronted with colonization, such as the several those who suffered and combatted mass genocide, dislocation, and enslavement: the marginalized immigrant communities and minority populations who were integral to California's past.

California is not a homogenous culture or identity but a veritable diasporic delta including peoples from Latin America (Mexico, El Salvador), Asia (Japan, China, Vietnam, Philippines), First Nations (Cherokee), Iran, Armenia, and several more who established intermixed clusters of unique communities along the large spaces of the state. An important immigrant demographic, especially within the agricultural mecca of the Central Valley, was that of the Portuguese who saw an increase in population size from 7,990 in 1880 to 99,194 by 1930.[1] Of these Portuguese, a majority were from the Azores archipelago—upwards of ninety-eight percent.[2] On the surface this may seem like a triviality, but much like the archipelago, there is a tectonic complexity and precarity in the history of Azorean people that has made their story unique and powerful.

[1] Williams, Jerry R. 2007, *In Pursuit of Their Dreams: A History of Azorean Immigration to the United States*, 2nd Edition, (North Dartmouth: University of Massachusetts Dartmouth), 90-93.
[2] Ibid

Why Azoreans? Despite the Azores' magnified geopolitical relevance in the international theater of maritime commerce and war, Azores were a fragmented and peripheralized semi-colony of Portugal with a great majority of the land owned by the Lisboan elite.[3] Because of multinational military and commercial interests, Azoreans encountered familiar island themes of exploitation, conscription, impoverishment, and famine resulting from the forced status as an export economy—let alone the frequent volcanic activity.[4] Due to some of these factors, the Azores trended as other island nations in becoming a reproductive arena, where a typification of gender roles dominated social organization, thus doubling the peripheralization of Azorean women.[5]

As conditions worsened in the Azores, desperation culminated in waves of migration to the Americas—the recently discovered Central Valley of California quickly becoming the perceived ideal destination to make a good living off agriculture.[6] Comprising the Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin Valley, the Central Valley is a large body of land saddled between the Sierra Foothills to the Pacific coastal mountains. Known for its exceptional agricultural production and diverse immigrant cultures, it heralds a unique aspect of California history that remains underrepresented. Upon arriving in the Central Valley, significant barriers prevented Azorean immigrants from accessing the land and opportunities they endeavored to find.[7] Once established in the Central Valley, Azorean communities often fragmented, were disadvantaged in agricultural competition with other ethnic communities (specifically Dutch), faced exclusion and

[3]Estellie M. Smith, "The Portuguese Female Immigrant: The 'Marginal Man'," The International Migration Review 14, no. 1 (1980): 80. Accessed June 1, 2021. 80. doi:10.2307/2545062.
[4] Ibid, 79-80.
[5] Ibid
[6] Alvin R. Graves, "Azorean Portuguese: a study of the Portuguese dairymen in the San Joaquin Valley of California." M.A. dissertation, Fresno State College, Fresno, 1977. 17-18
[7] Ibid 22.

alienation, and found that earning enough to own private property was a formidable struggle.[8] Unfortunately, over the course of a few decades these struggles only continued as California plummeted into the Great Depression.

The Great Depression has been periodized in a few ways. Officially it signifies the economic collapse of the United States starting with the Wall Street Market Crash in 1929 and ending with the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933. The Great Depression period I will be examining subsumes the New Deal era and expands the scope to World War II. This is the common timeline in popularized American memory and represents not just a cultural and societal continuity of economic crisis but an environmental and political one as well. In fact, my periodization begins with the inauguration of FDR as president, a totemic character in US history who signals a radical shift in politics and economy toward centralization and progressivism after the *laissez-faire* era. His controversial but irrefutably novel programs piloted and packaged as the New Deal altered the course of the nation. The effects of these programs however have been argued by countless numbers of scholars who rate him on a scale oscillating from the most important reformer of US political history to an incompetent tyrant. Effectiveness aside, New Deal programs had irreversible impacts on agriculture which only continue to shape California today.

Due to the prominence of Azorean migrant dairying, the Central Valley's past is uniquely affected by the Azorean past and thus exposes both material and ideological economic conditions that have impacted people, places, and events in micro- and macroscale levels. Therefore, I believe the Azorean women's story is an important standpoint to explore labor experience, antagonize the very term *labor*, and problematize hegemonic value systems. I am also interested

[8] Ibid, 23-26

in the embodied labor experience of women because while a gradual accumulation of Central Valley, California Portuguese migration accounts of settlement experiences (particularly about dairies, *festas*, and language assimilation) and sociological surveys of demographics and economic activity have been collected over the last few decades, there continues to be an extraordinary gap in women's historical representation—even more valuable, their historical importance. By no means had the developments of these historical processes eradicated hegemony but attitudes certainly shifted, and women saw gradual improvements in the perceived freedoms, agency experienced as workers, and interpretations of their lifeworld.

Next, I will do a scoping literature review which emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of this project and introduces the theoretical framework(s) which will guide my research project and to which findings may contribute. Then I will first provide some background information on my research project, a rationale for the broad nature of my research questions and the epistemological and ontological justifications for the selected methodological approach.

This project is personal to me as it is my grandmother's story. She is a second-generation Californian from parents that emigrated from the Azores in the early twentieth century. One day of basic research to learn more about her past has led me down a path that resulted in what is to follow.

Scoping Literature Review

There are important genealogies and discourses that will be vital to articulate the research. In a very general and brief overview, I will trace the background theories, discourses, and historiography supporting my findings. Within these broader categories are genealogies and discourses in new social history, gender studies, and postcolonialism as I intend to ground my

findings in an interdisciplinary approach to history. To best demonstrate my attitude toward the research and the attitudes of research itself I will invoke the literature that influenced me in a scoping review. The scoping literature review will thread a few theoretical positions I will take, without rank or priority. The subjects of this literature review include: 1) **A Feminist or Gender History**, 2) **Embodied History as an Interdisciplinary Approach**, 3) **Gender Labor History**, 4) **Women and Latinx Labor History in the Great Depression and California Agriculture**, and 5) **Azorean Diaspora History to Central California**.

A Feminist or Gender History?

Joan Scott's "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" and Patricia Skinner's introduction in *Studying Gender in Medieval Europe: Historical Approaches* have established a useful dialogue in examining whether a gender or feminist history better suits the research and strategies for investigating sources containing "women of no historical importance."[9] The irony between feminist and gendered histories is that despite their marginal differences, they contain conflicting standpoints on women's marginality.[10] Skinner submits that feminist histories target women in history and use this research "with aspiration[s] to reshape the historical frame"[11] and "to make wide claims to political and social (and academic) equality in the historian's own time"[12] while gender histories approach gender categories from a relational standpoint, "drawing lessons learnt from gender inequalities and applying them to wider issues of disempowerment."[13]

[9] Patricia Skinner, *Studying Gender in Medieval Europe: Historical Approaches*. (London: Palgrave, 2018), 11.
[10] Ibid, 14-16 and Joan Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review*. 91/5 (Dec. 1986). 1055-1058, 1066-1070.
[11] Skinner, 15.
[12] Ibid
[13] Ibid

A reductive assessment of their disagreement points to the intentional or, more likely, unintentional exclusionary tendencies perpetrated by both categorical histories. Relayed both by Skinner and Scott, feminist historians criticize gender history as a "safe, de-politicized field that legitimates and re-establishes male-dominated concerns and discourse"[14] while gender historians criticize feminist historians for not being inclusive enough, for avoiding intersectionality, and contributing to a white women scholars' hegemonic knowledge production.[15] While this irresolvable burden of exclusion may be a nominal outcome of identity-forming categories like feminist history or gender history, it still raises important questions and red-flags for me in conducting and presenting my research.

The determination of whether to adopt a feminist or gender historical category will serve as a continual reminder in what or who is included or excluded in the findings and the subject of critical analysis. An initial impulse is to argue that a feminist history steers toward a feminist historical orientation, with intentions to engage in a "recovery history,"[16] where oral histories of women and archival research with a focus on women's experiences exist without contrast or comparison to male experience. A cursory glance at Azorean migrant history reveals an all-too-common ambiguity of gender roles, netted private and public dialectics, and intersectionality with class specifically. The precarity of dichotomous categories evokes a gendered[17] approach to Azorean labor history as an unavoidable transition to a relational, gendered standpoint. Perhaps this feminist study gravitates toward the promises of inclusion and deconstructive narratives in which gendered history strives. Or, the best strategy is to operationalize them modally, zooming

[14] Ibid
[15] Ibid and Scott, 1066-1070.
[16] Skinner, 12.
[17] Ibid, 9.

in and out of women's labor history in the Azores through feminist and gendered lens, always with their epistemological gradients in mind.

Embodied History as an Interdisciplinary Approach

Embodiment is a theory that situates the body within the processes of cognition and knowledge gained by a subject. As a historical approach, it is my aim to access, at some level, the *la chair du monde*[18] of the past. To do this, I intend to invoke and infuse interdisciplinary methods and concepts of *situated knowledges* in Donna Haraway's "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective;" *dialogical relations* in Patricia Hill Collins', *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*; and interpretive/negative phenomenology (*affect alien*) in Sarah Ahmed's "Killing Joy: Feminism and the History of Happiness" into the historical approaches of *metahistory* in Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* and microhistory most exemplified in Natalie Zemon Davis's writing.

As Donna Haraway explains it *situated knowledges* is "a doctrine of embodied objectivity that accommodates paradoxical and critical feminist science."[19] This science takes an embodiment approach to interpret the subject in its place and time with the clear intention of always keeping the investigator's positionality in mind and the subject's contingent understanding of the world.[20] In a way it has similarities to ethnographic methods in anthropology but with subjects that cannot share their knowledge in real-time. I see it as an

[18] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Alphonso Lingis, and Claude Lefort, *The visible and the invisible: followed by working notes,* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1968). 131-133
[19] Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 581. Accessed June 7, 2021. doi:10.2307/3178066.
[20] Ibid, 595.

inclusionary or opening process that looks for rich, everyday description in narratives—potentially providing detail outside the confines of the narrative with a continual awareness of and check on my own prejudice, essentialism, or bias. With this approach I am looking for the subjective balance between the body situated within the relations of their world.

To confirm and check contingencies or outlier positions of a narrative gained by a situated knowledge of a subject I turn to Patricia Hill Collins who proposes *dialogical relations* as a system of checks and balances between individual and group narrative. She writes, "On both the individual and the group level, a dialogical relationship suggests that changes in thinking may be accompanied by changed actions and that altered experiences may in turn stimulate a changed consciousness."[21] In ways, this admits to a Foucauldian idea of biopolitical structures dictating who we are but also reintroduces the individual's agency. Relationality though is a systems-based analysis of subjective networks. The interaction between a subject's interpretation of their past in communication with collective narratives can convey a more holistic, emergent lifeworld.[22]

From there the concept of *affect alien* or *negative phenomenology* is important in encouraging the investigator to find *what is not there.* These questions are often in the form of representation. What is not portrayed, why, and how? Ahmed's fascinating concept of *affect alien*[23] poses a creative approach to discerning fact and fiction, or truth-making. Narrative as a human instinct for interacting is articulated by conscious and unconscious choices of what

[21] Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment,* (New York: Routledge, 2002) 30

[22] Here I am employing Husserl's concept of *lifeworld*: lived experience inhabited by conscious beings, incorporating ways in which phenomes (events, objects, emotions) emerge and appear in our everyday life. Edmund Husserl and David Carr, *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology: an introduction to phenomenological philosophy,* (Illinois: Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology & Existential Philosophy, 1970)108-109.

[23] Sara Ahmed, "Killing Joy: Feminism and the History of Happiness," *Signs* 35, no. 3 (2010): 580. Accessed June 7, 2021. doi:10.1086/648513.

belongs or does not belong in a story.[24] Those who have power give power to what they choose to present. Thus, *what is not represented* becomes an interrogation which often opens incredibly rich detail that was previously overlooked. What is the story of the affect alien?

Much of this will sound familiar to the microhistory authors and scholars. Linked with a type of "from the bottom up"[25] scaling, my research ambitions to recover narratives from a reservoir of *longue durée* and process-oriented approach histories created by a select few individuals who had the power and resources to reproduce these histories and judge their facticity. As renown microhistory author Giovanni Levi's wrote, smaller scales permit us "to observe aspects of large historical processes that would remain invisible under the homogenous categories."[26] Gender history combined with microhistory challenges the conventions of space and magnifies the body within the field, promoting a more complicated, nuanced approach to interpreting narrative and fact.

With all this in mind, being that aspects of my project will be conducted as an oral history with support of archival material, it will be incredibly narrative. Hayden White's *metahistorical* approach serves to troubleshoot historical verses literary problematics. He writes that a historical work is "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of explaining what they were by representing them."[27] A clear difference between storytelling and writing history can lead one down a philosophical wormhole. Metahistory offers a unique approach by admitting to the fictive

[24] Ibid, 581.
[25] Christian De Vito, 'History Without Scale: The Micro-Spatial Perspective', in this volume, p. 362, quoting Osvaldo Raggio and Angelo Torre, 'Prefazione', in Edoardo Grendi, *In altri termini: Etnografia e storia di una società di antico regime* (Milano, 2004), 33.
[26] Giovanni Levi, 'On Microhistory', in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 1991), 93–113.
[27] Hayden V. White, *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) 3.

conventions innate in historical writing but in reifying the importance of factual data evidenced in coherent sources.[28] Stories justify stories, becoming their own form of factuality. Ultimately the frameworks orbit the concept of representation: what, how, and why a subject was included or excluded from more formalized history accounts.

With all these frameworks we can move on to labor history approaches.

Gender Labor History

Gender labor history is a discourse of space. Historians exploring gender labor history situate the intersection of class and gender labor through the dialectics of private and public space. As Sarah Rees Jones in "Public and Private Space and Gender in Medieval Europe" writes, the negotiation between private (women's) and public (men's) space is a discourse of what has been viewed *as* labor and productivity (public) versus what *is* domestic and reproductive (private).[29] "This concept of space, with its cyclical movement of human bodies…does not map on to a simple binary of public and private,"[30] writes Jones, conferring the notion of "flexibility" in the way these spaces are contrived. Her essay explains how "space" overtime is gendered not because of biological distinctions or behavior patterns but created to differentiate social status.[31] Space then transposes the gendering of class.

While Jones elucidates notions of gendered space through religion, government, procreation, city planning, among others, her argument on the role property plays in gendered history is profoundly reflective on how gendered spatial order is historically entrenched in

[28] Ibid
[29] Jones, Sarah Rees, "Public and Private Space and Gender in Medieval Europe," in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, ed. Judith M. Bennett and Ruth Mazo Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 246-61.
[30] Ibid, 245.
[31] Ibid, 258.

European legal and social patriarchy.[32] As Jones and Scott show, class modulations perform in a variety of flexible gender labor activities. Temporal and geographic variables considered, there still appears a theme that as historians study the lower social classes women dilate the "private spheres" of domesticity to encompass more responsibilities traditionally performed by men. In these studies, peasant women in European medieval societies can be found in agricultural fields, though often performing less strenuous duties than the men such as raking, and working with livestock—milking, feeding, and making cheese.[33] Jones and Scott convey that as men sensed the reproductive arena's encroachment into male-centric productive zones, reactionist, corrective policies were culturally and statutorily mandated to shift the perception of what constituted labor—or what were permissible activities for each gender. The patriarchal bias of reproduction as nonlabor poses real challenges to reconcile labor history of women.

Silvia Federici in *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation* thoroughly outlines the modes of capitalist structures which converted women's status and downgraded their value within the workforce. She enumerates:

> "(i) The development of a new sexual division of labor subjugating women's labor and women's reproductive function to the reproduction of the work-force; (ii) the construction of a new patriarchal order, based upon the exclusion of women from waged work and their subordination to men; (iii) the mechanization of the proletarian body and its transformation, in the case of women, into a machine for the production of new workers."[34]

But as Susan Gal and Gail Kligman in *The Politics of Gender after Socialism* point out, despite the objectification and epistemic violence utilized to devalue the role of women within Western societies, the historical reality is that distinct sexual divisions of labor were rarely actualized.[35]

[32] Ibid, 246.
[33] Ibid
[34] Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation*, (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2004) Introduction.
[35] Susan Gal and Gail Kligman, *The Politics of Gender after Socialism: A Comparative-Historical Essay. Course Book* ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012) 38.

This is especially apparent in historical analysis as we see that the actual roles that were delegated to women were mutable, never really holding with any consistency beyond childcare and laundry.[36] Instead, gender role dualities were fractal, nested, or protean.[37]

Likewise, Barbara Caine and Glenda Sluga in *Gendering European History: 1780- 1920* remind us that ability to dictate the gender roles and control the gender biases of labor, societies and cultures divide up abstract roles into spaces.[38] With the separation of private and public spaces and women occupying primarily the private space, value on labor was separated from the private to the public. Thus, domestic tasks and chores such as care or other family responsibilities within the private sphere were not classified as labor in contrast.[39] Attributes of the private space included its expectation as a "secluded haven" for men after *work* and also its prevention from becoming a vilified site of "welfare" when the household women depended on public sphere for help. Of course, while the home was to be a haven for men, for women there is no leisure.[40] These household characteristics and dynamics are as apparent in the Central Valley of the Great Depression as they were in medieval times.

From a purely labor standpoint, David Graeber's in *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology* provocation of anarchism as *thing we do* allows one to not get swallowed up in the ideologies of the oppositional, activist rhetoric and views of Marxism or socialism.[41] While these ideologies are compatible and agreeable, anarchism as a praxis will be important in addressing the demoralized programs of the New Deal and Franklin D. Roosevelt who, for all intents and purposes, symbolized a political party of similar ideals—though within a highly capitalist setting.

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[36] Ibid, 41.
[37] Ibid
[38] Caine, Barbara, and Glenda Sluga. *Gendering European history, 1780-1920*. (London: Leicester University Press, 2000) 33.
[39] Ibid
[40] Ibid, 37-38
[41] David Graeber, *Fragments of an anarchist anthropology*, (Paradigm, 2004) 1-7

Nonetheless, Gal and Kligman would also convey that Marxist and socialist standpoints are not tangential with gender labor disparities.[42] Anarchism positions political entities as actors supporting or in competition with human collectivity and order. Ultimately it promotes an extra safeguard against agency or ideological affiliation.

The Great Depression and migrant communities are great subjects for magnifying the way that capitalist ideologies shape the material world. During episodes of economic crisis or conflict, labor needs determined the scope of what was interpreted as reproduction/production, men/women's job, work/domestic, and private/public—these values changed as men's anxieties of their own self-worth and position in society changed. Ultimately, preconceptions and presumptive definitions of what can be defined as productive, reproductive, public, private, labor, etc. must be put in abeyance if not abolished to allow for the subjective interpretation of the perceived experience of labor in a particular and innately original temporality and space.

Women and Latinx Labor History in the Great Depression and California Agriculture

There has been some great research about women's labor roles during the Great Depression, but shockingly little set in California. I am still in the process of gaining more insight on the feminist historical category but Susan Ware's *Holding Their Own: American Women in the 1930s* portrays the advancement of women throughout the US in traditional industries during the Depression and their fight for equal pay but neglects an intersectionality approach; Elaine S. Abelson's "'Women Who Have No Men to Work for Them': Gender and Homelessness in the Great Depression, 1930-1934" repositions the view of women with the context of new poverty and who were previously left-out of the Okie narrative and thus

[42] Gal, 45.

government policy; and Margret Hobbs' "Equality and Difference: Feminism and the Defense of Women Workers During the Great Depression" which suggests a false polarity of equal rights and maternalistic traditions found in representing this period.

There was a particular shift in the demand for women's labor during the Great Depression. Despite the growing number of women workers in traditional industries, women likewise faced extreme, if not heightened discrimination in the workplace and at home, opportunities and federal programs were almost exclusively designed for white women, and they worked for disproportionately low wages.[43] Most of the research I have done so far focuses on women in the workplace, one which operates under capitalist concepts of *work*—definitions determined by production. Thus, the research focuses on the women in industries and manufacturing rather than on the nuanced codified roles of labor in the domestic, agricultural, and reproduction arenas.[44] But this nuance is apparent especially when analyzing the several welfare policies of the New Deal which perceives and reinforces women's domestic roles through a patriarchal lens and controls mobility.[45] Suppression was doubly applied in the subaltern and minority communities.

There has been an increase Latinx and labor strike historiographers who have addressed specifically the role of migrant women in labor strikes and labor camps profuse in California throughout the 1930s. Margo McBane and Mary Winegarden in "Labor Pains: An Oral History of California's Women Farmworkers" go into depths about *volunteerism* and the critical role of wage-less labor within camps. Vicki Ruíz, in *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women in*

[43] Margaret Hobbs, "Equality and Difference: Feminism and the Defence of Women Workers during the Great Depression." *Labour / Le Travail* 32 (1993): 202. Accessed June 7, 2021. doi:10.2307/25143731.
[44] Elaine S. Abelson, ""Women Who Have No Men to Work for Them": Gender and Homelessness in the Great Depression, 1930-1934." *Feminist Studies* 29, no. 1 (2003): 110. Accessed June 7, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3178478.
[45] Ibid

Twentieth Century America writes about women's roles in the famous Cotton Strikes of 1933 and the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union which forever changed agricultural politics in America. Devra Weber's *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal* takes a similar topic but focuses in on 'auxiliary networks' which are the invisible wage-less jobs of childcare, cooking, and informal organizing that make strikes successful.

These works demonstrate the remarkable and essential influence that primarily Mexican immigrant communities, families, and social networks had on the efficacy of these important strikes in US history, and which have had wide-ranging political impact. Also, they are in my opinion the closest to challenging the tenets of labor in United States labor history and reconfiguring labor's potential as a historical category. Concepts of informal networks, such as auxiliaries, also serve as reminder that while women and race separately are crucial topics of inquiry about a geography in time, both together can triangulate the foundations and essence of great historical events, people, and places.

Azorean Diaspora History to Central California

The main literature addressing Azorean diaspora history in the USA reflects the East Coast experience during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; however, there are several academic and less-academic historical accounts of Azoreans in California emerging. Robert Santos' "Azoreans to California: A History of Migration and Settlement" gives a significant overview of the process of life on the Azores Islands, settlement in California leading up to the 1970s, and brief details of their influence on California regions. *In Pursuit of Their Dreams* by Jerry Williams segments a study on Azorean immigration to California, Hawaii, and

Massachusetts with a focus on industries such as whaling, dredging, agriculture, or livestock. Jennifer Helzer and Elizabeth Machado's *The New Blue Islands: Azorean Immigration, Settlement, and Cultural Landscapes in California's San Joaquin Valley* reviews settlement patterns, household architecture, and rituals of Azoreans who relocated to the San Joaquin Valley. Perhaps the most seminal piece of writing which is referred to by almost every source touching on Azoreans within the Central Valley (and also remarkably difficult to obtain) and their dairy practice is Robert Grave's *The Portuguese Californians: Immigrants in Agriculture* which was a geography dissertation on Azorean dairying in California at the University of California Los Angeles.

The compiled narrative overview: In the late nineteenth century, San Francisco was veritably the conduit for much of the initial immigration as it is where many of the Azorean whalers jumped ship, tempted by the fantasies and allure of seeking riches in the Gold Rush occurring in the Sierra Mountains. Many of the historical accounts depict a *long durée*, but they more or less all describe a familiar tale of failed dreams in the Gold Rush and the ancillary reclamation projects. Disenchanted Azoreans turned to vast and fertile arable lands of the California Central Valley or returned to the San Francisco Bay to establish fishing and trade communities or join manufacturing industries that were likewise gaining prominence. In the Central Valley, however, Azoreans saw opportunities for the acquisition of land and to establish their traditional Azorean livestock practices.

Felicia Angeja Viator's *Opportunity And Saudade: Azorean-Portuguese Immigrants In Post-World War II California* looks at the concept of *saudade*—a distinctly Portuguese word conveying an overwhelming melancholy and longing for a sense home and belonging. As women began to settle in the Central Valley along with men, these *saudade* narratives became

the most popular form of expressing the journey and providing any sort of qualitative data. In combination with the rising number of Azorean settlers in the Central Valley, the growing communities, illegal statuses, and lack of opportunities all culminate in the nostalgia of belonging in the Azores, but the harsh truth of the Azores' uninhabitable conditions that drove them away.[46]

Although M. Estellie Smith in "The Portuguese Female Immigrant: The 'Marginal Man'" does not write about the Azorean immigration to California per se, she conducted profound research (probably the most valuable for this project) on the networks and support systems established and run by Azorean women before and after settlement called c*uñha*. *Cuñha* which translates to "opening a door" indicates the backchannel and invisible methods in which Azorean women fostered and made feasible the migration from the Azores to the Americas.

Methodology

Following the footsteps of New Social histories and Latinx microhistories in Californian historiography, I attempted to construct a narrative analysis and descriptive account through an embodiment interpretation of two oral histories and five autobiographies by situating these narratives within archival data gleaned from government censuses, CALTRANS monographs, Department of Agriculture periodicals, newspapers, magazines, instruction manuals, and films produced during this period.

This is a highly narrative project. I employ a central character, Anne Korte, who becomes a bricolage of the many primary sources. This choice was a literary tactic which I felt uniquely

[46] Viator, Felicia Angeja "Opportunity And Saudade: Azorean-Portuguese Immigrants In Post-World War II California," *Hindsight Graduate History Journal,* Vol. VI (Spring 2012) 6

portrays the lifeworld and the embodiment of labor. Anne Korte, primed as the central character, is not entirely fabricated or fictional. She was my Grandma's sister who passed away in the sixties and lived through the proposed scope of my subject as a young adult. It was through oral history accounts of her that I began to construct the narrative, using any question or curiosity that emerged from these basic outlines as points of discovery, exposure, or nodes of further exploration. Adopting a method like one Natalie Zemon Davis renders in *The Return of Martin Guerre* I attempt a prosopography of Anne Korte through the composition of oral histories, autobiographies, and archival data.

The narrative of Anne Korte, a first-generation Azorean immigrant in the Central Valley of California, is adapted from oral history interviews conducted with her sisters Josephine Talamantes, a second-generation, on July 15, 2020 in her living room in Madera, California, and Cecile Korte on February 3, 2021 over telephone. The in-person conversation with Josephine Talamantes was an all-day event which accumulated to approximately eighteen hours in total. Obviously not all the conversation was documented, though a great deal of it has been recorded on my handheld audio recorder. The remainder of the interview was filmed (stored for a project for the future) and recorded with hand-written notes. Throughout this conversation we discussed everything from her each of her parents' migration, the establishment of the farm, the household composition, relations between the siblings and community, jobs they to do, what they wore, and what responsibilities they had around the house and they were perceived. The conversation with Cecilia was much more confined, ranging to about an hour and a half. All her contributions were framed as questions to edit, corroborate, or elaborate on points made or stories told by Josephine. Her conversation was recorded and details from this were gleaned and applied to the narrative-writing process. Due to COVID-19 I was unable to gain access to the numerous oral history

archives available in California with the Portuguese fraternity associations, University of California at Davis, Stockton Libraries, Union and Creamery association, and several more. There is so much more to be done, even just for the sake of preservation alone. I hope on my return to California I can obtain much more.

To supplement the lack of access to oral histories, vital to my findings were the Azorean migrant autobiographies *The Egg in the Water Glass* by Olivia Andrade-Lage which depicts her experiences living on a California Central Valley dairy farm through the Depression years; *A Barrelful of Memories* by Pauline Correia Stonehill which details her families settlement in California through her mother's eyes and then an early-1900s coming of age recounting of church, school, festas, and dances; *Footprints in the Soil: A Portuguese-Californian Remembers* by Rose Peters Emery which is story of growing up on her family's California ranch; and *Wind Chimes in My Apple Tree* by Josephine B. Korte (not my grandma) which tells the story of a young woman trying to survive in the Central Valley of California in the 1920s and 1930s; along with the collection of Azorean migrant oral histories by Sue Fagalde Lick's *Stories Grandma Never Told.*

Deploying my initial story outline developed from the oral histories, the autobiographies have given me an abundance of rich detail that had a catalyzing effect on the narrative and points of interest. With a structure and basic plot conceived from these sources, I let these microcosms of events, places, people, and things sublimate into further investigations of their place within the macro-historical process of California during this period. A clear example of this for me was in their relationship to alfalfa. Each of the sources spoke of alfalfa as a given fact but one which from a researcher's position becomes a vastly unique insight into many historical processes happening within California. As the US federal government, particularly the Department of

Agriculture, was prolific in their publications of censuses, bulletins, studies, and manuals during and after the mid-thirties, contextualizing Azorean dairy farms will certainly be feasible. These documents were most often located in Google Books or the HathiTrust Digital Library.

Articles found on HathiTrust Digital Library included the bulletins, studies, and manuals like *Raising Dairy Calves in California* (1938) by the California Agricultural Extension Service, *1938 Agricultural and Range Conservation Programs* by the US Department of Agriculture, the *Public Regulation of Milk Marketing in California* (1938) by the University of California, *List of mutual water companies in California* by the Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics, California Agricultural Experiment Station; and several more. Material gained from the California Department of Food and Agriculture include "The Story of California's Milk Stabilization Laws," "The History of the California Milk Pooling Program," or the "Production of Manufactured Dairy Products 1938." The CALTRANS published useful monographs on "A Historical Context and Archaeological Research Design for Agricultural Properties in California" and "A Historical Context and Archaeological Research Design for Work Camp Properties in California."

Finally, with Google Books one can obtain many of the Department of Agriculture surveys and reports that range from nation-wide scope to more regional statistics and Department of Commerce census reports. As production of these would be ramped up in the mid-thirties phase of the New Deal, there are mountains of data in which to immerse oneself. Bulletins by Berkeley: Berkeley: University of California Agricultural Experimental Station published hundreds of documents on studies and hand guides for agricultural farmers of the time.

These original documents and primary sources were complemented by secondary sources, primarily through articles in academic journals ranging from women's history,

California history, legal, water systems, food systems, environment conservation, and dairying focuses. There were several books as well that set the scene for primary documents' functions. Secondary material was crucial in contextualizing the historical reasoning and effects of a program, law, character, or event. Likewise, secondary literature directed me to more programs and laws, ranging on scale from local to national, which were at play in agriculture and labor practices in the subject's timeframe. Little cycles, like eddies, of references to primary material would lead to more questions which secondary material both answered and then opened further lines inquiry. Within every curiosity were more infoldings. Eventually, interrogations would render much of the detail superfluous, and yet all of it shaping the narrative and knowledge of the subject in peripheral or direct ways.

An incessant reflection and questioning of my presentism, essentialism, and anachronism was a conscious effort in the process of documenting and interpreting these narratives. Despite the issues with positionality, a sensitive and careful examination of the gender roles perceived in the Azores—discursively a Catholicism and mimicry of Capitalist societal organization of a periphery nation with second-class status—and those roles performed in the US will be necessary insight in the way they articulate their lifeworld.

Chapter Framework

Cuñha—Early Great Depression Migrant Women in Central Valley, California and Azorean Diaspora

Interpreted through the eyes of Anne Korte, a first-generation Azorean immigrant, this chapter situates the Central Valley of California in 1933. Starting out with the Korte family having just arrived at their individual allotment in Yosemite after a two-week cattle drive from

the Valley. Situated here, the haunt of ice-age glacial geomorphic expressions, nineteenth century land colonization, and Native American peonage exhume the foundation of California's agricultural development.

Anne Korte reflects on their drive from Snelling to Yosemite in which the Azorean family passes ghost towns and shuttered factories of once thriving early Gold Rush settlements. On these roads they encounter a variety of migrant laborers navigating the harsh realities of unrealized reforms conceived by Franklin D. Roosevelt's early presidency. Between mining, logging, government infrastructure projects, and agricultural work available, the itinerants travel with other dangerous, troubled men or in caravans of families bonded by informal networks and kinships established in previous camps.

Exploring further, informal networks expose the netted realities of how gendered division of labor was never as homogenous or articulated as popularly and historically represented. Wage-less and reproductive labor have been unrecognized, discriminated against, and devalued but were arguably more important to survival than the diminutive wages earned in work. At the intersection of gender and Latinx women, this chapter also examines the vital, interdependent role they played in shaping labor rights through participating at the picket line and performing crucial "auxiliary" roles in strikes—particularly in the famed 1933 Cotton Strike.

In the closing section, we return to Anne Korte in Yosemite among the cattle herd, recounting her father's abusive behavior and offering a revised pioneer history in which Azorean women organized of their sons' and husbands' escape from the extractive and colonial practices of Portuguese rule on the Atlantic archipelago by *cuñhas*.

Umwelt—Alfalfa and Water Systems in the Late Great Depression of the Central Valley

Continuing with a historical interpretation through the account of first-generation Azorean, Anne Korte, this chapter examines women's labor roles within the historical process of alfalfa production and water systems which influenced the relative success of dairies in the Central Valley of California during the period preceding and succeeding 1938. This chapter interlaces contrapuntal and nearly paradoxical narratives: One being the erosion of traditional gendered divisions of labor in the Azorean family's composition due to the stresses and demands of dairy farming during the Great Depression in the Central Valley; and two, how the agriculture and irrigation policies and projects conducted by private, federal, and state-sponsored machinations not only preyed on subaltern communities but further codified patriarchal hierarchies.

The chapter begins with Anne Korte and her father, Antonio, on the peripheries of their property in Snelling, California as they prepared to use their time allotment, delegated by their water district, to irrigate their alfalfa fields. Here traces the relations between developing agricultural technologies in alfalfa cultivation, New Deal policies and regulations surrounding soil conservation, and inclusive harvesting practices of small dairy farms. Readying to release canal water from the weir, Anne studied the mechanics and methods of the furrowed alfalfa fields anticipating it would soon become her responsibility as her father's health continued to deteriorate. This leads to an exploration and critical enumeration of the policies on soil conservation and provisions established by state and federal governments for farming practices. The section concludes with a portrayal of how the alfalfa was harvested on the dairy farm by a typical Azorean family.

The second section begins with Anne releasing the water from the weir—which bridges their property with the great hydroelectric and evapotranspiration water systems of California—

and into the fields. From here I examine how the Kortes use of water situates them into the complex and highly politicized historical processes of water systems in California. Focusing on the Local Organization Era and Hydroelectric Era in California's water wars, water rights legislations and fragmentary policy decisions allow for the formation of a centralized and modernized water system. With the control of water usage being centralized, farmers' access was of lower priority to factory farms and nearby industrially productive cities. Meanwhile, women's use for water (specifically what was considered domestic) was greatly peripheralized, even within family units. While greater access to the electricity created by hydroelectric technologies were helpful for households, the benefits would hardly paper over the costs.

The chapter concludes with Anne taking stock of what has been lost in the human historical processes of water systems management and extractive technologies in California.

Milk—Azorean Women and Milk Wars in Dairying during the Great Depression

In this chapter, I explore an interpretation of dairying through the milking of an individual cow to the development politics, marketing, and production processes of milk in the Central Valley. This chapter examines and portrays the tasking of milking, the importance of relationships with the cattle, Azorean prevalence in Central Valley dairying, sanitation standards and how they affect and are affected by marketing biases, and cooperatives.

Anne Korte joins her brothers and sisters in the corral where they are milking a string of cattle. After a description of the sterilization methods mandated for milk and supply room, Anne sits beside Linda her cow and deliberates on the value in hand-stripping over mechanized milkers, how cows have been bred to produce more milk than calves can drink, and the

ambiguous legacy of Azorean dairying—why it is not a family rite of passage but the industry inculcating a narrative to maintain its vitality.

Then begins an extended discussion on the ponderous role of sanitation standards in dairying. By grading and classifying dairies based on changing criteria, consumer fear and market-drive regulations for pasteurized milk favored milksheds and distributors located closer to cities. The disparity was then amplified by Milk Stabilization Acts which set prices per region, which only really safeguarded Grade A dairies. With a preponderance of Azorean dairies being in Central Valley and the valley having most of the Grade B dairies, they were producing milk primarily for butter which was now under threat from the success of margarine. To compete with the antagonizing county inspectors who condemned large herds for tuberculosis exposure to the unfair marketing schemes, farmers join cooperatives.

The chapter concludes with Anne and Linda in the field caring for one another and finding joy in their relations.

Dwelling—The Azorean Dairy Household in Early 1940s

From the historical examination of the Great Depression in California to its tailings in agriculture and then dairying during the mid-to-late thirties, this chapter contracts the spatial scope even further to the household just before the onset of World War II. Of course, this domestic analysis, or discursive *private* sphere is the traditional site of exposure for women's history but the scale of the data and descriptive details, as expected, is nevertheless expansive—which has the potential to be elaborated on far more than I can provide in this paper.

Through the interpretation of Anne Korte's lifeworld, the chapter pays a great deal of attention to Mary's activity and her endless list of chores including completing laundry, prepping

food, tending to the newborn child, sewing, bookkeeping, and much more. Anne deliberates on what makes these tasks any different to what the men do: the two Antonios who were taking an afternoon nap while Anne, after hours of outdoor labor, joined her mom in helping her with her chores.

After exploring some of the more anticipated roles, the chapter elaborates on the perilous haunt of death's specter always looming. Mortality rates from injuries, sickness, and miscarriages were incessant and as doctors or hospitals were hard to come by, care provisions were often left to the women of the house. The cycle of birth and death magnifies the somewhat nonsensical, semantic constructs of production, cost, and labor.

Lastly, I review the multivalence of women's experience in the public world as well and how errands or simple tasks in town can accumulate to an understanding and knowledge of space and time that men often miss while *working*. These chores that draw invisible lines from the community into the household, create somewhat undefined lines of assimilation and acculturation, and prove to shape the way we understand and organize the past. Meanwhile, women as arbiters of the new world and old, orchestrate these flows of present and past.

Finally, the chapter ends with a representation of subtle acts of care, dignity, and welfare that women brought to their children. Putting the children and their mother there in history, where they can not only be seen but heard amongst all that has been forgotten.

Cuñha—Early Great Depression Migrant Women in Central Valley, California and Azorean Diaspora

Transhumance and Transients in the Central Valley

From dust, they emerge. Dismounting her horse, Anne Korte[47] exhales in the shade of a giant sequoia. She shivers as the first cool breeze she has felt in months of ceaseless valley heat courses along her sweated shirt. In the sunlit meadow, her father Antonio, brother Antonio, and two other men count and inspect the cattle, conferring thirty or so of the herd had made it safely to their summer pasture.[48] A creek chimes nearby followed by a squirrel carrying a pinecone. It scurries along pine needle mulch and startles Anne and her horse, reminding her to stay vigilant for black bears, pumas, and rattlesnakes lurking within the recesses of this vast wilderness.

They are in Yosemite within High Sierra, California. The cattle graze in the summer grassland oasis secreted within a glade of towering redwoods. Pine needles whisper and a mildewy, wooden spice rents the air. Just a mile or two away and perhaps visible through passages of forest cleared by a previous year's fire, are John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt's

[47] The narrative of Anne Korte, a second-generation Azorean immigrant in the Central Valley of California, was adapted from oral history interviews conducted with Josephine Korte on July 15, 2020 in her living room in Madera, CA and Cecile Korte on February 3, 2021 over telephone.

[48] As temperatures in the Central Valley over summer can range up to one-hundred degrees Celsius on average, it was common practice to have livestock summer in the High Sierras. Under the Organic Act of 1893, The National Forest Reserve was established in 1905 "sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations." In contrast to Nation Parks which sought to preserve environmental and historic sites, Nation Forest Reserves were established for public extraction such as mining, logging, and grazing. As once herds could roam free, ranchers were now leased individual allotments, or stock ponds. Judith Marvin and Julia Costello, "Cattle in the Sierra," The Calaveras Heritage Council. Accessed March 1, 2021. https://www.calaverashistory.org/cattle-in-the-sierra

prized geographic anomalies of Glacial Point[49]—Sierra Nevada's granite batholith[50] sculpted by Ice Age glaciation like an artist's finger through clay.

Figure 1: Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir on Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, California, in 1903. *(Courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Roosevelt, Theodore--Misc. Political and Social Activities, Washington, D.C., Image No. LLC-USZ62-8672)*

The otherworldly landscape is augmented by the haunt of indigenous peoples like the Miwok or most notably the Ahwahneechee—a multicultural peoples which state-sponsored private militia unsuccessfully "relocated" to the San Joaquin Valley in 1851.[51] For six centuries the Southern Sierran Miwok, Yosemite Ahwahneechee, Eastern Sierran Mono-Paiutes, and

[49] In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt asked John Muir to meet him in Yosemite, sending a letter saying, "I want to drop politics absolutely for four days and just be out in the open with you." Here, Muir spoke of environmental degradation and convinced both Roosevelt and then California Governor George Pardee to make the Valley and the Mariposa Grove part of Yosemite National Park—joining together the 1864 state grant lands with the 1890 national park lands in 1906. "Muir's Influences," National Park Service, accessed February 28, 2021, https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/historyculture/muir-influences.htm. See image 2.

[50] The Sierra Nevada batholith is a belt of plutonic rocks that extend from Lower California, through the Peninsular Ranges and Mojave Desert, through the Sierra Nevada, and into western and northwestern Nevada. Though it could be named within a large tectonic process, the part of the belt of plutonic rocks within the Sierra Nevada is considered to be the Sierra Nevada batholith. Paul C. Bateman, Lorin Clark, et al, "The Sierra Nevada Batholith A Synthesis. of Recent Work Across the Central Part," Geological Survey Professional Paper 414-D, (Washington: U.S. Department of the Interior,1963) 3.

[51] Mark David Spence, "Chapter 7: The Heart of the Sierras, 1864-1916," *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 105.

Central Valley Yokuts coexisted in seasonal variation and complex cross-cultural exchange. Despite Western incursions, indigenous peoples adapted to and even adopted some Mexican, American, and European customs. By the early 1900s the native population grew with the tourism industry. The indigenous of Yosemite even participated in vocations such as mining, building railroads, and construction for the hotels. Nonetheless, xenophobia and extractive[52] interests implemented a process of "vanishing" them from this land by the 1930s. [5]

The Yosemite indigenous are certainly not an isolated case. From 1840-1870, the colonization of California resulted in indigenous populations' decline to approximately 12,000 from 200,000 by disease, famine, and execution.[53] 24,000 to 27,000 were forced into labor and indentured servitude, including estimates of 6,000 to 7,000 children kidnapped, sold, and used as slaves.[54] All of these nefarious deeds were cloaked in legal framework by 1850 when California decided to be a "free" state.[55] Instead, the Act for the Government and Protection of Indians permitted the "apprenticing" of indigenous children to whites through the Indian Indentured Act and criminalized indigenous Americans as "vagrants"—a crime that permitted the arbitrary assignation of guilt by any white man and prohibited legal representation by indigenous peoples—by "hiring" them to the highest bidder at a public auction.[56] The Indian Indentured Act legalized a system of peonage where many indigenous people were coerced into farm work at a time when few people wanted these jobs. From early California statehood, demand for labor

[52] Extractive industries extract non-renewable natural resources for profit with highly pollutant, exploitative, and conflict-producing practices
[53] Madley, Benjamin. "Understanding Genocide in California under United States Rule, 1846-1873," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 47:4 (Winter, 2016), 449-451.
[54] Ibid
[55] Ibid, 454.
[56] Ibid, 445.

exceeded availability. Coercion was a regular occurrence and method of meeting economic goals.[57]

Land dispossession and native removal were common themes in the early period of United States' 19th century California colonization. They are critical in contextualizing the history of agriculture. Competition and access to land shaped flows of migration, culture, and development. To entice more settlers, private land had to be freed up from the natives and previous *Californio* occupants. As indigenous populations were culled by colonial means, the Mexican and Spanish populations were handled by law. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo created the Land Law of 1851 to commission the reexamination of Spanish and Mexican land titles. This act of placing the burden of proof on landowners made it nearly impossible for most Californios to prove their ownership, especially since many did not know English and had shotty legal representation. Over a short period of time, the Land Law invalidated many claims, forcing previous owners to sell their properties.[58] Land colonization in early California was well-endowed, multifaceted, and methodical.

Anne Korte leans against the fencing of their allotment as the men establish camp and clean out the summer cabins.[59] The cows stare out into the woods, tend to their bodies, or chew on the fresh meadow beneath their hooves. Between the cows, Anne, and the others, they all are rather content to rest and not think about the struggle of the last few days. It took a lot to get them to where they are now—for better or worse. This is not the time to decide if it was worth it

[57] Richard S. Street, *Beasts of the Field: A Narrative History of California Farmworkers, 1769-1913*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 120.
[58] Andrew Rolle, "The Messy Land Problem." *California: A History*, (News York, NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1963). 150-156.
[59] From oral history interviews conducted with Josephine Korte and Cecile Korte.

or not. Among the Yosemite Valley are vacationers from San Francisco and Sacramento, unloading children and furniture into their private two-story cabins from the Cadillacs or Benz. Throughout the day, tranquility is interrupted by the knelling from a church, sawing from Civilian Conservation Corps workers[60] clearing a hiking path, and hammering from lodge construction in the distance—the new sounds of nature.

Mariposa Monarcha: Early 1930s Central Valley, New Deal, Seasonal Labor, and Netted Gender Roles

For the Kortes, it took nearly two grueling weeks for an eighty-five-mile cattle drive from Snelling, California to Yosemite.[61] Most of this time Anne served as the *drag*, the least desirable position in the hierarchy of a cattle drive. The two Portuguese hired hands flanked the herd while the Antonios held the point. A thirty-cow cattle drive was a relatively small-scale operation, even for the day. Nonetheless, it does not belittle the task. One slip-up or a momentary lack of concentration could impact next years' annual finances if not cause a serious injury. Livestock is an extremely dangerous business with casualty counts higher than many other vocations. Situated behind the herd, pushing slow cattle, and corralling the strays, Anne inhaled dust kicked up by cattle and horses. Similar exposure would lead to San Joaquin Valley Fever some years later and a life-threatening case of dust pneumonia for Antonio Jr. But it was not in her personality to complain.

[60] The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was created by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 to provide jobs for men in the Great Depression. A few duties of the CCC included forest management, flood control, conservation projects, and the development of state and national parks, forests, and historic sites. In Yosemite, they built the Tioga Pass Bridge, over 77 miles of Tioga Road, Wawona Road, and a road to Glacier Point, downhill skiing routes at Badger Pass, cable system at Half Dome, new entrance stations, campgrounds, vista points, parking areas, lookout towers, and picnic sites. "On the Trail of the New Deal in Yosemite National Park," *The Living New Deal.* Accessed March 2, 2021. https://livingnewdeal.org/tag/yosemite-and-the-ccc/

[61] Cattle drives of 25-60 cattle can move about 11-15 miles a day.
Information in the following paragraph is a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories.

The journey started from their ranch in Snelling and traced the Merced River through the once thriving industrial hub of Merced Falls where the recently defunct Sugar Pine Lumber Company processed timber driven downstream.[62] Founded as a post office for the Gold Rush, Merced Falls remained an important intersection for travelers and distribution chains. Throughout Gold Country and the Central Valley these constellations of post offices establish roads and like nodes, become small towns themselves. As the luster of shimmering metals wore off and early settlers saw with clarity the grave conditions miners and panners faced in Coloma and along the American River, many (especially women) found more opportunity in these towns, resorting to trades they abandoned for their California dreams.[63] Alienation, poverty, and diversity produce unique niches of unlikely companions vying for survival in an unrelenting land.[64] But these were mostly marriages of convenience. Migration and vocational precarity were still the primary motive for the settlers' movements. Like picking up dice from a table, many of these thriving towns could be vacant within a year before the next rolls out. A decade later, Merced Fall's obsolescence would make it the twenty-fourth ghost town in this county alone.[65] Towns were abandoned frequently on the frontier once they were of no *use*.

Along the Merced River and into Mariposa County, Anne might have seen migrants, some with their families, traveling via vehicle brigade, foot, or train. Before government sponsored projects proliferated, these folks traveled to and from seasonal employment opportunities at intensive canning operations and agribusinesses in Central Valley and Bay Area to mining opportunities in the Hornitos District, Merced River Placers, Mormon Bar District,

[62] "Madera Sugar Pine Merchandises Output Pinedale, Yosemite," *Madera Tribune*, Volume LX, Number 118, 19 September 1932.
[63] Nancy J. Taniguchi, "Weaving a Different World: Women and the California Gold Rush," *California History* 79, no. 2 (2000): 144-147. Accessed June 8, 2021. doi:10.2307/25463691.
[64] Ibid
[65] Phillip Varney, *Ghost Towns of Northern California.* (Minnesota: Voyageur Press), 4.

Original and Ferguson, Hite in Coulterville, and Placers in Tertiary gravels. After a steady decline in the price of gold over the previous decade, gold rose from $20.67 to $35.00 per ounce.[66] At $0.60 an hour for about fifty hours a week it was a draw for many who could afford the relocation and would take the risk of working in extremely dangerous conditions.[67] Mining wages were much more appealing than the greatly decreasing value of farm labor at $1.90 for 12-hour workday without board or canning at $0.30 an hour.[68] Nonetheless, these were wages, even then, that no one could make a substantial living off of, let alone consider purchasing private property—the days of cheap land grabs from failed state coops were over. This will soon be a more realized fact as growth in mechanization coincided with a transition to agricultural enterprises cultivating intensive cash crops for distant urban markets.[69] The American Dream of owning the family farm was fast becoming an unrealistic fantasy. But with President Franklin D. Roosevelt having just been elected (1933-1945), the morale of the nation had lifted. He rallied behind the American worker and workers were filled with optimism.

Mobilized by the rhetoric that won him the election, FDR passed the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), a labor and consumer law, which aimed to both regulate the industry and stimulate the economy. Establishing the Public Works Administration (PWA) which arranged and created public works projects, using over $7 billion to stimulate millions of Americans into employment, the PWA also implemented the National Recovery Administration

[66] A. H. Koschmann and M. H. Bergendahl, "Mariposa County California Gold Production," *Western Mining History.* Accessed March 2, 2021. https://westernmininghistory.com/articles/23/page1/
[67] United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Wages and Hours of Labor in Metalliferous Mines, 1924 and 1931 : Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, No. 573 , Washington: U.S. G.P.O., January 1933, https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/title/4103, accessed on March 2, 2021
[68] United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "July 1932," *Employment and Payrolls* (July 1932). accessed on March 2, 2021. https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/title/152#5225
[69] United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture.* Bulletin No. 836. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office), 1945, 6.

(NRA) to regulate hours worked, wages, and unfair competition.[70] The NRA had then also codified worker's rights to organize and legal safeguards for collective bargaining. Farmers, however, were excluded from these provisions. Despite the efforts made to correct structural flaws in *laissez-faire* economics and work environments in urban industries, farming was not in their purview.[71] As the policies introduced eight-hour workdays with a minimum wage of $1.25 an hour their application did not occur for many in the agricultural sector. In the end, NIRA, PWA, and NRA did little to improve working conditions for rural workers. [72]

Equally disenchanting was the signing into law of the infamous Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) which proposed to stabilize prices and increase earnings. The federal government not only paid farmers to limit production but bought and slaughtered farm animals by the millions.[73] It was widely publicized that this policy provided special favors to select occupations, especially that of farm *owners* and operators, not the laborers. And yet, while farm property prices doubled from 1933 and 1937, wages fell even further, and it did little stimulate growth in the first sector. The increasing disparity only magnified the alienation felt by the low-wage workers and fomented unrest. [74] In some ways, policies like the AAA reveal the incredible distance between politicians and their contingency. All the promises in FDR's campaign never came to fruition. Farm workers had no allies in the formal structures of society, only found solidarity in their collectivization.

[70] Alston, Lee and Randy Rucker, "The Dynamics of Farm Failures and the Effectiveness of Government Policies to Alleviate Agricultural Distress: 1925-1939," *Working Paper Series* No. 25. (Davis, CA: Department of Economics, Williams College, Agricultural History Center, University of California, 1986), 5-6.
[71] Ibid
[72] Ibid
[73] Ibid
[74] United States. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture.* Bulletin No. 836. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office), 1945. 18.

Meanwhile, as all these policies were just being rolled out, in temporary ditch-bank settlements, Hoovervilles, or auto-camps, itinerants suffering from constant starvation and fatigue dispersed across Central Valley. These camps in the Central Valley only represent a small fraction of the twenty-thousand Okies grasping onto an elusive promised frontier in the early 1930s. The most menacing of these were the bands of transient bachelors who posed serious threats for the Kortes or any passing traveler at the time. These wayward men, imbued with a Victorian masculine anxiety, were a pervasive threat—known as "unstable and possibly dangerous" in the popular imagination.[75] Though rampant throughout the state, the newly constructed Civilian Conservation Corps drew a new crop of single men to the Sierras and Valley. [76] With aims to employ jobless single men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, the CCC assigned these men six-month contracts to learn forestry, flood control, and fire prevention. [77] Meanwhile the WPA began to collaborate with the CCC in expansion projects throughout the Valley, making perennial itinerants of these men who had to move from job to job as temps. In California's Central Valley, perhaps one of the most important WPA and CCC projects was in irrigation, having a direct benefit to farmers and ag communities. Eventually these programs could be credited to assisting with rural power development or the electrification of rural communities in California.[78]

On these backroads of Central California, many families would have been returning annually to logging industries, mining opportunities, or to the railroad logging camps like those

[75] D. T. Courtwright, *Violent land: Single men and social disorder from the frontier to the inner city.* (Harvard University Press, 1996). 195.
[76] Ibid
[77] Ibid
[78] Stan Cohen, *The Tree Army: A Pictorial History of the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933 1942*, (Missoula, MT: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, 1980). 90-91.
"A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps," *National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni*, accessed March 4, 2021. www.cccalumni.org

of the Sugar Pine Railway in Tuolumne County. Often traveling in caravans, families would build connections, networks, and communities within their tenures in different camps. These numerous webs of dependence and kinship support invert value-systems that celebrate the hard work, individualism, and toughness mythologized in Okie subculture. In fact, the role of families, communes, *mutualistas*, and women's networks and alliances were critical in the formation of working-class consciousness and organizations in California history. These formations arguably had equal if not more impact on affecting change for the plight of agriculture in the Great Depression and future generations.

Figure 2. Dust Bowl migrants at temporary camp near Calipatria while awaiting work, 1937. *(Courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Dorothea Lange Collection, Washington, D.C., Image No. LC-USF34- 016109-E [P&P] LOT 0345.)*

The "Okie" narrative remains the dominant memory of the Great Depression, one reproduced through John Steinbeck's literature, Hollywood cinema, and Dust Bowl historiography. The narrative of women's experience, especially an intersectional analysis with race, is dramatically unrepresented. In photographs and popular renderings of the Great Depression, women are holding babies, tending to the numerous children, preparing what little food was available, and laundering. This historical woman in the Depression was epitomized in Dorothea Lange's "Migrant Mother" (1936) and John Steinbeck's Ma Joad in *The Grapes of*

Wrath (1939). In these representations they are the strong, selfless mother—a Madonna archetype. While these representations in some ways reflect many women's experience, it is a unidimensional view. The reality is more complex and diverse.

In Central California during the Great Depression, we know now that the gendered division of labor was about as facile as male Victorian values. As millions lost jobs at the onset of the Great Depression, women's employment rose by twenty percent.[79] By 1940, 13 million women were employed, making up 49% of the labor force.[80] According to the U.S. Department of Health, *100 Years of Marriage and Divorce Statistics United States, 1867-1967*, marriage rates decreased by over twenty percent during the 1930s indicating that more women gained income outside traditional patronage.[81] Dependency on men for income, though predominant still within society, was shifting. But these statistics only slightly reflect the integration of women in labor and their private and public worlds. What could never be quantified is the wage-less labor of women in times of transition and while tending to household duties at the camps. Wage-less labor rearticulates the representation of their labor and problematizes the concept of work as a process, or relational.

It was often the case women were coerced or voluntarily helped in the fields alongside men while maintaining domestic duties before and after helping. Conceptualization of *volunteerism* has been debated in recent critical theory. The reconfiguration of what can be categorized as labor makes incommensurable terms like volunteerism as the entire episteme of what represents labor roles mutates. Incommensurability aside, it is a lifeworld captured

[79] Claudia Goldin, "The Quiet Revolution That Transformed Women's Employment, Education, and Family," *The American Economic Review* 96, no. 2 (2006): 5. Accessed June 7, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/30034606.
[80] "Employment of Women in War Production," *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 7 Unite. (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office), 1942. 5.
[81] Alexander A Plateris, *100 years of marriage and divorce statistics, United States, 1867-1967*. Rockville, Md: National Center for Health Statistics; (U.S. Govt. Print. Off., Washington, 1974). 8

poignantly in Margo McBane and Mary Winegarden's "Labor Pains: An Oral History of California's Women Farmworkers," by a woman living in a Central Valley Delta migrant camp in the 1930s:

> "I am an agricultural working woman. I came to this camp with my husband and baby. I have to get up before the men get up. I feed my baby and then I am suppose to help in the kitchen. If I don't help in the kitchen people will say 'what kind of woman is she?' Although there is a paid cook I am suppose to help. I have to go out to work with the men at the same time, taking my baby with me. When we finish work at suppertime, I have to do the cooking and wash the dishes. At night, when the baby cries, I have to be extremely careful because we live in a rooming house and the partition has thin walls. Sometimes I have to take the baby outside in order to quiet it. I am suffering doubly."[82]

There are clear patterns of a greater involvement of women in agriculture and canning, as it meant cheap, if not free labor for the employer in industries that were rapidly losing profits.[83] When women had a chance to earn a wage, employers often tried to reinforce sexual divisions of labor. Less strenuous or dangerous activities were delegated across all industries, especially for white women.[84] Race affects these discriminatory distinctions. Women's pay was half that of men's—a disparity reinforced politically, as twenty-five percent of the NRA's wage codes set lower wages for women. Despite these restrictive measures, women continued to perform outside constraints. In a letter to a friend, author Carey McWilliams wrote in 1937 the following after interviewing walnut workers United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA-CIO):

> A few nights ago I spoke to 1,500 women—women who work picking walnuts from shells. It was one of the most amazing meetings I ever attended… The employers recently took their hammers away from them—they were making "too much money." For the last two months… they have been cracking walnuts with their fists. Hundreds of them held up their fists to prove it.[85]

[82] Margo McBane and Mary Winegarden, "Labor Pains: An Oral History of California's Women Farmworkers," *California History*, 1 July 1979; 58 (2): 179–181. doi: https://doi.org/10.2307/25157910. 179.
[83] Ibid
[84] Ibid
[85] Vicki Ruíz, *From Out of the Shadows: Mexican Women In Twentieth-Century America*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008) 72.

Dorothy Ray Healey, UCAPAWA vice-president and organizer, recalled that their desire for representation was more related to their benches than with the hammers.[86] These are just two of thousands of stories of women working as farm hands or in canneries during the Great Depression. A gender analysis leaves one questioning any mode of distinction between what can and cannot be justified in the sexual division of labor, let alone the value of any role.

Mentality alters another thread in the narrative: labor as means to an alternative end. That end was food. In oral history accounts from women in fields to women protesters, acquisition of food was a primary motive, not wage. Wage, in a sense, was just an intermediary.[87] "Men remembered the strike in terms of wages and conditions; women remembered these events in terms of food."[88] Food scarcity created conditions to where some women had to forage for berries to feed their families. Some only had flour and water. Food was immediate issue of survival.[89] In many of these accounts, for migrant and transient women these dire conditions were conceptualized in material terms not as an ideological conflict. While vulnerability, middle-class aspirations, racism, and religion did, in particular, reinforce many white women's role in the reproductive arena, especially in the rural communities of Central California, migrant communities and labor organizations evince a much more collaborative and unified gender experience. There was a bond fused by coming to terms with material circumstances.

Throughout the next decade, a heightened contrast between women's material focuses on family survival and man's often idealistic grasps at self-actualization translate into increasing rates of domestic abuse, alcoholism in men, divorce rates, and men's abandonment. Meanwhile,

[86] Ibid
[87] HARD Work Camps Team and Caltrans Staff, *A Historical Context and Archaeological Research Design for Work Camp Properties in California,* (California Department of Transportation, 2013) 64.
[88] Riaz Fuerte, "Oral History and Mexicana Farmworkers" *Working People of California.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 215.
[89] Ibid, 215

some urban progressives saw rural women as instruments of change and enlisted them to promote social engineering and economic growth ideas. But historian Paula Nelson hazards a warning, saying, "It is important that the lives of women in the West, as elsewhere, be understood in all their diversity and complexity and that no rigid interpretive framework be forced onto the study."[90]

Representation for Women's Labor and "Ladies" Auxiliary

Many immigrant women during the Great Depression converted personal struggle into political action. In the Central Valley, archival records and oral history convey that in the predominantly immigrant labor camps a preponderance of strikers were women. These women, along with children and men, were subjected to police, state, hired posse, and vigilante violence, while fighting for higher pay, collective bargaining, safety, and child-care. While white women such as Caroline Decker, Nora Conklin, and Lorine Norman held leadership positions and labor organizing roles in nationally recognized unions like the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU), thousands of migrant women involved in organizing, striking, and supporting labor protests throughout the 1930s have been erased from history. Between thorough examinations of these semi-documented and vital movements, events amplified in the wave of 1933 protests and strikes, traces of their imprints surface in ubiquity.

Among the innumerable examples of protests in 1933, when an approximate 50,000 farm workers participated in thirty-seven labor strikes (twenty-four led by the CAWUI),[91] intersections

[90] Marilyn I. Holt, *Linoleum: Better Babies & the Modern Farm Woman 1890-1930*, (Albequerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 5.
[91] Vicki Ruíz, 74.
Stuart Jamieson, "Labor Unionism in American Agriculture," *Monthly Labor Review* 62, no. 1 (1946): 25-36. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41818027.

of race and gender appear most prominently in the Cotton Strike of 1933 in San Joaquin Valley. All the thirty-seven-plus organizational efforts culminated in 18,000 cotton pickers who went on strike in San Joaquin Valley 1933, creating one of the most important (arguably, if not most important…) labor movements in United States history. What started as an unprecedented movement soon ranked as one of the bloodiest strikes in American agriculture. [92] In the end, the strikes achieved wage increases for twenty-one of the twenty-four disputes.[93] CAWIU's Caroline Decker has gained spotlight over that year, and rightfully so; but she was first to admit her limited role in organizing and facilitating.[94] Ninety-five percent of the union's composition was of Mexican families.[95]

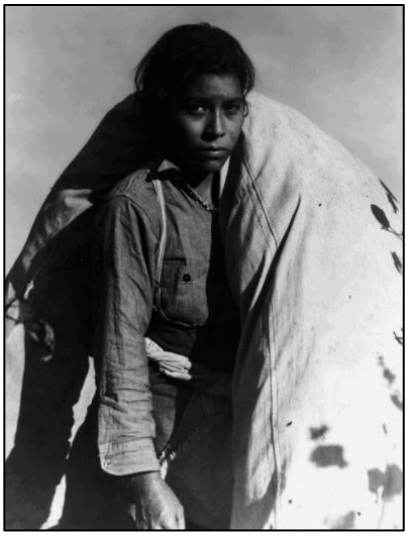

Figure 3. A Mexican cotton picker in the southern San Joaquin Valley. *Photo by Dorothea Lange. (Photograph by Dorothea Lange, courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, LC-USF34-0099450-C)*

Rodolfo F Acuña, "The San Joaquin Valley Cotton Strike of 1933." *In Corridors of Migration: The Odyssey of Mexican Laborers, 1600-1933*, 237-252. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007).

[92] Ibid

[93] Ruíz, 74.

[94] *Interviews on the organization of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union in California in the 1930s.* Bancroft Library. https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A11611

[95] Ibid

In early October of 1933, the strike began. After announcing their intentions, on October 10, state- and grower-sponsored vigilantes with hunting licenses called "The Minutemen"—composed of 4,000 businessmen, civic leaders, and growers—opened fire. As the possies conducted indiscriminate violence on women, children, and men, the California Highway Patrol stood by and waited.[96] By all accounts, none of the strikers were armed. As weeks passed, in the Corcoran make-shift camp, women died of pneumonia and several children died of starvation. But the perils endured in these protests won them unprecedented wage increases and national awareness.[97] It is now recognized that these protests would not have been effective without the strong support networks established by immigrant women.

> "The networks helped form daily picket lines in front of the cotton fields. Older women still sporting the long hair and *rebozos* of rural Mexico, younger women who had adapted the flapper styles of the United States, and young girls barely into their teens rode together in trucks to the picket lines. They set up makeshift childcare centers and established a camp kitchen."[98]

Aside from the picketers, "auxiliary" members who cooked and provided the backchannel communication and supply networks were vital to the longevity and efficacy of the strike.[99] Caroline Decker's imprisonment for criminal syndicalism is often symbolized as martyrdom for the cause. She was the first to remind us of silent thousands who made it possible.

Women participated in strikes not only as workers, but also as "auxiliaries." In fact, male unionists, due to their biases, were more likely to respond to women who participated in women's auxiliaries than to workers.[100] Women standing behind *their* men was deployed as a sentimental theme for union mobilization. Meanwhile, the working woman remained hidden. Women auxiliars

[96] Devra Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) 79-111.
[97] ibid
[98] ibid
[99] Ibid
[100] Sharon Hartman Strom, "Challenging 'Woman's Place': Feminism, the Left, and Industrial Unionism in the 1930s," *Feminist Studies*, Summer, 1983, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Summer, 1983), 359-386.

should not be viewed in contrast to working women but symbiotically. These auxiliaries, often picketing and fighting the police, also provided meals, childcare, and support for picketers. Without each other these strikes could not last.[101] Importantly, auxiliars do not exist in gender role reversal. There are no historical records of men's auxiliaries providing meals and childcare for striking women yet; instead, *ad hoc* arrangements were organized by the friends, relatives, and communities of women.[102] Auxiliary roles and their importance are often forgotten in labor history. Unions rarely note their impacts in their relative successes. Some women used auxiliaries as a forum for dialogue of women's concerns, encouraged by organizers to address such issues as birth control, childcare, and who should do the housework. In some cases, women gained the respect of men and given representation on strike committees.[103] In others, auxiliaries upset male union leadership.[104] These organizations did not equal liberation, of course; but offer a reimagining of what roles were perceived as valuable, were necessary, and which were important in working class struggles.[105]

Ends and Beginnings: Azorean Settlement and Foremothers

What Anne Korte may have encountered on that cattle drive or ones before was only the start of what was to come.[106] The next decade of the Depression would soon normalize these realities if it had not already. As her father and brother establish camp before nightfall, Anne watches the cattle. Back at the ranch in Snelling, her mom and three younger siblings stay. She

[101] ibid
[102] ibid
[103] ibid
[104] ibid
[105] ibid
[106] Information in the following section is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories.

imagines what they could be doing at that moment: as the blazing heat mellows in the evening, it is best to clean the barn, mend clothing items, tend to the fava beans, water the garden, or check for gopher holes in the alfalfa. Her hands blistered and back sore from riding, it is something she is used to by now, never remembering a day she has not worked.

She hears her father remonstrate with her brother. He is cruel, ruthless, and unforgiving. Despite the freedoms and responsibilities afforded to her by her hard work, he still polices her and regulates her social behavior—holding onto Catholic gender constructs from the Azores, even though he has not gone to church since his youth. A straightforward picture of him would be impossible to render. But the amount of work he puts into the dairy farm and what he does to ensure his family's survival is tainted by his physical and verbal abuses. Anne often wonders how dispensable she would be if she should no longer be of use to him. Was it for the sake of the family? Or was it for him?

He will stand out against the backdrop of a setting sun sometimes and regard himself highly. It is important for him that the family recognizes the sacrifices he made to get them where they are today. His story of carving out a life for them in the wilderness of early California is the one he cherishes and wishes the family to reproduce. The ultimate pioneer, he fashioned himself. It was his suffering, his struggles and determination that got them to where they are today. His struggles and no one else's. The rest of the family has a bit-part to play, women and children just passive supporting roles cast in his romanticized theater of willpower.

His favorite story to tell was how he was secreted in a barrel onto a cargo ship parked at a Terceira harbor to America at a young age.[107] For days, cramped uncomfortably in a barrel,

[107] Aspects of Stonehill's story of her grandfather, Vavô, in *A Barrelful of Memories* were adopted in this paragraph. Pauline Correia Stonehill, *A Barrelful of Memories*, (Portuguese Heritage Foundation: San Jose, California, 2005), 21-24

dehydrated, and starving, he stayed in an furnaced compartment of a ship traveling back to the East Coast of America. Finally, when the deck was clear, the man running the engine would then let Antonio out, exchanging food and drink for his help loading coal into the engine. Upon arriving Antonio again had to be stowed away in the barrel before escaping at the docks and joining a Portuguese whaling brigade. The part of the story he neglected to tell was the part where his mother arranged the trip, paid off the engine worker in the cargo ship, and organized a whaling gig for him upon his arrival just so that he could avoid Lisboan conscription to the colonial wars in Africa. Not only did she have to arrange it so every step would work but had to keep it covert to avoid mainland authorities keen to arrest all deserters, and eventually resign to the fact she may never see her child again.

As M. Estellie Smith writes, "Women were often the pushers, the naggers, the schemers, the manipulators, the innovators, the security blankets and the teachers. All of this becomes especially interesting when one considers that Portugal is supposedly a classic example of the male-dominated society."[108] Most migratory moves were to locales where female kinship existed, which points to the fact that women had a major share of planning and arranging the emigration.[109] Much of the time they were the ones who would do the labor and spend long hours in offices to get papers written, papers signed, certificates prepared, and documents stamped, finding out what information was required and working out how to obtain it.[110] Often financial assistance from the place of departure and arrival must be secured; furniture and valuables prioritized, sold, shipped, or stored; arrangements would be made to care for elderly parents or other kin, for houses, lands, graves and even for the collection of rents.

[108] Smith, 79-80
[109] Ibid
[110] Ibid

In Azorean communities the networking and stratagem for emigration is referred to as the *cuñha*, which is to "make a connection" or more directly translated, "to open a door."[111] It also applied to immigrants in new communities who were attempting to establish social networks in a puzzling world. *Cuñha*-making was a commonplace, every-day occurrence with congenial links that may be used only a few times in one's life; but a migrant is constantly seeking potential *cuñhas*.[112] These created and shaped the settlement patterns of California pioneers as they had elsewhere across the world, problematizing the narrative franchise of the pioneer man who sacrificed it all and had the cunning to *win.*

As night falls, shadows thicken and undulate in glacial specters projected from irregular domes and cambial redwood canopies onto the valley below. Like a cinema they portray an ethereal interplay of the past, present, and future forms converging. Creatures awaken in the darkness and articulate the rare spaces of the world. They are distances so near but feel so far away. The immensity of this place is overwhelming but freeing too. Her fingers dig in the soil, nails tugging on a rhizome of grass as a cow wags its tail and crickets stridulate. The breathtaking geomorphic expressions of the Yosemite Valley, like a dark colonial violence imprinted in the earth, remind Anne of her foremothers in the Azores who made possible the grueling journey to California, irrevocably situating her within silent historical processes.

[111] Ibid
[112] Ibid

Umwelt—Alfalfa and Water Systems in the Late Great Depression of the Central Valley

Transplants in Golden Fields: Wind Erosion, California Clover, and Harvest

Manifest is a ridge of the Sierra Nevada mountain range in nautical twilight as Anne Korte shivers in a brisk springtime breeze.[113] From her breath a diaphanous cloud purls through a curtain of steam emanating from a canteen held in her hands. She places the metal close to her chest and grips it tightly to improve blood circulation in her hands. After sipping near scalding coffee, she places the canteen back into the pouch of a cushioned saddle on Nellie, her Percheron[114] draft horse, who is feeding on alfalfa. Anne stomps her brother's hand-me-down boots[115] on the cement weir and slides her foot back and forth to test for black ice.[116] (Despite an inherited distrust in county reps, it appears the assessor was accurate in having advised the planting of the cedar windbreaks—serving both to shield the wind and raise proximal temperature. They had certainly been helpful with the slight reduction in ice.)

She sighs, thankful there is no little slippage to complicate the already laborious task at hand. In 1935, around this time of the year, her older brother Joe had slipped and fractured his tibia. As there were no doctors nearby, their mother, Mary, after a harrowing process, fixed two

[113] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories.
[114] The Percheron were a breed of horse originating in western France which accounted for 70 percent of draft horses owned in the U.S. during 1930s. The breed's migration history to the U.S. extends back to the early 19th century as it was supposedly the only one of the four horses to survive the Transatlantic trip. In 1906 alone, over 13,000 of these horses were imported to the U.S. After losing some popularity in the twenties, financial demands on the farmer, caused by the Great Depression, Percheron registration nearly doubled to help in the fields until gasoline became more affordable in WWII times. "The Origin and History of the Percheron Horse," *Percheron Horse Association of America*, Accessed 11 May 2021.
[115] Rose Peters Emery, *Footprints in the Soil: A Portuguese Californian Remembers,* (Portuguese Heritage Foundation: San Jose, California) 68.
[116] Black ice is a term in the United States for a type of thin, clear ice layer on pavement which is difficult to see. Olivia Andrade-Lage, *The Egg in the Water Glass* (Portuguese Heritage Foundation: San Jose, CA), xxi &73; Emery, 117.

wooden planks and spare cloth from a rucksack to fashion a splint.[117] Even after months of waiting for his recovery, Joe's malunion proved so severe that it not only impaired ability to perform those same chores but disabled him from walking without a crutch ever again. Despite a patriarchal obstinance the most able bodies were Anne and Antonio Junior. With the mounting tasks and Antonio's deteriorating health, he was forced to divide Joe's old chores to Anne and Antonio Junior. Opening the weir was a new responsibility for her.[118] She wanted to continue making a good impression and avoid any reason for eliciting abuse from her father—which he was often ready, if not eager, to dish out.[119] In many ways, the punishment was an even greater motivation than the cautionary tale of Joe's injury.

Anne steps back onto the trodden clay path, wipes beads of moisture from her eyebrows, and listens to the waking world around her. Accompanying a long hush of wind and Nellie's snorting is a confusion of warblers sounding their elaborate dialects, a rooster back at the ranch heralding in the morning, and cows mooing out in their fields nearby as her three other able brothers and sisters advance toward them for morning milking. Nellie and Anne are startled by a louder presence within the darkened recesses of trees. Nothing out there except a drunken, desperate transient worker would be of much threat to them in these times. Predatory creatures like coyotes, wildcats, and foxes are not big enough to take down anything bigger than a lamb. In a sliver of oceanic blue sky, she traces a chevron of geese flying northward along the Pacific skyway toward Canada, honking before slipping into darkness. Their echoes sustain long after their passage.

[117] Similar account in Stonehill's story but with using large sacks of grain to set the leg which was poorly done and had to be rebroken and set again to a boy who was only ten-years old. Stonehill, 145.
[118] Similar accounts of weir and irrigation responsibilities for women conferred in Andrade-Lage, 45-49; Stonehill, 245-247; and Emery, 133.
[119] Punishments: Stonehill, 86, 117, 184

Through viscous tule fog, Anne locates Antonio in the *cova*[120]—the parcel of their property situated on a decline and with the best soil composition suited for alfalfa. Antonio's silhouette hunkers over the furrows while either reconstituting the soft earth edges of the irrigation ditch, shoveling any obstacles from channels, or patching wooden checks.[121] Anticipating her responsibility of the fields in the near future, Anne examines the earthen matrices, committing to memory what is an adopted furrowing practice in agricultural development over the decade: Alfalfa is flood irrigated using the border check method consisting of concatenated slight ridges eight to fourteen inches high, forty to eighty feet apart, and extending in length from two-hundred-and-fifty feet to a quarter mile.[122] Checks are crossed by other checks, forming a grid of basins within the field, situated a few degrees lower than the next to create a gravitational drag.[123]

Figure 4: Central Valley Alfalfa Field. *(Courtesy of* Agriculture in California*, California Agricultural Experiment Station Extension Service, Circular 747, May 1959)*

[120] *Cova*—Depression in the land. It can also mean grave. Andrade-Lage, 45.
[121] Best field orientation and description by Andrade-Lage. Ibid, 88.
[122] Ibid
[123] Charles Nordhoff, *California for Health, Pleasure, and Residence* (New York: Harpers and Bros., 1882), 135.

Anne is concerned about the old man's voluminous list of ailments.[124] A recent scare with ulcerative colitis[125] saw him an extended visit to the hospital in University of San Francisco followed by another in Stockton a month later. But vocalizing any such concerns would always be futile. Vulnerability for Antonio, like most men in those times, was bunkered within the crude and well-crafted architectures of masculinity, reified like the canal walls by continuities of Victorian values. The mere fact that Anne is out there to help with these morning tasks would have seemed unfathomable to him just a decade prior, let alone her riding a horse. Examples of her participation in his Azorean upbringing would have been slim to none. On the islands, Catholicism and Continental traditions articulated a strict gendered private and public orientation.[126] Regulation of these gendered roles were rigorously enforced by governing entities, indoctrinated early in life, and performed in overt customs publicly.[127] The spatial limitations and scarcities of island life only abetted the power of these conventions. While legacies of these patriarchal values carried over to America, the labor demands, diversity, and spatial expansiveness of life in California eroded the potential for control.[128] Within the Valley young women and older women of Azorean families, just like her, are out in fields as well as in the home. In the fog and dawning light, difference is incommensurable.

Anne examines forty acres of alfalfa[129] (or, lucerne)—a perennial flowering plant used for grazing, hay, and silage, as well as a green manure and cover crop. She always preferred its second name, California clover. In California, this vegetable was synonymous with dairying. In fact, without alfalfa, a thriving dairying industry in California would be difficult to imagine. As

[124] Andrade-Lage, 88; Stonehill, 243-247
[125] Stonehill, 221
[126] Smith, 79-80
[127] Ibid
[128] Sue Fagalde Lick, *Stories Grandma Never Told: Portuguese Women in California*, (Blue Hydrangea Production, South Beach, Oregon) 105, 109, 111
[129] Lick, 59

Charles Nordhoff in his popular guidebook/advertisement for settling in California, *California for Health, Pleasure, and Residence*, wrote, "[Alfalfa's] introduction into California… will some day be accounted as one of the important steps in making agriculture a legitimate industry in the State, instead of vulgar and hazardous speculation."[130] It may seem a moot point, but alfalfa and dairy were not a natural pairing but a symbiotic relationship bonded by circumstantial technologies of agricultural development and application in the Americas.[131] Due to alfalfa's resilience against winter, insect, drought, injury, and disease; extremely high yield; adaptability to soil conditions; and high nutrient content, it was an ideal crop for the farmers and their cattle in the arid and semi-arid environments of California.[132] Farmers who had to buy their hay were greatly handicapped—yet among increasingly good company during the last decade of drought.

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[130] Ibid

[131] Attempts to grow alfalfa in the United States began as early as 1736, but the first successful plantings were made during the 1850s in the San Joaquin Valley with a variety imported from Chile. Chilean varieties were not resistant to colder climates, and it was not until these varieties from other regions were imported that alfalfa culture spread. 0. S. Aamodt, "Climate and Forage Crops," *Climate and Man: Yearbook of Agriculture* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), 440-441.

[132] Francis P. Griffiths, "Production and Utilization of Alfalfa," *Economic Botany*, Apr.-Jun., 1949, Vol. 3, No. 2. 171.

"Although alfalfa will grow under a number of climatic conditions, it is best suited to regions having relatively arid climates, low precipitation, and mild winters. Consequently, a number of varieties have flourished in the study region [California].

"A major reason for aridity of the area is the presence of a subtropical high pressure cell located off the coast of California. The eastern portion of this cell is noted for dry, stable, descending air which militates against atmospheric humidity and instability, and the cell also acts as an impediment against northern Pacific storms originating in the Gulf of Alaska. Added barriers to high humidity in the region are the Coast Ranges, located between the Valley and the Pacific Coast. Although most peaks only range in elevations up to about 4,000 feet the several ranges attain widths of fifty miles which aids in precluding moist maritime air from the Pacific Ocean and precipitation from Pacific storms.

"Consequently, relative humidity in the region is low; with readings on summer afternoons measuring only fifteen to twenty percent. Precipitation is also sparse; most of the area experiences less than ten inches of precipitation per year, and rarely is there rain between May and October. Aridity is doubly important since most varieties of alfalfa are affected adversely by acid soils which often form under more humid conditions, as well as diseases such as leaf spot and bacterial wilt, both of which are particularly destructive in wetter areas.

Alfalfa also flourishes under warm growing season conditions. Maximum temperatures are 75 degrees or higher from April through October, and June through September is especially hot. Bakersfield, for instance, reports 110 days per year with a daily maximum of ninety degrees or above. Combined with this warm temperature regime is a long growing season. Frosts are a regular feature of the winter, but seldom occur before December or after February, giving the region a growing season of 250-300 days. Under such favorable conditions as many as seven or eight cuttings per year are possible, on a three week to monthly basis from April to October." Steven John Zimrick, "The Changing Organization of Agriculture in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, California," (PhD Diss., Louisiana State University, 1976), 47.

As small farmers and ranchers could not produce the necessary yields for their cattle, their only option was to purchase less nutritional hay at a higher price from market opportunists. Just over the course of a few years, dairy producers dwindled from around sixteen thousand to less than six thousand.[133] These struggles would only further be compounded by New Deal programs which mismanaged both real and artificial demand.

But to the Korte family, this year is going to be better—at least in terms of yield. A moderate La Niña weather event experienced across the valley concluded what was the longest drought in California's history at the time.[134] Antonio was a bit ambitious on this round of harvest seeking thirty pounds per acre rather than their typical twenty.[135] More alfalfa meant more high-protein feed for the cattle, radically increasing their health and quality of milk. High-protein crop should contain between ten and twelve percent of digestible protein.[136] To obtain a balanced ration of hay cattle would be fed in quantities varying between 1.5 and. 2.5 pounds daily per hundred pounds of live weight.[137] In general, one pound of grain for each three pounds of milk was the authoritative view of the University of California at Berkeley and Davis ag-programs.[138] For cattle two lactations averaged 4,124 pounds of milk and one-hundred-and-fifty

[133] William J Kuhrt, "The Story of California's Market Stabilization Laws," State of California, Department of Agriculture, Bulletin, Vol. 54, No. 4, (1965). 188. https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/dairy/pdf/fmmo/1965CDFABulletinTheStoryOfCAMilkStabilizationLaws.pdf
[134] John T. Austin, "Floods and Droughts in the Tulare Lake Basin," *Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners*, Accessed May 15, 2020, 241. http://www.tularebasinwildlifepartners.org/uploads/2/1/4/7/21473344/floods_and_droughts_in_tulare_lake__basin_secondedition.pdf.
[135] Griffiths, 173.
[136] H.P. Davis, "1938 Feeding Dairy Cattle," *The University of Nebraska Agricultural College Extension Service* 621, no. 38 (May 1938): 17, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3241&context=extensionhist
[137] Griffiths, 173.
[138] Ibid

pounds of butterfat, or an average of one pound of milk for each 2.24 pounds of alfalfa, hay consumed and 1 pound of butterfat for each 61.6 pounds of hay consumed.[139]

It seems to have paid off this time around, but fear of its sustainability and, even more, the threat of fines by a federal or state inspector always makes higher yield a gamble. Concern about the viability of the soil—its nitrogen fixation, symbiotic bacterial content, and erosion prevention (primarily sheet and wind erosion in California)—was not only a dominant environmentalist discourse those days but a key component for any legislative policy on agriculture post-1935. As alfalfa has a high-ash content (up to ten percent) every five tons of annual crop resulted in one-thousand pounds of soil minerals lost, exploiting the fields was an untenable practice despite temptation to glean as much as possible from more gainful seasons.[140]

In 1938, there were over three million tons of alfalfa harvested in Merced county alone.[141] Sometimes quantitative data can drive home the severity of damage done. Numbers tell the story of cultivation's impact on soil. Ironically, under new reforms of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1936, alfalfa was confirmed to be a "soil-building"[142] which helped prevent wind and sheet erosion.[143] While lime and phosphates were mandated for fertilizing the fields,

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[139] "Feeding Dairy Cows on Alfalfa Hay Alone!" *United States Department of Agriculture*, Technical Bulletin No. 610, (March 1938): 3

[140] "Only about three percent of the total tonnage of alfalfa [is] converted into meal—a proportion that continued to increase as a result of nutritional knowledge relative to the use of alfalfa in mixed feeds and also as a result of improvements which served to stabilize nutrients such as carotene (pro-vitamin A), riboflavin, thiamin, pantothenic acid and choline. Alfalfa meal supplies about one and a half times as much protein as most grains and about half the nitrogen-free extract (carbohydrate) which grains contain. The protein provides such essential amino acids as arginine, threonine, lysine and tryptophan but is somewhat low in eystine and methionine. Dehydrated meal is particularly rich in dietary factors supplied by green forage or good green pasture and is therefore widely used to supplement poor hay and increase feed utilization during the winter or when green feeds are not available." Griffiths, 175.

[141] "Agricultural Commissioners' Crop Reports Merced County 1938-1948," *California Department of Food and Agriculture,* 12.

[142] As opposed to "soil-depleting" crops like wheat, cotton, and rice—crops often associated with large-scale farming.

[143] "Handbook, 1938 Agricultural and Range Conservation Programs," *Agriculture Adjustment Administration*, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), 22-32.

California clover infused nitrogen and some degree of these nutrients back into the ground as well.[144]

Figure 5: Women and child standing before a dust bowl storm cloud. *(Page 48 from "The Dust Bowl: An Illustrated History by Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns")*

On a national stage, soil conservation became a proxy for federal control over crop and livestock surplus. After the repeal of the first AAA in 1935 (deemed unconstitutional), the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936 was passed to preserve and improve soil conditions, promote economic use in agriculture, and curb exploitation of soil resources. The Act and a newly signed AAA in 1936, continued federal assistance to farmers with subsidies when they reduced the amount of land devoted to crops—this time only for crops that were determined to have had a negative impact soil and high erosive potential—and endeavored to stimulate the planting of crops that prevented further erosion.

To incentivize farmer compliance, credits were offered if certain provisions were met. Much of these machinations were tedious, intricate, and articulated in legal framework with unique amendments and arrogations for different counties.[145] Inspecting these measures were a

[144] Ibid

[145] Pages and pages read as follows:
Practices E-4, F-1, and F-2 not applicable. Practice F3.

handful of government-sanctioned professionals, “operators” who were deemed by “county committees” and approved by “State committees” to be authorities on the immensely heterogenous ecologies of every county within the Valley.[146] Since most of the Azorean farmers knew little to no English, these stipulations were outright inaccessible. Likewise, as the standards required machinery and extra manpower that many small farmers simply could not afford, these policies, surrogate through the premise of conservation efforts, were widely ignored. By 1939, in Merced and San Joaquin counties alone only six farms in total were reported in the Census of California—Agriculture.[147] It also helped that the federal and state agricultural departments were understaffed with underpaid, unqualified inspectors. As women and their children in Azorean households were most likely to be the only literates in the family, complying to these regulations often depended on them.[148] Compliance, however, would often be subject to the father’s plasticity or lack thereof.

Across the nation, struggling farmers limited their crop production, poured gallons of milk to spoil in levees, and culled millions of livestock just to receive a penance of monetary

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CONTOUR LISTING ORFURROWING NONCROP LAND.
Rate of credit—Four acres equal one unit.
Credit will be allowed for this practice in addition to the following practices on the same land: A–13.

(a) Contour listing or contour subsoiling during 1938 on non-crop open pastureland on slopes in excess of 2% for the purpose of preventing water erosion and conserving moisture. The minimum depth of cultivation with the subsoiler must be 10 inches. If any other implement is used the cultivation must be of a depth of at least 6 inches. The vertical drop between lists or subsoiler rows must not exceed 20 inches; the surface to be left rough behind the lister or subsoiler.

(b) Constructing and maintaining permanent furrows on non-cropland with slope of 3% or more for diversion of surface water to prevent soil washing, not including any temporary ditching or ditching for the purpose of irrigation. Furrows are to be not less than 8 inches wide and 4 inches deep with only sufficient grade to carry and spread water evenly over the surface of the land, Furrows shall be at intervals so the drop between them will not exceed one foot on 2% slope, 2 feet on 4% slope, 3 feet on 9% slope, and 3 feet on 12% slope. Ibid, 40.

[146] Ibid, 40.

[147] Warder B Jenkins, "Agricultural Census of 1940," *Journal of Farm Economics* 22, no. 1 (1940): 350-58. Accessed May 17, 2021. 745-739. doi:10.2307/1232063.

[148] Josephine Korth, *Wind Chimes in My Apple Tree*, (Island Winds, 1978), 285; Emery, 73.

assistance—subsidies often diminished and deferred. Anne Marie Low in her Depression era diary wrote about these new policies saying, "panaceas devised by the New Deal for relief, such as the Resettlement Administration [and] the Agricultural Adjustment Act… did nothing for the nerves of farmers and ranchers."[149] Low, like many other farmers and families who lived in these rural lands for decades, saw New Deal programs detrimental to the environment and communities. Historians Sonya Michel and Robyn Muncy argue that New Deal programs also codified differences between genders, thus limiting women's gains from them and perpetuating competition between gender labor divisions.[150]

There were, however, few representatives who fought against biases, most notably Francis Perkins who the "first" women public executive, leading the Department of Labor, and championed the Social Security Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act. Author, DeLysa Burnier writes:

> "As labor secretary, she was a tireless advocate for the dispossessed who gave voice to those who were unemployed, to those who labored for low pay in unsafe working conditions, to children forced to labor, to workers without collective bargaining rights, and to countless ordinary people who had suffered through the Great Depression."[151]

Though her contributions and efforts were vital to minority communities of the U.S., she was relegated to the shadows of New Deal historiographies and contemporaneous media outlets. Federal agencies and purported fiscal relief efforts which offered subsidies and marginal price adjustments in farm products did not, in many women's opinion, help farmers but instead drove some of them from their homes, limiting alternatives as farmers fell progressively into debt.

[149] Anne Marie Low, *Dust Bowl Diary*, (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 158.
[150] Sonya Michel and Robyn Muncy, *Engendering America: a documentary history, 1865 to the present*, (Boston: McGraw-Hill College, 1999), 167.
[151] DeLysa Burnier, "Frances Perkins' Disappearance from American Public Administration: A Genealogy of Marginalization," *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 30, no. 4 (2008): 399. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25610953.

Figure 6: Azorean farmers with a horse-drive mower. *(Courtesy of the Tulare County Museum)*

Nellie cranes her neck to munch on a patch of the clover. Salad tangles as steaming soil shakes from the horse's mouth. Soon Anne imagines the cows will be invited into the field to feed on the fresh alfalfa. As it is early May and alfalfa appears to be somewhere between a one-quarter to half bloom—or approximately 6-inches high—Anne anticipates the next harvest would be in a week or so.[152] It is typical for this time of the season to let the cattle do a great deal of the fertilization in the fields after harvesting.[153] From springtime onward, every six weeks it was general practice to harvest the hay again.[154] In the later months when less water supply was available and cattle were driven to summer feeding pastures, clover would be cut at earlier stages of the bloom and stored in the barn or in a haystack to combine with other hay varieties for winter's feed supply.[155]

First growth was the best nutrient intake for the cows but also required a dutiful eye by the farmer for the fresh alfalfa could lead to fatal bloating.[156] Bloating of the rumen expands the cow's diaphragm putting critical pressure on their lungs and heart, which causes cattle to asphyxiate or die of shock. Four years ago, while Antonio was away from the farm, Joe had left

[152] Davis, 17.
[153] Stonehill, 246; Andrade-Lage, 46, 72, & 88
[154] Ibid
[155] Ibid
[156] Stonehill, 246.

the cows unsupervised before returning to find that one had fallen dead.[157] Calling on Mary, their mother, the entire family sprinted out to the field where Mary with a kitchen knife located straddle-legged cows, placed a finger at a forty-five-degree angle near the hip bone of the Holstein, and sunk the knife into the abdomen. What emitted was a gusher of grass juice and chewed fodder. One after the other, she worked through each of the affected cattle. Though the aftermath was a horror-show, the herd was saved.

Anne is transported to times when in fall the year prior she and Sally used the sickle-mower pulled by a team of horses to cut the crop.[158] A rake driven by their father followed. The rake used large steel forked prongs to shape out windrows, where smaller piles were then shocked for partial drying. The rake was deemed by their father to be too dangerous for the girls so when he was not around this task was delegated to a brother. (While times were changing and the need for the entire family was often required, small nonsensical segregations of responsibilities such as uses of the rake are reminders of the biases entrenched in the Azorean family orientation.)

After drying, days later Anne sat on the back of the horse-drawn wagon driven by Sally, her younger sister, as clover was pitched by Antonio and Antonio Jr. She would quickly sort the hay to sides, leaving open a middle portion. It was a method she developed over time to maximize space in the wagon and reduce the number of trips back and forth from the barn. Once at capacity (reaching the height of the ladder), the cart was steered toward the barn, where Mary was waiting with another draft horse. There Mary operated a grappling hook (hay fork) by a cable lowered from a pulley attached to the roof beam. Anne stayed in the wagon and positioned

[157] Story from Stonehill, 247-248
[158] Similar renditions of hay-processing can be found in Stonehill, 69-70 & 248-250; Andrade-Lage 45-47, 119; Lick, 67 & 79; and Emery, 30-32 & 87-93 & 170

the hay fork to grab massive clumps of hay. Led by Mary, horses would pull the cable attached to singletrees on the horse's back away from the barn, lifting the fork to the second story haymow. Once it reached the track at the top of the barn, Anne would pull a rope to release the fork. Inside, members of the family would rush to distribute the hay around the mow with pitchforks. Anne would dodge and catch the descending heavy fork after Mary unhooked the cable from the singletree to start the entire process over again.

Turning away from these memories, Anne looks out toward fields veiled in fog. Sunlight of a future time would expose the land, but now it is all unrealized. Some days Anne would look out from the edges of their property and observe the seas of alfalfa in the valley. Among the vast golden planes were heathers of cows, intermittent oak patches, and ranch houses, sparser than birds in the sky. To her, it almost appears that the crop has been cultivating people.

Irrigating a Transpiring Valley with Alluvial Fans

Lifting the kerosene lantern, Antonio signals for Anne to release the canal water.[159] Climbing down to her knees, she removes wooden planks one-by-one from the gates of the weir, placing them on the cement platform while the cool stream gushes forth into the furrowed channels of alfalfa.[160] Having placed the final plank on the platform she lifts herself from the ground and watches the marbleized water slither down behind a screen of undulating vegetation. Though it is the first time since 1927 there has been enough rainfall and, more importantly, snowmelt to take California out of drought, this type of optimism is always met with caution if

[159] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories.
[160] Andrade-Lage, 48-49

not outright suspicion this far into the merciless realities of the Great Depression. Water systems were and continued to be a historical anxiety in California.

As water pours into the furrowed lanes, Anne notes the remaining two alfalfa fields that needed watering. She weighs up the amount of hydration needed to adequately supply each of the three fields with the amounts needed for the cattle. Throughout the morning, she will be riding back and forth from the corrals to the canal to irrigate each of the fields. And while these anxieties would occupy her mind, she would deliberate on the purpose of their cultivation. How much of the alfalfa was necessary and how much of it was precautionary? How much was an overcompensation, some trauma reflex or response to the fear of losing it all next year? Could all the water, the precious resource, used for alfalfa be better used elsewhere? As the responsibility of irrigation was more in Anne's hands now, she considers redirecting irrigation. But with these changes she would have convinced Mary of subterfuge against Antonio as well. Interpellations of Victorian values with her mother would surely meet resistance.

Anne spent her younger years witnessing her mother's private stress over water. Almost every choice in how to use and how much water to use could have enormous consequences on the family's welfare.[161] The responsibility, precision, and efficacy in calculating what was needed to prepare meals; clean the house, barn, and other facilities; wash the seven children; do the laundry; water the garden; provide water for chickens, hogs, and goats; and to drink was immense. In the established hierarchy of utility, Mary's access for water was secondary and her acuity thankless. In times of scarcity, they would say that giving up some of these uses for water were the sacrifices needed to keep the dairy ranch profitable. Anne could not understand what made the overproduction of alfalfa or milk more important than sanitation and their own

[161] Shades of water usage in families is also touched on in Emery, 27-28 & 33 & 107

sustenance. It was a value system that she could not comprehend. Even when they exploited their time allotment for canal water use, what was deemed necessary for production, came first.

She heard of some luckier neighbors who were installing wells, pumped by windmills, to supplement the supply restrictions of the canal.[162] But not all properties had ground water to pump. Private firms and companies, like Pacific Gas & Electric Company, could supply the groundwater, but they racked up even greater prices at dubious rates.[163] Some of the wealthier landowners, ranches, and factory farms had electricity and gas-powered wells that would produce gallons upon gallons of groundwater. These were the same opportunists who leeched and leveraged unmitigated access to whatever resource was needed for profit. Water, like their access to land, government subsidy, and labor, was never in scarcity for the large-scale farms, ranches, and urban industries. Between advancement through expensive mechanizations and legal machinations the needs of the rest of the farmers and peoples of the valley were peripheral. What was left for families like the Kortes was not even enough to stay competitive, it was the bare minimum needed for survival. But even the idea of survival, in a household level, became a value system, one inculcated by the systems that dispossessed them.

The Kortes had a well installed on their property a few years back but it was never good for anything more than coughing up maybe a bucket of dirty water after a feverish pumping of the handle.[164] Most of the water used for household chores, especially cleaning, came from a small reservoir (more or less a pool dug into the ground) piped into a trough behind the chicken coup or from a catchment tank which contained rainwater beside the house. Sanitation was of serious concern specifically for the reservoir water. Fencing prevented animals and bacteria from

[162] Stonehill, 166, 209
[163] Ibid
[164] Emery, 94

contaminating it. The reservoir was cleaned annually, and catfish were kept in it to prevent algae build up.[165] The water they drank mostly came from the catchment of rainwater. If there was not enough to spare, water from the reservoir or the well had to be boiled and stored for potability. Even the catchment for rainwater was subject to microbial contaminations which could be lethal—especially in summer when temperatures rose to one-hundred degrees for several weeks.

Managing the amounts needed and making sure the water was safe for drinking was primarily within women's purview. The ceaseless vigilance and understanding of nuance in water quality, the ability to commensurate amounts needed to feed and clean a family of seven along with all their animal companions and crops was incredibly nerve-wracking for Anne but done dutifully and almost automatically by Mary, without much complaint. For Azorean dairy farmers, there was not another option, at least not for years to come. Not for them.

Despite the relative abundance of water that year, farmers were still advised to limit their use by the irrigation districts.[166] Operating under the auspices of municipal policies established in 1932, irrigation districts' access to water usage was a serious advantage compared to dairies in other regions of the Central Valley—especially those who depended on the restrictive and exploitative politics of ground water.[167] Elsewhere, particularly in the southern and western areas where natural watersheds had not existed, the price-hikes by both private companies such as the Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) and federally funded canals contributed yet another financial burden on the ranchers and farmers—ones which greatly added to rates of insolvency and-or bankruptcy.[168] No matter the promises advertised by private or public regimes about the benefits

[165] Andrade-Lage xvii
[166] Andrade-Lage, 48-49; Stonehill, 245
[167] Stonehill, 209
[168] Ibid

of their management over California's water systems, it was rather hard to believe either had small-scale farmers' security in mind. Irrigation districts were perhaps the closest to sovereignty a farmer could obtain.[169] But sovereignty was a species of being near extinction.

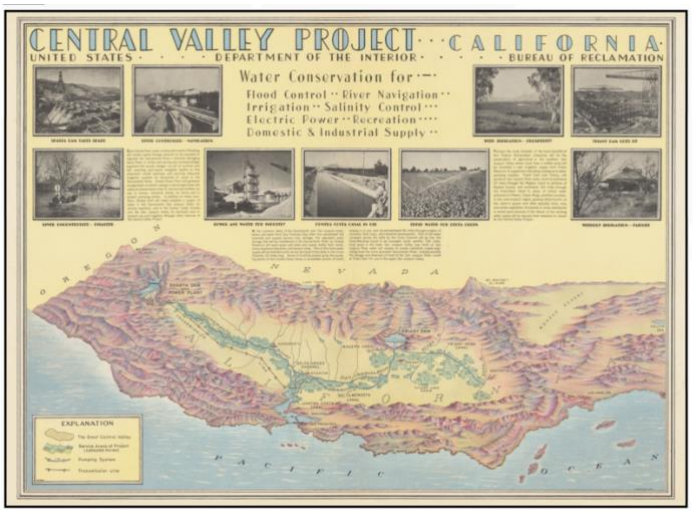

Figure 7 [left]: The World of Pacific Gas & Electric*. Created by Richard Edes Harrison, 1938 for Fortune Magazine. Courtesy of Data Deluge.* ***Figure 8 [right]: Central Valley Project—California*** *[Map and Views of California] by Abel A.A. 1942, Courtesy of David Rumsey Map Collection.*

Irrigation districts established in the 1920s were community-oriented responses sponsored by the 1887 Wright Act to the state-old conflicts over water rights, usage and supply, and flood control.[170] Among the transitions of water systems in California, irrigation districts symbolized what became known as The Local Organization Era—a time of privately regulated and constituted water systems and mutual water companies which were supported by legislative reforms of water management policies.[171] By the 1930s, ninety-four districts were active in California and the land watered by these agencies proliferated to 1.6 million acres. Irrigation districts provided ninety percent of the surface water used for irrigation before the Central Valley

[169] Irrigated acreage had increased from less than one million acres in 1900 to more than three million by 1930.
[170] "The Wright Act authorized the formation of irrigation districts with the power to acquire water rights, to construct water projects, and to sell bonds and impose property assessments to support water development and distribution." Ellen Hanak, Jay Lund, Ariel Dinar, Brian Gray, Richard Howitt, Jeffrey Mount, Peter Moyle, and Barton H. Thompson, *Managing California's Water From Conflict to Reconciliation*, (San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California, 2011), 26-30.
[171] Ibid

Project came online in the 1940s.[172] This era was in many ways an economic response to the diminishing returns and regressive status of the mining industry that kickstarted California's economy.[173] By then it threatened rapidly developing agriculture, commerce, and shipping sectors.

As actors in the previous Laissez-Faire Era championed appropriative water rights[174], which prioritized the *date of first use* position of hydraulic mining over traditional proximity-focused riparian water rights,[175] the Local Organization Era sought to correct water usage priorities to the farmers and those closer to water sources.[176] Proceeding cases such as *Woodruff v. North Bloomfield Mining Co.* (1884), *People v. Gold Run Ditch & Mining Co.* (1884), and most famously, *Lux v. Haggin* (1886),[177] hydraulic mining was determined a public nuisance and must cede to paramount public interest in agriculture.[178] If a dispute were to arise in a case, those under riparian rights would be entitled to "the natural flow of the watercourse undiminished except by its reasonable consumption by upper [riparian] proprietors."[179] The law's resolution created a contiguity between riparian and appropriative interests with a lean toward the riparian through a novel convention called Reasonable Use.[180] It is the arbitrary language of reasonable

[172] Ibid, 21.
[173] Ibid, 26-30.
[174] Ibid
[175] Ibid
[176] Ibid
[177] Two of the first and most successful ranchers in the Valley.
[178] "California Supreme Court's decision in *Lux v. Haggin*, in which the court upheld riparian rights, supporters of irrigation development had been forced to go to the legislature for relief. Assemblyman C. C. Wright introduced the Wright Act, to establish publicly controlled districts with sufficient legal powers to take land and water from powerful Central Valley riparian landowners. Wright and his supporters hoped that these vast tracts might be transformed into community-controlled irrigation districts." Daryl B. Simons, "Conveyance and Distribution Systems," *Irrigation of Agricultural Lands, Volume 11*, (1967): 14. https://doi.org/10.2134/agronmonogr11.c46
[179] Oscar Tully Shuck, *History of the Bench and Bar of California: Being Biographies of Many Remarkable Men, a Store of Humorus and Pathetic Recollections, Accounts of Important Legislation and Extraordinary Cases, Comprehending the Judicial History of the State*. (United States: Lawbook Exchange, 2007.) 106.
[180] In CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE X, § 2 (1928) "It is hereby declared that because of the conditions prevailing in this State the general welfare requires that the water resources of the State be put to beneficial use to the fullest extent of which they are capable, and that the waste or unreasonable use or unreasonable method of use of water be prevented, and that the conservation of such waters is to be exercised with a view to the

and beneficial use in the amendment that would soon jeopardize local water systems, leaving them legally prone to state and federally-sponsored water projects.

From the obfuscations of Reasonable Use the 1930s Hydroelectric Era of California emerged. Trending centralization and modernization machines of all industries in the U.S. by state and federal authorities had also subsumed California's water systems. Four intertwined forces culminated in California's transition into the Hydroelectric Era.

1) The state legislator's decision to secure water supplies which would enable Los Angeles and San Francisco to grow for the next 100 years;
2) congress's induction and support of a federal reclamation program;
3) state legislature's decision to build a California water project;
4) and the federal government's engagement in the management of floods.[181]

The Central Valley Project (CVP) Act of 1933 was the state government's formal announcement of their initiative to control California's water systems.[182] Private interests like PG&E, Southern California Edison, Sacramento River Basin area-of-origin advocates, and some senior water rights holders campaigned against its proposal. Though voters passed CVP, the state initially could not raise the finances to fund the project. But through federal takeover and the establishment of the United States Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), federal and state regimes

reasonable and beneficial use thereof in the interest of the people and for the public welfare. The right to water or to the use or flow of water in or from any natural stream or water course in this State is and shall be limited to such water as shall be reasonably required for the beneficial use to be served, and such right does not and shall not extend to the waste or unreasonable use or unreasonable method of use or unreasonable method of diversion of water. Riparian rights in a stream or water course attach to, but to no more than so much of the flow thereof as may be required or used consistently with this section, for the purposes for which such lands are, or may be made adaptable, in view of such reasonable and beneficial uses; provided, however, that nothing herein contained shall be construed as depriving any riparian owner of the reasonable use of water of the stream to which the owner's land is riparian under reasonable methods of diversion and use, or as depriving any appropriator of water to which the appropriator is lawfully entitled. This section shall be self-executing, and the Legislature may also enact laws in the furtherance of the policy in this section contained." Ibid, 38.

[181] Hanak, 33-34

[182] Ibid, 45.

ratified the law in 1935 and the first canal and dam projects began in 1937 with the Shasta Dam.[183] Many farmers saw this as the capitulation of their once community-focused irrigation programs. Again, the government would interfere on these vital sources of their livelihood by regulating usage, configuring demand, and inflating prices. Intervention, as proven by the failings of AAA and other New Deal programs, would only benefit and prioritize large-scale industrial farming and metropolitan areas such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento.

While the centralization of water systems remained a threat for the Azorean dairy farms and communities, its technologies provided electricity, marginal increases in water supply, and new administrative jobs to the area. Provisions generated by these projects had positive impacts on Anne and her family—likewise all households in migrant communities, specifically with household chores.[184] There would be a tension however in conjuring gratitude for these new technologies: The troubling paradox being that while government and state-sponsored programs at once codified gendered division in labor practices and largely increased the migrant farmer's precarity, the material products of these programs and projects optimized household chores and costs. Investments in private and public water pumping projects concomitant with the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, whilst adhering to the economic interests and demands of private utilities companies like PG&E and SMUD, created electricity networks on an extraordinary scale. Approximately fifty-thousand units of pumps, pumping plants, and pumped wells were established by the thirties and as of 1939, of the 3,777 farms in Merced county, 3,251 dwellings reported having electricity pumped into their households. Likewise, of the 5,575 farms in San

[183] Ibid
[184] Emery, 24, 91

Joaquin county, 5,099 dwellings reported having electricity.[185] In the energy extracted from the dams, well pumps, and hydroelectric technologies metastasizing along the river shorelines, mediating river flows, and dotting landscapes with wells bored into vast aquifers, fringe benefits were gained by all stratified classes in their access to electricity as a public utility, furnished at lower gradually lower costs.

Electricity was an expression of water control[186] and none was more symbolic than the Hoover Dam. Anne and her relatives would have sat near the radio in their living room or listened to the news while milking in the barns and read on the occasional newspaper brought home of the totemic Hoover Dam completed in 1935. Under the Boulder Canyon Project Act which authorized the Hoover Dam also authorized the All-American Canal, the largest irrigation canal in the world, which would traffic a maximum of 428 cubic meters per second of water into the Imperial Valley, making hundreds of thousands of acres arable in what was one of the driest places on earth.[187] What would not have been broadcasted was that these symbolic grand achievements of innovation were a legacy of Harriet Williams Russell Strong. Strong, who in 1887 took over the management of Rancho Del Fuerte in Whittier, California after her husband's passing, made one of the most lucrative ranches in California based on her 1887 patented irrigation system.[188] After the great flood of 1914 in Los Angeles, compounded with the motivation to help the continual struggles of farmers in her region suffering from drought, she petitioned funding for a "mammoth irrigation tank" to secure water supply and electricity

[185] Warder B. Jenkins, "Agricultural Census of 1940." *Journal of Farm Economics* 22, no. 1 (1940): 738-740. 745-739. doi:10.2307/1232063.
[186] G. Goodwin,"Water, Infrastructure and Power: Contention and Resistance in Post-colonial Cities of the South" *Development and Change*, 49 (2018): 1616-1618. https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12458
[187] "All-American Canal," *NASA Earth Observatory*, accessed May 15, 2021, https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/37078/all-american-canal
[188] Jane Apostol, "Harriet Russell Strong: Horticulturalist, Conservationist, and Feminist," *California History* 85, no. 2 (2008): 50-65. doi:10.2307/25139149.

production.[189] Local support led her to present her plan and hydroelectric inventions to dam the Colorado River to Congress in May 1918.[190] Though the plan was rejected after the armistice, a decade later, Congress passed the Boulder Canyon Project Act, which realized her projects and designs two years after her death.[191] Her legacy in what was considered a landmark engineering marvel in U.S. history remains secreted away in archives.

Figure 9: View showing the first time all 12 valves in the canyon wall outlets at Hoover Dam worked simultaneously, discharging Colorado River water. (1936) *Courtesy of Water and Power Associates.*

Both awesome and alien, the power rendered in the images of the Hoover Dam alone are unsettling. The Hoover Dam portrays the summation of extractive potential in a simple idea coopted. It magnifies a homogenization of narratives that once told entirely idiosyncratic tales. In the endeavors to survive untenable environments, small innovations create macrosystems that literally design flows of water to move backwards, create fire from water, and foist conditions of dependence on ordinary communities that cannot be reversed without complete ruination.

[189] Ibid
[190] Ibid
[191] Ibid

Anne runs her hand in the cool water and closes her eyes to listen to its babbling. *Water tells the story of her history: The Azores, their migration, and the Central Valley. As it shapes the land, it shapes who they are, who she is, what she can be.* While there was so much talk about production, use, and scarcity surrounding water, she ruminates on life and life lost. Agricultural technologies that can be traced all the way back to the indigenous tribes in the Valley; some of which were adopted by the Mexican and Spanish settlers, the Californios, and applied to established Spanish methods, before becoming the template for the 19th and 20th century colonizing enterprises.

These waterways are interlaced, narrative, and mutual networks of nourishment, of life and death processes. But around her is California's vitiating native waterscape, losing its hallmark physical diversity which supported extraordinary biological diversity.[192] Once in the American River and San Joaquin River millions of adult salmon and steelhead spawned in California's tributaries and streams, disseminating enormous volumes of ocean nutrients that would enrich the state's inland ecosystems.[193] These nutrients nurtured an extensive patchwork of lowland floodplains and riparian forests which hosted vast herds of elk and antelope; were homes to beavers, otters, cougars, grizzly bears; and made estuaries for massive bird migrations along the Pacific Flyway.[194] The San Joaquin Delta, where these rivers converge, was a 700,000-acre mosaic of tidal freshwater marsh, tidal channels, floodplains, and natural levees with brackish marshes, which provided a unique vital spawning and rearing habitat. Whales and seals could be found in the further reaches of the channel on daring explorations.[195]

[192] Hanak, 47.
[193] Ibid
[194] Ibid
[195] Ibid

These natural water systems radically changed by the conversion of wetlands into industrialized, extractive, and mismanaged agricultural enterprises. Over the course of three decades, natural flood systems were eradicated at extraordinary rates, and drainage systems introduced a concentration of salts, selenium, and other heavy metals, making these once fertile homes toxic breeding grounds if not outright killing fields.[196]

To Anne, the normalcy of water technologies is perturbing. It is unsettling to recognize the apparent lifelessness within the canals as an oddity. While these fabulously intricate and ingenious irrigations provided water for crop growth and livestock, they were devoid of fish and policed to keep *free from* wild creatures. Dependency on nature while sidelining wildlife for human expansion was the new natural process informed by teleological ideologies. In the span of thirty years, the entire valley had been altered. From mining tailings and mercury wastes to massive soil erosion, rapacious logging practices to reclamation projects, hydraulic water systems to overproduction of land, the extraction and exploitation has terraformed beyond comprehension. By the early twentieth century roughly ninety-five percent of the wetlands were gone while the seven million acre-feet of water produced annually by water-systems projects would not be enough for farmers, municipal, and industrial users.[197]

Within Anne's short lifetime much has changed. She thinks of California's hydrological processes: its symbiotic flows of intricate webbings from the High Sierra Mountains, through the Great Central Valley's wetlands and water basins, and toward the Pacific Ocean. As she holds onto the alfalfa, dew dripping from the roots and soil, and listens to the canal water, she thinks of the cycles of water she learned about in her school years. Transpiration always drew her on a

[196] Ibid
[197] Ibid, 48.

spiritual level. Thinking of what has happened to the environment here, she wonders if it could be called natural. What exactly has transpired?

Milk—Azorean Women and Cooperative Dairying during the Great Depression

Weaning the Breed

Anne mounts Nellie before the purple mountains as a tule fog dissipated in the warm exhale of a budding sun. She lightly kicks her heals into the ribs of her companion and rides off toward the corral while leaving her father to continue laboring long hours alone in the alfalfa fields. Through the strobing of the orchard, she can see the dilapidated shed where crates and equipment were stored when apple, orange, or walnut picking season comes around.[198] Just down the orchard is a portion of land devoid of vegetation encircling a pipe jutting from the ground.[199] This is a zone of the property most of them avoided, where caustic cleaning materials is flushed from the house and barns.[200] Around her is the damp sour scent of wetted earth, perfumes of flowers and budding fruit.

Emerging on the corral Anne observes her two brothers and sister on stools milking a string of cows by hand.[201] In spring it is standard practice to milk the cows out in the field rather than herding them into the barn as they did in fall and winter. While it made the milker's work much more time-consuming and tedious it is more economical to give cattle the fresh salads.[202] Likewise, it was argued that the best quality milk was produced in spring—which as will be discussed later, is a fact that often skewed data for marketing prices in favor of distributors.[203]

[198] Stonehill, 188, 253-254
[199] Emery, 26
[200] Ibid
[201] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories. Also details were gleaned from Andrade-Lage, 71-78; Lick, 59 & 65; Stonehill 70, 85, 86, 113, 154; and Emery, 94-95.
[202] Andrew M. Novakovic and Christopher A. Wolf, "Disorderly Marketing in the TwentyFirst Century U.S. Dairy Industry," *Choices*, Agriculture & Applied Economics Association, 4th Quarter, 33(4), (2018). 2 https://www.choicesmagazine.org/UserFiles/file/cmstheme_654.pdf
[203] Kuhrt, 192.

While the greater quality could be a result from more access to water, recent calving, and better alfalfa content, there is a considerable theory which relates quality to the cow's happiness (however that could be determined). Luckily the cows are content to relax and feed while the boys, girls, young women, and young men milk.

Figure 8: Azorean farmers standing in a corral. *(Courtesy of the Tulare County Museum)*

Milking would occur twice a day all days a week—first starting near four in the morning and the next near four in the evening. As each cow is milked for close to a half an hour, one round of milking five or six cows could last up to three hours. For Anne's younger brothers and sisters this would mean milking before and right after school. Milking was always the highest priority among anything else. Thus, if her brothers and sisters were to have any extracurricular activities, they would have to be scheduled around the long hours needed for milking. It would be of utmost rarity or by covert means that any activity outside the dairy was possible.

The reasoning was not (completely) out of parental obstinance either. Holsteins had been bred and were continuing to be bred to create far more milk than their calves could consume. This engineered codependence has almost made not-milking them an abuse. If they were not milked daily, buildup of milk could cause serious discomfort to the cows, if not lead to mastitis or other injuries. Mary used to recount stories from the Spanish Flu epidemic two decades earlier

as a warning and reminder for the children of the importance in milking the cows daily.[204] She would describe the valley as a cacophony of anguished bellows emitting from a chorus of humans hemorrhaging in their farm homes and their un-milked cattle in the fields. While they could not approach the agonizing humans, healthy farmers would spend long hours of the day wandering to neighboring farms milking distraught cattle. As bodies mounted in piles down the church halls, milk was dispensed onto the earth. Much milk has been spilt onto the earth throughout US history.

With these conditions in mind, after two weeks female calves are weaned from their mothers purely to make each cow as profitable as possible. Even calves are a perverse source of competition for dairies. This reality is magnified by the selling of male calves. As the male calves are of no use to the dairy, unless there is need of a sire, a truck would arrive at the farm with a cargo of newborn male calves and unwanted female calves.[205] A collector tosses them into the container with the others and drives off as their mothers bellow after them in agony. Anne could never watch. Hearing all night the dreadful cries of the female calves separated from their mothers was already hard enough to stomach. Anne looks into the eyes of mothers and witnesses their distress, their trauma, their memory.

Compost: Azorean Dairy Origins and Legacies in the Central Valley

As Antonio remained head of the household and chief decision maker, Anne and Antonio Junior, who were out of school, would fill these hours with the ceaseless chores around the property and occasionally in town.[206] As Joe had left for college, Anne and Antonio were

[204] Stonehill, 97
[205] Ibid, 70-71.
[206] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories. Also, details were gleaned from Andrade-Lage, 87-90; Lick, 59 & 106; and Stonehill, 247.

coerced to stay and help with the dairy farm. Because the family was unable to afford hired hands, Antonio was dependent on their cooperation. While the younger siblings went off to school, Anne and both Antonio's would be busy with the animals, machinery, fence building, road graveling, tree grafting and pruning, mending harness, treating the produce with bluestone to prevent smut, cutting and stacking wood for the stove, building a shed, or digging a septic tank.

In fact, sometimes her whole day could be dedicated to manure.[207] From using a broom to scrape up hay and droppings from the cattle into drains, they would then be scooped up and carried out into a ditch beside the barn where it would be combined with the previous day's waste to compost. Then came the thorough washing of the barn floor and walls with chlorinated water with lye. Despite her distaste for it, all of it must be dealt with an attention to detail and concentration as it was vital for the hygiene of the cows and milk.

For Antonio, it was only by law that he had to let the children leave the farm. Several of the neighboring Azorean farmers who forced their children to work instead of going to school had been arrested.[208] Ironically, the fathers were perceptive in the opening of opportunities education provided for many of the migrant children. It was the same scope of liberties that many mothers sacrificed and wished for in migrating.[209] In the end, these educational foundations were instrumental for assimilation and subsequent autonomy gained by children, especially girls. Educated children had also made significant contributions to the dissolution of family farms by the 1940s.[210] Mortality rates for Azorean men were high, and when they died,

[207] Stonehill, 70; Lick 67; Emery31, 80, 96
[208] Andrade-Lage 31
[209] Andrade-Lage 87; Stonehill 173, 214; Lick, 74, 105 & 113-127
[210] Josephine Talamantes oral history and Emery, 184

these farms, though intended to be passed down to family members, were often sold because their children or wives sought alternative options.

There was some understandable part of their father's desire to pass on the dairy farm as a legacy. It was of little dispute that the decision and investment in the parents to own and establish a dairy farm made them more resilient to the dire challenges posed by the Great Depression. As most industries plummeted into a crisis, dairy had remained just stable enough to at least weather the initial chaos. This was only made a reminder by the hundreds of transient worker families seen along their roads, fields, and canals every day. Much of this relative success was deeply coincidental and formed by continuities of colonization projects in mid-twentieth century California[211] and extending all the way back to fifteenth century Portugal. Azorean familiarity with livestock as a more-or-less obligatory industry by Portuguese mainland interests. This skillset combined with the difficulties in assimilating or even speaking with other California settlers positioned Azorean immigrants to transition from sheep herding to taking up and eventually become the majority dairying demographic within the Valley.[212]

The transhumance story of cattle and Azoreans to California had been auspicious if not outright serendipitous. As the story often goes, the perceived sovereignty obtained from owning a dairy farm was earned from the hard work of Azorean men saving up the meager wages as hired milkmen, often from Swiss-, Danish-, and Dutch-owned or Portuguese dairies.[213] Over the course of a few years, Azorean communities developed together, and eventually, by the 1940s, three out of five dairymen in the valley were Portuguese. In the San Joaquin Valley, from 70 to 75 percent of the dairy herds were owned by Portuguese and a quarter of the 38,000,000 gallons

[211] John Curl, "A Brief History of Cooperatives in California," Grassroots Economic Organizing, Accessed May, 29, 2021, https://geo.coop/story/brief-history-cooperatives-california
[212] Graves, 26.
[213] Helzer, 4.

of fluid milk sold each month in the state comes from this valley—two-thirds of the 4,500,000 pounds of milkfat used a month in manufacturing.[214] Pride in the dairy farms and what they did for the family's success was understandable but misguided. Ownership of this pride and legacy was almost always attributed to the man of the household. The women were portrayed as dutiful housewives who supported men's resolve, but this is closer to fiction.

There is a significant argument to be made and empirical proof behind the claim that while the men were unable to earn a livable wage from mining industries of late nineteenth century California, it was women's household product of milk which opened new economic opportunities for newly settled Azorean families.[215] Dairying combined with the cultivation of other farmland crops could be traded and supplied to local communities and neighbors. Informal networks, *cuñhas* of Azorean women would have been trading in reciprocal economies and also communicating with other Azoreans back home. Migration flows to the *new world* in California from the Azores would have resulted from the women's networking of work opportunities, boarding, and even marriages. Self-sustaining and cooperative farms would formulate these early diverse communities before ambitions were sequestered and converted by large-scale ranch enterprises, which multiplied profit-oriented dairies owned and run by men. Instead of a family honoring the legacy of a father, the continuation of the Azorean dairy farm could be seen as an industry using narrative as its own means for survival.

Hand-Stripping Human-Cow Relations

Anne walks Nellie to the corral with the other draft horses, releases her, and then ambles toward the side of the horse shed where sets of harnesses hung on pegs with hames, tugs,

[214] Bohme, Frederick, 243.
[215] Helzer, 4.

cruppers and heavy, contoured, pear-shaped horse collars, well-padded and lined with soft, smooth leather to keep their shoulders from chafing.[216] Apathetically, Anne tosses the saddle over a wooden fence railing. It slips and kicks up dust as it hits the ground while she walks toward the cow barn nearby. In the cow barn the supplies receive a different treatment. The dairy supply room looks something more like a laboratory.[217] The chlorination and lye fumes are strong enough to make her choke as she hurriedly pulls on the sterilized boots and sterilized milking uniform. Poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, frigid microclimate, and otherworldly echoes emitting from cement walls and flooring make this room perhaps the most dreaded of them all. Just a few years ago it was her job to clean the empty milking buckets and the empty ten-gallon milk containers in the sink of cold water and detergent solutions. After, her hands would be raw and eyes stinging. From the supply room she enters the cow corral with a milking bucket, cleaning cloth in a bucket of chlorinated water, and stool.

Figure 10: Azorean farmer milking. *(Courtesy of the Tulare County Museum)*

Anne approaches Linda, her favorite cow who greets her with a vivacious moo and presses her snotty nose against Anne's elbow. A maternal figure, Linda was often able to provide

[216] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories.
[217] Emery 53, 95, 112; Andrade-Lage 47; Stonehill 67, 70, 173

milk for more calves than her own, especially for the calves of older, less prolific cows. Cows are remarkably gregarious creatures with personalities as dynamic as that of humans. Their sociability extends beyond their species. Anne and Linda would have had an extremely unique understanding. Through an ineffable language, they could translate and interact yet with an appreciation and respect for difference and unknowing. With one of Anne's brothers or sisters Linda could be stubborn if not aggressive. But Linda trusted Anne, at least most of the time.

Having an established relationship with the cow was more of a reality outside of course, for when they were milked in the barns, secured by stanchions, the cows' protestations would be less effective. Stanchions did not have to nullify this connection in any way. In Anne's experience, cows did not mind sharing their milk most of the time. Milking by force or bullying was never necessary. Anne was charmed at how cows found a way to express themselves too. They were known to squish the children with their backsides.[218] Barns also had fresh hay for them and offered a warm place of respite in less optimal climates. These freezing mornings were always a bit difficult for the farmer though. The quivering hands and discomfort of the milker could be misinterpreted by the cow. Out in the corral though, a simple step forward is enough to throw off the milkers timing. Reading the cow and making sure the cow has a chance to read you was as important as any other part of the task.

As cows could live up to twenty years old, many of these cow and milker relations have been formed over a milker's entire life. Familiarity and comfort with a cow produce greater yield in that these types of bonds were good for disease prevention, such as mastitis,[219] as well as for intimating cooperative moods, reducing stress levels, limiting injury risk, and familiarizing

[218] Andrade-Lage, 42
[219] An inflammation of the udder caused by a variety of bacteria, commonly found in straw bedding or carried by flies.

lactation cycles for the cows.[220] Mastitis at the time was believed to be a result of residual milk in the udder and teat after milking.[221] Thus, even if a farmer used the milking mechanism they would apply "hand-stripping" technique after, thinking that they would avoid causing the infection.

With the new milking machines and increasing industrialization of the milking facilities, the prosthetics both increased the amount of milk drawn through suction and the amount of expenses derived from damages to the cows, equipment, and humans mishandling the machines. Several neighbors and family members who purchased the milking equipment abandoned them for hand milking shortly after attaining them because of low yields, udder troubles, and short lactation periods.[222] There was no use in complicating the procedure with the average number of cows and family members.

From a distance, greater integration of these machines paralleled the increase in cattle quantities on farms. As more cattle were acquired it eventually became cheaper to buy equipment and pay for their collateral costs than for extra manpower.[223] In light of this, the Bureau of Agriculture Economics wrote:

> "On the basis of available data, it has been determined that the 90-cow herd will require one machine milker, a combination general dairy hand and hand-milker or stripper, a relief machine milker for four days per month and full time attention of the operator for management and general work around the dairy in connection with feeding, milking and general dairy operation."[224]

[220] Oliver Grant, "The Diffusion of The Herringbone Parlour: A Case Study in the History of Agricultural Technology," *Discussion Papers in Economic and Social History*, Oxford University, Number 27, (Dec. 1998). 6-7.
[221] Ibid
[222] Lick, 59
[223]Ibid
[224] Ernest Feder, "The Milkers' Unions of the San Francisco and Los Angeles Milksheds: An Inquiry into Modern Industrialized Dairying and Collective Bargaining in Agriculture," *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Aug, 1950), 462, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1233045.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A42bbab25e9a8e38d775d2b6a7932f903

The use of milking machines cut down only twenty-five percent of the total time of labor devoted to milking.[225] All in all, the reduction in total labor hours was just eleven percent as keeping cows in cowsheds was the most labor-intensive activity, involving handwork for feeding and *dunging-out*.[226] Likewise, assurances of sanitation became crucial aspects of milk processing's modernization. Sterilized machines mediated human contact at all stages to comfort the consumer, prevented spreading of disease, and perhaps marginally improved the health of the cow's udder in less diligent settings.

For women who remained on the dairy this mechanization and compartmentalization transition, especially after WWII, meant the return of their exclusion from milking and the resurgence of male-dominated spaces as farmers, absorbed into larger dairy regimes, were often obliged to hire less trained workers with non-agricultural backgrounds for cheaper labor.[227] However, as of 1938 the introduction of mechanic milking only created a "reverse salient" or bottlenecks for farmers, thus the greater participation of women in traditional hand milking and dairy production was not only the viable option but advanced their position in the family and opened new opportunities for them outside the home.

Ponderous Insanitation: Germ Theory, Grading Dairies, Market Stabilizers, and Buttering-Up

Before milking Anne would take the cloth from the bucket, soak it in chlorinated water, and wash generous portions to the hind quarters, udders, and teats of the cow.[228] Sanitation and cleanliness had become watchwords for the dairy industry. By recommendation of the University

[225] Ibid
[226] Grant, 7.
[227] Ibid, 8.
[228] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories.

of California's highly influential agricultural department, strict protocols were formalized with milk handling and processing.[229] Starting in the late 1920s and into the 1930s, increasing numbers of zoonotic diseases fostered by unsanitary raw milk production were a prevalent concern and marketing obstacle. With advancements like the introduction of mechanical refrigeration and the 1934 discovery of the compression cycle—which improved surface coolers which were simply kept cold with ice or well water—, discovery of the alkaline phosphatase test, homogenization methods of processing milking, development of HTST pasteurizers, and the passing of the Grade A Pasteurized Milk Ordinance and its widespread adoption, pasteurization was preferred by the consumer.[230]

Progressing from the introduction of germ theory in 1890s, diseases caused by milk-borne pathogenic bacteria include human and bovine tuberculosis[231], brucellosis[232], salmonellosis, streptococcal infections, diphtheria, and "summer diarrhea." Pasteurization of milk was not only a goal of public health authority[233] but a significant factor in the

[229] Kuhrt, 189

[230] S.A. Rankin, R.L. Bradley, et al, "A 100-Year Review: A century of dairy processing advancements—Pasteurization, cleaning and sanitation, and sanitary equipment design," *Journal of Dairy Science*, Volume 100, Issue 12, (December 2017). 7. https://www.journalofdairyscience.org/article/S0022-0302(17)31057-3/fulltext#seccestitle40

[231] Due to dairy lobbyists in California, it was very late in testing for tuberculosis. Before the 1939 State Agricultural Code did not require the tuberculin test for cows producing milk intended for pasteurization or manufacture. The widespread presence of bovine tuberculosis in the state is further evidenced by the fact that 1,602,654 pounds of meat, representing 3,874 carcasses, were condemned for human consumption by official meat inspectors in the state because of tuberculosis alone-equaling the total quantity condemned for all of the other diseases put together. Department of Agriculture, 219

[232] Brucellosis, the infection of dairy cattle with the melitensis variety is a matter of importance not only because of man's greater susceptibility, but also on account of the greater severity of the human disease caused by this variety which results in a true septicemia. The disease occurs in endemic and epidemic form and is on the increase. In light of the fact that melitensis infection is widely distributed through sources in bovine, porcine, caprine and even equine and ovine species, the need for extended pasteurization becomes increasingly apparent since raw milk can be and probably is one of the chief sources of the disease in humans. Of the large cities of the United States, about 88% require Bang tested dairy herds for the production of raw milk. Portland, Oregon, has had this requirement for ten years… immediate steps should be taken to pasteurize 100 per cent of the milk supply. Ibid, 220

[233] Considered "one of the major breakthroughs in public health" at the time "Got Raw Milk?," *Boston Globe*, March 23, 2008, accessed May 26, 2021 http://archive.boston.com/bostonglobe/magazine/articles/2008/03/23/got_raw_milk/

commercialization of the dairy as a commodity, all of which was formalized in the 1927 Pure Milk Act. The quality of pasteurized milk was based off a grade and influenced the indexing of marketing classification in the 1935 Milk Marketing Program which evaluated not only the milk itself but the producer's facilities and handling. Milk Marketing Stabilization Acts offered ambiguous protections to producers from predatory and exploitative distributors with the Young Act which employed the Director of Agriculture to set selling prices based off manufacturing differentials per area.[234]

Inspection results of the producer's facilities by the state or private assessors determined the amount a producer could earn.[235] Grade A and Grade B farms were the primary

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[234] Kuhrt, 179-184.

[235] **The dairy farm inspections were made in accordance with U. S. Public Health Service dairy farm inspection form No. 8976-A, 1936.** ***(Italicized and in parentheses beside the sanitation requirements are percentages of "Grade A Milk Intended for Pasteurization" in the U.S. that the Public Health Service Milk Ordinance found violated.)***

COWS
1. Testing for tuberculosis, Bang's, etc.
DAIRY BARN
2. Lighting (milking building)
3. Air space, ventilation
4a. Floor construction (milking building)
4b. Floor cleanliness (milking building)
5. Walls and ceilings (construction, painting) *(25% violated)*
6a. Cow yard—(grading, draining)
6b. Cow yard—cleanliness *(50% violated)*
7. Manure disposal *(25% violated)*
MILK HOUSE
8a. Floor construction
8b. Walls and ceilings (construction, painting)
8c. Lighting, ventilation
8d. Screening *(25% violated)*
8e. Miscellaneous (use, orientation, waste disposal, hot water, chlorination, etc.)
9. Cleanliness and fly control in milk house *(50% violated)*
TOILETS AND WASTE DISPOSAL
10. Location, construction, maintenance, cleanliness *(50% violated)*
WATER SUPPLY
11. Sanitary quality, accessibility
UTENSILS
12. Type and materials *(25% violated)*
13. Cleansing—(facilities, practice)
14. Bactericidal treatment (equipment, use)
15. Storage *(75% violated)*

distinctions.[236] Dairies within the Grade A bracket were then priced by marketing Class I, Class II, and Class III categories.[237] Class I was for fluid milk, Class II for milk not used by Class I or III, and Class III was for manufacturing of butter and powders.[238] The distinction between each of the classes were often more arbitrary than that of the grades and fostered a favoritism to certain backchannel dealings and shadowy profiteering.[239] Classifications and grades marginalized further the already peripheral, and underrepresented Central Valley farms from the farms closer to city centers. Amendments to the Act could never remedy its demoralization.

Much historiography around dairying in the Great Depression concerns the Grade A dairies and how they operated within the ephemeral policies. Grade A farms were predominantly near large cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles and were of Dutch, Danish, or Swiss origin.

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16. Human handling prior to next usage
MILKING
17. Udders and teats—(cleansing, diseased excluded)
18. Flanks (brushing, cleansing)
19. Milkers' hands (cleansing) *(25% violated)*
20. Milker's clothing (clean outer garments)
21. Stools—type and storage *(25% violated)*
22. Removal of milk (immediate, no handling)
23. Cooling (during holding and transit)
BOTTLING AND CAPPING
24. Mechanical—(clean, use)
EMPLOYEES
25. Health examination, tests, etc.
MISCELLANEOUS
26. Vehicles—type, cleanliness, storage *(75% violated)*
United States. Public Health Service. *Report of a survey of the city health department of Los Angeles, California: April-August, 1939*. Sacramento: California State Printing Office (1940). 232-234

[236] Factors exemplified in the footnotes by the U.S. that the Public Health Service Milk Ordinance were comprehensive in the determination of whether a farm was fit for Grade A pasteurization or if it was Grade B for manufacturing butter, cheese, and ice creams. Most sanitation violations of these farms had to do with the storage of equipment, especially milk cans returned from the creameries. These cans were brought to the milk house and stored on the floor with the lids in place as facilities should be provided for storing these cans after washing on metal racks in the milk house. Milk houses were to have two rooms and facilities provided mechanical refrigeration. The method of milk pail emptying after they have been brought to the strain room was another weakness. The dump tank located in the barn itself was without a protecting wall between it and the cows. When exposed, the tank should be protected by an overhead fan, but many were not protected against flies. Ibid
[237] Kuhrt, 179-184.
[238] Ibid
[239] Ibid, 190-194.

Many of the disputes over marketing prices did not represent the Azorean farmers who were mostly Grade B producers. The Portuguese accounted for approximately forty-eight percent of all Grade A dairymen in the San Joaquin Valley and about sixty-five percent of all Grade B dairymen in the San Joaquin Valley were of Portuguese descent. The highest concentration of dairy farms in the valley was in the north, where three counties, Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Merced, account for about eighty-five percent of all Grade B dairies, and over fifty percent of all Grade A dairies.[240] Yet while the Grade A dairies were the ones most highlighted because of their profitability, a large portion of the story has been neglected. Once again, symbolized by government policy, economic priority shapes representation of the past.

Marketing grades had material impacts on the dairy farms. Sanitary regulations set minimum prices for milk used for fluid products and producers who received these prices were those who had contracts with distributors. Grade A milk producers without distributor contracts and all Grade B producers were excluded from the marketing order program. In raising the price of fluid milk products, the marketing orders shifted some Class 1 products to manufactured milk product uses which consequently lowered the price of milk used for manufactured products. Producers who did not have contracts to sell into the fluid market were doubly disadvantaged by these new laws.

Grade B farms, like that of the Korte's, who were creating dairy products primarily for butter manufacturing, also faced another threat in the rise of margarine. Since the petroleum-based butter substitute maintained its ascendancy, butter from Grade B farms suffered without much legal support, nullifying the competitive edge by the 1940s. Cooperatives with the help of associations and unions were formed to represent butter manufactures and producers. Focus was

[240] Graves, 37-39.

put on lobbying efforts which centered on retaining and extending margarine import taxes of foreign oils to reduce price differentials between it and butter while also equalizing taxation levels.[241] Restrictive margarine laws were expected in 1936, led by the American Institute of Domestic Fats and Oils, but by 1937 the battle, waged by the California Creamery Operators Association (CCOA) and other dairy groups, was thirty-five years old and without much success. With new advertising efforts by margarine manufacturers, stressing its nutritional benefits, came a reassessment of anti-margarine activities. Consensus confirmed that fighting with margarine was too harmful as the margarine manufacturers were portrayed as helping poor people and attacked by dairy producers who forced prices up in times of economic hardship.

Transportation and Coops

After milking, Anne would clean Linda again, then carry the milk to the milk house.[242] Next to the milk house was a metal tank fixed on a wooden platform. The wooden platform was adapted to have a long step along one side to make it easy for the milkers to climb up and empty their heavy buckets. A spigot at the bottom of the tank ran the milk into ten-gallon cans that were taken into the milk house, where the cream was separated. As the milk entered the separator, it poured through a series of spinning discs or pans housed in a cylinder. The cream, lighter in weight, rose to the top of the cylinder where it was expelled through a spout. Skim milk was ejected through a lower spout and cream went into a ten-gallon can, skim milk into another. While they continued this separation method, across the state more and more dairy distributors were asking dairy producers to leave the raw milk out for collection as the separators and

[241] Rand. F Herbert, "History of CCOA" *California Creamery Operators Association,* Accessed May 29, 2021, https://ccoadairy.org/history/

[242] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories, supplemented by segments from Emery, 95; Andrade-Lage, 43; Stonehill, 165, 248;

pasteurization methods were becoming more advanced. As Grade B producers though, separation remained on the task list.

Separated milk was then cooled while the skim milk was fed to the calves and hogs. For cooling, milk was poured into another apparatus which ran the milk over a zig-zag cooler and into a large-sterilized dish which had a gauze and cotton wool disc in the base through which the milk drained. This pad caught all the dirt, hayseeds and other debris and had to be changed morning and night. The milk in a ten-gallon can was taken to the milk stand filled with water and situated near a hedge or tree to protect it against the sun or to the cellar in some households, where it was to be picked up by the dairy cooperative's delivery man in the morning and evening at a scheduled time. Meeting these scheduled times was critical.

Transportation was soldered to perishability. Transportation, advanced first by the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads and then with access to paved highways like Highway 99 and roads built no less by the CCC, concomitant with innovations in refrigeration technology abetted new opportunities for dairying in the thirties. Perishability negated opportunities for farmers to explore marketing options and alternative customers as, in terms of price discovery, individual farmers did not have realistic markets outside of a day's truck drive. The relative lack of storability and transportability created an urgency and dynamic far different from grain growers.[243] As technologies improved both transportation and storage of milk, they often became too expensive for the small-scale farmer, furthering their inability to compete for Grade A pricings. Access to transportation however created mobility. Where corporations took advantage of mechanical advancements, cooperatives and self-help associations also benefited in reach.

[243] Novakovic, 2.

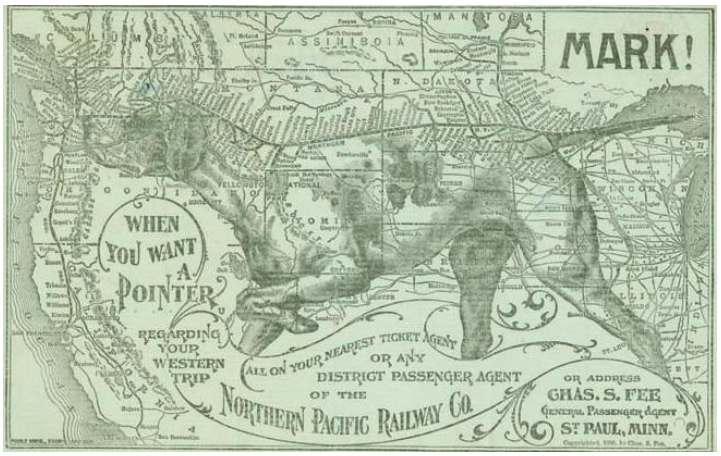

Figure 11. Northern Pacific Railway Map Advertisement, 1896. "Mark! When You Want a Pointer Regarding Your Western Trip." A railway map showing lines and stations combined with the graphic of a hunting dog in pointing stance looking westward*. Image courtesy of the Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma*

To defend themselves from the changing patterns of marketing and favoritism to milksheds situated closer to the city centers, Azorean dairy farmers joined and created cooperatives as milk marketing orders exacerbated rather than mitigated imbalances, acting as deterrents to processing investments.[244] Azorean immigrants have shown considerable favoritism to the cooperative pattern of marketing dairy products as almost sixty percent claimed to market their milk by cooperative, while only forty-five percent of the non-Portuguese indicated a preference for the cooperative pattern.[245] This extends as far back as the early 1900s when the Portuguese dairymen established the Associated Milk Producers which by 1920, had eighty percent of its membership being Portuguese.[246] The Valley had several cooperatives established and controlled by Portuguese dairymen including the Kings County Creamery Association, known locally as "Os Creamery Portugues"—"The Portuguese Creamery."[247]

[244] Stonehill, 262-272; Andrade-Lage 40
[245] Graves, 58.
[246] Ibid
[247] Ibid

The Azores had not created something novel here but conformed to a collective practice that supported humans throughout history. For over a century, dairy farmers chose to market their milk through cooperatives. By the 1930s, a distinctive feature of cooperative marketing was that producers enter an agreement where certain dues or other financial commitments are put in exchange for a guaranteed milk market and a promise to achieve the highest price-return possible. [248] Dairies producing butter and non-fat dry milk were generally recognized as the primary agents for market clearing functions, so coordinating daily, seasonal, and cyclical milk production with demand was better suited for dairy cooperatives to discern. [249] The onus of cooperatives to do what is called daily balancing, is one of the main reasons why cooperatives became processors of butter and milk powder.[250]

Committing to cooperatives, associations, and unions could have material consequences for the farmer. With the new sanitation laws, the arbitrary assessment and decision of tuberculosis contamination by a state inspector could lead to the condemnation of an entire herd of cattle. Naturally, the Grade B farms, the ones who could not afford to comply with the industry consumption standards, were routinely targeted, making what was already limited competition for the milkshed farmers even less potent.[251] Several dairy unions and collectives would fight to have their own veterinarians present while the testing was done but it was increasingly difficult to organize and prearrange with the oft impromptu inspections, if not day-prior notifications. Despite a few attempts to reverse these practices in court, county and state assessors seemed to have a way of finding coop and union members' cows to be infected at

[248] Novakovic, 3.
[249] Ibid
[250] Ibid
[251] Stonehill, 266

abnormal rates. Hundreds of farms across the valley saw their dairy cows rounded up and taken by authorities and sent to the grinder to be processed for meat in Stockton or buried.

As Carl Rhodehamel of the famous coop Unemployed Exchange Association (UXA) formed in Oakland, California once said, "We are not going back to barter. We are going forward into barter. We are feeling our way along, developing a new science."[252] In California, cooperatives extend as far back as the trade collectives of early indigenous tribes. The lineage traces to Californios who would barter outside the Missions and as mentioned above, to the first settler migrant communities near the mining colonies which proved far more successful than their counterparts. By the Great Depression period, coops promulgated across the state, influencing all sectors of society and spatial orientations. Where traditional economies had failed, reciprocal economies thrived. Every person, with their skillset or resource had a part to play in these networks. Cooperatives particularly in the Valley, first assumed by dairying processors and distributors, fragmented into other systems of mutuality, such as life insurance fraternities, work trade, and retail stores.[253] While powerful political and economic regimes sought to protect their minority interest, the struggling majority always found ways to collectivize and survive.

Natureculture

Anne sits beside Linda on a stool and inhales.[254] The sun peers through a cream of vaporizing fog like an ancient benevolent eye watching over the Korte family. Birds light up the scene with their impressive songs, while Josie sings to the murmurings of the chattering cattle.

[252] Curl.
[253] IDES mentioned in Andrade-Lage, 57; Stonehill, 101, 256
[254] The following paragraphs containing details about laundry comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage 41-45, Stonehill, 71; Emery, 26, 50

Their cats, dogs, and chickens join in on the feed. Frank informs Josie that her singing was scaring the cattle leading Josie to spray Frank with milk. Cattle musk, moist soil, and new grasses in concert would perhaps be difficult to sell but are welcoming in context.

Before milking Linda, Anne massages and pats Linda's udders to calm her down and start the lactation process while Linda continues munching on the fresh grass. After moments of waiting, Anne takes her thumb and first finger and cups it around the top portion of the teat right before the udder to contain the milk. Linda's warmth loosens Anne's fingers and just before she is about to milk, a metallic crash from the highway nearby startles her. Nearly knocking Anne over, she jumps up and tries to soothe Linda. Stroking Linda's back, Anne returns to her stool and presses her head into her belly. Anne closes her eyes and matches her breath with the pace of Linda's heartbeat decelerating. Linda closes her eyes, begins chewing again, as drool drips from the corner of her mouth. Inhaling and then exhaling with Anne's head pressed firmly to Linda, they feel joy.

Dwelling—The Azorean Dairy Household in Early 1940s

Laundering Gender Roles: Bluing not Bleaching

Noon on an autumn day, Anne returns from the corrals and observes the silhouette of her mother, Mary, behind a veil of laundry hanging from clotheslines.[255] Nearby their faithful panting dog is guarding Chrissy, the newborn sister, who is asleep in a hamper set on the mossy ground beneath the sway of an umbrella tree.[256] With dirtied hands and clothes, Anne hustles toward the sink, washes up, puts on a new shirt, and rushes to help her mother. Only half the laundry is done for the day and Mary is already talking about the half a dozen other chores including dinner preparations, bookkeeping, porch scrubbing, etc. Anne's brothers and sisters would be back from school soon to help, especially with Chrissy, but until then Anne is not going to let her mom do everything by herself.[257] As Anne lifts a pair of wetted jeans to hang, Antonio and Antonio Junior emerge, walking right past them and into the house to eat the soup and bread Mary had laid out for them and then head to the living room couches for a nap. How Anne would have loved a nap after working long morning hours in the field.[258]

Anne listens to the rippling of clothing and bedding. The wind is warm with a cool nautical edge. Carrying in the wind are preternatural whispers of a war to be fought in the Pacific. Rumors and reports from local Chinese farmers, journeymen, and store owners spoke of Japan's brutal campaign of the Second Sino-Japan War.[259] Even by then, the war had accrued

[255] Perhaps in a much more intentional and meaningful way this chapter is going to be dependent almost entirely on sourcing from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories while supplemented by segments from Emery, Andrade-Lage, Stonehill, Lick, and Korth's autobiographies. The reasons why I consider this meaningful lay in the fact that a majority of what is to follow will not be found in history books. This is the chapter in which I want to flesh-out, evince the embodiment of wage-less labor, domestic labor, private work, and work carried out in the reproductive arena. I will do my best to create a tapestry of these references and quotes, weaving in and out what emerged from which source, but in a way, there are many of which they could be evoked.
[256] Stonehill 161
[257] Lick, 60, 93, 66, 105; Stonehill, 116, 150, 164, 177, 192, 194, 211
[258] Emery, 85, 115; Stonehill, 86; Lick, 73
[259] Andrade-Lage, 124

casualties to an estimation of millions. Soon mothers, wives, and sisters would be at the wharf in San Francisco mournfully waving to their young men drafted for war on both fronts. This time, they would not be able to hide or escape to the United States from the Azores as they did for the Portuguese colonial wars decades ago. As of now, warmth carried in the wind also placates these anxieties. The future is a frigid edge blunted. Men nap instead.

For years, Mary alone washed clothes for six to seven people until her children were finally ready to help.[260] There was no compromising laundry for any other activity except maybe food; but even then, food prep was secondary. As Mary hangs the remainder of the damp clothes, Anne walks toward the washroom of the bunkhouse behind the main house and turns on the faucet where trough water pipes into galvanized tubs. Once filled, Anne would apply bar soap to the laundry before scrubbing them clean on a washboard. From there the dirty water is emptied into a sump to be piped out into the orchard as Anne brings out the newly washed clothes to be hung.

Luckily Mary had already completed the white laundry which demanded even more attention and exertion. Without bleach white sheets, pillowcases, dishtowels, and clothing items were dipped in a copper wash boiler brought to a boil in the kitchen and stirred with a three-foot length of broomstick. Small marble-like balls of bluing were tied in cloth and swished before clothes were wrung out by hand. Throughout bleaching, a fire in the oven remained burning even during summer when temperatures could reach a hundred degrees several days in row. The smoke competing with the caustic fumes from the blued water made for the tough decisions of whether to cover their mouth with a rag or not. Even in autumn, temperatures could be extreme, and the sun was no less imperial even with a little breeze. While sweat pours from Mary's brow

[260] The following paragraphs containing details about laundry comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Stonehill, 140, 149; Lick, 67, 100, 105, 107; Emery, 26, 50, 107

and pools on her back she takes extra precaution to not drip on clothing items she hung on the line. Anne brings her a glass of water with the last load of laundry—vital replenishment and hydration which Mary probably would have ignored without Anne's further insistence.

Cellar Space: Removing the Heart, Canning, Giblets, and Milky Fingers

After laundry is done, Anne and Mary enter the kitchen where empty plates of the Antonios' are left on the table and a pot of soup boils.[261] *Sopas* using *couves* or *nabos* as a base combined with cabbage, onions, and potatoes seasoned with *funcho* or fava beans with *linquiça* are the typical dishes this time of the year—a reality that Anne accepted and had distaste for but never would vocalize. These soups could be accompanied with any of the surviving plants from the garden such as the fava beans or corn. Fava beans with tomato sauce and sautéed onions emulsified with mustard greens are her favorite, but not so much for her father. Mary promises them that they would have the pork roast in *vinho d'alhos* soon. Fresh bread and butter are perennial to the menu. Savory scents are omnipresent in the room if not often accompanied by the cooling of bread which is baked about three times a week. If there is not enough flour, biscuits would be made with cornbread. As Mary scrubs and cleans the stovetop of grease, Anne places Chrissy on the table to coo in slumber before heading down to the cellar to grab more wood for the perpetually burning stove.

Cut in the ground between the kitchen and dining room are the dirt steps leading into the cellar in which lizards and bugs would seek refuge from the heat.[262] It is not until one walks into the cellar that one realizes the onerous management of food inventory. Considering spoilage and

[261] The following paragraph containing details about cooking comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 25, 53, 54, 94; Stonehill, 67, 70, 191, 203, 217, 253; Lick, 67, 100, 106; Emery, 49-61

[262] The following paragraph containing details about the cellar comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 54, 68-69; Stonehill, 68, 164, 171; Lick, 78; Emery, 57, 102

rot with the variables of that year's yield, projected income, expenditures, and the proportions of each product needed to last throughout the winter months is not just complex but critical.[263] It is supply and demand, but within the household, and with actual lives at stake. Any of the staples, such as hams, bacon, eggs, milk, butter, potatoes, and certain other vegetables from Mary's envied personal garden that are not immediately used are stored in the cellar with supplementary items bought in large quantities at the neighborhood shop where butter and eggs were traded for supply. Ample storage space is necessary but often hard to find with a hundred-pound sacks of flour and sugar in large tip-out bins and a fifty-pound barrel of coffee beans adjacent to a hand-turned coffee grinder and butter churn that are used and cleaned almost every day. Along with wine barrels and beer are hundred-pound sacks of red beans, dried prunes, potatoes, cheese, crocks of lard, and a screened meat safe where fresh meat dangles from the ceiling.

It is quite rare to have meat from cattle those days—perhaps an occasional gift from a meat producer or from a trade with the cooperative. Instead, three or four pigs are killed over winter, salted or made into bacon, *linguiça*, or *morçela*.[264] The yearly slaughter of the family hogs is called *Montança* and is a long-standing tradition in which families go house to house to help complete the deemed necessary chore. The children and family would gather around as a pig is stabbed in the throat by the man of the house. Everyone gathers while blood drains into a vat. Once drained, the blood-let carcass is dipped in and out of a cauldron of near-boiling water to cook. With a serious professional demeanor, the man after slitting each hind leg tendon would insert a hook between legs which are then strung up with block and tackle. With a heavy butcher knife, they flay inner bristles before washing and eviscerating. Removing the heart and liver,

[263] Lick, 111

[264] The following paragraph containing details about *Montança* comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 100-101; Stonehill, 67, 243; Lick, 100; Emery, 59, 97

intestines then fall into a washtub to be washed and rinsed at least seven times over with soap and lemon juice by women and girls.

Within the next two days, these intestines would then be used as casings for the *salsicha*, *linguiça*, and *chouriço* sausages. Hams, sausages, and bacon are stored in the smoke house near the barn to be cured for six weeks with stoking and feeding the fire added to Mary's daily routine. In this event the fat would also be separated from the meat, cubed, and placed in kettle suspended over a fire which would be stirred until rendered into crisp cubes to be cooled and solidified as lard. Some of this lard would be mixed with lye to be made into soap while portions of the rest would preserve meat placed in ten-gallon earthen jars or fed to the farm animals if desperation called.

In summer the canning is done.[265] As if farm women had not already been preserving foods for centuries, New Deal programs like the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) took to educating canning as a new chore women could do in these times that would contribute to the welfare of the house while the man worked. Mary and Anne would often laugh at the manuals brought home by one of the men on the best practices for canning. Canning was a somewhat new practice for the US but was arguably developed by shoreside Portuguese in California during the World War I in fisheries and a well-established production in the household far before the federal government decided they should elucidate women on their time and priorities.

More pressing for Mary, is that these preserved vegetables and fruit take up more cellar space than is probably needed. But on the farm waste is incomprehensible, so what vegetables or fruit are left are canned compulsively. Everyone in the family except Antonio would take part in

[265] The following paragraph containing details about canning comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 70; Stonehill, 68; Emery, 103

the summer canning. They take tomatoes as well as the peaches, plums, apricots, and pears from the orchard, then wash, pit, and peel them. Next, in an assembly line they place the fruits in a boiling pot of water and sugar before filling a series of cans with hot, cooked fruit, fitting a lid with a projecting rim over a rim on the can, and pouring heated rosin around the edges to seal in the contents. This is all done in the hundred-degree heat making the experience one of the most dreaded but essential come wintertime.

Day in and day out the kitchen is the central hub, and it had an almost panoptic view (to some degree) of everywhere in and out of the house.[266] As in most old-time houses, much of the kitchen work goes on in an attached pantry which contains the sink and its rippled wooden drainboard; storage cabinets for food, pots, and pans; work counters above large bins for flour and sugar; and shelves for everyday dishes. The stove, with an attached tank for heating hot water, is at least eight feet away from the pantry on the far side of the large kitchen and kitchen table set across from the stove. The stove is always sure to be pristine and sanitized. She buys stove polish to give a sheen and winking patina to everything but the shiny nickel scrollwork trim that supported the warming oven over the stove top. One of Anne's jobs when younger was to clean it and, because of all the frying that was done, it collected a lot of grease which had to be laboriously picked out of the crevices.

Mary does most of the cooking. Even when fatigued, unwell, or having delegated some cooking chores to her children, she always manages the kitchen. Everyone would congregate in the kitchen and not just those of who lived at home but any friends or extended family. The backdoor is always open, and it is indeed a courtesy to just walk in through it if you are

[266] The following paragraph containing details about the kitchen composition and atmosphere comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 29; Stonehill, 67; and Emery, 20-26, 103-108

expected. Mary would knead bread (sometimes for big occasions she would prepare vast quantities of dough in the same tub that was used for washing clothes or giving baths to the children), or chop up meat, potatoes, and onions, placing them in a wooden bowl for hash. The girls would set the table or busy themselves with stringing beans or peeling potatoes with the smell of roasting pork emitting from the wood stove or apple pie fresh from the oven and cooling on the long wooden table. Some would sit on the bench under the window and one or two of the kids would perch on the covered wood box to the left of the stove, jumping up when Mary needs firewood.

Raising chickens is also Mary's responsibility.[267] Her and the girls help by feeding and watering them, gathering the eggs, and cleaning the hen house. Now and then the chickens have lice and Mary would dab a little mercuric ointment on the bald spot under each wing. Chickens are an occasional treat that Mary would serve for dinner either fried or roasted with bread and giblet stuffing. It bothered the children a little to see Mary kill one. She would tie its feet together and then suspend it from a fence post. Grasping its head in her left hand, she takes a sharp, heavy knife in her right hand and slits the throat. The hen is plucked in a pot of hot water, tempered with a bit of cold to avoid overcooking, which makes the feathers, even the pin feathers, simpler to remove. Often, the choice feathers could be used for making pillows or other household items and crafts. The chicken would be cut open near the vent with entrails pulled out. The liver, gizzard, and heart saved.

[267] The following paragraph containing details about chickens comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Stonehill, 67; Lick, 67; Emery, 101; and Korth, 258

It is also their role to take care of the mischievous young calves who loved to bounce around and nuzzle their legs.[268] To feed them the women place their fingers in a pale of skimmed or raw milk and then present them to the calves as if modeling a teat. Eventually the calves would forgo the finger method and head straight to the pales or the milk poured into troughs. They would have to be fully weaned and feeding solely on grains or hay before they could be reintroduced back into the herd. This separation is hard on them at first. The yearning to return to their mothers has visible effects on their mood. But they are resilient creatures and adapted to their kin and the humans rather quickly. These types of bonds would continue throughout both the humans' and calves' lives.

Stillborns: Risky Farm Hands, Home Remedies, and Rosaries

As Anne returns to the kitchen and places the firewood in the stove, Mary serves her a bowl of soup with buttered bread on the side. Starving, Anne eats the meal with an abandon that makes her mother laugh. Surely this lack of etiquette would have drawn the ire of Antonio, but he is snoring on the couch. It seems to have entertained the freshly awoken Chrissy who is trying out a bunch of new expressions. Her wide eyes scan the room in surprise as her tiny hands grab at her tiny feet. She pumps her arms up and down while smiling. Mary tries to quiet her so as not to wake the men, but Chrissy cannot abate her excitement. Anne volunteers to take Chrissy out on the porch while she finishes her meal.

[268] The following paragraph containing details about calves comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 44; Stonehill, 70; Lick, 67; Emery, 111, 137; and Korth, 260

Greeted by the dogs on the porch Anne eats as she and Chrissy look out at the property. This is exactly where she sat listening to her mother giving birth.[269] Midwives delivered babies at home and with prenatal care and pediatric medicine unheard of, the death of children was common and quite likely during the Great Depression days. Hearing her mother in distress caused by childbirth would have been a harrowing experience for the children. Having to lose a new sibling would have been traumatic (though all too normal) for the mom but losing their mother would be unfathomable. Not having a father on the farm was starting to become a reality. No longer having the care, support, and work of their mother is a possibility existing outside the limits of imagination. Between the number of children their mother had at her age, it was an incredible risk, and one Anne had trouble understanding—especially if Antonio just needed another hand on the farm.

A year prior, their brother Joe's wife, Emily, came down with typhoid fever during her pregnancy causing their daughter's premature birth. Desperate, Joe came to Mary for help. Mary offered to care for the baby and would do her best to save it. Mary wrapped her up, placed her in a shoe box, and kept warmed bricks around the box as a kind of improvised incubator. The baby was bottle-fed because she was too weak to suckle for extended periods of time. With the help of Anne, Mary's patience and perseverance managed to pull the baby through, finally returning home to her mother when she was plump and thriving. After her return though, some wounds were never healed between the two, eventually leading to a divorce soon after.[270]

Whenever they visit Mary's sister, Pauly, in Los Banos, a grave underneath the umbrella tree on their ranch serves as a reminder of the harsh realities of childbirth at that time. As it was

[269] The following paragraph containing details about the death of mother at childbirth, childhood death, miscarriages, and stillborn deaths comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Stonehill, 81, 209, 212, 220; Lick, 60, 61, 98, 100; and Emery, 140-150

[270] Lick, 61

during ultimate dregs of the mid-thirties, they felt and were under pressure to feel that no amount of labor or time could be spared, even for a pregnant woman. So four months into her pregnancy, Pauly had spent hours scrubbing the porch of the house, preparing food for the family, lifting heavy items, pumping the well for water, and toiling in the garden on a hot spring day. The hard physical labor, she believed, led her to miscarry. Unable to be in the Catholic cemetery, Pauly placed them in a small box and buried them in the backyard.

Death was all too common. Mary's sister who lived nearby had lost a little boy from diarrhea and a nephew of Antonio's had been killed by a horse. Measles, mumps, chicken pox and whooping cough were a periodic threat with epidemics like that of diphtheria always on the horizon. The sound of a wake and women dressed in black was not an unfamiliar sight. With doctors in short supply and transportation to hospitals in the city centers too demanding, illness had a much higher mortality rate.

For minor complications, Mary usually resulted to folk remedies.[271] When someone came down with severe chest colds Mary would apply a mustard-plaster poultice—a stinging and burning paste of dry mustard and water and spread between two squares of muslin—to the chest. For coughs there was a mixture of honey and lemon juice and for upset stomachs fried onions, water, and vinegar soups. Sometimes they resorted to superstitions from the old country such as cutting off a lock of hair, wrapping a string around it, and tying it to the branch of a young tree if their hair was too thin or for a persistent nosebleed putting a knife under the mattress where they slept.

[271] The following paragraph containing details about a mom's medical care comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Stonehill, 192, 195, 217 and Emery, 140-150

In 1936, Anne's Aunt Rosie showed up at the ranch nearly ready to have her child. After a long day of labor, two twin girls were born. The birth of her twins was a miracle and source of great delight for all until Rosie, hours now after, remained in poor condition. Transporting her to a hospital in Fresno, the twins were left with the family, and much of the childcare duties were left to the older children. Having to adjust quickly, they would bathe the babies in the kitchen sink, prick their fingers trying to pin a diaper, and sing them to sleep. Three months later Rosie returned from the hospital in a luxurious coffin with her brown hair marcelled, wearing a pale beige shift with beaded neckline, and with pennies covering her eyes. It was the most luxurious thing she probably experienced. For three days she remained in the living room for the rosary service until the funeral could be arranged.

An Endless Rucksack Weave: Wool, *Festas,* and *Maricas*

Anne recalls Mary carding wool from their sheep to be used in making comforters.[272] With two cards—flat, rectangular, six-inch by three-inch wire-bristled brushes with short handles—Mary loaded up a handful of prewashed wool on the table then rubbed the two together to flatten and smooth the fibers. For the quilt making, a wooden loom was set up at one end of the dining-room. There a large rectangle of cloth was attached with a layer of wool or cotton spread on top and a second cloth rectangle placed above it, basted in place. Mary and Anne would begin at one end to quilt an arc or shell-like pattern of stitching.

Anne and Mary sew most of their clothing on the old boxed-in pedal sewing machine. Many of their clothes are fashioned from rucksacks. Just as with any other material on the farm,

[272] The following paragraph containing details about sewing comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Andrade-Lage, 26-27, 60, 91, 116, 133; Stonehill, 68; Lick, 59, 106; and Emery, 24, 70, 113

cloth is an expense and can be contrived from rags, towels, discarded bags, or wool. A more recreational activity is to embroider, which is a thrifty and efficacious asset when designing fashionable dresses for summer *festas*.

Once, Antonio and Anne were playing around the sewing machine while Mary was working on refurbishing a sofa when Antonio asked if he could sew. Mary cut out a teddy bear's coat with set-in sleeves, then showed him how to put it together. It was then Antonio Senior walked in, called his son a *marica*,[273] beat him, and proceeded to slap Mary for permitting Antonio to sew. While Anne would eventually take on greater responsibilities on the farm in the latter half of the thirties, the boys were punished for taking on these household chores, let alone enjoying them. Seeing their mom, especially when she was carrying, would often compel the boys to help, but it was always out of range from their father.[274]

***Saudade*: Bookkeeping Trivialities of the Peripheral**

As Anne cleans her dishes, she observes Mary looking over the month-prior's bills. Though Antonio would claim that it was Mary's ability to read and write English that would give her the primary responsibility to make out orders, check bills for accuracy, write receipts, and keep necessary records, all her numerous experiences and skills gained from a lifetime of calculation and proficiency had also made her exceptionally adept at bookkeeping and managing the family's finances—even without any formal education. Her capabilities of course would never eclipse Antonio's authority over the budget. Despite discretionary measures to use extra

[273] Lick, 107
[274] Ibid

profits as necessary means to ends that benefitted the family, every check she writes would be signed by him.[275]

Sometimes, watching her brother and father sleeping on the couch, the disparity within their home fills her with rage.[276] All these little signifiers are articulated in overt or subtle ways to reiterate, insist, and remind her that her place is seen as second to theirs. In a simplistic, but easily enforceable way, the zone of their domain, a secondary domain, has been configured: any work around the house was women's work—that is of course if it could be interpreted as qualifiable for boosting man's ego like managing the girls' relationships or repairing mechanical items. Although Antonio and Joe take turns with filling the wood box, women alone wash and dry evening dishes, set the table, feed chickens, gather eggs, turn butter, grind coffee, bring in wood for the range and heater, empty ashes from the stove, scald out the chamber pots, sweep the kitchen, hang and take in clothes, make school lunches, polish the stove, clean the coal oil lamps, sew, and mend among all the outdoor chores they were obliged to do.

It is not just about domestic spaces either. While the men are in fields, women gain unique knowledge about the world walking the town block by block, learning to cope with the public transportation systems when traveling to cities, and getting, not to one place routinely as in the case of men, but several places as creative solutions to needs-driven problems.[277] She would be in the markets, schools, hospitals, furniture shops, clothing shops, appliances shops, various local and federal governmental offices, repair services, doctors, feed stores, creameries, clinics, post offices, neighbors, fraternities, or churches. All this data gleaned from experience is

[275] The following paragraph containing details about budgets and bookkeeping comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Stonehill, 66; Lick, 60, 66, 111; Emery, 73; and Korth, 278
[276] The following paragraph containing details about disparity and domain comprise of the oral histories and elements found in Stonehill, 67, 245, 265, 245-248; Lick, 65, 105, 111; Emery, 84-99
[277] Lick, 65; Smith, 79-80

not trivial. These details, their interpretations, and then the application of them, however conservative their application, are the silent drivers of their families and communities. They do not produce but provide.

All these responsibilities, intricate understandings, and crucial decisions fell and continue to fall on women—a demand sometimes foisted but also chosen, yet almost always unshared. Performing these eternal lists of chores, it is routinely intimated and recursively reminded that she is no longer operating in stability but in marginality—old and new, past and future.[278] She exists in two worlds. In Portuguese tradition they called it *saudade*: the melancholy of wanting an interpretation of the past now and what was in the past to gain from the hindsight of now.[279] The liminality of *saudade* is where the migrant Azorean women labors.

The inculcation of home as the woman's realm, paradoxical reality of home being the material domain of women, and men's desire for the abstract of *home* to be non-demanding and familiar, articulates a requirement from women to alter an environment which sedated man's anxiety, fear of powerlessness, and over-exertion.[280] She adapts except when she cannot; she puts family first but is ready to make *sacrifices*; she endures and carries the families suffering but yields to the man of the household; she forges new connections but keeps old ties; she obtains information but cannot gossip; and she remains central to everything, but always peripheral.

Sundowning: A Last Story

Later that evening, Antonio emerges from the cellar with a familiar wino-stupor and an even more familiar wish to exact the perceived failures of his life onto the lives he brought into

[278] Ibid
[279] Viator, 6
[280] Lick, 110

the world.[281] Preparing for the worst after his initial subterranean descent, Mary shuttles her children to the cow barn and hides them within the piles of hay, insisting they stay no matter what they hear. And so, they hear her footsteps against the hardwood floor as she exits the barn and onto the gravel before entering the house. They hear the mooing, grunts, and bellows of the cattle below; songbirds outside in the umbrella trees and orchards; lizards scuddling about on walls; pigeons in the barn nests that Anne "accidentally" forgot to remove; rustling of hay from a draft of warm autumn air; dogs, hogs, and chickens outside moving and vocalizing; cars on a distant freeway; the South Pacific horn even further; then the yelling of their father; a fleshy thud followed by a shattering of glass; their car out front starting and peeling off down the road; the back screen-door screeching open; and their mother sighing before calling them in for dinner. They emerge twilit.

[281] Information in the following paragraphs is from a combination of Josephine Talamantes and Cecilia Korte's oral histories

Conclusion

Although my findings exceeded my expectations, they were also unsurprising in ways. It is a rather well-researched and established fact that women in agrarian and migrant communities shared a large percentage of labor responsibilities. Instead, my aim of the project was thus fulfilled in that it evinced specific data from the source material and contextualized it in previously (over)explored historiographic subjects of the Great Depression. Placing these findings in a wider context was necessary to create an understanding of California's past and to sync this qualitative data.

Yet, while each of the sources supplied a great deal of information and perspective, with access to more oral histories and personal accounts found in the magazines published during and after the Great Depression, there is certainly much more that can be done. In a way, each one of the chapters could be their own thesis and the research could expand to a less binary way of articulating gender. It is my primary motive to spur more interest in a gendered Azorean history in California. With that notion, I would like to reiterate that this was a project conducted by my positionality. I often sit here questioning how much I missed and what would have been concentrated on if it someone else investigating the topic. Elements of race, body care, clothes, dating, interests, play, language, school, and many more were hardly touched on but have so much to offer.

Overall, as California historiography celebrates the bravery and achievements of California's Anglo-American settlement and extractive enterprises, my research confirms the neglect of the marginalized immigrant communities and women who were integral to California's past. To reframe the narrative, I did my best to contribute to the recovery of informal

networks such as the kinship networks in migrant families, auxiliary networks in striking, milker and cow relations, coops, family kinships, communes, *mutualistas*, midwives, unions, fraternities, and *cuñhas* which also expose the netted realities of how gendered division of labor were never as homogenous or articulated as popularly and historically represented. Labor existing within networks, systems, and kinships have been unrecognized, discriminated against, and devalued but were arguably more important in understanding how history becomes with society.

Unsuspectingly, my findings pinpointed a problematic pioneer, male-gaze perspective on California's development which I had not considered prior to my research. These narratives illuminated the part of the pioneer story where the women (mother's, daughters, wives, etc.) arranged the trip, saved up the finances and paid the often-illegal traffickers, and organized gigs for their boys and men upon their arrival in America. They operated off what is called the *cuñha*, which is to "make a connection" or more directly translated, "to open a door." These created and shaped the settlement patterns of California pioneers as they had elsewhere across the world, problematizing the narrative franchise of the pioneer man.

Also, these accounts of women's labor experience in dairy turned the idea on its head that the dairy farm was man's legacy. There was an understandable pride in the dairy farms and what they did for the family's success but ownership of this was almost always attributed to the man of the household. The women were portrayed as dutiful housewives who supported men's resolve, but this is closer to fiction. Instead, self-sustaining, and cooperative farms created and run by women would formulate early, diverse settlement communities before ambitions were sequestered and converted by large-scale ranch enterprises, which multiplied profit-oriented dairies owned and run by men. I suggest then that instead of a family honoring the legacy of a

father, the continuation of the Azorean dairy farm could be seen as an industry using narrative as a means for survival.

It seemed true that the greater participation of women in traditional hand milking and dairy production was not only the viable option but also advanced their position in the family and opened new opportunities for them outside the home. Likewise, all the seemingly trivial chores and tasks delegated to them by traditional division of labor and private/public orientations gave them skillsets which opened more doors to prospects outside the dairy farm as these skills became assets to other industries and lifestyles growing in demand during WWII, let alone their sovereignty. Finally, educational foundations were instrumental in assimilation and subsequently the autonomy gained by children, and especially women.

What I had also not expected was the radical shift in my opinion of New Deal programs and the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. My outlook on this progressive era of US political history now has been problematized to its core, but much more importantly so. Throughout my research, I found that the centralization and modernization efforts enhanced in this period furthered the dissolution of struggling dairy farmers and peripheralizing migrant groups and women. Contradictorily, the technological advancements did great things to improve women's lives and provide them with a modicum of more freedom with access to electricity and transportation. Still, overall, state-sponsored initiatives were often as harmful and greedy as the most insidious capitalist enterprises, if they were not in outright collusion.

While the New Deal's NIRA, PWA, and NRA programs did little to improve working conditions for rural workers, the narrative of women's experience, especially an intersectional analysis with race, was also found dramatically unrepresented. In representations of the Depression, women are the strong, selfless mother—a Madonna archetype—and while these

representations in some ways reflect many women's experience, it was a unidimensional view. What could never be quantified is the wage-less labor of women in times of transition and while tending to household duties at the camps.

I found the New Deal soil conservation programs became a proxy for federal control over crop and livestock surplus. Many farmers saw this as the informal capitulation of their once community-focused irrigation programs, which further devalued the importance of women's need for water and need of water use in households for survival. Women's use for water (specifically what was considered domestic) was greatly peripheralized, even within family units interpolation in these ideologies as *sacrifices*. Again, the government would interfere on these vital sources of their livelihood by regulating usage, configuring demand, and inflating prices. Intervention, as proven by the failings of AAA and other New Deal programs, would only benefit and prioritize large-scale industrial farming and metropolitan areas such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento. Also, in a short period of time natural water systems radically changed by the conversion of wetlands into industrialized and mismanaged agricultural enterprises.

Even down to dairying, the legacy of centralization and modernization led to the dairy farmer's precarity and eventual dissolution. Classifications and grading of dairy marginalized further the already peripheral, and underrepresented Central Valley farms from the farms closer to city centers. But as with other networks and kinships fostered in the chaotic California history, to defend themselves from the changing patterns of marketing and favoritism to milksheds situated closer to the city centers, Azorean dairy farmers joined and created cooperatives as milk marketing orders exacerbated rather mitigated imbalances, acting as deterrents to processing investments. By the Great Depression period, coops promulgated across the state, influencing all

sectors of society and spatial orientations. Where traditional economies had failed, reciprocal economies thrived.

Through the interpretation of these autobiographers and oral histories who recalled their experience of the historical subject, I was pleased to find that the concept of labor—its value systems, what it really defines, and who gets to determine what it is—was something emotional, affective. The findings confirmed what Haraway wrote, "To notice how material-semiotic labor is done does not vitiate it ethically or politically but locates it culturally and historically, within which nonproductive judgement is possible." Antagonizing the modernist discourse/epistemologies (maybe even cosmologies) of progress, naturalism, and technological advancement and their material affectations/consequences, the history of Azorean women in Central California during the Great Depression confirms my belief in the critical salve of narrative.

All the narratives, systems theories, and kinship epistemologies to me can be understood best and rearticulated in the quiet, embodied ontology of human-animal relations expressed in the Azorean women and cattle. In all accounts, these Azorean women *saw* and *heard* the heifers, their shared distress, trauma, endurance, love, and memory. Cows like humans are remarkably gregarious creatures with personalities as dynamic as that of humans and a sociability extending beyond their species. If there is one set continuity it is one that exists in historical dependency of cattle and man, an intertwined narrative and environmental knowledge that cannot be elaborated fully in language. It is an extremely unique understanding for it is ineffable, process-oriented, often mistranslated, and a flesh-based interaction that requires an appreciation and respect for

difference and unknowing. Both can tell the story of resilience, adaptation, kinship, and becoming with each other, just a little differently. We do it through history.

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