Vital Subjects

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Paolo and Maria saw other fractures and dislocations, which were medicated painlessly and with the greatest ease.

Paolo Mantegazza,  
*L'Anno 3000. Sogno* (141)

Leopoldo Franchetti’s brand of colonialism envisioned agricultural productivity as the remedy to the biopolitical fragmentation of Italians. Fertile land and the nourishment colonial bodies and would-be soldiers stood to extract from it functioned as prophylaxis—defending the *razza italiana* both from further mutilation (departure for foreign lands) and from its decimation by local opposition. While the biopolitical rhetoric of defense may be almost self-evident in the colonial context, what happens to it when the potential threat comes not from outside, but from within? For Italy’s preeminent Darwinian physician, public hygienist, and anthropologist Paolo Mantegazza (1831–1910), the Italian body politic was sick. Pathological bodies produced pathological politics, and ensured Italy’s inferiority on the European, and global, stage. His answer to preventing the spread of a generalized infection was to write—hundreds of volumes, popular manuals, and pamphlets that would educate Italians about correcting and maintaining the proper function of their bodies. If the avowed goal of Mantegazza’s popular scientific production was the protection of life, his final novel *L’Anno*
3000. Sogno (The Year 3000. A Dream), published in 1897, illustrates how that protection becomes its negation through the futuristic invention of immunitary technologies that “eliminate” pathological newborns in order to strengthen the remainder of the population.

Writing as Prophylaxis

In 1868, as Italian troops continued their struggle to establish Italy as a territorial whole, Paolo Mantegazza published a best-selling epistolary romance novel that inaugurated his ascent to literary celebrity. Un giorno a Madera. Una pagina dell’igiene d’amore (A Day in Madeira: A Page from the Hygiene of Love) traces the melancholy and ultimately unreproductive love affair of its protagonists, Emma and William, and can be situated within emergent discourses of national public hygiene, which were shaped in large part by Mantegazza and his colleagues at the Universities of Pavia and Florence. By 1899, there were more than twenty editions of Madera in circulation (Pasini 249–250). Through the epistolary exchange that constitutes the bulk of the novel, readers learn that frail Emma is the last survivor in a family ravaged by tuberculosis. On his deathbed, her father

7 Mantegazza was indefatigable not only as a writer, but also as an academic and an elected official. From 1860 until 1869, Mantegazza was a professor of General Pathology at the University of Pavia. In 1865, he was elected parliamentary deputy of Monza. In 1869, he moved to the University of Florence where he occupied Italy’s first chair in Anthropology. Historian Giovanni Landucci identifies Mantegazza’s role as central to a Florentine milieu engaged in intense debate surrounding anthropology and public hygiene. Furthermore, Walter Pasini notes that Mantegazza claimed to have written his wildly successful Un giorno a Madera in a matter of hours during a break in a parliamentary session (229). In addition to reflecting Mantegazza’s recurrent rhetoric of effortless authorial prowess, this claim also illustrates how his novel must be read while bearing in mind his direct participation in shaping state practices of public hygiene.

8 From 1910 until 1924, Un giorno a Madera continued to be reprinted annually, in several cases by numerous publishers (Bemporad, Bernadoni, Brigola, and Treves were among his most faithful). New editions continued to appear, though at a far less steady rate, from 1926 to 1952. The most recent edition was published in 1991 by Edizioni ECIG (Genoa). A portion of the novel was translated into English by David Jacobson and published in Pireddu, Paolo Mantegazza. The Physiology of Love and Other Writings 351–376. Whenever possible, I have used Jacobson’s translation.

9 The etiology of tuberculosis was not discovered until 1882 (by Robert Koch). Until then, tuberculosis was a major impetus for projects of public hygiene in Italy. Koch also
Immunitary Technologies

curses his “poisoned blood” and insists that Emma vow never to take a husband, much less reproduce, lest she perpetuate the diseased family line. The novel ends with William and Emma’s relationship un consummated and Emma’s death. Her vow of physiological sterility thus upheld, she implores William in her final letter to “render [his] life fecund with courageous and great works” (Un giorno a Madera 182).

Emma dies a heroine because—fated to die from consumption—she courageously refuses to reproduce. Her plight is paralleled by the threat of Italian consumption with which Mantegazza prefaces the novel. In his dedicatory notes to the Monza electorate, Mantegazza expresses anxiety about his role in Italy’s nascent parliamentary administration:

Poveri noi, se i nostri figliuoli dovessero trovare che l’opera dei primi deputati del Regno d’Italia andò tutta consumata nel fare delle mozioni sospensive, degli ordini del giorno puri e semplici e delle questioni pregiudiziali. Poveretti noi, se tutta la vita d’una generazione dovesse andar consunta nel rattrappare i nostri cenci, nel puntellare le casse dell’erario, nel lasciare ai futuri della carta e dei debiti. Ognuno di noi deve aprire un solco in quella terra in cui i figli hanno a seminare il pane dell’avvenire. Questa terra bagnata di sangue l’abbiamo a fecondare del nostro sudore; e chi ebbe dagli elettori la più alta missione che si possa affidare a un cittadino, ha maggiori doveri degli altri di preparare la terra per una Italia migliore. (vi)

[Poor us, if our sons were to find that the work of the first deputies of the Kingdom of Italy was completely consumed by putting things off, by carrying out the plain and simple orders of the day [...]. Poor little us, if the entire life of a generation were to be consumed patching our rags, shoring up the chests of the treasury, leaving bills and debts to our children. Each of us must plow the land in which our sons may sow the wheat of the future. We must fertilize this blood-soaked land with our sweat; and he who is granted the highest mission entrusted to a citizen by the electorate

made significant contributions to scientific understandings of cholera (W. Pasini 230). For two rich accounts of the role that public health has played in shaping social, political, and scientific history in Italy, see: Snowden, The Conquest of Malaria; Naples in the Time of Cholera.

10 Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own.
has even more of an obligation than others in preparing the land for an improved Italy.] (emphasis mine)

By deploying the metaphor of agricultural labor to describe newly unified Italy’s need for sound policymaking (“each of us must plow the land in which our sons may sow the wheat of the future”; elected officials must “prepare the land for an improved Italy”), Mantegazza dresses his parliamentary deputies, heroic veterans and noble voters in peasant’s rags (cenci) in order to figure his productive Italian population. He mobilizes this rhetoric of agricultural productivity in order to advocate a project of moral-physiological regeneration.11 Consumption threatens the unproductive. A critical link is thus established between terrain—once bathed in bellicose blood, now to be inseminated with the figurative sweat of intellectual and political labor—and prospective genealogy, which he evokes by singling out “our sons [...] of the future.” Here, as in Franchetti’s colonial project in Eritrea and in D’Annunzio’s Fiuman discourses, one finds the ineluctable infusion of the nationalized soil with the biological traces of its inhabitants. In each of these cases, labor, be it agricultural or intellectual, saturates and legitimates territories, fusing them organically with the bodies that inhabit them. Mantegazza’s patriotic trajectory is ultimately one of war, work, rebirth (or “resurgence”), and reproduction:

E quando dico un’Italia migliore, voglio dire degli Italiani più sani e piùonesti prima di tutto, poi più operosi e più sapienti, che è quanto dire piùricchi e più potenti. (vi)

[And when I say a better Italy, I mean Italians who are more healthy and honest first and foremost, and also more hard-working and knowledgeable, which means more rich and more powerful.]

He clarifies his metonymic substitution (“Italy” for “Italians”) in order to isolate his focus on the physiological and moral health of the population.12

11 Throughout his oeuvre, one of Mantegazza’s primary concerns is positing a relationship between morality and physiology. This project is best illustrated in Mantegazza and Neera. His physiology texts Fisiologia dell’amore (1873) and Fisiologia della donna (1893) are extended treatises on morality.

12 The unveiling of his substitution of “Italy” for “the Italians” merely exposes another order of substitution: “the Italians” stand in for the desire of a body politic that has overcome its constitutive fracture.
True to biopolitical form, Mantegazza meanders, though not without purpose, from biological fitness to political strength. This increase in the physiological strength of Italians ("more healthy," "more hard-working") presumably wards off potential encroachment from elements residing outside the national borders—the threat alluded to with the evocation, cited above, of Italy’s not-so-distant past as a “land wet with blood.” His rhetoric of productivity thus cedes to one of biological defense.\footnote{Giorgio Agamben departs from Foucault’s formulation of biopower, identifying instead what he calls a “fundamental biopolitical split” within the structures of Western political theory. For Agamben, this rift—between the “People” as the phantasmagorically integral body politic and the “people” as the marginalized, who threaten this unity from within—is precisely what Nazi Germany sought to remedy through its purging of the latter: “Nazism tried obscurely and in vain to free the Western political stage from this intolerable shadow so as to produce finally the German Volk as the people that has been able to heal the original biopolitical fracture.” Agamben’s “people” represent, “that naked life that modernity necessarily creates within itself but whose presence it is no longer able to tolerate in any way” (\textit{Means without End} 33: 4).}

Mantegazza’s address to voters offers a figure for what Giorgio Agamben calls an “original biopolitical fracture”: peasants—representatives par...
excellence of liberal Italy’s rhetoric of the “people” (“the wretched, the oppressed, and the vanquished”)—provide a rhetorical field in which proper citizens may be represented (Agamben, Means without End 30: 1). Politically disenfranchised peasants, as rhetorical placeholders, are thereby included in a formulation that simultaneously marks their exclusion. The work of Italian regeneration, of staving off the consumption of intellectual and physiological force, is entrusted not to these (non-)subjects, but instead to servants of the state. Left in the wrong hands, the passage warns, attempts at regeneration risk exhausting Italian potential. In Un giorno a Madera, this attempt is figured as the threat of reproducing the biologically unfit, and thus blocks the love affair and affirms Emma’s role as a respectable heroine.

Mantegazza grafts Emma and William’s respective struggles between duty and desire onto racialized national difference. William is both doubled and halved (“a doubled man,” half English and half Italian): “In me, love welded together two races [razze], two destinies, two worlds. […] In every move, I feel in me Vesuvius and the London fog” (Un giorno a Madera 46). While desire is figured as Italian, duty is English: “I feel like an Italian, I take action as an Englishman does” (Pireddu 357). When William pleads with Emma to ignore the orders of her dead father, she implores him: “Extinguish Vesuvius, William, and become English once again” (Un giorno a Madera 46). Presumably, were the “Italian” to triumph over the “English,” the relationship would be consummated, resulting in the generation of a biologically unfit being. Mantegazza’s novel, considered alongside his voluminous writings on national physiological and moral hygiene, may be read as a cautionary tale: if Italians reproduce before they are rendered, “more healthy and honest first and foremost, […] more hard-working and knowledgeable, […] more rich and more powerful,” they will generate physiological and political pathology. The tuberculoid baby that haunts Un giorno a Madera is thus a figure for a degenerate Italy. Yet Mantegazza’s novelistic meditations on the biopolitical did not end here. In 1897, the threat of the pathological infant resurfaced,

14 Jacobson’s translation reads, “I feel two natures within me, two worlds of thoughts, sensations, joys, and sorrows. At every stroke I feel Vesuvius and the London fog” (Pireddu 357).
15 Both David Horn and Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg’s recent readings of Cesare Lombroso describe his criminological project as shaped by similar anxieties about Italy’s relationship to modernity. See: Horn, The Criminal Body; Stewart-Steinberg.
as Mantegazza arguably picked up where he had left off nearly thirty years earlier, publishing his futuristic eugenic utopia L’Anno 3000. Sogno.\textsuperscript{16}  

As Mantegazza was completing 3000 in 1896, the same year as Italy’s disastrous colonial defeat at Adwa, he published a memoir containing parliamentary addresses, personal recollections, and political commentary titled \textit{Ricordi politici di un fantaccino del parlamento italiano} (Political Memoirs of a Parliamentary Foot Soldier). A proponent of Italian colonialism in the Horn of Africa, Mantegazza had been Italy’s representative at the Berlin conference in 1884. He was discouraged by the Italian defeat at Adwa in 1896 and by what he saw as an inept colonial government.\textsuperscript{17} In his memoir, he transcribed a speech that was intended for his fellow deputies in the Camera some years before in which he called for public health legislation that would remedy the “expiration of the Italian race”:

Sopra 17 dei principali Stati europei, tutti, meno la Russia, godono di un \textit{grado di vitalità che non è concesso al nostro paese}. Il sorriso del nostro cielo, la mitezza del clima, l’amenità dei colli per vendemmia festanti, e le mille altre vanterie di cui risuonarono a lungo gli idillii dei nostri poeti, hanno un riscontro piuttosto doloroso in codesto manifesto \textit{scadimento della razza italiana} originato dalla lunga dissuetudine da ogni virile esercizio, e \textit{alle cui forze vitali} non si cerca mai di apprestare nessuno di quei provvedimenti sanitari per cui vanno lodate le altre nazioni civili. Dopo la Russia noi siamo dunque gli uomini che più si ammalano e che più muoiono in Europa. (\textit{Ricordi politici} 33–34, emphasis mine)

[Of the more than seventeen principal European states, all except for Russia enjoy a \textit{level of vitality that is not permitted our country}. The smile of our sky, the mildness of the climate, the amenity of the hills for festive harvests, and the thousands of other boasts that resound in the idylls of our poets have been painfully put in check by this obvious \textit{decline of the}}

\textsuperscript{16} In her introduction to the English translation, Nicoletta Pireddu points out that Mantegazza’s interest in the project of “making Italians” emerges in the pages of this later novel as it explores “the role of the State in the management of new territory, to the importance of improvements in public health, preventive medicine, and factory conditions (in the year 3000 child labor has been abolished […]), the standardization and radical reform of the educational system, and the need for higher moral and aesthetic norms in Italian life” (\textit{The Year 3000} 28–29).

\textsuperscript{17} On Mantegazza’s relationship to colonialism, see: Labanca, “Un nero non può essere un bianco” and Choate, \textit{Emigrant Nation}. 
Italian race, which began with a gradual desuetude of every virile exercise; [a race] whose vital forces we never seek to shore up through public health measures for which other civilized nations are praised. After Russia, we are therefore the men who get sick and die more often than in all of Europe.] (emphasis mine)

The stakes of Mantegazza’s public health discourse, which he disseminated in the form of popular hygiene handbooks, manuals, and novels, are thus laid bare as he laments the lack of “vitality” of the Italian race. Making Italians vital subjects is arguably at the center of the Mantegazzian oeuvre. For Mantegazza, “Italians had not just to be ‘made’ politically into a polis, but also had to be ‘re-made’ biologically, by science and medicine, into a healthy and vigorous nation,” writes Maria Sophia Quine (141). Racial scientists such as Mantegazza, and his colleagues Giustiniano Nicolucci (1819–1904), and Giuseppe Sergi (1841–1936) viewed Italians, as Quine puts it, “as a work in progress, a living, organic mass of bones, bodies, and brains to be skillfully crafted into a popolo-nazione” (152). The passage above dwells once again in the semantic orbit of the rhetoric of loss, as Mantegazza’s warning about the “decline” of the Italian race presupposes an originary racial unity—itself the product of ideological fantasy. Rhetorical “decline,” as a loss of racial prestige or physiological quality, thus functions according to the logic of fetishistic disavowal, insofar as it allows the text to claim a presence—“the Italian race”—in spite of its absence.

L’Anno 3000 weaves the reproductive nucleus of Un giorno a Madera together with a more sustained (and arguably more urgent) meditation on the optics and microscopics of race. The earlier Madera is a novel about failed reproduction that, given its epistolary structure, foregrounds writing as prophylaxis. The preserved letters that make up the novel are a testament to the fact that no final union between Emma and William takes place and that, therefore, no biologically unfit being is born. As long as Emma and William
continue to write, there is no risk of contact, nor of the diseased reproduction that would purportedly result from it. In 3000, Mantegazza shifts his focus to technologies of racial visualization by projecting a future in which skin is rendered “as transparent as glass.” Though the novel grapples with the possibilities of both visible and invisible hereditary markers, 3000 ultimately reaffirms technologies of racialization that rely upon the apprehension of race by the human eye.

Capturing the Moribund Race

Mantegazza’s shift from a novel that foregrounds writing, race, and reproduction to one that explores instead the visual parameters of race and reproduction might be explained by his pioneering work in the nascent field of visual social sciences during the second half of the nineteenth century, which was facilitated by advances in photography and Mantegazza’s faith in the photograph as a “precious aid” to social scientific discovery. These were the years of Eadweard Muybridge’s and Étienne-Jules Marey’s experiments with human and animal locomotion that led to the diffusion of stop-action and chronophotography. In Mantegazza’s day, Florence was an important site in the development of the photographic medium as both an artistic and scientific technology, as well as a touristic commodity. In 1852, before Italy came into being as such, brothers Leopoldo, Giuseppe, and Romualdo Alinari opened one of Italy’s first commercial photographic studios, specializing in portraiture, landscape, and monument photographs which were among the first to depict Italian cities (particularly their native Florence) as commodified objects for touristic consumption.18 Some forty years later, the Italian Photographic Society was founded at the University of Florence (1889). Between publishing the two novels Un giorno a Madera (in 1868) and L’Anno 3000 (in 1897), Mantegazza was named the Society’s first president. During these years, Mantegazza had begun using photography to supplement his studies of the “physiognomy of pain,” as well as his anthropometric studies in Lapland and India. Physiognomy—coined in the late 1770s by Johann Caspar Lavater to describe the science born from “the original language of nature, written on the face of Man” (Sekula 10–11)—assigned character traits to anatomic features of the face, thus making of

18 See Pelizzari, Percorsi della fotografia in Italia 50–52. Pelizzari’s book was originally published in English as Photography and Italy.
the body a legible text that even a non-specialist might read or interpret. Allan Sekula has cogently identified an “archival paradigm” at the origins of photography’s use for social regulation and discipline. When operating in an archival mode, photography seeks to “encompass an entire social terrain while positioning individuals within that terrain” according to types—“heroes, leaders, moral exemplars, celebrities, and those of the poor, the diseased, the insane, the criminal, the nonwhite, the female, and all other embodiments of the unworthy” (10). Through a close reading of two late nineteenth-century thinkers who employed photography to social-statistical ends—Alphonse Bertillon (1853–1914), credited with inventing the first modern system of criminal identification, and Francis Galton (1822–1911), the notorious founder of eugenics—Sekula uncovers physiognomy, and the related sciences of phrenology and criminology, at the “ignoble” origins of realist photography—an instrumentalist and utilitarian practice aimed at arresting the entire social field.

In 1876, as Bertillon and Galton were busy developing photographic methods of classification through the photographic and textual criminal identification card and the photographic composite, respectively, Mantegazza collaborated with photographer Giacomo Brogi (1822–1891) to publish the *Atlante della espressione del dolore* (Atlas of Expressions of Pain). The inspiration for the *Atlas*, along with his subsequent *Fisionomia e mimica* (Physiognomy and Expression, 1881), was Charles Darwin’s *Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals* (1872)—one of the first scientific volumes to contain photographic illustrations (M. Pasini 127). The majority of the hundred or so photographs in Mantegazza’s *Atlante* were of major works of art representing human suffering, and only a handful were of human subjects on whom various procedures intended to cause physical or sensorial pain were carried out—having their fingers crushed for brief or prolonged periods of time, chewing on bitter wood, and listening to the sound of fingernails scratching glass (which one can imagine was akin to hearing fingernails on a chalkboard), to name just a few. That Mantegazza photographed works of art alongside human subjects also reveals something about the content of physiognomy in the mid-to-late nineteenth century: like Mantegazza’s oeuvre as a whole, physiognomy “provided a discursive terrain upon which art and the emerging bio-social sciences met during the middle of the nineteenth century,” as Sekula puts it (23). Mantegazza’s *Atlante*, a fascinating text, undoubtedly contributes to Italy’s anthropological tradition of visualizing, indeed fixing, racial difference through photography, which is most often associated with the criminological studies of Bertillon
and Galton’s contemporary and Mantegazza’s interlocutor, Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909). In the *Atlante*, Mantegazza’s subjects are either presented as either presumably neutral or “Negro” subjects; captions reading “Expression of olfactory pain,” appear just before “Negro expression of olfactory pain.”

Capturing race was also the aim of Mantegazza’s two other forays into photography during his trips to Lapland in 1879 and a few years later to India. During his research stay in Lapland, Mantegazza, along with photographer and travel mate Stefano Sommier, used photography to produce a racial archive of the indigenous Lapp people (Fig. 2.2).

Mantegazza’s goal was to preserve for “future memory” the Lapp’s relative isolation from other “races” such as Norwegians, Swedes, and Russians, since their isolation was bound to end, producing in them what he described as a “racial” change (*Mantegazza, Un viaggio in Lapponia*). Similarly, with his voyage to India, he sought to create a visual archive of the “moribund” pastoral Toda people of southern India (*Mantegazza, Studi sulla etnologia dell’India*). Prompted by his enthusiastic reception of phrenologist William Elliot Marshall’s 1873 study *Travels amongst the Todas*, Mantegazza set out to verify the craniological, psychological, and physiognomic uniqueness of this “race,” which he classified as, to paraphrase, closer to Jews and the Semitic races than to the Aryan races. In order to confirm his findings, he took a series of portraits (head shots and profiles), as well as some ethnographic photos of the daily life and customs of the Toda people, and, for comparison, photographs of other groups he encountered during his travels (Hindus, Tibetans, and Lepcha). A true fin-de-siècle positivist, Mantegazza believed in the objectivity of the photographic record, in its ability to reproduce reality with scientific accuracy. For Mantegazza, the photograph did not substitute or transcend scientific research, but served instead as a visual supplement to it. Ever captivated by discovering new means to transmit scientific knowledge to the popular masses, Mantegazza also saw photography as a powerful instrument of “democratic” diffusion (*divulgazione*).19 These accounts of his use of the visual medium to document and produce racial difference provide an interesting explanation for his shift from “writing as prophylaxis” in *Un giorno a Madera* to “technologies of seeing” in *L’Anno 3000*.20 I locate Mantegazza’s turn to visual technologies

19 For my discussion of Mantegazza’s anthropological photography, I draw from Chiozzi, “Fotografia e antropologia nell’opera di Paolo Mantegazza.” See also Chiarelli.
20 A 2010–2011 exhibition at the National Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology (which Mantegazza founded), titled “Obiettivo uomo. L’antropologia fotografica di Paolo Mantegazza” (curated by Paolo Chiozzi, Maria Gloria Roselli, and Monica Zavattaro)
of racialization in this later novel within the context of his enthusiasm for anthropological photography aimed at verifying scientific “truths” about race. In addition, it bears noting that his scholarly commitment to protecting and preserving life (in the form of public hygiene manuals, novels, essays, and photography)—from the “moribund” Lapps and Todas to Italians themselves, who, as Mantegazza pointed out to his parliamentary colleagues with some urgency, risked racial “decline”—is haunted by imminent death. As Roberto Esposito has suggested, “[T]he living being begins to enter into the horizon of visibility for modern knowledge the moment its constitutive relationship with what continually threatens to extinguish it emerges. Sickness and death make up the cone of shadow within which the life sciences carve out their niche” (Immunitas 14–15). To contemplate Mantegazza’s purported fear of decline from a slightly different angle, his photographic practice is also bound to the rhetoric of loss (racial decline, as the loss of racial prestige or identity); as a means of capturing the “moribund races” of Lapland, the Toda, or Europeans themselves, the photograph is the ultimate medium for establishing a presence in spite of an absence, as both the subject of the photograph and the moment in time captured are forever lost. Yet the rhetoric of loss, as opposed to absence, nevertheless paradoxically affirms an originary presence; for Roland Barthes, the photograph (and in particular the portrait) contains the affirmation: “[this] has indeed been” (115). Such is the fetishistic nature of the Mantegazzian photograph: by affirming the presence of racial identity before it is “lost” forever, the fundamental emptiness of that identity is kept at bay.

**Aesthetic Truths and Fictive Science**

Like Leopoldo Franchetti, Paolo Mantegazza has been the object of surprisingly little scholarly attention. This “unjustly neglected” founder of Italian anthropology has received far less scholarly attention than his famed interlocutor Cesare Lombroso, to name just one example.21 As showedcased over a hundred of Mantegazza’s ethnographic photos from his travels in Lapland and India, and his photographic studies of anthropometry and physiognomy (Zarrilli).

with Franchetti, when scholars have examined Mantegazza’s oeuvre, they have been careful to underscore his playfully innocuous patriotism, often contrasting him with his infamous contemporaries such as Lombroso and Giuseppe Sergi. Despite his subscription to biological determinism and his seminal role in shaping nineteenth-century Italian physical and social sciences, as well as visual anthropology, Mantegazza is distanced from these more “fanatic” interlocutors. Such a relegation betrays a critical ambivalence about where to locate this intensely prolific and influential nineteenth-century thinker within the imbricated genealogies of liberal Italian nationalism and racial discourse.

Mantegazza helped give shape to an Italian school of nineteenth-century positivist social science that forged a connection between human psychology and physiology (Papini 11). The scientific “discovery” of the Italian volgo or folk was given a decisive push after Unification, when anthropological and ethnographic pioneers such as Giustiniano Nicolucci, as well as Mantegazza and Lombroso, began to study the ethnic bases of “Italic” peoples. Anthropology and related disciplines such as ethnography, demography, and folklore studies thus emerged and gained momentum in a post-Unification context that was eager to address the fragmentary nature of Italians with regard to class, language, relationships to capitalist modernity, and ethnic belonging. For Pireddu, Mantegazza sought to address the fragmentary nature

22 Historian of Italian anthropology Giovanni Landucci points out that, “He did not spare fanatic Darwinians and he ended up cutting all ties with old mates such as Sergi and Lombroso” (126). For a similar claim, see Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 32. Horn suggests that this personal and professional split between Lombroso and Mantegazza arose in 1867 after a “very public debate” about the physiology of pain (The Criminal Body 92). Mantegazza later predicted the demise of criminal anthropology, calling Lombroso the “founder of a new religion” and a “false prophet.” (Horn, The Criminal Body 171, n. 48). See also Mantegazza, Fisiologia del dolore. For more on Mantegazza’s role in shaping nineteenth-century Italian anthropology, see Puccini, L’Uomo e gli uomini.

23 Pireddu argues that Mantegazza’s relationship to positivism was ambivalent at best (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 49, n. 26). Historian of anthropology George Stocking suggests that the relationship between physiology and psychology—which was in wide circulation by 1860—can be traced at least to Herbert Spencer’s Principles of Psychology of 1855 (Victorian Anthropology 142). Mantegazza’s status as an unsuccessful precursor to Freud seems secondary to Alberto Capatti, who faithfully records the spoils of Mantegazza’s commercial success in order to trump his famous successor (10).

24 See Puccini, “Giustianiano Nicolucci.” For connections between the southern
of Italians first and foremost through a “democratic” educative campaign aimed at “the common reader in its broadest sense” (“Anthropological Roots” 82). Mantegazza also carved out a role for science in the management of the state, and he took a particular interest in female reproductive health. In 1871, thanks to partial funding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Mantegazza (aided by Lombroso), distributed ten thousand copies of a questionnaire to every municipal government in the country to gather information on the stirpi italiche, which took special aim at the reproductive health of young women: in addition to height, age, blood pressure, diet and nutrition, the survey queried respondents on the age of menarche. Mantegazza worked for eight years to compel municipalities to complete the survey; he was eventually forced to abandon the project due to the lack of response (Quine 142–143).

Mantegazza was also an immensely successful novelist whose image was once reproduced on matchbooks (Labanca, “‘Un nero non può essere un bianco’” 82). For roughly fifty years between 1860 and his death in 1910, Mantegazza waged what Monica Boni has called a “publishing crusade,” producing a staggering number of articles, novels, and monographs on bourgeois moral and physiological hygiene (11). As the self-proclaimed “in-house doctor,” Mantegazza published popular serials such as the “Almanac of Popular Hygiene” and “The Small Library of the Italian People,” which aimed to bring medical knowledge about household management and personal hygiene inside the domestic walls (Quine 140). Unlike his contemporaries Nicolucci, Sergi, and Lombroso, who studied cranial morphology with an eye toward establishing the origins and hereditary transmission of ‘Italic’ types—whether “Aryan,” “Mediterranean,” or “degenerate”—Mantegazza looked to anthropometric data as the basis of political intervention. Whereas his primary concern was with crafting a biopolitics that served the nation-state, Mantegazza’s influence was not limited to the Italian peninsula. Although he was simultaneously revered and rebuked by

question, colonialism, and the disciplines of demography and folklore studies, see Lombardi Satriani, “Realità meridionale e conoscenza demologica.”

25 Pireddu highlights Mantegazza’s interdisciplinarity, as well as his status as a forerunner of cultural studies, by quoting his introduction to American audiences as “Physician-surgeon, Laboratory-experimenter, Author-editor, Traveller-anthropologist, Professor, Sanitarian, Senator” (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 2). See also Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza: A Scientist and His Ecstasies” 7.

26 For this reason, Mantegazza has been figured as a precursor to Francis Galton (1822–1911) and Alphonse Bertillon (1853–1914) (Quine 142).
writer, critic, and cleric Giovanni Papini as a (failed) precursor to Freud and Havelock-Ellis, Mantegazza was an interlocutor of both, along with Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Charles Darwin, Max Bartels, Francis Galton, and Paul Bartels (Pireddu, “Introduction Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 2).

Despite Mantegazza’s pioneering contributions to a number of fields—he experimented with artificial insemination and skin grafts; he is credited with having imported the first coca leaves to Europe and conducted the first scientific studies of the effects of erythroxylon on the human body; and he was an early promoter of the therapeutic bath—several of his contemporaries offered condemnations of the dubiousness of his sexual science.27 Liberal Italy’s preeminent philosopher Benedetto Croce (1866–1952) described allegations among nineteenth-century readers that Mantegazza “abus[ed] science to satisfy non-scientific curiosities” and exploited science as a veil for his own lasciviousness in his study Gli amori degli uomini (The Sexual Relations of Mankind, 1886) (Croce, “Scienziati-letterati” 52). Similarly, writer and critic Giovanni Papini (1881–1956) dubbed Mantegazza “The Erotic Senator,” characterizing him as a second-rate

27 For a more extensive discussion of Mantegazza’s contribution to these and other fields, see Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza: A Scientist and His Ecstasies”; and “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 2.
plagiarist whose publications simply showcased a string of erotic anecdotes (11). Mantegazza’s texts were thus the alleged outcome of his prurience. They also had the capacity to inspire dangerous “phantasies” in their female readers. Suspicion was cast on Sigmund Freud’s Dora, famed protagonist of his foundational case study on hysteria, by Herr K. when he suggested that she “took no interest in anything but sexual matters,” citing her reading of Mantegazza’s *Fisiologia dell’amore* (Physiology of Love, 1873) and “books of that sort” as proof that she had invented his indecent proposal to her on a lakeside walk (Freud, *Dora* 41).28

While fin-de-siècle readers such as Croce, Papini, and Freud stressed Mantegazza’s texts’ erotic potency, several post-World War II readers of Mantegazza share instead a preoccupation with his subscription to Darwinist racism. This recent scholarship, confined less explicitly by bourgeois norms of sexual propriety, is forced to reckon instead with the author’s firm entrenchment within the racist epistemologies of fin-de-siècle positivism. For instance, in her article problematizing Mantegazza’s position vis-à-vis positivism and positioning him instead at the origin of Italian cultural and postcolonial studies, Nicoletta Pireddu asks: “How to cope [...] with the embarrassing remarks on women, or on allegedly lower races that emerge from many of Mantegazza’s writings, which, despite his allegedly open and tolerant attitude, seem to plunge him back into the most obtuse survival-of-the-fittest logic?” (“Anthropological Roots” 83). She goes on claim that it is precisely this aspect of Mantegazza’s work that has led to his post-World War II condemnation and neglect by scholars. Pireddu calls for a “diluting” of what she calls Mantegazza’s ideological “shortcomings” with regard to his work as a whole, and in particular in light of what she reads as his challenge to post-Unification positivism and bourgeois rationality (83–84). Similarly, Paolo Chiozzi characterizes twentieth-century critics as “hasty” in their accusations of racism based on Mantegazza’s “ambiguous” use of taxonomic models (“Esistono gli ‘Ariani’?” 46).

If his formulations of sexual and racial discourse are two components of Mantegazza’s work that have received heightened attention from scholars, Mantegazza himself engages various articulations of race and reproduction in order to characterize his narrative project as a whole. He figures his own textual production as both biological and prospective, thus forging a connection between race and reproduction that merits interrogation. At stake

28 For more on Mantegazza’s relationship with Freud, see Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza: A Scientist and His Ecstasies” 8–9.
in each of the interpretations of his nineteenth-century critics is the degree to which writing can inspire, or is inspired by, unbounded sexuality. This node, contemplated from a different angle, is central to Mantegazza’s work, as well. In producing a model of sexual difference in *Fisiologia della donna* (Physiology of Woman, 1893), Mantegazza renders biological reproduction analogous to intellectual or artistic production: “The people of Philadelphia believe that with every childbirth, a woman must lose a tooth. At times, this is true for us as well. We really do lose hair, and after giving birth to a book or a statue, we men also lose health and strength” (64). Male (re)production is thus figured as a form of artistic creation.

More explicitly, in Mantegazza’s preface to *Dizionario d’igiene per le famiglie* (Family Hygiene Dictionary, 1881), a collaborative work with the novelist Neera, their textual project is figured as a reproductive one:

> Se il nuovo figliuolo sia nato robusto e destinato a lunga vita, toccherà a voi il dirlo. Io non posso dirvi altro se non questo, che fu concepito con caldo amore e salutato dai genitori con molte e dolci speranze. Possa vivere lungamente e veder vivere i nipoti e i pronipoti di una gagliarda e feconda generazione. (ii)

>[It is up to you to say if our new son is born robust and destined for a long life. I can only tell you this: he was conceived with affectionate love and welcomed by his parents with many kind hopes. May he live
Following Diotima’s address in Plato’s *Symposium*, physiological parturition is a metaphor for intellectual production.29 Significantly, though the text is co-authored, only Mantegazza offers a preface. Neera is thus inscribed in the preface only insofar as she is figured as a (textual) mother. Furthermore, her contributions to the dictionary are marked with an “N.”, while Mantegazza’s remain unmarked. *Auctoritas*, etymologically linked to author, authority, and “planter-cultivator,” is thus doubly aligned with paternity, both in the presence of solely Mantegazza’s prefatory comments and in the absence of the need for an authorial signature on his dictionary entries. The newborn text is positioned at the origin of a prospective male genealogy; Mantegazza thereby promises readers ever more textual offspring.

If, as the selections from Mantegazza’s *Fisiologia della donna* and *Dizionario d’igiene per le famiglie* cited above illustrate and as the nineteenth-century critics’ concerns confirm, Mantegazza’s textual project is figured as (sexually) reproductive, race comes to the fore, given the historical intersection between the production of sexuality and biopolitical race thinking that Foucault famously identified. Foucault contends that the bourgeois deployment of sexuality was the result of a shift from an aristocratic “symbolics of blood” to a bourgeois “analytics of sexuality.” While within narratives of aristocratic nobility, blood served a retrospective function (genealogy), the emergence of a bourgeois discourse of sexuality was centered around the prospective function of blood (racialized progeny). “The bourgeoisie’s ‘blood,’” claimed Foucault, “was its sex” (*The History of Sexuality* 128). Reproductivity is thus the discursive site upon which individual bodies are inscribed in the service of a racialized collectivity.

Instead of attempting to embellish Mantegazza’s racial politics by deeming them more or less virulent than his contemporaries or successors, or relatively anomalous or insignificant when compared to his greater body

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29 Mantegazza arguably biologizes Plato’s metaphor. While intellectual and/or moral formation is at stake for both, Mantegazza’s project is one that draws narrative and physiology, specifically with regard to biological progeny, into closer proximity. For a discussion of Diotima’s address that examines the multiple forms of spiritual and physiological pregnancy operating therein, see Pender. Adriana Cavarero in “Diotima” offers a reading of Diotima (as performed by Socrates) as a privileged and necessarily female exponent of Plato’s philosophy.
of work, I propose instead a reading of how Mantegazza figures the Italian national body as made up of *vital subjects* and how other bodies (pathologized, sexualized, racialized, etc.) perform boundary work, ensuring the (fantasized) cohesiveness of that body. Following Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy, the question passes from “Is it racist?” to “How does race work?”

One way to address the question of how race works in the Mantegazzian text is by exploring how he simultaneously exploited the registers of art and science. For Chiozzi, Mantegazza’s unfavorable response to Austrian anthropologist Karl Penka’s 1883 article on Aryan origins is proof that Mantegazza was not racist. Mantegazza writes:

Gli Ariani sono ancora per noi un mito storico in cui il vero si associa a molta nebbia e fors’anche a molti errori. Io leggo con molta attenzione tutto quanto si scrive sulle origini dei popoli, ma fino ad ora non trovo che romanzi storici nei quali mi è assai difficile il discernere quanta parte spetti alla storia e quanta alla fantasia dell’autore, e senza dire il troppo superbo ignorabimus, chiedo il libro, mormorando modestamente: ignoramus. (*Fisionomia e mimica* 364)

[Aryans are still a *historical myth* for us wherein what is true is foggy and perhaps contains many errors. I have read quite attentively everything that has been written on the origins of peoples, but until now I have been unable to find anything but *historical novels*, in which it is quite difficult for me to discern how much belongs to history and how much belongs to the imagination [*fantasia*] of the author, and, without saying the overly arrogant “ignorabimus,” I close the book, modestly mumbling “ignoramus.”] (emphasis mine)

Here, Mantegazza anticipates contemporary critiques of race that figure its production as a battle between “truth” and “fiction.” For Mantegazza, authorial fantasy is operative in ensuring that origin stories—in this case that of the Aryans—remain within the dual realms of myth and ignorance.

30 Here I draw from Stuart Hall’s call for a focus on the “concrete historical ‘work’” performed by racism, and Paul Gilroy’s suggestion that anti-racism inhibits our ability to view race as a “precarious discursive construction” (Hall; Gilroy, “The End of Anti-Racism”).

31 For a more nuanced (yet largely biographical) discussion of Mantegazza’s shifting relationship to anthropological race, see Labanca, “Un nero non può essere un bianco.”
Yet in Mantegazza’s *Fisionomia e mimica*, Aryans, as distinguished from Semites, take center stage as representatives of the European races:

Hanno la pelle bianca quasi tutti gli Ariani e i Semiti e a quanto dicesi molti polinesiani, che non sono né malesi, né papuani e che probabilmente hanno comunque con noi la stessa origine. Hanno la pelle nera i Negri, i Papuani, gli Australiani, alcuni tribù dell’India e i Negriti. Tutti gli altri popoli della terra hanno la pelle del color delle fave secche […] (38).

[Almost all Aryans and Semites have white skin, as do, from what I hear, many Polynesians who are neither Malaysians nor Papuans, and who probably have the same origin as we do. Negroes, Papuans, Australians, and some tribes of India, as well as Negrites have black skin. All other peoples on earth have skin the color of dried fava beans.]

These categories are deployed in order to hierarchize:

In alto e in basso dell’albero umano rami e ramoscelli si avvicinano, per modo che altissimi e bassissimi si toccano. Il negro che si eleva a cafro si avvicina all’europeo, che col gozzo o il cretinismo o la fame si abbassa, si avvicina all’austaliano e al negro (93).

[High and low on the tree of man, branches large and small approach one another, so that the very highest and the very lowest touch. The Negro who is elevated to the level of Kafir approaches the European, who, thanks to a goiter, idiocy, or hunger, is lowered, approaching the Australian or the Negro.]

Mantegazza’s attack is therefore waged not at the Aryan as a category, but at the speculative nature of origin stories in general: “In classifying races [razze] we must exclude their origins as much as possible, because searching for origins is the most fecund source of ethnologic errors” (93). Mantegazza thus upholds the (fictive) truth of the Aryan while condemning speculations about his provenance to the realm of error.

Furthermore, if Mantegazza disparages the fiction of origins stories in the name of truth, in another instance, he complicates this reading by assessing the function of fiction in scientific discourse:

[I]l vocabolo razza […] non è che il prodotto della nostra ginnastica
mentale, delle operazioni del nostro intelletto, all’infuori di qualsiasi realtà. La scienza aveva bisogno delle razze come di quadri ipotetici e questi prodotti dell’arte, per servirci di un’espressione di Lamarck, sono diventate per il volgo realtà concrete. Le razze esistono come una finzione del nostro cervello; esse esistono in noi, ma non fuori di noi. (Cited in Chiozzi, “Esistono gli ‘Ariani?’” 47)

[[T]he word race [...] is nothing but a product of our mental gymnastics, the operations of our intellect, outside of any reality. Science needed races [to serve as] hypothetical frames, and these products of art, to use a Lamarckian expression, became concrete realities for common folk. Races exist only as an invention of our brains; they exist within us, but not outside of us.]

Mantegazza draws from Lamarck’s 1809 treatise Philosophie zoologique in order to echo the latter’s assertion that classification is a mere interpretive apparatus (“hypothetical frame” or “product of art”), adopted by the naturalist in order to make sense of his object (nature). Mantegazza extends Lamarck’s analysis to describe not only the task of the scientist (deploying “art” to organize the natural world), but also the way in which scientific methodology permeates (however erroneously) public consciousness (“[races] became concrete realities for common folk”). In so doing, Mantegazza exposes race as a discursive production, without, however, abandoning its organizing function in scientific narrative.

In staging a critique of race, Mantegazza simultaneously if implicitly addresses his own textual production. Following Lamarck, he claims that

32 “Le but, au contraire, d’une classification des animaux est de fournir, à l’aide de lignes de séparation tracées de distance en distance dans la série générale de ces êtres, des points de repos à notre imagination, afin que nous puissions plus aisément reconnaître chaque race déjà observée, saisir ses rapports avec les autres animaux connus et placer dans chaque cadre les nouvelles espèces que nous parviendrons à découvrir. Ce moyen supplée à notre faiblesse, facilite nos études et nos connaissances, et son usage est pour nous d’une nécessité indispensable; mais j’ai déjà montré qu’il est un produit de l’art et que, malgré les apparences contraires, il ne tient réellement rien de la nature” (emphasis mine; Lamarck 117).

33 Far more important than racial classification for Mantegazza’s scientific project was a biological explanation of inheritance. Darwin would praise Mantegazza’s work on pangenesis as an explanation for the transmission of both inherited and acquired traits as extremely influential in his groundbreaking study of evolution (Taylor 10).
science relies upon “art” or “fiction” for its interpretive frame. He thereby authorizes his own role as a writer of (science) fiction. Furthermore, by evoking the misled “common folk” (volgo) he hails the very audience he seeks to infuse with the morally hygienic knowledge through his popular prose. Mantegazza’s texts are a showcase of meditations on the multiple articulations of science and aesthetics (Pireddu, Antropologi alla corte della bellezza). His “scientific” texts brim with naturalist metaphors, poetic hyperbole, and extended digressions on beauty. Taken together, his many moral treatises entitled “Physiology of [Love, Pleasure, Pain, etc.]” might be said to constitute a literary genre unto themselves (Fig. 2.3).

Conversely, his novels have typically been read as artless vehicles for his scientific (or less-than-scientific, following his scandalized detractors) agenda. Clearly, one of the central tensions within Mantegazza’s oeuvre is an oscillation between the registers of science and literature in the service of his global taxonomic mission to render psychological and physiological man—and woman (and herein lies the threat of his work, at least to nineteenth-century readers)—legible and intelligible. If race is more artful fiction (narrative) than science, it is necessary to both his scientific and literary projects. Indeed, Lucia Re has referred to the porous boundaries between literature and the Italian racial theory of Niceforo and Sergi in this period in terms of “rhetorical short circuits” (“Italians and the Invention of Race” 20).

A fervent Darwinist, Mantegazza availed himself not only of vocabularies

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34 This earns Mantegazza the distinction of being more of a novelliere than a scientist for Sandra Puccini (“I viaggi di Paolo Mantegazza” 51).
35 Walter Pasini resists classifying Mantegazza’s novels as such: “He was a writer of books of a novelistic character. [...] It should be said that Mantegazza did not achieve excellence in this field because his novels have far too obvious didactic intentions and autobiographical notes that were a bit too insistent” (18). This condemnation brings Mantegazza closer to his colleague and pen-pal, Charles Darwin: “For [historian Walter Cannon] the Origin is a dull monograph whose amateurish metaphors (a tree, a bank, a struggle, a chain, a beehive) are superfluous decoration on a structure built out of the massive freestone blocks of documented fact. These figures of speech, he says, are no more than ‘available verbalisms’ and Darwinism itself profoundly anti-literary because it proves conclusively in its style and its freedom from moralistic assumptions that science has outgrown all the ancient resources of myth, ritual and drama” (Morton 5).
36 This oscillation was also institutional: the chair in Anthropology that Mantegazza occupied beginning in 1869 (Italy’s first) was originally housed in the University of Florence’s Facoltà di Filosofia e Lettere. Mantegazza appealed relentlessly to the administration for its transfer to the Facoltà di Scienze (Landucci, 113; 126).
of zoological typologization, but also of logics of racialized and nationalist hierarchy. True to fin-de-siècle form, in Mantegazza’s writings, at times the national population contains (by subsuming) racialized variation, and at others the nation stands in metonymically for race, or vice versa. This blurriness recurs throughout Mantegazza’s writings; the shifting logic is typically nestled within a rhetorical oscillation between humanistic universality (“the human family”) and racialized specificity (“high races” and “low races”).

In Fisionomia e mimica, Mantegazza addresses the concept of race explicitly, writing:

La razza è un’espressione molto larga, che abbraccia tante e diverse cose, quali un certo modo di sentire, un certo grado di intelligenza, certa intensità di emozioni, e tutte queste cose influiscono e modificano la mimica. È questo uno dei punti più oscuri della mimica e noi dedicheremo ad esso uno speciale capitolo. (294)

[Race is a broad expression, that embraces many diverse things, including a certain way of feeling, a certain intelligence level, a certain intensity of emotions, and all of these things influence and modify facial expressions. This is one of the most obscure aspects of human expression and we will dedicate a special chapter to it.]

In this formulation, as in many that attempt to provide a definition of “race,” causality is ambiguous at best. As Mantegazza attempts to provide a


38 This relationship between specificity and universality is fundamental to Victorian evolutionary anthropology, which resolved this potentially paradoxical disjunction with temporality. Stocking writes, “mankind was one, not because it was everywhere the same, but because the differences represented stages in the same process” (Victorian Anthropology 225).

39 Ann Stoler has pointed out that such an opacity of causality is inherent to race thinking. In the epilogue to her aforementioned study Race and the Education of Desire, Stoler discusses what Foucault called the “polyvalent mobility” of race by examining the
definition (it is introduced with the classificatory heading “Race,” and follows similar ones such as, “Education” and “Sex”), he opens by anticipatorily foreclosing the task at hand (“race is a broad expression”). He then goes on to list qualities that race might either describe or determine (“a certain way of feeling, a certain intelligence level, a certain intensity of emotions [...]”). Rather than answering the question he has posed, Mantegazza defers the reader to a subsequent chapter.

In Mantegazza’s meditation on race in Fisionomia e mimica, the mobility of the term is evident precisely insofar as causality is muddled. The moral-psychological categories of sentiment and intellectual capacity that for Mantegazza dictate physiognomy both disclose racial truths (“They are racially marked and so they are emotionally/intellectually inferior”) and provide the necessary conditions for racialization (“They are emotionally/intellectually inferior and so they are racially marked”). Indeed, Mantegazza’s next move is to assert the “obscurity” of the term, promising an entire subsequent chapter aimed at its exegesis. Yet what he delivers merely affirms this obscurity, and recalls his understanding of race (cited in Chiozzi) as a mobile hermeneutic mechanism. Taking issue with climatological analyses of character, Mantegazza privileges instead the influence of racialized blood:

Gli Scandinavi sono molto parchi nei loro movimenti, poco vivaci, molto silenziosi; hanno in tutto una mimica piena di riserva, io direi, molto concentrca. Ma voi andate a Bergen, una delle maggiori città della Norvegia e vedete invece gente gaia, rumorosa, una mimica eccentrica e tumultuosa. Ma dunque? Anche qui fa freddo e perché la mimica è tanto diversa da quella che si osserva a Trondiem o a Cristiania? È perché a Bergen vi fu nei secoli lontani una grande importazione di schiavi irlandesi; quindi avete molto sangue celtico, che ha portato seco la telegrafia dei gesti e la prorompente vivacità della mimica. E chi mai oserebbe parlare d’una mimica italiana, quando è così diversa a Napoli e a Milano, a Cagliari e a Torino? (296)

multiple implications within contemporary political discourse of the statement, “Blacks are poor because they are black.” Depending upon ideological exigency, the statement may be wielded by self-proclaimed racists (biology determines racial inferiority, which determines class) and anti-racists (institutional racism both produces and codifies race, which determines class) alike. Though Stoler focuses upon the mobility of this declaration when it is adopted by antagonistic political groups, her discussion calls forth the need for the problematization of causality in analyses of racialist discourse.
[Scandinavians are very frugal in their movements, which are lifeless and silent; they have overall a very reserved, I would almost say concentric, range of expressions. But if you go to Bergen, one of the largest Norwegian cities, you will find instead a joyous, noisy people with an eccentric and tumultuous range of expressions. And so? It is cold there, as well, so why would human expression be so different from that of Trondheim or Christiania? It is because in Bergen, centuries ago, there was a major importation of Irish slaves, so there you have a lot more Celtic blood, which brought along with it the telegraphy of gestures and the uncontainable liveliness of expression. And who would ever try to speak about a unified Italian expression, when it is so different from Naples to Milan, from Calgliari to Turin?]

Blood trumps climate, as Bergenians are merely Celts in disguise. Racialized blood is introduced in order to explain away internal difference, as this fragmentation undermines the metonymic substitution of nation for race. Mantegazza extends this explanation to the Italian peninsula, thereby suggesting that blood ensures southern difference. He closes with the query, “And who would ever try to speak about a single Italian expression, when it is so different from Naples to Milan, from Calgliari to Turin?” Evidently, it is Mantegazza himself who dares speak of a unified “Italian expression,” and he does so not a paragraph later; the suggestion of anything less risks destabilizing his fiction of European racial supremacy (and his positioning of Italians within this group). Perhaps not surprisingly, then, his next move is to address this potential for racialized variation within the naturalized borders of the nation-state by producing a model of Italian/black opposition:

La mobilità dei lineamenti è assai diversa nelle diverse razze e non si accorda sempre col grado di gerarchia psichica. [...] Ma se i negri fanno colla loro faccia molte smorfie, hanno il volto mobilissimo anche gli Italiani, che pure stanno a un livello molto più alto. (297)

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40 It is of further note that in this passage, the human eye deceives and Mantegazza must intervene in order to penetrate the immediately visible with an affirmation of the microscopics of blood.

41 Mantegazza’s choice of the oppositional pairs of Naples and Milan and Cagliari and Turin are unequivocal shorthand for southern question discourse that posits geographic extremity as representative and/or productive of cultural, racial and/or linguistic difference.
The range of facial expressions is quite diverse within the different races, and it is not always in line with [where a group sits in] the psychic hierarchy. [...] If Negroes make many faces, Italians also have very mutable faces, even though they are at a much higher level [in the psychic hierarchy].

The contingent threats of internal Italian fragmentation and Italian-black likeness are thus abated as Italians are inscribed at the top of the chromatic hierarchy. The logic of this progression reads: racially fragmented Italians may be, but in opposition to the “black race” (whose geographical coordinates need not be specified), they constitute a unified representative of the “Italian race.” Indeed, as Mantegazza was drafting Fisionomia e mimica, early Italian colonial enthusiasts found the African/European or black/white opposition was the most effective way to erase racialized regional difference (Wong 89).

My goal here is not to trace the variations within Mantegazza’s definitions of race over the course of his hyper-prolific career, nor is it to highlight the fact that these shifting definitions are often at odds with one another. Such a reading might produce a catalogue that would, for one, reproduce the classificatory logic of Mantegazza himself, and, moreover, would risk engendering
little more than the conclusion that his scientific method, like that of so many of his contemporaries, was faulty.\footnote{As Hannah Arendt argued in 1950, “[T]oday no single science is left into whose categorical system race-thinking has not deeply penetrated” (160). Nancy Leys Stepan reminds us: “[T]he sciences of human difference cannot and should not be dismissed lightly as something belonging thankfully to the past […] They were the work of the best scientists of the day and were at the centre, not the margins, of science. Evolutionary biology, modern genetics, bacteriology, sciences which still provide the framework for the sciences of biology and medicine today, were all closely tied to racial (and sexual) sciences. Racialism was thus part of the very modernity of science” (31–32).} Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg identifies a similar tendency in Lombroso criticism: “[his] style—his bad writing, his lack of system, his obsessive accumulation of ‘facts’—turned him into an easy target of a debunking that made him the propagator of a pseudo-science whose basic presuppositions could not hold up to closer inspection” (232).\footnote{In her study of Lombroso and writer Matilde Serao, Nancy Harrowitz describes one such reading of Lombroso’s work as “reductive” and “limited” (23) because it fails to account for his historical and epistemological context.} The same might be said for Mantegazza. Contending oneself with condemning Mantegazza’s outdated scientific method would lead to a similar dead-end in terms of interpreting his own vast production.

**Technologies of Seeing**

Rather than stressing the separation between art and science in the nineteenth century, it is important to see how they were both part of a single interlocking field of knowledge and practice. The same knowledge that allowed the increasing rationalization and control of the human subject in terms of new institutional and economic requirements was also a condition for new experiments in visual representation.

Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer* (9)

Though race (*razza*) figures prominently in Mantegazza’s “non-fiction” prose, his novel *The Year 3000* is not organized around an explicit deployment of the term. Instead, race appears in the novel as a relic of the past—its representatives are conserved in a futuristic museum exhibit. Yet central to the thematics that structure this fictional text is a project of reproductive engineering. At the
opening of *The Year 3000*, Mantegazza promises a futuristic tale aimed at the celebration of the “fertile marriage” (*matrimonio fecondo*) of its protagonists.\(^4^4\) What the text ultimately produces, however, is a figure of male intellectual production, rather than female parturition. Instead of the birth of a healthy biological being, the “birth” celebrated at the close of the novel is one of scientific genius: the invention of a psychoscope. This invention is the last in a series of technologies of visualization figured throughout the novel aimed at reducing physiological and psychological bodies to a kind of text.\(^4^5\) Mantegazza’s novel thus dramatizes an epistemological shift that occurred in the nineteenth century, and most markedly within his field of physiology, that made the body “the site of both power and truth.” As Jonathan Crary suggests in his seminal study of modernity and vision: “[K]nowledge was conditioned by the physical and anatomical functioning of the body, and perhaps most importantly, the eyes” (79). As the relationships between the body, vision, and truth were being refigured, Mantegazza, along with his famed interlocutors Francis Galton, Sigmund Freud, and others, attempted to externalize the mind through technologies of visualization (photography as a “mental picture”). Physiognomy and phrenology might be counted among such technologies of visualization. As Lev Manovich has argued and as Mantegazza’s novel makes clear, these attempts grew out of an increasing demand for mass standardization and regulation. Simply put, “The private and the individual are translated into the public and become regulated. What before was a mental process, a uniquely individual state, now becomes part of the public sphere.” (“Visual Technologies” 205). For Manovich, modernity addresses subjective interiority through an exterior visual representation of it, paving the way for technologies of mass spectacle such as cinema. Though Mantegazza’s psychoscope does not arrive at the proto-cinematic, it is nevertheless pervaded by such an impulse toward the exteriorization of interiority and its regulation (205).

Mantegazza makes clear that his eugenic utopia, *L’Anno 3000* (the least successful of his forays into popular fiction), is in part a response to the

\(^4^4\) In his translation of the novel, David Jacobson translates *matrimonio fecondo* as “mating match” (*Mantegazza, The Year 3000. A Dream* 58).

\(^4^5\) Horn and Stewart-Steinberg both discuss the centrality of corporeal texts to Lombroso’s project. Whereas Lombroso was eager to catalogue criminally deviant bodies (indeed, Stewart-Steinberg notes that a void occupies the space of the “normal” subject), Mantegazza was keen to produce healthy bodies as foils to potentially pathological ones. This is particularly the case in what I call his “reproductive novels”: *Un giorno a Madera* and *L’Anno 3000*. 
central thematic concern of *Un giorno a Madera*—healthy, as opposed to diseased, reproduction: “Couples’ visits to be authorized for fertile marriage have fairly well diminished hereditary diseases, but they still exist, through the errors of visiting physicians and through vices that ruin good constitutions as well” (*The Year 3000* 111). In 3000, protagonists Paolo and Maria travel by electric airship from Rome to Andropolis, capital of the United Planetary States (located at the foot of the Himalayas) to obtain a permit for a reproductive marriage from the Biological Senate.

Premarital certification was, along with birth control, sterilization, and mental hygiene, among the fundamental topics of eugenics debates in late nineteenth-century Italy. Eugenics, coined by Francis Galton in 1883, entered official discourse in Italy in 1912 with the participation of Corrado Gini, Giuseppe Sergi, Alfredo Niceforo, Enrico Morselli, Antonio Marro, Roberto Michels, Achille Loria, and Raffaele Garofalo at the First International Congress of Eugenics in London (Cassata 19; 27). As Mantegazza’s writings attest, many of Galton’s principles were in wide circulation well before an official Italian eugenics school, the Comitato Italiano per gli Studi di Eugenica, was launched in 1913 (Cassata, *Molti, sani e forti* 27). Indeed, several years before Galton’s coining of the term eugenics, Mantegazza published *L’igiene dell’amore* (*The Hygiene of Love*, 1878), in which he asserted his own primacy over Galton’s with regard to studies of heredity (Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 32; Mantegazza, *L’igiene dell’amore*). For Francesco Cassata, Mantegazza’s “hygienic-utopian” novels *Un giorno a Madera* and *L’Anno 3000*, alongside other projects of social medicine, and the fleeting appearance of an Italian neo-Malthusian school, all attest to the presence of a strong proto-eugenic discourse in liberal Italy (“Rigenerare la razza” 115). Mantegazza regarded science as the basis for government policy; Maria Sophia Quine argues that this instrumentalization of science toward explicitly political ends is what distinguished Mantegazza from another of his ethno-anthropological interlocutors, “the ‘father’ of

46 Unlike *A Day in Madeira*, *The Year 3000* saw only one edition, which was re-released by Lumbrina in 1988 with a preface by Alberto Capatti. In 2007, it was released again by the publishing house Lupetti. The novel was published under the series title *I Rimossi*, dedicated to titles that had been “removed” from circulation, or, significantly, “repressed.” For an in-depth discussion of the publication, translation, and reception of *The Year 3000*, see Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 42–44.

47 See also: Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development*. See also Galton, “Hereditary Talent and Character.”

48 See also: Mantovani; Bonetta.
Italian racism,” Giustiniano Nicolucci, and thus brought Mantegazza closer to twentieth-century eugenics (140).

On their way to apply for premarital certification in Andropolis, Paolo and Maria, the protagonists of L’Anno 3000, make stopovers in the Necropolis of La Spezia, where Paolo lectures young and inexperienced Maria on the political and military history of Europe since the nineteenth century, and at the Egyptian Pyramids, where the protagonists feast on fish drawn from the sea that now covers the former deserts of the African continent. Paolo and Maria then travel by luxurious, high-speed ocean liner to Sri Lanka (still known as Ceilan in the year 3000), where they visit variously governed city-states: The Land of Equality, Tyrannopolis, Turatia (“The Socialist Republic”), and Logopolis (copy of parliamentary England). From this “Island of [political] Experiments,” the travelers continue on to the Island of Dynamo, where they observe the office of planetary energy (whose technicians distribute currents of light, heat, and electricity throughout the globe by way of an elaborate web of conductor cables). From here, they board their aerotach once again, bound directly for Andropolis. After visiting the administrative centers of the capital city for a few days, Paolo surprises Maria when he is awarded the Cosmic Prize (conferred by the Academy of Andropolis), for his invention of the psychoscope, which allows its user to read the thoughts of whomever he chooses. Following the ceremony, Paolo and Maria receive authorization to marry from the Health Tribunal. The novel concludes with a telegrammatic account of their wedding.

This felicitous narrative conclusion that I have just outlined does not, however, coincide with the novel’s ideological conclusion—in which the novel acknowledges that the political world it has labored to construct is untenable. Despite the fact that the novel, set in the year 3000, includes an account of the historical surpassing of race, the way that it approaches the relationship between vision and corporeal knowledge reveals that it is not beyond the logics of racialization that prescribe the apprehension of

49 Chris Fern notes that technological innovation also plays a central role in the fin-de-siècle utopias of Bellamy (Looking Backward, 1888) and Wells (A Modern Utopia, 1905) and claims that this reflects their historical positioning within an era of “dramatic advances in hygiene, medicine, long-range transport and communications” (69). Nicoletta Pireddu makes a similar argument in her discussion of the literary intertexts and cultural context of The Year 3000. For Pireddu, the psychoscope represents the novel’s attempt to “extend the moral and social benefits of science even to the less tangible and more complex manifestations of human life—that is, to the psychological and spiritual ones” (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 3; 7; 31).
race by the human eye. Central to the couple-protagonists’ travels is a visit to the eugenics laboratory known as the Hygeia, where newborns deemed physiologically unfit are incinerated. This marks the final phase of the pair’s reproductive education, and enables them to obtain a permit for a reproductive marriage, purportedly the primary aim of their pilgrimage from Rome to Andropolis. Yet this project of eugenic engineering occurs in a future tense which Mantegazza figures as already beyond race:

Le rapide e facili comunicazioni fra paese e paese e le profonde modificazioni dei climi avvenute per opera dell’uomo tendono ad ogni generazione a fondere indefiniteamente le razze, creando un nuovo tipo, indefinite cosmopolita, frutto dell’incrociamo intimo e profondo di tante e tante razze, che per lunghi secoli eran rimaste isolate e disgiunte, facendosi paura reciproca e continua e distruggendosi a vicenda col ferro, col fuoco e più ancora col trasporto di terribili malattie infettive, che poi colla cresciuta civiltà sono quasi del tutto scomparse dalla superficie della terra. (146)

[The rapid and easy communications between one country and another and the profound changes in climate that have come about through human intervention tend in each generation to fuse the races indefinitely,
creating a new type, indefinitely cosmopolitan, the fruit of the deep and intimate cross-breeding of ever so many races that had over long centuries remained separate and isolated, creating continual mutual fear and destroying each other with sword, with fire, and even more with the transportation of terrible infectious diseases, which later, with the advances in civilization, have almost entirely disappeared from the face of the earth.] (170)

The “indefinitely cosmopolitan type”—a sort of super-race—can only emerge in the wake of the disappearance of those which the text has determined are worthy of elimination: “the Australians, the Maori, the Hottentots, the bushmen, many blacks, the Guarani [...]” (The Year 3000. A Dream 169). The end of racialization is thereby effected by its mobilization in hierarchized natural selection. The eugenic project of the novel, which might in this post-racial future seem superfluous, thus relies upon a second-order racialization, one in which various medical-scientific technologies are mobilized in order to penetrate the epidermal and physiognomic surface in order to evince physiological and psychological constitution. It is our couple-protagonists’ visit to the Museum of Andropolis that signals what I consider to be the ideological conclusion of the novel: Paolo and Maria may only view the mannequins of racialized man on display there by relying upon modes of seeing that the text’s technological innovations have rendered obsolete.

In 3000, travel is pedagogical and is essential to ensuring the eventual biological union of the healthy protagonists. Their educative relationship is

50 This fantasy about communication and industry enabling diffusion recurs throughout Mantegazza’s oeuvre. In Fisiologia della donna he figures the process similarly (186).

51 Pireddu argues that here Mantegazza is “in line with the Darwinian theory of evolution, which, by invalidating the notion of the fixity of species, had reconceptualized the life of organisms as subject to continuous and progressive modifications with the passage of time.” She also notes that this ethnic homogenization is among the “problematic” moments in Mantegazza’s utopian vision. She reads this “new type, indefinitely cosmopolitan” in terms of what she calls Mantegazza’s “cosmopolitical democracy” (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 30; 39).

52 It is worth noting that Mantegazza’s technological innovations are epistemologically rooted in physiology and are consequently described by Mantegazza as prosthetic extensions of the human eye (rather than exterior, objective and/or mechanized agents of sight).
likewise gendered: Paolo is a linguistic and (social)-scientific authority; he
guides Maria through new socio-political terrains, evoking a crude refiguring
of Virgil’s pedagogical role in the *Commedia*. As he and Maria prepare for
a trip to the offices of the central government, she retreats: “Paolo, dear, I’m
an ignorant little woman who finds it hard enough to govern a house and is
bewildered at the notion that just a few humans can govern the entire world
from the Government Palace of Andropolis” (104). Paolo responds with
a “love pat” and authorizes her role as pupil, “No, you are not an ignorant
little woman, and the central government of Andropolis is not a cabal nor
such a dark, intricate mechanism that you can’t understand or admire it”
(105). This exchange prompts one of Paolo’s erudite lectures on the political,
military, and social history of the area since the nineteenth century; strung
together, lessons like these, aimed at both the reader and Maria constitute
the narrative bulk of the novel. Moreover, travel enables Mantegazza to
thematize the genre within which his novel might be inscribed: that of
utopian fiction. The lands the betrothed must traverse before arriving

53 Indeed, Paolo has learned the “dead language” of Italian (in 3000, a “cosmic
language” is spoken) and he credits Dante as his inspiration (Mantegazza, *The Year 3000.
A Dream* 62). For more on the internationalism “cosmic language” of 3000 in relation
to Ghislanzoni’s European federalist project in Abrakadabra (1884), see Pireddu,
”Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 38.

54 Curiously, while the protagonists are not engaged in time travel, the narrator—and
even at times Paolo, whose learned observations are often indistinguishable from those of
the narrator—seems quite conscious that we, as readers, are. That is, instead of orienting
the terrain geographically for (primarily) Maria, the narrator regularly orients Maria
temporally: rather than “Here [insert sociological fact],” the narrator orients with, “In
the year 3000, [insert sociological fact].” Fern observes that the status of the plausibility
of utopian fiction shifted between the Renaissance (More, Campanella and Bacon)—
which posited geographical elsewheres just as “actual travelers’ accounts” from voyages
of “discovery” were circulating—and the nineteenth century, when time travel became
critical to utopian writings, thereby diminishing their plausibility and ensuring the [Fern
citing H.G. Wells] “double-encoding of utopias as both fiction and non-fiction, literature
1967; 93 (cited in Fern 71).

55 Though Jameson identifies the homology of socialist and utopian discourse (“Utopia
is a transparent synonym for socialism itself,” he writes), Mantegazza arguably re-figures
this relationship. He stages the socialist communities of Egualianza and Turazia as
failed utopias in order to formulate his own—Andropolis—which, he suggests through
his condemnation of the oppressive homogeneity operating in these societies, instead
purportedly celebrates human diversity. The paradox constituted by such a claim in
light of the text’s eugenic project is one of the central tensions of the novel. For more
at their destination are so many utopias, and they are staged as naive and idealistic foils to the text’s narrative, thematic, and ideological point of arrival: Andropolis.

Chris Fern notes that one of the fundamental elements of utopian fiction is the protagonist’s return “home” and an account of his discoveries (“the protagonist in such narratives is nearly always male”) to his fellow (non-utopian) citizens (13). While Mantegazza’s couple-protagonists do not return to Rome (the novel concludes in Andropolis), their voyage is staged as the realization of a fictive one of the same name and already completed by another author (who bears a striking resemblance to Mantegazza). At the opening of the novel, the narrator states: “Paolo and Maria brought just a few books with them, among them *The Year 3000*, written ten centuries earlier by a physician with a bizarre imagination who tried to guess what human life would be like a millennium on” (*The Year 3000. A Dream* 58). Rather than the account of utopia emerging from the travelers’ return home, in *3000*, the protagonists traverse terrain already produced by the fantastic meanderings of a doctor/author. Indeed, one of their goals is to verify the accuracy of this futuristic fantasy. Paolo declares, “I’m really curious how well this prophet guessed the future” (58). Paolo and Maria’s “home” is therefore a textual one: protagonists of Mantegazza’s *L’Anno 3000*, their point of reference is the *Year 3000* of the unnamed clinician-author. They are thus both readers of text and writers of it: their journey through the landscapes and cities of the year 3000 both constitutes the narration and drives it forward.56

With each stopover on their way to Andropolis, it becomes increasingly clear that at stake in their travels is Maria’s education on her own role and that of institutions in the management of reproduction.57 Maria’s individual

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56 For Pireddu, this *mise-en-abyme* functions as “a literary solution that highlights Mantegazza’s proverbial self-centeredness,” but also serves to “[enhance] the credibility of the future scenario” (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 24).

57 Despite a striking number of thematic parallels between Mantegazza’s *L’Anno 3000* and Campanella’s *La Città del Sole* (1602), Pireddu is among the few scholars who mentions the latter as one of several precursor texts (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 3). Capatti discusses another precursor, Albert Robida’s *Voyage de fiancailles au XXe siècle* (1892). Instead of a novel that targets reproduction, Robida’s *Voyage*, set in 1954, stages prenuptial travel as generative of matrimonial stability (12). Campanella, like Mantegazza after him, dedicates much of his text to the organization of sexual relations, particularly with regard to education, reproduction, and even hygiene.
reproductive role is, true to biopolitical imperatives, inscribed within a collectivity. In Foucault’s words:

[S]exuality represents the precise point where the disciplinary and the regulatory, the body and the population, are articulated. [...] Medicine is a power-knowledge that can be applied both to the body and the population, both the organism and biological processes, and it will therefore have both disciplinary effects and regulatory effects. (Society Must Be Defended 252)

The fictional year 3000 is situated where discipline and regulation intersect: the citizens of Andropolis are both self-governing and rigorously regulated. Disciplinary agents are replaced by civilians: “In the year 3000 there are no longer gendarmes, nor policemen, nor public security guards; every honest citizen is a gendarme, a policeman, and moreover also a judge” (The Year 3000. A Dream 101). Here is Bentham’s Panopticon—“a generalizable model of functioning, a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men”—realized (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 205). The watchtower may or may not be empty, but subjects will behave as if it were constantly manned. In Foucault’s now classic formulation:

Power should be visible and unverifiable. Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know (medical practice, alimentation, domesticity, etc.). The “Grand Magistrate of Generation, or the Grand Medical Doctor” oversees reproductive coupling (42). Men and women who have come of age (nineteen years for women; twenty-one for men) participate in a public display of unclothed athletic exercise, “displaying themselves nude in gymnastic exercises” (43). Their bodies are thus deemed fit or unfit for sexual reproduction, and couples are assigned based upon corporeal compatibility, “according to their respective corporeal proportions. [...] A large and beautiful woman is united with a robust and impassioned man” (43). On a designated night, at a designated hour (deemed by clinician and astrologer alike as favorable for insemination), and only after “the generators have washed themselves well,” the couple is united for the reproductive act (43). In 3000, Mantegazza shifts focus: instead of an examination of the generative couple, he places the product of their union on physiological trial. An examination of reproductive bodies seems inconsequential to the conferral of a license to reproduce (Paolo and Maria receive their permit without being subjected to such an examination).
whether he is being looked upon at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so. (201)

Or, as Thomas Flynn puts it in his analysis of vision in Foucault’s account of modernity, “Disciplinary power, unlike traditional sovereign power, is exercised through its invisibility while imposing compulsory visibility on its subjects” (201). The disciplined future has already been realized in Andropolis, and therefore the role of the prison has been eclipsed by an even kinder, gentler institution—the school: “[T]his House is by no means a jail, as they were in earlier times, but a sort of school, where they correct the guilty, where they lovingly study the causes that can have led someone to commit a crime” (The Year 3000. A Dream 102). As I’ve mentioned, the educative project enabled by travel constitutes both the novel’s content and its raison d’être. Yet Mantegazza saves a space in the year 3000 for Bentham’s carceral Panopticon, albeit in a somewhat altered form: “The city of Andropolis boasts over fifty large theaters, which offer the widest range of shows to delight the eyes and ears—to delight the imagination and the heart. [...] Only the Panopticon, the largest and wealthiest of Andropolis’s theaters, is the property of the State; its purpose in presenting its spectacles is to educate the people to appreciate beauty and the finer emotions” (155–156). It is almost as if Mantegazza anticipates Foucault’s memorable antimetabole nearly a century later that “prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons,” by adding to this list an artistic and/or cultural institution—the theater (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 228). The Panopticon refigured as pedagogical (read: disciplinary) theater raises the question about the degree to which Mantegazza’s text, itself structured by a pedagogical relationship, between Paolo and Maria, and between Mantegazza and his would-be readers, “stages” the encounter between the discipline and regulation of reproduction. It also brings up the question of visual perception, one which recurs throughout the novel (Paolo and Maria’s travels are marked by statues and museums, which represent

58 Here, Mantegazza seems also to anticipate Foucault’s thinly veiled rejection of Guy Debord’s well-known argument that consumer capitalism controls unknowing subjects through spectacle. Foucault writes, “We are much less Greeks than we believe. We are neither in an amphitheater, nor on the stage, but in the panoptic machine, invested by its effects of power, which we bring ourselves since we are part of its mechanism” (Discipline and Punish 217). In Mantegazza’s novel, the Panopticon-as-theater dramatizes the very passage that Foucault will outline nearly a century later: from power as the spectacular display of the sovereign’s credo “let live and make die,” to power as both disciplinary and regulatory, modeled on the biopolitical injunction to “make live and let die.”
Immunitary Technologies

history visually: “you see before your eyes” is one of the novel’s orienting refrains; futuristic medical technology is primarily scopic, that is, directed at objects of examination and fancy) and demarcates its ideological limits.59

Paolo’s learned monologues on statecraft and reproduction both constitute and propel L’Anno 3000’s narrative. The limits of absurdity in the political utopias that Mantegazza presents as foils to Andropolis are often to be found in descriptions of how sexual relations are regulated there.60 From a resident of The Land of Equality, Paolo and Maria learn: “A law passed in this very year requires all men to fecundate their wife only on the first of May. As for love, we make it at the same hour, every hour, when the special bell of the Government House tolls” (72). These lessons also prepare Maria, and readers, for arrival at Andropolis. There, the couple visits the Hygeia, Andropolis’ hospital (or “Institute of Health”), named after the goddess of health and sanitation.61 Aimed as it purportedly is at the celebration of the “fertile marriage” of the protagonists, the narrative foregrounds this visit: though the text seldom gestures forward, goings-on at the hospital are alluded to long before their arrival there. Yet, if these allusions are noted by readers, they fail to move the protagonists. As the couple interviews a citizen of Andropolis on the legal system, he mentions that recidivism happens only among “born delinquents who were spared elimination by errors in their brain exams” (emphasis mine; 103). Likewise, during their visit to the Health Ministry, the couple learns from a representative that, “Even in the year 3000 there continue to be people who are weak and destined to live short lives, and even though pathological newborns are destroyed, many imperfect organisms still remain who can neither find life at all pleasant nor make it useful to themselves and others” (111). Though the protagonists seem unmoved by the suggestion that living beings are “suppressed,” and newborns “destroyed,” the text thereby registers some anxiety about what awaits them at the Hygeia. Moreover, these

59 Here, following Christian Metz and Martin Jay, I refer both to the Latin scapium, “to look at, examine,” and to the noun scope, as in “something aimed at or desired.” See: “scope, n. 2a,” The Oxford English Dictionary Online; “-scope, comb. form,” The Oxford English Dictionary Online; Jay; Metz.

60 For more on the political fantasies represented in The Year 3000, including that of European federalism, see Pireddu, “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 24–26; 36–41.

Vital Subjects

exchanges forecast a disruption: at times, readers learn, “error” results in the survival of “imperfect organisms.”

Paolo and Maria tour the grounds with the director of the *Hygeia*, who informs them about the professional hierarchy in place; the hygeians—those who practice the preventative medicine privileged by the hospital—are situated at the top of the hierarchy because they assess newborns “to verify whether they are fit for life” (135). After the couple visits the tuberculosis ward and the trauma wing, the anxiety of the text is displaced onto Maria; if, at earlier points in the narrative, Maria seems impervious to accounts of human “suppression,” just before their arrival at the hospital, the text registers her heightened awareness. “‘And now,’ said the Director, ‘let us go visit the division of the hygeians.’” Maria is apprehensive at the suggestion: “Maria, who had heard talk of the elimination of babies unfit for life but who knew nothing more about this, was rather anxious and unsure whether she should go into that department.” Paolo, once again, steps in to manage her relationship to knowledge and desire. Critically, Maria’s reproductive lesson hinges upon her (and by extension, the readers’) *seeing* the horrifying medical intervention: “We must and want to see everything. Let’s go.” They enter a large waiting room full of wailing newborns and nervous mothers, who await “the doctor’s sentence of life or death for their little children” (141). Mantegazza thus fuses the juridical language of the state (“life or death sentence”) with that of medical hygiene, producing an immunitary model. Practitioners examine newborns with new technologies that render their skeletal, organ, muscular, and cerebral systems visible to clinical observers. The narrator explains: “The hygeian took the baby, who was all but naked, and, stripping it completely, placed it on a sort of perch. Immediately a beam of light flooded over it, making it transparent, as though it were made of glass” (142). From here, a diagnosis—physiological

62 Here, Mantegazza resembles David Horn’s Lombroso, for whom: “the body was made an index of the interior states and dispositions of suspected individuals, a sign of the evolutionary status of groups, and a more or less reliable indicator of present and future risks to society” (*The Criminal Body* 1). Yet his mobilization of technology constitutes a departure from Lombroso, who made a name for himself by indexing immediately visible corporeal evidence of criminality. As Stewart-Steinberg writes succinctly: “Here the shape of an ear, of a chin, or the shifty glance of an eye already determine a subject in his or her future actions” (231).

63 This is the second time we read of the “perfected” X-ray, which makes the inner functioning of the human body visible to the observer. Just before their arrival at the *Hygeia*, Paolo and Maria encounter the following: “A delicate youth, pale and gaunt,
and psychological—is produced, and conveyed to a secretary, who records the diagnosis (as a “sentence,” or “verdict”). In the event that the diagnosis is favorable, the examining doctors sign a certificate authorizing life, which is presented to the relieved mother: “Number 17: The child is healthy, sturdy, fit for life” (142). It is here that, to paraphrase Nicoletta Pireddu, the novel’s celebration of scientific progress and technological innovation reveals its horrifying dystopian side (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 32).

After witnessing several similar “verdicts,” once again, Maria’s anxiety partially prepares readers for what is to come: the medically assisted execution of infants. Yet what reads initially as an entirely regulatory system of state medicine is complicated in the final instance, when Mantegazza introduces the caveat of maternal consent:

Maria sperava che le visite avrebbero avuto tutte un analogo risultato, per cui non avrebbe assistito alla distruzione di nessuna creatura, ma ecco che il numero 20, un bambino gracilissimo e che per di più era nato di otto mesi, sottoposto all’esame dell’Igeo fece aggrottare le sopracciglia al medico. (116)

[Maria hoped that all the visits would have a similar outcome, so that she would not have to witness the destruction of any creature, yet then came number 20, a very frail baby who, in addition, had been born at eight months and who, on being submitted to the examination of the hygeian, brought furrows to the brow of the doctor] (143)

The clinician thus diagnoses the newborn: “Baby very frail, tubercular, unfit for life.”

Yet just as the authoritative syntax of diagnosis becomes indistinguishable from an institutionally-mandated death sentence, the narrative takes a curious turn: the clinician confronts the mother with, “And so?” Weeping, was just then waiting to be called. The pneumopathologist asked him to remove his clothes and, once he was entirely naked, asked him to go stand in a sort of niche where suddenly the light that was illuminating the room disappeared, and all was plunged into darkness. Immediately after, though, the doctor directed a beam of light onto the naked man, who became as transparent as if he were made of glass. One could see the heart in its speeded-up, irregular beating, and see the lungs dilating and contracting rhythmically, and see all the viscera of the belly, as if that man had been opened by an anatomic knife, one could even make out the marrow in the depths of the bones” (emphasis mine; 137).
she replies, “Yes.” The narrator interjects, euphemistically translating the words of the clinician: “That ‘And so?’ meant: So, do you allow your baby to be eliminated?” With the consent of his mother, the whimpering baby is thrown into an incinerator:

E infatti, un inserviente prese il bambino, apri un usciuolo nero, posto nella parete della sala e ve lo mise, chiudendo la porticina. Fece scattare una molla, si udi un gemito accompagnato da un piccolo scoppio. Il bambino innondato da una vampa di aria calda a 2000 gradi era scomparso e di lui non rimaneva che un pizzico di ceneri. (117)

[And in fact an attendant took the baby, opened a small black portal in the wall of the room, and put it in there, closing a small door. A spring was released, a cry was heard, accompanied by a little explosion. The baby, enveloped by a flare of hot, 2,000-degree air, had disappeared, and only a bit of ash remained.] (143)

Here is where discipline and regulation meet: institutional agents (in this case, clinicians) produce a “sentence,” and mothers are to act as knowing subjects, educated in the tenets of institutional hygiene that conducts them, as compliant citizens of Andropolis, to authorize the execution of their infants. Fredric Jameson points out how moves toward the totalizing institutionalization of life constitute a recurrent paradox within utopian narrative:

Indeed, one of the basic constraints of the form would seem to be the incompatibility within it between action or events and that timeless map-like extension of the non-place itself: in other words, if things can really happen in Utopia, if real disorder, change, transgression, novelty, in brief if history is possible at all, then we begin to doubt whether it can really be a Utopia after all, and its institutions—from a promise of the fulfillment of collective living—slowly began to turn around into their opposite, a more properly dystopian repression of the unique existential experience of individual lives. (“Of Islands and Trenches” 17)

Vittorio Roda makes a similar observation about 3000, calling it a “monument to nineteenth-century optimism” while asserting that:

[T]here’s something troubling in the air: the undesired and unanticipated
flipside of that very optimism, the shady zone tucked into the folds of an ‘elsewhere’ that the implacably normalizing rationalism of Mantegazza renders [...] in spite of the expressed intentions of the author, perilously close to the ruthless universe of the dystopian. (148)

The scene at the Hygeia overwhelms Maria, who pleads with Paolo to move on from this “chamber of horrors,” yet Paolo insists that they watch one last examination. This final encounter introduces the possibility of a mother’s refutation of the clinician’s diagnosis and sentence. When an attendant confronts the mother of an infant whose outwardly delicate constitution recalls that of the baby who had met with the unhappy fate of incineration, the mother rejects his diagnosis of “Baby with serious heart weakness, unfit for life” (144). As he menaces her with, “And so?” she appropriates his language, wielding it in the service of her own refusal: “And so? And so? So, no!” This declaration marks her exit: she hurriedly escapes from the hospital, clutching her fragile infant. Critically, no guard, no policeman intervenes to stop her. She is “free” to leave, with only her conscience left to answer to: “Poor woman!” the hygeian laments, “How often she will regret that no. She thinks she’s being a good mother, instead she’s merely being a cruel one” (145). The inherent cruelty of the state’s eugenic murder of infants is thus displaced onto an individual mother’s choice to defend the life of her ailing baby. As an agent of the state and the so-called public good, the hygeian’s accusation of cruelty is of course waged at this individual as a kind of social or collective mother, a would-be mother of the ‘hygienic’ nation. He evokes the logic of individual sacrifice for the common good, which in Mantegazza’s biopolitical utopia is understood as necessitating an immunitary defense.

What are the narrative consequences of this discovery? The novel is unable to arrive at a celebration of reproductive bliss among its protagonists—no happy, robust babies are born to Paolo and Maria—because the project of Maria’s sexual education is thwarted by this gesture of female resistance to the disciplinary and regulatory mechanisms of the Hygeia. Furthermore, it is at this critical point, when the text exposes the destructive mechanisms at work in the eugenic utopia that it has labored to construct,
that the logic of the text takes a sharp turn. If the locus of the utopian fantasy has been the possibility of disciplining and regulating healthy life (in an immunitary key: by exposing pathological elements to death), this moment of refusal constitutes a disruption of that fantasy. Like immunitary logic itself, the very notion of 3000 as a eugenic and/or ‘hygienic’ utopian novel contains troubling traces of its opposite: a dystopian future in which human babies are tossed into incinerators, presumably making life unbearable for their parents. At a narrative level, the mother’s imperviousness to hygienic discipline and regulation result in the survival of the “imperfect organisms” anxiously evoked at various points of Paolo and Maria’s journey. The result is that, instead of figuring Maria’s hygienically enlightened parturition, the novel concludes by figuring that of Paolo. The “birth” that is ultimately celebrated (Paolo’s psychoscope) is the last in a constellation of Mantegazzian inventions aimed at further rendering bodies “transparent.”

The technological innovations that Mantegazza envisions enable the eugenic project of the hygeians, rendering physiological and psychological man legible and intelligible. Perhaps not surprisingly, despite the fact that national origins, like national languages, are staged as relics of the past, it is Italian genius that propels these technological developments:

Quest’altra statua è innalzata al dottor Micali, medico italiano, che nel secolo XXV, perfezionando la luce Rontgen riuscì a render trasparente tutto quanto il corpo umano, permettendo così di vedere ad occhio nudo il cervello, i polmoni, il cuore; tutti quanti i visceri e perfino il midollo delle ossa. (106–107)

[This other statue is erected to Doctor Micali, an Italian physician who, in the twenty-fifth century, by perfecting Röntgen light, managed to make the whole human body transparent, thereby allowing us to see with the naked eye the brain, the lungs, the heart, all the inner organs, and even the marrow of bones.] (134)

Newborns are examined and (almost always) exterminated if their bodies are (in)visibly marked as defective. In order for the body to harbor traces of moral or biological atrophy, technology must be mobilized in order to assist the human eye; physiognomic and/or chromatic race is thus surpassed by medico-scientific innovation, which renders the skin “as transparent as […] glass” (136). The scientific “birth” that marks the close of the novel complements this physiological visibility with psychological transparency:
Paolo’s invention of the psychoscope, “a little instrument the size of pocket binoculars [...] that allows us to easily read the thoughts of others to whom it is directed,” is awarded the Cosmic Prize by the Academy of Andropolis (189). Instead of a public ceremony celebrating the protagonists’ fertile marriage, then, the public ceremony staged at the novel’s conclusion is in celebration of this invention aimed at reducing bodies to legible text.

These inventions serve to render physiognomic and epidermal race superfluous: the truth of the body is located instead within the microscopics of the brain, organs, and muscular systems. For Mantegazza, this truth is accessible thanks to the work of technology, understood as both the text itself and the medical apparatuses it produces. If, on the one hand, this logic undermines the potency of visible race (skin color, physiognomy, etc.), on the other hand, it leaves intact that of invisible race (blood, biological essence). Truths of psychological and physiological systems are no longer legible on the skin or on the face; the text and other technologies thus intervene with inventions aimed at exposing what lies within. Yet the novel does not arrive unproblematically at this conclusion, wherein bodies are reduced to little more than intelligible and predictable text. Indeed, the thematic conclusion might be said to be dislocated from the ideological conclusion offered by the novel. If the novel “ends” here, with Paolo’s technological triumph over psychological opacity, where to situate the narrator’s account of the biological surpassing of racialized variation? Why is the road to the full disclosure of biological truth marked with a fantasy about the historic dissolution of race (ostensibly having occurred long before the present tense of the text)? In spite of itself, the novel seems to know that it is not beyond modes of racialization that posit the immediate visibility of race. Indeed, if it were, why would a central thematic focus of the novel be the protagonists’ arrival at the eugenic laboratory of the Hygeia? If racialized variation has already given way to Darwinist selection and regeneration (“a new type, indefinitely cosmopolitan”) why are the text’s technological innovations aimed directly at uncovering the very biological truths that race either discloses or causes?

Returning, then, to Paolo and Maria’s visit to the Hygeia: it concludes, as I have noted, with the refusal of a mother to sacrifice her child to the mandate of public hygiene. Soon thereafter, the couple visits the Museum of Andropolis, which contains artifacts that recount—true to Mantegazzian form—the entire physiological and psychological history of man, arranged
for at-a-glance consumption.\footnote{The museum thematizes Mantegazza’s oeuvre as a whole, aimed, as I have mentioned, at narrating “the entire history of the human family.” It is tempting to forge connections between the circular layout of this fictionalized museum in Andropolis and Mantegazza’s own in Florence. Such work would entail reconstructing the organization of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology as it stood in 1897. Though, today, Mantegazza’s Museo follows a similarly circular layout, it has only been housed at its current site since 1910.} Within the museum are arranged plastic replicas of human beings:

\[T\]i vedi davanti agli occhi l’Adamo selvaggio e irsuto dell’epoca quaternaria, l’uomo delle caverne, l’uomo neolitico e infine tutta la lunga schiera di razze più moderne e che sono però già scomparse dalla superficie della terra; quali gli Australiani, i Maori, gli Ottentotti, i Boschimani, molti Negri, i Guarani e tante e tante altre razze, di cui per alcune però rimangon le traccie nei contemporanei del secolo XXXI. (145)

\[You see before your eyes\] the wild, hirsute Adam of the quaternary age, the caveman, Neolithic man, and finally the whole long array of more modern races that have however already disappeared from the face
of the earth—such as the Australians, the Maori, the Hottentots, the bushmen, many blacks, the Guarani, and so many other races, some of whom, however, remain, albeit only in traces, in the thirty-first century.]

(emphasis mine; 169)

Epidermal and physiognomic race reemerges in the space of the museum, where racialized man is showcased for viewers. Despite the fact that these visually marked bodies are staged as relics of the past, they signal a kink in the Mantegazzian logic that I have been tracing. In order for the text to suggest that it has surpassed physiognomic and/or epidermal race, it must stage its dissolution; populating its futuristic world are not physiognomically or epidermally marked racial others, but instead the “indefinitely cosmopolitan,” and ostensibly post-racial, type. In Mantegazza’s post-racial future, the human eye alone is unable to read racial difference and/or signs of physiological inferiority; technologically assisted forms of viewing are required to penetrate the skin and evince physical defects that lie beneath the skin. Ultimately, however, the text falls back upon an affirmation of the very types of seeing that it renders obsolete.² How will viewers in the year 3000 consume these racialized artifacts as such without resorting to the very modes of physiognomic and/or epidermal racialization (or what Sekula deems physiognomy’s “everyday nonspecialist empiricism” (11)) that the text has attempted to surpass? It is precisely here that the text turns back upon itself. Just as it becomes clear that year 3000 museum patrons require the modes of seeing that the fantasy of the text has labored to dissolve, the novel ushers in a self-critique that exposes the utopian project for what it is: a product of the “bizarre fantasy” of a nineteenth-century thinker.

From the plastic replicas of racialized man, Paolo and Maria continue on to the naturalist wing of the museum, which houses the extraterrestrial exhibit: “[S]ome naturalists, richer in imagination than in science, imagined how the planetary inhabitants might appear and rendered them in drawings or sculpture” (170). Paolo and Maria giggle as they observe the naturalists’ representations of life forms on other planets:

² Here I refer to Jonathan Crary’s argument that a new kind of seeing subject emerged in the nineteenth century, whose capacity for vision lay in his physiological composition rather than in the exterior mechanics of optics. Critically, this new subjective vision—articulated most forcefully by Goethe and Schopenhaur—“coincided with the making of the observer into a subject of new knowledge and new techniques of power” (79).
O Maria Mia, come son buffi questi angeli planetarii, come sono grotteschi, soprattutto come sono impossibili! Mi par che i naturalisti, che li hanno scoperti, dovevano conoscere ben poco l’anatomia comparata e ancor meno la biologia. [...] Guarda qui, questo abitante di Venere quanto è buffo! Gli hanno appiccicato due ali e questo è il sogno più antico, che ha creato gli angeli delle teogonie cristiane, delle maomettane, e di tante altri religioni. L’uomo ha sempre desiderato di poter volare e attaccandosi due grandi ali di oca, di cigno o di aquila, ha fabbricato i suoi angeli. (147)

[Oh, my dear Maria, how comical these planetary angels are, how grotesque, above all, how impossible! It seems to me that the naturalists who have discovered them must have known very little comparative anatomy and even less biology. [...] Look here, at this ‘Venusian!’ How funny it is! They’ve stuck two wings on it—which is the oldest dream we have—and created the angels of theogonies of the Christian, Islamic, and a good many other religions. Man has always longed to fly, and by tacking on two big goose or swan or eagle wings he has created his angels.] (171)

The inherent limits of the naturalists’ historically contingent worldviews are represented by their Venusians, who are little more than mannequins plastered with goose feathers. The narrator continues with a similar critique:

In tutti quei mostri, però non si poteva trovare un solo organo che già non esistesse nell’uomo o in altri animali, per cui la nuova creatura planetaria non era che un mosaico di membra diverse prese ora agli uccelli, ora agli pesci, o agli insetti o ai molluschi. (148)

[In all these monsters, however, one could not find a single organ that did not already exist in man or in other animals, so that the new planetary creature was merely a mosaic of different body parts taken now from birds, now from fish or from insects and mollusks.] (171)

This passage reads as self-referential; it suggests that there are ideological boundaries in place that serve to limit the work of futuristic projection. In this case, the targets of the critique are both the naturalists—who depict extraterrestrial creatures with pencils, plastic, and goose feathers—and the novel itself, which fantasizes about the end of race as it mobilizes
technologies of racial visualization in order to do so. This self-ironization underscores the text’s acknowledgement of its own boundaries, marking what I consider the ideological resolution of the novel: in spite of itself, the text recognizes that it is not beyond the visual logics of racialization that it has toiled to overcome.

That the novel’s ideological parameters should be exposed by how it approaches the apparent legibility of bodies brings up some of the questions with which this chapter began. Part of what critics have found so simultaneously compelling and threatening about Mantegazza’s work is how it brings sexualized and racialized bodies into the realm of visibility through writing and Mantegazza’s use of photography, which he claimed would facilitate even more readily a “comparative reading” of human bodies. Likewise, Mantegazza’s feverish publication of volumes upon volumes of popular prose, which he himself refers to as textual offspring, must be read as therapeutic, as an attempt to heal the Italian masses, delivering them from what would otherwise be their biopolitical decline. Subtending such a rhetoric of decline is the ideological fantasy of the racialized Italian national body. Like Maria traveling through the institutions of Andropolis, readers are to learn the joys of personal and collective hygiene, and all of the “freedoms”—from the oppressive regulation of Tyrannopolis, and even the Land of Equality; from pain, sickness, and premature death—that it enables. 3 And at the apex of this

3 “Human life too has been considerably prolonged, thanks to the rising prosperity of the poor classes and all the progress in hygiene. Whereas in the nineteenth-century an average life span was between twenty-eight and thirty-six years, today the average planetary life span is seventy-two years and in some healthier regions up to eighty-five years” (112). Pireddu lists these and many other of the “human and social benefits” produced in the novel (“Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 27). For Žižek, following Lacan, this is how Marx invented the symptom: “The ‘symptom’ is, strictly speaking, a particular element which subverts its own universal foundation, a species subverting its own genus. In this sense, we can say that the elementary Marxian procedure of ‘criticism of ideology’ is already ‘symptomatic’: it consists in detecting a point of breakdown heterogeneous to a given ideological field and at the same time necessary for that field to achieve its closure, its accomplished form. This procedure thus implies a certain logic of exception: every ideological Universal—for example freedom, equality—is ‘false’ in so far as it necessarily includes a specific case which breaks its unity, lays open its falsity. Freedom, for example: a universal notion comprising a number of species (freedom of speech and press, freedom of consciousness, freedom of commerce, political freedom, and so on) but also, by means of a structural necessity, a specific freedom (that of the worker to sell freely his own labour on the market) which subverts this universal notion. That is to say, this freedom
biopolitical project lies nothing short of an immunitary imperative. Indeed, I read Mantegazza’s modernity in L’Anno 3000 not, as others have, in his prophetic poetics—he “predicts” the outbreak of World War I, the demise of the socialist experiment, the formation of the European Union, and he anticipates the invention of the CAT scan or, even more recently, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration-enforced body scan, and “clean” energy, nor in his many other fanciful futuristic inventions such as popular air travel à la Jettsons and the Pantomass, a personal massage contraption that conforms to individual bodies like a well-tailored suit, and so on. Instead, taking my cue from Roberto Esposito’s contention that immunization—the hermeneutic that “lays bare the lethal paradox that pushes the protection of life over into its potential negation”—is what defines modern political subjectivity, what renders this novel ‘modern’ is how Mantegazza stages the encounter between disciplinary and regulatory regimes of life and death (Esposito, Bios 116). Indeed, it is only in this biopolitical key that one can interpret Mantegazza’s relationship to technology. In addition to the medical technologies I have already discussed, the year 3000 is home to new networks of global communication modeled on the human body:

E così come nel nostro corpo ogni organo, ogni cellula ha la propria vita indipendente e solo si mantiene collegato nella grande federazione e nella grande unità dell’organismo per mezzo del sistema nervoso e del sistema sanguino; così nel nostro pianeta ogni Comune vive da sé, a per mezzo dei fili telegrafici che rappresentano i nervi, comunica con Andropoli, che è in una volta sola cervello e cuore del gigantesco organismo planetario. Fra i Comuni e il centro vivono poi tanti centri minori che sono le Regioni, le quali rappresentano i gangli. (emphasis in original; 79)

[And just as with our body every organ, every cell, has its own independent life and only maintains itself in a linkage with the great federation and

is the very opposite of effective freedom: by selling his labour ‘freely,’ the worker loses his freedom—the real content of this free act of sale is the worker’s enslavement to capital. The crucial point is, of course, that it is precisely this paradoxical freedom, the form of its opposite, which closes the circle of ‘bourgeois freedoms’” (The Sublime Object of Ideology 22).

4 Pireddu discusses these and other Mantegazza predictions in L’Anno 3000 “Introduction. Paolo Mantegazza, Fabulator of the Future” 34–42.

5 Esposito explains, “[It is] the modality of immunity through which the Modern thinks the figure of the subject” (56).
the great unity of the organism by means of the nervous and blood systems, so on our planet every commune lives by itself, but through the telegraphic wires that represent the nerves it communicates with Andropolis, which is at once the brain and the heart of the giant planetary organism. Between the communes and the center, then, dwell many minor centers, which are the regions, representing the ganglia.] (emphasis in original; 108)⁶

The planetary community of 3000 is connected through information technologies modeled on the human body, a body that has been rendered “as transparent as glass” thanks to still other medical technologies aimed at disclosing corporeal defects that lie beneath the skin. And yet this very transparency conceals an immunitary imperative that forecloses the very community it claims to preserve. Mantegazza’s technologies of visualization might also be considered in light of the ideological fantasy of the racialized Italian body, insofar as they respond to an anxious question that the novel suggests to vexed thinkers like Mantegazza: what if, upon closer and ever-more technologically enhanced inspection (be it the photograph or the viewing machine that renders bodies “as transparent as glass”), the traces of Italian racial identity are nowhere to be found? What if the body fails to register the racial truth of Italian identity?

This chapter has been concerned with how Mantegazza produces the racialized body through immunizing technologies of visibility. The next chapter follows the flow of race beneath the skin in Gabriele D’Annunzio’s novels the Romanzi della rosa and his Fiuman discourses. At Fiume, technology is mobilized not, as in L’Anno 3000, to evaluate biological fitness, but instead to propel the racialized body skyward. The passage from Mantegazza’s L’Anno 3000—a mediocre and poorly received novel that represents what critics figure as Mantegazza’s amateurish engagement with literature to thinly veiled scientific ends—to an imposing figure like D’Annunzio, whose language and style are instead heralded as the pinnacle of liberal Italy’s literary innovation, requires some comment. Though avowed foes in life, Mantegazza’s version of Darwinism influenced D’Annunzio’s composition of his first best-selling

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⁶ At the risk of celebrating yet another Mantegazzian “prophecy,” Lisa Cartwright and Brian Goldfarb note: “After World War II, discourses of neurology and machine computing became mutually constitutive. Descriptions of the nervous system as a model for machine intelligence were paralleled by characterizations of the nervous system as a conductive mediating network” (127).
novel, Il Piacere of 1889 (Pireddu, Antropologi alla corte della bellezza). If Mantegazza’s oeuvre can be considered as at least part of the raw material from which D’Annunzio—a notorious gatherer of facts and lifter of text—drew in composing his literary masterworks, an analysis of race and (re)productivity within these two bodies of work presents interesting interpretive possibilities. That is, if the “scientific” content—rather than the literary sophistication—of Mantegazza’s writings was digestible to D’Annunzio, following the thread of race and (re)productivity from one set of writings to the next allows readers to observe yet another passage: from the laboratory of the scientist, to the inept hands of the literary dilettante, in D’Annunzio’s texts, readers may behold the refashioning of these concepts in the studio of a master. D’Annunzio tethers rhetorics of race and (re)productivity to a variety of other formulations about Italian modernity and preeminence. Race is inscribed within a poetic constellation that figures blood and territory as the rhetorical conditions for Italy’s conquest of modernity. Despite the migration of these themes across uncharted stylistic terrain in D’Annunzio’s oeuvre, their ideological coherence nevertheless remains bound to their first and clumsy enunciation in fin-de-siècle social science.