Becoming-Speed: Futurism's Conflicts with Subjectivity and Motion

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Hızlaşmak: Gelecekçiliğin Öznellik ve Hareketle Çatışmaları

ABSTRACT

The Italian futurists of the early twentieth century fabricated a fiction of speed that dwelled on a new form of subjectivity that depended on motion's transformative effects. The futurist preoccupation with technological development and its potential influences on the human subject formed the basis of this fiction. Yet, as is the case with the majority of futurist narratives, a series of conflicting and vague concepts constituted how the futurist envisioned this subject on-the-move and their possible experiences. Futurists assumed that a variety of "becomings," each constituted in relation to the variety of assemblages through which the subject travels, helped this new subject discard conventional forms of a hermetic identity. Yet, this narrative of a new form of subjectivity also strongly implied that the magnified forms of perception emerging out of the experience of speed produced an empowered sense of self in the very same subject. Concentrating on such a deconstruction and reconstruction of subjectivity through the experience of speed, this paper analyzes a series of Umberto Boccioni's artworks that represented motion, mobility, and subjectivity.

Keywords: Boccioni, Futurism, Subjectivity, Speed

ÖZ

Gelecekçi hız miti, hareket halindeki bir öznenin değişen duyumlarından ortaya çıkan yeni bir öznellik olasılığı etrafında inşa edildi. Bu hız miti, gelecekçilerin teknolojik ilerlemeye ve bunun insan üzerindeki etkilerine olan ilgisinden kaynaklanıyordu. Ancak gelecekçi mitlerin çoğu gibi, hareket halindeki bu özne ve onun en tipik deneyimleri bir dizi çelişkili ve belirsiz kavramdan oluşuyordu. Güya hermetik bir kimlikten yoksun olan bu yeni özne, içinden geçtiği yeni ortamların içinde bulanıklaşan birden fazla "varlıktan" oluşuyordu. Ancak aynı zamanda hız deneyimi ve bunun beraberinde getirdiği yoğunlaşmış algılar, güçlü bir benlik duygusunu yeniden oluşturarak aynı özneyi güçlendiriyordu. Bu yazı, Umberto Boccioni'nin bazı sanat eserlerini, özellikle hız, hareket ve temsil edilen hareketlilik türü aracılığıyla öznelliğin yapı sökümü ve yeniden inşası temasına odaklanarak analiz etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Boccioni, Gelecekçilik, Öznellik, Hız

Introduction

Futurist sculptor Umberto Boccioni's (1977, p. 198) interest in the plastic relations between object and its surrounding environment finds its ultimate expression in his manifesto, *Pittura Scultura Futuriste* of 1914. In this manifesto, Boccioni argues that "…reality is not to be found in the object but in the transfiguration of the object as it becomes identified with the subject." According to Boccioni (ibid), a subject may be able to conceive reality only if it is able to associate and empathize with the object(s) of perception, i.e. the outside world. Boccioni's statement above engages with one of the fundamental arguments that Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, founder of futurism, posits. In the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* (1991b, p. 95) Marinetti positions futurism against the conventional forms of literary *I* in favor of a new form of perception that entails a communion with matter comprising its "crowd of massed molecules and whirling electrons." Given this persistent attention to a new form of relation between the subject and matter with all its

fluctuating states, we may assume that Marinetti, in his writings, endeavors to redefine "self" as a more open and adaptable configuration. One of Marinetti's main aims is to substitute the psychological conception of the self with a new form of subjectivity. This futurist fiction of a new subjectivity largely dwelled on notions of speed and movement. Here, a variety of "becomings," each constituted in relation to the variety of assemblages through which the subject travels, helped the new subject discard conventional forms of a hermetic identity. Yet, this narrative of a new form of subjectivity also strongly implied that the magnified forms of perception emerging out of the experience of speed produced an empowered sense of self in the very same subject.

Methods

Concentrating on such a deconstruction and reconstruction of subjectivity through the experience of speed, this paper analyzes a series of Umberto Boccioni's artworks that represented motion, mobility, and subjectivity. Methodologically, the article pursues a qualitative analysis that brings together the close visual analysis of several paintings and sculptures by Umberto Boccioni, historical documents (mainly in the form of manifestoes written by futurist artists), and theoretical investigations on speed and subjectivity. The article contributes to the existing scholarship on Boccioni and futurism by emphasizing the tension and incongruity between the different modalities of subjectivity proposed by the futurists.

Results

Assemblages

This futurist preoccupation with conventional forms of subject-object relationships dwells to a great extent on Henri Bergson's *Introduction to Metaphysics* and its phenomenological theories of perception. Bergson (1955) argues that we may construct the knowledge of things could be through two major and opposing methods that involved either assuming changing positions around an object or directly breaking into it. Moving around the perceived object imparts us a relative knowledge based on both the point(s) of view the subject assumes as well as the analytical and/or epistemological structures of cognition and expression. Because of this dependence, Bergson (1955) argues that relative knowledge is distorted and misleading. Directly entering the object, on the other hand, yields an absolute knowledge based on an intuitive understanding of the object's internal dynamics, i.e. its "states of mind." Here Bergson defines intuition as "the sympathy by which one is transported into the interior of an object in order to coincide with what there is unique"(1955, pp. 23-24). Absolute forms of knowledge becomes possible inasmuch as the subject

communes with the fluctuating crux of the object in question. Hence, Bergson's epistemology prioritizes the intuitive type of knowledge over analytical and scientific ones.

Bergson illustrates this epistemology by a comparison of two possible ways in which we may perceive an object in motion. The first form of perception assumes an external position (relative and analytical) while the second takes place from within (absolute and intuitive). According to Bergson, a 'real'/'absolute' movement does not imply a change in spatial location per se but a qualitative one. A change in the subject's position in space does not determine 'absolute' movement. Rather, such a qualitative movement and its perception relates to the transformations in the states of the object's crux (1955; also see Petrie, 1974, p. 145). With regard to this argument, any perceived object has a peculiar inner dynamic which fundamentally dwells upon the flux, change and conflict of its molecular formation. As such, the "becomings" of objects depend upon their own molecular and material forces as well as those of the objects with which they interact. Gilles Deleuze (1993) likewise uses the term "molecularity" to explain not only the inherent states of an object but also the sensibility of a perceiving subject; both pertain to a fluctuating molecular life of things. In so doing, he counters the orthogonal system of Cartesian philosophy with its analytical and relative perceptions, to propose a different subject-object relationship that culminates in a new form of subjectivity, i.e. "becoming-molecular":

> Becoming is to emit particles that take on certain relations of movement and rest because they enter a particular zone of proximity. Or, it is to emit particles that enter that zone because they take on these relations. (…) Proximity is a notion at once topological and quantal, that marks a belonging to the same molecule, independently of the subjects considered and the forms determined (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 273).

Accordingly, the relation of becoming and molecularity lies in the merging of the subject with the specific assemblages in which s/he is involved. In each distinctive assemblage, the subject is "becoming" while s/he relates to and identifies with this specificity and its molecular formation.

The idea of formally merging into the environment is apparent in some of Boccioni's works as early as 1909. In *Portrait of a Young Woman* (colored chalk on paper), for instance, prismatically fragmented components of atmospheric light interpenetrate the figure depicted on the canvas. This destroys the illusion of spatial distance on the surface of the canvas. The horses at a distance seen through the window begin to appear in the very same plane of vision as the woman. In a similar vein, in the *Back to the Light* of

1910, the light coming from the window dematerializes the face of the woman making it dissolve into its surroundings. In this drawing, light appears to have acquired a corporeal substance and shape such that it literally penetrates into the human body. Through the physical effect of light, the face of the woman, window, exterior view from the window and the room merge into each other becoming one. While in Boccioni's early works such light was the mere source of the dissolution of objects into their environment, in the later works Boccioni began to use the same dissolution to render the experiences and perceptions of a subject within distinctive assemblages.

In *The Street Enters the House* of 1911 (oil on canvas), for instance, the artist takes one step further the theme of becoming one with the environment. Boccioni in this painting tackles the issue of subjectivity from two different points of view. First, the street interpenetrates the figure on a balcony who contemplates the scene below, thereby rendering her part of the assemblage that surrounds her. In order to achieve this effect, Boccioni utilizes light green wedge-like color patches that seem to emanate from the street below and end up on the figure on the balcony. The thin, brown poles of the construction on the street protrude into the plane of the figure and the balcony above. Furthermore, the earth of the construction site fills the holes of the balcony railings in such a way that the plane of the ground beneath and that of the balcony blur into each other. Finally, the figures of a horse and a construction worker, which originally belonged to the street below, pass through the figure on the balcony and seem to project from the picture plane into the space of the viewer. Second, this illusion of penetration into the space beyond the canvas, along with the fact that the figure on the balcony is depicted three times from three different points of view (for the three figures are identical wearing the same two-piece dress of same colors and looking down onto the street with the very same pose), constitutes a comment on the subjectivity and perception of the viewer. In so doing, Boccioni endeavors to merge the viewer into the assemblage of the painting, an aim already declared in 1910 in the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*:

> Our bodies penetrate the sofas upon which we sit, and the sofas penetrate our bodies. The motor bus rushes into the houses which it passes, and in their turn the houses throw themselves upon the motor bus and are blended with it. The construction of pictures has hitherto been foolishly traditional. Painters have shown us the objects and the people placed before us. We shall henceforward put the spectator in the center of the picture (Boccioni, et al., 1973, p. 28).

In strictly Deleuzian terms, the figure on the balcony in The Street Enters the House is "becoming-molecular" while it melds into the assemblage of street. What is more, the painting itself is intended to constitute another assemblage with its environment and its spectators to the extent that it takes into account a viewer and his/her possible experience of the painting.

Transportation

To the extent that becoming entails a motion of differentiation between heterogeneous dispositions, a consistent series of "becomings" formed by each of the assemblages traversed by the object-on-the-move composes movement. If we accept this to be the case, then how is the subjectivity of a subject in motion influenced by this? Marinetti (1991b) emphasizes motion as a key feature of this postulation. *The Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* of 1912 opposes the traditional forms of literary *I* to an imagined driver speeding two hundred miles an hour. Significantly, Marinetti also narrates how he realized the necessity of discarding the old forms of subjectivity as well as sentence structures of literature in the midst of an airplane journey. It is narrated in the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* that while Marinetti became one with the assemblage of the plane, his sensory perceptions as well as his subjectivity were altered (Schnapp, 1994). The futurist preoccupation with developments in technology and their probable impacts on subjectivity formed the basis of this fiction (Margozzi, 2002; Daly, 2016; Pizzi, 2019; Mather, 2020). Marinetti draws a comparison between the movements of matter and the actions of newly advanced machinery, such as the mechanical piano keyboard, the filmic procession, and automobile driving. He asserts that the nature of both kind of movements (molecular and technological) belong outside the realm of human perception, thereby pertaining to intuition (Marinetti, 1991b). The impact of technological advances on reception and representation has been discussed by many scholars to day (Beckman, 2010; Schnapp, 1999; Virilio, 2007; Virilio, 1995; Crary, 1990; Benjamin, 1969). The means of transportation that emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries constituted one of the most significant impacts on visuality.

The kinship of optics and transportation, as Jeffrey Schnapp (1999) argues, emanated from the changes in how the human subject perceives and connects to the traversed landscapes (also see Schivelbusch, 1986). For these changes were incited by the transformation of transportation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Jeffrey Schnapp (1999), closely associates the advent of optical devices such as phantasmagoria (magic lanterns which were used in late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to create and project phantom imagery), diorama, and the moving camera with contemporary modes of transportation. For further discussion on the use of phantasmagoria see (Barber, 1989;

Castle, 1995). Such new modes of perception were, therefore, tied to transience to the extent that the modern subject experienced the world at a new level of speed. Yet, *passenger*-centered and *driver*-centered modes of transportation influenced visual perception in two distinctive ways.

That the passengers of the train were not able to see ahead of the scenery from the window, nor to play any role in the speed and the track of the movement, generated a rather passive and detached experience. The passenger had very little control over the perception of the journey and the spaces traversed, which transpired as a series of fleeting images. This type of perception, which verges upon a haptic experience emanating from the shock effect, is rendered manifest in Boccioni's *States of Mind* triptych of 1911 (oil on canvas). The same year, Boccioni (1988, p. 238) stated, "…if solid bodies give rise to states of mind by means of vibrations of forms, then we will draw those vibrations." Indeed, as its Bergsonian title suggests, the *States of Mind* canvases were an attempt to reconstruct the experiences of subjects in a train station who say their farewells, leave, or stay (Figure 1).
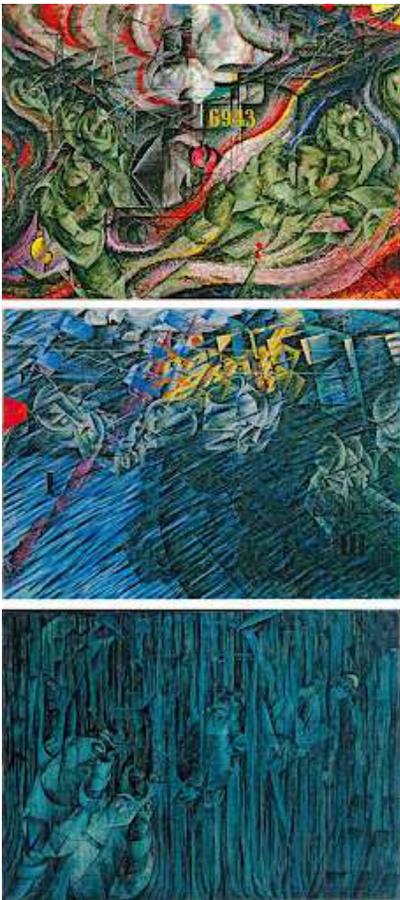

Figure 1.
Umberto Boccioni, States of Mind triptych (The Farewells, Those Who Go, Those Who Stay), oil on canvas (Boccioni, 1911)

States of mind, argued Bergson (2001; 2004), emerged from the ever changing rhythms of tension and relaxation in the cognitive processes which in turn were bound to the free will and action of the human beings (Antliff, 2000; Antliff, 2011). The "effort of intuition" corresponds to an utmost degree of tension in the state of mind culminating in an ability to experience successive stages of duration that are simultaneous with our own (Bergson, 1955). As previously argued, the becomings of these durations beyond the threshold of our relative knowledge are perceived as static beings (Bergson, 2007). When experienced at its most intense degrees of tension, however, this rhythm would allow a subject to contemplate matter in terms of its qualitative rhythms of duration, in other words its "becomings" rather than its quantitative features (Bergson, 2007; Bergson, 1944). For Boccioni, the states of minds of the passengers reached such intense degrees of tension due to the shock effect of the train.

In *Those Who Go*, Boccioni focused on the rhythmic tension of the scenery of fleeting images and endeavored to depict its impact on the passengers on a train. His intention to paint the vibrations of both objects and states of mind entails a fantasy scene in which the movement of the train and scenery outside prompts tactile sensations as well as unusually perceptive states of mind in the travelling subjects. In this painting, the fragmented landscape of buildings seen from the windows of the train merges into the plane of the passengers who are also fragmented (Kozloff, 1973). Unlike *Those Who Stay*, here Boccioni includes merely the heads of the figures. These heads, through fragmentation, are flattened out and split open, thereby dissolving into the space surrounding them. As such, the human figures along with the scenery of buildings all seem to float in the same half-dreamy, half-melancholic environment of the train which is depicted by harsh and thick metallic-blue brush strokes on canvas. The fact that the eyes of the figures are closed underlines this dreamy state, which approached the near psychic experience that Bergson mentions. It should also be noted that in some of the studies for the painting, a few passengers are depicted with eyes wide open. In one of these sketches, the eyes of one figure are bulging out in apparent fear. This, I would argue, further emphasizes the state of anxiety and shock that dominates the atmosphere of the painting. Christine Poggi (2009) points to the fact that on one of these studies the word *forse* (maybe) is inscribed as a sign of this uncertain and anxious state. That Boccioni chose to render the eyes closed on the final painting may point to an emphasis on the haptic experience of the speed of the train and the "states of mind" it entails. In this respect, while the speed of the train produces an intensified state of perception, the subjects remain floating and fragmented as they have no control over either the degrees of the speed of the train or the assemblages traversed.

Driver-centered transportation technologies provided an alternative to this restraint of one's orientation and speed during a journey. At the very beginning of *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*, Marinetti (1991a) emphasizes the clear distinction between these two methods of transportation. While pulling an all-nighter, Marinetti and his friends are initially stirred up by the life unfolding on the streets because of tram sounds. Yet, it is only when they hear the screeching cars that they are lured outside. This was because it was through the automobile, not the tram, that the subject could control and thereby, get empowered by motion and speed. According to Virilio, it is through the very windshield of the car that the driver retains contact with what is outside. In this assemblage of the driver and a speeding car, the windshield becomes a screen whereby the "voyeur-voyager" experiences the outside world (1991). As such, the subjectivity of the automobile driver is both deconstructed as s/he becomes one with the speeding metallic vehicle and reconstructed via the power and control s/he enjoys over the route of the car and the levels of speed. Virilio (2007), elsewhere, argues that the dromological revolution of the early 1900s found its utmost expression in the futurist movement, with its subject who becomes "an animal body that disappears in the superpower of a metallic body able to annihilate time and space through its dynamic performances." "Dromology" is a term Virilio uses to define the analysis of diverse notions such as urbanization, warfare and perception vis-a-vis speed and movement. It is based upon the Greek word "dromos," i.e. to race and literally means "the logic of speed."

Curiously enough, the automobile did not constitute one of the means of transportation that Boccioni represented once he joined futurist movement. In 1904, however, he executed a series of automobile drawings for *Automobile Club d'Italia* (tempera on cardboard). These paintings, in a rather humorous way, depict scenes of car races taking place out in the countryside. Most of the paintings feature people from the countryside watching the speeding vehicles in an awestruck manner, thereby opposing the advent of technology and mechanical movement to rustic life. In his later career, Boccioni prefers fastly moving horses and bicycles rather than cars as his subject (Vere, 2011). These modes of transportation still largely manage to intensify the perceptions of a subject-on-the-move. Such an impact of speed only later came to be primarily associated with automobiles. Yet, a cyclist or a horse-rider is capable of more directly associating to the paths and the spaces travelled than an automobile driver. Despite the conventions of cultural historians, argues Schnapp (1999), the history of speed and accelerated motion, if not the myth constructed around them, did not commence with the mechanization of modern transportation. Such history, he suggests, cannot be contemplated without taking into account the horsemanship and coaching subcultures of the pre-motorized era.

These two forms of transportation both feature a traveling subject who not only "becomes-molecular" while becoming one with the series of assemblages travelled but also acquires a strong sense of self because of the strengthening of their perceptive faculties. Marinetti (1983; quoted and translated in Blum, 1996a) made it clear that it was speed that not only dematerialized but also intensified the subject in question: Triumph of our *I* over our Weight, with its treacherous plots to murder our speed and drag it into immobility's ditch. Velocity = scattering + condensation of the *I*. All the distance covered by a body is condensed in that very body (Marinetti, 1983; quoted and translated in Blum, 1996a).

As Hal Foster (1997) observes, to Marinetti speed implied more than a mere "technological sensorium"; it was also a metonym for the necessary re-creation of the self. Indeed, movement, according to Deleuze & Guattari, made possible the deterritorialization of the body and the self from restrictions and fixed boundaries. Such deterritorialization also entailed a reterritorialization of the assemblages of a given subject as s/he disperses through them (1987). It is important to note that these terms, according to Deleuze & Guattari (1987; 1994), are neither binary opposites nor antithetical categories. Instead, deterritorialization and reterritorialization can exist together or follow each other in both mental and corporeal experiences. It is always possible for the lines of flight of a subject, i.e. lines of desubjectification and deterritorialization to fold back onto themselves resulting in a reterritorialization of the "self", a resubjectification. In a similar vein, for the futurists speed per se was the vehicle for the deterritorialization and fragmentation of the 'self' throughout the traversed spaces. Such speed and the dynamism it generated simultaneously enabled the driver to reterritorialize not only the assemblages s/he passes on his/her way, but also a new and powerful 'self.'

This theme of de- and re-constitution of the self through the speed of a driver-centered movement is particularly evident in Boccioni's "Dynamism of a Cyclist" of 1914 (oil on canvas). The bicycle rider in this painting is turned into an amorphous form whereby the curved lines that delineate the figure are in perfect harmony with the lines that define the environment (Figure 2). Such harmony creates a merger of the figure into its background that is further emphasized by the thick and harsh brushstrokes in black and brown protruding from the figure into his environment. This effect can also be observed in some of the studies Boccioni executed for the "Dynamism of a Cyclist." In these sketches, while the figure becomes ever more abstract, its curvilinear lines begin to open up and dissolve into the environment. Furthermore, in most of these studies, as in the case of the

painting itself, harsh and rigid lines in black establish connections between the figure and the space surrounding him. Yet, in these sketches, the boundaries of the figure are still traceable for the delineating lines are usually executed in bold black.

Figure 2.
Umberto Boccioni, Dynamism of a Cyclist, oil on canvas (Boccioni, 1914)

In the actual painting Boccioni reterritorialized the dissolving figure of the bicycle rider through the use of color. Even though his selection of colors (which especially focuses on blue and brown) for the figure is akin to the choice for the background, the brown and blue colors of the figure are darker compared to that of the environment. As the colors begin to define the space around the figure, they not only become softer but also blend with other colors such as purple, red and green. In this respect, while the speeding figure dissolves into its environment by means of the abstraction and opening up of its delineating lines, it also acquires an entirely new form through the boldness of the same lines as well as the use of color. That the patches of color become denser in the center of the composition where the figure is situated further underscores this peculiar emphasis on the movement of the cyclist as well as his resubjectification.

Plastic Forces

How Boccioni (1977) represented the relations among the interior forces of a series of objects, in fact, made visible this constant de- and re-assembly of the subject through motion and speed. He used a variety of effects that he named "force lines", "force colors" and "force forms" that visualized these relations in both his paintings and sculptures. These various forces are especially manifest in the several studies Boccioni executed before assembling his sculpture *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses* in 1914. The study for *Horse + Rider + Houses* of 1913–14 (pen and ink on white paper), for instance, is a simple sketch that shows the interaction of force lines of the assemblage suggested in the title. Accordingly, the lines that represent the bodies of the horse

and the rider in the foreground and the houses in the distance converge into each other forming a "becoming-molecular" arrangement. *Plastic Forms of a Horse* of 1914 (oil on canvas), on the other hand, displays an intersection of the houses in the background with the body of the horse through the use of color. Boccioni uses what he calls color forces in this painting to blend the horse figure in the foreground with the forms in the distance and create an assemblage. In the study called *Plastic Dynamism: Horse + Houses* of 1914 (oil on canvas), the pyramidal "force forms" of the houses in the background penetrate into the "force form" of the horse which, in turn, creates an affect of dynamic fusion.

Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses of 1915 represents an assemblage of a fastly moving horse traversing a group of stagnant houses concretizing these forces in sculptural form (Figure 3). Accordingly, in *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses* Boccioni disassembled the volumes that form the static and moving figures only to subsequently bring these together in an interpenetrating manner. This method of de- and re-assembly pursued and made visible the innate force lines and forms of the horse. Wedge-shaped volumes that intersect with the conical forms of the house represent these lines and forms. This intrusion of different planes into each other, argues Coen (1996), results in "the dynamic expansion of a body transformed by speed." Here, Boccioni gives concrete form to "becoming-molecular" of the horse-in-motion with the houses it traverses.

Figure 3.
Umberto Boccioni, Dynamism of a speeding horse + houses, gouache, oil, paper collage, wood, cardboard, copper, and iron, coated with tin or zinc (Boccioni, 1915)

A series of different materials such as coated iron, wood, cardboard, copper, gouache, and oil constitute the sculpture. Accordingly, in *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses* Boccioni realizes what he proposed in the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* of 1912:

> Deny in sculpture any attempt at realistic, episodic structures; affirm the absolute necessity of using all

elements of reality in order to rediscover the basic elements of plastic sensitivity. By considering bodies and their parts as PLASTIC ZONES, any sculptural composition will contain planes of wood or metal, either motionless or in mechanical motion, in creating an object; spherical fibrous forms for hair, semicircles of glass for a vase, wire and netting for atmospheric planes, etc. (…) Insist that even twenty different types of materials can be used in a single work of art in order to achieve plastic movement. To mention a few examples: glass, wood, cardboard, iron, cement, hair, leather, cloth, mirrors, electric lights, etc (Boccioni et al., 1973, pp. 64-65).

Indeed, Boccioni does not use different types of material in order to differentiate the moving object from the static ones. For instance, both the horse and the houses are composed of cardboard and wood. Patches of gouache and oil seemingly arbitrarily applied on the sculpture correspond to those visual elements Boccioni names "plastic zones" and emphasize the continuities existing between traversed and traversing parts. Giving the sculpture an unfinished look (as illustrated also in the photographs of Boccioni's studio), these patches of color imply a dynamic state that corresponds to the becoming that the horse experiences. Yet, the horse also appears to be a struggling figure that endeavors to crack the houses capturing it. The static houses to some extent seem to encumber the movement of the horse. *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses* thereby gives concrete form to the struggle of a speeding figure undergoing de- and re- constitution of the self.

Discussion

Futurism's association with fascist ideologies emerges from the depiction of an entrapped figure endeavoring toward dynamism. As in the case of many other paradoxes of the futurist movement, Marinetti's (1924; trans. and quoted in Hewitt, 1993, p. 136) celebration of the liberation of bodies is accompanied by an advocacy of the fascist state. Hewitt indicates how Marinetti conceptualizes the state as a body per se. For Marinetti, the aim of any ideology must be concerned with the liberation of that specific corpus. Hewitt speculates that this found its expression in Marinetti's declaration to "liberate, unleash, lighten, in order to accelerate its (the state's) speed and multiply a hundredfold its productivity" (Hewitt, 1993). Such an unleashment, however, became only possible through a productive corpus assumed to be more and more mechanical (Blum, 1996b). Futurist ideology therefore presupposed a vital machine designed to control other kinds of subjectivity. Cinzia Blum (ibid) argues that from very early on, the idea of discipline was a significant part of the futurist rhetoric. For instance, in "Geometric and Mechanical Splendor and the Numerical

Sensibility," Marinetti (1991c) claimed the birth of a new conception of beauty which found its expression in the forms of the machines and their geometric mechanical principles. Three of these essential features Marinetti enlists are order, precision, and discipline (ibid). In a similar vein, in futurist politics, the central mechanical assemblage of productivity and speed (i.e. the state) eventually reterritorializes and suppresses the deconstituted self and its freedom.

In contrast, Deleuze & Guattari (1987), in their conceptualization of "lines of flight" explain that each assemblage has lines of deterritorialization that are then reterritorialized by new assemblages, resulting in a freedom of thought and action in endless possible ways. They, however, underline the threat of rigid lines that result in the reterritorialization of a line of flight, i.e. re-subjugation via the established and conventional forms of power. For Deleuze & Guattari (1987), the state is not a body without organs, but an "apparatus of capture" which always runs a risk of subjugating the lines of flight. They postulate that fascism is itself a dangerous and intense line of flight to the extent that it is composed of a very basic desire: the desire of desire to be subjugated. The fascist state as an apparatus of capture, argue Deleuze & Guattari (1987), transforms the line of flight based upon this kind of a desire on the micro level into a line of total destruction. Interestingly enough, according to Deleuze & Guattari, the relation between fascism and desire, renders this ideology functional on both a micro level as well as on the macropolitics of the totalitarian state.

According to Foster (1997), the libidinal economy of Marinetti creates a shield in the form of becoming one with the machine. This, argues Foster, represents at once the castration and the technological phallus, hence the analogy between the double logic of prosthesis (extension and dismemberment) and that of fetish (protection against castration and acknowledgement thereof). Foster believes that for Marinetti "getting rid of the I," the dispersal of the self, meant the castration of castration – getting rid of the body in order to become the technological phallus (ibid). As a consequence of this, Marinetti had to turn to speed, war and art to ejaculate the aggression and violence which otherwise remains bound to this protected shield. Yet, Foster (ibid) overlooks the fact that desire is a social investment. His analysis therefore runs the risk of turning into an attempt to psychoanalyze Marinetti who allegedly found the place to discharge the surplus of his narcissistic tendencies in fascism and violence. In such analysis, fascism, then, becomes a mere static ideology of given ideas on the molar level in which one might invest as a result of his individual psychological tendencies. As observed by Barbara Spackman (1994), however, the definition of an ideology does not lie in the circulating ideas so much as it does in the very mechanisms

which bind and articulate these ideas. I would, therefore, argue that fascist inclinations were by no means sublimated in the end; these inclinations were there from the very beginning on the micro level which both contributed to the possible definitions of the fascist ideologies on the macro level and became in turn modified by them in a reciprocal manner.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Futurism's fiction of motion and speed emancipated the subject through processes of de- and reterritorialization of the body and its cognitive and perceptive faculties. Yet, this unencumbered body was eventually captured by not only the microfascist machinic assemblages but also by the macrofascist totalitarian state. The obvious battle of the figures-on-the-move in Boccioni's works emerge as metaphors for a subject whose subjectivity is freely adaptive and in flux on one level but is shaped by fascist politics, on the other. As is the case with the majority of futurist narratives, a series of conflicting and vague concepts constituted how the futurists envisioned subjects on-the-move and their possible experiences. Such a conflicting kind of battle would constitute the subject of a further study addressing the associations between subjectivity and "apparatus of capture" in futurist works.

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