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## Futurism's Construction of a Phallic National Identity

Italian Futurism is known best for proclamations such as:

vogliamo liberare questo paese dalla sua fetida cancrena di professori, d'archeologi, di ciceroni e d'antiquari. . . . Date fuoco agli scaffali delle biblioteche! . . . Sviate il corso dei canali, per inondare i musei! . . . Oh la gioia di veder galleggiare alla deriva, lacere e stinte su quelle acque, le vecchie tele gloriose! . . . Impugnate i piccioni, le scuri, i martelli e demolite, demolite senza pietà le città venerate! (*Fondazione e manifesto del futurismo, Teoria e invenzione futurista* 7-13).<sup>1</sup>

However, the Italian Futurists' project was not one solely of destruction, for in *Guerra sola igiene del mondo*, Marinetti specifically rejects the characterization of Futurism as a movement that was oppositional merely for the sake of being antagonistic.

The Futurist project to "ricostruire," rather than to destroy, marks the starting point of this paper. In particular, I will be addressing the extent to which such a project of identity fabrication constructs itself in relation to a notion of *la patria*, and how such a construction of an ideal national self, which, as we will see, is ideally a Futurist self, must be staged on the exterior of the male body.<sup>2</sup> It is useful to keep in mind the psychoanalytic observation that identity is fictional rather than imitative. Since "identification is never simply mimetic but involves a strategy of wish-fulfillment" (Butler 334), identity should be understood as a performative enactment of a fantasy.

For the Futurists, that fantasy entails either the repudiation of the feminine, its incorporation or appropriation, or its masculinization.<sup>3</sup> As such, the ideal, national self of the Futurists is explicitly gendered as masculine. However, it is the instability of national and gender identity in Futurist nationalist rhetoric that interests me. The very notion of *la patria* discloses a gender ambiguity in which the motherland, Italy, figures as a surrogate Phallic Mother who both mirrors the national subject's self-identity while, at the same time, representing otherness.

One of the central Futurist enterprises was the construction of a new

subjectivity appropriate to the Futurist vision for a new Italy. This “nuova Italia” would be the antithesis of “la città di Paralisi,” which is characterized by cowardliness, sluggishness and moribundity in Marinetti’s manifesto *Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna* (TIF 14-26). The “qualities” that the Futurists purpose for ideal Italians are, not surprisingly, the characteristics of the Futurists themselves. In their attempt to create a new “group-mind,” that is, a new self-image for the Italian people, the Futurists are indeed attempting to reinvent the Italian identity, excluding all the vices associated with a weak and decadent unified Italy such as “passatismo” and “parlamentarismo,” and substituting in their stead Futurist virtues.<sup>4</sup>

To the extent that the objective of the Italian Futurists is to distance themselves from the qualities, history and surroundings that typified the Italy that the Futurists despise, the Futurists’ nationalism differs from other nineteenth-century and twentieth-century European nationalist impulses, including their own Italian predecessor.<sup>5</sup> The unification of Italy in 1861 was the result of a “second wave” of nationalist movements which, according to Benedict Anderson, emphasized the genealogical justification and identity of the nation (195). As such, these “second wave” movements stressed continuity and historical tradition as opposed to the newness that had characterized the “first wave” of nationalist movements which had originated in the “New World” (Anderson 187-206). Interestingly, Futurism’s nationalist rhetoric, which emphasizes a radical break from the past, resembles more this “first wave” of nationalist movements.

Futurism’s refusal of the past is exemplified by Marinetti’s address to Italian students in *Guerra sola igiene del mondo*:

Oggi più che mai la parola *Italia* deve dominare sulla parola *Libertà*. Tutte le libertà, eccettuata quella di essere vigliacchi, pacifisti, neutralisti. Tutti progressi nel cerchio della nazione. Cancelliamo la gloria romana con una gloria italiana più grande. Combattiamo dunque la cultura germanica, non già per difendere la cultura latina, ma combattiamo tutte e due queste culture ugualmente nocive, per difendere il genio creatore italiano d’oggi. (TIF 336)

Despite this forward-looking focus, and even as Marinetti promotes an anti-traditional, iconoclastic vision for the nation, he simultaneously reinvokes tradition by championing a conventionally-gendered ideal Italian male whose masculinity must be fervently militant.<sup>6</sup> However, even within this militant masculinity, an instability lurks which questions the very definition of masculinity.

For the Futurists, the model for this ideal Italian male is, of course, the ideal Futurist. Marinetti’s definition of Futurism in *Lettera aperta al futurista Mac Delmarle* elucidates the gender prejudice upon which Futurism is constructed: “Noi professiamo un nazionalismo antitradizionale che ha per base il vigore

inesauribile del sangue italiano" (*TIF* 92).<sup>7</sup> Here, Marinetti equates Futurism and its particular brand of nationalism with the vigor of Italian blood. Vigor, while not a quality exclusive to men, connotes a traditionally masculine quality. As such, Futurism and its brand of renegade nationalism hinge on the supposed inherent masculinity that runs through the Italian male's veins.

With his pithy proclamation about "il vigore inesauribile del sangue italiano," Marinetti's forward-looking nationalism reveals its roots in a conservatively gendered political rhetoric. In addition, Marinetti's configuration of the ideal Italian becomes inseparable from that of the ideal Futurist. Even if other Italian nationalist groups also espouse the idea of an Italian essence, namely, an *italianità*, the Futurists' conception of "Italianness" is inseparable from a notion of virile masculinity. However, as we will see, the Futurists' strong emphasis on masculinity intimates the weaknesses that lurk in that masculinity and in that sanguine vim.

The Futurist painter Umberto Boccioni identifies one such weakness when he laments,

Disgraziatamente l'italiano, che sa giuocare la vita per una femmina, è incapace di imporsi una disciplina, un amore ideale lontano, di concepire astrattamente il dovere, la patria, e la solidarietà.<sup>8</sup>

Boccioni's observation alludes to the incongruous behavior of the very Italians upon whose vigorous blood Futurism relies. It also discloses Futurism's misogyny for, as Boccioni points out, while the average Italian is capable of making the ultimate sacrifice for "una femmina," he is incapable of making sacrifices for more abstract, and, it is implied, more deserving causes. As such, Boccioni seems to have some reservations about "il vigore inesauribile del sangue italiano."

Ironically, Boccioni might be addressing this criticism to Marinetti himself. For although Marinetti exhibits the qualities of the virile and militant Futurist in his "love manual" *Come si seducono le donne* (1918), he unwittingly reveals himself to be also the Italian who, if he does not go so far as to "giuocare la vita per una femmina," will at least wait twelve hours hidden under a bed in order to get her alone. In doing so, Marinetti propels Futurism and "il vigore inesauribile del sangue italiano" into farce, which depends on just such ludicrous and improbable situations (Abrams 29). However, while it may appear farcical, *Come si seducono le donne* is a strategic military and Futurist tactic.

Although Marinetti at times resembles more a pathetic Don Juan than a virile Futurist, he also invokes but reverses the Ovidian maxim "Miliat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido" (*Amores* 1.9, v. 1). For Marinetti, the maxim

should read not "every lover is a soldier" but rather, "every soldier is a lover." The analogy between soldier and lover is not just coincidental, but is necessary, for, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick observes, the military is the space in which the most intimate male bonding is prescriptive and homosexuality is proscriptive (Sedgwick, 1986).<sup>9</sup> As such, it is with regards to "Cupid's camp" that it is most imperative to theatricalize one's heterosexuality since the need to appear strong militarily entails the risk of appearing weak by exposing the homoerotic bonds between men.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, for Marinetti, while every lover may be a soldier, every soldier **must** be a heterosexual lover.

Paradoxically, it is through the theatricalization of Marinetti's amorous conquests in "Cupid's own field" that *Come si seducono le donne* discloses the threat of effeminization or homosexuality; it reveals this threat in its very attempt to combat it. To ward off such "evils" as effeminization or homosexuality, virile ornamentation such as spurs are employed. However, virile ornamentation as well has an undesired effect. When virility depends on fashion to affirm its presence, those fashion accessories exposes virility as an exterior mask which the Futurist performs or wears as a costume.

Writing on the eighteenth century "renunciation of fashion by men" Kaja Silverman points out that at that time women began to be the prime articulators of their families' wealth. While women began to dress to impress, men began to culturally "renown fashion." Nevertheless, male subjectivity, similar to female subjectivity, finds its primary libidinal pleasure in exhibitionism; only secondarily does it find pleasure in voyeurism (Silverman 142). The male subject, as feminists have argued, gravitates toward scopophilia as a means of disavowing its own castration anxiety. However, when the male subject becomes the object of its own scopophilic gaze through a concern for fashion, that fashionable project avows and therefore discloses the anxiety about castration, which is an anxiety about the male subject's virility.

Fashion, therefore, is important for the staging of both Futurism's cultural distinction of nationality and masculinity. Giacomo Balla in his *Manifesto futurista del vestito da uomo* offers an example in which the male body becomes the space for the staging of both.<sup>11</sup> Balla's manifesto on men's clothing seemingly responds to the question Futurists have posed for themselves, namely, "What's a Futurist to wear?" If such a concern for fashion reveals the weaknesses in the virile Futurist subjectivity, the threat of this effeminizing possibility is allayed by the ancillary position it holds within greater Futurist concerns. The manifesto begins, "Noi futuristi, nei brevi intervalli del grande lavoro di rinnovamento, discutevamo di ogni cosa, come è nostra abitudine" (Balla 144). Yet, according to the manifesto that follows, men's clothing is clearly part of, if not essential to, the Futurists' struggles for renewal. As Balla writes,

For quite some time now we have been convinced that today's clothes . . . are still atrociously passéist. . . . Our crowded streets, our theatres and cafes are all imbued with a depressing funereal tonality, because clothes are made only to reflect the gloomy and dismal moods of today's passeists. (Balla 132)

For Balla, while clothes "reflect" an interior state and therefore project or imitate a pre-existing interiority, appropriate Futurist attire can alter that interior state.

As a result, Balla seems to suggest that by merely restyling that exterior through fashion, the interior, namely, the very subjectivity of the Italian male, can be radically transformed as well. For the Futurists, it would seem that, as the saying goes, the suit indeed "makes the man," that is, the interior identity is brought into being by exterior ornamentation.<sup>12</sup> Balla's manifesto discloses how subjectivity is displayed onto the body, which in turn suggests that the surface is **not** an effect of an essential nature or of a cause originating from within the body. I would like to suggest that Balla's reference to the "brief intervals" from which emerge the Futurists' concern for fashion, might figure as the fissures or gaps in the Futurists' ideal male subjectivity.

While the Futurists value inconsistencies, in as much as the latter reflect Futurism's embracement of change and dynamism in general, inconsistencies that undermine Futurism's construction of an ideal Italian masculinity present a problem for the Futurist agenda. Such problems surface in Marinetti's *Come si seducono le donne*. As Marinetti and his lover discuss the spurs that he wore during their lovemaking, here again what the Futurist wears is paramount to his Futurist virility. Curiously, while the spurs attribute bellicose qualities to Marinetti, who, thanks to them, is "pieno di guerra" during love-making, Marinetti also declares that a woman without a man with spurs is an empty revolver (Marinetti 1918, 56-61). The spurs, therefore, assume phallic potential in the lovemaking, both for the man and the women. Marinetti elaborates, stating that "Una bella donna non può avere altro amante che un soldato armato in tutti i modi che viene dal fronte e sta per ripartire" (Marinetti 1981, 59). It is implied that anything less virile than a soldier with all his bellicose accoutrements will not only invoke Italy's effeminate and antiquated legacy, but will prove a poor lover. Once again, the clothes articulate not only the body but the spirit of the man inside them.

From Balla's manifesto, it is clear that the man whose wardrobe the Futurists want to revamp is the passéist's. His wardrobe is described as:

- (a) **the timidity and symmetry** of colours, colours which are arranged in wishy-washy patterns of idiotic spots and stripes;
- (b) all forms of **lifeless attire** which make man feel tired, depressed, miserable

and sad, and which restrict movement producing a triste wanness;  
 (c) so-called “good taste” and harmony, which weaken the soul and take the  
 spring out of the step (Balla 133).

In delineating just how the Futurist male body is to be clothed, (and how it is not to be), emphasis is placed on clothing that is “allegri(ssssssssssimo)” (Balla 145) and “daring clothes with brilliant colours and dynamic lines” (Balla 132). Further requisitions demanded of the Futurist clothing:

We want Futurist clothes to be comfortable and practical/ Dynamic/ Aggressive/  
 Shocking/ Energetic/ Violent/ Flying (i.e. giving the idea of flying, rising and  
 running)/ Peppy/ Joyful/ Illuminating (in order to have light in the rain)/  
 Phosphorescent/ Lit by electric lamps (Balla 132).

If these qualities are not enough to convey the masculine (not efeminate!) nature of this concern for dress, Futurist clothes should also “encourage industrial activity . . . [and] Use materials with forceful MUSCULAR colours” (Balla 132).

It is not insignificant that in Balla’s manuscript, these characteristics are written so as to form the outline or silhouette of Balla’s design for a Futurist suit. The disposition of the words in relation to the design of the suit further underscores how the Futurist identity is enunciated on the body’s surface, moving from the outside inward.

In addition, while Futurist clothes ought to denote productivity and muscular forcefulness, the fact that they ought also “provide constant and novel enjoyment for our [male] bodies” (Balla 132) seems to align Balla’s manifesto with a Foucaultian aesthetic of non-genital pleasure. Non-genital pleasures are in sharp contrast to Marinetti’s genital objective in *Come si seducono le donne*. Moreover, non-genital pleasure suggests the possibility of non-heterosexual pleasure as well.<sup>13</sup>

Also conflicting with what one might expect from the virile Futurist, Balla’s Futurist dress-code allows for variation: “**Pattern changes** should be available by pneumatic dispatch, in this way anyone may change his clothes according to the needs of mood” (133). So even though the Futurist’s clothes, like the Futurist himself should be dynamic, aggressive, etc., the possibility of mutation should not be shunned. “Available modifications will include: Loving/ Arrogant/ Persuasive/ Diplomatic/ Unital/ Multital/ Shaded/ Polychrome/ Perfumed” (133). While it may be possible to characterize these alternate qualities as “masculine,” and while the possibility for pattern changes are justified by the Futurist propensity for spontaneity, read against other Futurist proclamations, which disdain vacillation, it would seem that the Futurist has a license for mood swings that is repugnant in the non-Futurist. In *Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna*,

Marinetti writes,

Che mai pretendono le donne, i sedentari, gl'invalidi, gli ammalati, e tutti i consiglieri prudenti? Alla loro vita vacillante, rotta da lugubri agonie, da sonni tremebondi e da incubi gravi, noi preferiamo la morte violenta e glorifichiamo come la sola che sia degna dell'uomo, animale da preda. (*TIF* 15)

If variety is called for in order to avoid stasis, it also allows for the sort of vacillation and catering to "the needs of mood," that the Futurist despises in others but apparently sanctions in himself.

As a result, the Futurist manifesto on men's clothing unwittingly evidences the fragile construction of masculinity, which, as Barbara Spackman has demonstrated, threatens to not be virile at all. Yet, in addition to Spackman's insight regarding the fear that "given half a chance, boys will be girls" (91), and likewise, the analogous argument that, without the proper clothes, a Futurist might be indistinguishable from a non-Futurist, it would seem that even with his clothes, it is difficult to tell the Futurist from the non-Futurist.

The same argument that has been made about sexual identity applies to the Futurists and their figuration of an ideal Italian. As Judith Butler purports regarding sexual identity, the markings of gender are naively misinterpreted as the marks of an anatomically essential category called "sex." Similarly, the identities of both the Futurist and the Italian, at a closer look, reveal themselves to have no essence; indeed, the Futurist and the Italian are constructed from the outside inward.

I wish now to look at the erotic investment suggested by the Futurist configuration of a nationalist self-identity as well as the Futurist construction of *la patria*. To examine the Futurists' erotic investment in nationalism, it is revealing to look at Marinetti's definitions regarding *la patria*. In these passages, we will find a gender ambiguity that foregrounds the male body, often convoluting it with *la patria*.

In *Al di là del Comunismo*,<sup>14</sup> Marinetti writes,

Il cuore dell'uomo rompe nella sua espansione circolare il piccolo cerchio soffocatore della famiglia, per giungere fino agli orli estremi della Patria, dove sente palpitare i suoi connazionali di frontiera, come i nervi periferici del proprio corpo. (*TIF* 474)

Here, rather than emphasizing *la patria* as a feminine body as it has been traditionally figured, Marinetti suggests an image in which *la patria* functions as a physical space that allows for the corporeal union between "pulsating" male bodies. It is not insignificant that the man's heart breaks free of the institution

of the heterosexual family to be able to feel, via a nationalistic discourse, male bodies not unlike his own. The fact that these bodies bear a striking resemblance to his own, indeed are like his own body (“come i nervi periferici del proprio corpo”), underscores the narcissistic quality of these homoerotic, nationalist aspirations in which the desired other is indistinguishable from the self.

Lynn Hunt suggests in *Eroticism and the Body Politic* that the body politic is often figured as a female body that is necessary to connect men: “the point of triangulation or exchange that enables men to relate to one another in social and political organizations” (13). As such, female corporeality then serves both to facilitate and to displace, if not to disavow, the desire between men. Yet, as is evident in Marinetti’s definition, the male body is not disavowed but is, on the contrary, quite present. The female body of *la patria* becomes conflated with the male body of the patriotic subject as “i nervi periferici” of the male body suggestively parallel the “estremi orli della Patria.” Already a hybrid, *la patria*, etymologically “la terra dei padri” incorporates “il padre” into “la terra,” or vice versa, semantically performing both a feminization of the masculine and a masculinization of the feminine. In his discussion of this androgynous entity, Marinetti however reasserts the masculine body. Again the male body then becomes the space through and on which the cultural distinction of nationality is staged.

*La patria* also functions as a fetish upon whose existence the national subject’s possession of the Phallus depends. For as Marinetti declares, “Negare la patria equivale a isolarsi, castrarsi, diminuirsi, denigrarsi, suicidarsi” (*TIF* 475).<sup>15</sup> To deny the homeland is an act equal to self-castration. Marinetti also offers this interpretation:

La patria rappresenta per noi il massimo allargamento della generosità dell’individuo straripante in cerchio su tutti gli esseri umani similia lui.  
(*AdldC* 474)

Here, the feminine body of the patria is figured first as an extension of the masculine self, and then as one with that self. As such, the body of the national subject and the female body of *la patria* are superimposed. The nationalist, therefore, must defend his own bodily borders as well as her terrestrial confines. Furthermore, keeping in mind Marinetti’s quintessential Futurist, Mafarka, and his physical attributes (an eleven meter penis), the “massimo prolungamento dell’individuo” is clearly both *la patria* and the penis (*TIF* 253-266).

In *Come si seducono le donne*, we have seen how the Futurists conflate the penis with the Phallus. As Lacan argues such a confusion is almost obligatory albeit fallacious:

The price of the subject's access to the world of desire is that the real organ must be marked at the imaginary level with this bar, so that its symbol can take up its place as the signifier of this very point where the signifier is lacking. (Lacan in Mitchell 117)

That the Futurists confuse the penis with the Phallus is significant, for as we will see below, the nationalist's castration, the nation's castration and the subject's "personal" castration are all related.

What is most obvious about the language used in the context of Futurism's nationalism is that the relationship between one's country and oneself is figured as familiar, and at times, incestuous. In the case of Italy, *la patria* is an androgynous maternal figure and the nationalist subject is the son/suitor. The Futurists also recognize that this maternal figure is castrated. As a body, she is missing vital parts: "una Italia mutila, ancora una volta rassegnata nella sua mutilazione. Non c'è Venezia, non c'è Istria, non c'è Fiume."<sup>16</sup>

That Italy had been mutilated, castrated, was in fact the complaint of Italian irredentism. By desiring to return to Italy her irredenta and thereby restore her status as a non-mutilated maternal body, that is, as the Phallic Mother, the Futurists along with other irredentists demonstrate how the castration of the national subject and that of *la patria* are intertwined. In a letter to Papini, Marinetti makes the explicit connection between an "Italia futurista," and his own castration: "È più facile strapparmi i testicoli che la fede in una Italia futurista, grande, geniale, prima nel mondo, inesauribilmente ricca di genii."<sup>17</sup> *La patria* allows the individual to offset his castration, provided he restores the missing parts to the maternal body. Ideally, Italy would then be restored to her status as Phallic Mother and an *Italia futurista* is an Italy with "with balls" (or with a penis).

Since in Marinetti's definition of *la patria*, the male body and *la patria* are closely related, the nationalist must identify with Italy and her castration. Such identification is necessary for the deployment of nationalist and patriotic rhetoric. It is for this reason that Benedict Anderson's theorizing of the importance of imagination in nationalism is significant, for without identification, without the notion of commonality, of *italianità*, nationalist discourse, like the Phallus, deflates.

Yet, paradoxically, the national subject must also refuse or disavow such a disturbing identification with *la patria's* castration, for as the mutilated feminine body, Italy is the sign of sexual difference which evokes his own castration anxiety. The irredentist feels anxiety not just because he fears castration, but because he, in as much as he identifies with the mutilated motherland, has been castrated as well. War against Austria can then be figured as the ultimate Oedipal conflict, in which the patriot combats to restore the Phallus to the maternal body,

as well as secure his own access to it.

With war, however, comes sacrifice. Anxiety about the disfigurement of the male body emerges in *Come si seducono le donne* where Marinetti seems fearful that Italian women will no longer desire the Italian male body mutilated by war. This preoccupation compels the narrating voice to redirect its address from its putatively male readership to a female one. These female readers are instructed, one might dare say, beseeched, to be attracted to this mutilated but, presumably no longer castrated, male body:

Donne, dovete preferire ai maschi intatti più o meno sospetti di vigliaccheria, i gloriosi mutilati! Amateli ardentemente! I loro baci Futuristi vi daranno dei figli d'acciaio" (Marinetti 1918, 146).

Echoing Balla's manifesto on clothing, the identity of the Futurist soldier is articulated from the outside in, and physical mutilation is the sign of inner virility. Ideally, war would function as a sort of plastic surgery that, by altering the surface, would give proof of the Futurist that is supposedly beneath the skin:

Donne fate che ogni italiano dica partendo: Voglio offrirle al mio ritorno una bella ferita degna di lei! . . . Voglio che la battaglia mi riplasmì il corpo per lei! . . . Voglio essere modificato dalle granate e dalle baionette nemiche per lei! (Marinetti 1981, 147)

Again the Futurist soldier's identity is inscribed onto his body which, as a sort of text, impersonates and incorporates (literally, takes into the body) that identity.

This preoccupation with possible loss or mutilation is attributable to the fact that, similar to the Lacanian subject who knows that "'having' only functions at the price of loss and 'being' as an effect of division" (Rose in Mitchell 40), the national subject can only secure the Phallus at the price or risk of bodily mutilation, that is, by another sort of castration. Whether at the level of personal subjectivity or national subjectivity, identity is secured through a loss, or mutilation in the case of the Futurist soldier. This fact reiterates the psychoanalytic insight that "normal" male subjectivity is constructed on castration anxiety. The nationalist must risk mutilation in order to maintain the split from the Other, for without such a division, the identity of the self, and the nation, is non-existent. Carl Carrà insightfully notes just this when he writes, "Rinnegare il nazionalismo vuol dire assoggettarsi al nazionalismo d'altri."<sup>18</sup>

The nationalist's sacrifice for the homeland can be said to function as a repetition of the loss upon which all identity is founded. At the same time, sacrifice is a means of disavowing that loss. As such, the homeland defended,

restored to its un-mutilated state, can then assume the role of a fetish which, as the site of both the denial of sexual difference (the denial of castration) and the continuous reminder of sexual difference, depends on a double and conflicting reading. The ambiguous or hybrid gendering of *la patria* then complements the homeland's role as fetish.

As Benedict Anderson has argued, nationalism identifies an "imagined community." Although the Futurists imagine a virile, militant masculinity for themselves and for the nation, they also undermine that masculinity by emphasizing its performative and ornamental nature. Furthermore, the achievement of the national community that the Futurists desire necessitates not only the staging of nationalism on the nationalist's own phallic body but demands that *la patria* figure as a phallic maternal body.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>From here on abbreviated as *TIF*.

<sup>2</sup>I am indebted to Professor Lucia Re of UCLA for calling to my attention the privileging and objectification of the male body in Marinetti's texts during a graduate seminar on Futurism.

<sup>3</sup>Blum and Re delivered papers dealing with Futurism's attitudes toward women at a conference on Futurism held at UCLA, March 10-12, 1993. Also see Cinzia Blum, "Rhetorical Strategies and Gender in Marinetti's Futurist Manifesto," *Italica* 67 (1990): 196-211; and Lucia Re, "Futurism and Feminism," *Annali d'Italianistica* 7 (1989): 253-272.

<sup>4</sup>In addition to the evidence in the Futurist manifestos themselves, for Italy's national inferiority complex, see R. J. B. Bosworth, *Italy, the Least of Great Powers: Italian Foreign Policy Before the First World War* (London: Cambridge UP, 1970). Also Richard Drake, *Byzantium for Rome: The Politics of Nostalgia in Umbertian Italy, 1878-1900* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1980).

<sup>5</sup>For example, the nationalism of Enrico Corradini, the early twentieth century political and literary figure and his political party, *Associazione nazionalità italiana*, invoke the mythology of the Roman empire and Italy's past glory to be reclaimed. See Drake, 187. Also Emilio Gentile, "Il futurismo e la politica dal nazionalismo modernista al fascismo 1909-1920," *Futurismo, Cultura e Politica*, ed. Renzo De Felice (Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1988) 105-159. Regarding Futurism's distinctly forward-looking nationalism, Gentile writes, "Questo nazionalismo non aveva gli occhi rivolti al passato per rifiutare il presente, ma guardava al futuro; aveva una propria imagine-mito della 'vita moderna' e considerava l'industrializzazione un processo inevitabile per

consolidare la nazione e accrescere la sua potenza” (107).

<sup>6</sup>It must be recognized that the ideal masculinity that the Futurists celebrate marks a departure from the profile of the languid, depressed, neutral Italian male who the Futurists disdain. However, Futurist anti-traditionalism is at times accompanied by a less than iconoclastic sexual politics. See Re (1989) and Blum (1988). Also Ciniza Blum, “The Scarred Womb of the Futurist Woman,” *Carte Italiane* 8 (1986-87): 14-30.

<sup>7</sup>Also referred in Gentile, 111.

<sup>8</sup>Umberto Boccioni, *Opere complete* (Foligno: F. Campitelli, 1927) 8-9; quoted in Gentile, 113.

<sup>9</sup>Sedgwick is mentioned in Barbara Spackman, “The Fascist Rhetoric of Virility,” *Stanford Italian Review* 8 (1990): 95-96. See Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985) 83-96.

<sup>10</sup>Alice Yaeger Kaplan also suggests that military comradeship poses a threat to a stable definition of masculinity by permitting activities usually off-limits to masculinity to typify masculine behavior in the particular content of the military. Kaplan, *Reproduction of Banality* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986) 11.

<sup>11</sup>Due to the difficulty in reading Balla’s manuscript as reprinted in Mario Bulzoni, ed., *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* (Rome: 1968), I also refer the English translation of Balla’s manifesto: *Futurist Manifest of Men’s Clothing in The Documents of 20th Century Art*, ed. Umbro Apollonio, trans. Robert Brain et al. (New York: Viking P, 1970) 132-134.

<sup>12</sup>Silverman contends, “Clothing is a necessary condition of subjectivity—that in articulating the body, it simultaneously articulates the psyche” in “Fragments of a Fashionable Discourse,” *Studies in Entertainment*, ed. Tania Modleski (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986) 147. Silverman also refers to Freud’s similar conviction, see Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1953-1966) v. IX, 26.

<sup>13</sup>Winifred Woodhull, “Sexuality, Power and the Question of Rape,” *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*, eds. Irene Diamond et al. (Boston: Northeastern UP, 1988). “According to Foucault, the preferred strategy is to ‘desexualize’ sexuality by multiplying and diffusing pleasures, in order cancel the now-obsolete understanding of it as a circumscribed domain fundamentally opposed to power and the law” (169). Woodhull refers to “The Confession of the Flesh,” *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980) 194-228.

<sup>14</sup>Here on abbreviated as *AddC*.

<sup>15</sup>Other references by Marinetti to castration in relation to *la patria* include the following from *Guerra sola igiene del mondo*: “Oggi, in Italia, passatisti è sinonimo di neutralisti, pacifisti ed eunuchi, mentre futuristi è sinonimo di anti-neutralisti violenti” (TIF 332).

<sup>16</sup>Paolo Orano, *La Dalmazia è italiana. Sarà italiana!* published August 12, 1917; quoted in Gentile, 127-128.

<sup>17</sup>Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, letter to Papini, October 1913, *Carte Papini*, (Florence: Fondazione Primo Conti); quoted in Gentile, 116.

<sup>18</sup>Carlo Carrà, letter to Soffici, 12 June 1913, *Archivi del futurismo*, ed. M. Drudi Gambillo and T. Fiori (Rome: De Luca, 1959-1962) vol. I, 217; quoted in Gentile, 110, n. 15.

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