

Gigliola Gori
University of Urbino

Supermanism and Bodily Culture in Italy: **The Case of Futurism**

The objective of this paper is to examine the impact of futurism, and the idea of “superman,” on fascism. Futurism, an ideology founded by Marinetti in 1909, promoted a non-conformist vision of life which incorporated art, custom, morals, and politics. It also promoted values such as instinct, strength, courage, dynamism, speed, and youth, and promoted sport and physical education. Marinetti also adopted the idea of a superman.

This paper compares the futurist superman and bodily culture with the subsequent fascist ideal of a new nation of healthy sportsmen. This idea was epitomized by Mussolini, the living and acting ideal of the superman. The importance of the futurist superman is asserted through a demonstration of the centrality of physical education and sport in fascist Italy. This is achieved by examining recent literature, legislative texts, the arts, and publications that deal with physical education and sport. The paper considers the question of how much fascist visions concerning the shape of the “new” Italy derived from the futurist ideal and programme of giving all citizens the opportunity to practise physical education and sport.