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Food and the Futurist ‘Revolution’. A Note

by

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### Section 1: Editorials

1. *Introduction to the special issue on “Gastronomy and Revolution”* (M. Albertone – L. Frobert – E. Pasini)

### Section 2: Articles. Special Issue: Gastronomy and Revolution

2. *Nourrir les enfants, nourrir le peuple. L’alimentation entre identité nationale, lutte politique et action révolutionnaire. Commentaire au séminaire sur “Gastronomie et Révolution”* (M. Margotti)

3. *Wheat versus Maize. Civilizing Dietary Strategies and Early Mexican Republicanism* (S. Bak-Geller Corona)

4. *Food and the Futurist ‘Revolution’. A Note* (R. Ibba – D. Sanna)

5. *Food and Cooking in Revolutionary and Soviet Russia* (D. Steila)

### Section 3: Notes

6. *A Response to Doina-Cristina Rusu* (M. Thick)

### Section 4: Reviews

7. *A Matter of Method: British Aristotelianism and the New Science. Essay Review* (F.G. Sacco)

8. *Book Reviews* (S. Gino, R. Gronda)

### Section 5: News & Notices

9. *Activities of the GISI | Les activités du GISI (2015)*

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# Food and the Futurist 'Revolution'. A Note

Roberto Ibba, Domenico Sanna \*

*The Italian futurist movement dealt with all branches traditionally tied to high culture, but, at the same time, it approached 'humbler' fields as fashion, sports and cookery. In his french period, Marinetti met the chef Jules Maincave and they opened together a 'Futurist' restaurant. In 1913 Maincave published the manifesto La cuisine futuriste. In 1930, Marinetti issued in Turin the Manifesto of Futurist Cooking. The publication was preceded by a celebration dinner which took place at the Penna d'Oca restaurant in Milan. In Marinetti's opinion, people think, dream and act according to what they eat and drink. The Futurist crusade against pasta reflects this point of view. If, on the one hand, Futurism embraced a new way of cooking, on the other hand Fascism promoted the reintroduction of traditional Italian cooking. Purpose of this essay is to delineate the contradiction between Futurism and the Fascist movement and regime, in Italy and in Europe, focusing on the aspects related to cooking.*



## 1. Futurism and the 'culinary' revolution

In 1909, with extreme attitudes oriented to the worship of the 'break with the past', in the fields of art, music, theater, literature, dance, and even cooking, the work of Pellegrino Artusi *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*

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(‘Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well’)<sup>1</sup>, as a symbol of Italian traditional gastronomy, became the critical target for Futurists, who thought that dynamism and speed were the main themes of modern life and should permeate all its aspects.

Futurism was the cultural movement which more than any other led the attention on the debate about cooking. The revolution proposed by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Fillia in *Futurist Cooking*<sup>2</sup> was a ‘culinary’ one, where the aesthetics was combined with the material dimension of the food.

Marinetti had foreseen since his literary beginnings, in his theatrical work *Le Roi Bombance*, the need to transform the gastronomic dimension, in order to bring about a complete revolution. The American researcher Selena Daly has written an interesting essay (“*Le Roi Bombance: The Original Futurist Cookbook?*”), according to which:

The themes of nutrition and digestion fascinated Filippo Tommaso Marinetti for much of his career. The beginnings of this interest can be traced to his pre-Futurist play *Le Roi Bombance*, published in 1905, in which the eponymous obese king is concerned only with satisfying his enormous appetite<sup>3</sup>.

The first real events were carried out just before the First World-War, in 1910, in Trieste, during a Futurist conference held at the Politeama Rossetti: “The dining companions decided to reverse the order of the courses: starting from the coffee and closing with the appetizers and aperitifs. The use of cutlery was excluded to amplify the sense of touch. Everything was reversed”.<sup>4</sup> The dinner menu included:

*Caffè*  
*Dolci memorie frappées*  
*Frutta dell’Avvenire*  
*Marmellata di gloriosi defunti*

<sup>1</sup> Pellegrino Artusi, *La scienza in cucina e l’arte di mangiar bene* (Firenze: Giunti, 2014).

<sup>2</sup> Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Fillia, *La cucina Futurista. Un pranzo che evitò un suicidio*, (Milano: Marinotti, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Selena Daly, *Le Roi Bombance: The original Futurist cookbook?*, [http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13532944.2013.806289#.Vi8Nt7xo\\_xA](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13532944.2013.806289#.Vi8Nt7xo_xA).

<sup>4</sup> Piero Frassica, “Introduzione”, in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Fillia, *La cucina futurista*, (Milano: Viennepierre, 2007).

*Arrosto di mummia con fegatini di professori*  
*Insalata archeologica*  
*Spezzatino di passato con piselli esplosivi in salsa storica*  
*Pesce del Mar Morto*  
*Grumi di sangue in brodo*  
*Antipasto di demolizioni*  
*Vermouth*<sup>1</sup>.

During his subsequent stay in France, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti met the chef Jules Maincave<sup>2</sup>, and together they managed for a while a 'Futurist restaurant'. On September 1<sup>st</sup> 1913 Maincave published in the journal *Fantasio* the manifesto "La cuisine Futuriste"<sup>3</sup>.

After the end of the First World-War, the practical attempts toward a Futurist cooking came a long way, with the installation of the exhibition "Futurist Rome" in 1920. Ten years later, in 1930, the restaurant Penna d'Oca in Milan (directed by Mario Tapparelli) organized a Futurist dinner that passed into history. Some weeks after it, in the *Gazzetta del Popolo* in Torino, the "Manifesto della cucina Futurista"<sup>4</sup> appeared. The publication of the manifesto caused a strong controversy that involved the national and international press. Even the "New York Times" devoted space to the topic<sup>5</sup>.

The "Manifesto della cucina Futurista" was divided into 4 sections: Against *pastasciutta*; Invitation to chemistry; The "Carneplastico"; Equator+North pole. The program was articulated in eleven specific points:

<sup>1</sup> *Rapporto sulla vittoria del Futurismo a Trieste*, in Aldo Palazzeschi, *L'incendiario* (Milano: Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, 1910).

<sup>2</sup> Hervé This and Pierre Gagnair, *Cooking: The Quintessential Art*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Critical Writings*, ed. Günther Berghaus (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), Manifesto of Futurist Cuisine, footnote 7; Gennaro Rosario, *Creatività e dinamismo a tavola: la cucina futurista di Maincave, Marinetti e Fillia*, in *Soavi sapori della cultura italiana*, atti del 13. Congresso dell'A.I.P.I., Verona, Soave, 27-29 agosto 1998, eds. Bart Van Den Bossche, Michel Bastiaensen, Corinna Salvadori Loneragan, Firenze, Cesati (2000), p. 317-329. Some months before, in the same review, Guillaume Apollinaire had published "Le Cubisme culinaire" (now in *Œuvres en prose*, Gallimard, 1977, p. 401).

<sup>4</sup> Guido Davico Bonino, ed., *Manifesti Futuristi*, (Milano: Ebook Rizzoli, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Claudia Salaris, *Cibo Futurista. Dalla cucina nell'arte all'arte in cucina*, (Viterbo: Stampa Alternativa, 2008).

1. A original harmony of the table (glassware, pottery, decoration) with the flavors and colors of the food;
2. The absolute originality of the food;
3. The invention of tasty plastic complexes, whose original harmony of form and color, nourish the eyes and excite the imagination before groped lips;
4. The abolition of fork and knife for the plastic complexes;
5. The use of the art of fragrances to favor the tasting. Every dish must be preceded by a perfume that will be deleted from the table by fans;
6. The limited use of music in the intervals between courses because it does not distract the sensitivity of the tongue and of the palate;
7. The abolition of eloquence and politics at the table;
8. The use of poetry and music as ingredients sudden, to turn the flavors of food with their sexual intensity;
9. The quick presentation between courses, under the nose and the eyes of the diners, of food that they will eat and others that they do not eat, to promote curiosity, surprise and imagination;
10. The creation of simultaneous and changing canapés which contain ten, twenty flavors to be tasted in a few seconds. In Futurist cooking these canapés have by analogy the same amplifying function that images have in literature. A given taste of something can sum up an entire area of life, the history of an amorous passion or an entire voyage to the Far East;
11. A battery of scientific instruments in the kitchen: ozonizers to give liquids and foods the perfume of ozone, ultra-violet ray lamps (since many foods when irradiated with ultra-violet rays acquire active properties, become more assimilable, preventing rickets in young children, etc.), electrolyzers to decompose juices and extracts, etc. in such a way as to obtain from a known product a new product with new properties, colloidal mills to pulverize flours, dried fruits, drugs, etc.; atmospheric and vacuum stills, centrifugal autoclaves, dialyzers. The use of these appliances will have to be scientific, avoiding the typical error of cooking foods under steam pressure, which provokes the destruction of active substances (vitamins, etc.) because of the high temperatures. Chemical indicators will take into account the acidity and alkalinity of these sauces and serve to correct possible errors: too little salt, too much vinegar, too much pepper or too much sugar.

The manifesto proclaimed: “While recognizing that men malnourished or coarsely have made great things in the past, we affirm this truth: you think, you dream and you act, accordingly to what you drink and eat”<sup>1</sup>. This phrase clearly evoked similar expressions of Ludwig Feuerbach’s<sup>2</sup>. Summing up, the Futurist cooking program developed on different levels:

- Practical-hygienic aimed to renew the nutrition for a new man;
- Political-self-sufficient that sticking to the Fascist politics wanted to protect the national products;
- Futurist propaganda, following Marinetti’s methodology that identified both the enemies—*spaghetti*, domestic routine, academic chefs—and how to tackle them: proclamations, conferences and events;
- Artistic, which is the most interesting for the consequences that produced after decades in the *nouvelle cuisine* and then in the molecular cuisine. That is the focus on the aesthetic aspect of the course, making the act of enjoying an art form-life, body art, total art, where the ritual food becomes surprise show with diners no longer passive users, but part of a performance<sup>3</sup>.

After the publication of the Manifesto, in Turin, at Via Vanchiglia 2, on March 8, 1931, the Taverna del Santopalato was opened: it was the first Futuristic restaurant, designed and realized by F.T. Marinetti, Fillia and Diulgheroff<sup>4</sup>. Already in the months before the opening the Taverna had raised a reputation, in connection with the campaigns of the Futurists. It was characterized by a clean and linear space—the negation of what the classic restaurants represented—dominated by aluminium, that was the most suitable and expressive material. The Taverna enclosed these essential skills and was truly a child of the century in which it was conceived.

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Elisa Montagner, *Food design e bijoux contemporanei: dalla tavola imbandita al gioiello commestibile* (Venezia: Università Ca’ Foscari, 2011); Cfr. L. Feuerbach, *Das Geheimnis des Opfers, oder Der Mensch ist, was er ißt* (1862), in Id., *Gesammelte Werke*, II, *Kleinere Schriften IV (1851-1866)* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1990), 26-52.

<sup>3</sup> Claudia Salaris, *Cibo Futurista*.

<sup>4</sup> Marzio Pinottini, “La cucina Futurista ovvero l’ottimismo a tavola”, in *Alla Taverna Santopalato di Via Vanchiglia 2*, (Torino: Università degli Studi, Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere, Torino, 2004).

During those years, Italy was marked out by a strong prevalence of the rural working classes, while the urban workers were a minority. Also for this reason the battle for the Futurist cooking connected itself to the modernization of the Italian life. According to Marinetti's ideas, the strongest theme of Futurist gastronomical politics remained the exaltation of the creative experience of food. In this perspective, the crusade was started against *pastasciutta*, the cooking symbol of the nation, which was defined: "a food *passatista* ['passéist'], because it hampers and brutalizes; it is delusional concerning its nutritional capacity; it makes one skeptic, slow and pessimistic". It belonged to the "anti-virile" food and was "no food for fighters"<sup>1</sup>.

The Futurist journalist Marco Ramperti argued that *pasta* made Italians 'jammed up', like an unfinished work of art. Therefore, if they wanted to pursue a policy of dynamism and action, even under Fascism, Italians must reject guzzling and paralyzing food.

As for many other strongholds of Futurism, also for cooking some effects were to be seen only decades later<sup>2</sup>. Just think about the Slow Food movement, which proposes an alternative model of development and supply, that moves away from the model of globalization, trying to recover the typical characteristics of each territory. Only many years after the end of Futurism, new cooking styles inspired by Futurism came to life: we can mention the *nouvelle cuisine*, with the culture of light meals; finger food, *i.e.* the tactile relationship with food; Fusion Cuisine, a fusion of culinary traditions; Visual Food or Food Design, *i.e.* the importance of how food is displayed.

While in reality, at the time, no revolution was carried out despite the efforts of Marinetti and his movement, nowadays it is a widespread idea that food preparation and consume is an art that involves the whole sensory sphere, and not only taste. And if Marinetti was the first to raise the issue of the connection between chemistry and food, it looks like he anticipated the debate opened by the Spanish cooks during the last fifteen years, that are embodied by the 'molecular' cuisine avowed by the chef Ferran Adrià<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Irba Futurista, "Manifesto di culinaria Futurista", in *Roma Futurista*, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> Rod Kedward, *La Vie en bleu: France and the French since 1900* (London: Penguin Books, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Danielle Callegari, "The Politics of Pasta: La cucina Futurista and the Italian Cookbook" in *History in California Italian Studies*, 4:2 (2013), [http://escholarship.org/uc/ismrq\\_cisj?volume=4;issue=2](http://escholarship.org/uc/ismrq_cisj?volume=4;issue=2)





## 2. Futurism and Fascist regime: a diverging alliance.

It should be said that at the time there was a strong contrast between the Futurists, who proposed a new way of cooking—lighter and more essential, outside and against classical Italian cuisine—and the Fascists who wanted to spread the classic Italian cuisine among the masses.

The Futurist movement had started to deal with politics right after its birth: already in 1910 its members began to draft a political program that would be developed in the pre-war years and would define itself in a text published in 1913. Overall, their ideas were confused and often inconsistent, ranging from subversive behaviors, to patriotism, to anarchy<sup>1</sup>. The movement was almost ineffectual from a political point of view, and ignored but by the intellectuals who sympathized with it.

The Futurists had been in the frontline of interventionism against Austria, at the beginning of the First World-War; they considered war as “the only hygiene of the world”, a way to erase the past and start a new era for the avant-garde. In this phase they familiarized with Benito Mussolini: in a few occasions the Fascist leader met Marinetti; they were agreed on interventionism, even if there weren't specific political common points.

During the War many Futurists—among which Marinetti himself—fought in the frontline and before the end of the conflict they started to think and act as a proper political party. Starting from 1918 “Roma Futurista”, edited by Mario Carli, Emilio Settimelli and Marinetti, was published alongside other Futurist organs (“Vela Latina” in Naples, “L'Italia Futurista” in Florence). The *Manifesto* of the Futurist political party was published in September 1918 and it was characterized by a strong anti-monarchist and anti-clerical attitude, cutting ties with the liberal class and heading to the “Italy of tomorrow”.

<sup>1</sup> Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Guerra sola igiene del mondo* (Milano: Edizioni Futuriste di “Poesia”, 1915).

With regards to agriculture (and so to food), the Futurist party proposed the “agricultural endowment fund for combatants” created thanks to national donations, in addition to the “socialization of the extended public soil” created through the public and ecclesiastical lands expropriation<sup>1</sup>.

This highlighted the need to reassign the lands to the First World-War veterans<sup>2</sup> as promised by the liberal government during the years of the conflict. In his *Futurist Democracy*, Marinetti built up a Futurist political program, reaffirming since the opening that, for the first time, a political party would be born out of an artistic and cultural avant-garde movement, against the conservative ideas of the political elite of that age<sup>3</sup>.

The positions of the Futurist party eventually laid the foundations for the Fasci of Combat created by Mussolini in 1914 during the well-known San Sepolcro meeting in Milan<sup>4</sup>. Besides the political contribution, the Futurists instilled into early Fascism resoluteness, organizational basis, a strong anti-monarchist sense and ethics.

Another group tied to the Futurists was the so called *arditi*: they could be distinguished by a strong interventionist and irredentist bent that gave rise to the “impresa di Fiume” led by Gabriele D’Annunzio. On the other hand, in January 1919 the Futurists parted with the socialist reformers led by Bissolati ratifying a clear division between the democratic interventionism and the anti-democratic nationalism<sup>5</sup>.

Mussolini drew from the Futurists and the *arditi* to create the first branches of the Fasci of Combat and he used their “actionism” against the Socialist Party, i.e. on April 15th 1915 when the Fascists, *arditi* and Futurists fought against the socialists and assaulted the headquarter of *L’Avanti*.

The electoral baptism of the Fasci of combat was a failure: despite Marinetti and Mussolini’s allegiance, no members of the parliament were elected in the

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 738-741.

<sup>2</sup> “For the veterans [...] Marinetti called for the socialization of public and Church lands, and the expropriation of uncultivated or poorly cultivated lands” (Ernest Ialongo, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti: The Artist and His Politics* (Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 64).

<sup>3</sup> Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Democrazia Futurista. Dinamismo politico* (Milano: Facchi, 1919).

<sup>4</sup> Emilio Gentile, *Storia del partito Fascista. 1919-1922. Movimento e milizia* (Roma and Bari: Laterza, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> R. De Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario 1883-1920* (Torino: Einaudi, 1965), 474-490.

elections of November 1919. Mussolini, on the brink of the political failure, gave up on his trust to create a political entity that included the whole left wing interventionism. Only when in 1920, during the convention of Milan, the Fasci abandoned their republican positions and started to devise a pact between working class and middle class, with overtures toward the Vatican, Marinetti, who totally disagreed with those positions, left the Fasci of combat<sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, the cultural connection between Fascism and Futurism continued during the years of the regime: after the March on Rome (1922) and the establishment of the totalitarian regime (1924-25) the relationship between Marinetti and Mussolini improved<sup>2</sup>. Although disapproving of some of the pillars of the regime (the rejection of modernity, the support to the monarchy, the covenant with the Church, the racial laws), Marinetti, who was eventually nominated as Accademico d'Italia and joined the Italian Social Republic<sup>3</sup>, wrote a book about the connection between Futurism, Fascism and arditism, inscribed to "My dear friend Benito Mussolini". In the introduction Marinetti elucidated the relation between Futurism, Fascism and politics:

Italian Futurism, characteristically patriotic, which has spawned countless Futurismi in foreign lands, has nothing to do with their political attitudes, like the Bolshevik standpoint of the Russian Futurism that has become State art. Futurism is an artistic and ideological movement. It intervenes in political struggle only in the hour of serious dangers for the nation.

Fascism was born from interventionism and Futurism, and nurtured with Futurist principles. Fascism contained and will always contain that block of optimistic, proud, violent, tough, and belligerent patriotism that, first among the first, we Futurists preached to the Italian crowds. Therefore we support strenuously Fascism, as the firm guarantee of imperial victory in the upcoming general conflagration. Fascism operates politically, that is, inside our sacred peninsula; it demands, imposes, enforces, forbids. Futurism works instead in the infinite domains of pure fantasy, and therefore can and must dare dare ever more

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 593-598.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Seton-Watson, *L'Italia dal liberalismo al fascismo* (Milano: Mondadori, 2011), 791-878.

<sup>3</sup> Giordano Bruno Guerri, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti: invenzioni, avventure e passioni di un rivoluzionario* (Milano: Mondadori, 2009).

recklessly. Vanguard of the Italian artistic sensibility, it is necessarily always ahead of the slow sensitivity of the people. It is so often misunderstood and opposed by the majority that cannot understand our discoveries, and the brutality of our polemical expressions, nor the zeal of our intuitions”<sup>1</sup>.

Ideological differences, especially concerning tradition and innovation, were apparent in matters of nutrition, cooking and agricultural policies. If, on the one hand, Futurism embraced a new way of cooking—lighter and beyond the classicism of the Italian cooking—on the other hand Fascism promoted the reintroduction of traditional Italian cooking through the autarchy.



### 3. The Fascist agricultural policy: autarchy, battle for wheat and reclamations

After the liberist policy of the first months of Mussolini’s government, since 1925 the Fascist political economy changed, due to the choices made by Mussolini and his new minister Giuseppe Volpi. Autarchy, since 1936, would be the keyword to empower the Italian manufacturing<sup>2</sup>.

In 1925 Mussolini promoted the “Battle for Wheat”, the goal of which was to increase the wheat production and reduce import, granting financial stability and maximizing land exploitation. In the countryside, the pillars of production were: farmer-run business, sharecropping and small-farm leasing. In Italy, during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, sharecropping and small-farm leasing prevailed because of lower risks and safer income<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Futurismo e Fascismo* (Foligno: F. Campitelli, 1924), 16-19.

<sup>2</sup> Gianni Toniolo, *L’economia dell’Italia fascista* (Roma and Bari: Laterza, 1980).

<sup>1</sup> Jon S. Cohen, “Rapporti agricoltura-industria e sviluppo agricolo”, in Pierluigi Ciocca and Gianni Toniolo, eds., *L’economia Italiana nel periodo fascista*, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1976), 386-388.

The “Battle for Wheat” was relevant also from a political point of view. The agricultural policy helped increase consensus, which was the first aim of the Fascist government: wheat was the vehicle for achieving cohesion between rich landowners, and middle and small farmers. Increasing productivity thanks to new techniques, expanding cultivable areas, restricting importations should allow to reach national autonomy and increase the subjects’ consensus.

But if, on the one hand, wheat production increased, on the other hand vegetables and oil production decreased, while zootechnics was overlooked, thus slowing the production of bovine, pork and ovine meat<sup>2</sup>. During Fascism land properties were concentrated, and the majority of the rural population suffered the negative effects of the protectionist policy; the production costs, through price increase, fell back on the final consumers<sup>3</sup>.

#### 4. Fascism and Italian cooking: political and the symbolic use of food

The consequences of the Fascist agricultural policy influenced the Italian diet. The control of agriculture and food was part of the construction of the new Fascist Italy: nutrition was at the center of the stability and the health policies<sup>4</sup>. Propaganda, especially through women Fascist associations, relied on the connection between national pride and traditional cooking: magazines as “La cucina Italiana” and “L’alimentazione Italiana” focused on simple cooking using few ingredients.

In the same years of the publication of the *Manifesto della cucina Futurista* (1930), that lined up against *pastasciutta* and traditional Italian cooking in favor of multi-color and multi-flavor preparations, Fascism established its control on nutrition, mooting the concept of a national food sovereignty.

Strictly tied to the autarchy, the Fascist point of view about food was made clear by the national food consumption campaigns. The regime publicized a

<sup>2</sup> Piero Bevilacqua, *Le campagne del mezzogiorno tra Fascismo e dopoguerra* (Torino: Einaudi, 1980), 172-179.

<sup>3</sup> Jon S. Cohen, “Rapporti agricoltura-industria e sviluppo agricolo”, 400-407.

<sup>4</sup> Alberto Capatti and Massimo Montanari, *La cucina italiana. Storia di una cultura* (Roma and Bari: Laterza, 2002).

carbohydrates-based diet, excluding animal proteins, vegetables, olive oil, citrus fruits and wine. This diet was symbolically linked to nationalism, being purportedly influenced by 19<sup>th</sup> century habits and by the Italian “Risorgimento”<sup>1</sup>.

In order to persuade the Italians, the “battle for wheat” was endorsed by the CNR (the National Research Council), whose experts published researches on the positive benefits of national whole-wheat bread, rice and grapes. In 1928 the Fascists founded the Commission for the study of malnutrition, in partnership with the CNR: they started to publish reports as “Quaderni della nutrizione”, which illustrated the Italian food situation.

Especially after the invasion of Ethiopia and the resulting international sanctions (1935-36), the Fascist regime used economic austerity as a political instrument against consumerism and wealth: ‘housewives magazines’ gave tips on food recycling, and the calories consumption per capita in Italy was lower than in France or England.

The Fascist food politics based on food sovereignty, land reclamation, import restrictions, food distribution control and obsession for national traditional cooking was, in the end, a failure. To let the Italians accept the ceaseless restrictions, the Fascist government increased state aids and tried through propaganda to reinforce patriotism<sup>2</sup>. The alliance with Nazi Germany (1936-39) created opportunities for export and facilitated the migration of Italian workers to German factories. But during the German occupation of northern Italy in the last phase of the Second World-War (1944-45), people would starve due to food rationing<sup>3</sup>. At the end of the Fascist era, the food consumption and availability was lower than in the other European countries: the drop in the intake of calories and proteins affected both the Italian population and the outcome of the war<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Carol Helstosky, “Fascist food politics: Mussolini’s policy of alimentary sovereignty”, in *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 9:1 (2004), 1-26, DOI: 10.1080/1354571042000179164, 1-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 9-12.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 13-17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 17-19.



## 5. Futurism and Fascism: differences in the “kitchen”

Both Futurism and Fascism included food and cooking in their symbolic universe. But despite both early and late contaminations between the two movements, they had very different ideas about food. Futurism described itself as an artistic avant-garde movement ‘without boundaries’ with non-traditional and non-conservative features, while Fascism was a political movement, an official party that aimed to gain absolute power, tending to totalitarianism. For the Futurists, cooking was an artistic expressions that had to move away from the tradition (“against *pasta*”) and experiment new ingredients, flavors, colors and techniques, breaking with the past.

The Fascist regime used food in a deceptive way: on the one hand, the qualitative and quantitative control on what people ate was connected to the attempt to guarantee a minimum standard for everyone, in order to grow a nation strong and powerful from the point of view of demographics and health; on the other hand, the Fascist propaganda used food traditions as a lure to nurture patriotic sentiments, especially among the people who lived in the countryside, and thus create a diversion from economic problems. Futurist cooking evolved after the Second World-War, surviving to the movement itself.



*V. Mayakovsky, Rosta Agitprop Poster.*