

CHAPTER THREE – FUTURISM IN THE SERVICE OF THE REGIME

I. PROPAGANDA

Despite habitual claims to the contrary, Futurism's politicised art and literature of the 1940s is not all of one character or complexion, and cannot (or rather, should not) be grouped together under the catch-all heading of 'propaganda'. It is possible – indeed, extremely easy – to distinguish between work that was purely ideological and didactic in nature, exhibiting little or nothing in the way of genuine artistic aspirations, and other verbal or visual imagery that served a political purpose whilst also possessing a pronounced aesthetic dimension deserving of objective appraisal in its own right. Representing by far the greatest proportion of political imagery produced at this time, the latter belongs in a discussion of the altogether more nuanced and ambiguous category of 'war art' – work that is dealt with at length in Chapter Four.

Examples of outright propaganda produced by artists and writers affiliated with the movement during these years include Gaetano Pattarozzi's 1941 study *England: Sewer of Passéism* (**Fig. 27**).¹ This volume makes for a deeply uncomfortable read alternating, as it does, the most grotesque anti-Semitic outbursts with incisive – and arguably more justified – attacks against Britain's shameful colonial record and cynical tendency to manipulate world politics to its own advantage. However, Pattarozzi was a committed and unrepentant Nazi-Fascist who went on to become involved with the Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) in the post-war era.² Consequently, his own extremist ideological convictions and declared admiration for *Germany's Colonising*

¹ *Inghilterra fogna di passatismo* (Rome: Unione Editoriale d'Italia).

² See Speranza Delogu's entry on this controversial figure in Godoli, *Il dizionario del futurismo*, cit., vol. 2, pp. 846-47.

Civilisation (the title of a volume by the same author of the following year)³ fatally undermined his arguments and rendered his criticisms of Britain's historical abuses of political power monumentally hypocritical.

Other similarly one-dimensional works include the 1942 anthology *Ad Amedeo Savoia Aosta*, produced by the Roman 'Gondar' Futurist group.⁴ Verbose, heavy-handed and trite, the verses contained within its pages were clearly drafted by figures who conceived of poetry as little more than a conduit for the expression of the most banal jingoistic slogans and sentiments. If the reader were in any doubt as to the true interests of this group, its leader's description of the origins of his association in this volume makes its primarily ideological motivations abundantly clear.⁵

Depero's collection of essays *In Roman Step* is another case in point.⁶ The character of this little-known text is fundamentally at odds with the popular image of this seemingly most genial (and certainly most marketable) of Futurist artists. From the mid-1930s onward Depero's love of all things mechanical, which had previously found an outlet in the artist's creation of his signature toy-town imagery, began to take on an altogether more ominous and threatening aspect in the context of his exploration of Fascist iconography.⁷ However, his increasingly sombre interpretation of the Futurist machine aesthetic was taken to new extremes in *A passo romano*:

³ *Civiltà colonizzatrice Tedesca* (Rome and Naples: CLET, 1942).

⁴ *Ad Amedeo Savoia Aosta. Omaggio di aeropoesie guerriere offerto dagli aeropoeti futuristi* (Rome: Edizioni Futuriste di 'Poesia', 1942).

⁵ Silvio Labella, 'Come e perchè è nato il Gruppo futurista romano "Gondar"', *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶ *A passo romano. Lirismo fascista e guerriero programmatico e costruttivo* (Trento: 'Credere, Obbedire, Combattere', 1943).

⁷ See Giovanni Lista, 'Futuro-Fascismo', in Manuel Fontán del Junco, ed., *Futurist Depero 1913-1950*, exh. cat. (Madrid: Fundación Juan March, 2014), pp. 339-45.

We officials, soldiers and bourgeois must imitate and obey the machine in its tirelessness, its methodical character and its resistance. Emotionally cold – insensible to the most burning sensations – inexorable in our decisions like advancing steamrollers. The time has come for us to emulate steel.⁸

Depero's lurid prose encouraged Axis soldiers to march 'as if with every step the left foot were crushing the skull of an Englishman and the right foot the skull of a Bolshevist'.⁹ Startlingly crude and bloodthirsty, *A passo romano* exhibits a level of fanaticism that would almost be comical were it not so sinister (**Fig. 28**). Indeed, its ferocity reaches such a pitch and intensity on occasion that one can only interpret the volume as a cynical attempt on Depero's part to curry favour with the regime, rather than the reflection of any genuine convictions on the part of its author. If so, it was to be extremely ill-timed given that within five months of its publication Fascism was to collapse, leaving Depero in the unfortunate position of having to attempt to destroy all trace of his inflammatory text.¹⁰ Moreover, its vulgarity appears to have been considered in extremely poor taste by the authorities: Celso Luciano, an official attached to the Ministry of Popular Culture, felt it was "'out of the question'" to allow "'such a mediocre piece of writing'" bear a dedication to Mussolini, as its author had intended.¹¹ *A passo romano* represents an inglorious blot on Depero's career, yet by this point the artist had begun the process of detaching himself from Futurism, calling for 'poetry and lyrics that are easily comprehensible',¹² lamenting the encroachment of industrialisation on artistic production, and

⁸ 'Asse d'acciaio', in *A passo romano*, cit., pp. 15-23 (p. 20).

⁹ 'Passo romano come se l'acciottolato fosse composto di crani nemici', *ibid.*, pp. 7-10 (p. 7).

¹⁰ See Cecilia Mariani and Micaela Deiana, 'So I think, So I print. L'opera litografica di Fortunato Depero negli anni Quaranta', in Cecilia Mariani and Micaela Deiana, *Fortunato Depero. So I think, So I print – Litografie degli anni Quaranta*, exh. cat. (Sassari: Agave, 2014), pp. 11-13 (p. 11, n. 3).

¹¹ See Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics*, cit., pp. 299-300 (p. 300).

¹² 'Andare verso il popolo', in *A passo romano*, cit., pp. 69-72 (p. 71).

calling for a 'return to the craft'.¹³

Another artist who remained nominally associated with the movement at this time and whose work certainly falls into the category of explicit propaganda was Bruno Munari. In his capacity as art director for the current affairs magazine *Tempo*,¹⁴ Munari's dramatic photo-collages and arresting graphic layouts chronicled the progress of the war entirely in line with the official version of events. Although his involvement in such work does not necessarily reflect any significant ideological commitment to Fascism on a personal level,¹⁵ it remains one of the supreme ironies of the historiography of twentieth-century Italian art that Munari's popular image seems to have been entirely unaffected by his collusion with the regime, a fact undoubtedly owed to the undeniable charm of his contemporaneous – and incredibly influential – books for children,¹⁶ as well as his playful yet highly sophisticated post-war work in the fields of graphic and industrial design. It is Munari's posable rubber toys, *Useless Machines* and 'unreadable books' that embody the authentic, whimsical spirit of this artist, we are told, rather than his exquisite double-page spreads detailing the losses inflicted on Allied shipping, or depictions of Italian aircraft raining bombs on Manhattan (**Fig. 29**). The latter have been characterised as marked by a spirit of 'detachment and disengagement'¹⁷ when compared to Munari's authentic art-for-art's-sake experimentation: a singularly unconvincing argument in

¹³ 'Autarchia artistica ed artigiana. Rinnovamento del mobilio e vasto sviluppo dell'intarsio', *ibid.*, pp. 73-76 (p. 75).

¹⁴ Munari worked for *Tempo* from the late 1930s. Earlier that decade he had also worked for the Fascist aviation magazine *L'Ala d'Italia*. For an overview of his contribution to both journals, see Jeffrey Schnapp, 'Bruno Munari's Bombs', in Jordana Mendelson, ed., *Magazines, Modernity and War* (Madrid: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, 2008), pp. 141-59.

¹⁵ See Pierpaolo Antonello, 'My Futurist Past, Present and Future', in Miroslava Hájek and Luca Zaffarano, eds, *Bruno Munari: My Futurist Past*, exh. cat (Milan: Silvana, 2012), pp. 95-103 (p. 96).

¹⁶ Around a dozen such books were designed by Munari during the mid-1940s, many of which remain in print today, including his justly celebrated *Le macchine di Munari* (Turin: Einaudi, 1942).

¹⁷ Schnapp, 'Bruno Munari's Bombs', *cit.*, p. 154.

relation to the striking imagery of this consummate professional, yet one that perhaps meets a psychological need for those who find such work an impediment to their appreciation of his oeuvre as a whole, or who have a vested interest in fostering the artist's avuncular image, and consider work of this type a potential threat to his reputation. In this regard, it may be significant to note that the menu which appears on www.munart.com – the self-styled 'most complete website dedicated to Bruno Munari' – lists no section dedicated to the artist's work for Fascist publications.¹⁸

Like many of the regime's visually striking expositions over the course of the *ventennio*, Munari's editorial projects illustrate the point that official Fascist propaganda was not required to adhere to staid or traditional formal conventions, and that its slogans and statistics could be incorporated into imagery marked by a high degree of creative elegance and sophistication. However, they also mark the border between work that *fulfilled* a political purpose and that which merely *aspired* to, and which – due to this distinction – was able to be perhaps yet freer in conception and imaginative scope. Examples of such imagery include the 'photoplastics' created by a number of figures associated with Macerata's lively 'Boccioni' Futurist group (Virginio Bonifazi, Mario Buldorini, Umberto Peschi, Bruno Tano and Wladimiro Tulli) in the early years of the war. Like Munari, they too employed Modernist photographic techniques to explicitly political ends, although in their case the ultimate purpose or application of the resulting imagery was to remain unspecified (**Fig. 30**). The group's *First National Exhibition of Photoplastics of War* opened in May 1942, and comprised twelve images taking as their subjects such unambiguous

¹⁸ [Accessed 9 March 2016]. Berghaus's criticisms of those who promote a sanitised image of Depero's career (*Futurism and Politics*, cit., pp. 293-94) would indeed seem to apply equally well to many students of Munari (see below, p. 99, n. 30).

themes as *The Pact of Steel*, *Paths of Victory*, *The New Europe* and *Two Nations – One War*.¹⁹ The ‘photoplastic’ was a technique that involved the incorporation into photographic works of ‘extraphotographic materials’, especially relief elements.²⁰ An early, rudimentary example of this had been Wanda Wulz’s *Portrait* of 1932, which comprised a cut-out photographic image mounted on a black background, to which two hemispheres of green glass were glued in place of the eyes.²¹ However, as that year’s *Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution* illustrated, the technique could also be employed to great effect on a grand scale. For this monumental exposition, Giuseppe Terragni created a suitably vast panel titled *Gatherings*, incorporating ‘airplane propellers constructed from photographs of mass rallies [which] faced diagonally up toward hundreds of plaster hands, all pointing to the sky in a disembodied Roman salute’.²² As stated, it is unclear whether the works produced by the ‘Boccioni’ group were intended to be appreciated as conventional artworks (that is to say, viewed on the walls of a gallery) or whether the exhibition of 1942 represented an attempt to showcase the expressive efficacy of this unconventional medium in order to promote its suitability for more practical applications, such as those explored by Terragni.

Aside from the work of the above figures, photography does not appear to have been employed to political ends by Futurist artists during the 1940s, despite Tato’s assertion that his photographic practice of ‘camouflaging objects’ might fruitfully be explored in a military context.

¹⁹ On both this exhibition and the medium itself, see Giovanni Lista, *Futurismo e fotografia* (Milan: Multhipla, 1979), pp. 269-80, 309 and 346-47. See also Toni, *Futuristi nelle Marche*, cit., pp. 99-100 (who states that the exhibition included thirteen works). A show of March 1940 by the same group had included seven photomontages by Amorino Tombesi, although these were altogether more neutral in terms of their subject matter (Crispoliti, *Nuovi Archivi*, cit., 1940/2).

²⁰ Giovanni Lista, ‘Fotografia’, in Godoli, *Il dizionario del futurismo*, cit., vol. 1, pp. 470-75 (p. 475).

²¹ The work appears on the cover of Lista’s aforementioned volume *Futurismo e fotografia*.

²² Marla Stone, ‘Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 28, no. 2, April 1993, pp. 215-43 (p. 223).

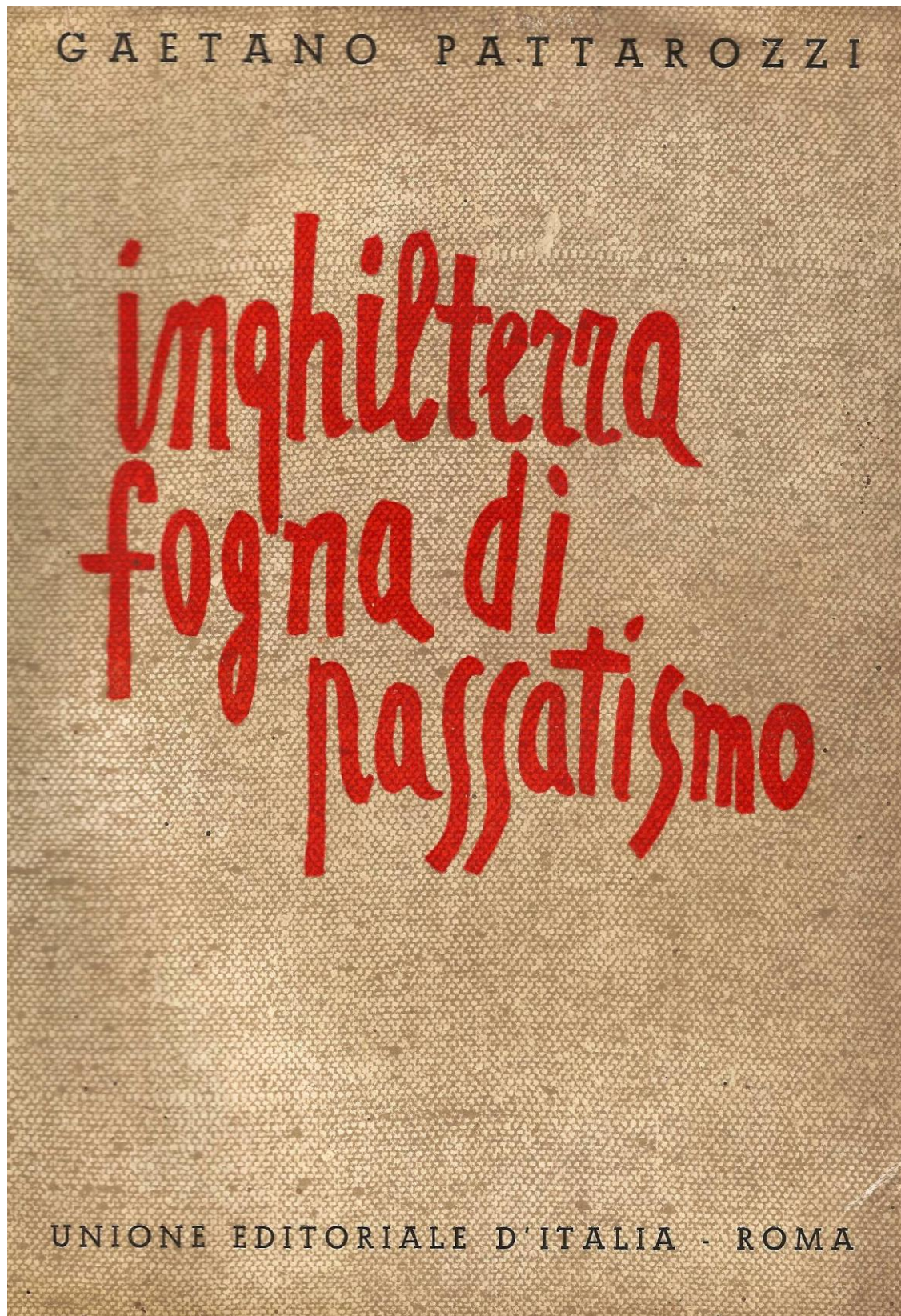


Fig. 27 Gaetano Pattarozzi, *England: Sewer of Passéism* (Rome: Unione Editoriale d'Italia, 1941)



GLORIA AGLI EROI DI STALINGRADO

Fig. 28 Fortunato Depero, illustration from *A passo romano* (cit., p. 10). The slogan 'Glory to the Heroes of Stalingrad' appears at the end of a German translation of the author's essay 'Roman Step: As if the Cobblestones were made of Enemy Skulls' (pp. 11-14).



Fig. 29
Bruno Munari, *Bombardment of New York*, 1942
silver gelatin print and tempera, 46 x 30 cm
private collection



Fig. 30
Bruno Tano and Mario Buldorini
unidentified work, [c. 1942]
photoplastic, dimensions and location unknown
(GRI 850702 / S. VI, B. 14)

Tato had been one of the key exponents of Futurist photography during the inter-war years, having co-authored (with Marinetti) a manifesto on the subject in 1930.²³ It was in this text that he first drew attention to the potential wartime application of his photographic theories, expanding on the theme in his autobiography of 1941.²⁴ This technique, employed by the artist in a number of works dating from the 1930s, involved combining a range of disparate objects in such a way as to suggest a new reality greater than – and quite different to – the sum of its parts, as in his photograph of a ballerina ‘constructed from an upturned fruit dish, two candles and a lemon’.²⁵ The relevance of such experiments to military matters, Tato claimed, consisted in the fact that the most effective camouflage was not that of a passive nature, concerned simply with hiding objects, but rather that of an *active* character, capable of manipulating the viewer into seeing whatever the *camoufleur* wished him to see. It was here, he insisted, that the ingenuity of Futurist artists could be called upon to fabricate entirely fictitious – and therefore misleading – panoramas from the simplest of means, ‘which would result in the [enemy’s] discovery of important, yet in fact non-existent, military operations’.²⁶

Tato’s reflections on this matter found an echo in a manifesto written in 1942 by Marinetti and Crali titled *Plastic Illusionism of War and Perfecting the Earth*.²⁷ Unlike Tato, Crali had practical experience of working in this sphere, being engaged in devising camouflage schemes during the

²³ ‘La fotografia futurista’, in Caruso, *Manifesti*, cit., vol. II, no. 197.

²⁴ *TATO racconTATO da TATO. 20 anni di futurismo* (Milan: Oberdan Zucchi). See also Giovanni Lista, *Futurism & Photography*, exh. cat. (London: Merrell, 2001), pp. 84-86.

²⁵ Tato, *TATO racconTATO da TATO*, cit., p. 131. The work referred to (*Synthetic Ballet by the Dancer Stearina Candelotti*) is reproduced in Lista, *Futurism & Photography*, cit., p. 84.

²⁶ Tato, *TATO racconTATO da TATO*, cit., p. 130.

²⁷ ‘Illusionismo plastico di guerra e perfezionamento della terra’ (Rome: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, [1943]). A translation of this document can be found in the appendix to this thesis; all subsequent citations from the text are taken from this version.

war years as well as instructing others in the theory and practice of the technique.²⁸

Nevertheless, he and Marinetti shared the Bolognese artist's ideas about the best approach to adopt, suggesting that the most effective manner by which 'to deceive enemy pilots and defend industrial plants geared to war production airports docks and gun emplacements' was through a creative approach to camouflage, rather than one which merely sought mechanically to reproduce the visual characteristics of the surrounding environment:

Alter the colour of and reshape the landscape giving a volumetric character to plains so as to raise up authentic mountains out of nothing removing shifting altering ports rivers [and] road and rail networks.

At times, the recommendations of this remarkable manifesto verge on the surreal:

Spiritualise materiality and vulgarity by means of gigantic winged colourful transparent free-word tables in such a way that a smoking factory might metamorphose into an evanescent mystical chapel fringed with angels and bells.

In this context, the manifesto's admiring references to the development of 'dazzle' camouflage during the First World War make sense, insofar as the latter's bold, eye-catching abstract patterns were likewise intended not to disguise or to obfuscate, but to confuse, bewilder and disorientate. Although the manifesto ultimately traced the ancestry of such designs back to the abstract vocabularies of Boccioni and Balla, its acknowledgement of British primacy in this field

²⁸ See Crali, 'Una vita per il Futurismo', in Rebeschini, *Crali aeropittore futurista*, cit., pp. 168-72. See also the letter from S. Degiani to Crali referred to in the manifesto itself (Cra.3.41). An artist named Francesco Bagnaresi, who worked alongside Crali on military projects at the headquarters of the Camouflage Unit in Udine, appears as a signatory of this manifesto in an alternative version of the text (Caruso, *Manifesti*, cit., vol. III, no. 312). The involvement of artists of all nationalities in such work was common during both world wars. See Roy R. Behrens, 'Camouflage', in Jane Turner, ed., *The Dictionary of Art* (London and New York: Grove, 1996), pp. 530-31.

of activity remains rather surprising given the strong *antinglese* thrust of Fascist propaganda at this time.²⁹

With its proposals to intervene directly in the landscape, Crali considered this manifesto a precursor of Land Art ('We Futurist aeropoets admire Michelangelo because he dreamed of sculpting mountains') believing his and Marinetti's text to have 'anticipated the interventions of American artists in this sphere by thirty years'.³⁰ It also expressed the Futurists' desire to emulate those 'great artists of the past [who] painted battle scenes with the same ardour as they depicted angels [...] sometimes setting down their palettes to create fortifications for the defence of the Fatherland'.³¹ Nevertheless, Crali later recalled how his approach was neither appreciated nor understood by his superiors, observing: 'Camouflage demands imagination, but this disturbs the military mentality.'³²

²⁹ The manifesto refers to the artists C. R. W. Nevinson and Edward Wadsworth. However, only the latter was involved in dazzle projects, and as a dock officer, charged with supervising the application of designs to vessels, rather than as a *camoufleur* proper (although officers were allowed to make their own modifications to designs, over time). It is possible that Marinetti and Crali had Wadsworth's striking woodcuts in mind when composing the manifesto, such as his celebrated image *Liverpool Shipping of 1918*. The inventor of dazzle camouflage was in fact a painter and naval officer named Norman Wilkinson, who oversaw the work of his Dazzle Section from offices in Burlington House. For a history of the development of dazzle camouflage, see Roy R. Behrens, 'The Role of Artists in Ship Camouflage During World War I', *Leonardo*, vol. 32, no. 1, 1999, pp. 53-59.

³⁰ 'Una vita per il Futurismo', cit., p. 169. In fact, the 1934 'Technical Manifesto of Futurist Aeroplastics', signed by Munari and a number of other artists, had proposed similar interventions. See Aldo Tanchis, *Bruno Munari: From Futurism to Post-industrial Design* (London: Lund Humphries, 1987), p. 20. Tanchis incorrectly dates this text 1930 and omits the references to Fascism found in the manifesto, repr. in Crispolti, *Nuovi Archivi*, cit., 1934/4.

³¹ [Tullio Cr]ali, 'Contro naturamorta', *Il Popolo del Friuli*, 22 January 1942 (Cra.2.242). In an article of 1943, Sartoris likewise invoked the 'warlike, patriotic [and] political traditions' of Italian art, epitomised by figures such as Leonardo da Vinci, 'prophet of flight and inventor of our most modern weaponry: the machine-gun and the tank'. 'Artisti e poeti sui campi di battaglia', *Il Lavoro Fascista*, [1943] (Cra.3.34).

³² 'Una vita per il Futurismo', cit., p. 171.

II. STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: COLLUSION WITH THE RIGHT

II.I. Against the Still Life

As we have already noted, Futurism's creation of politicised imagery at this time should come as little surprise to anyone with even the most rudimentary knowledge of the movement. In fact, in the very broadest sense, such work was entirely consistent with its long-standing rejection of what one might term 'cultural absenteeism', grounded in a belief that painters and poets should engage with and interpret contemporary reality ('living art draws its life from the surrounding environment').³³ This stress on content had always distinguished Futurism from other avant-garde movements, much to the snobbish disdain of Gino Severini, who lamented the fact that his erstwhile colleagues had 'looked to their subjects for the innovative contribution to art, while [...] in Paris, painting itself had become the new, original element'.³⁴ Perhaps more consistently than any other movement, Futurism had expressed scorn for artists who chose to pursue formal perfection in the context of 'eternal' subject matter such as the nude, famously banished from Futurist painting for a decade in 1910.³⁵ More specifically, of course, the war's technological and industrial character was a natural source of inspiration for the movement's artists and writers at this time, offering them the perfect opportunity to update the existing *estetica della macchina*, while the conflict's desired outcome – an increase in Italy's international influence and prestige – were those long cherished by political Futurism itself.

³³ Umberto Boccioni, and others, 'Manifesto of the Futurist Painters' (1910), in Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos*, cit., pp. 24-27 (p. 25).

³⁴ Gino Severini, *The Life of a Painter* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 85.

³⁵ See Umberto Boccioni, and others, 'Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto' (1910), in Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos*, cit., pp. 27-31 (p. 31). In 1912, a text drafted by the five initial Futurist painters had posed the rhetorical question: 'Is it not, indeed, a return to the Academy to declare that the subject, in painting, is of perfectly insignificant value?' 'The Exhibitors to the Public', *ibid.*, pp. 45-50 (p. 46). See also above, Chapter Two, p. 77, on Marinetti's scepticism regarding the ultimate value of 'concrete' abstraction.

Consequently, the movement's insistence on the 'indispensability of the subject'³⁶ acquired a more specifically patriotic relevance and complexion during the 1940s, just as it had done during the First World War.³⁷ Nowhere was this more evident than in its campaign against what it perceived to be the anachronistic and disengaged genre of the still life.

Like the nude, the still life had long been viewed with scorn by certain Futurists, despite the fact that the genre had inspired such masterpieces as Boccioni's *Development of a Bottle in Space* and Ardengo Soffici's *Deconstruction of the Planes of a Lamp*. Paradoxically, Soffici had been among the first to question the validity of the still life as a vehicle for the expression of Futurist ideas in his 1914 essay 'The Subject in Futurist Painting'.³⁸ A later critique was made by Gerardo Dottori in an article for the journal *Vetrina Futurista*, although Dottori's argument was broader in scope than Soffici's, not being limited to aesthetic objections: 'The *still life* is a [...] foreign concept, imported into Italy in the XVII century. [...] This genre of painting cannot be [considered] Italian. Italy is a land of light and sun, of colour and warmth. A country, in short, where living nature triumphs.'³⁹ Throughout the 1940s Futurism's attacks against the still life became more sustained, the movement's artists railing against such *naturamortisti* as Giorgio Morandi and Filippo De Pisis in countless newspaper articles and texts:

My dear passéist comrade, I believe that by caressing an apple, fawning over a pumpkin [and] dusting off a cup [...] with a bourgeois, pacifist appetite for good taste, it will not

³⁶ F. T. Marinetti, 'Aeropittori di guerra – aeropittori cosmici e astrattisti – futuristi', in *IV Quadriennale d'Arte Nazionale. Catalogo generale*, pp. 70-71 (p. 71); repr. in Crispolti, *Nuovi Archivi*, cit., 1943/2.

³⁷ On this point, see below, Chapter Four.

³⁸ In Apollonio, *Futurist Manifestos*, cit., pp. 134-35.

³⁹ 'Contro la natura morta' [1927], pp. 60-63 (pp. 60, 61), in Caruso, *Manifesti*, cit., vol. IV, no. 392 bis.; original emphasis.

be possible to be involved with or to contribute in any worthwhile manner to a victorious rebirth of art.⁴⁰

In 1942, Di Bosso and Ambrosi published a volume entirely devoted to the subject, titled *Heroes Machines Wings against Still Lives*.⁴¹ Within its pages, images by a number of high-profile artists including de Chirico, Guttuso, Mario Mafai, Ottone Rosai, Scipione and Mario Tozzi were juxtaposed with dynamic Futurist paintings; each of these pairings was accompanied by comments from a variety of figures (predominantly Futurist artists and poets) in which the genre was denigrated and mocked. Another section reproduced a number of quotes from art critics *praising* still life imagery. However, insofar as the examples selected were chosen for their somewhat florid language, these were presented as the pseudo-intellectual ramblings of charlatans, and the effect remained equally negative. Echoing the sentiments of the early Futurists, the volume's authors asserted that 'Art is an expression of life – Art must keep pace with that which surrounds it',⁴² and savagely mocked those painters 'for whom a bottle, two candles or three carrots are transformed into MYSTERIOUS PINNACLES OF THE SPIRIT AND RAINBOWS OF PURE POETRY',⁴³ satirising the rarefied language typical of the Scuola metafisica and its latter-day descendents.⁴⁴ Like Dottori, Di Bosso stressed the nationalistic and racial

⁴⁰ Fortunato Depero, 'Stile di acciaio. Domande – risposte – constatazioni ed impegni imperativi categorici dell'artista d'oggi', in Depero, *A passo romano*, cit., pp. 98-113 (pp. 106-07). Among the many other contributions to this debate were articles by Crali ('Contro naturamorta', cit., and 'Purificare l'arte', *Vedetta Isontina*, September 1940 (Cra.2.161)) and Castrense Civello ('Come muoiono le "nature morte"', *L'Ora*, 21 March 1942 (Cra.2.298)).

⁴¹ *Eroi macchine ali contro nature morte* (Rome: Edizioni Futuriste di 'Poesia').

⁴² Alfredo Gauro Ambrosi, 'Clima di guerra ispiratore ideale', *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴³ Renato Di Bosso, 'Per una salutare e urgente bonifica della moderna arte pittorica italiana', *ibid.*, pp. 4-5 (p. 4).

⁴⁴ See, for example, Carlo Carrà's essay 'Concerning Ordinary Things' of 1918: "'Ordinary things" reveal the forms of simplicity that tell us of a superior state of being, which constitutes the splendid secret of art. But when the flashes of inspiration of "ordinary things", so rarely repeated, illuminate art, they create those essentials that are the most precious for us modern artists. One could say that in this way we rise from

dimensions of the problem, admitting that whilst still life painting might conceivably form part of foreign cultures, its existence within Italy could only be accounted for in terms of 'base commercial opportunism or a passive and habitual mania for foreign things'.⁴⁵ For his part, Marinetti drew attention to the 'neutralist' character of such imagery in his introduction, defining the act of creating still lifes as 'anti-Italian treason',⁴⁶ while the poet Maria Goretti dismissed the genre as a 'typical expression of the bourgeois, pacifist and nostalgic spirit'.⁴⁷

In order to stress Futurism's Fascist credentials, the volume also included criticisms of still life painting by party hierarchs, suggesting that this ostensibly trivial debate had greater political currency than one might initially imagine.⁴⁸ Among these contributions was a statement by Roberto Farinacci, who was quoted as remarking: 'I have always considered "still lifes" to be the most genuine expression of artistic impotence'.⁴⁹ This comment appeared beneath a still life by Morandi (**Fig. 32**), which faced a reproduction of Prampolini's aforementioned *Simultaneous Aeroportrait of Italo Balbo*.

However, the strength of both Farinacci's and Marinetti's convictions as to the importance of subject matter had already resulted in lines of communication being opened up between the Futurist leader and the founder of the Premio Cremona – something that would otherwise have

the depths to the surface like flying fish.' In Massimo Carrà, ed., *Metaphysical Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), pp. 47-48 (p. 48).

⁴⁵ Di Bosso, 'Per una salutare e urgente bonifica', cit., p. 5.

⁴⁶ 'Collaudo', in Di Bosso and Ambrosi, *Eroi macchine ali*, cit., pp. 2-3 (p. 3).

⁴⁷ *Eroi macchine ali*, cit., p. 28.

⁴⁸ It would seem that the Duce himself was no admirer of the genre. On one occasion he had publicly reprimanded Morandi for his attachment to such imagery, exclaiming 'Basta colle nature morte!' ('That's enough of the still lifes!'). Alexandre Blokh, 'Giorgio Morandi and Vitale Bloch', in the catalogue of the *Impressionist / Modern Evening Sale* (London: Christie's, 7 February 2012), n. p.

⁴⁹ *Eroi macchine ali*, cit., p. 24.

been inexplicable, given the latter's well-known disdain for modern art. In fact, by the time *Heroes Machines Wings* was published, five Futurist painters had taken part in the Cremona Prize. In 1939 Dottori contributed a work titled *Listening to the Discourse of 9 May XIV*, a fragmented image incorporating a number of different scenes in order to suggest the broadcasting of Mussolini's proclamation of the Italian Empire to all corners of the country. At the centre of the painting is a symbolic image of a mother and child, recalling those depictions of the Madonna found in Dottori's *arte sacra futurista*; behind these figures a map of Italian East Africa pinned to the wall explains the father's absence from this family scene and confirms the subject of the Duce's broadcast. Dottori participated again in 1940 alongside Leandra Angelucci, Di Bosso, Forlin and Leonida Zen, all of whom interpreted the autarkic subject of 'The Battle for Grain'.⁵⁰ Farinacci's reasons for accommodating such works remain obscure, particularly the rather bizarre compositions of Angelucci and Zen, which one would presume to have been entirely incompatible with his conservative vision. Pressure may well have been placed on him by Mussolini to tolerate the presence of Futurist artists in his exhibition, just as in 1931 Marinetti's protests to the Duce had ensured that the Futurists were able to display their work collectively at the Rome Quadriennale, circumventing the institution's formal policy of excluding group participation.⁵¹ Even more astonishing than the involvement of his artists in the Premio Cremona is the fact that Marinetti himself was one of the Prize's judges in 1940, a fact that undoubtedly accounts for the greater number of Futurist painters featured in that year's exhibition. Having publicly expressed his admiration for the Cremona Prize in an open letter to Farinacci's newspaper *Il Regime Fascista* in July 1939,⁵² Marinetti's appointment to the jury was

⁵⁰ Illustrations of the Futurist works exhibited at the Cremona Prize can be found in Crispolti, *Nuovi Archivi*, cit., 1939/5; 1940/6. On the movement's participation in the event, see also Cibi, *Corrado Forlin*, cit., pp. 166-68.

⁵¹ See Salaris, *La Quadriennale*, cit., pp. 12-14.

⁵² 'Il "Premio Cremona". Una lettera di Marinetti a Farinacci sulle vaste possibilità creative dei temi dettati dal Duce per i concorsi del 1940 e del 1941', *Il Regime Fascista*, 4 July 1939, p. 3.

officially announced in the same publication on 11 April 1940.⁵³ Again, while this may also have been imposed on Farinacci from above, it illustrates the point that official attitudes toward Futurism at this time – even those of the most hawkish spokesman of the anti-modernist Fascist right-wing – were characterised by greater tolerance and deference than one might naturally suppose (a point that we shall return to in Chapter Six). There was undoubtedly a large degree of cynicism and opportunism in Marinetti's manoeuvrings, as suggested by his somewhat absurd claims regarding the 'typically Futurist' character of the Cremona Prize on the basis that the superficially modern subject of radio transmissions was one of the obligatory themes of its first exhibition.⁵⁴ However, while the movement's defence of formal experimentation might seem to have naturally aligned it with Bottai's 'liberal' artistic vision, Futurism's stress on content – as well as its continual indictment of 'xenomania' and intransigent *italianità* – placed it squarely in Farinacci's camp. Indeed, Futurism tended to distance itself from the comparatively neutral stance promoted by Bottai through the Bergamo Prize and *Primato*, both of which attracted the support and participation of many of those artists included in Di Bosso and Ambrosi's aforementioned volume. *Primato* was in fact routinely referred to as *Primato della muffa* ('Primacy of Mould') by certain Futurists – particularly the irascible Pattarozzi in his newspaper *Mediterraneo Futurista*⁵⁵ – while the Premio Bergamo was singled out for attack by artists such as Crali, who characterised it as a rest home 'for anaemics and sexually-frustrated little old men, housing only a few healthy specimens'.⁵⁶

⁵³ 'La giuria del II "Premio Cremona"', *Il Regime Fascista*, p. 2. See also Tellini Perina, 'Il Premio Cremona', in *Gli anni del Premio Bergamo*, cit., p. 52.

⁵⁴ 'Il "Premio Cremona". Una lettera di Marinetti', cit. It is interesting to note that the other theme selected for this edition of the Premio Cremona was 'States of Mind Created by Fascism' – the evocation of *stati d'animo* having long been a Futurist preoccupation, most famously in Boccioni's eponymous triptych of 1911.

⁵⁵ See also Marinetti's article 'La spiritualità rivoluzionaria dell'Asse', *Mediterraneo Futurista*, 28 October 1941 (Cra.2.217).

⁵⁶ 'Purificare l'arte', cit.

Ultimately, however, it proved equally impossible for the Futurists to maintain any meaningful alliance with Farinacci, for whom the value of a work of art consisted *entirely* in its effectiveness as propaganda. The movement's overall position on the issue of the proper role and purpose of art in wartime therefore remained essentially centrist in character, its painters questioning the validity of artistic activity that stood aloof from current affairs, while upholding the principles of creative liberty; endorsing patriotic, politicised imagery while eschewing the crude didacticism of the Cremona Prize. Evidently, the instances of collaboration between Marinetti and Farinacci were not born of any shared aesthetic vision, and it is perhaps for this reason that they are rarely mentioned in the secondary literature, despite seeming to offer a considerable amount of grist to the mill of late Futurism's many critics. (Undoubtedly, this fact is also a simple consequence of the prevailing lack of in-depth research on 1940s Futurism: Härmänmaa's remark that 'the Futurists explicitly condemned the Cremona prize' illustrates how little this particular relationship has been studied.)⁵⁷ Indeed, in the same letter in which he commended Farinacci's 'Futurist' Premio Cremona, Marinetti also took the opportunity of expressing his reservations as to the wisdom of awarding first prize to Luciano Ricchetti's monumental – but stylistically simplistic and pedestrian – canvas *Listening* (**Fig. 2**), arguing that Dottori's work, with its 'beautiful simultaneity', more 'fully satisfied' the requirements of so complex a theme, and would therefore have been a more worthy recipient;⁵⁸ nor did he reprise his role as a jury member at the third Cremona Prize of 1941. In the final analysis, the aesthetic differences that separated Marinetti and Farinacci were far more profound and significant than the points of ideological agreement which enabled them to cooperate on isolated projects – a fact that must have been abundantly clear to Marinetti when judging the entries for the 1940 exhibition,

⁵⁷ Marja Härmänmaa, 'Beyond Anarchism: Marinetti's Futurist (anti-)Utopia of Individualism and "Artocracy"', *The European Legacy*, vol. 14, no. 7, December 2009, pp. 857-71 (p. 867).

⁵⁸ 'Il "Premio Cremona". Una lettera di Marinetti', cit.



Fig. 31 Alfredo Gauro Ambrosi, *Fascist Forces of Land-Sea-Sky*, 1942
oil on board, 159.5 x 122.5 cm, Trento: Museo dell'Aeronautica Gianni Caproni

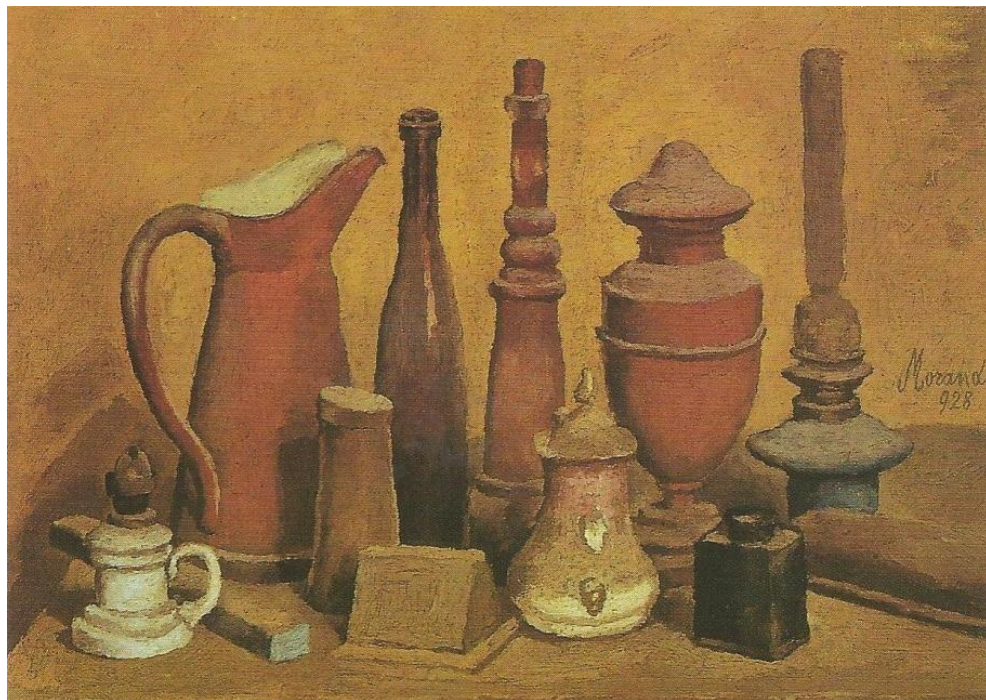


Fig. 32 Giorgio Morandi, *Still Life*, 1928, oil on canvas, 34.5 x 46.5 cm
Rovereto: Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (Giovannardi Collection)

where ‘the romanticising of rural work was emphasised by [depictions of] archaic tools and the complete absence of references to industrial civilisation’.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, by illustrating how Futurism was accommodated within even the most unlikely of quarters, such collaborative episodes remain deeply fascinating, and revealing as to the movement’s improving status within Italian culture following the turbulent late 1930s.

II.II. ‘Innovative Avant-garde Movements’ against ‘Unpatriotic Judaism’: Futurism and Anti-Semitism

If Marinetti’s enduring enthusiasm for conflict and violence has sullied his post-war reputation, Michele Colucci speaks for many in asserting that at least one aspect of his political ideology ‘does honour to the founder of Futurism: his staunch opposition to the racial laws (within the limits allowed him by Fascism) and, more generally, to any form of anti-Semitism’.⁶⁰ Viola has likewise insisted on Marinetti’s ‘total repudiation of racism’ and the ‘declared anti-racist character’ of Futurism itself,⁶¹ while no less an authority than Renzo De Felice has unequivocally stated: ‘Marinetti was not an anti-Semite’.⁶²

Two facts are commonly adduced as evidence of the Futurist leader’s enlightened attitudes. The first of these is the publication in 1938 of what are justly considered to be among ‘the most violent attacks ever written by Fascists about the corruption and hypocrisy of Fascism’⁶³: two scathing indictments of the regime’s adoption of Nazi-style anti-Semitism, published in the

⁵⁹ Tellini Perina, ‘Il Premio Cremona’, cit., p. 55.

⁶⁰ ‘Prefazione’, in Marinetti, *Originalità russa di masse distanze radiocuari*, cit., pp. 11-23 (p. 20).

⁶¹ *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., pp. 143, 150.

⁶² *The Jews in Fascist Italy: A History* (New York: Enigma, 2001), p. 300.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

Futurist journal *Artecrazia*. One of these was an editorial by Marinetti's (Jewish) right-hand man, Mino Somenzi; the second, an anonymous piece signed 'Artecrazia'. De Felice asserts that 'given the context, [the latter] was [also] thought to be by Somenzi; however, there was no doubt that Marinetti himself had played a large role in writing it'.⁶⁴ He goes on to quote from this second article, which blazes with righteous indignation:

Today what serves your purpose is the war against the Jews, but between a Jew, war veteran, squad member, Fascist legionnaire and a pseudo-Fascist Communist, swindler, ruffian, ready to serve any master and any party for a price, as long as they are in power, I am decidedly in favor of the first.⁶⁵

The second piece of evidence presented in favour of Marinetti is his strenuous defence of the avant-garde, insofar as those who denigrated modernist aesthetics often did so on the basis of their supposed 'Jewish' character, much like their Nazi counterparts. In his autobiography of the Futurist leader, Guerri quotes an eyewitness of the *serata* held at Rome's Teatro delle Arti in December 1938 – organised as a public protest against the enemies of the avant-garde within Italian culture –⁶⁶ who recalled how 'Marinetti, in a brilliant, explosive, violent monologue, defended modern art against accusations as to its Jewish and Bolshevik character'.⁶⁷ Similarly, De Felice admiringly describes how

in the first few weeks of the racial campaign some of his remarks during a radio conversation regarding modern art demonstrated how much he was opposed to those who sought to deny any value to a whole series of contemporary works, just by calling them 'Jewish'.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 301.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 302. The articles in question appeared in issue 117 of the magazine in December 1938.

⁶⁶ On this event, see Guerri, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., pp. 253-55.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 254.

⁶⁸ *The Jews in Fascist Italy*, cit., p. 300.

Yet Marinetti's response to this issue was not as straightforward as it might appear, for his angry criticism of those who attacked the art produced by his movement on grounds of race tended to constitute a denial of the accusation's veracity, rather than a repudiation of anti-Semitism itself.

As Berghaus has noted, for the Futurists

to refute that they were Jewish or Bolshevik artists or had anything in common with degenerate art as it was practised in Germany [meant that] they basically accepted the premises and basic conceptions of their adversaries, i. e. that there exist categories such as Aryan and Jewish or sane and degenerate art.⁶⁹

Accordingly, to insist that Marinetti's comments were intended as expressions of solidarity with the Jews seems naïve at best, and revisionist at worst. His public statements – if not his personal convictions⁷⁰ – would appear consistently to have been motivated by political expediency, and calculated to insulate his movement from criticism. What Monica Bohm-Duchen has asserted in relation to Bottai applies equally well to Marinetti: '[he] saw no reason to protest against the anti-Semitic aspects of his adversaries' views, only the anti-pluralist and anti-modernist ones'.⁷¹

Consequently, Christine Poggi is correct to assert that in the context of this debate Marinetti was

⁶⁹ *Futurism and Politics*, cit., p. 253.

⁷⁰ Berghaus notes that 'there is evidence that Marinetti intervened with the Duce to prevent Nazi-style anti-Semitism and that the Jewish community was grateful for his support' (ibid., p. 254). Agnese also claims that following the fall of Mussolini, the Marinetti family left their Rome apartment to Jewish friends named Grassi before heading north to Venice (*Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., pp. 301; p. 341, n. 111).

⁷¹ *Art and the Second World War*, cit., p. 164. Remarkable as it may seem, isolated figures within the Futurist movement even endorsed Hitler's purge against modern art. In an article concerning the infamous exhibition of 'degenerate' art held in Munich in June 1937, Bruno G. Sanzin praised Hitler's 'courageous' action against the artists represented in the show, concluding: 'In removing [their works] from German galleries, the Führer has undertaken a defence of public health.' 'Il Führer e l'arte bolscevica in Germania. Com'è stata bandita', *Il Piccolo della Sera*, 29 September 1937, in Enrica Mezzetta and Paolo Sanzin, *Bruno Giordano Sanzin aeropoeta futurista triestino. La pubblicistica dal 1920 al 1944* (Rome: Aracne, 2011), pp. 342-43. Similar views were also expressed by Forlin in a typescript titled 'I futuristi e la guerra' of c. 1940 (For.1.1.19).

‘opportunistic and defensive, [making] his primary concern the defense of Futurism’.⁷²

The Futurist leader’s stance on the matter is further complicated by the fact that whilst the *Artecrazia* articles were unambiguous in their condemnation of racism his involvement in their drafting is hypothetical, as well as by the fact that the anonymous views expressed in the pages of this journal were contradicted in almost all of the Futurist leader’s *signed* statements in which references were made to the ‘Jewish question’. In fact, from the early 1930s, his response to those who sought to equate modern art with Judaism had not been moral outrage over the tenor of the debate, but pragmatic efforts to disentangle the two. In the catalogue of the 1934 Venice Biennale, for instance, Marinetti referred to a recent discourse he had delivered at the inauguration of an exhibition of aeropainting in Berlin, on which occasion he had drawn a clear distinction between ‘innovatory avant-garde movements’ and ‘unpatriotic or Marxist Judaism’.⁷³ The voicing of such comments in Germany at this time may be accounted for in terms of an (ill-judged) strategy by which to defend modern art against its Nazi critics, yet the repetition of them in Italy in 1934 is extraordinary, pre-dating as they do by four years the passing of anti-Semitic legislation by the Fascist regime.

From such opportunistic racism, born of a desire to distance the movement from the damaging ‘taint’ of Judaism (something Marinetti attempted to do on more than ten separate occasions in a single newspaper article of 1938),⁷⁴ the Futurist leader quickly moved on to join ‘the

⁷² ‘Introduction to Part Two’, in Rainey, Poggi and Wittman, *Futurism: An Anthology*, cit., pp. 305-30 (p. 330). See also Rainey’s introductory text in the same volume, cit., p. 37, and Ialongo, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., pp. 258-71.

⁷³ ‘Mostra degli aeropittori futuristi italiani’, in *XIX^a Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d’Arte – 1934. Catalogo*, exh. cat., 1st edn (Venice: Carlo Ferrari, 1934), pp. 171-72 (p. 171).

⁷⁴ ‘Nuove battaglie per l’italianità di tutta l’arte moderna’, *Autori e Scrittori*, December 1938 (Cra.3.26).

reactionary chorus of those expressing virulent anti-Semitic views'⁷⁵ during the 1940s, alongside other members of his movement such as Castrense Civello and Forlin. Linking his anti-Semitism with the Futurist campaign against *naturamortisti*, Civello described engaging with the still life as 'a moral sin and, far worse, an ignoble mercantile [...] speculation derived from a typically Jewish commercial and swindling mentality'.⁷⁶ In essay of c. 1941, Forlin also referred to this supposed racial trait, observing how the merits of Andreoni's work had 'passed, unobserved, beneath the speculative eyes of the Jews'.⁷⁷ Certain of Marinetti's own comments echoed these offensively stereotypical remarks – as in his references to the 'Jewish adoration of money' in the introduction to Pattarozzi's *England: Sewer of Passéism*.⁷⁸ According to Härmänmaa, such comments constitute evidence that Marinetti's 'anti-Semitism was of a purely spiritual [rather than biological] nature',⁷⁹ reflecting his disdain for the plutocratic and Bolshevik world views (contradictorily) associated with the Jews, rather than for the Jews themselves as a racial group: 'for Marinetti, the enemy was not Jewry but Jewishness'.⁸⁰ Whilst this theoretical distinction is interesting from an academic point of view, it is irrelevant in real terms, since such stereotypical images were an integral part of anti-Semitic propaganda, and thus equally insidious. Furthermore, Härmänmaa's claim would appear to be contradicted by Marinetti's assertion that 'the Jews have shone with commercial intelligence [but] never with creative genius',⁸¹ insofar as this statement suggests he believed the deficiency to be innate and pre-ordained – rather than

⁷⁵ Poggi, 'Introduction to Part Two', cit., p. 330.

⁷⁶ 'Come muoiono le "nature morte"', cit.

⁷⁷ 'Aeropitture futuriste di Cesare Andreoni' (For.1.1.31), in Cibi, *Corrado Forlin*, cit., pp. 259-61 (p. 261).

⁷⁸ 'Presentazione', in Pattarozzi, *Inghilterra fogna di passatismo*, cit., pp. 7-16 (p. 13).

⁷⁹ *Un patriota che sfidò la decadenza*, cit., p. 274.

⁸⁰ Ibid. Guerri has likewise asserted in relation to Bottai that 'every scholar who has studied this matter agrees that [he] was not truly racist – that is to say, did not subscribe to "biological" racism – and that his support [for Fascism's race laws] was merely political'. *Giuseppe Bottai*, cit., p. 169. The distasteful, if unintentional, impression left by this remark is that the author believes 'merely political' racism is somehow better than that based on biological principles.

⁸¹ 'Nuove battaglie per l'italianità di tutta l'arte moderna', cit.

behavioural or cultural – in character. The same is true of Ignazio Scurto's claim that the Jews had consistently exhibited a 'manifest incapacity' in the artistic sphere.⁸²

Among the most distasteful manifestations of anti-Semitism within the movement were the vitriolic sentiments of Pattarozzi, evidently a firm believer in the existence of a world Jewish conspiracy. His newspaper *Mediterraneo Futurista* carried a regular feature titled 'This is for You Whining Idiots' ('È per voi piagnoni imbecilli') which, by way of justifying – and fomenting – anti-Semitic attitudes, printed a series of citations and aphorisms from ancient Jewish texts deliberately chosen for their provocative nature: 'The Jew is strictly prohibited from showing any act of mercy toward non-Jews (Sepher mizboth, p. 85 c)'; 'The death of a non-Jew is a joy for the Jew, which costs him no money (Jore de' ah, par. 158)'; 'It is permitted to test medicines on the non-Jew to see if they are useful or dangerous (Jore de' ah, 158, 1)'.⁸³ Such a strategy had been derided by Somenzi in his aforementioned *Artecrazia* editorial of 1938, where he observed how 'they are bringing back stories that are 4,000 and more years old, as though they were true or had just happened the day before yesterday and are still newsworthy'.⁸⁴

Ultimately, it is somewhat ironic that the aspect of 1940s Futurism which has tended to receive the least criticism should actually be that most deserving of it. By any estimation, Guerri's assertion that 'Futurism was the only organised movement that opposed racism' at this time is too generous,⁸⁵ while Viola's negative evaluation of *aeropittura di guerra* as too 'celebratory' sits awkwardly with his praise for Marinetti's 'courageous' (yet as Viola himself admits, most likely never sent) letter to Hitler in which he 'advised the dictator to save the German avant-garde [by]

⁸² 'Genuina italianità dell'arte italiana contemporanea', *La Voce di Mantova*, 21 December 1938 (Cra.2.41).

⁸³ *Mediterraneo Futurista*, vol. 5, no. 13, June 1940, p. 6.

⁸⁴ Cited in De Felice, *The Jews in Fascist Italy*, cit., p. 301.

⁸⁵ *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., p. 252.

“wresting control of it from the Jews”, thereby imitating Italian Futurism, which he defined as “free of Jews” – an absurd claim, given Somenzi’s eminent position within the movement.⁸⁶

Marinetti’s involvement in a project promoted by the regime to ‘cleanse’ literature by banning works of Marxist or Jewish authors is also profoundly regrettable,⁸⁷ as is his troubling description of the poet Ugo Veronesi as ‘a long-standing formidable scourge of Jewish ghettos’,⁸⁸ a character trait one can only presume was intended to be interpreted in a positive light. As Cibirin observes, such comments seriously undermine ‘the historiographical insistence on the Futurist leader’s strenuous opposition to the racial laws’⁸⁹ and, by extension, that of his movement itself.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., p. 145. On this reprehensible, undated, letter see also Härmänmaa, *Un patriota che sfidò la decadenza*, cit., p. 267. See also the article by Il Gregario Zeta, ‘La tradizione si continua con la rivoluzione e non con la reazione’, *Origini*, [1942] (BFTML GEN MSS 475 / 10306-01; 10182-01), in which Marinetti is again cited as asserting: ‘I am pleased patriotically to affirm that there have never been, nor are there now, any Jews in the Italian Futurist movement, nor among the principal poets, painters, sculptors, musicians, architects and ceramists of the Italian avant-garde.’

⁸⁷ See Guerri, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., p. 255. Guerri reports that as a consequence of this ‘shameful initiative [...] a list of over nine hundred writers was compiled whose works were considered to be “unwelcome in Italy”’. On this episode, see also Ialongo, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., p. 262.

⁸⁸ ‘L’attività del gruppo futurista Savarè’, in *Futuristi aeropittori di guerra*, [1940], p. 2; repr. in Crispolti, *Nuovi Archivi*, cit., 1941/1.

⁸⁹ *Corrado Forlin*, cit., p. 196.

⁹⁰ Marinetti’s response to the rise of anti-Semitism was ultimately as uncritical as his attitude to the ‘Pact of Steel’. His private, negative, feelings on the latter are described by Agnese (*Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., pp. 282, 293-94) and Guerri (*Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., 264-66). His altogether more positive public statements can be found in texts such as *Canto eroi e macchine della guerra mussoliniana* (Milan: Mondadori, 1942), p. 181, ‘I sentimenti capitali del Sansepolcristo in una intervista con F. T. Marinetti’, *Italia*, 31 October 1940 (BFTML GEN MSS 475 / 09927-02) and ‘Futurismo armato’, *Guerra Nostra*, 11 April 1941 (BFTML GEN MSS 475 / 10241-01). See also Ialongo, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, cit., pp. 270-71.