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The Year 3000

Paolo Mantegazza

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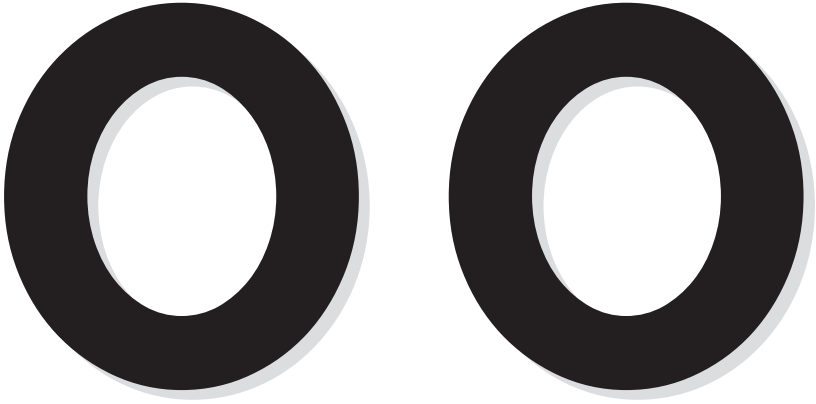
THE YEAR

30

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A DREAM

Paolo Mantegazza

EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY NICOLETTA PIREDDU

TRANSLATED BY DAVID JACOBSON

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Translation and critical materials

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Set in Fournier by Bob Reitz.

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*A Giovanna,
per 3000 ragioni*

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Nicoletta Pireddu

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Acknowledgments

Each time Paolo Mantegazza was informed about an upcoming translation of one of his books, he would experience — he claimed — three different forms of pleasure: satisfaction of his own vanity, pride in the widening of his audience, and elation at realizing how the accelerated dissemination of one’s work throughout the five continents could make ideas more universal and hence more human.

This project took Mantegazza verbatim at least on his last point, since it involved many people from different corners of the world, to whom I am very much indebted. Professor Arthur B. Evans read an earlier and abridged version of my manuscript and provided valuable suggestions about science fiction topoi and intertextual connections, while Professors Giuseppe Mazzotta and Luigi Ballerini generously endorsed the final product. My dear colleagues Jingyuan Zhang and Philip Kafalas kindly corroborated the totally fictional nature of Mantegazza’s Chinese references. Dalila Benachenhou providentially alerted me to the recent French translation of *L’anno 3000*. An engaging and productive conversation with Lorenzo Flabbi on Mercier and Souvestre gave me new food for thought. Adriana Gualdieri, from the Biblioteca Civica “G.Canna” of Casale Monferrato, and Laura Luna were the two indispensable Italian vertices of the Alessandria-Treviso-Washington triangle, thanks to which much-needed proto-science fiction material successfully completed an interregional and intercontinental voyage that seemed more complex than the interplanetary expeditions narrated in the texts themselves. Upon shamefully short notice Elena Denisina, Natalia Malysheva, and Philip Philipovich provided Polish and Russian translations and transliterations, while Lindsay Reimschuessel and Donna Scott mercifully rescued me in the midst of copier and postal breakdowns.

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In recognition of all the support I have received for the production of this volume, I can only appropriate Mantegazza’s desire for a global circulation of his translated works and hence hope that this English version of *L’anno 3000* will engage and amuse readers worldwide even before the diffusion of the Cosmic language.

Nicoletta Pireddu

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INTRODUCTION

Paolo Mantegazza,
Fabulator of the Future

Nicoletta Pireddu

FOR SOMEBODY WHO, IN 1854, LEFT ITALY for South America at the age of twenty-three with the ultimate project of creating an agricultural colony formed by Northern Italian émigrés, the prospect of imagining human communities in the fourth millennium must not have seemed particularly daring. And it must have been even less problematic to put aside, at least temporarily, the role of anthropologist and scientist to wear the hat of the literary writer.

Actually, it is impossible to talk about Paolo Mantegazza without resorting to overly hyphenated identitarian labels like those that, one century ago, introduced this captivating Italian intellectual to the American audience: “Physician-surgeon, Laboratory-experimenter,

Author-editor, Traveller-anthropologist, Professor, Sanitarian, Senator.”¹ By then, indeed, Mantegazza was already very popular in all these capacities in the Western world at large—read and reprinted profusely and quoted by such leading scientific figures as Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Max Bartels and Paul Bartels, and Havelock Ellis.

Born in 1831 in the Northern Italian town of Monza, near Milan, this veritable Renaissance man whose versatility would fully satisfy any “biographer in search of six characters” (Robinson ix) began his career as a pathologist but soon combined his medical interests with a desire for travel, which led him first to Argentina and later to Lapland and India. The contact with cultural otherness turned him into an anthropologist, a profession that, in addition to winning him the first Italian chair in that discipline (Florence, 1870), would inspire over one hundred works, from his travelogues *Rio de la Plata e Tenerife*, *Un viaggio in Lapponia (A Voyage to Lapland)*, and *India*, to his famous four-volume collection *Fisiologia del piacere* (The Physiology of Pleasure), *Fisiologia dell’amore (The Physiology of Love)*, *Fisiologia dell’odio* (The Physiology of Hate), and *Fisiologia del dolore* (The Physiology of Pain).

However, his scientific interests always went hand in hand with a commitment to sanitary, political, pedagogical, and aesthetic matters. In all these fields Mantegazza made innovative contributions, experimenting with artificial insemination and grafting on animals, inventing the *globulimeter* to measure the number of red cells in blood, founding the National Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology and the journal *Archivio per l’antropologia e l’etnologia* (still the official Italian publication in the discipline), promoting photography for anthropological research, creating the serial *Hygienic Almanacs* as an outreach measure for the improvement of people’s sanitary conditions, and inaugurating the fashion of seaside holidays with an emphasis on the therapeutic and leisure potential of beach resorts.

In the domain of literature Mantegazza showed no less variety in his choice of genres and topics, ranging from the epistolary sentimental novel *Un giorno a Madera (One Day in Madeira, 1868)*, which brings

together physiology, love, and hygiene, to the Epicurean and exotic tones of the autobiographical fiction *Il Dio ignoto* (The Unknown God, 1886), to the futuristic story of a journey to an imaginary elsewhere in *L'anno 3000. Sogno* (*The Year 3000: A Dream*, 1897). Here this provocative popularizer of knowledge transferred to a utopian fourth millennium the controversial scientific, moral, social, and political issues that he had broached over his long and productive lifetime, hence offering Italy a niche in the realm of early science fiction, a genre that had already gained ground in other European countries.²

The Literature of Tomorrow: The Year 3000 and Its Foreign Models

The Year 3000—the story of Paolo and Maria's journey to the futuristic capital city of the United Planetary States to get married—effectively represents the kaleidoscopic mentality and worldview of Mantegazza as an exponent of an epoch at the crossroads between the certainties of positivism and the anxieties of the turn of the nineteenth century. Arguably the most original of Mantegazza's fictional texts, it is equally pioneering in the wider context of Italian literature of the 1800s. With his representation of an allegedly better life in a fourth millennium transformed by scientific discoveries, technical developments, and institutional accomplishments, Mantegazza contributed to a utopian genre that, from Thomas More's seminal work *Utopia* (1515) and Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1602), through Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627) and Cyrano de Bergerac's *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon* (1656), now received new impetus from a nineteenth-century futuristic imagination nourished and substantiated by the principles of burgeoning scientific and technological progress.

From the works of Félix Bodin and Émile Souvestre to those of Camille Flammarion, Jules Verne, Edward Bellamy, and H. G. Wells, among many others, literary narratives launch readers on adventurous tours de force in space and time in which ferments for the advancement of rational knowledge often merge with tensions

between contrasting social ideologies—the culture of monopolies and capitalism, on the one hand, and, on the other, socialist and communist ideals. The common denominator of these works is what Darko Suvin defines as “*the narrative dominance or hegemony of a fictional ‘novum’ (novelty, innovation) validated by cognitive logic*” and “totalizing” in nature (63). The novelty of science fiction, in other words, “entails a change of the whole universe of the tale” (Suvin 64) or at least of its pivotal aspects, and relies upon “methodically systematic cognition” (65) to justify its difference with respect to the empirical norms of the reader’s reality.

The international cultural and professional relations that Mantegazza cultivated through his numerous collaborations with foreign intellectuals, his voracious reading (of French texts in particular, as his unpublished journals confirm), and his frequent travels abroad unquestionably also allowed him to become acquainted early with the literary fashions developing beyond the Italian border, especially in France, where he lived in 1854 while completing his volume *Fisiologia del piacere*. While it is unclear precisely how much Mantegazza knew of foreign science fiction production, his formal choices in *The Year 3000* suggest that he was at least aware of the properties of this new genre and of the topoi that several earlier and contemporary authors had adopted. As a committed promoter of culture and of himself, attracted by innovation and particularly attentive to strategies and stylistic formulas that might grant him success, Mantegazza seemed to understand the impact that science fiction could have upon a wide audience and hence was eager to leave his personal imprint on this new literary realm, just as he had on other fictional and nonfictional forms, from the epistolary novel and the travelogue to the scientific and cultural essay and biography and personal memoirs.

If Louis Sébastien Mercier’s 1771 utopia *L’an 2440. Rêve s’il en fut jamais* is considered the first novel with a specifically futuristic setting, Félix Bodin was the first to make critical and theoretical statements on what would take shape as a new genre, for which Bodin coined the expression *littérature futuriste* (futurist literature) (Bodin, Preface 37).³ In the preface to his 1834 novel *Le Roman de*

l'avenir (*The Novel of the Future*) Bodin emphasized the difference between, on the one hand, the lack of depth and action in traditional utopian or apocalyptic literature (32)—whose undeveloped setting, plot, and characterization were for him merely in the service of a specific moral, religious, or political agenda that does not elicit the reader's participation—and, on the other, the blend of marvelous and verisimilar elements through which futuristic fiction could fulfill both emotional and rational needs in a century that was increasingly scientific yet not ready to sacrifice the fantastic and marvelous for the sake of mere speculation. Imagining a future of plausible marvels through literature, for Bodin, would encourage hope and hasten “the progress of humanity” (34). Nevertheless, as he discussed the potential and the effects of futurist literature, Bodin highlighted one main challenge facing this “future genre” (40)—namely, its inability “to satisfy everyone” (37). Being, understandably, “more airy-fairy” (37–38) than the past, the future, for Bodin, could be constructed according to individual fantasies (“every sect and system has its own” [38]); hence its depictions would run a higher risk of disappointing an audience with very diverse mindsets and expectations.

The plot of *The Novel of the Future* seems to substantiate this apparently inevitable weakness, since, although Bodin's story is set “somewhere in the 20th century of our Christian era” (54) and allegedly intends to fulfill readers' desire “to find every appearance of reality therein” (44), it does not prioritize the display of sensational inventions as a hallmark of future life, contrary to the works of most subsequent writers. *The Novel of the Future* does introduce steamships, birdlike aerostats propelled by artificial wing power, and underwater cities, but its main concern, as Paul Alkon observes, is “the phenomenology of possible futures, not technological forecast” (265). Bodin founds his future world upon the tension between emotional and rational forces, represented, respectively, by the “Poetic” or “Anti-Prosaic Association” and by a world federation governed by a utilitarian “Universal Association of Civilization” whose parliament meets once a year in diverse cities such as Vienna, Athens, and the fictional Centropolis in the South American republic of

Benthamia. The poetic side of Bodin's fragmented and incomplete story is the patina of a vanished past that colors the wonders of his imaginary future, characterized by heroic ideals and an epic and mythic grandeur, evoked by Greek-sounding archaic names like Philirène, Philomaque, Eudoxie, and Politée and materialized by an exotic ambience, ancient ruins, emperors, pharaohs, and amazons fighting against the dehumanized and standardized life brought about by industrialization and mechanization.

Significantly, despite the idiosyncratic nature of representations of the future and their authors' personal agendas, what in fact can be observed in the "novels of the future" evolving and proliferating after Bodin's is precisely the recurrence of particular stock situations and narrative patterns. For instance, the topos of the dream and/or sleep as a literary technique to justify the leap from the present to the future is found quite often in early European science fiction, albeit for different purposes and with different outcomes. In his "preface" to *The Novel of the Future*, for instance, Bodin claims his story is a synthesis of numerous manuscripts owned by an Italian refugee and visionary he met in London, Fabio Mummio, who had an "invincible inclination to acquire knowledge of the future" (47) through forensic astrology, chiromancy, necromancy, and mesmerism. Bodin's novel is allegedly built upon the notebooks recording Mummio's hallucinations, somnambulisms, and "magnetic interrogations" (49) of women from all over the world, from whom he had gathered "visions, anticipations, and prophecies" (52) of the time to come.

But the oneiric dimension was already the main vehicle to the future in *L'an 2440*, by Mercier, whom Bodin acknowledges as a predecessor in the very act of parodying him with his dedication "To the Past" (Bodin 27)—a response to Mercier's celebration of the future of the third millennium.⁴ After discussing the injustices of his time with a philosopher friend, Mercier's anonymous protagonist falls asleep only to wake up in a futuristic Paris that, even more than Bodin's civilization, stands out less for its scientific and technological innovations than for its moral, social, and institutional transformations. Touching upon issues that would be equally crucial to Mantegazza's year

3000, in Mercier's 2440 nations live in harmony and are only rarely upset by war. Standing armies, slavery, priests, and taxes have been abolished, and, thanks to a thorough reorganization of public space, safety and sanitary conditions have dramatically improved.

Indeed, the topoi, situations, and structural elements of these foundational literary constructions of the future recur, with variations, in the works of the many science fiction writers who dot the nineteenth century. Paul Alkon warns us against the temptation to extrapolate from either authors or readers a collective consciousness of futuristic literature as a monolithic genre able to encompass and systematize such diverse narrative forms as accounts of journeys through fantastic universes, epic marvels, utopias, and philosophical tales. Rather, he approaches these literary achievements as independent manifestations (11, 246). Nevertheless, a look at Mantegazza's novel substantiates the fact that many formulas of the futuristic imagination first seen in Mercier and Bodin began, just a few decades later, to fertilize the literary panorama of various countries, Italy included. Indeed, *L'anno 3000* seems to synthesize and reelaborate very specific elements belonging to what was developing, especially abroad, as the distinct literary convention of forward temporal displacement, by then characterized by a wider geographical setting, less and less confined to the authors' own nations, and by the importance of science and technology for social transformation.

Starting from a peritextual component like the book title, we could argue that in *L'anno 3000. Sogno* there resonates *L'an 2440. Rêve s'il en fut jamais*. But Mantegazza also modified the work of his established forerunner Mercier (whose novel went through twenty-five editions after its first appearance in 1771, including an Italian translation in 1798) in a way that reflects his personal *Weltanschauung*. With the overachieving attitude he displayed in most of his accomplishments, Mantegazza further stretched Mercier's temporal displacement in order to reach the fourth millennium and, eliminating the doubtful apposition in Mercier's title, stated more assertively the factualness of the oneiric dimension. Unlike in Mercier's plot, where the protagonists fall asleep in order to reach the third millennium, characters and

readers in *The Year 3000* access the future naturally. The futuristic experience is conceived and presented as thoroughly verisimilar, without the mediation of a frame. Neither the narrator nor the plot justifies the role that the allusion to a dream plays in the title, apart from an indirect reference to the author's personal fantasy, which can be further substantiated by Paolo's reference to the imagination of a nineteenth-century writer who authored a book on life in the fourth millennium (58). What could be considered a structural weakness in the novel, however, is all the more intriguing precisely because it is unmotivated and not integrated in the plot, reinforcing the possibility of an element borrowed from some other source and incorporated in a mechanical way.

However, Mantegazza was not the first writer whose imagination traversed the threshold of the fourth millennium. In 1846 Émile Souvestre had published *Le monde tel qu'il sera* (*The World as It Shall Be*), an account of the adventures of Maurice and Marthe, who, after "a profound and death-like sleep" (8), are transported to the year 3000 in their coffins by the curious allegorical figure of John Progrès—"a cross between a banker and a notary" (6) and a surrogate of the fairy godmother whom Marthe wishes to have as a chaperone to the future.⁵ They wake up in a future Tahiti, which, from a captivating exotic island, has turned into a center for greedy entrepreneurs, and from there they set out for a worldwide tour that discloses extravagant technological and scientific conquests, from air-conditioning, televisions, telephones, hot-air balloons, and underwater transportation, to new materials, engineered giant fruits and vegetables, and genetic manipulation of the human race. Broadly recognized in France but also widely translated in Europe and the United States, the novel must not have escaped Mantegazza.⁶ Both authors transcended Mercier's limited French setting by describing a couple's worldwide journeys, touching upon a rich variety of geographical, institutional, and urban spaces with allegorical toponyms that make up part of a universal political system (the Republic of United Interests for Souvestre and the United Planetary States for Mantegazza), each with an exotic capital city located in a geographically recognizable area (Tahiti

for Souvestre and the Indian town of Darjeeling for Mantegazza's Andropolis). Mantegazza's novel also seems to reproduce certain elements of *The World as It Shall Be*, including the detailed summaries at the opening of each chapter and several specific plot components. For instance, the distribution of prizes for virtue among the Academicians of the Institute of Sans-Pair in Souvestre (139) is echoed in the final chapter of *The Year 3000*, where the Andropolis Academy of Science awards the cosmic prize to the individual who has made the greatest discovery in the last decade. Likewise, the section on the evolution of the dramatic genre and the status of theater performances in Souvestre's chapter 19 (169–90) raises topics that are reelaborated in chapter 10 of *The Year 3000*, where Mantegazza explores the theaters of Andropolis and their spectacles.

Yet precisely such points of great similarity between the two novels also allow us to see that, beyond structural analogies, Souvestre and Mantegazza have different styles and priorities. Richer in narrative and descriptive details, *The World as It Shall Be* is concerned above all with the moral underpinnings of its characters' futuristic journey, whereas the more concise and linear approach of *The Year 3000* reflects its author's scientific mentality and priorities. Both authors are daring in their visions of technology's future potential, even though Souvestre's solutions, albeit ingenious, are less advanced, as in the case of catapults allowing people to move between different places. However, Souvestre and Mantegazza in fact attribute quite different values to the conquests of progress. Not accidentally, *The World as It Shall Be* is considered the first futuristic dystopia, which, in a comic and hyperbolic tone, presents implausible fourth-millennium scenarios precisely to annihilate hope in what Maurice anticipates as "all its splendid promise" (Souvestre 7). The idealistic, loving, principled couple who initially wishes to "leapfrog the centuries" (7) in order to find themselves in a "perfect future" (7), instead of living "in the present with all its strife and uncertainty" (7), in fact transport the reader to a dysfunctional, corrupt future at the mercy of capitalism and covetousness. Mantegazza's Paolo and Maria belong to the year 3000 and consistently act as spokespersons for its utopian social and

political context, although, as we will see, this future milieu also reveals ambivalences and problematic contradictions.

While Souvestre's protagonists travel to the year 3000 as newlyweds, the fact that Mantegazza's Paolo and Maria are merely affianced probably stems from the work of Albert Robida, another popular French novelist and a forerunner of science fiction and fantasy illustration, chronologically closer to Mantegazza and renowned for his pioneering literary and visual technological imagination. Robida was the author, among many futuristic works (some of them parodies of Jules Verne's novels and characters), of the 1892 novel *Voyage de fiançailles au XXème siècle* (Engagement Trip to the Twentieth Century), the story of Estelle Lacombe and the young Georges Lorris, a member of a prominent family of scientists. The two young lovers, in a long-distance relationship that began by "telephonoscope"—and hence under the aegis of electricity—go on a honeymoon in 1954, before getting married, in order to get to know each other better and verify their compatibility before their wedding. More moderate than Souvestre in his temporal projection (making "only" a sixty-year leap from his book's publication, probably insufficient for Mantegazza) but bolder in terms of moral and social standards, Robida seems to speak to Mantegazza's sensitivity, especially considering Mantegazza's insistent emphasis on the need for an authentic union of souls between man and woman, as opposed to a hypocritical, self-interested, and passionless arrangement.⁷ In an interesting anticipation of Paolo and Maria's departure aboard the aerotach at the opening of *The Year 3000*, Robida's Georges and Estelle leave with the "aeronef" (aeroship) that Georges's father prepares for them, together with a detailed itinerary for a journey that will take them, instead of to stereotypical romantic and touristic places like Venice, Naples, Constantinople, and Tunis, to electric furnaces and hydroelectric central stations (Robida 14).

Electricity, which supplants the steam-propelled machines of most early science fiction and is almost omnipresent in Mantegazza's *The Year 3000*, finds in Robida an enthusiastic supporter, as we can see in many of his other books, including *Le vingtième siècle. La vie*

électrique (The Twentieth Century: Electric Life, 1890). Already in the previous decade, however, Camille Flammarion—visionary astronomer, science popularizer, and prolific author of space novels—had undertaken several aerostat flights to study atmospheric electricity and transposed the results in his many fictional works. Moreover, Jules Verne, who would become the father of French science fiction and who was already enjoying considerable popularity in Italy, had already narrated abundant sky, land, and underwater adventures made possible by complex instruments and means of transportation, imaginatively rendering both existing and emerging technologies, particularly electricity. After Joseph Deleuil's 1844 demonstration of the arc lamp in the Parisian Place de la Concorde, France had to wait for over four decades before the light bulb replaced candles, paraffin, oil, and gas in domestic use. Unquestionably, however, the potential of this new form of energy was immediately evident, and Verne proved a passionate fabulist celebrating its multiple uses.⁸

We may think, for instance, of *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (originally published in 1864 and translated into Italian by Treves in 1874) with “Mr. Ruhmkorff’s apparatus” (54)—that is, a “Bunsen pile,” the early electrical battery that had appeared the year before in *Five Weeks in a Balloon*, here part of a more complex device leading to a portable electric lantern: “An induction coil communicates the electricity produced by the pile to a lantern of peculiar shape. In this lantern there is a spiral tube where a vacuum has been made, and in which nothing remains but a residuum of carbonic acid gas, or of azote. When the apparatus is put in motion this gas becomes luminous, producing a steady white light” (54–55). Or even more relevant is *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*, where electricity is ubiquitous although the novel was published in 1870, over a decade before the electric light bulb became a reality, thanks to the experiments of Sir Joseph Swan in England, Thomas Edison in the United States, and Alessandro Cruto in Italy. For instance, in chapter 12, “All by Electricity,” Captain Nemo describes to Professor Aronnax the various instruments aboard the *Nautilus* and the boat’s electric power source, extolling that “powerful agent, obedient, rapid, easy, which conforms

to every use, and reigns supreme on board my vessel. Everything is done by means of it. It lights, heats, and is the soul of my mechanical apparatus” (Verne, *Complete* 177).

Interestingly, on the first page of Mantegazza’s *The Year 3000* a simple switch on the wall of the aerotach “turns the electricity into heat, light, movement, whatever your pleasure” (57), a probable debt to Verne as much as an effect of the technical advances that were also gaining ground in Italy. The city of Milan, for instance, hosted the first demonstration of public electric lighting on March 18, 1877, followed, in June 1881, by the lighting of the Vittorio Emanuele Gallery by arc light bulbs on the occasion of the National Exposition. Milan would thus soon become one of the first European cities providing electric public lighting, thanks to commercial agreements to buy equipment from the international company that managed Thomas Edison’s interests in Europe.⁹ A speedy industrialization process allowed Northern Italy to catch up with the rest of Europe, and in 1898, one year after the publication of *L’anno 3000*, Turin hosted the General Italian and International Exposition of Electricity. By 1890 the first electric railway in Europe had begun operating between Florence and Fiesole.

The presence of electricity in Verne’s novels attests to the widespread awe people felt for this new technology, seen as a powerful mark of progress that could modify all aspects of nature. Significantly, however, Verne’s vague and incomplete explanations of electricity reveal that this phenomenon was still partially obscure to him. Furthermore, unlike Robida and Mantegazza, whose works integrate scientific discoveries and technological innovations into everyday life, Verne tends to present the social developments of his own inventions as the creations of mad scientists or of anomalous individuals who often act in the past or in contemporary settings—sometimes geographically “other,” but only rarely in the future.

Still, among Verne’s more neglected examples of futuristic fiction, *Paris in the Twentieth Century* and the novella *In the Year 2889* deserve attention, along with *Une ville idéale* (An Ideal City), a story that Verne presented as a lecture in 1875 at the Academy of Sciences,

Letters, and Arts in Amiens.¹⁰ Whether twentieth-century Paris, the Amiens of the year 2000 that Verne declares he dreamed of, or a New York rebaptized as Centropolis in 2889, Verne's cities exhibit not just architectural innovations, but above all electrically operated machinery available to the population at large. An electric connection in *Une ville idéale* allows the Emperor's pianist to hold a concert in Paris and make his notes resonate on keyboards in London, Vienna, Rome, St. Petersburg, and Peking (*Ville* 29).¹¹ *In the Year 2889* features electric calculators, along with accumulators and transformers that, at the touch of a button, produce energy without batteries or dynamos and the powerful electric sparks of deadly weapons. Yet Verne was also increasingly obsessed with the risks posed by technology in the life of the future, leading, for instance, to the extremes of efficiency found in *Paris in the Twentieth Century* or to the excessive power of the press in *In the Year 2889*. Verne unquestionably preferred mysterious and exotic islands to futuristic urban spaces (and, unlike Mantegazza, did not attempt to reconcile these two milieus), as attested to by the collapse of the dejected Michael Dufrenoy in a hollow city possessed by the "demon of electricity" at the end of *Paris in the Twentieth Century* (199).

But if transalpine literary culture was certainly the most meaningful reference point for Mantegazza, the international literary panorama to which *The Year 3000* belongs must also include seminal British and American futuristic utopian authors like H. G. Wells and Edward Bellamy, whose works had begun to circulate in Italy. For instance, Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000–1887*, published by Treves in 1890 as *Nell'anno 2000*, soon reached its thirteenth Italian edition. It is once again a resort to induced sleep, through hypnosis, that allows Bellamy's protagonist, Julian West, to wake up at the outset of the third millennium. The abundant, efficient, and harmonious future that welcomes him makes the nineteenth century, by comparison, look appalling in its poverty, degradation, and lack of solidarity. Bellamy's twenty-first century has its share of high-tech solutions—fully electrified homes, cable telephones for home delivery of sermons, and credit cards—but above all it stands out for its commitment to

equality, attained not so much through unrest and struggle as through a shift in people's intellectual and moral attitudes.

Improvements in the education and health systems, hospital treatment for the criminally inclined, and the overcoming of lying, for instance, would certainly have met with Mantegazza's approval, yet the author of *The Year 3000* could not be further from Bellamy's utopia's socialist orientation—precisely the ideology that Mantegazza most aggressively debunks in his own futuristic novel.¹² The prospect of Bellamy's future had already met with the resistance of William Morris, who, although not rejecting socialism tout court, took issue in his 1891 *News from Nowhere* with the loss of creativity and pleasure entailed by the excessively authoritarian perspective of *Looking Backward*. In any case, while both Bellamy and Morris joined the already long line of writers who could witness the future through the trick of sleep or dreams—actually a two-directional trick in Bellamy's case, toward both the future and the past—it was not until 1895, with H. G. Wells's *The Time Machine*, that an authentic journey backward and forward through time could take place with the more realistic aid of technology, rather than the intervention of oneiric or other obscure forces.

For Mantegazza, however, just as there is no time or reason for backward glances, neither fantastic machinations nor technological gadgets are necessary to justify the leap into future centuries. A belief in science and the writer's realistic imagination suffice to allow the reader to fly on the wings of progress without ever inverting the arrow of time.

Yesterday's Future: The Culture of Italian Proto–Science Fiction

If Mantegazza deserves to be considered a prominent interlocutor in the European panorama of utopian, futuristic literature, his contribution to the genre is all the more relevant in the Italian context, where the tradition of early science fiction is less visible and solid than its foreign equivalents and still little studied, even less from a comparative perspective.

Along with the popularity of the sentimental tones of the *feuilleton*, the Italy of Mantegazza's time saw the rise of two different literary movements. On the one hand, readers turned to truthful, nonidealistic accounts of reality—a trend that came to be known as *verismo* in the works of such novelists as Giovanni Verga and Luigi Capuana, similar to what had already gained ground in other European cultures as realism and naturalism. On the other hand, authors like Gabriele D'Annunzio and Giovanni Pascoli, the Italian equivalents of Charles Baudelaire, Joris-Karl Huysmans, and Oscar Wilde, penned decadent, symbolist works that celebrated the predominance of sensations, the cult of beauty, and the autonomy of art.

To be sure, these groups of writers were not themselves totally insensitive to the appeal of fantastic elements. Often, authors best known for their realist aesthetics (Verga, Capuana, De Roberto, and Serao, among others) also explored irrational and disquieting situations dealing with occultism, alchemy, magic, and superstition—phenomena that a few decades earlier had been central to the “Scapigliatura” movement. More specifically, however, in the early nineteenth century Italian culture had already experienced an intriguing although short-lived fad of marvelous literary travels in space. This trend bloomed in conjunction with the astronomer William Herschel's construction of a powerful reflecting telescope—with a 40-foot focal length and a 49.5-inch aperture—that on August 28, 1789, led to the discovery of two new moons around Saturn, then many other celestial objects, including the planet Uranus. Herschel's technological and scientific accomplishments, coupled with his belief in extraterrestrial life, nourished much public debate and many popular fantasies throughout Europe. In Italian literature and iconography this proto-science-fictional imaginary ranged from winged lunar inhabitants and hot-air-balloon journeys to the moon featuring the Neapolitan character Pulcinella, to works like Francesco Bruni's *Lettera su la ipotesi degli abitanti de' pianeti* (Letter on the Hypothesis of Planet Inhabitants, 1836) and Francesco Viganò's *Il Viaggio nell'Universo. Visioni del tempo e dello spazio* (The Journey into the Universe: Visions of Time and Space, 1838) (see Valla).

An interest in scientific and futuristic topics reemerged in Italy a few decades later, when, under the influence of leading foreign contributors to the genre, two distinct fantastic trends took shape—extraordinary voyages inspired by the marvels of Jules Verne and futuristic wars of the kind portrayed in George Tomkyns Chesney's 1871 *The Battle of Dorking*. It is hence possible to debunk the myth that slower Italian industrialization, compared to other European nations, also delayed the development of a scientific and technological imagination in Italian literature. Indeed, by the turn of the nineteenth century Italy was seeing a substantial output of fantastical works both as complete volumes and as short fiction published in serials such as *Il Giornale Illustrato dei Viaggi* (1878) (the first magazine in the field, published by Sonzogno after it acquired the rights to the French *Journal des Voyages* [Turris x]), *La Tribuna Illustrata* (1890), and *La Domenica del Corriere* (1899). Translations and adaptations of French and Anglo American authors, both established and less known, proliferated—from Poe and Verne (the Italian translations of the latter almost contemporary with the publication of the French originals), to Wells, Flammarion, and Robida, among many others. The Italian audience's tastes were further shaped by editorial choices, as, for example, Verne's and Wells's works were published as youth and popular literature, while Bellamy's and Morris's were aimed toward more engaged, adult readers.

A few works published before Mantegazza's *The Year 3000* adopted the topos of spatial and/or temporal displacement combined with utopian themes, variously expressing either optimism or anxiety and skepticism toward scientific and material progress, often transposing into the future the political and social issues that dominated public debate in Italy (e.g., socialism, matters of justice). For instance, the very successful *La colonia felice. Utopia* (The Happy Colony: A Utopia, 1874), by Carlo Dossi, addresses the question of human perfectibility through the utopian story of a group of convicts who, instead of being given a death sentence, are confined to a remote island where, by negotiating a peaceful coexistence, they learn to abide by the social contract. Although they are very diverse, several

Italian novels can in fact be inserted into the narrower category of science fiction and futuristic literature, including Guglielmo Folliero De Luna's *I Misteri Politici della Luna* (The Political Mysteries of the Moon, 1863), Agostino Della Sala Spada's *Nel 2073! Sogni d'uno stravagante* (In 2073! Dreams of an Odd Man, 1874), Antonio Ghislanzoni's *Abrakadabra. Storia dell'avvenire* (Abracadabra: The Story of the Future, 1884), Ulisse Grifoni's *Dalla terra alle stelle. Viaggio meraviglioso di due italiani e un francese* (From the Earth to the Moon: The Marvelous Journey of Two Italians and a Frenchman, 1887), and F. Bianchi's *Da Terra a Marte* (From Earth to Mars, 1895).¹³ Nevertheless, although the genre was quite vital at the local level, Italian proto-science fiction, particularly futuristic works, did not enjoy the same resonance as its foreign counterparts, its practitioners developing practically no relationship with the more renowned European writers to whom they often owed a great deal. Several of these Italian authors have now fallen into oblivion, their biographies extremely difficult to reconstruct.

For his part, except general topics such as technological devices and a displacement into the future, whether into space or just to an imaginary earthly place, Mantegazza does not seem to have shared much with the visions of his immediate Italian predecessors. For instance, Grifoni's *Dalla terra alle stelle* tells, in flashback, the story of Alberto, a college student from Florence, who, accidentally mixing various chemicals, produces a paint that nullifies gravity. With his friend Professor Sandrelli, Alberto builds a ship called *Flying House* with which the two travel around the world and into space, land on Mars where they find tiny human-looking inhabitants, and fly back to Earth, until the ship sinks near the North Pole. With its adventurous interplanetary journey, its many digressions on scientific issues, and its fascinating illustrations, *Dalla terra alle stelle* recalls the work of Jules Verne, whom Grifoni, not incidentally, acknowledges as his model in the preface to his fifth edition in 1890, proudly reporting his publisher's earlier comments about the Vernian quality of this pioneering "fantastic-scientific novel."¹⁴ Yet Grifoni's novel also intriguingly anticipates Professor Cavor's attempts to create

an antigravity substance in H. G. Wells's 1901 scientific romance *The First Men in the Moon*, which would be translated into Italian only in 1910.

Despite the many innovative and captivating narrative solutions that make *Dalla terra alle stelle* a milestone in the domain of science fiction, Grifoni's novel does not introduce the scientific, social, and political issues soon to emerge in *L'anno 3000*. Ghislanzoni's *Abrakadabra. Storia dell'avvenire* and Della Sala Spada's *Nel 2073! Sogni d'uno stravagante*, however, allow us to map an intertextual background for Mantegazza's novel. First partially published in installments between 1864 and 1865, twenty years before its more complete and revised version, Ghislanzoni's *Abrakadabra* is a hallucinatory and convoluted story told by a mysterious nobleman interested in occultism and the cabala, who projects himself into a highly technologized and apparently emancipated and pacified 1977, which in fact turns out to be an era of extreme fanaticism and liberticide. Against the backdrop of complex philosophical and moralizing debates, a mystic and tragic love story develops between Albani and Fidelia, before an apocalyptic destruction and rebirth of the world by angel-like creatures that strongly recall the ending of Souvestre's *The World as It Shall Be*. Further, although it is far removed from the vision and tone of *The Year 3000*, *Abrakadabra* also provides Mantegazza with a specific political setting and key institutional elements for his adventures in the fourth millennium—namely, the idea of a federative European union whose geographical and cultural boundaries can be overcome thanks to flying gondolas and other futuristic means of transportation, supranational governments, and a “Cosmic” language. These details, which appear for the first time in Italian literature in Ghislanzoni's work, reflect important and often neglected debates on Europeanism and federalism that developed in Italy simultaneously with the Risorgimento's myth of national identity.

But before he provided food for thought to Mantegazza, proverbially avid for knowledge and intriguing ideas, Ghislanzoni was very probably the source of inspiration for Della Sala Spada's *Nel 2073! Sogni d'uno stravagante*, which, evoking Mercier's well-known title *L'an*

2440. *Rêve s'il en fut jamais*, might also have worked as a *trait-d'union* between the French initiator of futuristic utopias and Mantegazza's *L'anno 3000. Sogno*. Yearning to stop living and be born again in the future, Della Sala's protagonist, Saturnino Saturnini, asks the scientist Professor Rokroktwen to put him to sleep for two hundred years with the aid of magnetism, then wakes up in a virtuous and peaceful society, in which people are gathered in a confederation and unified by Latin as a universal language. They live under simple laws, with no need for lawyers, and enjoy highly improved hygienic conditions thanks to the discovery of connections between physical well-being and the earth's electromagnetic currents. All areas of life are marked by imaginative innovations, from unfolding balconies, pipes that distribute wine into each household, homes built in four days, and speedy underground shuttles, to various homages to electricity and its Vernian renditions, such as the "elettrofono" (82–83), which diffuses music as though from one hundred orchestras; the "elettrografia" (98), an electric stenographer that records and transcribes words; and a network (a sort of Internet *ante litteram*) that makes communication circulate worldwide through electric wires in each speaker's mouth (158).

Della Sala's debt to those portions of Ghislanzoni's novel already published at the time allows us to appreciate Mantegazza's penchant for reworking his predecessors' material. Beyond specific elements such as artificial storms, a universal language, moralizing emblems, and mystic women, Della Sala shares with Ghislanzoni an overall archaic, religious, and almost mythologizing atmosphere. Both authors devote lengthy digressions to their own time and milieu, solidly anchoring their work in the values of the present and the past instead of using it as a springboard to explore a truly new life in the fourth millennium, able to transcend the here and now. This conservatism also explains the local settings—respectively Turin and Milan—these authors choose for their futuristic worlds and the canonical, traditional languages designated as having attained "cosmic" or "universal" status—French in *Abrakadabra* and Latin in *Nel 2073*.¹⁵ The universal idiom in *The Year 3000*, on the other hand, is

defined simply as “cosmic,” without endorsing any existing national language (and actually declaring these languages dead). For the same reason Mantegazza’s fourth millennium transcends real and narrowly Italian spaces to exhibit a more global and creative interest. At the same time, however, *The Year 3000* also demonstrates concern with more verisimilar innovations, unlike the implausible and extravagant visions of Ghislanzoni and, even more so, Della Sala Spada, which do not fit into a cogent overall intellectual design. Therefore, even if they inspired Mantegazza’s novel, *Abrakadabra* and *Nel 2073!* exhibit many more of the elements belonging to the category of “uchronia,” namely, depicting a happy future time yet not fully localizable as a specific and plausible geographical elsewhere (Alkon 115–16). *The Year 3000*, in contrast, displays a more coherent connection between uchronia and utopia, the alterity of its setting playing a crucial role in the definition of its alternative future.

Still largely unknown to the general public, these novels have also been almost totally ignored by critics, who continue to situate the official development of Italian science fiction as a self-conscious and consistent genre right after World War II and to identify as its precursors the two major Italian names of the outset of the twentieth century, namely Emilio Salgari and Enrico de’ Conti Novelli da Bertinoro, who wrote under the pen name Yambo. To be sure, by the early 1900s Italian weekly magazines focused on adventures and voyages proliferated, often imitating French titles, such as *Per terra e per mare* (By Land and by Sea), edited by Emilio Salgari himself, and *Viaggi e avventure di terra e di mare* (Journeys and Adventures by Land and by Sea), edited by Antonio Garibaldi Quattrini—both launched in 1904 and both based upon the French *Sur Terre et sur Mer*—and *L’oceano* (The Ocean), edited by Luigi Motta (1906). The interest in fantasy, both exotic and technological, hence truly became a mass cultural phenomenon, thanks not only to numerous translations of foreign works published in magazine installments but also to a growing number of young Italian authors eager to experiment with the genre.

This burgeoning of literary anticipations of the future was further

encouraged by important scientific events that exerted a powerful influence upon the Italian audience. For instance, the astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli's 1877 observation of what he called "Mars channels," and his subsequent publications on the topic in 1893, 1895, and 1909, generated creative speculations about alien forms of life on the Red Planet.¹⁶ Indeed, Bianchi and Grifoni referred to these topics directly in their novels. Mantegazza would follow suit, as usual by overdoing things: the physicists and astronomers who in his year 3000 are "perfecting the telescope" (170) hope to be able to see not only the inhabitants of Mars but also those of Venus, Mercury, "and the other planets closest to Earth" (170). Likewise, 1885 research on the rotary magnetic field by the Italian physicist and electric engineer Galileo Ferraris led to the creation of an alternating-current motor. And on the basis of Heinrich Hertz's 1888 demonstration of the production and detection of electromagnetic radiation, Guglielmo Marconi successfully used Hertzian waves to create a system of wireless telegraphy that he employed in 1901 and 1902 to carry out the first transatlantic transmissions. Marconi thus perfected a telegraph technology that already existed not only in real life but also, as we have already seen, in several science fiction novels. The importance of technological progress was further extolled through the intense and rapid industrialization that, especially in Northern Italy, soon led to a thriving automotive production but also had crucial cultural repercussions, such as the development of a mechanically reproducible art form like cinema.

In this cultural climate, and only one year after Mantegazza's *The Year 3000*, Yambo published the parascientific adventures of *La guerra del XX secolo* (The War of the Twentieth Century), followed, among others, by *Gli esploratori dell'infinito* (The Explorers of the Infinite, 1906). Emilio Salgari—christened during his lifetime the "Italian Verne" and best known for his numerous adventures among the jungles and corsairs of the Southern Seas—also took a stab at futuristic fiction with *I figli dell'aria* (The Sons of the Air, 1904) and *Le meraviglie del Duemila* (The Marvels of Two Thousand, 1907). In the latter work James Brandok, a young American millionaire,

and his scientist friend Toby Holker—thanks to the powers of an ancient exotic plant, the flower of resurrection—manage to suspend life and awaken in 2003, after one hundred years' sleep. They find themselves in a highly technological world, featuring electric ships, flying machines, underground trains, tramways passing through ice tunnels, television news, a sort of radar (*eofono*), interplanetary journeys, and contact with Martians (Salgari, too, paid homage to the Schiaparelli fad). In fact, however, Salgari's third-millennium world is not totally futuristic: machines fly by beating mechanical wings (as in Bodin's *The Novel of the Future*); the speed of trains and aircrafts is rather modest for the time; much of the visual technology had already appeared in the works of earlier writers like Robida, set in nearer epochs; and, above all, contact with the omnipresent electricity is highly destabilizing for the two protagonists, who, despite their curiosity about the future, define themselves as “uomini d'altri tempi” (men of the Old World) (168).

Ten years after the publication of Mantegazza's novel and with one less millennium to cover in its plot, *Le meraviglie del Duemila* hence makes a nod (even if not explicitly declared) to the author of *The Year 3000*, who cannot possibly have escaped Salgari's attention. At the same time, however, *Le meraviglie del Duemila* exhibits typically Vernian literary situations and solutions that highlight Salgari's different attitude toward progress. As at the ending of Verne's *Paris in the Twentieth Century*, where the protagonist chooses death at the Père Lachaise cemetery rather than yielding to the principles of the new way of life, electricity ultimately turns out to be fatal to the mental equilibrium of Salgari's equally unprepared James and Toby, who go crazy in the ultramodern, future society.

In this tug of war between the lure of the future and nostalgia for the past, which characterizes much of Italian literature and culture between the two centuries, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, one year before *Le meraviglie del Duemila*, had published the first Futurist Manifesto. The innovations made possible by speed and technology were now no longer an imaginative projection, but, in the theory and practice of Marinetti and his fellow futurists, a reality, the new

face of the present in the arts and in everyday life. But above all this reality was a *total* one, encompassing not only the content but also the form of representation. Neither *The Year 3000* nor any other novel belonging to the corpus of Italian proto–science fiction seemed to reach that milestone, despite the works’ unanimous recognition of the role of technology, electricity above all, in promoting increasingly faster worldwide communication. Bold technological projections like the distribution of energy “without need of conductor tubes” (87) in *The Year 3000* do not go hand in hand with equally radical innovations in the technology of the word. These novels lack what, according to Marinetti, is the ability to abandon the musty style and static syntax of the *passé* nineteenth century to embrace the expressive dynamism and simultaneity of the “wireless imagination” and “words in freedom.”¹⁷

To be sure, however, before Marinetti decided to murder the moonshine—that is, to get rid of languid sentimentality and decadent staticity—in a late-nineteenth-century Italian cultural context still dominated by Romantic overtones, Mantegazza’s contribution to early science fiction, albeit not unique, is certainly of a higher standing than most Italian output of the time. Beyond the notoriety of its author, by far the most prominent of the few writers who contributed to the genre, *The Year 3000* is also more cogent and sophisticated than the era’s other works, which are often marked by mechanical or unsubstantial plots, stylistic unevenness, and a gratuitous use of stereotypical situations. It is hence all the more surprising that, despite its relevance to the expanding futurist utopian panorama and the international popularity of its author, *The Year 3000* is still often neglected in scholarly discussions in the field.¹⁸

The Fourth Millennium at the Touch of a Button

L’anno 3000. Sogno tells the story of two young people, the scientist Paolo Fortunati and his companion Maria, who, in the year 3000, leave Rome, the capital of the former United States of Europe, heading to Andropolis, the capital of the United Planetary States,

located in Asia, at the feet of the Himalayas. There, after a five-year engagement, they plan to celebrate their “mating union.” Aboard the ultramodern electric spaceship that will allow the two protagonists to visit several curious places before landing at their futuristic destination, Paolo reads to his beloved a work entitled *L’anno 3000* (*The Year 3000*), a novel penned by a physician who, ten centuries earlier, had attempted to guess what the world would look like in the fourth millennium. In addition to functioning as a literary solution that highlights Mantegazza’s proverbial self-centeredness, this interplay of narrative levels sets up a more visible contrast between the real conditions of the author’s times and the dynamics of this futuristic world. The fact that Paolo has to *translate* the book from the dead Italian idiom into the newly established Cosmic language as he reads to Maria is indeed the first in a rich series of situations that illustrate the dramatic changes that have occurred between fin-de-siècle Italy and Europe and the two protagonists’ civilization. Further, this gap enhances the credibility of the future scenario. Mantegazza’s realistic logic works to authenticate the truthfulness of narrated events, events that the characters do not dream of, but actually live. Therefore, the reference to dreams in the novel’s title here acquires the value of prophecy more than pure, inconsistent fantasy. The *sogno* of the year 3000 is Mantegazza’s own wishful anticipation of a future that, the author hopes, sooner or later will become present. The value of this future is emphasized in the novel’s first pages, in the contrast that the stop in LaSpezia creates between the alluring scenario of the fourth millennium and the past buried for good in the Necropolis—over “twenty thousand years of human history” (59) sleeping forever in silence, collected as in a museum.

By the year 3000, after a catastrophic war that lacerated the European countries and subsequently led to their political unification, conflicts have been abolished. The entire world is now in the hands of an oligarchy of wise and honest individuals, under whose auspices all residues of territorial rivalries, economic barriers, and cultural differences have disappeared, and the quality of life has remarkably improved, thanks to the suppression of physical pain. Paolo and Maria’s

journey from Rome to Andropolis hence enacts a displacement in both space and time, in line with Bakhtin's concept of a "chronotope," each of its legs offering insights into a particular phase in the social, institutional, and scientific evolution of this utopian universe.¹⁹

For instance, on the Isle of Experiments, which corresponds to Ceylon, the couple stops in the Republic of Turatia, named after the late-nineteenth-century Italian socialist Filippo Turati and modeled upon his egalitarian vision. Elaborating on what had already emerged during the previous stop in the Land of Equality, and reflecting Mantegazza's own political ideology, here Paolo criticizes the pervasive interference of the State in the citizens' lives and the apathy generated by its leveling effect. Denouncing the failure of the egalitarian ideal of the 1789 French Revolution, he ultimately declares to Maria that the political project of egalitarianism will be soon overcome by new institutional experiments aimed at fostering individual initiative and competition. Paolo and Maria are no less cautious with the opposite ideological extreme—namely the political and religious despotism of the small state of Tyrannopolis—yet they also express deep skepticism toward what may at first seem the golden mean between socialism and tyranny, represented by the parliamentary model of Logopolis. Indeed, despite some worthwhile reforms the City of Words also appears to Paolo as a corrupt, inefficient, and whimsical regime that uses rhetorical verbosity to cover up its absence of substance and coherence.

The fact that these and several other political and social organizations are all located in Ceylon seems to reassert the stereotype of the island as the primary locus of the utopian imagination. In fact, however, Mantegazza here resorts to the condition of its insularity to question, rather than reinforce, the normative utopian ideology it embodies. Indeed, as he groups together on the island the ideals he dismisses as surpassed or nonviable, Mantegazza also explicitly criticizes the persistence of their naively impractical ambitions across time: "Human nature is so elastic, so proteiform, that it allows us, over long intervals, . . . to hold on to the same strange utopias. . . . It is enough for a hundred people to think up a new social utopia or

rethink an ancient one that has been buried for centuries, and they know that on the island of Ceylon they can always find a small or large virgin territory for founding their new republic or theocracy” (79). This polemical and self-conscious approach to the stylistic marks and narrative conventions of the utopian genre compensates for other structural elements that, if taken in isolation, would fix *The Year 3000* within the category of the traditional utopia—for instance, the common choice of toponyms often ending with the suffix *-polis* (Centropolis in Bodin, Cosmopolis in Verne, Andropolis in Mantegazza), or the predominance of descriptive, static elements that advance the plot by accumulation instead of enriching it with deep characterization and unexpected plot twists.

Just as it tests various political and institutional systems, Paolo and Maria’s journey also delineates different technological phases, culminating with the accomplishments of Mantegazza’s imagined fourth millennium. On the Isle of Dynamo, for instance, Paolo and Maria familiarize themselves with the changes that, across ten centuries, led from the technology of steam and electricity to what in the year 3000 has become the production of a general form of clean and silent energy, called *pandynamo*. Generated by living beings, it is distributed to the whole planet through little tubes and converted on demand into light, heat, movement, or electricity. Mantegazza hence transcends the widespread fixation with electricity as the ultimate source of energy—a fixation shared by most of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors, including Verne and Salgari, among many others—and also suggests the principles of other machines and inventions he will display in subsequent chapters. The technology that fostered the unquestionably major leap in nineteenth-century mechanics is by now material for the Historical Museum, which the protagonists visit. After Watt and Volta, the locomotive and the battery, a new era has come, that of “the artificial production and application of nerve force to mechanics” (83). The fourth millennium owes this technology to Macstrong, a much-venerated English scientist who died in 2654. Mantegazza’s conception of energy is not only innovative but also ecological, his vision as significant to the

health issues of his time as it is pertinent to our own environmental concerns. Unlike the notoriously appalling conditions of workers in post-Industrial Revolution Europe, no shrill noise, dangerous fumes, or excessive workloads plague the Dynamo energy plants: the “cleanly dressed” and “vigorous-looking” (82) employees are almost indistinguishable from their bosses. This encouraging portrait of savvy factory production reinforces the narrator’s earlier remarks in praise of the nonpolluting and waste-free technology powering the English electric mail boat *Cosmos*, which brings Paolo and Maria to Ceylon. An “economical, very simple battery” breaks down saltwater “to provide hydrogen, the new fuel, and distill it into drinking water” (67)—an interesting anticipation of current awareness-raising efforts in favor of sustainable and renewable energy systems, prominent among them clean hydrogen.

Not surprisingly, once the two protagonists land in the capital of the United Planetary States, many more pioneering finds await them. Despite the exotic, archaic, and mystic resonances of its Indian setting, Andropolis is in fact not so much a memorial to glorious past stages of civilization as the locus of groundbreaking advances in all sectors of everyday life. Without questioning the foundational value of ancient wisdom—and for Mantegazza Indian culture is the quintessence of this wisdom, as he makes plain in his travelogue *India*—it is possible to aspire to physical, intellectual, and emotional well-being only by trusting in the new horizons of the postindustrial reality. In the United Planetary States this translates in part into displays of futuristic instruments for their own sake—electric engines with sophisticated flight and navigation instruments, instant telecommunication, synthetic foods and drugs, flexible materials to construct prefabricated homes that can guarantee fast accommodation to everybody. Yet Mantegazza seems once again particularly concerned with the human and social benefits of scientific and technological progress. Considerable improvements in medicine and hygiene now allow people to live longer and healthier lives. Thanks to sports and hydrotherapy, nervous illnesses and boredom have disappeared. Safer factory conditions and more tolerable working schedules free up more

time for education and entertainment. Cosmic citizens also enjoy a bureaucracy-free existence and are not subject to any state religion. Women have the right to vote, and divorce is a well-established practice. The prevailing social harmony and universal dialogue that ultimately erased crime have even made possible the abolition of the Ministry of Justice and the police force.

With his proverbial eclecticism, however, Mantegazza does not succumb to the ideology of order and symmetry that characterizes many imaginary cities. Mantegazza here avoids uniformity and monotony—which he abhorred in his writings as much as in his personal life—not only by conceptualizing an urban space featuring a plurality of styles—from homes made with various materials to the vast array of fountains, each with a unique form—but also by allowing room for individual activities and tastes. The wealth of opportunities for the entertainment of both mind and heart is well demonstrated by the “over fifty large theaters” (155) and by the abundance of performances at the largest and wealthiest of them, the Panopticon. Here, furthermore, the blend of “the cleverest discoveries of science and art” (156) that Mantegazza extols applies not only to the production of entertainment but also to its fruition: thanks to the “aesthesiometer,” an instrument installed in each theater seat, spectators can experience different degrees of visual, auditory, and olfactory sensations while watching a show.

Unquestionably, the fictional world of *L'anno 3000* synthesizes many issues that Mantegazza developed more systematically in his cultural and scientific studies, tropes that also expose the author's response to the conditions of the newly created Italian nation. Unified in 1861 after decades of struggle, Italy at the turn of the twentieth century was still coping with fundamental political, institutional, and social questions affecting the “making” of the Italian people. These questions are transposed and sublimated in the pages of Mantegazza's novel, from the role of the State in the management of the new territory, to the importance of improvements in public health, preventive medicine, and factory conditions (in the year 3000 child labor has been abolished—an urgent concern not only in nineteenth-century Italy

but also in much post–Industrial Revolution Europe), the standardization and radical reform of the educational system, and the need for higher moral and aesthetic norms in Italian life.²⁰ Mantegazza, however, transcends the status quo by endorsing such controversial practices as easily available divorce, abortion, and euthanasia—issues that would polarize public opinion for the entire twentieth century and that still have a strong resonance in our own world. For instance, although Italy legalized divorce only in 1970, Mantegazza, over one century earlier, in *The Physiology of Love*, stated that “divorce should be written into our laws as soon as possible; happy couples demand it in order to ensure their dignity, offended by a tyrannical bond; unhappy creatures implore it on bended knee, whom misfortune or guilt condemned to the greatest of human tortures, that of a slavery without redemption, a yoke without repose, a scourge without balm, a sorrow without hope” (296).

Furthermore, while aware of the broad nature of the utopian and futuristic genre to which his novel belongs, Mantegazza also gave a personal touch to *The Year 3000*, enriching it with autobiographical references. The love story between Paolo and Maria, for example, echoes Paolo Mantegazza’s own recent union with Countess Maria Fantoni, thirty years his junior, whom he met in 1891 soon after the death of his first wife and to whom he dedicated the novel.²¹ Likewise, the novel is dotted with references to places linked to Mantegazza’s own whereabouts (from LaSpezia to India), members of his intellectual entourage (Regalia, De Amicis, Turati), authors he loved (Porta) or hated (D’Annunzio), and his personal views on the crucial social issues that scroll throughout the various chapters.

However, it would be reductive to treat *The Year 3000* as a mere *roman à clef*, slavishly reproducing Mantegazza’s experiences. Indeed, the protagonists’ journey to the United Planetary States reveals the author’s awareness of and participation in a specific European historical and cultural conjuncture, of which *The Year 3000* offers many hints. Turn-of-the-century Europe perceived its present and future in contradictory ways. On the one hand, it saluted the approaching year 1900 with a strong belief in scientific and technological progress; the

certainty that society was heading toward greater prosperity, happiness, and refinement; and confidence in the prospect of higher moral standards. This view was mainly upheld by the optimistic doctrine of positivism, with its ideology of rational and social advancement, but also by the self-confidence of several European nations, like Great Britain and France, whose imperialistic operations strengthened their economic and political power. At the same time, however, popular superstitions and a general sense of precariousness contributed to fear of an imminent apocalypse as the climax of a process of degeneration, despite the apparent security that technology seemed to offer. This more problematic approach to the new era and the anxiety it fostered emerged, for instance, in a growing interest in the study of human behavior, of the psyche, and of the occult. Works like Émile Durkheim's *Suicide* (1897) and Sigmund Freud and Joseph Breuer's *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) shattered the individual's integrity and self-control, raising doubts about the conviction that the rational and material aspects of life alone can account for reality as a whole.

On the one hand, what underlies Paolo and Maria's adventures is Mantegazza's proverbial quest for human well-being and happiness. In *The Year 3000* these goals seem attainable through progress as a guarantor of unlimited improvement, 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. A follower of Darwin, Mantegazza was also intrigued by the wider sociological and moral implications of the endless variability of species, which had inspired Herbert Spencer's concept of the perfectibility of human nature. In *The Year 3000* the scientist on the Isle of Dynamo replies as follows to Maria's inquiry about the relationship between mechanical and moral civilization: "Dearest lady, I as an engineer cannot concern myself with mechanical progress alone; please believe that it almost always moves in parallel with moral progress" (89). The narrator's comments about the management of fertile marriage at the end of the novel further consolidate the author's own asserted

belief in the intellectual but also redemptive power of science, seen at once as a rational, moral, and hence civilizing resource. If “in barbaric times” (191) “the right to transmit life to future generations . . . had been granted to all” (191), in the allegedly culturally more advanced fourth millennium it is above all necessary to have “the consent of science” (191), with the assumption that only scientific authorization can prevent painful consequences.

An implicit response to the negative portrayal in the novel’s first pages of science and technology as instruments of past terrible bloodshed, this edifying image of science (according to Mantegazza’s personal hierarchy of values) seems like the final word on the problem that haunts Mantegazza—namely, as we can understand from Paolo and Maria’s conversation, the problem of suffering and pain, of the “lament rising up from the entire planet, which weeps and asks heaven why there is life and why there is suffering” (64). Just as the performative nature of Mantegazza’s scientific imagination in *The Year 3000* aims to overcome many physical ailments, the novel purports 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, which, as Mantegazza repeatedly claims in many of his writings, were the major challenge confronting the nineteenth century. Paolo’s invention of the “psychoscope,” which wins him the cosmic prize from the Academy of Science of Andropolis, corroborates confidence in a future finally able to promote “a new era of morality and sincerity among humans” (190) precisely because of its unprecedented ability “to read into our brain” (190). If, as the secretary of the Academy states, “the dream of all the ages” and the main hope for happiness is the synergy of moral and intellectual progress (191), the psychoscope will guarantee each individual’s physical and mental well-being by helping them overcome contradictions between thoughts and actions. From the perspective of fourth-millennium scientists (and of their nineteenth-century predecessor) the avowed social usefulness of the psychoscope in the diagnosis of mental illness for educational and psychological purposes seems to overcome the risk of an Orwellian

totalitarian degeneration in the applications of this technology, a danger that we can presume possible as we learn, for instance, that with the intervention of this “terrible optic device” “lying will be banished or become rare” (191).²²

Just as the psychoscope raises concerns about the ambivalent uses of science—even though the novel mitigates and often suppresses the possible negative ramifications of this radical confidence in the science of tomorrow—various other disquieting elements cast a shadow upon the apparent hopefulness of these futuristic scenarios. Scientific, technological, and social growth may as well be a panacea, but sometimes the means and costs of attaining an allegedly better life leave room for perplexity or even horror. For instance, the United Planetary States unveils its dystopian side when the narrator discloses the methods adopted to get rid of physical defects and moral deviance. In the name of eugenics all fertile couples are obliged to comply with a rigorous health policy implemented by a tribunal that grants the right to procreation only after a satisfactory medical checkup has ruled out hereditary diseases and consanguinity between the partners. An even more appalling measure affects newborns, whose brains are scanned and magnified with special equipment aimed at detecting physical, mental, or moral pathologies. In the case of any anomaly—for instance, a documented predisposition to delinquency—the baby is eliminated (with the mother’s consent). While not as extreme as his contemporary and rival Cesare Lombroso in his interpretation and normalization of criminal behavior, Mantegazza nonetheless, in studies such as *Physiognomy and Expression*, supported connections between physical traits and intellectual and moral features. Beyond his expressed position, however, he also offers at least as much evidence of his interest in—if not attraction to—those very manifestations of deviance, especially of a sexual nature. Nevertheless, from the reading of human perfectibility (or lack thereof) through physiognomy, to the need to block the transmission of hereditary diseases, Mantegazza’s search for happiness was often supported by a Malthusian perspective that is ready to sacrifice (selectively, with scientific authority and adequate technical support)

weak, imperfect, or inadequate members of the present society for the sake of the physical and mental improvement of future generations. He hence became one of the first to introduce the prospect of eugenics in Italy when the theories of Francis Galton, who first coined the term in 1883, had just begun to spread. Already in 1878, in *Igiene dell'amore* (The Hygiene of Love), Mantegazza had highlighted his own pioneering investigation into heredity, claiming priority over Galton's own studies.²³

On the one hand, if, as the subtitle of *L'anno 3000* claims, this fantastic journey into the world of the fourth millennium is “a dream,” the era's developing Freudian psychoanalysis would suggest that through this dream Mantegazza was trying to fulfill his wish for an ideal future, tailored precisely to his most personal aspirations. Yet on the other hand, although carried away by his fertile imagination, Mantegazza did not gag his critical spirit and hence seems to interrogate his own yearning for progress and perfection, ultimately revealing that a dream, without the restraint of ethics and common sense, may shade off into a veritable nightmare. This awareness of limits and of the risks entailed by excess causes his future to oscillate between utopia and antiutopia, negotiating between materialistic and idealistic impulses and involving characters and readers in the struggle between fear and hope. However, just as the ending of *The Year 3000* is a happy one, despite the many darker aspects that we glimpse in its projections, Mantegazza himself remained an optimist until the end of his novelesque life. Just one year before his death his 1909 volume *La Bibbia della speranza* (The Bible of Hope) would celebrate hope with the same enthusiasm that animates the narrator's explanation of Paolo and Maria's eastbound journey: flying eastward means reaching “the light of day [that] has always brought man hope, the hope that never dies” (64). This hope—significantly the imperative carved on the statue at the gate of Andropolis's city of the dead, later even emerging as the value worshipped in the largest and most beautiful temple of Andropolis—goes beyond blind faith in the power of science tout court. More broadly this hope centers on the belief that humankind is ultimately heading toward better times, no

matter what principles and instruments its members choose to adopt to imagine and build the future.

With this aspiration Mantegazza exemplifies the position that Robert Scholes has assumed, in favor of the free speculation allowed by what Scholes defines as “structural fabulation,” that is, “a fictional exploration of human situations made perceptible by the implications of recent science” and hence “modified by an awareness of the nature of the universe as a system of systems, as a structure of structures. . . . The insights of the past century of science are accepted as fictional points of departure” (41–42). Structural fabulation, for Scholes, grants us unprecedented freedom to speculate, because “where anything may be true—sometime, someplace—there can be no heresy. And where the patterns of the cosmos itself guide our thoughts so powerfully, so beautifully, we have nothing to fear but our own lack of courage. There are fields of force around us that even our finest instruments of thought and perception are only beginning to detect. The job of fiction is to play in these fields. And in the past few decades fiction has begun to do just this, to dream new dreams, confident that there is no gate of ivory, only a gate of horn, and that all dreams are true. It is fiction—verbal narrative—that must take the lead in such dreaming, because even the new representations media that have been spawned in this age cannot begin to match the speculative agility and imaginative freedom of words” (38).

To be sure, regardless of Mantegazza’s ultimate standpoint vis-à-vis the imaginative and speculative leap he took in this ultramodern planetary civilization, the novel’s most surprising elements are its author’s intriguing political, economic, and social forecasts, most of which have turned out to be accurate or, in some more extreme instances, may hit their targets in the future. Mantegazza’s amazing perceptiveness largely compensates for the often unexciting prose of *L’anno 3000*. Unquestionably the book deserves attention above all for its documentary value and its originality, more than for purely aesthetic reasons. On the technological front the novel bestows upon readers visions of surprising discoveries and inventions based upon scientific principles—inventions that would actually change daily life

in the next two centuries or even surpass current conditions. If, as we have seen, this technological futuristic imagination was anything but rare in nineteenth-century Europe, Mantegazza nonetheless left his personal mark by presenting ideas and devices that evolved from issues and interests he explored throughout his scholarly career.

For example, well beyond William Röntgen's discovery of X-rays only two years before the novel's publication, Mantegazza imagined medical examinations with machines that, like CAT scans, are able to provide a full, three-dimensional model of the whole body. If by the end of the nineteenth century Justus von Liebig had already devised beef extract as an alternative to real meat, we should not be surprised to learn that in the United Planetary States people can feed upon synthetic foods, resorting to pills to satisfy the needs of not only their stomachs but their souls. Artificial intelligence imitates the thinking of real brains, and even research in bioengineering is cutting-edge in Mantegazza's futuristic universe: wounds can be healed and physical deformities corrected through the creation of artificial tissues that attach to live skin cells and grow to replace damaged muscles. Bodies enjoy thorough massages with the aid of a sophisticated machine—electrically operated, needless to say. The homage to electricity goes so far as the conception of an alloy—the “electro” (126)—as radiant as electric lighting.

From a historical point of view *The Year 3000* accurately predicts the outburst of World War I. Above all, however, in line with what would become the actual international agenda from the early decades of the twentieth century onward, Mantegazza also highlighted the institutional and ideological role of Europe in the peaceful reconstruction of a shattered Old Continent. Indeed, Mantegazza's references to the “United States of Europe” can be considered a landmark in the larger historical and cultural discourse on Europeanness, more pertinent than ever in the present context. Furthermore, by extending the European federal dimension to a universal scale, *The Year 3000* opens up crucial issues of globalization and cosmopolitanism, touching upon their political, linguistic, and economic implications. The global currency circulating in the Planetary States, for instance, envisages,

on a larger scale, the ongoing process of euro-area enlargement in Western Europe and in the so-called new accession countries.

Although, surprisingly, these issues have so far been neglected in Mantegazza scholarship, *The Year 3000* stands out not only in the context of futuristic proto-science fiction but also in the framework of Italian and European political and cultural history at large. Mantegazza's novel is one of the earliest and only literary examples of a sustained engagement with Europeanism and federalism as models of thinking and acting beyond the nation, paradoxically coming at a moment of Italian history—the Risorgimento—that coincided with Italy's longed-for nation-building process. While, as observed earlier, Mantegazza's treatment of a *specifically European* political, economic, and institutional structure as a template for a planetary political system probably owes credit to Della Sala Spada and Ghislanzoni, *The Year 3000* conveys a more substantial political message than the peripheral and somewhat gratuitous references to the "confederation of all the states of the world" in *Nel 2073!* and builds a more cogent scenario than the hallucinatory, convoluted spatial and temporal framework of *AbraKadabra*.

Coming from a patriotic family himself (his mother, Laura Solera, an activist for the cause of Italian independence, made him participate in the Five Days of Milan revolt against Austria when he was sixteen), Mantegazza could not be insensitive to the powerful ideals of political and intellectual figures like Giuseppe Mazzini and Carlo Cattaneo, who advocated the creation of the United States of Europe even before Victor Hugo's famous address to the leading European powers at the 1849 Peace Congress in Paris. Hugo envisioned a peaceful future moment when—just as different provinces had been combined into France—all "nations of the Continent" would be "blended into a superior unity, and constitute the European fraternity" without losing their individuality (Hugo 5). In his pioneering 1829 essay "D'una letteratura europea" Mazzini, even before laying out his political project of a Young Europe, had extolled literature as the paramount institution able to demonstrate that the particular history of nations was about to end and that European history was about to begin—a

history that, by putting an end to the prejudices and aberrations of patriotic sentiment, would succeed in turning the inequalities caused by dissension among peoples into simple differences. (Mazzini 70, 42). Carlo Cattaneo, inspired by the American and Swiss democratic models founded upon a reduction of the absolute sovereignty of the nation-state, claimed that true peace would only be possible through the creation of the United States of Europe, presenting federalism as the only political solution that might build a Europe free from the international conflicts triggered by borders (244).

The symbolic realm of Mantegazza's fourth millennium appropriates such pronouncements, also transposing into reality Ghislanzoni's visionary scenarios. Significantly, in the projections of *AbraKadabra* a European parliament would already exist in 1930, with representatives of the "European peoples" elected by universal suffrage and—with a far more optimistic outlook than the actual vicissitudes of the 2009 ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon—already implementing by 1977 a European constitution aimed at reconciling the greatest individual freedom with guarantees of security and public order (58). Faithful to the federalist principle of administrative decentering, Ghislanzoni's European Union functions according to a synergy of local and global organisms: it is composed of twenty-four departments, divided into smaller communes, whose leaders represent a cohesive "European people" in the general congresses that are scheduled—in an uncanny anticipation of the dynamics of the real European Council—twice per year, but in this case in Berlin. In the name of tolerance and fraternity the Union accepts all sorts of terms to designate political and administrative leaders—"mayors, principals, kings, emperors, heads of households, fathers, czars, sultans" (58–59). However, complying with its transnational mission against discrimination, it has normalized their tasks. It is precisely the sacred principle of egalitarianism that has abolished capital punishment and incarceration and instituted the right to existence, according to which every European citizen receives lifetime lodging, sustenance, and clothing from his or her commune. Yet this same principle is also responsible for the abolition of cultural differences through the homogenization

of local and national languages into the “Cosmic language,” which, although apparently confined to the European territory, reveals its potential for unlimited extension, since, in Ghislanzoni’s vision, it will ultimately render other languages useless not only in Europe but also in other continents.

Curiously, Ghislanzoni’s hypothetical scenario becomes reality in Mantegazza’s fourth millennium, where the Cosmic language has indeed already attained global status, just as the “United States of Europe” has now expanded into the “United Planetary States,” whose universal governance has superseded not only state sovereignty but also the political and cultural differences inside and outside the European federation’s territorial lines. In *The Year 3000*, furthermore, if twentieth-century Europeanism offered the Old Continent a peaceful and permanent antidote to collective fratricidal violence, Mantegazza’s internationalism on a universal scale ultimately also materializes what the renowned British journalist and reformer William Stead would soon urge, only two years after the publication of *The Year 3000*. Stead, in his 1899 volume *The United States of Europe on the Eve of the Parliament of Peace*, promoted the prospect of a brotherly “Federal Union, without hostile frontiers and without standing armies, and with a greater expenditure upon education than upon armaments,” that would eventually become the blueprint for the “United States of the world” (12, 20). This development would come thanks to the abatement of all commercial and institutional barriers—above all “the pestilent nuisance of the *douane*” (12), a residue as barbarous as the passport, which obliges “the wayfaring man to admit the existence of independent, rival, or hostile States” (12) even in the face of consciousness and evidence of established forms of “international freedom and union” (14) (e.g., the postal system and the financial system of circular notes). For his part, Mantegazza had already abolished protectionist measures and introduced a universal paper currency, in addition, of course, to extensive means of transportation and communication, from the more plausible railways and telegraphs to futuristic electric spaceships that, by bringing people closer, help them avoid hate and warfare.

Linking 1897 to our own current debates, we could argue that with these global networks of national political governments and international nongovernmental formations that evolve from the European federative model, Mantegazza, even more than Ghislanzoni, sketches what political scientists have recently proposed as “cosmopolitical democracy.” Such groupings are able to “involve the world’s citizens in decision making” without either reproducing “the state model on a world scale” (Archibugi 9, 8) or dissolving the state structure altogether. They are founded upon a representative organism for transnational political life, such as a unifying parliamentary body for general and special interests.²⁴ If, for contemporary proponents of global governance, democracy has to be realized “on three different interconnected levels: within states, between states and at a world level” (Archibugi 8), cohesion in the planetary administration of Mantegazza’s year 3000 is guaranteed precisely by the relationships among, and autonomy of, all components of the global federation, from the “supreme Council” and “partial assemblies within each department” (all elected by universal suffrage for only a one-year term) down to the commune, which is “the state’s organic molecule” (106). The recipe for a successful political globalization, according to Mantegazza, hence features decentralization with a vengeance and emphasizes individual responsibility. This for him demonstrates “how easy and straightforward it is to govern the whole of humanity from the center of the globe when men, families, and communes are self-governing” (106).

However, while alleged accountability and tolerance at all levels seems to promise a plurality of identities thanks to a synergy of particular and universal, local and global forces, Mantegazza in fact does not neglect its more problematic side either—namely, what in a contemporary context would be the risk of globalization as homogenization rather than the harmonization of differences. Connected and merged through the intensification and expansion of cultural flows made possible by means of communication and environmental changes, peoples and races of the fourth millennium lose their individual traits and create “a new type, indefinitely cosmopolitan, the fruit of the deep and intimate cross-breeding” (170).

Interestingly, Félix Bodin had already presented this inevitable loss of ethnic distinctions as a mark of the future: “The interbreeding of races and the mixing of nations have been effected more and more profoundly: the original types of the different varieties of the species have been gradually erased; languages have grown more similar and few have almost disappeared. . . . The word ‘nationality’ is beginning to lose any but a vague significance” (*Novel* 93–94). As Émile Souvestre reiterates about his own fourth millennium, this “blending of racial characteristics was the natural result of social progress. The blood of all the different races had been mixed” (*World* 51). But behind the rosy promise of a harmoniously diverse humankind as just one happy family of equals, this ethnic and social creolization also sweeps away cultural niches and local feelings of belonging, raising the dystopian specter of institutional leveling and normalization.²⁵

The caveat against the dangers of imposing global democracy against peoples’ will (Archibugi 8) applies very well to these futuristic fictions. Indeed, the cosmopolitical creation of the “fraternal Continent,” whether Ghislanzoni’s European Union or Mantegazza’s planetary extension of it, is not exempt from a democratic fundamentalism that, targeting global equality, ends up reintroducing differences through restrictions, exclusions, and marginalizations. As we have seen, instead of translating into an extension of egalitarian and libertarian principles, the worldwide federative expansion in Mantegazza’s *L’anno 3000* ultimately reinstates the need for a Nietzschean moral and intellectual aristocracy: after it has buried the “stupid majorities” of the socialist European phase, the United Planetary States decides to be governed by the elite—“wise and honest minorities” who in fact implement inflexible Malthusian rules regarding the right to procreation. Likewise, Mantegazza’s idea of a Cosmic language certainly arises from that same desire for universal brotherhood, which at the end of the nineteenth century fostered the creation of artificial international languages like Volapük (1879) and Esperanto (1887). The price to pay for this supposed equality without borders, however, is the death of national and regional languages—an outcome that suggests the tensions inherent in the linguistic policies

of our own increasingly globalized world, negotiating between the erasure of cultural barriers (as in the current widespread tendency to adopt English as a lingua franca) and the preservation of local heritages and identities.

Seven years after *The Year 3000* was published, H. G. Wells, in *A Modern Utopia*, revisited the notion of a future world state that deliberately conceives itself as utopian, but with a substantial difference with respect to its antecedents: unlike the “all perfect and static States,” where “a balance of happiness won for ever against the forces of unrest and disorder” (5), Wells’s modern utopia “must be not static but kinetic, must shape not as a permanent state but as a hopeful stage” (5). Instead of resisting and overcoming “the great stream of things” (5), it should “rather float upon it” by building “not citadels, but ships of state” (5). Although not so lucidly as Wells and probably not even totally intentionally, Mantegazza likewise allows us to catch a glimpse of the weaknesses and obstacles inherent to his apparently “healthy and simple generation enjoying the fruits of the earth in an atmosphere of virtue and happiness” (Wells 5). By tracing a Wellsian “flexible common compromise” (Wells 6) between different visions and measures, *The Year 3000* builds a dynamic future, characterized by a dialectic between the apparently boundless human possibilities granted by the “other” logic of utopia and the limitations and flaws of “the world of Here and Now” (8).

Introducing his ideal model of futuristic fiction, Félix Bodin envisioned a narrative “fantastic, romantic, philosophical, and somewhat critical at the same time; a book in which a brilliant, rich and vagabond imagination can be deployed at its ease; and, finally, a book that is amusing without being futile” (*Novel* 41), able to eschew both the excesses of fantasy and the aridly critical and illusion-breaking philosophical perspective. *The Year 3000*, we could argue, would probably make Bodin happy. Famous for the claim “in science the true, in art the beautiful,” which seems to decree an unflinching belief in the need to separate rational, objective truth from the subjective pleasures of the aesthetic realm, Mantegazza in fact offers us an intriguing combination of the two domains. The narrative itself

confirms this: “The men of the thirty-first century no longer separate the beautiful from the true, and science and politics also enjoy dressing festively; . . . joy and beauty are no longer divorced from civilization, as in the times of great intellectual decadence and great hypocrisy” (109). Thematically and conceptually blended in the construction of this futuristic fantasy, science and art encourage the nineteenth-century imagination to transcend its temporal and spatial boundaries and travel in an ideal, apparently liberating elsewhere. At the same time, however, the novel suggests the need for a critical approach to dreams.

At a moment when Italy did not yet enjoy an established utopian, science fiction tradition, Mantegazza did not simply reproduce the styles and conventions of the genre, but rather offered a personal reelaboration of them, with interesting deviations from established models. Thus, *The Year 3000* should not be dismissed as blindly celebratory, satiric, or simply anachronistic, as has been too hastily affirmed.²⁶ Rather, it deserves to be reevaluated for its many “predictive” and “investigative” (Alkon 126) sparks, which invite us to use reason and emotions together, to test the technical possibilities but also the ethical limits of intellectual and material progress and of the quest for human happiness. Euphoric about the new, but also conscious of the inevitable shifts between triumph and downfall that the future holds in store, Mantegazza problematizes both extreme visions while gearing his and our imaginations to the challenges of an increasingly complex, more or less imminent, tomorrow.

A Note on the Text

First published in 1897 by Treves, *L'anno 3000. Sogno* was translated into German that same year by Willy Alexander Kastner as *Das Jahr 3000 ein Zukunftsstraum*, published by Jena Costenoble.

Interestingly, the original subtitle “Sogno” (Dream) is less ambiguously rendered in German as “utopia.” The effect is a more rigorous literary categorization of Mantegazza’s novel—and hence the loss of the connections the title draws with the topoi of dreaming and

sleeping as vehicles to the future, which Mantegazza's novel revises. Even before being translated into German, *L'anno 3000* was reviewed by the *Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt* (May 4, 1897).

The year 1897 also saw the publication of a Dutch edition in Leiden by Adriani (more faithful to the original Italian title: *Het jaar 3000: Een droom*) and a Portuguese edition by A. Varela (*O Ano 3000*). In 1898 there followed a Polish translation by M. Lag, *Rok 3000-ny: Marzenie przyszłości* (Łódź: nakł. Księgarni L. Zonera)—“Year 3000: The Dream of Things to Come”—and a Russian translation, *Будущее человечество (3000-й год)*, or *Budushee chelovechestvo (3000-i god)*—“The Humankind of the Future (Year 3000)” —an even more highly interpretive rendition that dissolves any allusion to imaginary (oneiric, utopian) worlds and brings to the foreground the factual value of the novel's representation. By relegating the reference to the year 3000 to a subtitle, the Russian translation also diminishes the importance of the specific temporal target, instead emphasizing more generally future generations themselves.

No French edition was available before 2003, when L'Harmattan published *L'an 3000*, translated, edited, and introduced by Raymond Trousson. No English translation of *L'anno 3000* exists prior to this one, apart from the incipit of the novel, which was anthologized in *The Physiology of Love and Other Writings* (University of Toronto Press, 2007): 513–14.

The Italian press did not devote to *L'anno 3000* the same close attention it paid, for instance, to Mantegazza's first novel, *One Day in Madeira*, which was an enormous editorial success. According to Mantegazza's bibliographer, Erasmo Ehrenfreund, only a few reviews of *L'anno 3000* seem to have been written in Italy between 1897 and Mantegazza's death in 1910, in such journals as *Gazzetta dell'Emilia* (May 14, 1897), *Illustrazione italiana* (August 21, 1898), and *Corriere di Catania* (July 24, 1899) (Ehrenfreund 137). Interestingly the article in *Illustrazione italiana*—which refers to the novel as “a curious book” that reaped success—is in its entirety a report on the content of a French review of Mantegazza that appeared on May 9, 1898, in *Journal des Débats*.²⁷ This review presented the utopian

political scenario of *L'anno 3000* in positive terms but used Mantegazza's work as a sort of illusion-breaking tool to moderate the French electorate's hopes of immediate happiness. Just as France apparently would have to wait until the fourth millennium to get a glimpse of the perfect government, the French reviewer suggests, so the Italian people would almost certainly not elect Mantegazza to Parliament on the basis of the political ideas he expresses in his novel. These views, the reviewer implicitly suggests, were quite different from those of the actual Italian government of his time, although he ironically concludes that the Italian Parliament would probably not miss Mantegazza too much, as it already had another "Deputy of Beauty" in its ranks—Gabriele D'Annunzio. This is an intriguing textual rapprochement of two prominent intellectual figures who were surely linked with each other by the anxiety of influence.

On the whole the rather subdued Italian reception of *L'anno 3000*, despite the circulation of several foreign translations, is puzzling. Mantegazza's fame as a novelist might have still been linked to *One Day in Madeira*, and the century was probably also already experiencing the avant-garde surge that would soon sweep away the old academies and ultimately pave the way for Fascism, no less hostile to the modalities of nineteenth-century science. Paradoxically the total eclipse of Mantegazza also condemned his futuristic novel to oblivion in precisely the decades that lay the groundwork for the official birth, in the late 1940s, of what is considered the consistent and cogent production of the science fiction genre.

Readers would have to wait until the late 1980s to find *L'anno 3000* back on the Italian bookshelves, in the 1988 edition by Lubrina, with a preface by Alberto Capatti. A more recent Italian edition by Lupetti appeared in 2007, with a postface by Davide Bigalli. The present English translation is based upon the original 1897 edition by Treves and on the 1988 Lubrina edition. In the English rendition I have regularized the most obtrusive of Mantegazza's frequent present-past tense shifts but have left the others unchanged so as to give readers a taste of the author's narrative style.

As part of a wider rediscovery of Mantegazza's pioneering

contributions to various scientific and humanistic areas of culture, critics in various countries are also devoting new attention to Mantegazza as a science fiction writer, as the following selection of scholarly articles shows.

- Bigalli, Davide. "Paolo Mantegazza: Il sogno della quiete perpetua." *L'anno 3000. Sogno*. By Paolo Mantegazza. Milan: Lupetti, 2007. 147–59.
- Boni, Monica. *L'erotic senatore. Vita e studi di Paolo Mantegazza*. Genova: Name Edizioni, 2002. (The first chapter, "I sogni di Paolo Mantegazza," pp. 13–43, mainly discusses *The Year 3000*.)
- Capatti, Alberto. "Prefazione." *L'anno 3000. Sogno*. By Paolo Mantegazza. Bergamo: Lubrina, 1988. 9–19.
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- . "Tra scienza e fantascienza: Il cervello umano in alcuni scrittori postunitari." *Ifantasmia della ragione*. By Vittorio Roda. Naples: Liguori, 1996. 125–60.
- Trousson, Raymond. "Introduction." *L'an 3000*. By Paolo Mantegazza. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003. 7–35.

Notes

1. Anonymous and unnumbered introduction to Mantegazza, *Anthropological Studies*.
2. For more comprehensive discussions of Mantegazza's life and cross-disciplinary scholarly achievements in late-nineteenth-century Italian and European culture, see Pireddu, "Paolo Mantegazza"; Pireddu, "Primitive Marks."
3. Mercier's title literally translates as "The Year 2440: A Dream if Ever There Was One," but it was rendered in English as *Memoirs of the Year Two Thousand Five Hundred*. See, e.g., the translation by W. Hooper (Dublin: W. Wilson, 1772). This choice eliminates the reference to the dream that

in fact, together with sleep, would become a leitmotif shared by numerous European futuristic novels.

4. In his introduction Bodin explicitly ridicules the “honest and sometimes amusing declaimer Mercier, who aspired, 50 years ago, to dream of the year 2440” yet “did not even push so far as representative government, underwear and close-cropped hair” (53). To Bodin’s eyes, therefore, Mercier provides an inadequate political perspective, insofar as his “philanthropic monarchy” appears as a mere “modification of absolute power” (53) and is hence insufficiently progressive for Bodin’s standards. For its part *The Novel of the Future* foresees not only the abolition of slavery and the end of wars but also a decline of monarchies that will go hand in hand with an increase in democracy. Interestingly we find the main elements of Bodin’s vision in Mantegazza.

5. Literally, then, the protagonists’ experience is not exactly a dream, but Souvestre still resorts to a sleeplike state to account for their spatiotemporal leap.

6. At least fourteen translations of Souvestre’s works were circulating in the United States by the second half of the nineteenth century, sixteen or more in the United Kingdom. See Clarke xi.

7. One eloquent passage can be found in chapter 22 of *The Physiology of Love*: “Today matrimony is one of the most fruitful sources of misfortune; it is a slow poison that kills domestic happiness, the morality of a nation, the economical development of the forces of a country. Matrimony is often a patent which gives free irresponsibility to woman and an easy and unpunished polygamy to man; it is a false mask of virtue, with which they cover the vice of modern society; it is a safeguard which justifies all smuggling of infidelity, all treachery; it is a flag that hides a domestic slave-market, an exchange of easy lechery, or a bigamy tolerated with enviable longanimity by offenders and offended.

“Matrimony in modern society is the most cruel, the most inhuman parody of faith, of the oath, of eternity. . . .

“Matrimony should be a free, a very free election, as much for the woman as for the man; it should be the election of elections, the typical election. In our country, on the contrary, it is only the man who selects; woman generally accepts or yields to the choice. . . .

“The common consciousness in two creatures of choosing each other freely and loving each other without any bond of interest, any pressure of authority, prejudice or ambition, is the sacred stone on which the most splendid temples of conjugal felicity are erected” (290, 291, 292–93).

8. See Durr; Esposito; Gooday.
9. See Orizio and Radice; Mori; AA.VV.
10. *Paris in the Twentieth Century* was written and rejected for publication in 1863, discovered in 1989 by Verne's great-grandson, and published posthumously in 1994. *In the Year 2889* is believed to have been cowritten with Verne's son Michel under the influence of Robida's *Le vingtième siècle*. It was first published in English in 1889 and one year later in French as *Au XXIXème siècle: La journée d'un journaliste Américain en 2889*. For a discussion of the controversies surrounding Jules Verne's futuristic production see Evans 65.
11. In *Paris in the Twentieth Century* we already find "two hundred pianos wired together by means of an electric current" that "could be played by the hands of a single artist" (209).
12. See, e.g., Bellamy chapter 21.
13. A shorter version of Grifoni's novel, entitled *Da Firenze alle stelle*, was published in 1885. As for F. Bianchi's novel, its full title is *Da terra a Marte: Romanzo umoristico, scientifico-filosofico. Combatte la teoria della reciproca attrazione dei pianeti, contiene la scoperta della vera teoria del volare* (From Earth to Mars: A Humorous Scientific-Philosophical Novel. It Fights the Theory of the Reciprocal Attraction of Planets. It Contains the Discovery of the True Theory of Flying). This novel tells the story of Eugenio Barmann, who, after financial and family misfortunes, undertakes a journey to Mars, interacts with its inhabitants (including the local scientist), and perfects the project of a flying machine and a system to communicate with Earth. Despite extensive research I have been unable to identify Bianchi's full name, which is not even listed in the catalog of the Italian National Library in Florence. This gives an idea of the very limited diffusion and knowledge of such works and of the persistent difficulties in pursuing scholarly research on them, unlike their French equivalents.
14. "Interessantissimo romanzo fantastico-scientifico" (Grifoni iii). Significantly, when the first portion of the novel was initially published, a review in *Nuova Antologia* welcomed Grifoni as a new "Giulio Verne italiano" (Italian Jules Verne) but criticized precisely the long scientific digressions that are the hallmark of Grifoni's Vernian technique, claiming that they allegedly harm the "immaginazione sbrigliata" (unbridled imagination) that should characterize the novel, although it belongs to "il genere della fantasia scientifica" (the genre of scientific fantasy). See "Il Mondo dell'avvenire" 579. This demonstrates Italian public opinion's difficulties in coming to terms with unconventional literary styles and new genres.

15. Turin and Milan remain the main locations, even though the characters in both Della Sala Spada's and Ghislanzoni's works also leave their respective headquarters and travel to other parts of the world (even trying to contact creatures from other planets in *Nel 2073!*).

16. *Il pianeta Marte* (The Planet Mars, 1893), *La vita sul pianeta Marte* (Life on the Planet Mars, 1895), and *Il pianeta Marte* (The Planet Mars, 1909). Schiaparelli's writings on this topic have been recently republished as *La vita sul pianeta Marte*. The hypothesis that there was life on Mars was also supported in part by the misleading English translation of *canali* as "canals" rather than "channels," hence suggesting man-made structures.

17. See Marinetti. Curiously the remarks in *The Year 3000* that seem to come closest to a thematization of Marinetti's formal perspective on expressive speed appear in chapter 7, which presents writing in the elementary schools of the United Planetary States—"ten times faster than the ancient sort" because, unlike the "old-fashioned writing that lasted up until the twenty-first century, in which vowels and consonants all had to be represented by a letter," schools now teach a kind of "stenography in which the vowels are all omitted or indicated with the simplest marks" (127). Marinetti would go well beyond the school curriculum of Mantegazza's fourth millennium, not only by urging the destruction of syntax, the abolition of punctuation, adjectives, and adverbs, and the use of infinitive verbs for the sake of mechanical simultaneity but also by provocatively practicing all he preached in his own aesthetics.

18. Mantegazza, e.g., does not appear in Inisiero Cremaschi's overview of Italian science fiction precursors (*Universo e dintorni*) or in Gianfranco de Turris's "Quando la bandiera sventolò su Venere." But even more surprisingly he is not even mentioned in the article "Science-Fiction," included in the recently published *Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies*.

19. This is the literary expression of an intrinsic connection of "temporal and spatial relationships" that "[define] genre and generic distinctions." See Bakhtin 84–85.

20. Mantegazza's negotiations between a historical perspective on major social plights and its seemingly incompatible counterpart offered by a Utopian projection toward an imaginary future exemplify what Fredric Jameson calls "Utopian circularity"; that is, the ability of the representation of the future not only to act as "a political vision and program" but also to "return upon our present to play a diagnostic and a critical-substantive role." See Jameson 147–48.

21. "Alla mia Maria raggio divino di sole che illumina e riscalda l'ultimo

crepuscolo della mia sera” (To my Maria, divine ray of sunshine that brightens and warms up the last crepuscule of my evening) (Mantegazza, *L'anno*).

22. Although the novel subordinates the disturbing potential of Paolo's invention to humanitarian causes, the topos of mind-reading technology and the question of its more or less acceptable applications provide further evidence of Mantegazza's cutting-edge imagination. Indeed, more recently both reality and fiction have offered poignant investigations into precognition abilities, elaborating premises found in *The Year 3000*. In 2007 a team of German and British neuroscientists adopted high-resolution brain scans to probe human mental activity and identify patterns associated with the development of specific thoughts and intentions (Sample). This milestone in brain-reading technology immediately raised scientific and ethical debates that conjured up the specter of a *Minority Report* society, where—as in the 2002 movie directed by Steven Spielberg, based upon Philip K. Dick's 1956 short story—precognition abilities, coupled with advanced equipment, promote preemptive disciplinary measures that allow the ability to punish the guilty before a crime has been committed and ultimately to eliminate crime altogether, just like the foreknowledge granted by the psychoscope in *The Year 3000*.

23. Francis Galton—interestingly Darwin's cousin—illustrated the purposes of “the science of improving stock” in his 1883 volume *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development* (25), but he had already divulged his ideas on the physical and mental improvement of future generations, with special attention to racial qualities, in his 1865 article “Hereditary Talent and Character.” For an overview of eugenics in late nineteenth-century British culture see Richardson. For more recent bioethical issues entailed by the nineteenth-century dream of human perfection see Rotschild. For Mantegazza's references to Galton and his own groundbreaking research in the field see Mantegazza, *Igiene* 211.

24. See Falk and Strauss 216.

25. Souvestre, though, with his usual parodic intent, ultimately connotes “universal brotherhood” as “universal ugliness,” since, in an interesting inversion of the myth of progress as unlimited improvement, racial interbreeding had in fact led to the predominance of “the least well-favored races” (51).

26. See, e.g., Roda 54–55; Trousson. The intellectual and cultural context of Mantegazza's novel is in fact more complex. Far from ignoring the alleged crisis of positivism, Mantegazza himself expresses the tensions inherent to the movement. Debates regarding the role of science within this framework were far from over in those years. Yet Mantegazza projected himself even beyond

positivism itself, seeming to think of a more extended and general path toward the future. With precisely this farsightedness he transcended the more provincial sensibility and imagination of his contemporaries, certainly pushing characterization beyond the figure of the scientist-alchemist-sorcerer (whether positive or negative) that seems to prevail in proto-science fiction.

27. “Giudizii della stampa.”

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