

## **Questions of economics and hygiene: Recovering and using excrement in Italian cities and countryside in the late 19th century**

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Before chemical fertilizers, the fertility of the land depended on the use of the organic excrement of people and animals. During the 19th century, the issue of the recovery and use of droppings generated intense debate in countries for economic and hygienic reasons. Our paper analyzes the phenomenon in Italy by following two lines of research. Agronomic literature accorded great importance to the modernization of stables and peasant houses to collect urine and droppings. It was necessary to build modern manures. At the same time, companies were established in the cities to contract out the cleaning of public baths and mattresses. In this way organic material was obtained for sale. The Italian case demonstrates the intertwining of economic and hygienic reasons in the management of manure. Through a case study, we will illustrate the collection, sale, distribution, cost and market systems of organic fertilisers.

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