Graphic design and graphic designers in Milan, 1930s-1960s: the layout of a profession

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ABSTRACT

Graphic design and graphic designers in Milan, 1930s-1960s: the layout of a profession

Graphic design holds a marginal position in the Italian design historiography in relation to industrial design. Often written by and for graphic designers, histories have tended to concentrate on changes in graphic styles as exemplified in works by prominent designers or the visual communication strategies of major companies.

By contrast, this thesis addresses the organisation of the graphic design profession in Milan, from the interwar period to the mid-1960s. Key aspects explored include: graphic design's mutable meanings and practices; formal and informal educational practices; graphic designers' self-identification with a new profession; and the structures they created to organise and make their practice visible. A focus on dialogue and negotiation between different interest groups stresses the relational and contingent nature of design professions. The thesis asks whether Milan's graphic practitioners capitalised on modernist ideas such as standardisation, universalism, objectivity and functionalism to distance themselves from graphic arts and advertising, and enable re-categorisation within design. Thus, it problematises the relationship between professionalisation and international modernism, within the specific context of industrial structures in Milan and the hierarchy of design practice in twentieth-century Italy more broadly.

The thesis provides an original retelling of stories often taken for granted, and looks behind individual designers and big companies to uncover overlooked narratives. Five chapters addressing the Scuola del Libro and the Cooperativa Rinascita in Milan, the ISIA in Monza, the Milan Triennale, the Studio Boggeri and the associations AIAP and ADI draw attention to educational issues, design practice, professional organisations, networks and mediating channels that have defined, legitimised, represented, advanced, contrasted, and articulated the graphic design profession in Milan. The argument is built on close scrutiny of archival material and other primary sources, including extensive visual material and oral interviews.

Methodologies derive principally from history of design and visual culture, and place great emphasis on visual analysis. Visual artefacts are approached both as visual expressions of design methodologies and aesthetic principles and, drawing on actor-network-theory, as three-dimensional actors that interact with people and other artefacts. Despite focusing on the local, the thesis draws on global design history as a methodology by taking into account the dynamic and multi-directional movement of people, ideas, and artefacts within transnational circuits. Building on sociological stances, it approaches professions as socially constructed concepts and argues that professional identities are constantly in formation and require continual adaptation to shifting environments, agendas and design discourses.

The thesis aims to offer neither a comprehensive history of Italian graphic design nor a final assessment of its professionalisation. Rather, it prioritises the process of professionalisation, by stressing tensions and contradictions, and by following practitioners' struggle to articulate what graphic design is. The originality and potential impact of the thesis lie in its endeavour to present a closely-articulated history of the graphic design profession in Milan that draws attention to economic, industrial, political, social and technological contexts, and to propose this as a template for the writing of graphic design history. Furthermore, it provides a historically-integrated, archive-based, outward-looking model for graphic design history as an integral part of the history of design.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification.

The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Chiara Barbieri
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ABBREVIATIONS

ARCHIVES AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

AALS	Archivio Albe e Lica Steiner (Albe and Lica Steiner Archive), Politecnico di Milano, Milan, Italy
ASB	Archivio Studio Boggeri (Studio Boggeri Archive), Meride, Switzerland
ASM	Archivio Storico della città di Monza (Historical Archive of the city of Monza), Monza, Italy
ASU	Archivio Storico Umanitaria (Historical Archive of the Umanitaria), Milan, Italy
CDPG	Centro di Documentazione del Progetto Grafico (Graphic Design Research Centre), Milan, Italy
CSG	Centro Studi Grafici (Centre of Graphic Studies), Milan, Italy
TM BP	Triennale di Milano Biblioteca del Progetto (Milan Triennale Design Library), Milan, Italy

DESIGN SCHOOLS

CR	Cooperativa Rinascita (Rebirth Cooperative)
CSAG	Corso Superiore di Arti Grafiche (Graduate Course of Graphic Arts)
CSDI	Corsi Superiore di Disegno Industriale (Graduate Courses of Industrial Design)
CSDICV	Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale e Comunicazione Visiva (Graduate Course of Industrial Design and Visual Communication), Rome, Italy
CSR	Convitto Scuola Rinascita (Rebirth School)
ISIA	Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche (Higher Institute for the Artistic Industries)
HfG	Hochschule für Gestaltung (School of Design)
RCA	Royal College of Art, London

ORGANISATIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

ADI	Associazione per il Design Industriale (Association for Industrial Design)
AGI	Alliance Graphic Internationale (International Graphic Union)
AIAP	Associazione Italiana Artisti Pubblicitari (Italian Association of Advertising Artists)
ANPI	Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia (National Association of Italian Partisans)

ATAP	Associazione Italiana Tecnici e Artisti Pubblicitari (Italian Association Advertising Technicians and Artists)
CGIL	Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (Italian General Confederation of Labour)
CoID	Council of Industrial Design
DC	Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democrats)
D&AD	Designers and Art Directors Association
FIP	Federazione Italiana Pubblicità (Italian Federation of Advertising)
G.A.R.	Gruppo Amici della Razionalizzazione (Friends of Rationalisation Group)
GUF	Gruppi Universitari Fascisti (Fascist University Groups)
ICSID	International Council of Societies of Industrial Design
ICOGRADA	International Council of Graphic Design Associations
INA	Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni (National Insurance Institute)
MAC	Movimento per l'Arte Concreta (Concrete Art Movement)
MRF	Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista (Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution)
ONB	Opera Nazionale Balilla (Italian Fascist Youth Organisation)
OPI	Organizzazione Pubblicitaria Italiana (Italian Advertising Organisation)
PCI	Partitito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)
PNF	Partito Nazionale Fascista (Fascist National Party)
TGP	Taller de Grafica Popular (People's Graphic Workshop)
TP	Tecnici Pubblicitari (Advertising Technicians)
UPI	Unione Pubblicitaria Italiana (Italian Advertising Union)
WoDeCo	World Design Conference, Tokyo 1960

Introduction

Milan 1933 may be considered as the place and date of birth of Italian graphic design.[1] Somewhere in between the launch of the magazine *Campo Grafico*, the setting up of the Studio Boggeri, the inauguration of the German Pavilion curated by the typeface designer Paul Renner at the 5th Milan Triennale, and the arrival in town of the Bauhausler Xanti Schawinsky, Italian graphic design was born.

As simplistic and anecdotal as this statement might appear, there is some truth in this birth certificate. Yet, as this thesis sets out to show, a specialist magazine, a graphic design studio, an exhibition and a foreign designer with first-hand experience of modernist aesthetics and techniques were only the first lines in the layout of the graphic design profession.

The professionalisation of graphic design in Milan forms the central subject of this thesis. This begins in the interwar period, adopting, in accordance with previous historiography, the early-1930s as a departure point for Italian graphic design; and it ends in the mid-1960s, when graphic designers had attained a better outlined, though far from secured and uncontested, position within the national and international design scenes. The thesis uncovers histories of the critical debate around the tracing of graphic designers' professional identity. Attention is drawn to educational issues, professional practices, networks and mediating channels that have defined, legitimised, represented, advanced, articulated or, in some cases, contrasted the layout of the graphic design profession over a period of about thirty years: from the Fascist regime to the Italian 'economic miracle', through the war years and the postwar reconstruction.

The thesis maps out the changing concept, public image and practices of graphic design in Italy during this period, and traces the process that brought graphic designers to think more self-consciously about their practice, gradually identifying themselves as a new profession. It asks how graphic designers learned what to do and how to interpret it, and investigates the ways in which they negotiated and mediated their professional identity both between themselves and with others. Further aspects of the professionalisation of graphic design explored here

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1   See, for instance: Carlo Dradi, *1933: Nasce a Milano la Grafica Moderna* (Milan: Ufficio Stampa Comune di Milano, 1973); *1933: Un Anno del Novecento a Milano*, ed. by Silvia Bignami (Geneva; Milan: Skira, 2001); *Grafica e Design a Milano, 1933-2000*, ed. by Aldo Colonetti (Milan: Editrice Abitare Segesta, 2001).

include the nomenclature used by graphic designers for their profession and the structures they created to organise and make their practice visible.

At the same time, the thesis asks whether graphic practitioners capitalised on modernist ideas such as standardisation, universalism, objectivity and functionalism to distance themselves from graphic arts and the advertising industry, and suggests that they did so in order to enable their re-categorisation within design as partners with industrial designers. In doing so, it seeks to problematise the relationship between professionalisation and international modernism. The latter is approached both as a formal change and as a conceptual shift in the design realm, within the specific context of industrial structures in Milan and the social hierarchy of design practice in twentieth-century Italy more broadly. Moreover, the thesis investigates modernism as a vehicle of design ideologies and political propaganda. By looking at graphic artefact as part of the historical and political setting, it addresses the ambiguous position of graphic practitioners towards the Fascist regime and problematises the fortunes of modernist visual language in Fascist Italy.

I suggest that graphic design practice emerged at the intersection of printing, typography, illustration, advertising and commercial arts; borrowing and adapting from closer practices.[2] Following Victor Margolin's approach to graphic design history, I attempt to maintain the distinction between the different strands that have over time become intertwined in graphic design practice amid a changing social, cultural and historical context.[3] I avoid the rhetoric of 'pioneers of graphic design' and trace the profession's lineage back to typography and the printing trades. Moreover, I retrace the problematic relationship between graphic design and advertising, from interwar alliance to postwar schism. In doing so, I respond to Steven Heller's call for graphic design historians 'to remove the elitist prejudices that have perpetuated a biased history', which has 'virtually denied [...] or hidden [advertising] behind more benign words such as "publicity" and "promotion"'.[4]

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2   For similar thoughts on the graphic design profession within different geographies and timeframes, see: Ellen Mazur Thomson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America: 1870-1920* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1997); Jeremy Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany 1890-1945* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000).

3   Victor Margolin, 'Narrative Problems of Graphic Design History', *Visible Language*, 28 (3) (1994), pp. 234-43, republished in Victor Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial: Essays on Design and Design Studies* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 189-201.

4   Steven Heller, 'Advertising, Mother of Graphic Design', in *The Design History Reader*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei and Rebecca Houze, (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2010), p. 435, first published in *Eye*, 17 (5) 995.

Finally, I address graphic design's in-between position in the worlds of advertising and design, and explore graphic designers' lasting efforts to negotiate their professional identity and the discipline's boundaries with industrial designers and exponents of the design culture at large.

The argument of this thesis is based on the sociological concept of professions as historically produced and socially constructed. I understand professions to be neither fixed nor immutable, but constantly in formation. Thus, professionalisation is addressed as a dynamic process of becoming; rather than an even or lineal evolution, a fixed goal or a static representation. Graphic designers are approached as self-conscious actors, drafting and constantly re-editing their own professional identity to adapt to changing cultural, economic and social environments, shifting agendas and evolving design discourses.

Given the broad, but nevertheless circumscribed, chronological timeframe covered here, as well as the very premise that professionalisation is an ongoing process, the thesis aims to offer neither a comprehensive history of Italian graphic design nor a final assessment of the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan. It does not seek to create a concordant narrative, but rather stresses tensions and contradictions and focuses on the struggle for graphic practitioners to articulate what graphic design is and what its limits are. In the following pages, I look behind the individual designers, the major companies and the familiar narratives that have populated Italian graphic design history so far, thereby providing an original retelling that shifts the focus towards the social, economic and political background underlying graphic design both as a profession and as a concept. Furthermore, I provide a historically-integrated, archive-based, locally-focused, outward-looking model for graphic design history as an integral part of the history of design.

I.I LOCATING GRAPHIC DESIGN IN ITALIAN DESIGN HISTORY

Graphic design holds a marginal position within the historiography of Italian design in relation to furniture and product design, and has often been excluded from general accounts. Until recent years, scholars' interest in Italian design has mainly focused on product design, showing scant interest towards other narratives. Hence, to reassess the existing literature and redress the balance is a central objective of this thesis. My goal is not only to contribute to a history of graphic design in Italy, but also to call for an equal position for graphic design within Italian design

history. Thus, this section reviews the historical and critical literature on both Italian graphic design and design in general, paying attention to familiar narratives and new directions in the scholarship. Furthermore, it addresses the state of graphic design history within the historiography of history of design and suggests ways in which this thesis intends to make an original contribution to both fields.

In recent years, scholars have acknowledged the uneven state of the historiography of Italian design. So-far overlooked narratives have begun to gain a greater recognition. As design historians, Maddalena Dalla Mura and Carlo Vinti bluntly put it:

> a significant problem that concerns the historiography of Italian design [is] the unchallenged pre-eminence of product design and the relatively marginal position occupied by other areas of design with a historically strong tradition in Italy, such as fashion and graphic design.[5]

Drawing on Grace Lees-Maffei's production-consumption-mediation paradigm, Dalla Mura and Vinti stress the clear bias towards product design and production of design historical writing.[6] They suggest that a greater focus on mediation would bring so-far neglected issues relating to graphic design into Italian design discourse. Readers are reminded that communication media are not only 'essential elements in the mediation of design', but also designed artefacts in themselves that 'as such constitute a further and important area of study for historians of design'.[7] In doing so, Dalla Mura and Vinti reflect on a pitfall of the mediation paradigm that is the risk of putting communication media per se aside, and focusing only on their intermediary function.

On a similar note, co-curators of the fifth edition of the Triennale Design Museum, TDM5, in 2012, complained that, 'unlike other realms of Italian design, graphic and communication design have not been written about very frequently. […] But above all, the history of Italian graphics has never been translated,

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5 Maddalena Dalla Mura and Carlo Vinti, 'A Historiography of Italian Design', in *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*, ed. by Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees-Maffei (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 46.

6 Design historian Grace Lees-Maffei identifies 'mediation' as a third stream in design history to complement the focus on production and consumption. Her interest in mediation is threefold: first, mediation enables to address channels that mediate between producers and consumers, and explore ways in which they articulate consumption practices and public understanding of design; second, mediating channels are understood as designed artefacts and thus worthy of formal and content analysis; third, the mediation paradigm approaches designed goods themselves as mediating devises. See: Grace Lees-Maffei, 'The Production-Consumption-Mediation Paradigm', *Journal of Design History*, 22 (4) (2009), pp. 251-76.

7 Dalla Mura and Vinti, 'A Historiography of Italian Design', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Fallan and Lees-Maffei, p. 45.

mediated and publicised among people not working in the industry'.[8] Set to reconfirm that graphic design is indeed design, TDM5 was the first exhibition to abandon a focus on product design in order to investigate how graphic design has contributed to the shaping of Italy's economic, social and cultural fabric. The exhibition provided co-curators Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza and Carlo Vinti with the opportunity to criticise the inward-looking attitude of the graphic design community. In other words, not only that graphic design holds a secondary position in the history of Italian design, but also that the few publications and exhibitions devoted to it tend to be written and curated by practitioners-historians, and to address primarily an audience of graphic designers.[9]

Outside Italian borders, a similar criticism has been expressed by graphic design historian and critic Rick Poynor. Writing in 2011, Poynor called for his peers to adopt an outward-looking and viewer-oriented perspective. According to him, the only chance for graphic design history to become a fully-fledged academic discipline is for it 'to be framed and presented in ways that relate to the concerns of viewers who are not designers – that is, most viewers'.[10] Vinti suggested a similar strategy when asserting that 'what is required is a critical discourse, which is not intended solely for graphic designers; which can speak to a wider public by exploiting the crucial role and relevance of graphics within contemporary culture and economics'.[11] It is from this perspective that this thesis intends to contribute to the current status of graphic design history. Rooted in the history of design and visual culture studies, this thesis adopts an outward-looking perspective. It seeks to bring original insights into graphic design history and to open the discipline to differ-

8   Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza and Carlo Vinti, 'TDM5. Un Museo per una Storia Ancora da Scrivere / TDM5. A Museum for a History Yet to be Written', in *TDM5: Grafica Italiana*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo, Massimo della Campa and Carlo Vinti (Milano: Corraini Edizioni, 2012), p. 26. On the TDM5, see: Davide Fornari, 'TDM5. Grafica Italiana vs 100 Years of Swiss Graphic Design', *Progetto Grafico*, 21 (2012), pp. 58-65.

9   For a critical perspective on the tendency of graphic design history to be written by practitioners-historians, see also: Steven MacCarthy, 'Designer-Authored Histories: Graphic Design at the Golstein Museum of Design', *Design Issues*, 27 (1) (2011), pp. 7-20.

10 Rick Poynor, 'Out of the Studio: Graphic Design History and Visual Studies', *Design Observer*, (2011), www.designobserver.com/feature/out-of-the-studio-graphic-design-history-and-visual-studies/24048/ [accessed 15 January 2017]. For further critical perspectives on graphic design history, see for instance: Teal Triggs, 'Designing Graphic Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 22 (4) (2009), pp. 325-40; Teal Triggs, 'Graphic Design History: Past, Present, and Future', *Design Issues*, 27 (1) (2011), pp. 3-6; Margolin, 'Narrative Problems of Graphic Design History', *Visible Language*, 28 (3) (1994), pp. 234-43, republished in Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, pp. 189-201.

11 Carlo Vinti, 'Graphic Designers, People with Problems. Some Thoughts from Italy', in *Graphic Design World/Words*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo and Maddalena Dalla Mura (Milan: Electa, 2011), p. 88.

ent audiences in order to avoid confining it to a niche of experts and stakeholders from within the field.

Previous literature on Italian design history presents a bias on product design and design production. The first English-language publication on Italian design, *Design in Italy: 1870 to the Present* by design historian Penny Sparke, exemplifies this product design-focused approach.[12] According to Sparke, 'while in pre-war years there were signs that graphic design – posters, packaging, book design and typography – was part of the emerging modern design movement, this faded from view after the war'.[13] Ironically, Sparke highlights the importance of photography in the postwar 'fetishisation' of Italian design products without apparently taking into consideration the fact that photographs are part of advertisements and of a typographical layout, in other words, part of graphic design. 'Before owning the chair or the armchair, the sofa or the house object with a modern design and innovative material', graphic design historian and practitioner Mario Piazza argues, 'consumers met their images, their names and qualities, within the pages of advertisements, promotional pamphlets, catalogues and magazines'.[14] Thus, to exclude graphic design from general accounts on Italian design, as in Sparke's aforementioned book, is to neglect the 'symbolic universe where consumers met products' for which graphic designers, at least, deserve acknowledgement.[15]

Graphic design has gradually acquired a more equal position with product design among English-speaking scholars since Sparke's first seminal attempt to convey a history of design in Italy.[16] Recent collections of essays on Italian design history tend to include at least one piece of text devoted to graphic design.[17] When

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12   Penny Sparke, *Italian Design: 1870 to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988).

13   Sparke, *Italian Design*, p. 13.

14   Mario Piazza, 'La Grafica del Made in Italy', in *La Grafica del Made in Italy: Comunicazione e Aziende del Design 1950-1980*, ed. by Mario Piazza (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2012), pp. 11-13.

15   *La Grafica del Made in Italy*, ed. by Piazza, p. 11. Graphic design is included in more recent works by Penny Sparke in which the design historian acknowledges the leading role of Olivetti in the modernisation of Italian visual language: Penny Sparke, 'A modern Identity for a New Nation: Design in Italy Since 1860', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*, ed. by Zygmunt G. Barański and Rebecca J. West (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 265-81.

16   Although outnumbered – five posters and a futurist graphic composition among a selection of about a hundred objects – graphic artefacts from the MoMA's collection are included in Giampiero Bosoni's book *Italian Design* published by MoMA in 2008. See: Giampiero Bosoni, *Italian Design* (New York: MoMA, 2008).

17   See: Gabriele Oropallo, 'This Way to the Exit: The Re-Writing of the City through Graphic Design, 1964-1989', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Fallan and Lees-Maffei, pp. 194-99; Experimental Jetset, 'Socialism as a Graphic Language: Ettore Vitali', *The Italian Avant-Garde, 1968-1976*, ed. by Catherine Rossi and Alex Coles (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2013), pp. 119-26.

not addressed directly as a main topic, graphic design has entered the discourse via attention to mediation.[18] For instance, in his analysis of the institutionalisation of design mediation in Italy in 1954, Kjetil Fallan suggests that there was a key role for graphic designers in the articulation of the design discourse in the postwar period, whereas Catharine Rossi effectively uses visual artefacts to address issues related to the mediation of Italian craft from postwar to postmodernism.[19]

In the Italian-language literature, previous historiography has tended to concentrate most often on the changing of graphic styles as exemplified in works – mainly posters – by prominent – almost exclusively male – designers or in the visual communication strategies of main companies.[20] Current literature includes a plethora of monographic books on graphic-design celebrities often written by or in collaboration with the designers themselves.[21] These books show a tendency towards self-celebration and repeat already-known anecdotes, reporting successful stories only. Often richly illustrated, they tend to consider visual artefacts as

18   See: Joseph Grima, Alessandro Mendini and Vera Sacchetti, 'The Radical Magazines', in *The Italian Avant-Garde*, ed. by Rossi and Coles, pp. 7-22.

19   Kjetil Fallan, 'Annus Mirabilis: 1954, Alberto Rosselli and the Institutionalisation of Design Mediation', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Fallan and Lees-Maffei, pp. 255-70; Catherine Rossi, 'Crafting Modern Design in Italy, from Post-war to Postmodernism', (doctoral thesis, Royal College of Art, 2011). It is unfortunate that Rossi's PhD thesis was re-edited for publishing and several sections devoted to graphic design included in the original text were omitted. See: Catharine Rossi, *Crafting design in Italy: from Post-war to Postmodernism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

20   For general accounts on Italian graphic design history, see: Daniele Baroni and Maurizio Vitta, *Storia del Design Grafico* (Milan: Longanesi & Co., 2003); *La Grafica in Italia*, ed. by Giorgio Fioravanti, Leonardo Passarelli and Silvia Sfligiotti (Milan: Leonardo Arte, 1997); *Abecedario: La Grafica del Novecento*, ed. by Sergio Polano and Pierpaolo Vetta (Milan: Electa, 2008); Renato De Fusco, *Made in Italy: Storia del Design Italiano* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 2007), pp. 123-34. Most recent publications also address issues related to consumption and mediation in order to overcome the design celebrities-centered approach and adopt a thematic rather than chronological focus. See: Carlo Vinti, *Grafica Italiana dal 1945 a Oggi* (Florence; Milan: Giunti, 2016). This tendency to focus on discussions on the evolution of visual styles, on the careers of design celebrities and on specific media is not confined to the Italian graphic design historiography, but reflects a common bias within graphic design history in general. For early criticism of scholars' emphasis on aesthetic aspects of graphic design to the detriment of considerations about communication concerns and social significance, see: Jorge Frascara, 'Graphic Design: Fine Art or Social Science?', *Design Issues*, 5 (1) (1988), pp. 18-29. For a critical perspective on more recent graphic design histories, see: Johanna Drucker, 'Reconsidering. Philip Meggs and Richard Hollis: Models of Graphic Design History', *Design and Culture*, 1 (1) (2009), pp. 51-78.

21   See, for example: *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1973. Comunicazione Visuale e Grafica Applicata* (Cinisello Balsamo: Pizzi, 1974); *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1981*, ed. by Bruno Monguzzi (Milan: Electa, 1981); Albe Steiner, *Il Mestiere di Grafico* (Turin: Einaudi, 1978); *Licalbe Steiner: Grafici Partigiani*, ed. by Anna Steiner (Milan: Edizioni Corraini, 2015); Anna Steiner, *Albe Steiner* (Milan: Edizioni Corraini, 2006); Giancarlo Iliprandi, *Note* (Milan: Hoepli, 2015); Giampiero Bosoni, Mara Campana and Stanislaus von Moos, *Max Huber* (London; New York: Phaidon Press, 2006).

self-evident and lack any serious critical or historical approach to the designers' careers. I should note, here, it is not my intention to dismiss the contribution of monographic works and autobiographies as a whole. Individual careers provide, in fact, some insights into available professional choices. Moreover, recent monographic studies have attempted to correct the hagiographic tendency of previous literature by questioning familiar narratives and discovering unknown details about design practices and professional networks.[22] It is nevertheless undeniable that, whereas we know a great deal about a few prominent individual designers, there is inadequate information about minor figures, about graphic designers as a group and about their professional framework.

Early exceptions to this tendency towards the aesthetic perspective, person-centred approach and focus on design celebrities are to be found in the work of graphic designer and theorist Giovanni Anceschi and art historian Anty Pansera from the 1980s. While Anceschi's approach towards graphic design is rooted in semiotics and information theory, Pansera's work has introduced issues relating to design education, mediation and professionalisation, which have informed my thesis.[23] I am also indebted to Vinti's attempt to challenge existing narratives through a meticulous study of primary literature and archival materials that focuses on design practice, professional networks, mediating channels and designer-client relationships.[24] It is also worth mentioning here the activity of the Centro di Documentazione del Progetto Grafico (Graphic Design Research Centre – CDPG), in Milan with its library, archive, and series of events, exhibitions, conferences and

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22   See, for example: Alessandro Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari and the Invention of Modern Graphic Design in Italy, 1928-1945' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leiden, 2011); *On the Road: Bob Noorda il Grafico del Viaggio*, ed. by Cinzia Ferrara and Francesco E. Guida (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2014); Gabriele Oropallo, 'Design as a Language Without Words: A G Fronzoni', *Writing Design: Words and Objects*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei (London; New York: Berg, 2012), pp. 205-18.

23   See: Giovanni Anceschi, *Monogrammi e Figure: Teorie della Progettazione di Artefatti Comunicativi* (Florence; Milan: La Casa Usher, 1981); Giovanni Anceschi, 'Il Campo della Grafica Italiana: Storia e Problemi', *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), pp. 5-19; Anty Pansera, 'La Storia di un Percorso', in *Visual Design: 50 Anni di Produzione in Italia*, ed. by Giancarlo Iliprandi, Alberto Marangoni, Franco Origoni and Anty Pansera (Milan: Idea Libri, 1984), pp. 15-24; *L'Italia del Design: Trent'Anni di Dibattito*, ed. by Alfonso Grassi and Anty Pansera (Casale Manferrato: Marietti, 1986).

24   In addition to previously mentioned publications by Carlo Vinti, see: Carlo Vinti, 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica" alla VII Triennale', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), pp. 50-63; Carlo Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965: Immagine e Politica Culturale nella Grande Impresa Italiana* (Venice: Marsilio, 2007); Davide Fornari and Carlo Vinti, 'Clienti e Committenti: le Ragioni del Numero', *Progetto Grafico*, 24 (2016), pp. 9-17; Simona De Julio and Carlo Vinti, 'La Publicité Italienne et le Modèle Américain', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire*, 101 (2009), pp. 61-80.

publications that promote public awareness and understanding of graphic design within and, sometimes, beyond the profession.[25]

As mentioned, previous historiography presents an unbalanced focus on the canonical list of male graphic-design celebrities. The gendered nature of the graphic design profession is acknowledged in my research. However, the focus on professionalisation and the intention of subverting existing narratives has limited my research primarily to well-known, mainly male and Northern Italian figures that already populate the scholarship in Italian graphic design. In recent years, the interest in women as graphic designers has grown, thus it seems the time is finally ripe to fully acknowledge women's role within this narrative.[26] It is my hope that the gender bias will be addressed, by myself or by other design historians, in future research projects.

The same reasoning applies to the emphasis on Milan that is a common and undiscussed feature of the historiography of Italian design.[27] The focus on the Milanese design scene is justified by the specific geography of Italian graphic

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25   For further details on the activity of the CDPG, visit the website: www.aiap.it/cdpg/ [access 16 January 2017].

26   AIAP, the Italian association of graphic designers, has recently launched an award devoted to women only: *AWDA: Aiap Women in Design Award, Premio Internazionale Design della Comunicazione*, ed. by Daniela Piscitelli (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2015). In the past five years several publications have investigated the career of graphic designer Lica Covo Steiner whose work has been overshadowed by the work of husband and collaborator, Albe Steiner: Anna Steiner, *Lica Covo Steiner* (Mantua: Corraini, 2015); Steiner Luisa and Mauro Begozzi, *Lica Steiner* (Milan: Edizioni Unicopli, 2015); Steiner Luisa and Mauro Begozzi, *Un Libro per Lica: Lica Covo Steiner, 1914-2008* (Novara: Istituto Storico della Resistenza e della Società Contemporanea nel Novarese e nel Verbano Cusio Ossola Piero Fornara, 2011). Other recent publication paying attention to women graphic designers working in Italy include: *Lora Lamm. Graphic Design in Milan 1953-1963*, ed. by Lora Lamm and Simonetta Ossanna Cavadini (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2013); Lorenzo Grazzani and Francesco E. Guida, *CDPG Folders: Claudia Morgagni, l'Impegno come Modello Professionale* (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2015).

27   On Milan as the Italian design capital, see for example: John Foot, 'Capital of Design, Capital of Fashion', in John Foot, *Milan since the Miracle: City, Culture and Identity* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2001), pp. 109-34; Andrea Branzi, *Learning from Milan: Design and the Second Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988); Raimonda Riccini, 'Disegno Industriale in Lombardia: Un Modello per il Made in Italy', *Storia d'Italia. Le Regioni dall'Unità a Oggi: La Lombardia*, ed. by Duccio Bigazzi and Marco Meriggi (Turin: Einaudi, 2001), pp. 1164-93.

design, as will become clear in this thesis.[28] Graphic design found in Milan an advantageous ecosystem of economic and political structures and cultural organisations that supported professional development and international exchanges. Since the end of the nineteenth century, Milan had become the heart of the Italian printing industry, up to a point where the city was given the nickname of 'Italian Leipzig'. The majority of newspapers with the largest national circulation were printed in the city, and the major publishers established their headquarters there. It is in Milan where early design educational experiences happened, graphic design studios opened, specialist magazines were launched and institutional organisations were founded.

I.II LOCAL NETWORKS AND TRANSNATIONAL CIRCUITS

Despite focusing on the local, regional and national scene, my study of the articulation of the graphic design profession in Milan and the passage from graphic arts to visual communication is not confined within the boundaries of the nation-state. The thesis is, in fact, informed by the perspective of global design history and recent research on the transnational, intended as the dynamic movement of people, ideas and objects across national borders that engages with the local context and then transcends it to focus on connections between the local and the global scenes, and on their mutual shaping.[29] Following the example set by design historians Glenn Adamson, Giorgio Riello and Sarah Teasley, editors of the book *Global Design History*, I draw on global design history as a methodology that 'demands to

28   On the tight relationship between the city of Milan and the graphics and printing industry, see: *La Città dell'Editoria: dal Libro Tipografico all'Opera Digitale (1880-2020)*, ed. by Giorgio Montecchi (Geneva; Milan: Skira, 2001); Peppino Ortoleva, 'A Geography of the Media since 1945', in *Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, ed. by David Forgacs and Robert Lumley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 185-98; *Grafica e Design a Milano, 1933-2000*, ed. by Colonetti. Within the graphic design discourse, exceptions to the Milanese monopoly are, for instance, the Turin-based type designer Aldo Novarese and the graphic designer Massimo Dolcini who lived and worked for the city of Pesaro in the Marche region in the 1970s and 1980s. On Navarese, see: *La Grafica in Italia*, ed. by Fioravanti, Passarelli and Sfligiotti, p. 123-24; Manuela Rattin and Matteo Ricci, *Questioni di Carattere: la Tipografia in Italia dall'Unità d'Italia agli Anni Settanta* (Milan: Stampa Alternativa, 1997), pp. 107-19. On Dolcini, see: Mario Piazza, *Massimo Dolcini: La Grafica per una Cittadinanza Consapevole* (Milan: Credito Valtellinese, 2015).
29   For a recent critical overview on global design history, see: D. J. Huppatz, 'Globalizing Design History and Global Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 28 (2) (2015), pp. 182-202.

understand design as implicated in a network of mutually relevant, geographically expansive connections'.[30]

I make, of course, no pretence of offering either a world history or an overarching narrative, but rather seek to complicate conventional national histories by situating the local scene within the transnational one, and tracing the movement and agency of individual actors within interactive, multidirectional and mutually relevant networks. In doing so, the thesis concurs with recent endeavours to overcome and problematise national discourses as attempted, for instance, by design historian Davide Fornari with his ongoing research on Swiss graphic designers working in Milan.[31]

My understanding of networks is informed by the work of anthropologist and sociologist of science, Bruno Latour, which provided a theoretical framework and conceptual backdrop to the writing of this thesis.[32] I use Latour's actor-network theory, ANT, as a thinking tool to reveal the process of how the product-graphic design was designed and how its meaning was negotiated between different interest groups. By giving priority to the process over the product, stressing uncertainties, controversies and contradictions, following the constant retracing of boundaries of group enrolment and acknowledging by whom they are being traced and with what kind of tools, and focusing on the continuous transformation of meaning as the outcome of power struggles between different networks, I loosely follow ANT rules and principles as a way to 'open the black box' in which the graphic design profession has been kept so far.[33]

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30   Glenn Adamson, Giorgio Riello and Sarah Teasley, 'Introduction: Towards Global Design History', in *Global Design History*, ed. by Glenn Adamson, Giorgio Riello and Sarah Teasley (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 6.

31   Davide Fornari, 'Swiss Style Made in Italy: Graphic Design Across the Border', in *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, ed. by Davide Fornari and Robert Lzicar (Zurich: Triest Verlag, 2016), pp. 152-89.

32   On Bruno Latour's actor-network-theory, see: Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2005). Using ANT as a theoretical framework and conceptual backdrop, I follow the advice of Kjetil Fallan who has on different occasions argued for the potential of Latour's theory for design historians. I do not adopt ANT language, and my debt is rather in the attention to networks and power relations. See: Kjetil Fallan, 'an ANT in our Pants? A Design Historian's Reflection on Actor Network Theory', in *Networks of Design: Proceedings of the 2008 Annual International Conference of the Design History Society (UK)*, ed. by Jonathan Glynne, Fiona Hackney and Viv Minton (Boca Raton: Universal-Publishers, 2009), pp. 46-52; Kjetil Fallan, *Design History: Understanding Theory and Method* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2010), pp. 66-78.

33   On group formation, dismantling and negotiation, see in particular: 'First Source of Uncertainty: No Group, Only Group Formation', in Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, pp. 27-42.

On the one hand, my work is informed by research on different geographies, historical periods and cultural contexts that might have had no direct impact or influence on the Milanese design scene, but offer insights into the development of professional patterns.[34] Cross-referencing existing literature enabled me to shed light on differences or similarities within the professionalisation process and map out the development of an international graphic design discourse. Thus, drawing on Anna Calvera's critical text on design as simultaneously local, regional, national and global, my focus on graphic design and graphic designers in Milan seeks to improve knowledge about the local and national scene 'seen as enriching and adding complexity to the debate' on design professionalisation across countries.[35] On the other hand, if, as Adamson, Riello and Teasley asserted, professionalisation is an 'implicitly transnational' topic, my account attempts to verify, confirm or challenge previous knowledge and add new details about professional and educational networks, platforms and circuits of transnational exchange through a meticulous analysis of primary sources and individuals' personal actions.[36]

I seek to articulate the mutual relationship between micro and macro narratives and resist at the same time the pitfall of exceptionalism and homogenising generalisation. As suggested by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, 'writing history today [...] should be less about pitching the global against the local, regional and national, and more a matter of exploring the interaction and influences between the

34   Works conducted by scholars Gennifer Weisenfeld, Ellen Mazur Thomson and Yasuko Suga – focusing respectively on Japan, USA and Britain – have been crucial to the development of my own argument. See in particular: Gennifer Weisenfeld, 'Publicity and Propaganda in 1930s Japan: Modernism as Method', *Design Issues*, 25 (2009), pp. 13-24; Gennifer Weisenfeld, 'Japanese Modernism and Consumerism: Forging the New Artistic Field of "*Shôgyô Bijutsu*" (Commercial Art)' in *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from 1910s to the 1930s*, ed. by Elise K. Tipton and John Clark (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), pp. 75-98; Thomson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America*; Yasuko Suga, 'Modernism, Commercialism and Display Design in Britain. The Reimann School and Studios of Industrial and Commercial Art', *Journal of Design History*, 19 (2006), pp. 137-154; Yasuko Suga, *The Reimann School: A Design Diaspora* (London: Artmosky Arts, 2014).

35   Anna Calvera, 'Local, Regional, National, Global and Feedback: Several Issues to be Faced with Constructing Regional Narratives', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (4) (2005), p. 375.

36   Glenn Adamson, Giorgio Riello and Sarah Teasley, 'Introduction: Towards Global Design History', in *Global Design History*, ed. by Adamson, Riello and Teasley, p. 5. On the potential for studies discussing professionalisation, in particular international professional organisations, to uncover a more comprehensive and inclusive geographical and cultural perspective on design history, see also: Jonathan M. Woodham, 'Local, National and Global: Redrawing the Design Historical Map', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (2005), pp. 257-67.

different scales'.[37] The study of graphic design in Milan is a good way of demon-strating that the simultaneous focus on the local and the transnational scenes is key for a design historical analysis of professionalisation. The professionali-sation of graphic design was also happening at the same time in other countries. Nevertheless, it is not only a matter of comparing experiences in different geogra-phies, but also of tracing connections. In the interwar period connections between the local and the global scales were mainly indirect – e.g. the exchange and circu-lation of practices and ideas through specialist magazines. In the postwar period graphic designers had increasing opportunities to experience in person what was happening abroad by taking part in international conferences, studying in foreign countries or becoming members of international organisations. While establish-ing the profession locally, Milan's graphic designers also played a crucial role in the articulation of an international graphic design discourse.

I.III REWRITING INTERNATIONAL MODERNISM THROUGH LOCAL NETWORKS

I am aware of the ubiquity of the term modernism as well as of the vagueness and ambiguity of its meaning.[38] I situate international modernism within the histori-ography of graphic design.[39] In other words, by international modernism I refer to a set of formal guidelines that were articulated in the interwar period by prom-inent figures of graphic design – Jan Tschichold, Paul Renner and Herbert Bayer amongst others – and later developed by advocates of what has become known as 'New Typography', 'International Style', 'Neue Graphik' (New Graphic Design), 'International typographic Style' or 'Swiss School'.[40] In Italy, this meant the adop-

37   Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees Maffei, 'Introduction: National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization', in *Designing Worlds: National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization*, ed. by Kjetil Fallan and Grace Lees Maffei (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016), p. 8.

38   See: Christopher Wilk, 'Introduction: What was Modernism?', in *Modernism: Designing a New World, 1914-1939*, ed. by Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), pp. 12-21; Fallan, *Design History*, pp. 105-12.

39   On international modernism in the realm of graphic design, see amongst others: Richard Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design: The Origins and Growth of an International Style, 1920-1965* (London: Laurence King, 2006); Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, pp. 103-109 and 156-77; Robin Kinross, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History* (London: Hyphen Press, 2004), pp. 103-19 and 146-57; Jan Conradi, *Unimark International: The Design of Business and the Business of Design* (Baden: Lars Müller, 2010), pp. 7-23; Richard Hollis, *Graphic Design: A Concise History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), pp. 37-75 and 130-78; Meredith Davis, *Graphic Design Theory* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2012), pp. 134-73; Helen Armstrong, 'Introduction: Revisiting the Avant-garde', in *Graphic Design Theory: Readings from the Field*, ed. by Helen Armstrong (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009), pp. 9-15.

40   Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2006).

tion of cutting-edge graphic techniques and visual language that favoured, for instance, photo-collage over illustrations, sans-serif over serif typefaces, asymmetrical and grid-based layouts over the centred page. It also meant a gradual move away from the graphic arts tradition towards a different approach to visual communication. This new approach stressed design methodology and problem solving over originality and artistic personality, and favoured the design of a comprehensive communication system over sporadic intervention.

However, my understanding is not restricted to visual style, but also takes into consideration specific methodologies, belief systems, behavioural concerns and social responsibilities associated with international modernism.[41] As such, I concur with Paul Greenhalgh's definition of 'the Modern Movement, via the International Style, [as] a particular range of formal/economic solutions, which in certain contexts carried a socialist, or at least moral, significance'.[42] Following Greenhalgh's critical approach, I do not take the alleged humanist and left-wing stance of international modernism for granted, but rather problematise the connotative potential of its visual vocabulary.

This critical approach to international modernism applies to the integration of modernism imagery and techniques into the propaganda and official culture of the Fascist regime. Scholars have extensively studies the relationship between Italian Fascism and architecture – in particular Italian Rationalism – fine arts and visual culture.[43] By contrast, historians of Italian graphic design still show a tendency to

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41   Frascara, 'Graphic Design: Fine Art or Social Science?', *Design Issues*, 5 (1) (1988), pp. 18-29.

42   *Modernism in Design*, ed. by Paul Greenhalgh (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), p. 22.

43   On the relationship between Rationalist architecture and the Fascist regime, see: *Il Razionalismo e l'Architettura in Italia durante il Fascismo*, ed. by Silvia Danesi and Luciano Patetta (Venice: Edizioni La Biennale di Venezia, 1976); Diane Ghirardo, 'Italian Architects and Fascist Politics: An Evaluation of the Rationalist's Role in Regime Building', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 39 (2) (1980), pp. 109-27; Richard A. Etlin, *Modernism in Italian Architecture, 1890-1940* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1991). On fine arts and Italian Fascism, see: Andrew Hewitt, *Fascist Modernism: Aesthetics, Politics, and the Avant-Garde* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Emily Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism: Art and Politics under Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997). On visual culture, in particular advertising, during Fascism, see: Karen Pinkus, *Bodily Regimes: Italian Advertising Under Fascism* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Adam Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity: Italian Advertising from Fascism to Postmodernity* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003). For a history of design perspective on design and material culture from the Fascism period, see: David Crowley, 'National Modernism', in *Modernism: Designing a New World, 1914-1939*, ed. by Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), pp. 342-60; Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design*, pp. 54-56 and 102-07; Sparke, 'A modern Identity for a New Nation', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture*, ed. by Barański and J. West, pp. 265-81.

avoid the issue and demonstrate a certain discomfort in dealing with the shadowy relationship between graphic design and Italian Fascism.[44] This thesis seeks to overcome scholars' reluctance to admit that major figures of Italian graphic design produced works that served as vehicles of fascist propaganda.[45] At the same time, it seeks to go beyond the simplistic 'good *vs.* bad' viewpoint. In doing so, I agree with historian of Italian Fascism, Gabriele Turi, who suggested using the concept of 'consensus boundaries', rather than 'antifascism', in order to address the grey area between alignment and resistance.[46] The complexity of the relationship between professionals and intellectuals and the Fascist regime cannot be reduced to a mere dichotomy between fascism and antifascism, but needs to take into account what historian Ruth Ben-Ghiat has defined as 'a web of tacit regulation [that] kept intellectuals in check and encouraged them to practice self-censorship'.[47] To this end, I study visual artifacts as part of the historical and political context, taking into consideration the intended use and the patronage. In addition, I explore the ways in which graphic designers negotiated their professional identity under the regime and then re-adapted it to the new political circumstances of postwar Italy.

In an article published in the *Journal of Design History* in 2015, design historian D. J. Huppatz defines the discipline's fixation with modernism as 'a significant hurdle in conceptualising a global design history'.[48] The article acknowledges current scholars' attempts to dismiss the one-way concentric model of dissemination in favour of a multi-directional network model that addresses the ways in which modernist ideas were mediated, adapted and adopted. This new approach inves-

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44   For instance, the exhibition TDM5 (2012-13) reveals scholars' discomfort to approach the relationship between graphic design and Fascist propaganda. As remarked by James Clough in his review of the exhibition for *Eye* magazine, the absence of anything from the twenty year of Italian Fascism was 'understandable': James Clough, 'Letters from Italy', *Eye Magazine*, (Autumn 2012), http://www.eyemagazine.com/review/article/letters-from-italy [accessed 18 April 2017].

45   In recent years, graphic design historians have begun to critically approach the pragmatic and/or ideological attitude of graphic designers towards fascist regimes. Within the Italian context, for instance, Alessandro Colizzi has convincingly discussed Bruno Munari's controversial works for the Fascist regime: Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari and the Invention of Modern Graphic Design in Italy, 1928-1945' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leiden, 2011). On the relationship between modernist graphic design and Nazis propaganda, see: Patrick Rössler, *Herbert Bayer: Die Berliner Jahre. Werbegrafik 1928–1938* (Berlin: Vergangenheitsverlag, 2013).

46   See: Gabriele Turi, *Il Fascismo e il Consenso degli Intellettuali* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980), pp. 193-375.

47   Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922-1945* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2001), p. 9.

48   Huppatz, 'Globalizing Design History and Global Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 28 (2) (2015), p. 188.

tigates dissemination agents – e.g. personal relationships, communication media and flows of designed artefacts – and addresses international modernism from a bottom-up perspective.[49] Likewise, through a close scrutiny of primary literature, archive documents, visual artefacts and individuals' experiences, I attempt to uncover local and transnational mediating channels that promoted international modernism in Italy within and beyond graphic design from the interwar period to the early-1960s.

My approach to the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan draws on the sociology and history of the profession from the late-1970s onwards, and integrates this core literature with design scholars' interpretations of the phenomenon.[50]

In 1977, sociologist Magali Sarfatti Larson wrote an historic narrative of professionalism in the field of medicine, law and engineering in the Anglo-American context, in which she identifies two distinct goals of the professional path: market control and collective mobility.[51] Whereas the latter refers to efforts to raise the social status and prestige of occupations, market control indicates the ability to claim, gain and manage a market for the expertise and services of an occupation. In order to gain market control, occupations need to be made distinct and recognisable to the lay public, and a formalised body of knowledge is a key step towards what she calls 'the production of the professional producer'.[52] Despite treating professions as archetypal homogeneous and homogenising units, and tending

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49   In the last two decades, design history scholarship on modernism have increasingly challenged the legacy of the Bauhaus, tracked down transnational networks moulding the international community of modernist designers, and questioned international modernism propagandistic potential within the postwar humanist rhetoric. See, for instance: *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War*, ed. by Kathleen James-Chakraborty (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); *Bauhaus Conflicts, 1919-2009: Controversies and Counterparts*, ed. by Philipp Oswalt (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2009); *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism*, ed. by Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei (London; New York: Routledge, 2009); Paul Betts, *The Authority of the Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004); Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Helena Čapková, 'Transnational Networkers: Iwao and Michiko Yamawaki and the Formation of Japanese Modernist Design', *Journal of Design History*, 27 (4) (2004), pp. 370-85.

50   For an overview of the historiography of the profession, see: *The Routledge Companion to the Professions and Professionalism*, ed. by Mike Dent, Ivy Lynn Bourgeault, Jean-Louis Denis and Ellen Kuhlmann (London; New York: Routledge, 2016).

51   Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism. A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1977).

52   Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism*, p. 50.

towards abstraction and generalisation, Larson's analysis provides a useful pattern that identifies markers along the professional path.[53]

Writing in 1988, sociologist Andrew Abbott criticises what he sees as the misleading focus of previous literature, Larson included, on organisational patterns and professional knowledge in abstract terms.[54] By contrast, he draws attention to professional practice and networks, and argues that knowledge must be understood in use and that professions should be analysed as contingent upon and affected by external forces. Whereas Larson focuses on professions' power, autonomy and prestige, Abbott stresses their vulnerability and relational nature. 'Interprofessional competition' and conflict over professional jurisdictions are at the core of Abbotts' approach to professions.[55] 'Professions', as he puts it, 'develop when jurisdictions become vacant, which may happen because they are newly created or because an earlier tenant has left them altogether or lost its firm grip on them'.[56] Abbott's concept of jurisdictional boundaries in perpetual dispute between neighbouring occupations applies to graphic designers' conflictual relationship with the adjacent professional fields of advertising, graphic arts, printing and industrial design.

Sociologist Valérie Fournier has further developed the concept of professions as continually contested, never completely established but rather always under ongoing renegotiation.[57] 'Professions', Fournier argued in 1999, 'need to establish and continuously work at maintaining their legitimacy in terms that map over with the norms and values of other actors in the network of liberal government (e.g. other professions, clients, state, media)'.[58] Professionalisation is thus an endless work-in-progress, a process rather than a goal to be reached once and for all. Fournier suggests addressing professionalism as a disciplinary logic. In other

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53   Larson herself has reflected upon the omissions and deficiencies of her analysis on the occasion of the new edition of the book in 2013: Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: Monopolies of Competence and Sheltered Markets* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2013). For further discussion, see also: Magali Sarfatti Larson, 'Looking Back and a Little Forward: Reflections on Professionalism and Teaching as a Profession', *Radical Teacher*, 99 (2014), pp. 7-17. For a thorough discussion of Larson's work and its influence on the sociological study of the profession, see also: Keith M. Macdonald, *The Sociology of Professions* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), pp. 8-14.

54   Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labour* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988).

55   Abbott, *The System of Professions*, p. 2.

56   Abbott, *The System of Professions*, p. 3.

57   Valérie Fournier, 'The Appeal to "Professionalism" as a Disciplinary Mechanism', *Social Review*, 47 (2) (1999), pp. 280-307.

58   Fournier, 'The Appeal to "Professionalism"', *Social Review*, 47 (2) (1999), p. 286.

words, she argues that professionalism is a social construction, a discourse that sets professions within a 'network of accountability' populated by 'various actors [...], criteria of legitimacy [...], professional competence and personal conduct'.[59] Both the relational nature of professions and the idea of professionalisation as a device of control and identity articulation are developed throughout this thesis.

Sociologist Eliot Freidson's work on professionalism has been of further interest. Like Abbott, Freidson addresses embodied knowledge, questioning the way in which practice and human interaction transform and create new knowledge.[60] In his most recent publication (2001), Freidson defines professionalism as being 'when an organised occupation gains the power to determine who is qualified to perform a defined set of tasks, to prevent all others from performing that work, and to control the criteria by which to evaluate performance'.[61] This definition has guided my own research on the strategies employed by graphic practitioners to establish the profession's social, economic and symbolic value, and obtain the exclusive right of determining how the work should be performed and evaluating outcomes.[62]

Writing in 1997, design historian Jonathan M. Woodham remarked upon the tendency of history of design scholarship to obscure 'much of the wider picture of the professional status of the designer and the role of design in industry through its general focus on successful partnerships between designers and industry'.[63] Indeed, design historians' first attempts to address the design profession tended to describe individual designers' outstanding careers, highlighting their ability to adapt creativity and previous knowledge for commercial purposes, as well as their managerial skills.[64] Drawing attention to public understanding, professional status and standards, and design organisations, Sparke's work (1983) on the emergence of the professional figure of the consultant designer and Woodham's publication

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59 Fournier, 'The Appeal to "Professionalism"', *Social Review*, 47 (2) (1999), p. 288.

60 Eliot Freidson, 'Professions and the Occupational Principle', in *The Professions and their Prospects*, ed. by Eliot Freidson (Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications, 1971), pp. 19-38; Eliot Freidson, *Professional Powers: A Study of the Institutionalization of Formal Knowledge* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

61 Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism: The Third Logic* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 12.

62 On Freidson's take on jurisdiction, see: Freidson, *Professionalism*, pp. 73-79.

63 Jonathan M. Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 167.

64 See, for example: John Heskett, *Industrial Design* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), pp. 105-19; Jeffrey L. Meikle, *Twenty Century Limited: Industrial Design in America, 1925-1939* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1979), pp. 39-67.

(1983) on the relationship between designers and consumers in Britain are early exceptions to the general focus on successful partnership.[65] Woodham's critique still fits the current state of the historiography of Italian graphic design that, as seen in section 1.1, has focused most of its attention on individual graphic designers and their collaboration with major companies.

A sociological stance on professions and professionalisation is not new to the history of design.[66] Scholars, including Sparke and Woodham, have retraced the process by which an activity develops into a generally recognised profession, alternately or concurrently investigating the institutional markers that pave the path to professionalisation: the setting up of professional organisations, the institution of recognised training and educational standards, the establishment of a self-administered code of conduct and ethics, the identification and articulation of a shared body of skills and knowledge, and the development of a professional network.[67] Most of the literature is geographically specific, thereby evidencing the tight relationship between professionalisation and the geopolitical, economic and cultural context. This is, for instance, the case with Artemis Yagou's work on the design profession in Greece that has been a useful reference model in the writing of this thesis.[68] In 2008, a special issue of the *Journal of Design History* edited by Lees-Maffei drew attention to the professionalisation of interior design.[69] In her introduction, Lees-Maffei 'holds up for examination the process of professionalisation in order to better understand design, its objects, processes and histories'.[70] Many of the contributors to the special issues refer to sociological approaches that can be also applied to the study of the graphic design profession. Articles make a convincing argument for professionalisation as a process of gradual differentia-

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65   See: Penny Sparke, *Consultant Design: The History and Practice of Designers in Industry* (London, Pembridge Press, 1983); Jonathan M. Woodham, *The Industrial Designer and the Public* (London: Pembridge Press, 1983).

66   For a design historical perspective on established literature on professionalisation, see: Anna Valtonen and Antti Ainamo, 'The Professionalization of Product Design: Reflections on the Finnish Case', conference paper *'Design Thinking: New Challenges for Designers, Managers and Organizations' International Conference* (Paris La Défense, France, 14-15, April, 2008).

67   Denise A. Guerin and Caren S. Martin, 'The Career Cycle Approach to Defining the Interior Design Profession's Body of Knowledge', *Journal of Interior Design*, 30 (2) (2004), pp. 1-22.

68   See: Artemis Yagou, 'Unwanted Innovation: The Athens Design Centre (1962-1963)', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (3) (2005), pp. 269-83; Artemis Yagou, 'First Steps: Early Design Education and Professionalization in Greece', *Journal of Design History*, 23 (2) (2010), pp. 145-61.

69   See: Grace Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction: Professionalization as a Focus in Interior Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (1) (2008), pp. 1-18.

70   Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (1) (2008), p. 1.

tion and claim of jurisdiction, question issues related to gender and class and set the profession within specific historical and geographical settings.[71]

In 2010, Ali O. Ilhan and David Wang brought new perspectives on the topic of the design profession, adopting a cross disciplinary approach in the field of design and sociology.[72] They argue for a sociological rather than epistemological distinctiveness for the design profession, and suggest that it is a 'sociological wrapping' rather than a distinct body of knowledge that holds together the design profession in order 'to achieve social identity and standing', projecting a coherent professional image to a larger public.[73] The idea of a 'sociological wrapping' – a concept which seems quite literally pertinent when dealing with graphic design – has stimulated my writing, drawing critical attention to the way in which graphic designers consciously designed and pragmatically mediated the profession's public image.

However, the interest of historians of design in the professionalisation is not unconditional. Scholars have criticised a positivist approach to the rise of design professions and its association with concepts such as modernity, rationality and progress. In 1992, Philip Pacey called for design history to broaden the picture, complementing the narrative with non-professional design preceding or coexisting with professional design.[74] Shifting the focus towards the negative effects, Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden (1995) pointed out the ways in which professionalisation excluded women from the public face of design.[75] Professionalisation as a system of exclusion on the basis of gender, money and ethnicity has been further problematised and dismissed by Paul Atkinson. Co-editing a special issue of the *Journal of Design History* in 2008 on the relationship between professional and amateur practice, Atkinson defines professionalisation as a ghost haunting the design discourse.[76] In contrast to the exclusiveness of professionalism, Atkinson has

71   Bridget May, 'Nancy Vincent McClelland (1877-1959): Professionalizing Interior Decoration in Early Twentieth Century', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (1) (2008), pp. 59-74; Tracey Avery, 'Acknowledging Regional Interior Design? Developing Design Practices for Australian Interior (1880-1900)', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (1) (2008), pp. 41-58.

72   David Wang and Ali O. Ilham, 'Holding Creativity Together: A Sociological Theory of the Design Professions', *Design Issues*, 25 (1) (2009), pp. 5-21.

73   Wang and O. Ilham, 'Holding Creativity Together', *Design Issues*, 25 (1) (2009), p. 5.

74   Philip Pacey, '"Anyone Designing Anything?" Non-Professional Designers and the History of Design', *Journal of Design History*, 5 (3) (1992), pp. 217-25.

75   Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden, 'Women Designers in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s: Defining the Professional and Redefining Design', *Journal of Design History*, 8 (3) (1995), pp. 177-93; Jill Seddon, 'Mentioned but Denied Significance: Women Designers and the Professionalization of Design in Britain, 1920-1951', *Gender and History*, 12 (2) (2000), pp. 426-47.

76   Gerry Beegan and Paul Atkinson, 'Professionalism, Amateurism and the Boundaries of Design', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (4) (2008), pp. 305-13.

explored DIY practices as a means to democratise design and free individuals from professionals.[77] In a more recent article, he remarks on the crisis of the design profession and on the advent of a post-professional era in which technological development has dismantled boundaries between professionals and amateurs, between designers and users.[78]

Within the history of graphic design, professionalisation has been the subject of both historical and critical writings. Two decades ago, Ellen Mazur Thomson made an important contribution to the history of the professionalisation of graphic design with her book *The Origins of Graphic Design in America 1870-1920*.[79] Despite the different geographical and historical focus, her study is of great relevance for my thesis offering a valid alternative to individual designers-centred approach.[80] Later studies have focused on the emergence and consolidation of graphic design as a university discipline, on the problematic relationship between graphic design and commercial art, and on alternative methodological approaches.[81]

Graphic design historians – practitioner-historians in particular – have been addressing concerns with the status of the graphic design discipline and profession for some time now, especially since the mid-1980s when desktop publishing software started to undermine the jurisdictional boundaries between professionals and amateurs.[82] Current ongoing internal debate among the graphic design community in Italy and abroad suggests that graphic designers are yet again asking themselves 'what is graphic design and who is it for?' – to borrow the title of a recent roundtable that took place at the Royal College of Art (London) on the occa-

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77   See: Paul Atkinson, 'Do It Yourself: Democracy and Design', *Journal of Design History*, 19 (1) (2006), pp. 1-10.

78   See: Paul Atkinson, 'Boundaries? What Boundaries? The Crisis of Design in a Post-Professional Era', *The Design Journal*, 13 (2) (2010), pp. 137-55.

79   Ellen Mazur Thomson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America*.

80   Within the American context, it is also worth mentioning Michele Bogart's history of the professionalisation of American illustrators and their attempt to negotiate their professional identity between commercial art and advertising and the fine arts domains. See: Michele H. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

81   See, for instance: Verónica Devalle, 'Graphic Design as a University Discipline in Argentina, 1958-1985', *Design Issues*, 32 (3) (2016), pp. 67-77; Alan S. Young, 'Commercial Art to Graphic Design: The Rise and Decline of Commercial Art in Australia', *Journal of Design History*, 28 (3) (2015), pp. 219-34.

82   For a discussion on the consequences of technological chages on the graphic design profession, see: Ellen Lupton, 'The D.I.Y Debate', 24 January 2006, online article, www.aiga.org/the-diy-debate [accessed 31 January 2017]. See also: Ellen Lupton, *D.I.Y.: Design It Yourself* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006).

sion of the exhibition *Graphics RCA: Fifty Years* (Autumn 2014). This is an unsolved question that I seek to approach historically and critically in my thesis by taking the layout of the graphic design profession in Milan as a case study.[83]

II.II PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND DESIGN EDUCATION IN ITALY

Education is a recurring concern in the literature on professionalisation.[84] Vocational education and training certifies members' exclusive competences and expertise, legitimates a profession and allows it to gain both recognition and prestige. It follows the standardisation of socially constructed and collectively negotiated skills and knowledge that are needed to fulfil certain tasks and requirements. In doing so, vocational education and training promotes the transition from the spontaneous transmission of know-how through on-the-job learning, to practitioners-controlled professional education.[85] Social historians Linda Clarke and Christopher Winch defined vocational education and training 'as a filter, dividing labour into different occupations, each with a distinct quality, skill and status'.[86] Education acts as a means to 'include or exclude particular groups from particular occupations or industries and from acquiring a particular status in society', and is expected to function as a guardian of entry into a profession often on the basis of class, gender and ethnicity.[87] By contrast to Clarke and Winch, Larson emphasises

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83   In the last couple of years, many graphic design exhibitions and retrospectives have included roundtables or lecture series questioning the goals and domain of the graphic design profession. For instance, on the occasion of the exhibition *100 Years of Graphic Design* organised by the Kemistry Gallery (London) in Spring 2015, a crowd of graphic design practitioners and enthusiasts gathered to discuss the topic 'Graphic Design: What Next?' (10 March 2015). The roundtable 'What is Graphic Design and Who is It For?' took place at the Royal College of Art on December the 2nd, 2014. Two weeks before (18 November 2014) an expert panel had discussions about graphic design education. On June the 27th, 2014, the Italian association of graphic designers, AIAP, and the Italian association of design historians, AIS/Design, organised the conference '"Graphic Design, Quale Professione?" Il Caso Italiano fra Ricerca Storica e Riflessione Critica' ('"Graphic Design, What King of Profession?" The Italian Example between Historical Research and Critical Perspective') in Genoa.

84   On vocational education and training, see: *Vocational Education: International Approaches, Developments and Systems*, ed. by Linda Clarke and Christopher Winch (London; New York: Routledge, 2007).

85   For a comparative approach to the passage from on-the-job learning to professional education, see: Michael Burrage, 'From Practice to School Based Professional Education: Pattern of Conflict and Accommodation in England, France, and the United States', in *The European and American University since 1800. Historical and Sociological Essays*, ed. by Sheldon Rothblatt and Björn Wittrock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 142-90.

86   *Vocational Education*, ed. by Clarke and Winch, p. 1.

87   Linda Clarke, 'The Emergence and Reinforcement of Class and Gender Division through Vocational Education in England", in *Vocational Education*, ed. by Clarke and Winch, p. 62.

the 'democratic potential' of standardised training.[88] 'Only with the rise of formal training institutions and standardised training', Larson argues, 'can professions [...] begin to assume that there is a communality, however minimal, among their members'.[89] The shared body of knowledge not only has a unifying potential on the members that recognise themselves as part of a group, but it is also expected to increase the profession's appeal to outsiders and encourage new members to ask permission to enter the field. Educational theorist Etienne Wenger's concept of 'communities of practice' has provided a stimulating thinking tool to articulate my argument on education – here understood as both learning and teaching – as situated and as a social process of identity formation during which practitioners shape and articulate what they do, who they are and how to interpret what they do.[90]

In recent years, design education in Italy has become the object of increasing research, and academic publications have flourished.[91] Scholars' interest has focused in particular on the experience of the Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche (Higher Institute for the Artistic Industries – ISIA) in Monza in the

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88   Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism*, p. 42.

89   Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism*, p. 46.

90   Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). On learning as a social and situated process, see also Wenger's earlier work in collaboration with cognitive anthropologist Jean Lave: Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1991). Within the design education and pedagogy discourse, the potential of Wenger's concept of 'communities of practice' has been explored by design educator Mike Tovey, see: *Design Pedagogy: Developments in Art and Design Education*, ed. by Tovey, Mike (Farnham: Gower Publishing Limited, 2015), pp. 1-14 and 37-49.

91   For the most recent academic studies on design education in Italy, see: *ISIA Design Convivio. Sperimentazione Didattica: Progetti, Scenari e Società*, ed. by Marco Bazzini and Anty Pansera (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2015); *Le Ragioni del Design: Progetto, Ricerca, Università*, ed. by Alberto Bassi and Fiorella Bulegato (Milano: Franco Angeli Editore, 2014); *About Learning and Design*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo and Maddalena Dalla Mura (Bolzano: Bolzano University Press, 2014). For an overview on design education and pedagogy from a design history perspective, see: Maya Oppenheimer, 'Histories of Design Pedagogy Virtual Special Issue for *Journal of Design History*', *Journal of Design History*, (2016), pp. 1-24.

1930s.[92] Scholars have also explored design education from the 1960s to nowadays.[93] Between 1960 and 1965, the first graduate schools of industrial design – Corsi Superiore di Disegno Industriale (Graduate Courses of Industrial Design – CSDI) – opened in Venice (1960), Florence (1962) and Rome (1965). The Roman CSDI established a graphic design course during the academic year 1967-68 and was renamed Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale e Comunicazione Visiva (Graduate Course of Industrial Design and Visual Communication – CSDICV). Graphic design was also taught in Urbino at the Corso Superiore di Arti Grafiche (Graduate Course of Graphic Arts – CSAG). The course opened in 1962 and it has arguably been considered by historian of Italian graphic design 'the first graphic design school in Italy'.[94]

This tendency to focus either on the interwar period or on educational experiences from the 1960s to nowadays is confirmed by Pansera's latest publication (2015), which provides the reader with an historical overview of design education in Italy from the opening of the ISIA in Monza in 1922 to the present day, except for a gap from the early-1940s and the second half of the 1950s.[95] The book is a chronological and systematic analysis of the articulation of the design discourse in Italy through the lens of education. It pays particular attention to the role played by professional organisations in the establishment of graduate design schools in

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92 On the ISIA in Monza, see: Elena Dellapiana and Daniela N. Prina, 'Craft, Industry and Art: ISIA (1922-1943) and the Roots of Italian Design Education', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Fallan and Lees-Maffei, pp. 109-25; Franco Renato Gambarelli, *Monza Anni Trenta dall'Umanitaria all'ISIA* (Monza: Musei Civici Monza, 2001); *L'ISIA a Monza: una Scuola d'Arte Europea*, ed. by Rossana Bossaglia (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1986); *Nivola, Fancello, Pintori. Percorsi del Moderno: dalle Arti Applicate all'Industrial Design*, ed. by Roberto Cassanelli, Ugo Collu and Ornella Selvafolta (Cagliari: Editoriale Wide, 2003).

93 On design education in Italy after 1960, see: Simone Bastianelli and Bianca Fabbri, 'CSAG di Urbino: la Prima Scuola Italiana di Graphic Design', *Progetto Grafico*, 24 (2013), pp. 58-64; Ester Manitto, *A Lezione con AG Fronzoni: dalla Didattica della Progettazione alla Didattica di uno Stile di Vita* (Busalla: plug_in, 2012); *Design In-Formazione: Rapporto sulla Formazione al Design in Italia*, ed. by Dalia Gallico (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2007); Gianni Trozzi, 'Quelli di via Conte Verde: per una Storia del Corso di Disegno Industriale e Comunicazioni Visive di Roma', *Progetto Grafico*, 1 (2003), pp. 102-05; Riccini, Raimonda, 'Culture per l'Insegnamento del Design', *AIS/Design. Storia e Ricerche*, 1 (2013), http://www.aisdesign.org/aisd/culture-per-linsegnamento-del-design-2 [accessed 1 April 2017]. Design education has attracted the attention of graduate students too, see: Filippo Taveri, 'Osservatorio: Didattica Educazione. Ricognizione sulla Didattica del Design, Percorsi Storici e Riflessioni Critiche' (Unpublished master dissertation, ISIA Urbino, 2012); Chiara Rizzo, 'Il Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale di Venezia 1960/1972: Il Contributo per la Formazione del Designer (Unpublished master dissertation, IUAV, 2008); Monica Pastore, 'Il Corso Superiore di Design Industriale di Venezia 1960/1971:La Comunicazione Visiva nell'Offerta Didattica e il Suo Ruolo nella Formazione di Nuove Figure Professionali' (Unpublished master dissertation, IUAV, 2007).

94 Simone Bastianelli and Bianca Fabbri, 'CSAG di Urbino: la Prima Scuola Italiana di Graphic Design', *Progetto Grafico*, 24 (2013), p. 58.

95 Anty Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia* (Venice: Marsilio, 2015).

the country. Pansera provides a detailed description of the impact of the Riforma Gentile on fine and applied arts education during the Italian Fascism.[96] However, her study focuses on organisational and structural changes without taking into consideration the broader impact of the fascistisation of the education system in Italy. My account differs from Pansera's one and seeks to uncover political influences on design education during the Fascist regime, reconstruction and postwar period.

This thesis employs historical and critical lenses to investigate the infancy and experimental phase of graphic design education in Milan and its surroundings from the 1930s to the mid-1960s. By drawing attention to the earlier decades, I seek to stress the mutual relationship between education and practice. In doing so, I follow the suggestion of design educator and theorist Richard Buchanan who, in the late-1990s, called for colleagues to confront what he saw as the misunderstanding that 'design educating must follow behind design practice rather than work as equal partner'.[97] By stressing the ways in which education fostered the articulation of the graphic design practice and thus promoted the shaping of the new professional figure, I argue that graphic design educational experiences functioned as crucial agents within the national – as well as international – design discourse. I will build the argument by drawing closely on specialist graphic design, industrial design and architecture magazines of the period and archival documents – such as course syllabi, meeting minutes and school promotional material – to voice practitioners concerns for design education and trace the movement, adoption and adaptation of ideas on design pedagogy. The focus on the immediate postwar period sheds light on an aspect of design education that had been neglected by previous literature on the topic and introduces a more political approach to education as agent of the material and moral reconstruction of the country.

II.III PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Together with education, professional associations have been identified as a key vehicle of professionalisation. Writing in 1964, sociologist Geoffrey Millerstone offers a detailed insight into the aims and dynamics of professional organisations that is still valid from todays' perspective. 'Until members of an occupation realise their collective existence as a group', Millerstone argues, 'the movement toward

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96   Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, 13-33.

97   Richard Buchanan, 'Education and Professional Practice in Design', *Design Issues*, 14 (2) (1998), p. 64.

professionalisation cannot really begin. Yet, a plea for professional status remains insufficient. The "cause" must be realised and recognised by society, in part or in whole'.[98] Professional bodies promote a sense of community between members, offer visibility and improve public understanding of the profession. Thus, they play a leading role within narratives of professionalisation. Millerstone's notion of the profession's image as simultaneously inward- – i.e. the shared image that professionals hold of themselves – and outward-looking – i.e. the image they offer to the lay public and other professionals – expands the framework of analysis and includes an intertwined network that sets the practitioners within society at large.[99] Amongst the many functions listed by Millerstone, professional bodies are expected to articulate and promote professional standards, control and constrain members' behaviour through the establishing of codes of professional conduct and facilitate networking. By representing members' interests in official contexts, professional organisations are expected to campaign collectively for greater recognition of the profession's social and economic value, and act as lobbying groups in charge of negotiating contracts and regulating wages.[100]

Since Millerstone's landmark study, considerations on professional organisations have been included in the majority of the thus-far analysed literature on the sociology and history of the professions.[101] Freidson's interpretation of associations has been of particular interest for my focus on internal conflicts, power negotiation, coalition building, compromise, temporary settlement and change.[102] Rather than considering professional organisations as unified and homogeneous bodies, Freidson challenges their capacity to speak in unison for the entire professional community.[103] Moreover, he questions their inclusiveness and argues that 'in the *early* stages of the development of professional associations the active membership [..] is composed largely of élite practitioners'.[104] This consideration mir-

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98   Geoffrey Millerstone, *The Qualifying Associations: A Study in Professionalization* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 12.
99   Millerstone, *The Qualifying Associations*, p. 159.
100   Millerstone, *The Qualifying Associations*, pp. 28-32.
101   See, for instance: Abbott, *The System of Professions*, pp. 79-83; Staffan Salander, 'Associative Strategies in the Process of Professionalization: Professional Strategies and Scientification of Occupations', in *Professions in Theory and History: Rethinking the Study of the Profession*, ed. by Michael Burrage and Rolf Torstendahl (London: Sage Publications, 1990), pp. 139-50.
102   Focusing on professional associations as changing processes rather than steady institutions, I also follow the advice of sociologist W. Richard Scott. See: W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations* (London: Sage Publications, 2001), p. 50.
103   Freidson, *Professional Powers*, p. 195.
104   Freidson, *Professionalism*, p. 142, italics in original.

rors the Italian situation where the élite – that is the most successful and distinguished graphic designers – were the prominent voices in the professionalisation discourse.

In the last decade, design history scholars have been investigating both national and international bodies for design promotion, demonstrating an increasing interest towards issues of professionalisation.[105] More than a decade has passed since Woodham suggested that international design associations might offer some means of redrawing the design history world map and overcoming the design celebrities-centred approach.[106] 'Concerned with the furtherance of the professional status of designers around the world', Woodham argued that, 'the potential outreach of these organisations in terms of members and influence is enormous'.[107] As suggested by Woodham, the adoption of a transnational perspective has enabled scholars to go beyond the local histories, offering new insights into international design networks.[108] Despite investigating the establishment and development of professional bodies in Milan, this thesis stresses the dynamics between national and international design organisations. In doing so, it seeks to

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105   On design professional bodies, see, for example: Leah Armstrong, 'Steering a Course Between Professionalism and Commercialism: The Society of Industrial Artists and the Code of Conduct for the Professional Designer 1945-1975', *Journal of Design History*, 29 (2) (2016), pp. 161-79; Katarina Serulus, 'Design Promotion in Belgium in the 1960s: National Interests and European Ambitions', in *Design Frontiers: Territories, Concepts, Technologies. ICDHS 2012 - 8th Conference of the International Committee for Design History & Design Studies*, ed. by Marcos Braga, Anna Calvera, Priscila Farias and Zuleica Schincariol (São Paolo: Blucher, 2012) pp. 285-88; Christopher Thompson, 'Modernizing for Trade: Institutionalizing Design Promotion in New Zealand, 1958-1967', *Journal of Design History*, 24 (2011), pp. 223-39; Gülay Hasdoğan, 'The Institutionalization of the Industrial Design Profession in Turkey: Case Study – The Industrial Designers Society of Turkey', *The Design Journal*, 12 (3) (2009), pp. 311-37; Yagou, 'Unwanted Innovation', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (3) (2005), pp. 269-83; Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design*, pp. 167-81. The University of Brighton has been very active in this field of research by funding a number of PhD projects in collaboration with the AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award that deal with national and international design professional bodies. These are the Chartered Society of Designers (UK), and the international organisations ICSID and ICOGRADA whose archives are held at the University of Brighton. On the Chartered Society of Designers, see: Leah Armstrong, 'Designing a Profession: The Structure, Organisation and Identity of the Design Profession in Britain, 1930-2010' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Brighton, 2014).

106   Woodham, 'Local, National and Global', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (3) (2005), pp. 257-67.

107   Woodham, 'Local, National and Global', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (3) (2005), p. 263.

108   The study of international institutions as case studies for analysing transnational connections and raising questions about the circulation of ideas and people has exceeded the field of history of design. See, for instance: Glenda Sluga, 'Editorial – Transnational History of International Institutions', *Journal of Global History*, 6 (2) (2011), pp. 219-2; Iris Bührle, Executive Summary, UNESCO History Project, Seminar: 'Towards the Transnational History of International Organisations: Methodology/Epistemology', King's College, University of Cambridge, 06-07 April 2009, http://tinyurl.com/htyzamk [accessed 1 March 2017].

contribute to current debates within the design history community on the histories and legacies of design organisations.

Primary sources consulted and used for this thesis fall into four categories: archives, interviews, periodicals, and visual artefacts. I have analysed primary sources in person, visiting public and private archives and collections in Italy (Milan, Monza, Rome and Bologna), Switzerland (Mendrisio) and Great Britain (London). The accessibility, usability and comprehensiveness of the material consulted varied.

Albe and Lica Steiner's Archive at the Milan Polytechnic yielded invaluable material on the Convitto Scuola Rinascita and on the Associazione per il Design Industriale (Association for Industrial Design – ADI). This enabled me to overcome the unavailability of archives for each organisation. Material relating to the Scuola del Libro was consulted at the Archivio Storico Umanitaria and again at the Albe and Lica Steiner Archive. The Studio Boggeri Archive provided abundant visual artefacts and precious archival documents. Further primary material on the Milanese graphic design studio was found at the Massimo and Sonia Cirulli Archive. Primary sources for Chapter 3 were collected at the Biblioteca del Progetto at the Milan Triennale. The Archivio Storico di Monza holds the scattered and heavily damaged archive of the ISIA. Information on the founding and development of the Associazione Italiana Artisti Pubblicitari (Italian Association of Advertising Artists – AIAP) was found at the Centro di Documentazione del Progetto Grafico, where I also consulted a number of graphic designers' private collections. Repeated visits to the Biblioteca Centrale Sormani, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma and the Centro Studi Grafici provided access to specialist magazines of the time as well as useful background reading.

Where possible, I interviewed key protagonists or people of interest that had witnessed the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan. Given the period covered by my thesis, many of the graphic designers involved are no longer alive, or are unavailable or unreliable due to their advanced age. Interviews presented their own challenges given interviewees' tendency to repeat well-known anecdotes and

to indulge in self-celebration.[109] I had the honour to meet Giancarlo Iliprandi, who sadly died recently aged 91, three times during my research and to interview him on two of those occasions. Anna Boggeri and Bruno Monguzzi, respectively daughter and son-in-law and collaborator, provided details on Antonio Boggeri and daily life at the Studio. Massimo Dradi generously shared memories of his father Carlo Dradi and his knowledge about the magazine *Campo Grafico* and the activities of the association Centro Studi Grafici. The conversation with Gillo Dorfles exceeded the specific field of graphic design and addressed the involvement of intellectuals, Dorfles included, in the development of Italian design culture in the postwar period. Finally, I interviewed graphic designer Elio Carmi and director of the CFP Bauer, Mara Campana, who provided me with useful insights into graphic design education in the postwar period, focusing on the Scuola Politecnica di Design of Nino di Salvatore and on the Scuola del Libro, respectively.

My research for each chapter began with a comprehensive survey of graphic design specialist magazines. These were *Campo Grafico*, *Risorgimento Grafico*, *Graphicus*, the three editions of the *Guida Ricciardi*, *Industria della Stampa*, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, *Ufficio Moderno* and *La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia* for the interwar period; and *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici*, *Linea Grafica*, *La Pubblicità Bollettino FIP*, *Ufficio Moderno*, *Poliedro* for the postwar period. The survey was then extended to include industrial design and architecture magazines, and general culture periodicals such as *Domus, Casabella*, *Stile Industria*, *Civiltà delle Macchine*, *Natura*, *L'Europeo*, and *Pirelli Rivista di Informazione e di Tecnica*. International magazines *Deutscher Drücker*, *Typografische Monatsblätter* and *Graphis* were consulted when relevant. Through this preliminary reading, I identified key individuals and networks, crucial issues of debate and shared concerns within and beyond the graphic design profession.

I address magazines both as primary sources and as visual artefacts and thus consider them both as vehicles for a message and as messages in themselves.[110]

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109   On challenges and advantages of oral history methods within graphic design history, see: Brian Donnelly, 'Locating Graphic Design History in Canada', *Journal of Design History*, 19 (4) (2006), pp. 283-94.

110   For a methodological approach to design magazines as physical objects and cultural artefacts, see: Jeremy Aynsley and Francesca Berry, 'Introduction. Publishing the Modern Home: Magazines and the Domestic Interior 1870-1965', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (1) (2005), pp. 1-5; *Design and the Modern Magazine*, ed. by Jeremy Aynsley and Kate Forde (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2007); Polly Cantlon and Alice Lo, 'Judging a Book by its Cover: Or Does Modernist Form Follow Function?', in *Writing Design: Words and Objects*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei (London; New York: Berg, 2012), pp. 135-47.

The form and content of magazines have often been analysed separately by scholars, thereby interrupting their mutual dialogue, and giving prominence to one or the other according to the targeted audiences: whereas cultural studies rarely engage with the design process and material form of magazines, graphic design literature includes how-to manuals and picture books in which the content of the written text is barely acknowledged.[111] By contrast, a comparative reading of textual content and visual form is crucial when dealing with graphic design magazines.[112] These are, indeed, not only arenas for debate but also the very output of graphic designers' own practices. Moreover, graphic designers are not only those who design and write the editorial content of these periodicals, but also tend to be the main readers. Thus, the shared know-how and visual vocabulary between authors, designers, and the readership of the magazines favour multiple level reading and secure the understanding of implicit connotative meanings.

I approach graphic design magazines as primary media for generating and mediating the profession's self-definition. In doing so, I adopt Thomson's definition of trade journals as a 'mechanism of professional self-realisation'.[113] 'Trade magazines', Thomson argued, 'function as professional communication networks, defining professions in themselves and to others. Over time [...] they reveal [...] the history of a profession, its changing practices, and its relation to the larger culture'.[114] They act as vehicles of information and communication within and outside the industry. They are forums of discussion on new ideas and technologies, and means of inspiring professional identity and pride and defining a shared viewpoint. They function as tools reflecting and encouraging members' interests, and

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111   See, for instance: *100 Classic Graphic Design Journals*, ed. by Steven Heller and Jason Godfrey (London: Laurence King, 2014); David Crowley, *Magazine Covers* (London: Mitchell Beatzley, 2003); William Owen, *Magazine Design* (London: William Owen, 1991).

112   For examples of comparative readings of visual form and written texts in graphic design magazines, see, for instance: Rick Poynor, *Typographica* (London: Laurence King, 2001); Louise Paradis, Roland Früh and François Rapo, *30 Years of Swiss Typographic Discourse in the Typografische Monatsblätter: TM RSI SGM 1960-90* (Zurich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2013); Jeremy Aynsley, 'Graphic Change: Design Change: Magazines for the Domestic Interior, 1890-1930', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (1) (2005), pp. 43-59; David Crowley, 'Design Magazines and Design Culture', in *Communicate: Independent British Graphic Design since the Sixties*, ed. by Rick Poynor (London: Laurence King, 2004), pp. 182-99.

113   Thomson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America*, p. 37.

114   Thomson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America*, p. 37.

as instruments of raising readers' tastes and educational standards.[115] Graphic design magazines also act as a field for testing the latest technological developments in printing and reproduction, and for experimenting with cutting-edge visual compositions. Thus, their material form is as much part of the argument for modernist vocabulary and techniques in graphic design as the written texts.

During my research, I consulted a variety of archival materials: from private and business correspondence to meeting minutes; from school's syllabi to finance reports; from sales invoices to design sketches. I analyse both the textual and the visual content of archival documents. I give prominence to one above the other, or focus on their dialogue, depending on the argument I am making. Meaningful and valuable information was found in the margins of the archival documents in the form of handwritten annotations and scribbles, which added a further layer to the reading. This is the case, for instance, with a dummy for a pamphlet advertising the Studio Boggeri in 1945, which has pencil and ink marks. The dummy is analysed in Chapter 2 to demonstrate the way in which Boggeri adapted the Studio's identity according to the changed socio-political circumstances of postwar Italy.

The archive itself – i.e. the why and how documents have been collected and organised – provided further layers of meaning beyond the immediate informative content, creating serendipitous or deliberate connections between documents. The finding of a pamphlet of the Alliance Graphique International (International Graphics Union – AGI) in Albe Steiner's archive suggested, for example, a relationship between the international organisation and the changing agenda of Milan's graphic designers in the early-1960s, which is explored in the final chapter of this thesis.

Drawing on visual culture studies and semiotics, I approach visual artefacts as multi-layered media and investigate them in the cultural framework, and socio-economic context of the time. Following Anceschi's advice, I focus on printed works as both communication artefacts with their own function and purpose, and as a visual expression of design methodologies and aesthetic

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115   Thompson's chapter on early graphic design periodicals in America offers a valuable perspective on the role played by trade magazines in the articulation of a profession. Analysing both verbal and visual discourses, Thomson verifies the emergence of the graphic design profession from neighbouring fields of practice and traces the beginning of specialisation as an intertwining of technical concerns and aesthetic issues. A different version of Chapter 2, 'The Trade Journals', was previously published as an article, see: Ellen Mazur Thomson, 'Early Graphic Design Periodicals in America', *Journal of Design History*, 7 (2) (1994), pp. 113-26.

principles.[116] Drawing on ANT, visual artefacts are, moreover, approached as three-dimensional actors that interact with people and other artefacts to create narrative within a specific context. Where possible, I consulted the printed materials in person. However, given the ephemeral nature of many of the artefacts investigated as well as the scattering and destruction of some of the consulted archives during WW2, I also turned to magazines of the period as an alternative visual source. When using reproductions or facsimiles, I acknowledge the fact that the original visual artefacts have been decontextualized and have become part of a different narrative. I also use the additional connotative reading acquired by the visual artefact in the new context to articulate my argument. In other words, rather than considering the page of the magazine as a neutral context, I investigate editorial choices and question why certain artefacts have been selected and what this selection tells us about debates among graphic practitioners.

IV. A WORD ON VOCABULARY

According to graphic designer and educator Katherine McCoy, the 'little agreement of proper nomenclature' is an endemic issue, shared by every language, faced by the graphic design profession up to our days.[117] The articulation of a specialist vocabulary is a thread that traverses all chapters. The uncertain outcome of lively discussions, heated debates and ever-settled negotiations, the often short-lived agreement around a shared terminology was anything but a straightforward process. Indeed, the terms used to identify graphic design as both a discipline and a profession during the period under study, and for many years thereafter, are often vague, interchangeable and contradictory. As I argue throughout the thesis, the semantic shifts are not accidental, but mirror the shifting definition of the status and identity of the graphic design profession.

As Woodham concisely phrases this uncertainty:

[...] the widely felt uncertainty for the connotations of the terms commonly used in the interwar years such as commercial art or graphic design, industrial art, or industrial design, reflected the inability of designers to establish a clear-cut professional identity or status.[118]

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116   Giovanni Anceschi, 'Archetipi della Seduzione Grafica', in *Lo Studio Boggeri*, ed. by Monguzzi, unpaged.

117   Katherine McCoy, 'Education in an Adolescent Profession', in *The Education of a Graphic Designer*, ed. by Steven Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 2005), p. 3.

118   Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design*, p. 167.

As I will demonstrate, the uncertain connotation was not limited to the interwar years, but it is a constant issue that resurfaces periodically, signalling the continuous readapting of the profession to the constant changing of socio-economic circumstances, cultural context, political agenda, and technological advancement. One can trace the struggle for graphic design to gradually construct an autonomous discourse by looking at the evolution of the specialist vocabulary. Indeed, to choose between 'graphic arts', 'commercial arts', 'graphic design', 'visual communication' or 'communication design' is to choose between different conceptual frameworks.

From the early stages of my research, terminology revealed itself to be an issue without a simple solution. The inconsistent language used in the Italian primary sources placed me at an impasse. Translation from Italian into English made things even more complicated and the situation was worsened by the fact that specialist vocabulary used in the English language during the period was contradictory as well.[119] How was I supposed to indicate the very subject of my thesis? The use of the word 'graphic designer' was anachronistic since it was commonly adopted in Italy in the Italian translation 'progettista grafico' only from the 1950s and only later in English. To reduce the variety of terms used from the interwar period to the early-1960s to 'graphic designer' was, moreover, an arbitrary decision that silenced the multi-layered semantic field. Conversely, to change terminology every other sentence runs the risk of confusing the reader.

To get out of this impasse, I decided to adopt a twofold strategy. First, I refer to the original terms – both in Italian and in the English translation – as found in primary sources and problematise the terminology every time I incur a semantic shift. Second, I adopt a number of umbrella terms for the sake of convenience. These elastic terms are: 'graphic practitioner' and its short form 'graphic' – both translation of the Italian term 'grafico' – and, especially in the postwar period, the term 'graphic designer'.

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119   The word 'graphic design' first appeared in the English-speaking world in 1922 in an article written by William Addison Dwiggins, but did not come into common usage until the postwar period. See: William Addison Dwiggins, 'New Kind of Printing Calls for New Design', *Boston Evening Transcript*, 29 August 1922, reprinted in Thompson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America*, pp. 184-89.

This thesis is organised into five chapters and follows a broadly chronological outline. In Chapters 1 and 2, I explore the interwar period; in Chapter 3, I look both at interwar and at postwar Italy; finally, I investigate the reconstruction and the postwar periods in Chapters 4 and 5. Each chapter represents a shift of focus within the same general topic and explores different aspects of the emergence and articulation of the graphic design profession. Design education is addressed in Chapters 1 and 4; professional practice and networks are questioned in Chapters 2 and 5; Chapter 3 focuses on mediation.

In Chapter 1 – 'Training the "progettista grafico"' – I explore the infancy of graphic design education in interwar Italy and trace the lineage of graphic design to typography and the printing trades. Focusing on the Scuola del Libro in Milan, with reference also to the ISIA in Monza, I employ the changing of curricula and graphic output as a lens to reassess the debate on the professionalisation of graphic design and the modernisation of Italian graphics that featured in specialist magazines of the period. I argue that the development of a specialist language and practitioners' agreement on a shared body of skills and knowledge demonstrate the new professional identity gradually taking shape. Furthermore, I assert that the transit from practice into professional education evidences the profession's greater confidence and self-awareness.

Chapter 2 – 'All graphics lead to Boggeri' – investigates the Milanese Studio Boggeri and reassesses its leading role in the history of Italian graphic design. By interrogating visual artefacts and archival documents, it examines how and why the Studio promoted the spread of modernist techniques and aesthetics in interwar Italy, and discusses its role in the definition of the new professional figure of the graphic designer. The chapter examines the interwar debate about the rationalisation of advertising, and addresses the relationship between graphic and advertising professionals. It problematises Boggeri's attempt to position the Studio at the vanguard of the national and international graphic and advertising industry by hiring graphic practitioners who were trained, worked and had networks abroad. Following the imperative of diverting familiar narratives, the chapter provides new insights into the complexities of the studio-system and brings to the fore Boggeri's multifaceted figure – one that cannot be reduced simply to founder and owner of the Studio Boggeri.

Chapter 3 – 'The Milan Triennale and the "educated client"' – explores the way in which graphic practitioners used mediating channels in order to promote their services, claim a social status for their profession and market their products. The chapter employs the Milan Triennale as a case study. It approaches the Triennale from 1933 to 1957 both as a platform to showcase the profession's public image and as a commissioning body. By analysing both the form and content of graphic design exhibitions, it discusses the ways in which exhibition design favoured experimental approaches to graphic design. At the same time, it argues that graphic designers used the 'good taste' discourse to foster the profession's jurisdiction and legitimacy. Covering about twenty-five years, the chapter shows continuity in the graphic design discourse between the experimental phase of the 1930s and the postwar period. It investigates examples of Fascist political temporary exhibitions, and problematises the regime's use of modernist visual language. Furthermore, it addresses the role played by designers in the material, social, political and moral reconstruction of the country and introduces issues that are further developed in the last two chapters.

Chapter 4 – 'Training the sergeants of graphic design' – looks at the Convitto Scuola Rinascita and the Scuola del Libro in Milan in order to shed light on the conditions under which graphic design education was founded and the graphic design profession was outlined in postwar Italy. I explore the pivotal role of design pedagogy in the aftermath of WW2, and contextualise the case studies within an internationally widespread movement to create reform-orientated educational institutes. Thus, I address education as a political act aiming to form professionals willing to assume responsibility for the impact of design on contemporary society. Finally, I question the political and ethical stance that the graphic design profession acquired in postwar Italy.

In the fifth and final chapter – 'The "poor relations" of industrial design' – I investigate the establishment and early years of design professional associations in Italy. By looking at conflicts, negotiations, compromises and temporary alliances between the AIAP and the ADI, the chapter addresses the problematic position of graphic design in between advertising and design. The focus on the ADI graphic design division evidences graphic designers' attempt to use the association as a platform for claiming a professional status and access to the design domain as the equal partners with industrial designers. In the last two sections, the chapter departs from the local scene to address transnational circuits – such as AGI,

ICOGRADA and the 1960 WoDeCo in Tokyo – to investigate the way in which Milan's graphic designers participated in and responded to the international development of a new way of thinking in visual communication. In doing so, it argues that the pattern of graphic design professionalisation in Milan reflects the wider debate within the international design community and thus cannot be understood by limiting the analysis to national borders.

1. Training the 'progettista grafico'

In 1940 Antonio Boggeri wrote a letter to the Swiss graphic designer, Max Huber, to solicit Huber's involvement in the recently opened graphic design studio, Studio Boggeri. Boggeri praised the graphic and artistic quality of Huber's work and ended his letter with a bitter comment on the state of graphic design in Italy.

> You should bear in mind that Italian artists who devote themselves to the graphic arts are generally weak in <u>typography</u> and completely ignorant of the theoretical fundamentals of modern <u>composition</u>. [The reason for this is] simply because here there are no specialist Schools for graphic arts.[1]

Boggeri's implicit description of graphic practitioners suggests that they should be expected to possess both technical skills and artistic sensibility, together with a good understanding of modern graphics. Furthermore, his complaint denounces the lack of professional training in Italy and asserts the need for it.

The letter raises two issues that this chapter seeks to address: first, the gradual articulation of the graphic design profession; and second, the need for professional training. Taking the Scuola del Libro (School of the Book) in Milan as a case study, I investigate the infancy of graphic design education in Italy from the mid-1920s to 1943, when an Allied air raid over Milan damaged the premises and forced the school to close temporarily until September 1946. Although the first graphic design courses did not appear until the mid-1950s – as will be explored later in Chapter 4 – the interwar educational experience and reception of the Scuola del Libro are explored here in order to question Boggeri's claim that there was a lack of interaction between design education and practice in the first phase of the development of graphic design as a profession.

The study of the Scuola del Libro also provides insights into the Milanese graphic design scene. The school was part of the printing network that had developed in Milan, the heart of the Italian printing industry, since the end of

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1   'Tenga presente che gli artisti italiani che si dedicano all'arte grafica sono generalmente deficienti nella <u>tipografia</u> e ignorano completamente le teorie fondamentali della <u>composizione</u> moderna semplicemente perché qui non ci sono Scuole superiori di arte grafica'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 4 February 1940, p. 4, ASB. Underlined text in original. The letter is quoted in Letizia Tedeschi, 'Il Moderno e la Grafica Editoriale a Milano tra Anni Trenta e Cinquanta: Appunti', in *La Città dell'Editoria: dal Libro Tipografico all'Opera digitale (1880-2020)*, ed. by Giorgio Montecchi (Geneva; Milan: Skira, 2001), p. 114.

the nineteenth century.[2] It was also part of the Milanese design network and collaborated with rationalist architects and avant-garde artists. It featured regularly in specialist magazines as a model of vocational training and 'good' graphic design.[3] Prominent figures of Italian graphic design worked in, studied in or collaborated with it. These included the editor-in-chief of the graphic arts magazine *Risorgimento Grafico*, Raffaello Bertieri, and the contributors of *Campo Grafico*, whose personal involvement in the Scuola del Libro – as director and students/staff members, respectively – is acknowledged when considering their critical stance towards the school.

This chapter argues that the Scuola del Libro was used by different interest groups to promote conflicting attitudes towards graphic design both as a profession and a discipline. To this end, it positions the school at the centre of heated debates on the professionalisation and modernisation of Italian graphic design. These debates were carried on in specialist magazines of the period, such as *Risorgimento Grafico*, *Graphicus* and *Campo Grafico*. Firstly, I explore the gradual definition of graphic designers' professional identity, by contextualising the changing of curricula and pedagogy within the development of a specialist vocabulary and the construction of a body of professional skills and knowledge in the

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2   On the Milanese publishing industry in the late-eighteenth century and first half of the twentieth century, see: Marino Berengo, *Intellettuali e Librai nella Milano della Restaurazione* (Turin: Einaudi, 1980); Adolfo Scotto di Luzio, 'L'Industria dell'Informazione: Periodici e Quotidiani, Giornalisti e Imprenditori', in *Storia d'Italia. Le Regioni dall'Unità a Oggi: la Lombardia*, ed. by Duccio Bigazzi and Marco Meriggi, (Turin: Einaudi, 2001), pp. 331-84; Ada Gigli Marchetti, 'Impresa e Lavoro: L'Industria Tipografico-Editoriale Milanese dalla Fine dell'Ottocento al Fascismo', in *La Città dell'Editoria*, ed. by Montecchi, pp. 23-37; *Editoria e Cultura a Milano tra le Due Guerre (1920-1940): Atti del Convegno, Milano 19-20-21 Febbraio 1981* (Milan: Fondazione Arnoldo e Alberto Mondadori, 1983); *La Stampa Italiana nell'Età Liberale*, ed. by Valerio Castronovo and Nicola Tranfaglia (Rome; Bari: Editori Laterza, 1979), pp. 15-28; Alberto Cadioli, and Giuliano Vigini, *Storia dell'Editoria Italiana: un Profilo Introduttivo* (Milan: Editrice Bibliografica, 2004), pp. 13-22; *Libri, Giornali e Riviste a Milano: Storia delle Innovazioni nell'Editoria Milanese dall'Ottocento ad Oggi*, ed. by Fausto Colombo (Milan: Editrice Abitare Segesta, 1998).

3   The start date of each the new academic year and the call for applications were advertised on a regular basis in specialist periodicals. There were numerous reviews of school publications, exhibitions, attendance at international events, students' works and cultural activities. Other professional schools were occasionally mentioned, but never as well illustrated as the Scuola del Libro. The magazine *Graphicus* sometimes mentioned the Scuola Salesiana (Salesian School) and the Reale Scuola Tipografica in Turin. This exception should not come as a surprise, since both schools were Turin-based, as was the magazine itself. On the Scuola Salesiana in Turin, see: G. V., 'Echi d'una Mostra', *Graphicus*, 21 (270), December 1931, pp. 215-218. On the Reale Scuola Tipografica, see: *Graphicus*, 19 (241), July 1929, pp. 10-11; 'Come Graphicus è Passato alla Scuola', *Graphicus*, 23 (1), January 1934, pp. 8-9; Carlo Delprato, 'L'istruzione Professionale per Grafici', *Graphicus*, 27 (4-5), May 1937, pp. 7-8.

profession and the industry more broadly. Secondly, I investigate the spread of modernist techniques and visual language in interwar Italy through the visual output of the Scuola del Libro, focusing in particular on promotional ephemera designed and produced by students. In the last section, a comparison will be made between the Scuola del Libro and the school of decorative arts in Monza, the Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche (Higher Institute for the Artistic Industries – ISIA) in order to assess the role played by the Scuola del Libro in the articulation of the new professional figure of the 'progettista grafico' (graphic designer).

1.1 'REFERENDUM FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING', 1923-24

By the 1920s the call for education and vocational training in the field of graphics and printing industries became the subject of a lively debate in specialist magazines between practitioners, industrialists and critics. Thus far, this debate has received little attention from design historians. By contrast, this section gives voice to the participants to the 1920s debate about vocational schools in order to provide a historical background and a critical framework for the Scuola del Libro.

As a consequence of production specialisation and technology advancement, the urgent need for vocational training had been felt in many industrial sectors from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.[4] The graphics and printing sector distinguished itself for its demands for 'workers' education' in addition to technical training.[5] Printing and graphic practitioners were expected to be not only literate, but also better educated and cultivated than other members of the urban working

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4   On vocational education institutes in Lombardy during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see: *La Leva della Conoscenza: Istruzione e Formazione Professionale in Lombardia fra Otto e Novecento*, ed. by Carlo G. Lacaita (Milan: Giampiero Casagrande Editore, 2009). On the founding of the architecture schools in Italy in the first half of the twentieth century, see: Loredana Campignin and Maria Luisa Mazzola, 'La Nascita delle Scuole Superiori di Architettura in Italia', in *Il Razionalismo e l'Architettura in Italia Durante il Fascismo*, ed. by Silvia Danesi and Luciano Patetta (Venice: Edizioni la Biennale di Venezia, 1976), pp. 194-96.

5   By 'workers' education' is intended a type of education that is not limited to knowledge and skills required on the job, but combines general culture and trade training in order to achieve class-social advancement. For a definition of 'worker's education', see: Margaret T. Hodgen, *Workers Education in England and in the United States* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925), p. 5; John Holford, 'Workers' Education in the Twentieth-Century British Labour Movement: Class, Union and Role', in *Vocational Education. International Approaches, Developments and Systems*, ed. by Linda Clarke and Christopher Winch (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 191-204.

class.[6] As argued by publishing historian Ada Gigli Marchetti, Milanese printing trade unions were the most active trade unions in Italy at that time in campaigning for workers' education.[7] They championed continuous training in order to keep professional skills and knowledge up-to-date with the ever-changing printing technologies. With a view to social advancement, trade unions aimed at nurturing the intellectual and moral level, and class awareness of their members.

In September 1923, the editor-in-chief of the Milanese graphic arts magazine *Risorgimento Grafico* and director of the Scuola del Libro (1919-25), Raffaello Bertieri, launched the 'Referendum per l'Insegnamento Professionale' (Referendum for Professional Training) in the magazine.[8] Two contrasting models of vocational schools were submitted to the reader for consideration. On the one hand, the 'scuola-industria' (industry-school) produced goods for the market or collaborated with external companies. The 'scuola-officina' (workshop-school), on the other hand, stood outside the market rules, and championed the autonomy of education above commercial concerns. Readers were invited to comment on the suitability and appropriateness of training pupils in the workshop-school independently from industrial production. Finally, they were asked whether they believed that industrial production could coexist with the level of technical training and liberal education that vocational schools were expected to provide.[9]

In this section, I argue that the referendum provides instrumental insight into the disputes over professional education and training in the graphic arts that pre-occupied practitioners, industrialists and critics during the interwar period. Nine months after its launch, *Risorgimento Grafico* assessed the success of the initiative:

> We are very pleased with the success, also because the viewpoints that we have pub-
> lished and will publish are not the expression of people whose knowledge of vocational

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6   For a foreign perspective on the high level of literacy and culture expected from workers in the graphic arts and printing industries, see: 'Des Travailleurs Intellectuels?', in Madelaine Rebérioux, *Les Ouvriers du Livre et Leur Fédération. Un Centenaire 1881-1981* (Messidor: Temps Actuels, 1981), pp. 35-41.

7   Ada Gigli Marchetti, *I Tre Anelli: Mutualità, Resistenza, Cooperazione dei Tipografi Milanesi (1860-1925)* (Milano: Franco Angeli Editore. 1983), p. 203.

8   'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (9), September 1923, p. 438.

9   The starting assumption of the referendum was the need for vocational education and training in the graphic arts and printing industries. Vocational education and training introduced pupils aged between twelve and fifteen to the graphic professions and media, and concurrently promoted the pupils' intellectual development. Not all contributors agreed with this assumption. The director of the Scuola del Libro in Florence, Guido Tartagli, argued that vocational education should address current workers in the graphic arts and printing industries only, and leave the training of pupils to the workshop. See: Guido Tartagli, 'Per l'Insegnamento Grafico', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (1), January 1924, pp. 35-37.

education and training is partial, nor of people whose interest is driven by mere amusement rather than experience. Indeed, one could say that one of the distinctive traits of our 'referendum' is that it has involved the entire group of bona fide experts and excluded the usual know-alls.[10]

The twenty-two contributors were not only members of the graphics and printing industries network, but many of them were also involved in vocational education and training. At least six contributors were associated with the Scuola del Libro.[11] This bias towards the Scuola del Libro should come as no surprise, given the position of the editor-in-chief of *Risorgimento Grafico*. The final issue of the 'Referendum for Professional Training' concluded that twenty out of the twenty-two contributors advocated the autonomy of school from industry and thus favoured the workshop- over the industry-school.[12]

Supporters of the industry-school stressed the economic benefits of a market-oriented educational institute. The administrator of a Milanese printing house and former advisor at the Scuola del Libro, Agostino Recalcati, argued that economic self-sufficiency allowed vocational schools not to rely on uncertain public and private funding. According to Recalcati, it was 'better to sacrifice a bit of *School* to the benefit of the *Industry*, rather than shutting up shop due to the lack of adequate financial means'.[13] Yet, schools were not expected to run as businesses aiming at 'profit for profit's sake'.[14] Recalcati recommended, in fact, that schools should aim at earning just enough to cover expenses and break even.

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10   'Siamo lietissimi del successo, anche perché le opinioni che abbiamo pubblicato e pubblicheremo non sono l'espressione di persone che dell'insegnamento professionale hanno una conoscenza relativa o che vi si interessano più per diletto che per convenzione: si può dire infatti che una particolarità del nostro "referendum" è quella di aver interessato tutto il gruppo di veri competenti e di aver allontanato i soliti sapientoni'. 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (5), May 1924, p. 208.

11   Contributors to the referendum were, in order of appearance on *Risorgimento Grafico*: Agostino Recalcati, Guido Giannini (20 (11), November 1923), E. Berardi, Tomaso Bruno, Umberto Allegretti (20 (12), December 1923), Guido Tartagli, Attilio Berini (21 (1), January 1924), Gianolio Dalmazzo (21 (2), February 1924), Ergisto Reggiani, Carlo Frassinelli, Giuseppe Isidoro Arneudo, Giuseppe Fumagalli (21 (3), March 1924), Alberto Matarelli, Edoardo Lacroix, Ugolino Marucelli (21 (4), April 1924), Giovanni Rocco, V. Jorio (21 (5), May 1924), Eugenio Calamandrei, Antonio Vallardi, Cesare Ratta, Enrico Gualdoni and Dalle Nogare (21 (6), June 1924).

12   'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale. Le Conclusioni del Referendum', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (7), July 1924, pp. 291-296.

13   'Meglio sacrificare un po' di *Scuola* all'*Officina* piuttosto di dover chiuderne i battenti per mancanza di mezzi finanziari adeguati'. Agostino Recalcati, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (11), November 1923, p. 535, italics in the original text.

14   '[...] il lucro per il lucro [...]'. Recalcati, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (11), November 1923, p. 536.

A further benefit of the industry-school was the opportunity for pupils to experience working practices within the school environment. Gianolio Dalmazzo, co-founder and director of the Real Scuola Tipografica (Royal Typographic School) in Turin, favoured a vocational school closer to the working environment, but at the same time different from industry. According to Dalmazzo, a '*binding condition*' for an appropriate work experience in an educational institution was '*to be exclusively determined* by pedagogical purposes, without taking into consideration any pecuniary speculation'.[15] The goal of the industry-school was pedagogy and not profit. It had to be aimed at recreating an industry-like work experience that provided pupils with a more or less accurate idea of what working in the printing industry would be like once they had graduated, while testing their skills and knowledge in the safe environment of the school workshop.

A shared concern among contributors was that industry-schools might exploit pupils as unpaid and unskilled labour, and sell products at a lower price than standard in order to be competitive.[16] Many practitioners and industrialists feared that profit-oriented schools might actually be detrimental to the printing industry itself. The industry was already perceived as suffering from unfair competition, as attested by the numerous articles addressing the issue.[17] Unfair competition needed to be combatted with professionalism, as illustrated in a series of cartoons published in *Graphicus* in 1929. In these an amateur typographer who is trying to compensate for his lack of professional skills and knowledge by charging lower prices, is forced to abandon the practice once clients understand that unfair competition results in poorly designed and badly produced artefacts and begin choosing quality over quantity (see Illustration **1.1**).[18]

For a vocational school to be the cause of unfair competition would have been a self-destructive absurdity. Milanese graphic industrialists Alberto Mattarelli,

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15   '[...] *alla condizione inderogabile* che tale produzione *si prefigga unicamente*, all'infuori di ogni considerazione di speculazione pecuniaria, lo scopo didattico [...]'. Gianolio Dalmazzo, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (2), February 1924, p. 75, italics in the original text.

16   Ergisto Reggiani, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (3), March 1924, p. 123.

17   See, for instance: 'I problemi delle Arti Grafiche', *Graphicus*, 18 (223), January 1928, pp. 7-9.

18   The five cartoons illustrating the story of an amateur typographer were published in *Graphicus* between January and May 1929: 'Le Sorprese della Concorrenza', *Graphicus*, 19 (235), January 1929, p. 4; 'Le Sorprese della Concorrenza', *Graphicus*, 19 (236), February 1929, p. 6; 'Le Sorprese della Concorrenza', *Graphicus*, 19 (237), March 1929, p. 4; 'Le Sorprese della Concorrenza', *Graphicus*, 19 (238), April 1929, p. 5; 'Finalmente ha Capito!', *Graphicus*, 19 (239), May 1929, p. 6.

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b

1.1   two of a series of five cartoons on unfair competition published in *Graficus* between
       January and May 1929: **.a** 'Le Soprese della Concorrenza' (Competition's Surprises),
       Graphicus, 19 (235), January 1929, p. 4. The text in the cartoon bubble says: 'Oh! Look
       there the colleague X in a car! How can one explain this? Just a month ago I stole another
       important client from him by asking a lower price! ?... ?... ?...'; **.b** 'Finalmente ha Capito!'
       (He Finally Understood!), *Graphicus*, 19 (239), May 1929, p. 6. The text in the cartoon bubble
       says: 'This is truly better than working night and day as an animal and still take a loss. If
       my colleagues were to imitate me instead of accepting to work at a loss, clients would pay
       the fair price and they will get as a reward a better job through a competition based on
       better quality and better service'

Edoardo Lacroix and Ugolino Marucelli recommended a compromise that was intended to overcome the conflict between the need for self-sufficiency and issues related to competitiveness. They suggested that vocational schools could restrict their industrial activity to collaboration with cultural bodies and limit their output to 'conveniently chosen' printed matter.[19] In doing so, the schools would cover production expenses without causing unfair competition to existing industry.

'Let us leave to the industry the task of training the apprentices, and to the school the task of shaping the artist', wrote Guido Giannini, consultant for the printing school in Florence.[20] 'Industry always needs the same models and the same printed matter', stated the administrator of the Real Scuola Tipografica in Turin, Giuseppe Isidoro Arneudo, the industry 'workshop "sterilises" technical and artistic practices, and it does not encourage brilliance, sensibility and delight in the new and original'.[21] Both supporters of the freeing of vocational schools from commercial concerns, Giannini and Arneudo suggested that workshop-schools encouraged students' creativity, and promoted experimentation with new techniques, materials and visual languages. Conversely, market rules inhibited free experimentation and limited the potential for innovation and creativity by stymying two essential aspects of pupils' education: the need for time and the trial-and-error approach.[22]

'A School must be a School, and that it must remain and never industrialise itself' was the reply of V. Jorio, director of a graphics and printing workshop in Rome.[23] He then added:

Our art will benefit [from workshop-schools] being able to reach ever-higher peaks. By attaining higher technical and intellectual development, workers will benefit [as well] and will be able to achieve a greater and better performance and thus be more entitled to that

19   '[...] opportunamente scelto [...]'. Alberto Matarelli, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (4), April 1924, p. 162. Artistic publications, illustrated book, primers, small touristic guides or railways timetables were amongst the printed material that schools were suggested to produce.

20   'Si lasci all'officina il compito di preparare gli apprendisti, ed alla scuola quello di foggiare l'artista'. Guido Giannini, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (11), November 1923, p. 537.

21   '[...] l'industria ha bisogno sempre dei medesimi moduli, dei medesimi stampati [...] l'officina "sterilizza" la pratica tecnica ed artistica, non eccita la genialità, il sentimento, il gusto del nuovo, dell'originale'. Giuseppe Isidoro Arneudo, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (3), March 1924, p. 125.

22   For a critical approach to on-the-job training in comparison to professional training, see: Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism: The Third Logic* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 89-96.

23   '[...] la Scuola deve essere Scuola, tale deve rimanere, e mai industrializzarsi'. V. Jorio, 'Per l'Insegnamento Professionale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (5), May 1924, p. 211.

economic-social well-being towards which efforts and ambitions of the working classes legitimately tend.[24]

Isolated from market demands, workshop-schools were in a privileged position and had the freedom to promote experimentation and pursue new knowledge, thereby contributing to the graphic arts themselves. With their balance between technical training and workers' education, workshop-schools were moreover expected to raise students' intellectual and moral level, foster personal fulfilment and emancipation, and support class and social advancement.

As I illustrated in this section, the referendum provides evidence for the growing self-awareness of the yet-to-be graphic designers and suggests that vocational education and training were felt as pressing issues that needed to be addressed in practice. Next section introduces the Scuola del Libro from its foundation in 1904 to the early-1930s. It describes its pedagogy and highlights the relationship between the school and the Milanese printing and graphics scene.

1.2 THE SCUOLA DEL LIBRO IN MILAN, 1904-33

The opening of the Scuola Professionale Tipografica (Typographic Professional School) in Milan in 1885 can be considered as one of the outcomes of the educational agenda of the Milanese printing trade unions.[25] As recalled in 1954 by Mario Melino, a WW2 partisan who played an important role in the postwar reconstruction of the educational institute, the school operated 'in perfect harmony with the graphic arts trade unions, […] it [was] looked upon very favourably by this class

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24   'Se ne avvantaggerà la nostra arte innanzitutto, che potrà così ascendere vette sempre più alte; se ne avvantaggeranno gli operai che, raggiungendo uno sviluppo tecnico ed intellettuale più elevato, saranno capaci di maggiore e migliore rendimento, e quindi più degni di conseguire quel benessere economico-sociale, verso cui è legittimo tendano gli sforzi e le aspirazioni delle classi operaie'. Jorio, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (5), May 1924, p. 211.

25   A wide range of trade organisations sponsored the Scuola Professionale Tipografica. Amongst them: the Pio Istituto Tipografico (Pius Typographic Institute), the Società di Mutuo Soccorso tra gli Impressori (Printers' Society of Mutual Assistance) and the Sezione Milanese dei Combinatori e degli Impressori (Milanese Branch of Compositors and Printers). The Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, the Milan municipality and the Chamber of Commerce also financed the school. On the educational agenda of the Milanese printing trade unions, see: Gigli Marchetti, *I Tre Anelli*, p. 203.

that not only supported the school, but also recognised it officially'.[26] The Scuola Professionale Tipografica was renamed Scuola del Libro when partially absorbed by the Società Umanitaria (Humanitarian Society) in 1904. The Umanitaria was a non-profit, philanthropic institute formed around socialist-inspired welfare programmes and had been founded in Milan in 1893.[27] According to its statute, the Umanitaria aimed at 'enabling deprived people, with no distinction, to rise again by themselves by providing assistance, work and education'.[28] Vocational education was one of the activities through which the Umanitaria promoted cultural and professional development of the urban working classes. Vocational schools managed by the Umanitaria included: schools of applied arts – such as wood and metalwork, mural, glass and textile decoration – school of electrotechnics, courses for

26   '[…] perfetto accordo con le rappresentanze operaie delle arti grafiche […] la scuola è sentita con viva simpatia da questa classe, la quale non solo l'appoggia, ma la riconosce ufficialmente'. Mario Melino, *La Scuola del Libro di Milano: Documenti e Fatti* (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1954), p. 34. As evidence of Milanese trade unions' official recognition of the Scuola del Libro, the certificate issued by the school was listed among the membership requirements in the union's 1907 regulations. Alternatively, the candidate, who had to be at least fifteen and already a salaried worker, was expected to submit an application form signed by three current members of the trade union, or a certificate issued by the candidate's employer. According to articles 5 and 7 of the regulations, industrialists were supposed to allow apprentices to undertake up to three courses at the Scuola del Libro, and they were expected to promote apprentices to proper workers upon provision of the school's certificate. See: Gigli Marchetti, *I Tre Anelli*, pp. 194-95.

27   For a history of the Società Umanitaria in the early-twentieth century with a focus on its relationship with the Socialist Reformism movement in Italy, see: Enrico Decleva, *Etica del Lavoro, Socialismo, Cultura Popolare: Augusto Osimo e la Società Umanitaria* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1985); Carlo G. Lacaita, *Sviluppo e Cultura alle Origini dell'Italia Industriale* (Milano: Franco Angeli Editore, 1984), in particular chapter 8, 'Socialismo, Istruzione e Cultura Popolare tra l'Ottocento e il Novecento: I Riformisti', pp. 222-244. On the Socialist Reformist movement in Milan of the late-nineteenth/early-twentieth century, see: *Il socialismo riformista a Milano agli inizi del secolo*, ed. by Alceo Riosa (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1981).

28   […] mettere i diseredati, senza distinzioni, in condizione di rilevarsi da sé medesimi, procurando loro assistenza, lavoro, istruzione'. 'Statuto Organico della Società Umanitaria', in *La Società Umanitaria. Fondazione P.M. Loria Milano, 1893/1963*, ed. by Riccardo Bauer (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1964), p. 18.

clockmakers and tailors, professional school for women, and the Scuola del Libro itself.[29]

The education on offer at the Scuola del Libro included three types of course: the 'Sezione diurna di Tirocinio' (daily training course), the 'Sezione di Completamento' (complementary course) and the 'Sezione di Perfezionamento' (vocational course).[30] The daily training course was a two-year-long, full-time – seven hours a day, Monday to Saturday – course for pupils between twelve to fourteen years of age.[31] The first year was common for all pupils, who were introduced to the different professions in the graphics and printing sector and acquired a general and basic knowledge of techniques and media. In the second year, pupils specialised in hand composition, printing, bookbinding, lithography, stereo electrotype or photochemistry.[32] Distribution among the different specialisations

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29   The Società Umanitaria also provided legal and housing assistance – in particular to internal migrants coming to Milan from other regions – child and health care. The employment agency at the Umanitaria assisted unemployed people helping them to find a job and offering financial aid and assistance in kind, while the Scuola Pratica di Legislazione Sociale (Training School for Social Legislation) trained trade unions organisers. On the vocational courses managed by the Umanitaria, see: Claudio A. Colombo, '"Sapere, Fare e Sapere Fare". La Società Umanitaria, un Modello Laico per la Formazione e l'Orientamento al Lavoro', in *L'Alchimia del Lavoro. I generosi che Primi in Milano Fecondarono le Arti e le Scienze*, ed. by Amilcare Bovo, Nimis Pietro, Mario Palmaro, Vincenzo Parisi, Helena Maria Polidoro, and Agnese Santucci (Milan: Raccolto Edizioni, 2008), pp. 93-145; Ornella Selvafolta, 'Arti Industriali e Istituzioni Scolastiche tra Ottocento e Novecento', in *Storia d'Italia*, ed. by Bigazzi and Meriggi, pp. 890-97. See also *Umanitaria: Cento Anni di Solidarietà*, ed. by Saverio Monno (Milan, Florence: Edizioni Charta, 1993).

30   On the history of the Scuola del Libro in the first-half of the twentieth century, see: Paola Signorino, 'Una Novità nella Milano Editoriale del Primo '900', in *Spazio ai Caratteri. L'Umanitaria e la Scuola del Libro*, ed. by Massimo Della Campa and Claudio A. Colombo (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004), pp. 37-58; and Vanessa Senesi, 'La Scuola del Libro Presso la Società Umanitaria di Milano dalle Origini Fino all'Anno 1931' (unpublished master dissertation, Università degli Studi di Milano, 2001).

31   The 'Sezione diurna di Tirocinio' opened in 1907. The opening of the training course for pupils followed the establishment of a 2nd Consortium in 1916, which lasted until 1920. In contrast to the 1st Consortium (1905-1915), which had been a partnership between the Società Umanitaria, the Federazione del Libro (Book Federation) and the Federazione dei Litografi (Lithographers Federation), the 2nd Consortium brought together the Società Umanitaria, the Chamber of Commerce, the Milanese section of the Federazione del Libro, the Unione Industriale Arti Grafiche (Graphic Arts Industrial Union), the Associazione Tipografica-Libraria (Association of Typographers and Editors), and the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce.

32   'Scuola del Libro Milano. Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio per l'Anno Scolastico 1918-19', pamphlet, ASU.

depended on pupils' own interests and aptitudes.[33] It was also contingent on the demand for apprentices coming from the different sectors of the industry.[34]

The comprehensiveness of the training course impressed Henry Lewis Bullen, director of the Typographic Library and Museum in New Jersey, who visited the Scuola del Libro during his European tour on behalf of the America Type Founder's Company in 1923.[35] Bullen described the school as one of the few existing educational institutes worth considering as a model to emulate and praised its inclusiveness. The inclusion of all fields of the graphics and printing industries within the same educational institution was in marked contrast with the North-American model.[36] According to Bullen, each aspect of the design and printing process was taught in a different school in the United States, thereby preventing students from acquiring a comprehensive overview. A year after Bullen's visit, the British typographer, type designer and printing historian, Stanley Morison, left an enthusiastic comment in the visitors' book: 'the activity of this school is indeed remarkable. I wish I could think that the London School of Printing, whose financial resources are much higher, was as good'.[37] Guests' courtesy apart, Bullen and Morison's comments suggest that towards the mid-1920s the Scuola del Libro in Milan was arousing international curiosity and enjoying the appreciation of foreign experts.[38]

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33   Pupils underwent frequent exams and psycho-aptitude tests intended to help them in choosing the most suitable area they should specialise in during their second year. 'Scuola del Libro in Milano. Programma per la Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio per l'Anno Scolastico 1924-25', pamphlet, ASU; 'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria di Milano', archival document, ASU, 1932-227-53, p. 8.

34   'Scuola del Libro. La Scuola di Avviamento e di Orientamento Professionale nell'Anno Scolastico 1938-39 – XVII', annual report, ASU, 1938-227-53, p. 1.

35   Giuseppe Pizzuto, 'Henry L. Bullen alla Scuola del Libro in Milano', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (12), December 1924, pp. 513-16.

36   On graphic arts education in America from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth-century, see: Ellen Mazur Thomson, *The Origins of Graphic Design in America: 1870-1920* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 108-15.

37   'L'attività di questa scuola è veramente notevole; vorrei poter pensare che la Scuola Tipografica di Londra, con le sue rendite tanto maggiori, fosse altrettanto buona'. Stanley Morison, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (8), August 1924, p. 348. On the infancy of graphic design education in Britain from the interwar period to the mid-1950s, see: Sylvia Backemeyer, '"Visual Language": The Growth of Graphic Design', in *Making Their Mark: Art, Craft and Design at the Central School, 1896-1966*, ed. by Sylvia Backemeyer (London: Herbert Press, 2000), pp. 33-45.

38   *Risorgimento Grafico* also reported a brief and enthusiastic comment by a certain Keufer. The first name of the author is not mentioned, but one could speculate that the comment was written by the French syndicalist and book worker, Auguste Keufer who died in March 1924, a couple of months before the issue of *Risorgimento Grafico* was published. *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (8), August 1924, p. 348.

Apprentices with two years' work experience were eligible to enrol on the complementary courses. The enrolment prerequisite was reduced to one year of on-the-job training when the candidate was a former pupil of the school. Eligible students had to be at least fifteen, or sixteen when applying for the complementary course in lithographic printing.[39] Classes were held in the evenings from 8pm to 10pm and courses lasted on average 120 hours. Vocational courses for student-workers were on Sundays from 9am to 12am and the total number of hours varied according to specialism. In addition to complementary and vocational courses in hand composition, typographic print, lithography, photogravure and bookbinding, the Scuola del Libro also offered vocational courses in book gilding and book decoration.[40]

Programmes were regularly updated in accordance with technological advances. As the result of the Società Italiana Linotype (Linotype Italian Society) donating the latest linotype machine – the number 4 model – to the Scuola del Libro in 1923, a special course for the retraining of former students of the mechanical typesetting classes was set up.[41] The curricula were frequently modified in order to keep the syllabi up-to-date with everyday working practice. For instance, from 1923 to 1930, assignments for the student-workers of the hand composition classes ranged from the page layout of a book (1923-24) and a calendar (1924-25), to the design of industrial catalogues (1925-26), advertisements (1926-27) and grief ephemera (1930-31).[42] The changes mirrored the expanding definition of graphic design

39   'Scuola del Libro, Milano, Anno Scolastico 1919-1920. Corsi Serali di Completamento', pamphlet, ASU. Enrolment requirements were printed in an almost identical manner in all promotional pamphlets until 1943.

40   'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Programma della Sezione di Completamento, Anno Scolastico 1925-26', prospectus, ASU.

41   From 1929 onwards, the special retraining course was renamed 'Corso di composizione meccanica su Linotype' (Course of mechanical composition with linotype). The Società Italiana Linotype supported the Scuola del Libro on other occasions. Besides the linotype machine n. 4 donated in 1923, two linotype machines were given on extended loan to the school in 1932. 'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria, Milano', archival document, ASU, 1932-227-53, p. 11. See also: 'Scuola del Libro in Milano, Anno Accademico 1923-24. Composizione Meccanica', prospectus, ASU; 'Scuola del Libro in Milano, Programmi per le Sezioni di Perfezionamento, Completamento e Composizione Meccanica, Anno Scolastico 1929-30', prospectus, ASU.

42   'Scuola del Libro in Milano. Regolamento e Programma dei Corsi della Sezione di Perfezionamento, Anno Scolastico 1923-24'; 'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Sezione di Perfezionamento, Anno Scolastico 1924-25'; 'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Sezione di Perfezionamento, Anno Scolastico MCXXV-MCXXVI'; 'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Sezione di Perfezionamento e di Completamento, Anno Scolastico 1926-27'; and 'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Sezione di Perfezionamento e Completamento e per il Corso di Composizione Meccanica, Anno Scolastico 1930-31', prospectuses, ASU.

and the increased interest in everyday ephemera in contrast to the previous focus on book design.

Industrialists' confidence in the validity of the Scuola del Libro is demonstrated by the rich correspondence between them and the school administration. Archival documents provide evidence that industrialists were often the first to recommend their apprentices and workforce to enrol on the complementary and vocational courses, and then to monitor their attendance regularly. The frequent reenrolment of former pupils of the training course on the complementary and vocational courses seems to suggest that workers were well aware of the crucial role of technical training and liberal education in their professional advancement and personal fulfilment.[43]

The composition of the student body in the interwar period was essentially exclusive on the basis of class and gender distinctions. Students were almost all male and often sons of printing workers or people involved in the graphics and publishing industries. They were otherwise likely to belong to the working class and the craftsmanship milieu, as is implied by a pamphlet from 1918 in which the training courses are described as courses for 'the sons of the working classes, salespeople and humble employees'.[44] The school register of the academic year 1935-36 indicates the gender and class bias. All male, students were either sons of compositors, printers, typesetters, lithographers, graphic industrialists, bookbinders, stationers, newspaper distributors, warehouse workers in printing workshops and publishers, or sons of mechanics, railwaymen, public transport drivers, bricklayers, factory workers, tailors, upholsterers, waiters, packers, nurses and peddlers.[45] Female students feature rarely as part of the student body. From 1918 to 1921, promotional pamphlets include bookbinding complementary classes for 'legatrici' (female bookbinders).[46] In the 1925-26 pamphlet, a 'corso speciale' (special course) for female 'mettifoglio' (paper sheet feeder) on lithographic machines was advertised. It consisted of thirty daily lectures of two hours each and 'only for

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43   'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria Milano', annual report, ASU, 1932-227-53, p. 5.

44   '[...] i figli di operai, di commessi e di modesti impiegati [...]'. 'Scuola del Libro Milano. Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio per l'Anno Scolastico 1918-19', pamphlet, ASU.

45   School register, academic year 1935-36, ASU.

46   'Scuola del Libro, Milano, Anno Scolastico 1918-19191. Corsi Serali di Completamento e di Perfezionamento', pamphlet, ASU.

women possessing the necessary physical requirement' were eligible.[47] According to the invitation card to opening of the June 1937 students' exhibition, this featured graphic works by both 'allieve' (female pupils) and 'allievi' (male pupils).[48] These three instances are the few evidences of female students at the Scuola del Libro during the first-half of the twentieth century that I could find in the archive.[49]

The Scuola del Libro followed the workshop-school model, as described in the 'Referendum for Professional Training', in the belief that schools 'should not follow any rule [...] other than those inspired by the best possible pedagogical parameter'.[50] Evening and weekend complementary and vocational classes allowed the educational activity of the school to coexist with apprentices' and professionals' everyday working life. Isolated from market demands and commercial concerns, students had the opportunity to research and experiment with new techniques and visual languages, as well as learning basic skills. Pupils' technical training in the workshop compensated for their lack of on-the-job learning.

In order to foster 'a correct perception of practical work', pupils were also in charge of designing, composing, printing and binding official publications and promotional material under the supervision of a member of staff.[51] Thus the visual output of the Scuola del Libro was the outcome of the collaboration between pupils of the different specialist departments, a detail that adds an implicit pedagogical intent to the more explicit promotional one. In addition to this in-house

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47 'Riservato a donne che possiedono i requisiti fisici dovuti'. 'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Programma della Sezione di Completamento, Anno Accademico 1925-26', prospectus, ASU, p. 14. Later pamphlets advertise the course without gender distinction.

48 The invitation card featured in 'Documentari di Campo Grafico', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (6), June 1938, p. 171

49 The gender restriction became more severe during the Fascist regime, when the regulation of the school system demanded the separation of males and females. A clause of the national contract for the regulation of apprenticeship in the graphic industry (1936) might explain further the lack of female students at the Scuola del Libro. Whereas males were obliged to attend the training courses before beginning an apprenticeship, a primary school diploma was the only requirement for females, who could train exclusively as bookbinders, booksellers or paper sheet feeders. Thus, not only were females able to access just a restricted list of occupations within the graphics industries, but they were also expected to learn directly on-the-job since they were excluded from vocational courses. On the 1936 apprenticeship regulation, see: 'La Regolamentazione dell'Apprendistato Grafico', *Graphicus*, 23 (6), January 1936, pp. 15-16.

50 '[...] non deve avere altre norme [...], che quelle ispirate dal migliore criterio didattico che sia possibile applicare [...]'. Mario Ferrigni, 'Programmi e Metodi della Scuola del Libro', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (8), August 1924, p. 339. Ferrigni's comment makes explicit reference to the 'Referendum per l'Insegnamento Professionale'.

51 '[...] esatta sensazione del lavoro pratico [...]'. The same text is reprinted in many pamphlets advertising the programme of the training courses, see for instance: 'Programma della Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio', academic year 1930-31, pamphlets, ASU.

work experience, 'holidays during the year [were] reduced to the minimum in order to facilitate pupils' transfer from the School to the industrial Workshop'.[52]

Parallel to the vocational training, students attended complementary humanistic classes.[53] The goal of the balanced relationship between theory and practice was to train 'neither inept theorists, nor ordinary labourers' and transform printing workers from passive makers into active collaborators of the graphic artists, if not into graphic artists themselves.[54] Indeed, students were expected to engage both theoretically and technically with professional practice. Classes included: Italian grammar, foreign languages, general culture, applied mathematics, history of the visual and graphic arts, chemistry and physics – replaced by technology classes in 1926 – sport and drawing. The study of foreign languages – French, English and German – focused on the acquisition of the specialist vocabulary, whereas history of art was taught in relationship to graphic arts and visual communication.[55] The promotion of professional awareness – seen as taking pride in the profession, developing a spirit of association, being able to negotiate rights and duties with industrialists and promoting professional improvement so as to achieve social advancement – was a further aim of the liberal classes in line with the reform programs undertaken by the Umanitaria.

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52 'Perché il passaggio dalla Scuola al Laboratorio industriale non riesca poi difficile ai giovinetti, le vacanze nel corso dell'anno son state ridotte al minimo'. 'Programma della Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio', 1928-29 or 1930-31, ASU.

53 Alongside the learning in the classroom and the training in the workshop, students also visited exhibitions, museums, typographic workshops, printing plants and publishers, and they attended conferences and seminars. See: 'Scuola del Libro in Milan. Regolamento e Programma dei Corsi della Sezione di Perfezionamento, Anno Scolastico 1923-24', prospectus, ASU.

54 '[...] teorici inetti, o operai qualunque [...]. Mario Ferrigni, 'L'Insegnamento Grafico in Italia', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 32 (1), January 1935, p. 28.

55 The course library – open three evenings a week from 8:30 pm to 10pm, from Monday to Wednesday, and on Sunday from 9am to 12am – had an assorted foreign specialist literature, including magazines, handbooks and historical surveys. In the early-1930s, about thirty foreign specialist publications were available: *Anales Graficos* (Buenos Aires), *Archiv für Buchgewerbe* (Leipzig), *Archiv für Buchbinderei* (Dresden), *Art et Decoration* (Paris), *Art et Métiers Graphiques* (Paris), *Bulletin Officiel des Maîtres Imprimeurs de France* (Paris), *Coreo Tipografico* (Barcellona), *Deutsche Buch und Steindrucker* (Berlin), *Freie Künste* (Leipzig), *Grafika* (Warsaw), *Grafika Polska* (Warsaw), *Graphische Revue* (Vienna), *L'Imprimerie* (Paris), *Linotype & Machinery* (Paris and London), *Magyar Grafika* (Budapest), *Offset Buch und Werbekunst* (Leipzig), *Paginas Graficas* (Buenos Aires), *Papyrus* (Paris), *Photographische Cronik* (Halle), *Plastika* (Warsaw), *The American Printer* (New York), *The British Printer* (London), *The Inland Printer* (Chicago), *The Printing Art* (Cambridge, USA), *The Studio* (London), *Trabajo* (Montevideo), *Typographische Jahrbücher* (Berlin) and *Zeitschrift für Reproduktionstechnik* (Halle). For the complete list of books and periodicals held in the course library in 1931, see: *Catalogo della Biblioteca della Scuola del Libro in Milano*, ed. by Luigi Ladelli (Milan: Umanitaria, 1931).

In addition to the expansion of its educational ambitions, the emerging graphic design profession was also actively seeking a new form of collective identity. This can be seen in the proliferation of new terms to describe professional roles during the interwar period. 'Operaio-artista' (labourer-artist), 'bozzettista' (draughtsman), 'artista grafico' (graphic artist), 'regista della stampa' (printing director), 'architetto del libro' (book architect), 'tipografo artista' (typographer artist) and 'progettista grafico' (graphic designer) are among the many different terms that appeared – and disappeared – in the pages of *Risorgimento Grafico*, *Graphicus* and *Campo Grafico* from the late-1920s to the mid-1940s. Reflecting in 1939 on the lack of consistency in the terminology, the editor of *Campo Grafico*, Enrico Bona, concluded that 'one gets the general impression that definitions and cataloguing have begun to pile up without reaching, after much discussion, a concise formula to be injected into the bone structure of the modern graphics organism'.[56] Indeed, as this section will demonstrate, the vocabulary adopted in specialist magazines was contradictory, and each of the terms corresponded to a somewhat different perspective on the ongoing articulation of the new professional figure of the graphic designer. The terms 'tipografi' (typographers) and 'grafici' (graphics) were the most commonly used terms to refer to proto-graphic designers. Following the elasticity of the language in use at the time, they are used here as elastic words, for the sake of convenience.

In 1933, Raffaello Bertieri, described the 'graphic artist' as a new category of collaborators of the typographer that was gradually taking shape in Italy.[57] The graphic artist was 'a person with a wider competence and better training than those acquirable in a workshop. He [could] conceive new page layouts, fresher compositions and less mundane artefacts, livelier and more effective arrangements of colour'.[58] On-the-job learning was insufficient for the graphic artist whose

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56   '[...] si ricava in generale l'impressione che le definizioni e le catalogazioni comincino a far mucchio senza arrivare, dopo tante discussioni, alla formula sintetica da iniettare nell'ossatura dell'organismo grafico moderno'. Enrico Bona, 'Del Progettista Grafico', *Campo Grafico*, 7 (1), January 1939, p. 3.

57   Raffaello Bertieri, 'Orientamenti Nuovi della Tipografia Italiana', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (2), February 1933, pp. 81-94.

58   '[...] persona che con maggiore competenza e miglior preparazione di quanto possa farsi in officina, può immaginare costruzioni nuove di pagine, formazioni più fresche e meno banali lavori, combinazioni più vivaci ed efficaci di colore'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (2), February 1933, p. 86.

original approach to the graphic arts relied on specialist training. Graphic artists were close to, but different from, fine artists. Mario Soresina, illustrator and contributor to *Risorgimento Grafico*, clarified the ambiguity: whereas the fine artist was 'totally unfamiliar with any notions of graphic technology', the graphic artist was 'the perfect technique specialist and the perfect aesthete'.[59] Thus, the term 'graphic artist' indicated a new type of practitioner who was expected to balance technical skills and professional knowledge with aesthetic sensibility and creativity.

The term 'graphic artist' assumed a slightly different connotation within the pages of the magazine *Campo Grafico*. From 1933, *Campo Grafico* and its contributors – also known as 'campisti' from the magazine title – not only advocated for a closer relationship between the graphic and fine arts, but also championed a closer alignment with the avant-garde, geometric abstraction, Constructivism, Futurism and Rationalist architecture in particular.[60] According to the campisti, to liaise with artists was part of graphic artists' professional profile and a good understanding of modern art was the prerequisite for a productive dialogue. The call for a closer relationship between graphics and modern art provided the campisti with the chance – one of many, as will be discussed below – to enter into dispute with Bertieri and his magazine. In the belief that typography should be 'a unique and unmistakable product of our present time', they criticised Bertieri's revival of Italian Renaissance and Bodonian book and type design.[61] In contrast to Bertieri's neoclassical rhetoric and return to national roots, the campisti highlighted the intertwined relationship between avant-garde art and architecture movements, and Central-European modernist graphics.

'To create aesthetic emotion on a surface through geometric elements' was, according to the campista Attilio Rossi, a common concern for both geometric abstraction and modern typography.[62] Rossi's words in *Campo Grafico* closely recall Swiss graphic designer Jan Tschichold's argument, according to which 'the

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59   '[...] digiuno completamente di ogni nozione di tecnologia grafica [...] il perfetto tecnico e il perfetto esteta'. Mario Soresina, 'Per una Estetica Grafica Italiana', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (3), March 1933, p.146.

60   *Graphicus* and *Campo Grafico* often published articles on modern art and architecture movements. See, for instance: Ezio D'Errico, 'Astrattismo', *Graphicus*, 25 (3), February 1935, pp. 16-17; Alberto Sartoris, 'Piet Mondrian', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (1), January 1938, pp. 12-13; Giulia Veronesi, 'Il Nuovo Bauhaus', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (1), January 1938, p. 13.

61   '[...] prodotto unico ed inconfondibile del nostro tempo presente [...]'. 'Presupposti alla Collaborazione con l'Artista', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (3), March 1934, p. 53.

62   '[...] creare un'emozione estetica in una superficie con elementi grafici'. Attilio Rossi, 'L'Evoluzione della Tipografia in Italia', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (9), September 1937, unpaged. The article was the translation of Rossi's article in the Buenos Aires-based magazine *Excelsior*.

same aim that had led to "absolute painting" – design composing from basic form and proportion – when applied to our field produced the new typography'.[63] The osmotic relationship between the modern art movement and cutting-edge graphics was indeed one of the principles of Tschichold's New Typography, the aesthetics of which were popularised in Italy in the pages of *Graphicus* and *Campo Grafico*.[64] Rossi recommended typographers to learn from the 'most lively tendencies of modern Constructivism', how to use individual graphic units – such as titles, text, page numbers and captions – as emotional and plastic elements.[65] Focusing on the two-dimensional surface, both abstract artists and modern typographers were aiming at formal equilibrium: the former by arranging colours and geometric forms on the canvas, the latter by balancing text, white spaces and pictures on the page. As evidence in support of his argument, Rossi compared abstract paintings by avant-garde artists Piet Mondrian, Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart, Atanasio Soldati and Virginio Ghiringhelli, with examples of cutting-edge magazine page layout (see Illustration **1.2**). Designed by graphic designers Edoardo Persico and Guido Modiano, the featured exemplars illustrate one of the most significant innovations of Italian graphics, namely the two-page spread conceived as a single layout, or 'two pages in one'.

A good understanding of modern art was not the only prerequisite for a productive dialogue between typographers and artists. According to the campisti, prior to collaborating with artists and dealing with aesthetic concerns, typographers were expected to develop 'a truthful and deep "awareness of the profession"'.[66] It was only after acquiring solid technical knowledge and practical skills, and an understanding of graphic media, production costs and workshop practices, that typographers were put in the position of working together with artists as equal partners in the creative process, rather than as mere makers. Vocational schools

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63   Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2006), pp. 56-58, first published in Berlin, 1928.

64   Articles on the New Typography appeared in both *Campo Grafico* and *Graphicus*. Richly illustrated, they were written by Italian graphic critics as well as Central-European graphic designers, such as Jan Tschichold and Willi Baumeister. See: G. P., 'Contro l'Arte del Libro', *Graphicus*, 17 (219), September 1927, p. 17; Giovanni T (Jan Tschichold), 'Della Nuova Tipografia', *Graphicus*, 23 (284), February 1933, pp. 7-9; Jan Tschichold, 'Schemi di Tabelle', *Campo Grafico*, 3 (6), June 1935, pp. 128-129; Jan Tschichold, 'Le Proporzioni nella Nuova Tipografia', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (4), pp. 5-8; Willi Baumeister, 'Willi Baumeister', *Campo Grafico*, 3 (5), May 1935, pp. 106-108; G. P., 'Recensioni', *Campo Grafico*, 4 (1), January 1936.

65   '[...] correnti più vive del costruttivismo moderno [...]'. Attilio Rossi, 'L'Evoluzione della Tipografia in Italia', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (9), September 1937.

66   '[...] una vera e profonda "conoscenza del mestiere"'. *Campo Grafico*, 2 (3), March 1934, p. 54.
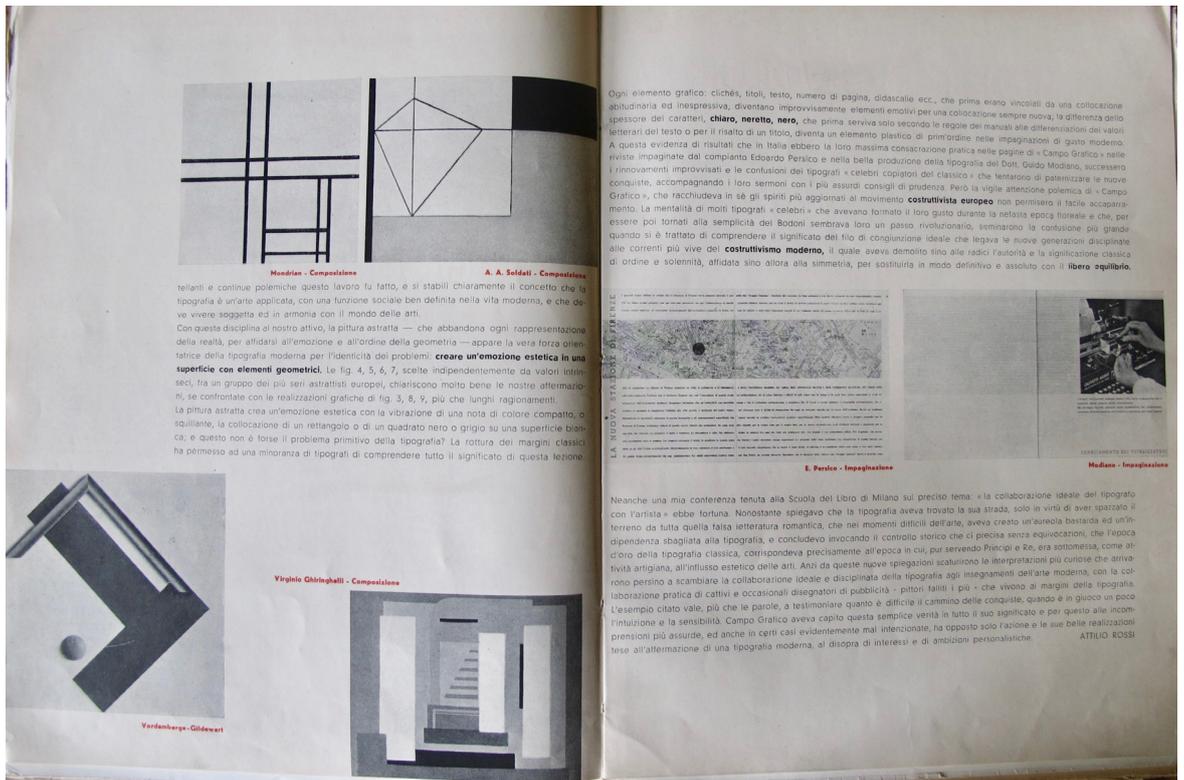
1.2   double-page spread comparing geometric abstraction paintings (clockwise works by Piet Mondrian, Atanasio Soldati, Virginio Ghiringhelli and Friedrich Vordemberge-Gildewart) and examples of two pages in one layout (left by Edoardo Persico, and wright by Guido Modiano) from Attilio Rossi, 'L'Evoluzione della Tipografia in Italia', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (9), September 1937, unpaged

were held to be responsible for the success of the collaboration. The balance between technical and humanistic classes was expected to convey professional skills and knowledge, promote students' curiosity and discourage preconceived and judgemental attitudes towards modern art.

The terms 'book architect' and 'typographer artist' provide extra detail to the description of the new professional figure outlined thus far in this section.[67] Used first by Bertieri in 1938, the terms raise further questions concerning the tension between art and graphics, between creativity and technique.[68] The main difference between the two figures was the degree of freedom with which they were expected to approach graphic work. On the one hand, the book architects were 'artists who, for professional reasons, had the chance to acquire familiarity with the typographical workshop'.[69] According to Bertieri, the lack of professional training put the self-taught book architects in a privileged position. Free from any constraint, they were able to focus solely on the 'pagina nuova' (new page) and their works favoured experimentation and research. The typographer artists, on the other hand, '[came] from the typography trade and [knew] all the tricks and necessities of their craft.[70] The responsibility towards the reader – i.e. the regard for clarity and readability – and the technical and historical background constrained the typographer artist, whose work was the outcome of a careful study of purpose and use of the printed matter. Yet, despite differences, book architects and typographer artists were anything but in conflict with each other. In fact, according to Bertieri, the modernisation of Italian graphics depended on the crossover between the two figures. Whereas book architects were expected to arrange the layout of their experimental graphic exercises by balancing text and pictures and focusing on the overall effect of the new page, typographer artists were expected to adjust book artists' creative excesses to the benefit of readability and functionality.

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67   The comparison between architecture and typography was a recurring image within the specialist literature of the period. Areas of text, pictures and white spaces were the building blocks in the hands of the typographers as architects of the page. See, for instance: Carlo Frassinelli, *Trattato di Architettura Tipografica* (Turin: Tipografia Carlo Frassinelli, 1940); Guido Modiano, 'Architettura dell'Annuncio', *Ufficio Moderno*, 15 (3), March 1940, pp. 106-08.

68   Raffaello Bertieri, 'Architetti del Libro e Tipografi Artisti in Italia', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 35 (4), April 1938, pp. 145-150.

69   '[...] artisti che per ragioni di professione ebbero la possibilità di acquistare dimestichezza con le officine tipografiche [...]'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 35 (4), April 1938, p. 145.

70   '[...] dalla tipografia provengono e della loro arte conoscono tutte le malizie ed anche tutte le esigenze [...]'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 35 (4), April 1938, p. 147.

Bertieri's article triggered a polemical response from the typographer, type designer and graphics critic Guido Modiano.[71] Modiano praised what he acknowledged as a change in Bertieri's former conservative attitude towards modern graphics. Yet, he criticised the use of the two pages in one layout to illustrate the difference between book architects and typographer artists. Both writers agreed on the 'italianità' (Italianness) of the two-page spread, but while Bertieri attributed the paternity to book architects, Modiano claimed he had been the first to use it and therefore it was to be attributed – to use Bertieri's terminology – to a typographer artist.[72] The clarification was more than a mere authorship tussle. By attributing the paternity of the 'most lively and current scheme in Italian typography' to a typographer artist, Modiano was 'reacting against the tendency to consider typographers […] as mere makers, often clumsy and incompetent, of someone else's ideas and projects'.[73]

Modiano was arguing for a more prominent role for typographers during the design stage and against the idea that only book architects, supposedly thanks to their inexperience and lack of technical constraints, could conceive innovative graphic compositions. In Modiano's opinion, it was, in fact, quite the opposite. The two pages in one layout was the outcome of rethinking typographic standards, a reaction to the symmetrical and centred page layout. Therefore, only someone who was well aware of typographical principles and know-how could have been able to actually conceive it. According to Modiano, the two-page spread was the outcome of cross-pollination between Rationalist architecture and modern art – in particular Futurism and geometric abstraction – and typographers' professional knowledge and technical skills.[74]

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71   Guido Modiano, 'Lettera Aperta a Raffaello Bertieri', *Risorgimento Grafico,* 35 (8), August 1938, pp. 333-340. A more polemical reaction to Bertieri's article was published on the pages of *Graphicus*, see: Ezio D'Errico, 'Artisti e Architetti', *Graphicus*, 28 (10), October 1938, pp. 11-15.

72   According to Modiano, the first time the two pages in one layout scheme appeared was in a catalogue that he had designed in 1931, and in the magazine *Tipografia* the following year.

73   ' […] reagire contro la tendenza che considera noi tipografi […] soltanto degli esecutori, troppo spesso maldestri, o incapaci, delle idee e dei programmi altrui'. Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico,* 35 (8), August 1938, p. 340.

74   On Guido Modiano and his role in the modernisation of Italian typography in the interwar period, see: Mauro Chiabrando, 'L'architetto della Pagina: Guido Modiano e la "Nuova Tipografia" Italiana', *Charta*, 84 (2006), pp. 64-69; Carlo Vinti, 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica" alla VII Triennale', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), pp. 50-63; Mauro Chiabrando, 'Guido Modiano e la Nuova Tipografia Italiana / Guido Modiano and New Italian Typography', in *TDM5: Grafica Italiana*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza and Carlo Vinti (Milan: Corraini Edizioni, 2012), pp. 60-61.

As suggested by the term 'bozzettista' (draughtsman), graphic practitioners and critics identified the sketch ('bozzetto' or 'schizzo') as the most indicative tool and methodology in the hands of the new professional figure they were trying to demarcate.[75] The very first issue of *Campo Grafico*, in January 1933, featured an article on drafting (see Illustration **1.3**).[76] Stating that 'works ought to be thought out before beginning them', Giovanni Peviani presented the sketch as a creative device and an epistemological tool: a means of visualising and generating new ideas by putting down on paper an initial concept to be developed and adjusted.[77] Sketching worked closely together with thinking. They stimulated each other in exploring different graphic solutions in a trial-and-error process. As a creative tool, the sketch allowed typographers to think, draw, check and adjust ideas in a continuous and cyclic flow of information from head, to hand, to paper and back to eye.[78]

Moreover, for Peviani drafting responded to the requirements of modern graphics. Based on the dynamic distribution of text, pictures and blank spaces, modern graphic compositions focused on 'the perfect distribution of white areas and on the correct shade of the masses rather than wasting time with decorative motifs'.[79] Peviani advised the reader of *Campo Grafico* to use a soft lead pencil to draw a variety of sketches in a few minutes, seeking the best balance between text – represented by shaded areas – and blank spaces (see Illustration **1.3.b**). For him this recommended sketching method could convey an immediate and simultaneous idea of the overall graphic composition. Having abandoned the rigidity of the central-axis settings, typographers were freed from the constraints of the traditional symmetrical layout. They needed to study carefully the balance and contraposition of graphic units, of white and black areas, in order to attain what was, by

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75   In the late-1920s, *Graphicus* published a series of articles on the usefulness of the sketch in the printing workshops. See, for instance: Carlo Frassinelli, 'Utilità dello Schizzo nel Lavoro Tipografico', *Graphicus*, 18 (230), August 1928, pp. 11-12; Alfredo Contardi, 'Utilità dello Schizzo in Tipografia', *Graphicus*, 18 (233), November 1928, pp. 7-8; Romolo Carmellini, 'Sull'Utilità dello Schizzo', *Graphicus*, 19 (235), January 1929, pp. 3-4; Carlo Frassinelli, 'Lo "Schizzo" in Tipografia', *Graphicus*, 19 (237), March 1929, pp. 4-5.

76   Giovanni Peviani, 'La Necessità dello Schizzo', *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, pp. 4-5.

77   '[…] i lavori vanno pensati prima di iniziarli'. Peviani, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, p. 5.

78   On drafting as a support for the design process of designers and architects, see: Paul Laseau, *Graphic Thinking for Architects and Designers* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1980).

79   '[…] perfetta distribuzione dei bianchi ed una giusta tonalità di masse più che gingillarsi con motivi decorativi […]'. Peviani, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, p. 4.
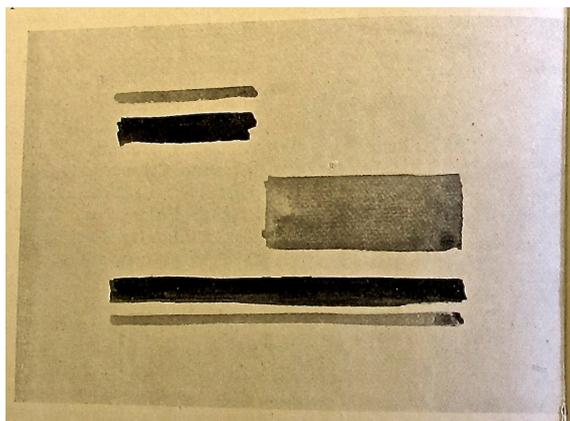
a

b

1.3 double-page spread from Giovanni Peviani, 'La Necessità dello Schizzo', *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, pp. 4-5; **.a** and **.b** details of the suggested sketching techniques

the mid-1930s, known as 'libero equilibrio' (free equilibrium).[80] The free equilibrium was a harmonic and asymmetric layout in which text and pictures were freely arranged. It was exemplified by the two pages in one layout and consisted in a dynamic composition that guided the movement of the reader's eye.

The sketch was also a communication device that, as a two-way intermediary, empowered typographers to communicate with both clients and makers.[81] According to the typographer and graphic critic, Carlo Frassinelli, the sketch protected the typographer's interests while at the same time guaranteeing the client's satisfaction.[82] It helped to foster communication by avoiding professional jargon, allowed the typographer to convey the general idea of the graphic work to the client at an early stage of the design process, and gave the client a chance to comment and agree upon the outlined version. According to Frassinelli, without the sketch, clients were more likely to choose from a portfolio of previous works, thereby debasing the output of the printing workshop to repetitive stereotypes. In contrast, the sketch could encourage a more open-minded attitude on the part of clients and promote their confidence in typographers' competence, advice and creative role. Moreover, it was instrumental for conveying information to makers. In addition to mediating the design and informing the maker, the sketch was also expected to have an indirect educative effect. In translating the drafted idea into printed matter, it was considered that makers would passively improve their graphic taste, develop their understanding of modern graphics and be thus encouraged to achieve professional advancement.[83]

Finally, the sketch was the conceptual instrument on which the draughtsman's shift from maker to designer was based.[84] It represented both a new methodological approach to the graphic arts and a different step in the production process.

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80   Other terms, such as 'ritmo grafico' (graphic rhythm) and 'grafismo' (graphism), were used as nuanced synonyms. See Guido Modiano, 'Cinque Manifesti', *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, pp. 21-23; Bruno Munari, 'Ritmi Grafici', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (6), June 1937, pp. 33-35; Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 35 (8), August 1938, pp. 339-40.

81   For a perspective on drafting as a communication device within architecture and its role in the professionalisation of architects, see: Mary N. Woods, *From Craft to Profession: The Practice of Architecture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 9-26.

82   Carlo Frassinelli, 'Utilità dello Schizzo nel Lavoro Tipografico', *Graphicus*, 18 (230), August 1928, pp.11-12.

83   Frassinelli, *Graphicus*, 13 (230), August 1928, p. 12.

84   On drafting skills as the tool for advancement across division of labour within architecture, see George Barnett Johnston's bottom up perspective on architectural practice focusing on draughtsmen: George Barnett Johnston, *Drafting Culture: A Social History of Architectural Graphic Standards* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 2008), pp. 11-12 and 32.

By the mid-1930s, design and execution had become two separate tasks and the draughtsman's position as design specialists in the modern printing workshop was secured. Selected from amongst the compositor's workforce, the draughtsmen were talented labourers with drawing skills and aesthetic sensitivity. Division of tasks and hierarchies in the printing workshop were based on the sketch, which was identified as the most distinctive aspect of the, as yet uncertain, professional identity of the graphic designer. In comparison to more traditional graphic processes, graphics critic Augusto Calabi argued in 1934 that 'today's specialisation and mechanisation put the creative task in the hands of a few, highly demarcated individuals', leaving the majority of practitioners to perform the execution.[85]

In 1939 Bona's aforementioned editorial summed up all the discussions surrounding the layout of the new professional figure.[86] This was poetically described as 'the organic rational core to graft in between the two big branches, the technique and the aesthetic, [...] of the old trunk of Typography'.[87] Bona acknowledged that inconsistency of terminology had given rise to confusion as regards competences and tasks:

> In between the two branches of the old trunk a heterogeneous and indefinable crowd has settled: the graphic director, the typographer artist, the book architect, the graphic artist, the graphic technician, the book decorator, the advertising technician, the cultured layout man, the draughtsman, the illustrator, the anonymous designer and the ultimate ars grafica workshop, etc.[88]

But, according to Bona, in 1939 time was ripe for the 'progettista grafico' (graphic designer), which was 'a modern definition, not pompous, and with a clear meaning', a synthesis of the collaboration between the artist and the technician.[89] Just as architects collaborated with sculptors, and directors collaborated with set designers, Bona expected graphic designers to work closely with artists and direct their creativity and experimental approach according to the purpose and use of the visual artefacts. The term responded to the shift of focus away from execu-

85 '[...] oggi la specializzazione e la meccanizzazione assegnano a pochi e ben distinti individui il compito creative [...]'. Augusto Calabi, 'Cosa Leggere e Cosa da Vedere', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (11), November 1934, p. 627.

86 Bona, *Campo Grafico*, 8 (1), January 1939, pp. 3-5.

87 '[...] nucleo organico razionale da innestare tra i due grandi rami, la tecnica e l'estetica, [...] sul vecchio tronco della Tipografia'. Bona, *Campo Grafico*, 8 (1), January 1939, p. 3.

88 'Tra I due rami dell'antico tronco s'è insediata una folla eterogenea indefinibile: il regista grafico, il tipografo artista, architetto del libro, l'artista grafico, il tecnico grafico, il decoratore del libro, il tecnico pubblicitario, il letterato impaginatore, il bozzettista, il disegnatore, l'anonima creazioni, lo studio ars grafica non plus ultra ecc. ecc.'. Bona, *Campo Grafico*, 8 (1), January 1939, p. 4.

89 'Definizione moderna, senza pompa, e di preciso significato'. Bona, *Campo Grafico*, 8 (1), January 1939, p. 5.

tion towards a more methodological approach to working practice. In sum, the 'progettista' (designer) had become the person in charge of the 'progetto' (design) of visual artefacts.

1.4 THE IMPACT OF FASCISM AND THE MODERNISATION OF THE SCUOLA DEL LIBRO, 1933-43

After a financially problematic period, the Umanitaria took over the management of the Scuola del Libro in 1933 in order to avoid its closure.[90] Following the merger of the Scuola del Libro with the Umanitaria, the school underwent a series of changes that are explored in this section in order to address the ways in which the school adapted to the changed political context and to the shifting definition of the graphic designer's professional identity. These changes responded, on the one hand, to the increased impact of Fascism on the school organisation. On the other hand, they consisted in the modernisation of the curriculum and technical equipment of the school to meet the requests for specialised training for the new profession, as investigated in the previous section.

The Umanitaria had been under compulsory receivership since 1924 for political and financial reasons. 'Is it possible', asked Benito Mussolini's brother, Arnaldo, rhetorically in 1929 about the Umanitaria, 'that an Institution founded at the peak of the democratic era, raised in the shadow of that master of weakness and useless sentimentalism – reformist socialism – could turn into an efficient organisation,

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90   In 1927 the Scuola del LIbro faced the withdrawal of financial support from the Sindacato Poligrafico Fascista (Fascist Polygraph Trade Union) and from the Federazione Fascista dell'Industria Editoriale (Fascist Federation of the Publishing Industry). Concurrently, the National Education Ministry cut its annual contribution to the school from 20,000 to 12,000 Lire. According to archival documents, the funding withdrawal was due to the associations' – formerly known as Federazione Grafica Operaia (Graphic Workers Organisation) and Associazione Editoriale Libraia Italiana (Association of Italian Book Publishing) – loss of administrative independence during the Fascist Regime. This prevented them from maintaining their financial commitment towards the school. In response to a direct request for financial support made by the director of the Umanitaria vocational courses, Elio Palazzo, Benito Mussolini subsidised the Scuola del Libro with 400,000 Lire between 1932 and 1933. See: 'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria, Milano', annual report, ASU, 1932-227-53, pp. 3-4; untitled archival document on the 1933 reorganisation of the didactic and renewal of the equipment at the Scuola del Libro, ASU, no archive reference number available, p. 1.

adequate to the requirements of the fascist civilisation?'.[91] Indeed, it was possible. A new managing board took office and Edoardo Palazzo became director of the professional schools at the Umanitaria, Scuola del Libro included. The activities of the institution were downsized and confined to vocational training. As recalled by Riccardo Bauer, antifascist and director of the Umanitaria in the postwar period:

> Fascism impoverished the Umanitaria [...] reducing it to just one professional school among many. [...] During the inauspicious twenty years of the fascist regime it was distanced from its essential mission, which was [...] to animate, guide and spur the Italian labour movement, and to stimulate the search for new ways to organise the world of work the structure of Italian society.[92]

The two-year training course at the Scuola del Libro was extended and renamed 'Scuola di Avviamento e Orientamento Professionale' (Foundation and Vocational Guidance Course) in conformity with the 1923 Fascist reform of the Italian educational system, Riforma Gentile (Gentile Reform).[93] As result of the fascistisation of the Italian education system, and in the same manner as any other educational institution during the Fascist regime, 'Cultura Fascista' (Fascist Culture) was

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91   'È possibile che un Ente sorto in pieno periodo democratico, allevato all'ombra del socialismo riformista che è stato maestro [...] di debolezze, di inutili sentimentalismi, possa trasformarsi in un organismo efficiente, adatto alle esigenze della civiltà fascista?'. Arnaldo Mussolini, 'L'Umanitaria Fascista Inizia la Sua Nuova Vita', 1929, the text is available on line on the website of the Umanitaria: www.umanitaria.it/page.php?t=1924-1942._Il_commissariamento_fascista [accessed 6 March 2015] (para. 1 of 4). Also quoted in: Emanuela Scarpelli, *Il Teatro del Popolo: La Stagione Artistica dell'Umanitaria fra Cultura e Società* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 2000), p. 199.

92   'Il fascismo ha depauperato l'Umanitaria [...] riducendola a una scuola professionale tra le tante [...] l'ha allontanata durante l'infausto ventennio da quella essenziale missione, che la istituzione aveva sposato sin dall'origine, di animatrice, di guida, di sollecitatrice di vie nuove pel mondo del lavoro, per la struttura sociale italiana'. Bauer, *La Società Umanitaria*, p. 8.

93   For an overview of the Gentile Reform and Fascist educational policies, see: Giovanni Genovesi, *Storia della Scuola in Italia dal Settecento a oggi* (Rome, Bari: Editori Laterza, 2004), pp. 123-74; Teresa Maria Mazzatosta, *Il Regime Fascista tra Educazione e Propaganda* (Bologna, Cappelli, 1978). On the Gentile Reform and the reorganisation of the artistic education, see: Ugo Ojetti, 'Per la Riforma dell'Insegnamento Artistico', in Ugo Ojetti, *Raffaello e altre Leggi* (Milan: Fratelli Treves Editori, 1921), pp. 231-51; Anty Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia: Una Storia Lunga Più di un Secolo* (Venice: Marsilio, 2015), pp. 20-22; Monica Amari, 'Il Dibattito sull'Insegnamento Artistico e la Riforma Gentile', in Monica Amari, *I Musei delle Aziende. La Cultura della Tecnica tra Arte e Storia* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1997), pp. 52-55; Filippo Taveri, 'Osservatorio: Didattica Educazione. Ricognizione sulla Didattica del Design, Percorsi Storici e Riflessioni Critiche' (unpublished master dissertation, ISIA Urbino, 2012), pp. 32-34. For an international perspective on the Gentile Reform, see: Richard J. Wolff, 'Italian Education During World War II: Remnant of Failed Fascist Education, Seeds of New Schools, in *Education and the Second World War: Studying in Schooling and Social Change*, ed. by Roy Lowe (New York: Routledge, 2011).

introduced into the training courses.[94] Further examples of the impact of Fascism on the activity of the Scuola del Libro were the adoption of the Fascist dating system and Fascist symbols in all official publications and printed ephemera.[95] The Roman straight-armed salute was made compulsory and it had 'to be used without exception by everyone'.[96] Students of the training course were expected to be members of the youth organisation, Opera Nazionale Balilla (ONB).[97] Professionals attending the complementary and vocational courses had to be members of the

94   Primary sources on the year of introduction of Fascist Culture lectures in the curriculum are contradictory. They feature on the prospectus of the training courses for the academic year 1930-31. Yet, according to an archival document from 1932, the so-considered 'indispensable' Fascist Culture lectures were still lacking. Fascist Culture lectures were held one hour per week and teachers were trained at the Scuola di Mistica Fascista (School of Fascist Mysticism in Milan). 'Scuola del Libro, Milano. Programma della Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio, Anno Scolastico 1930-31', prospectus, ASU; 'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria Milano', archival document, ASU, 1932-227-53, p. 8.

95   From 1927 to 1945 a double numbering system for dates was in use in Fascist Italy. Taking the March on Rome in 1922 as departing point of the calendar, the Fascist year began on the 29th of October, and ended on the 28th. It used Roman numerals – to differentiate itself from the Arab numerals of the Gregorian calendar – followed by E. F., Era Fascista (Fascist Era). Fascism public image used Roman symbolic. The fasces were declared emblem of the regime and their compulsory use was regulated by a number of decree-law that occurred in the second half of the 1920s. See: Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini's Italy* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 95-99.

96   '[…] da tutti indistintamente deve essere usato'. 'Regolamento dei Corsi per gli Allievi della Sezione Domenicale di Perfezionamento. Scuola del Libro di Milano, Anno Scolastico 1930-31', regulations pamphlet, ASU, italics in original. By December 1925 the adoption of the Roman salute was made compulsory in all public institutions – including schools – and in 1932 substituted for the bourgeois handshake. See: Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*, pp. 110-13.

97   The ONB was a party-controlled youth group created in 1926 for youths aged from six to eighteen. The ONB had the monopoly over youth organisations. Enrolment was made compulsory in 1937, but all children were 'strongly recommended' to join the ONB directly from its foundation. The original aim of the ONB was to provide children with military-like physical training. In addition, it carried out pre-military reviews, organised sports events and recreational activities and provided assistance in various forms. During the academic year, compulsory rallies were held on Saturdays. For an overview of the Fascist youth organisations, see: *Historical Dictionary of Fascist Italy*, ed. by Philip V. Cannistraro (Westport; London: Greesnwood Press, 1982), pp. 569-573; Tracy H. Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight: Political Socialization of Youth in Fascist Italy, 1922-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

Fascist trade unions.[98] Both memberships were compulsory: there was no way for pupils to avoid being part of the Fascist youth organisations, or for workers to refuse to sign up for Fascist unions.[99]

Further changes after the merger of the Scuola del Libro with the Umanitaria in 1933 were the result of the modernisation of both the curriculum and technical equipment. In 1937, the rationalist architect and chief editor of the architecture magazine *Casabella*, Giuseppe Pagano, wrote the introduction to a catalogue of the vocational schools at the Umanitaria. Commenting on the final year show, Pagano appreciated the students' 'lively, fresh and current awareness of good and bad, [...] the unmistakable understanding of modern aesthetics'.[100]

> At the Umanitaria a very different wind is blowing. Young and lively professors, up-to-date industrial technical equipment, order and clarity of ideas and, above all [...] the keen observation of contemporary needs and ideals. [...] Ornament and beauty lie first and foremost in cleanness, honesty, and clearness and in elegant technical skills.[101]

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98   The regime's monopoly of the syndicalist organisations was part of Fascism's corporate system. From 1926 onwards, according to the so-called 'legge sindacale' (syndicalism law) drawn up by Alfredo Rocco – articles 3 and 6 of the Carta del Lavoro (Labour Charter), 1927 – only one officially recognised employers and employees' association for each field of economic activities was allowed. All corporations were controlled by the regime and grouped under the Camera dei Fasci e delle Corporazioni (Chamber of Fasces and Corporations). Industrial Confederation included publicity and advertising producers, while graphic artists and text editors were grouped under the Confederazione dei Professionisti e degli Artisti (Professional and Artists Confederation) that counted more than 425,000 members in its ranks. On Fascist corporatism, see: *Historical Dictionary of Fascist Italy*, ed. by Cannistraro, pp. 138-140. On the fascistisation of Italian society through mass organisations and everyday Fascist rituals, see also: Victoria de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leisure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Mabel Berezin, *Making the Fascist Self: The Political Culture of Interwar Italy* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1997).

99   Opportunistic or pragmatic compliance with fascist institutions, especially when compulsory, should not be confused with full alignment with and adhesion to the Partito Nazionale Fascista (Fascist National Party – PNF). In some cases, signing up for the Fascist corporations was compulsory. For some professions, party membership was also obligatory. In 1931, for instance, university professors were requested to pledge alliance to the regime. Nationwide, only about fifteen professors out of over 1200 refused, and consequently lost their jobs. On the middle class' – e.g. lawyers, engineers, doctors, notaries and journalists – opportunistic signing up for the corporations, see: *Libere Professioni e Fascismo*, ed. by Gabriele Turi (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1994), pp. 43-44.

100   '[...] senso vivo, fresco ed aggiornato del bello e del brutto [...] inequivocabile comprensione dell'estetica moderna'. Giuseppe Pagano, in *Le Scuole dell'Umanitaria Anno XVI E.F.: Quaderno n. 1* (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1937), unpaged. Also quoted in Bauer, *La Società Umanitaria*, p. 167.

101   'All'Umanitaria soffia un vento molto diverso. Professori giovani e vivi, attrezzatura industrial aggiornata, ordine e chiarezza di cose e di idee e soprattutto [...] una attenta osservazione dei bisogni e degli ideali contemporanei [...] la decorazione e la bellezza sono innanzitutto nella pulizia, nell'onestà, nella chiarezza, nella elegante abilità tecnica'. Pagano, in *Le Scuole dell'Umanitaria Anno XVI E.F.*, unpaged. Also quoted in Bauer, *La Società Umanitaria*, p. 167.

Pagano's quote highlights what he perceived as a favourable change in the school organisation and methodologies in line with the aesthetics and requirements of modern graphics.

By 1937, workshop furniture and technical equipment had been renewed to bring them up to date with current printing technologies. For instance, a Nebiolo D.G.B. rotary printing press, a new paper cutting machine and printing press were purchased in 1933 for the typographic, bookbinding and photogravure workshops.[102] The equipment of the hand-composition workshop were modernised as well. The use of 'old, worn-out, incomplete and old-fashioned typefaces [that absolutely did] not meet the requirements of the modern aesthetic' was deemed counterproductive, if not damaging, for the students' training.[103] Therefore, three series of the most modern typefaces were purchased in the regular, bold and light variants.[104] Wood typefaces – serif 'Normanno' (Normande), 'bastone moderno' (modern sans-serif) and 'bastone allungato' (elongated sans-serif) – and lead elongated sans-serif typefaces were bought in 1936.[105] Finally, the 'Neon' font was purchased in 1938 and immediately featured in visual artefacts (see Illustrations **1.4** and **1.16**).[106] Designed in 1935 by the type designer Giulio da Milano and produced by the Società Nebiolo in Turin, 'Neon' was a sans-serif font of clean proportions.[107] Like Jan Tschichold's typeface 'Universal' (1926-29), it was a single-case alphabet

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102   Untitled archival document on the 1933 reorganisation of the didactic and renovation of the equipment at the Scuola del Libro, ASU), no archive reference number available, p. 2.

103   '[...] serie di caratteri vecchi, stanchi, incompleti e fuori ormai dai tempi attuali [...] non rispondono più in modo assoluto alle esigenze dell'estetica moderna'. The name of the three typefaces is not specified on the 1933 annual report. 'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria, Milano', annual report, ASU, 1932-227-53, p. 10. Underlined text in original.

104   The name of the three typefaces is not specified on the 1933 annual report. 'Note sulla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria, Milano', annual report, ASU, 1932-227-53.

105   'Scuola del Libro. Funzionamento dell'Anno Scolastico 1936-37 XV', annual report, ASU, 1937-227-53, pp. 3-4.

106   'Scuola del Libro. Funzionamento Durante l'Anno Scolastico 1937-38 XVI E. F.', annual report, ASU, 1938-227-53, p. 3.

107   On type design in interwar Italy, see: Mario Piazza, 'Caratteri Italiani / Italian Typeface', in *TDM5*, ed. by Camuffo, Piazza and Vinti, pp. 53-59; Manuela Rattin and Matteo Ricci, *Questioni di Carattere: La Tipografia in Italia dall'Unità Nazionale agli Anni Settanta* (Milan: Stampa alternative, 1997), pp. 96-99.

1.4 pamphlet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1938-39, 15 × 16 cm; featuring the 'Neon' font designed by Giulio da Milano in 1925 and produced by the Società Nebiolo (Turin)

that combined both lowercase and uppercase, whose lettering was reduced to geometrical forms of uniform width with an emphasis on the curve.[108]

Alongside the modernisation of workshop equipment, the curriculum was also updated, mirroring the gradual articulation of the graphic designer's professional profile. The campisti's demand for 'lectures on aesthetic matter', which were expected to promote the understanding of modern art and thus favour the dialogue between graphics and artists, found fertile ground at the Scuola del Libro.[109] Indeed, the school had been collaborating with artists since the mid-1920s, when they had hired the painter Atanasio Soldati to lead the book and graphic arts decoration course aimed at 'young artists and graphic illustrators'.[110] 'A distracted reader could wonder what kind of relationship there is between the artworks of [Soldati] and the graphic arts', conjectured Ezio D'Errico from the pages of *Graphicus* in 1936, 'the same relationship there is between calculus and the movement of the stars'.[111] Soldati's abstract paintings were deemed to share with modern graphics the same search for formal equilibrium as the balance of forms and colours on the two-dimensional surface. Representative of the geometric abstraction movement, Soldati was part of the Milanese avant-garde close to the Galleria Il Milione and later became co-founder of the Movimento per l'Arte

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108   Italian type designers were aware of the movement for the 'Kleinschreibung', which advocated the use of a single lowercase alphabet. Theorised by Dr. Walter Portstmann in his book *Sprache und Schrift* (1920), the single lowercase alphabet was adopted by the New Typography in its search for a rational and economical way to improve communication. See: r. g., 'abbasso le maiuscole', *Graphicus*, 19 (245), November 1929, pp. 3-4; Armando Mazzanti, 'In Difesa della Maiuscola', *Graphicus*, 20 (249), pp. 37-39; 'Notizie Varie', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 27 (8), August 1930, p. 403; 'Le Ragioni dei Nemici della Maiuscola', *Graphicus*, 20 (255), September 1930, pp. 153-54. On Jan Tschichold's design for 'Universal', see: Jan Tschichold, 'noch eine neue schrift', *Typographische Mitteilungen*, 3, March 1930, translated in Christopher Burke, *Active Literature: Jan Tschichold and New Typography* (London: Hyphen Press, 2007), p. 154. See also: Jeremy Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany: 1890-1945* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), pp. 103-09; Robin Kinross, *Modern Typography: An Essay in Critical History*, 2nd edn (London: Hyphen Press, 2010), pp. 107-14.

109   '[...] insegnamenti di natura estetica [...]'. *Campo Grafico*, 2 (3), March 1934, p. 54.

110   '[...] giovani artisti e disegnatori grafici'. 'Umanitaria, Scuola del Libro. Norme per l'Iscrizione ai Corsi di Completamento e di Perfezionamento. Anno Scolastico 1936-37, XV E. F.', pamphlet, ASU. In the 1930s, the painter Leonardo Spreafico had also joined the staff.

111   'Un lettore disattento potrebbe chiedere che relazione passa tra le opere di questo pittore e i problemi dell'arte della stampa [...]: la stessa relazione che passa tra il calcolo matematico e il movimento degli astri'. Ezio D'Errico, 'Atanasio Soldati', *Graphicus*, 26 (3), March 1936, p. 15.

Concreta (Concrete Art Movement – MAC) in 1948.[112] His eighteen-year teaching experience at the Scuola del Libro (1925-43) familiarised students with abstract art and promoted mutual understanding and cross-fertilisation. Moreover, the school acted occasionally as a public platform for *Campo Grafico*. On December the 3rd 1933, for instance, the campista Rossi lectured at the Scuola del Libro campaigning for collaboration between typographers and artists.[113]

In relation to the request of graphics industrialists for practitioners with drafting skills, the Scuola del Libro had been offering drawing classes since Bertieri's directorship. Bertieri himself explained the school's approach to drawing classes in *Risorgimento Grafico*:

> […] the teaching of drawing should be of a particular type and essentially graphic. During the course pupils do not learn how to draw a leaf nor a decoration, a vase nor a capital [of a column], but get used to evaluating the masses and the structure of the alphabet. They gain practice in the arrangement of white spaces, the proportions within the page, and the balance of a title of few lines of text on the empty page.[114]

In response to contemporary debates about the importance of sketching in the graphic arts, the role of drawing in the curriculum was strengthened during the second-half of the 1930s, especially in the complementary evening classes in hand composition. Given the scarcity of archival documents and the lack of surviving student works, detailed reconstruction of the drawing classes is difficult.

Nevertheless, the account of the product designer Franco Renato Gambarelli, a former pupil on the applied arts vocational courses at the Umanitaria who specialised in goldsmithing (1930-1935), provides an insight into the teaching methods that were likely to have been adopted in the Scuola del Libro as well. In order to test and enhance aesthetic sensibility, and develop the relational seeing, Gambarelli and his classmates were asked to carry out the following assignment:

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112 The MAC was co-founded by Gillo Dorfles, Bruno Munari, Gianni Monnet and Soldati himself. See: *Movimento Arte Concreta: 1948-1952*, ed. by Enrico Crispolti (Rome: De Luca Editori d'Arte, 2003). Attracting Rationalist architects, abstract art painters and modern graphic artists, the Galleria Il Milione was one of the main meeting points in the 1930s Milan. See: *Anni Creativi al 'Milione' 1932-1939* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1980).

113 Rossi's lecture not only caught the students' attention, but it also inspired artists and exponents of the Milanese avant-garde circle that gathered around the Galleria Il Milione. Comments on Rossi's lecture by Peppino Ghiringhelli and I. Giongo were published in the gallery magazine *Il Milione* in December 1933 and February 1934, and featured in *Campo Grafico*. See: 'Comprensione', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (2), February 1934, pp. 28-29.

114 '[…] l'insegnamento del disegno sia di carattere particolare ed essenzialmente grafico, e che l'allievo con quelle lezioni impari non a disegnare una foglia od un fregio, un vaso od un capitello, ma si abitui a giudicare il valore delle masse e della struttura dell'alfabeto, prenda pratica nella suddivisione dei bianchi, nella proporzione di una pagina, nell'equilibrare un titolo di poche righe su di una pagina vuota'. Raffaello Bertieri, 'La Scuola del Libro in Milano. La "Vita Nova"', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 21 (8), August 1924, p. 332.

> Cut a 2 by 2 cm piece of black cardboard and a 1 by 4 cm grey one; paste both cardboard pieces on a 20 by 20 cm white background. Arrange them so that they "look good" with one another and with respect to the background.[115]

The assignment recalls Josef Albers' basic design exercises for the Vorkurs (preliminary course) at the Bauhaus. Albers' exercises were designed to sharpen students' vision and stimulate flexible thinking by working with restricted means and materials.[116] Demanding a careful calculation of intervals and nurturing the awareness of empty spaces, the figure-ground relationship exercise described by Gambarelli was suitable for students of the Scuola del Libro as well. By arranging and reordering shapes on a background and establishing rhythm and tensions between visual elements, students trained their eye to recognise how each element relates to the whole, and how the slightest alteration affects the fluctuating figure-ground relationship. Gambarelli's assignment also recalls Peviani's aforementioned example of the drafting method.[117] Instead of drafting coloured masses on paper, students arranged geometric and coloured forms on a white background, in the search for a dynamic composition based on the aforementioned principle of free equilibrium.

In addition to the promotion of a dialogue between graphics and modern art, and to the training of practitioners with drafting ability to work out ideas on paper, the Scuola del Libro also adapted the curriculum to the division of tasks in the printing workshop. For instance, the focus of the hand composition course gradually moved from execution towards design. A note on the 1935 annual report attests to this methodological shift. The anonymous author of the report complained about the lack of time required to complete all second year assignments, and suggested that 'it would be more efficient if the composition was limited to training students in the execution of good, well designed and finished sketches, featuring

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115   'Ritagliare un cartoncino nero di cm 2x2 e uno grigio 1x4; incollare i due cartoncini su un fondo bianco di cm 20x20 posizionandoli in modo che "stessero bene" l'uno rispetto all'altro e rispetto allo sfondo'. Franco Renato Gambarelli, *Monza Anni Trenta dall'Umanitaria all'ISIA* (Monza: Musei Civici Monza, 2001), p. 26.

116   On Josef Albers' teaching methodology for the preliminary courses at the Bauhaus, see: Frederick A. Horowitz, 'Albers the Teacher: Design', in Frederick A. Horowitz and Brenda Danilowitz, *Josef Albers: to Open Eyes. The Bauhaus, Black Mountain College and Yale* (London; New York: Phaidon, 2006), pp. 98-124.

117   Peviani, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, pp. 4-5.

only approximate and explanatory elements', instead of finished products.[118] Execution and design were two different tasks and the still-unclear professional figure of the 'progettista grafico' was in charge of the latter.

Evidence for the modernisation of the Scuola del Libro can also be found in visual artefacts. Indeed, graphic compositions and visual language of both official publications and students' works drastically changed in the 1930s. In this section, I argue that the design change in the visual output at the Scuola del Libro was instrumental within the debate about the circulation of modernist aesthetics that gripped practitioners and graphics critics, and in particular within the quarrel between *Risorgimento Grafico* and *Campo Grafico*.

Conceived in opposition to Bertieri, *Campo Grafico* had been linked to the Scuola del Libro since well before its launch in 1933.[119] 'Stretching the terms a bit', stated the co-founder and chief editor of *Campo Grafico*, Attilio Rossi, 'one could even assert that it was Bertieri himself who, as Director of the Scuola del Libro, awoke in many of us that combative impulse, which he then persistently failed to acknowledge'.[120] Indeed, as already pointed out by design historian Carlo Vinti, the campisti – Carlo Baldini, Eligio Bonelli, Pasquale Bressani, Carlo Dradi, Giuseppe Muggiani, Alfredo Pirondini, Giovanni Peviani and Attilio Rossi – were all former

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118   'Sarebbe forse più opportune che la composizione si limitasse a far esercitare gli allievi ad eseguire degli ottimi schizzi, ben condotti, completi, con disegnati soltanto gli elementi di carattere indicativo […]'. 'Scuola del Libro: Note sul Funzionamento della Sezione Serale di Completamento e della Sezione Festiva di Perfezionamento, 1935-36', annual report, ASU, 1935-227-53, pp. 1-2. Second year assignment for students in the hand composition department were: the execution of the book in its diverse parts, advertisements for newspapers and magazines, original compositions of different commercial printed ephemera.

119   On *Campo Grafico*, see: *Campo Grafico, la Sfida alla Modernità* (Milan: Centro Studi Grafici, 2003); *Campo Grafico, 1933-1939: Rivista di Estetica e di Tecnica Grafica* (Milan: Electa, 1983). On Attilio Rossi and Carlo Dradi, co-founders of *Campo Grafico*, see: On Attilio Rossi, see: Massimo Dradi and Pablo Rossi, *Attilio Rossi e Campo Grafico: una Lezione di Modernità Ancora Viva Dopo Ottanta Anni* (Milan: Collana Riflessi, 2013); Giulia Martinucci and Lorenzo Grazzani, *CDPG Folders: Carlo Dradi e il Campo della Grafica Moderna* (Milan: AIAP Edizioni, 2006).

120   'Forzando un po' i termini, si potrebbe dire perfino che fu proprio Bertieri, quale Direttore della Scuola del Libro a destare in molti di noi quella forza combattiva che poi tenacemente non volle riconoscere'. Attilio Rossi, 'Campo Grafico al tempo di Bertieri', in *Onoranze a Raffaello Bertieri nell'Ambito del Quinto Centenario dell'Introduzione della Stampa in Italia* (Milan: Centro Studi Grafici, 1966), p. 210.

students of the school.[121] The campisti's personal involvement in the Scuola del Libro, as well as Bertieri's, add to the recurring reference to the school as a model for modern graphics an extra connotation that has not been taken into account by design historians so far.

Promotional material designed and produced by students at the Scuola del Libro during the 1920s present similar recurring features.[122] The highly similar traditional approach to typography and layout in the booklets for the academic years 1924-25 and 1930-31 in no way seems to reflect the fact that six years had passed, but rather demonstrates Bertieri's enduring influence within the Scuola del Libro despite his resignation in 1925 (see Illustrations **1.5** and **1.6**). Both booklets feature engraved illustrations, ornaments, serif typefaces, centred and symmetrical page layout, large margins and geometrical frames. The book layout is the reference point: explicitly represented on the front page and implicitly recalled by the book-inspired page layout.[123] The book frontispiece is again the typographic model of the 1926-27 pamphlet (see Illustration **1.7**). Its serif typeface, centred and symmetrical composition, decorative initials and frames, floral and geometric ornamentations are all reminders of the book layout. Once unfolded, the 1926-27 pamphlet reveals a hidden picture of the printing workshop. Isolated from the rest with a geometric frame, the picture is added as a decorative element and could be taken out with no need to rearrange the layout. The readability of the text itself would actually benefit from its absence, since the syllabication of the word 'allievo' (pupil) into 'al' and 'lievo' would not be awkwardly interrupted as it is by the central double-page picture.

As illustrated by these three exemplars, the visual output at the Scuola del Libro during the 1920s draws on Bertieri's interest in classicism and national typographic roots based on classical forms of Italian Renaissance printing tradition.

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121   Co-founders Rossi and Dradi studied decoration of books with the artist and illustrator Guido Marussig. Carlo Vinti, 'Campisti a Scuola. Come è Nata l'Avventura di Campo Grafico, in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by Della Campa and Colombo, pp. 59-62. For a student's account of the Scuola del Libro under Raffaello Bertieri's directorship, see: Mario Soresina, 'Raffaello Bertieri alla Scuola del Libro", in *Onoranze a Raffaello Bertieri*, pp. 77-87.

122   For an overview of students' graphic works, see: *Scuola del Libro Milano 1926-27: Composizioni Tipografiche, Disegni, Stampe e Rilegature Eseguite dagli Allievi nell'Anno Scolastico 1926-27* (Milan: Società Umaniaria, 1927).

123   The front page of the booklet for the academic year 1924-25 was published in *Risorgimento Grafico* together with a selection of students' works. Signed by applied artist, illustrator and designer Duilio Cambelloti, the illustration on the 1924-25 booklet illustrates the school's interest in craftsmanship and ornamentation, drawing on a visual vocabulary close to late nineteenth century Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau movements. See: *Risorgimento Grafico*, 22 (2), February 1925, unpaged.

1.5   booklet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1924-25, 13 × 18.5 cm

SCUOLA DEL LIBRO · MILANO

VIA FRANCESCO DAVERIO N. 7 :: TELEFONO 53-710

SOTTO IL PATROCINIO DELLA SOCIETÀ
« UMANITARIA »

*PROGRAMMI PER I CORSI
DI PERFEZIONAMENTO E
COMPLEMENTO, E PER IL
CORSO DI COMPOSIZIONE
MECCANICA*

ANNO SCOLASTICO 1930 · 1931

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*riparazioni, cucitura a telaio, rafilatura, coloritura e do-
ratura dei tagli, indossatura, applicazione dei capitelli,
sistemazione del dorso, sino all'esecuzione di rilegature in
tutta pelle flessibile, ecc.).*

Corso di doratura a mano dei libri

(scolpitura). Questo Corso si svolge in no-
vanta lezioni domenicali di tre ore ognu-
na, dalle nove alle dodici, divise in tre
anni con trenta lezioni ogni anno. Tas-
sa d'iscrizione per le novanta lezioni Li-
re Novanta, da pagarsi in tre quote ugua-
li: la prima all'atto dell'iscrizione, la se-
conda dopo le prime dieci lezioni, la terza
dopo le prime venti lezioni. I posti di-
sponibili per il primo Corso sono dodici.

*Gli allievi vengono praticamente addestrati a tutte le varie
fasi del lavoro di scolpitura. Inoltre per turno, dovranno
frequentare alcune lezioni di disegno per preparare i la-
vori da riprodurre, come verrà disposto dalla Direzione.*

Decorazione delle Arti Grafiche

Venticinque lezioni domenicali di dise-
gno di tre ore ciascuna: dalle nove alle
dodici. Tassa d'iscrizione Lire Venti. Li-
bero a tutti, ma soprattutto indicato per
operai compositori, scolpitori e litografi.
I posti disponibili sono venticinque.

Corso superiore di decorazione del libro

tenuto dal pittore G. Marussig. Venticin-
que lezioni domenicali di disegno di tre
ore ciascuna: dalle nove alle dodici. Tas-
sa d'iscrizione Lire Cinquanta. Il Corso è

1.6   booklet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1930-31, 11.5 × 15.5 cm

SCUOLA DEL LIBRO
IN MILANO
SOTTO IL PATROCINIO
DELLA SOCIETÀ
UMANITARIA

PROGRAMMA
DELLA SEZIONE DIURNA
DI TIROCINIO

PER L'ANNO SCOLASTICO
MCMXXVI-XXVII

Le iscrizioni alla Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio sono libere a tutti. Una modica tassa annua è pagabile in due rate, metà all'iscrizione e metà dopo un trimestre di Scuola. I documenti da presentarsi all'atto dell'iscrizione sono i seguenti:

a) Licenza elementare, o pagella della sesta classe;
b) Libretto di lavoro, prescritto dalla Legge sul lavoro delle donne e dei fanciulli, rilasciato dal Comune (*Ufficio di via Omenoni*).
c) Stato di famiglia, certificato in carta libera rilasciato dal Comune (*Ufficio Certificati, Piazza Missori*).

Gli allievi più bisognosi e più meritevoli possono concorrere alle Borse di Studio, istituite dalla Congregazione di carità, da lire 250 e 300.

Le domande di iscrizione si ricevono presso la Segreteria della Scuola del Libro (via San Barnaba, 38) dal 15 Luglio al 15 Settembre, dalle 9 alle 12 e dalle 14 alle 17.

Nella Sezione Diurna di Tirocinio, la Scuola accoglie giovanetti che abbiano compiuto i dodici anni di età e siano muniti della licenza del Corso Popolare. L'insegnamento si svolge in due anni; durante il primo gli alunni vengono iniziati alla conoscenza delle diverse lavorazioni grafiche (composizione, stereo-galvanotipia, impressione tipografica, impressione litografica, legatoria e fotochimica [fotografia e incisione]) e contemporaneamente seguono, per alcune ore del giorno, corsi appositamente ordinati di coltura generale. Per tutto il primo anno gli allievi vengono sottoposti ad interrogazioni frequentissime ed a particolari indagini dirette a conoscere le loro speciali attitudini e le loro inclinazioni sulla scelta della professione che essi debbono fare prima che si inizi il secondo anno di insegnamento; sebbene la Scuola non possegga appositi gabinetti per tale scopo nondimeno i moderni principî della psicotecnica vi vengono praticamente applicati in maniera da sospingere la scelta dell'al-

OFFICINA DI IMPRESSIONE TIPOGRAFICA

lievo verso quel ramo grafico per il quale egli avrà rivelato più attitudine. Durante il secondo anno gli alunni vengono applicati all'esercizio della professione scelta, continuando nel frattempo la frequenza alle lezioni di coltura generale. L'insegnamento di coltura generale, tanto nel primo come nel secondo anno, comprende le seguenti materie: italiano, aritmetica applicata, storia delle Arti Grafiche, coltura varia in genere, tecnologia, disegno, sport. L'insegnamento tecnico, sia nel primo che nel secondo anno, si svolge praticamente nelle officine della Scuola, dove gli alunni vengono abituati alla vera vita del lavoro. La Scuola non produce industrialmente, ma per le sue proprie pubblicazioni le varie sezioni dell'Istituto funzionano in modo che l'allievo ha la esatta sensazione del lavoro pratico e vi partecipa, sempre coll'assistenza del maestro. Perché il passaggio dalla Scuola al Laboratorio industriale non riesca poi difficile ai giovanetti, le vacanze nel corso dell'annata sono ridotte al minimo.

1.7   pamphlet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1926-27, 11.5 × 17 cm

No attempt is made to design a layout specific to advertising ephemera, whose purpose, use and audience are different to those of a book. The school appears unaware of, or indifferent to, contemporary discussions advocating economy, simplicity and functionalism in accordance with the needs of modern life as expressed, for instance, by Tschichold in his landmark article against book art that was reviewed in *Graphicus* in 1927.[124]

The campisti took issue with Bertieri's approach to graphics, in general, and with his lasting influence on the output of the Scuola del Libro, in particular. Their feeling of distance between the school and modern graphic aesthetics and techniques was eloquently verbalised by Carlo Dradi:

> While at Gropius' Bauhaus, in the Typography department, one taught a kind of graphics free from classical paradigms, asymmetrical and in line with the new principles of Rationalism; at the Scuola del Libro, under Bertieri's directorship, one taught the symmetrical page layout of the book that was the only model for the layout of any other kind of printed material.[125]

While Paul Renner was designing the 'Futura' font, Bertieri was recasting sixteenth century fonts such as 'Sinibaldi' and 'Incunabula' that were, according to the Dradi, 'more appropriate for a page [designed by] William Morris than [for one] by a 1930s' typographer'.[126] The campisti blamed Bertieri for ignoring technological progress and disregarding changes in everyday printed ephemera. Conversely, they promoted an idea of typography as applied art whose sole aim was visual communication. However, their critique is in part biased and misleading. Although Bertieri did indeed write mainly on book design, type design and the history of Italian graphic arts, many were the articles on other graphic design-related subject

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124   G. P., 'Contro l'Arte del Libro?', *Graphicus*, 17 (219), September 1927, p. 17. The article is a review of Jan Tschichold, 'Die Opposition gegen Buchkunst und Buchkunstaustellung', *Die Literarische Welt*, 29, 1927.

125   'Mentre al Bauhaus di Gropius, nella sezione della Tipografia si insegnava una grafica libera da moduli classici, asimmetrica, allineata ai nuovi principi del razionalismo, alla Scuola del Libro di Milano diretta dal Bertieri si insegnava la pagina simmetrica del libro, matrice unica per l'impaginazione di qualsiasi altro stampato'. Carlo Dradi, *1933: Nasce a Milano la Grafica Moderna* (Milan: Ufficio Stampa del comune di Milano, 1973), p. 26.

126   '[...] più degni di una pagina di William Morris che di un tipografo degli anni '30'. Dradi, *1933*, p. 26. On Raffaello Bertieri's work as type designer, see: Rattin and Ricci, *Questioni di Carattere*.

areas that were covered in *Risorgimento Grafico*, such as photography, poster design, advertising and printed ephemera.[127]

By the early-1930s Bertieri's influence was on the wane as the school moved towards a modernist aesthetic. Two pamphlets of 1932 and 1934 illustrate this shift (see Illustrations **1.8** and **1.9**). Whereas the front page of the 1932-33 pamphlet is still inspired by book frontispiece – i.e. title, subtitle, logo and publisher – the layout of the 1934-35 pamphlet abandons the rigidity of axial symmetry. The text is off-centre and arranged along orthogonal axes. The reading is enlivened and kept in rhythm by the steps-like arrangement and changes in direction of the text. The logo of the Umanitaria, juxtaposing the monogram *SU* and the Fascist symbol of the fasces, is moved from the centre to the lower left corner of the front page.[128] In the 1932-33 pamphlet the lictorian fasces are illustrated in detail, but the monochrome and the tight intertwine of the *SU* monogram around the fasces worsen the readability of the logo. By contrast, sticks, axe and leather ribbon disappear, and only the profile of the fasces is left in the 1934-35 pamphlet. The logo becomes simpler and bolder, more easily recognisable and noticeable. The three capitalised *Ls* of Scuo*L*a de*L L*ibro, which are aligned one above the other along the central axis, balance the composition and lighten the heaviness of the black area by recalling the form of the fasces.

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127   See, for instance: Gianolio Dalmazzo, 'L'Estetica della Pubblicità nei Giornali', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 19 (6), June 1922, pp. 297-302; Gianolio Dalmazzo, 'I Lavori Tipografici per il Commercio e per l'Industria', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 24 (6), June 1927, pp. 273-94; Augusto Calabi, 'Estetica Tipografica dei Quotidiani', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 25 (4), April 1928, pp. 165-72; Armando Mazanti, 'Il Cartello Murale Pubblicitario in Italia', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 27 (4), April 1930, pp. 177-90; Raffaello Bertieri, 'Segno del Lutto in Tipografia', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 27 (5), May 1930, pp. 231-35. On Raffaello Bertieri and *Risorgimento Grafico*, see the exhibition catalogue: *Nova ex Antiquis: Raffaello Bertieri e il Risorgimento Grafico*, ed. by Andrea De Pasquale, Massimo Dradi, Mauro Chiabrando and Gaetano Grizzanti (Milan: Biblioteca Braidense, 2011).

128   The fasces were a bundle of rods tied together around an axe that were used in ancient Rome to represent authority. They were carried by the 'lictores' – i.e. minor officials who walked in front of high magistrates during processions. In Roman time the fasces were used more generally as a symbol to represent institutions founded on discipline, whose unity and force were achieved through obedience to authority. During Fascism, they became the regime's main form of visual representation and were a ubiquitous image omnipresent in Italian visual culture under Mussolini's dictatorship. See: Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle*, pp. 95-99; Steven Heller, *Iron Fists: Branding the 20*[th]*-Century Totalitarian State* (New York; London: Phaidon Press, 2008), pp. 92-96; *Historical Dictionary of Fascist Italy*, ed. by Cannistraro, p. 205; Claudia Lazzaro, 'Forging a Visible Fascist Nation: Strategies for Fusing Past and Present', in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts: History and Modernity in the Visual Culture of Fascism*, ed. by Claudia Lazzaro and Roger J. Crum (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp.16-20.

Scuola del Libro

della Società Umanitaria ● Fondazione P. M. Loria
Milano, Via Francesco Daverio 7 ● Telefono 53-710

Anno scolastico 1932-1933

Corsi serali di Complemento per maestranze

Sezioni: Composizione a mano. Stampa tipografica. Litografia (torcolieri). Legatoria. Fotoincisione. Disegno applicato alle Arti grafiche. (Le lezioni di disegno sono obbligatorie per gli iscritti al primo ed al secondo Corso di Composizione; secondo di Legatoria; secondo di Litografia).

Riservati agli apprendisti che esercitino la professione da almeno due anni. Tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza Lire 30, ridotta a Lire 25 per gli iscritti all'O. N. D. Le lezioni si terranno nelle sere stabilite dalla Scuola, dalle 20,30 alle 22,30.

Norme e facilitazioni per l'iscrizione

Le iscrizioni si ricevono presso la Segreteria della Scuola, in via F. Daverio 7, dall'1 al 31 Ottobre, tutti i giorni feriali dalle ore 9 e 12 e dalle 14 alle 17; il martedì e il giovedì anche dalle 20,30 alle 22.
Per le iscrizioni occorre presentare il libretto di paga che attesti la qualifica e l'anzianità di lavoro.
Gli Orfani di guerra, i figli dei Mutilati ed Invalidi di guerra, dei Caduti per la Causa Fascista ed i figli di famiglia numerosa vengono iscritti gratuitamente.
Agli operai disoccupati, di tutti i corsi, verranno concesse facilitazioni, purchè muniti della tessera d'iscrizione dell'Ufficio di Collocamento.

Il Segr. Gen.: G. UGHI

Corsi Speciali domenicali di Perfezionamento

Sezioni: Composizione a mano (trenta lezioni). Stampa tipografica, per operai impressori di seconda categoria (trenta lezioni). Trasporto litografico, per operai trasportatori litografi (trenta lezioni). Stampa litografica su "Offset", per operai stampatori litografi (trenta lezioni). Rilegatoria, per operai legatori (corso triennale di novanta lezioni; trenta ogni anno). Scolpitura, per operai legatori (corso triennale di novanta lezioni; trenta ogni anno). Corso Superiore di decorazione del libro (venticinque lezioni).

Tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza ai Corsi di Tipografia e di Litografia, Lire 40; ai corsi di Rilegatoria e di Scolpitura (triennali), Lire 90, pagabili in tre rate nel primo anno; al Corso Superiore di decorazione del libro, Lire 50. Le lezioni si terranno ogni domenica dalle ore 9 alle 12.

Corso di Composizione meccanica su "Linotype"

Riservato al compositori a mano classificati lavoranti effettivi. I posti disponibili sono quattro. Gli aspiranti saranno sottoposti ad una prova tecnica di composizione a mano. L'ammissione sarà fatta in ordine di merito. La tassa di iscrizione e di frequenza è di Lire 100, pagabile in due rate uguali: una all'atto dell'iscrizione e l'altra dopo cinquanta ore di lezione. Il corso è costituito da 200 ore di lezione, che si terranno nelle sere stabilite dalla Scuola, dalle ore 20,30 alle ore 22,30.

Il Presidente: D. GHEZZI

1.8   pamphlet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1932-33, 13 × 17 cm

MILANO TELEFONO N. 51-342
VIA FRANCESCO DAVERIO 7

SOCIETÀ UMANITARIA

SCUOLA
DEL
LIBRO

ANNO SCOLASTICO 1934-35
XIII E. F.

FONDAZ. P. M. LORIA

Corsi serali di complemento per maestranze

Riservati agli apprendisti che esercitano la professione da almeno due anni o che siano stati licenziati dai Corsi Diurni di Avviamento Professionale della Scuola del Libro. Tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza Lire 50, ridotta a Lire 25 per gli iscritti all'O. N. D. Le lezioni si terranno nelle sere stabilite dalla Scuola, dalle 20 alle ore 22.

Sezioni: Composizione a mano. Stampa tipografica. Litografia (torcolieri). Legatoria. Fotoincisione. Disegno applicato alle Arti grafiche. (Le lezioni di disegno sono obbligatorie per gli iscritti al primo ed al secondo Corso di Composizione, secondo di Legatoria, secondo di Litografia).

Norme e facilitazioni per l'iscrizione

Le iscrizioni si ricevono presso la Segreteria della Scuola, in via F. Daverio 7, dal 20 Settembre al 19 Ottobre, tutti i giorni feriali dalle ore 9 alle 12 e dalle 14 alle 17; il martedì e il giovedì anche dalle ore 20,30 alle ore 22.
Per le iscrizioni ai Corsi serali di Complemento occorre presentare il libretto di paga dal quale risulti in modo chiaro la qualifica e l'anzianità di lavoro (se necessario presentare il libretto paga precedente), o la licenza dei Corsi diurni di Avviamento Professionale.
Per l'iscrizione ai Corsi di Perfezionamento occorre pure presentare il libretto di paga che attesti la qualifica.
Gli Orfani di guerra, i figli dei Mutilati ed Invalidi di guerra, dei Caduti per la Causa Fascista ed i figli di famiglia numerosa vengono iscritti gratuitamente.
Agli operai disoccupati, di tutti i corsi, verranno concesse facilitazioni, purché muniti della tessera d'iscrizione dell'Ufficio di Collocamento comprovante il loro stato di disoccupazione.

Corsi speciali domenicali di perfezionamento

Tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza ai corsi di Tipografia e Litografia (trenta lezioni), Lire 40; ai corsi di Rilegatoria e Scoltura (corsi triennali) novanta lezioni, trenta ogni anno), Lire 90, pagabili in tre rate nel primo anno; al Corso Superiore di decorazione del libro (venticinque lezioni), Lire 50. Le lezioni si terranno ogni domenica dalle ore 9 alle 12.

Sezioni: Composizione a mano. Stampa tipografica: per operai impressori di seconda categoria. Trasporto litografico: per operai trasportatori litografi. Stampa litografica su «Offset»: per aiutanti e lavoranti stampatori litografi. Rilegatoria: per operai legatori. Scoltura: per operai legatori. Corso Superiore di decorazione del libro.

Composizione meccanica su «Linotype»

La tassa di iscrizione e di frequenza è di Lire 50, pagabile in due rate uguali una all'atto dell'iscrizione e l'altra dopo cinquanta ore di lezione. Il corso è costituito da 200 ore di lezione, che si terranno nelle sere stabilite dalla Scuola, dalle ore 20 alle 22. I posti disponibili sono quattro.

Corso di Perfezionamento riservato ai licenziati dal Corso di Composizione meccanica su Linotype negli ultimi cinque anni.

Il Segr. Gen.: G. UGHI

Il Presidente: D. GHEZZI

1.9   pamphlet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1934-35, 10 × 15 cm

The almost identical content of the two pamphlets facilitates comparison of the different ways of arranging the text that has been adopted in the two-page spread. The text printed on the left and right pages of the 1932-33 pamphlet is arranged symmetrically along the central axis as in previous exemplars. Nevertheless, the sans-serif font and the functional use of colour were heralds of the design change of promotional material in accordance with New Typography guidelines. By contrast, the two-page spread of the 1934-33 pamphlet is organised asymmetrically in a grid-structure that facilitates the comparative reading of the text. The margins of the justified text replace the rules of the table chart, and the invisible armature of the typographical grid spreads over both pages of the unfolded pamphlet. With its flexible format and orientation, the two pages in one layout is evidence of the attempt to abandon the book-inspired page layout and take into account the specific use and way of reading a pamphlet.

The relationship between the Scuola del Libro and *Campo Grafico* became tighter over the years. In order 'to give the reader a concrete demonstration of the merits of the technical training and, in particular, of the aesthetic improvement in line with the liveliest tendencies of modern taste attained by the school in recent times', the campisti devoted the July 1936 issue of *Campo Grafico* to the Scuola del Libro. Students were commissioned to design of the magazine layout and advertisements (see Illustration **1.10**).[129] The pamphlet for the academic year 1936-37 was included in the special issue among other exemplars of school's visual output (see Illustration **1.11**). The pamphlet stands out from previous promotional ephemera by virtue of its square format. It is folded twice and the narrower front page reveals the blue-grey, capitalised serif text written along the border of the right flap. Sticking out like the label of a divider in a filing system, the text invites the user to open the pamphlet by anticipating content hidden underneath. Wide, white borders on the top and left balance the typographic composition that occupies the bottom-right of the three-page spread, in which nine blocks of justified text are arranged horizontally in a table chart-like layout. Variations in line spacing, colour and type sizes balance the different weight of the blocks of text. The asymmetrical layout, the lack of ornamentation and the use of typo-photo – synthesis of photography and sans-serif – exemplified the modern taste that *Campo Grafico* had been promoting since 1933. The decreasing sizes and the spiral-like arrangement of

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129   '[darà al lettore la dimostrazione reale del valore raggiunto dalla Scuola in questi ultimi tempi nell'insegnamento tecnico, e, in modo particolare, del miglioramento estetico secondo le correnti più vive del gusto moderno'. *Campo Grafico*, 4 (7), July 1936, p. 1.

D edichiamo questo numero agli allievi della Scuola del Libro di Milano, in esso tutte le applicazioni, le pagine di testo e la pubblicità, sono state eseguite su schemi di lavori studiati e composti dagli allievi della Scuola Secondaria di Avviamento Professionale e da quelli dei Corsi serali di Complemento e domenicali di Perfezionamento, adattandovi testi diversi o ricomponendoli nel testo originale. Questo esperimento darà al lettore la dimostrazione reale del valore raggiunto dalla Scuola in questi ultimi tempi nell'insegnamento tecnico, e, in modo particolare, del miglioramento estetico seguendo le correnti più vive del gusto moderno.

1.10   editorial, *Campo Grafico*, 4 (7), July 1936, p.1; special issue designed by the students of the Scuola del Libro in Milan

UMANITARIA
SCUOLA DEL LIBRO

FONDAZIONE P. M. LORIA MILANO VIA DAVERIO 7

NORME PER L'ISCRIZIONE AI CORSI DI COMPLEMENTO E DI PERFEZIONAMENTO
ANNO SCOLASTICO 1936-37. XV ERA FASC.

Le iscrizioni si ricevono presso la Segreteria della Scuola, via Daverio 7, sino al 17 ottobre, tutti i giorni feriali dalle ore 9 alle 12 e dalle 14 alle 17 (escluso il sabato pomeriggio); il martedì e il giovedì dalle 20,30 alle 22.
Per l'iscrizione ai Corsi serali di Complemento occorre presentare il libretto di paga dal quale risulti in modo chiaro la qualifica e l'anzianità di lavoro (se necessario presentare il libretto paga precedente), o la licenza dei Corsi diurni di Avviamento Professionale della Scuola del Libro.
Per l'iscrizione ai Corsi di Perfezionamento occorre pure presentare il libretto di paga che attesti la qualifica richiesta, oppure la licenza della Sezione di Complemento della Scuola del Libro.
Gli orfani di guerra, i figli dei Mutilati ed Invalidi di guerra, dei Mutilati e Caduti per la Causa Fascista ed i figli di famiglia numerosa vengono iscritti gratuitamente.
Agli operai disoccupati di tutti i corsi verranno concesse facilitazioni, purchè muniti della tessera dell'Ufficio di Collocamento che comprovi lo stato di disoccupazione.

CORSI DI COMPLEMENTO
SERALI PER APPRENDISTI

Riservati agli apprendisti che esercitano la professione da due anni o che siano stati licenziati dai Corsi diurni di Avviamento Professionale della Scuola del Libro. Tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza Lire 30, ridotta a Lire 25 per gli iscritti all'O. N. D. Le lezioni si terranno nelle sere stabilite dalla Scuola, dalle ore 20 alle ore 22.

CORSI DI PERFEZIONAMENTO
DOMENICALI PER OPERAI

Riservati agli operai che comprovino la qualifica richiesta ed ai licenziati dalla Sezione di Complemento. Tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza ai Corsi di Tipografia e di Litografia (trenta lezioni), Lire 40; al Corsi di Rilegatoria e di Scolpitura (corsi triennali: novanta lezioni, trenta ogni anno), Lire 90, pagabili in tre rate nel primo anno); al Corso superiore decoraz. del libro (venticinque lezioni), Lire 50. Le lezioni si terranno la domenica dalle 9 alle 12.

COMPOSIZIONE MECCANICA
SU MACCHINA LINOTYPE

Il corso è costituito da 200 ore di lezione, che si terranno nelle sere stabilite dalla Scuola dalle ore 20 alle ore 22. La tassa d'iscrizione e di frequenza è di Lire 50.

IL PRESIDENTE: D. GHEZZI · IL SEGRETARIO GENER.: G. UGHI

Sezioni: Composizione a mano. Impressione tipografica. Litografia (torcolieri). Legatoria. Fotoincisione. (Per gli iscritti ai Corsi di Composizione a mano, Legatoria e Litografia, sono obbligatorie lezioni di copia dal vero, disegno geometrico e di composizione).

Sezioni: Composizione a mano. Impressione tipografica: per impressori di seconda categ.. Trasporto litografico: per trasportatori. Stampa litografica su «Offset»: per macchinisti e aiutanti litografi. Rilegatoria e Scolpitura: per legatori. Corso superiore di decorazione del libro: dedicato specialmente ai giovani artisti e disegnatori grafici.

Corso di perfezionamento riservato ai licenziati dal Corso regolare negli ultimi cinque anni. I posti disponibili sono limitati a quattro.

1.11   pamphlet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1936-37, 14.5 × 15 cm

the text around the picture on the front page of the pamphlet support and enhance the three-dimensionality of the photographic medium.

The picture itself, which is a photomontage, testifies to the changing of the photographic aesthetic.[130] The two original photographs were published in *Campo Grafico* in June 1937 (see Illustration **1.12**).[131] Their objective was to inform the reader and so they adopt the frontal perspective in order to illustrate the workshops, document furniture and technical equipment and describe the environment in detail. By contrast, the photomontage goes beyond documentary intents.[132] It uses the readability and communicative potential of the photographic medium to create a new, aspired to, reality, and convey the idea of the Scuola del Libro as an inclusive institution that brings together all professions in the graphics and printing industry. Photographs feature also in promotional ephemera from the 1920s, but the use, the position within the layout and relation with the other typographic elements of the photographic medium are different (see Illustration **1.7**). In the 1936-37 pamphlet, the photomontage replaces the calm and frontal perspective of the original pictures with a dynamic, diagonal perspective and unusual point of view. The context of the workshop is cut out and, because of the omission of walls and other references to the environment, the compositors' cabinets appear to be floating above an abstract chessboard pattern. The close up transforms drawers and stands into geometric forms to the benefit of the juxtaposition of image and text, mediating the contrast between the three-dimensional space of the picture and flat surface of the type. The same two pictures reappear in the 1938-39 pamphlet (see Illustration **1.4**). This time the compositors' and printing workshops are blown up, rotated, cropped and juxtaposed, with no attempt to hide the editing process by retouching the pictures. The flexible use of photographic medium and typographical material evidences the functional intent behind the design of these graphic compositions.

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130   In addition to the many examples of photomontage that featured in *Campo Grafico*, the magazine also published a number of articles about the technique and its use in advertising and graphic arts. See, for instance: Bruno Pallavera, 'Ritocco del Fotomontaggio', *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, p. 7; Luigi Veronesi and B. Pallavera, 'Del Fotomontaggio', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (12), December 1934, pp. 278-79.

131   The cabinets in the background of the photomontage belong to the compositors' workshop, whereas the close-up in the foreground portrays technical equipment from the printing workshop.

132   On the use photomontage in periodicals in interwar Italy, see: Silvia Bignami, 'Il Fotomontaggio nelle Riviste Illustrate degli Anni Trenta tra Ricerche d'Avanguardia e Cultura Visiva di Massa', in *Gli Anni Trenta a Milano tra Architettura, Immagini e Opere d'Arte*, ed. by Silvia Bignami and Paolo Ruscon, (Milan; Udine: Mimesis Edizioni, 2014), pp. 199-222.

a
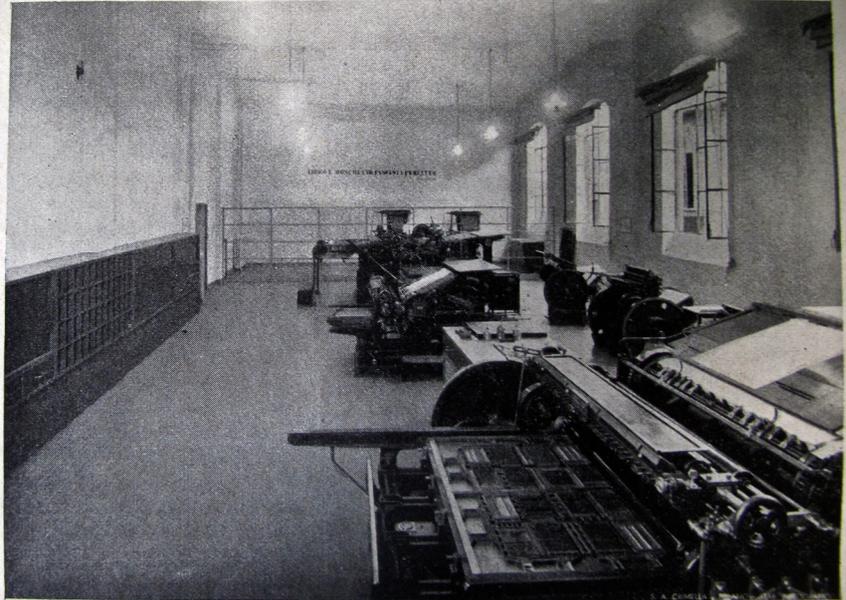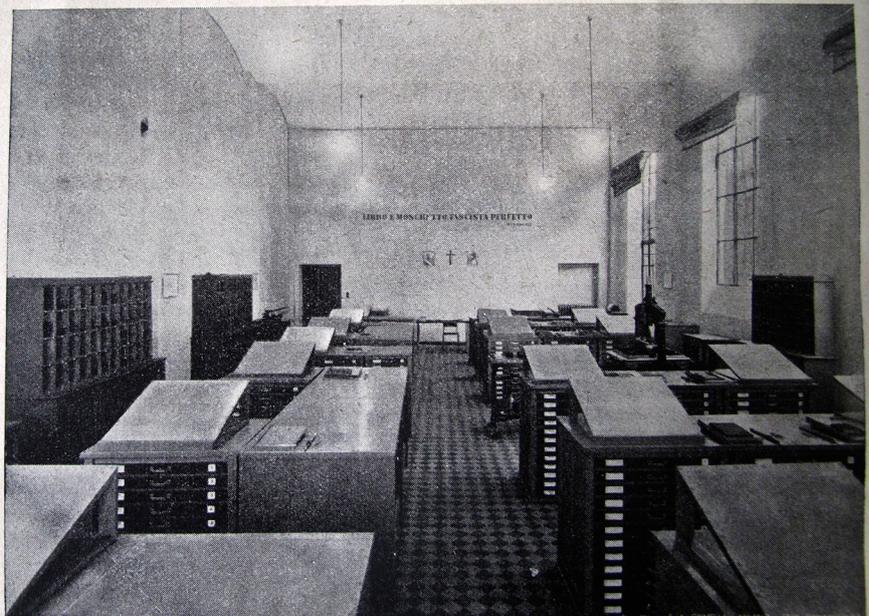
b

1.12   the Scuola del Libro in Milan: **.a** printing workshop; **.b** compositor's workshop. *Campo Grafico*, 4 (5-6), May-June 1937, unpaged

In accordance with the principles of the New Typography, photography is a formal element that is here being used as a typographic tool and modified in combination with type.[133]

The turn towards modernist aesthetics and away from a more traditional approach to typography and layout also affected the image of the Umanitaria, whose graphics were designed and produced by students at the Scuola del Libro. As mentioned at the beginning of the previous section, the Umanitaria published a catalogue in 1937 with an introduction by the rationalist architect Giuseppe Pagano (see Illustration **1.13**).[134] Attention should be drawn to two elements of the catalogue: first, coloured and transparent cellophane sheets – brown, purple, green, red, blue, yellow and orange – are used to separate the different sections illustrating the output of each of the vocational schools at the Umanitaria; second, the catalogue is bound using a metallic spiral coil. Both these elements demonstrate the experimentation with new printing and binding technologies and materials in line with cutting-edge Italian and Central-European publications.[135] Other exemplars of the Umanitaria official publications were included as 'study material and aesthetic enjoyment' in the 'Documentari di Campo Grafico' (Campo Grafico's Documentaries).[136] The first issue of the 'Documentari' in February 1938 featured the invitation to the students' chorale (see Illustration **1.14**). The interaction between the white and bluish halved *U*s, the shifting between foreground and background and reversal of positive and negative forms enlivens the front page design. The half-width left flap and the uncompleted text underneath invite the user to unfold the card. The dotted background recalls the halftone dots of the

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133   See: 'Photography and Typography', in Tschichold, *New Typography*, pp. 87-95.

134   *Le Scuole dell'Umanitaria Anno XVI E.F.: Quaderno n. 1* (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1937). The catalogue was designed and produced by students at the Scuola del Libro and published in 1000 exemplars. The catalogue consulted by the author is part of Albe Steiner's archive.

135   Guido Modiano used the spiral binding in two publications: *25 Anni Olivetti* (Milano: Guido Modiano, 1933); P. M. Bardi, *Belvedere dell'Architettura Italiana d'Oggi* (Milan: Edizioni Quadrante, 1934). It was also used in the French architecture magazine *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. Articles commenting on spiral binding appeared in specialist magazines of the time, see: 'Lettera Aperta di Stella Nera (Giov. Ansaldo) a P. M. Bardi, Comparsa sul Giornale "IL Lavoro" di Genova', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (5), May 1934, pp. 102-04; 'Tipografia Nuova: "25 Anni Olivetti"', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (9), September 1934, pp. 200-02; 'La legatura a Spirale', *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, pp. 18-19; *Domus*, 6 (71), November 1933. On printing on cellophane: 'Stampa su Cellofane', *Graphicus*, 24 (3), March 1934, pp. 22-23.

136   '[...] materiale di studio e di godimento estetico'. *Campo Grafico*, 6 (2), February 1938, p. 36. The 'Documentari di Campo Grafico' are nine inserts published in *Campo Grafico* from February 1938 to February 1939, featuring exemplars of modern graphic design.

1.13   catalogue of the vocational schools at the Società Umanitaria, *Le Scuole dell'Umanitaria*
Anno XVI E.F. Quaderno n. 1, 1937
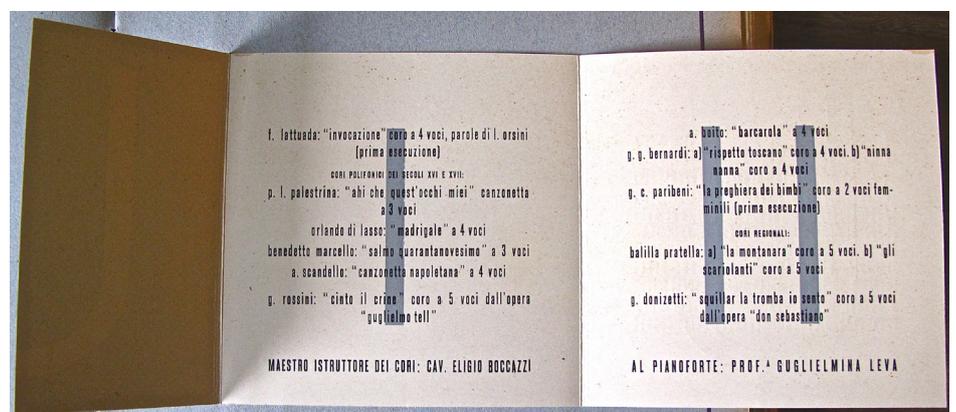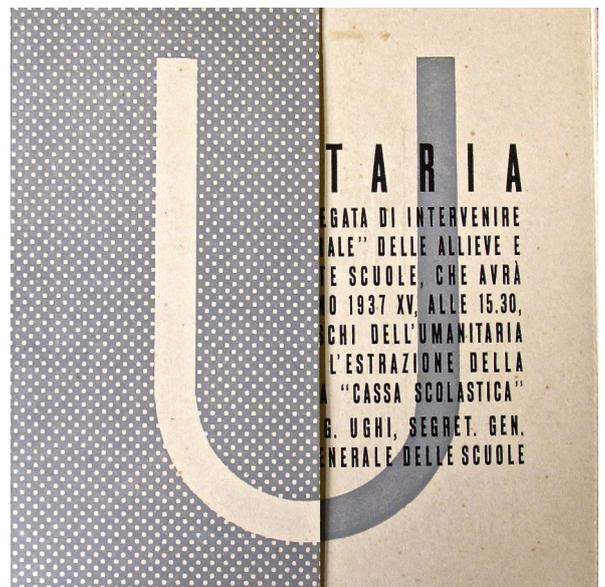
1.14   invitation card to the students' chorale at the Società Umanitaria, designed by the students of the Scuola del Libro, 1938; featured in 'Documentari di Campo Grafico', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (2), February 1938, p. 41

typographic screen.[137] Derived from the printing technique itself, the decorative pattern reappears in the 1940-41 pamphlet that will be analysed later in this section (see Illustration **1.18**). This time the halftone dots acquire an extra connotation and, by making the reprographic technique explicit, they appear to stand for the photo-gravure complementary courses that were advertised but not actually illustrated in the pamphlet.

Like a parent neglecting a wayward child, the more the Scuola del Libro inclined towards *Campo Grafico*, the more Bertieri distanced himself from it. His editorial allegiance to the Scuola del Libro diminished significantly in the 1930s and he published only two articles on the school in *Risorgimento Grafico* after 1933.[138] The first article was an overview of the history of the school, in which Mario Ferrigni overlooked the current activities whilst devoting a paragraph to Bertieri's directorship.[139] The second was a review of the exhibition of the bookbinding and book decoration courses, in which the author commended the revival of religious books' bookbinding, praising the balance between clear geometric decorations and asymmetrical layout, and traditional techniques and materials such as gilding, leather and parchment.[140] Both articles appear to have been a safe compromise that enabled Ferrigni to comment upon the Scuola del Libro without making too many concessions to its modernisation.

The January 1937 issue of *Campo Grafico* and the February 1937 issues of *Risorgimento Grafico* exemplify the way in which the more the campisti got involved in the Scuola del Libro, the less Bertieri showed interest in its activities. On the one hand, the campisti announced: 'beginning with this January issue and in the all following issues of *Campo Grafico* 1937, four pages will feature works by the

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137   On halftone screens and reproduction techniques in Italy, see: Giuseppe Pizzuto, 'Retini Italiani per Fotoincisione', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (2), February 1938, p. 36. Pizzuto wrote a series of articles on the reproduction techniques that were published in *Campo Grafico* from February to September 1938.

138   From 1922 to 1932, the Scuola del Libro appeared more than eighteen times in the pages of *Risorgimento Grafico*.

139   Mario Ferrigni, 'L'Insegnamento Grafico in italia', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 32 (1), January 1935, pp. 23-31.

140   Bookbinding and book decoration courses were taught by the painter and engraver Guido Marussig and the bookbinder Pio Colombo. Mario Ferrigni, 'Saggi di Giovani Rilegatori', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 33 (10), October 1936, pp. 377-394.

students of the Scuola del Libro in Milan'.[141] The initiative was aimed at making all Italian typographers aware of the school's efforts towards 'an appropriate aesthetic improvement in accordance with current times'.[142] On the other hand, the February 1937 issue of *Risorgimento Grafico* included the only visual artefact to feature in the magazine during the 1930s and early-1940s. This was a pamphlet advertising an exhibition by students of the Scuola del Libro (see Illustration **1.15**). The picture on the front-page of the pamphlet provide further testimony of the flexible approach to the photographic medium that was being adopted. Indeed, it is the same picture of the printing workshop that appears on the two pamphlets illustrated earlier in this section. Moreover, the decorative red line exemplifies the process of abstraction and geometric simplification of Fascist symbols that was mentioned earlier when analysing the 1934-35 pamphlet. Since there is no difference in treatment between the decorative line framing the double-page spread and the outline of the fasces on the front-page, no emphasis is put on the logo, which thus becomes a geometric ornament rather than an eye-catching, easily recognisable and noticeable symbol.

The geometric stylisation of the fasces is more evident in the invitation to the 1938 annual exhibition of the Umanitaria vocational schools (see Illustration **1.16**). Here the red outline is broken into four parallel segments of different width.[143] The abstraction process recalls the cover of a book featured in Ferrigni's aforementioned review of the 1936 exhibition of the bookbinding and book decoration course (see Illustration **1.17**). According to Ferrigni, the expressive, almost musical, use of linear ornaments transformed the 'abstract vagueness of the geometric form into the precise figurative image of the fasces, using only straight parallel lines, all angles excluded'.[144] The repeated parallel lines on the cover define the surface area of the fasces and facilitate the identification of the symbol. By contrast, the iden-

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141 'A cominciare da questo numero di Gennaio e in tutti gli altri fascicoli di Campo Grafico 1937, verranno inserite quattro pagine con lavori eseguiti dagli allievi della Scuola del Libro di Milano'. *Campo Grafico*, 5 (1), January 1937, p. 2. Students' work did not feature in four pages for each of the 1937 issues as the announcement had promised. Issues n. 3, 4, 9, 11 and 12 do not feature any work by students of the Scuola del Libro. The number of pages devoted to the school's graphic works during the year 1937 was, moreover, quite flexible.

142 '[...] un adeguato elevamento estetico in rapporto ai tempi nuovi'. *Campo Grafico*, 5 (1), January 1937, p. 2.

143 The invitation was published in the fifth issue of the 'Documentari di Campo Grafico', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (6), June 1938, p. 171.

144 '[...] dalla semplice vaghezza astratta della forma geometrica arriva alla precisazione dell'immagine figurativa del fascio, ottenuta con sole linee rette parallele e l'esclusione assoluta degli angoli', Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 33 (10), October 1936, p. 388.
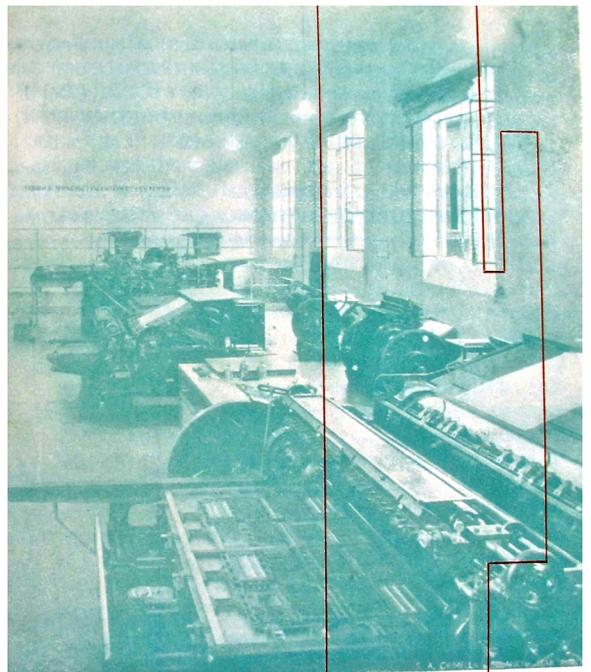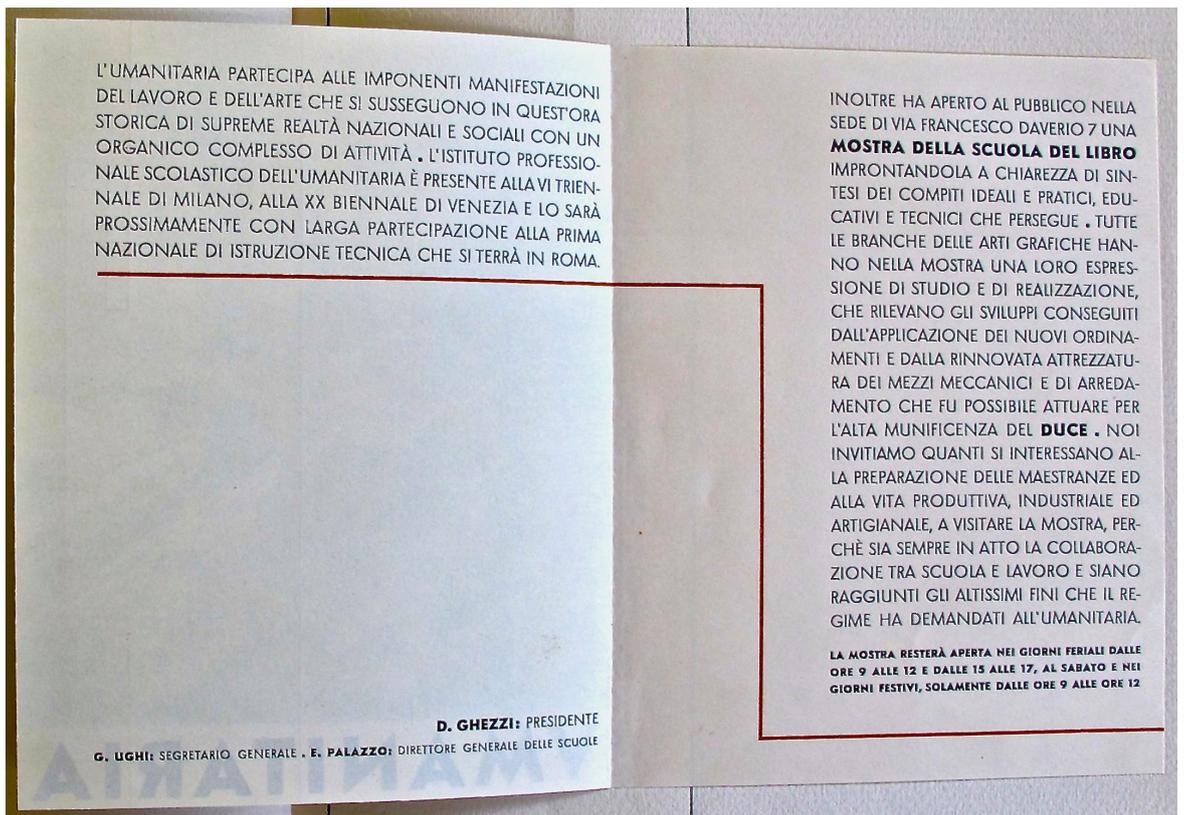
VMANITARIA

L'UMANITARIA PARTECIPA ALLE IMPONENTI MANIFESTAZIONI DEL LAVORO E DELL'ARTE CHE SI SUSSEGUONO IN QUEST'ORA STORICA DI SUPREME REALTÀ NAZIONALI E SOCIALI CON UN ORGANICO COMPLESSO DI ATTIVITÀ . L'ISTITUTO PROFESSIO-NALE SCOLASTICO DELL'UMANITARIA È PRESENTE ALLA VI TRIEN-NALE DI MILANO, ALLA XX BIENNALE DI VENEZIA E LO SARÀ PROSSIMAMENTE CON LARGA PARTECIPAZIONE ALLA PRIMA NAZIONALE DI ISTRUZIONE TECNICA CHE SI TERRÀ IN ROMA.

D. GHEZZI: PRESIDENTE
G. UGHI: SEGRETARIO GENERALE . E. PALAZZO: DIRETTORE GENERALE DELLE SCUOLE

INOLTRE HA APERTO AL PUBBLICO NELLA SEDE DI VIA FRANCESCO DAVERIO 7 UNA **MOSTRA DELLA SCUOLA DEL LIBRO** IMPRONTANDOLA A CHIAREZZA DI SIN-TESI DEI COMPITI IDEALI E PRATICI, EDU-CATIVI E TECNICI CHE PERSEGUE . TUTTE LE BRANCHE DELLE ARTI GRAFICHE HAN-NO NELLA MOSTRA UNA LORO ESPRES-SIONE DI STUDIO E DI REALIZZAZIONE, CHE RILEVANO GLI SVILUPPI CONSEGUITI DALL'APPLICAZIONE DEI NUOVI ORDINA-MENTI E DALLA RINNOVATA ATTREZZATU-RA DEI MEZZI MECCANICI E DI ARREDA-MENTO CHE FU POSSIBILE ATTUARE PER L'ALTA MUNIFICENZA DEL **DUCE** . NOI INVITIAMO QUANTI SI INTERESSANO AL-LA PREPARAZIONE DELLE MAESTRANZE ED ALLA VITA PRODUTTIVA, INDUSTRIALE ED ARTIGIANALE, A VISITARE LA MOSTRA, PER-CHÈ SIA SEMPRE IN ATTO LA COLLABORA-ZIONE TRA SCUOLA E LAVORO E SIANO RAGGIUNTI GLI ALTISSIMI FINI CHE IL RE-GIME HA DEMANDATI ALL'UMANITARIA.

LA MOSTRA RESTERÀ APERTA NEI GIORNI FERIALI DALLE ORE 9 ALLE 12 E DALLE 15 ALLE 17, AL SABATO E NEI GIORNI FESTIVI, SOLAMENTE DALLE ORE 9 ALLE ORE 12

1.15   pamphlet advertising an exhibition by students of the Scuola del Libro in Milan, 1937; featured in 'Piccoli Stampati', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (2), February 1937, p. 75
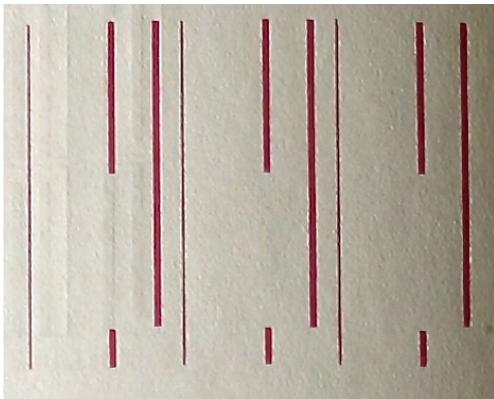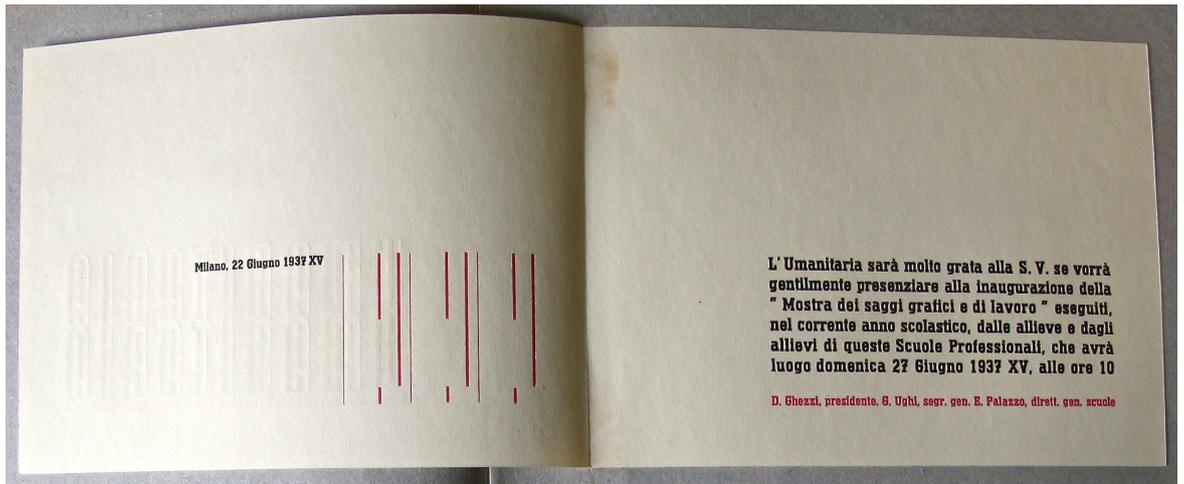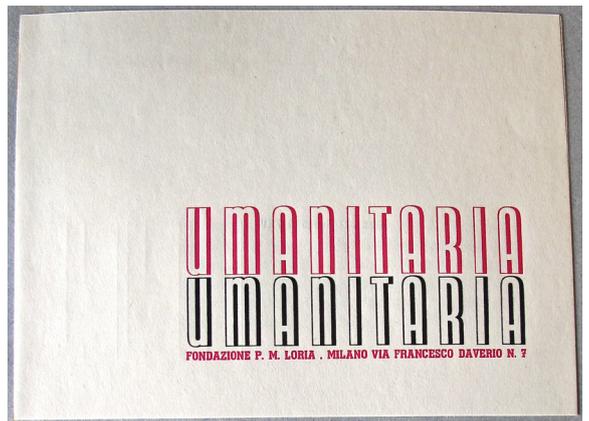
a

1.16   invitation card to the students' exhibition, Scuola del Libro in Milan, 1938; featured in 'Documentari di Campo Grafico', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (6), June 1938, p. 171: **.a** detail of the fasces
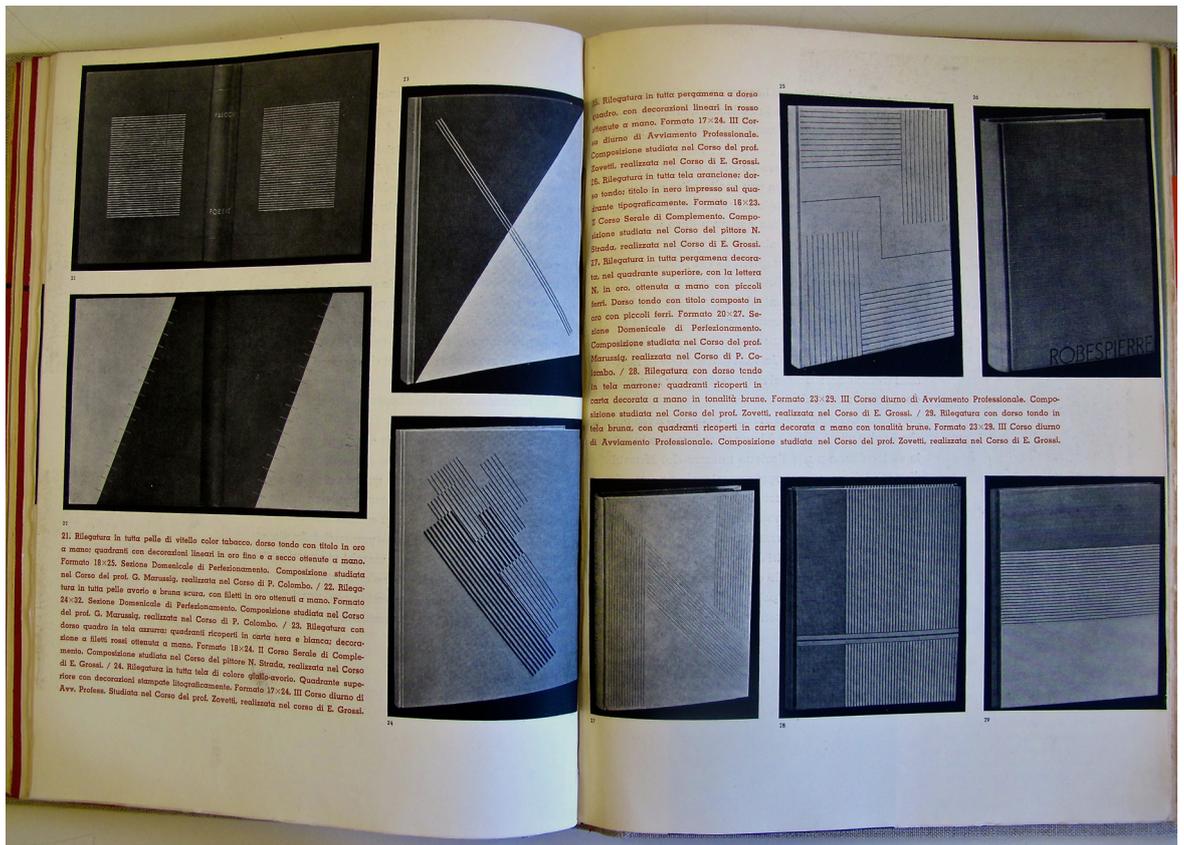
1.17   double-page spread from Mario Ferrigni, 'Saggi di Giovani Rilegatori', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 33 (10), October 1936, pp. 388-89

tification of the fasces on the pamphlet is less evident and the symbol is not readily recognisable unless one knows what one is looking at. Exploiting the Gestalt principle of Reification, the perceived form – i.e. the fasces – contains more spatial information than does what is actually drawn – four parallel segments of different width. Thus the illusory outline of the fasces is perceived as real thanks to the constructive potential of perception.[145]

As I have argued in this section, by featuring visual artefacts designed and produced at the Scuola del Libro, the campisti were not only illustrating the spread of modernist graphics in Italy, but were also discrediting Bertieri's 'Dannunzian rhetoric of typography as art and poetry' that had been directing the school for over two decades.[146] The school was at the centre of a power struggle between two different interest groups with conflicting agendas. Indeed, the evidence provided in this section has shown how the positive reputation of the Scuola del Libro in the field of the graphic arts and printing industry, and its past relationship with Bertieri, made the radical design change of the graphic output and the adoption of modernist aesthetics after 1933 vital and instrumental for the campisti's campaign for the modernisation of Italian graphics. On the one hand, the school's subscription to the guidelines promoted by *Campo Grafico* was capitalised upon by the campisti to legitimise their offensive against Bertieri and his magazine. On the other hand, by changing its visual appearance, the Scuola del Libro was itself promoting a new image: turning from restorer of Italian typographic tradition under Bertieri's directorship, into a modern school in line with experimental visual languages and modernist aesthetics.

The pamphlet of the academic year 1940-41 provides a visual response to the typographic renewal that had been promoted by the campisti, as much through

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145   It would be speculative to see a political meaning behind the radical simplification of the fasces, since today's perception is not comparable to the perception of people living in Italy under the Fascist regime. Considering the omnipresence of the fasces in the daily imagery of the time, it would certainly have been easier for someone to recognise the symbol hidden behind the parallel lines then, than it is for a contemporary viewer today. Nevertheless, the use of the fasces as a geometric decorative element, rather than as a straightforward propaganda tool, is worth consideration, especially given that the Umanitaria was originally formed around socialist-inspired welfare programmes. On the schematic rendering of the fasces within the iconography of Italian Fascism as a way to reinterpret a traditional symbolic form in a modern key, see: Claudia Lazzaro, 'Forging a Visible Fascist Nation: Strategies for Fusing Past and Present', in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts: History and Modernity in the Visual Culture of Fascism*, ed. by Claudia Lazzaro and Roger J. Crum (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 18.

146   '[…] retorica Dannunziana della tipografia come arte e poesia'. Rossi, in *Onoranze a Raffaello Bertieri*, p. 216. 'Dannunzian rhetoric' refers to the Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio, member of the Decadent literary movement.

written texts as through the magazine's experimental layouts, since January 1933. The similarities between the cover of the first issue in 1933 and the front page of the 1940-41 pamphlet attest to the like-minded dialogue between the magazine and the Scuola del Libro (see Illustrations **1.18** and **1.19**). Both covers illustrate the variety of professions involved in the graphics and printing sectors: man and technical equipment are the focus of the selected pictures, and the emphasis is put on daily work activities. Nevertheless, pictures are used for different purposes. The magazine's cover is a statement of intent. The blurry imagery conveys a general idea of workshop practices, illustrates the tight relationship between the printing workforce and *Campo Grafico* and advertises the latter as the 'magazine of graphic aesthetic and technique', for practitioners, made by practitioners.[147] By contrast, the sharp pictures on the 1940-41 pamphlet provide a detailed description of the diverse professions and technologies involved in the design and printing pro-cess, and carefully illustrate the school's educational offer. The graphic language itself has changed. The composition of the magazine cover is based on a dynamic rhythm conveyed by diagonal and circular lines of force. The retouch of the bor-ders and homogenisation of the half-tones make the transition between one picture and the next almost continuous, and create a crescendo that culminates in the enlargement of the compositor's hand.[148] Seven years later, the layout of the pamphlet is based on a grid structure, a white outline frames the pictures and the vortex movement is replaced by a rhythmic and intermittent cadence of neatly juxtaposed planes. The emphasis on diagonal and circular lines of force, which in 1933 had echoed futurist art and graphics, has settled over the years into a grid structure nearer to Constructivism and Rationalist architecture. The experimental language of the magazine's cover has been translated into a set of guidelines to be taught and learnt in the school's workshop and classroom.

1.6 THE COMMERCIAL ART COURSE AT ISIA, 1933-45

Concurrently with the modernisation of the Scuola del Libro, Elio Palazzo, director of the vocational schools at the Umanitaria, also promoted the reorganisation of the ISIA in Monza. This reorganisation brought about the opening of the 'Corso

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147   *Campo Grafico* was subtitled 'Rivista di estetica e tecnica grafica'.

148   Pallavera's article on photomontage in the first issue of *Campo Grafico* is dedicated in par-ticular to the profession of the 'ritoccatore' (the person who retouches and edits the pic-tures) and the collaboration with the photographer. Pallavera, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, p. 7

1.18   pamphlet, Scuola del Libro in Milan, academic year 1940-41, 14.5 × 20.5 cm

1.19   cover, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (1), January 1933, 24 × 33 cm

di Arte Pubblicitaria' (Commercial Art Course) at ISIA in the academic year 1933-34. Design historians Elena Dellapiana and Daniela N. Prina argued that 'the Scuola del Libro was, along with ISIA, instrumental in securing the foundations of visual communication in Italy'.[149] A detailed history of ISIA is beyond the aims of this chapter. Nevertheless, a comparison between the Commercial Art Course at ISIA and the Scuola del Libro is pertinent to the chapter's attempt to understand the significance of the latter as a model of vocational education and modern graphics.[150] The two institutions were amongst the first schools in Italy offering courses on proto-visual communication. However, they presented two different approaches to graphics that will be compared in this final section.

The ISIA was a school of decorative and applied arts founded in 1922 in Monza, a town 20 km northeast of Milan, by a consortium that included the municipality of Milan and Monza in partnership with the Umanitaria.[151] It offered diverse curricula balancing practical knowledge and theoretical education. Courses included cabinet-making, decorative painting and sculpture, ceramics, gold- and silver-smithing. The teaching was workshop based and students were taught by both artists and technicians. Central and North-European educational models – in line with the German and Austrian Werkbund and influenced by the Vienna Secession

149   Elena Dellapiana and Daniela N. Prina, 'Craft, Industry and Art: ISIA (1922-1943) and the Roots of Italian Design Education', in *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei, and Kjetil Fallan (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 122.

150   My reassessment of the Scuola del Libro focused on the school's attempt to bridge the gap between specialised requirements of professional practice and generalised art education. This fits within recent literature on design education that has reassessed so-far overlooked educational institutes often overshadowed by world renowned schools with elite designers within both the staff and student bodies. See, for instance, Yasuko Suga's work on the Reimann School in Berlin: Yasuko Suga, *The Reimann School: A Design Diaspora* (London: Artmosky Arts, 2014), pp. 13-23; Yasuko Suga, 'Modernism, Commercialism and Display Design in Britain. The Reimann School and Studios of Industrial and Commercial Art', *Journal of Design History*, 19 (2006), pp. 137-154.

151   Founded as Università delle Arti Decorative (University of Decorative Arts), the school was renamed Istituto Superiore delle Industrie Artistiche in 1928. For an overview on ISIA in Monza, see: *L'ISIA a Monza: una Scuola d'Arte Europea*, ed. by Rossana Bossaglia (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1986); Anty Pasera, 'Gli ISIA. Da Dove Veniamo e Chi Siamo', in *ISIA Design Convivio. Sperimentazione Didattica: Progetti, Scenari e Società*, ed. by Marco Bazzini and Anty Pansera (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2015), pp. 18-20; Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, pp. 15-20. For a first-hand account of a former student, see: Gambarelli, *Monza Anni Trenta*.

– were brought to ISIA by many professors that had trained or worked abroad.[152] The South Kensington Museum in London, with its annexed school, was a further reference model.[153] Indeed, the statute of the school established that parallel to the school a 'collection of art applied to the industry that would assist the students of the Schools, the makers [and] the industrialists' should be created, together with a furniture museum.[154] In addition, the school took part in the international exhibitions in Monza – these were the forerunners of the Milan Triennale, whose role in the professionalisation of graphic design in Italy is addressed in Chapter 3.[155]

The recently appointed director (1932-43) of ISIA, Palazzo, championed the mechanisation and standardisation of decorative arts. In order to bring decorative arts closer to industrial standards and serial production than to arts and craft tradition and bespoken craftsmanship, he promoted the use of new materials and experimentation with the latest technologies. Responding to the current needs of applied arts and industries, and the market demand for specialised practitioners, Palazzo suggested the opening of four new courses: 'sezione vetrinisti' (window dressing course), 'sezione del cartellone' (poster design course), 'sezione di scenografia cinematografica e teatrale' (theatre and cinema set design course) and

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152   The textile and graphic designer Ugo Zovetti, teacher of painterly decoration at ISIA, studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Arts and Crafts) in Vienna and was a member of the Austrian Werkbund. The second director of the school, Guido Balsamo Stella, was trained in Munich at the Academy of Fine Arts under the Swiss painter and engraver Albert Welti. The teacher of mural painting, Raffaele de Grada, studied both in Zurich and at the Dresden Academy, and worked in Karlsruhe. The German ceramicist Karl Walter Posern also studied and worked in Karlsruhe. Posner was hired by Balsamo Stella to teach glazing techniques in the pottery department at ISIA. The sculptor Arturo Martini studied in Munich under the German sculptor Adolf Hildebrand. Anna Akerdhal, the Swedish wife of Balsamo Stella and assistant director, coordinated the women-only weaving workshop, assisted by the Swedish artist Aina Cederblom and the embroidery expert Anita Puggelli. See *L'ISIA a Monza*, ed. by Bossaglia, pp. 9-53.

153   On the opening in Italy of applied arts museums and annex schools based on the model of the South Kensington Museum during the late-nineteenth century, see Amari, *I Musei delle Aziende*. See also: Ornella Selvafolta, 'Arti Industriali e Istituzioni Scolastiche tra Ottocento e Novecento', in *Storia d'Italia*, ed. by Bigazzi and Meriggi, pp. 861-97; Michael Conforti, 'The Idealist Enterprise and the Applied arts', in *A Grand Design: the Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum*, ed. by Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson (London: V&A Publishing, 1997), p. 36.

154   '[…] creare raccolte di arte applicata all'industria a sussidio degli allievi delle Scuole, degli artefici, degli industriali'. The furniture museum aimed at linking the school activity to the local craft production, which consisted of wooden furniture. Article 2.f and 2.g of the 'Statuto Organico del Consorsio per l'Università delle Arti Decorative' (1922), in *L'ISIA a Monza*, ed. by Bossaglia, p. 177.

155   On the Monza 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Biennale of 1923, 1925 and 1927, and the 4th Triennale of 1930, see: *1923-1930 Monza Verso l'Unità delle Arti*, ed. by Anty Pansera (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004).

'sezione delle arti grafiche' (graphic arts course).[156] The latter was focused on book decoration and was intended as a direct continuation from the Scuola del Libro. ISIA organisers expected that the best students of the Milanese school would enrol on the course in Monza in order to achieve 'artistic improvement'.[157]

Notwithstanding the redevelopment proposal, the Commercial Art Course was the only new course that opened in 1933. It corresponded to Palazzo's original description of the poster design course, geared towards catering for the demand for trained poster artists coming from the Fascist regime in order to promote its propaganda policies. I have not been able to find any sizeable evidence of graphic output other than propaganda and advertising posters in the archive of ISIA in Monza. These posters were described in the exhibition inventories as sketched designs that 'would only be produced in the event of someone placing an order, and would then have to be developed outside the school'.[158] Indeed, ISIA outsourced the production to external typography and printing workshops.[159] Thus students of the Commercial Art Course were not offered the same hands-on technical training that was available at the Scuola del Libro, where each step of the graphic production was dealt with in-house.

In an attempt to modernise ISIA, Palazzo recruited architects, graphic artists and critics actively engaged in contemporary cultural debates and prominent promoters of Italian Rationalism.[160] The newly opened Commercial Art Course was assigned to the graphic and industrial designer Marcello Nizzoli, and the architect, typographer, display designer and editor of the architecture magazine *Casabella*,

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156   Elio Palazzo, 'Memoriale per il Definitivo ed Organico Riordinamento Finanziario e Didattico dell'Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche della Villa Reale di Monza', annual report 1932-33 and redevelopment proposal, ASM, II.965.1, pp. 12-15.

157   '[…] perfezionamento artistico […]'. Palazzo, 'Memoriale per il Definitivo ed Organico Riordinamento Finanziario e Didattico dell'Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche della Villa Reale di Monza', annual report 1932-33 and redevelopment proposal, ASM, II.965.1, p. 15.

158   '[…] potrebbero essere realizzati soltanto con il verificarsi di qualche ordinazione che imporrebbe i loro sviluppi fuori sede'. 'Riepilogo Generale della Produzione delle Diverse Sezioni Durante l'Anno Scolastico 1938-39 and 1940-41', annual students' work inventory, ASM, AP.9/1.

159   ISIA outsourced the production of official publications to external workshops. Amongst them: the Stabilimento Tipografico Cesare Tamburini (Milan), the Stabilimento delle Nogore & Armetti (Milan), the Officina Grafici Rinaldo Muggiani (Milan), Pizzi & Pizio (Milan and Rome), and the Tipo-Litografia P. Agnelli di Anteriore Protti (Milan). The names of the printing workshops are printed on booklets, programs and posters of ISIA.

160   Agnolodomenico Pica taught art history, Giuseppe Pagano arts criticism, and Giovanni Romano was responsible for the furniture workshop. 'Notizie Statistiche. Anno scolastico 1933-34', staff list and teaching hours, ASM, CAMMU 41.1; 'Elenco Personale dell'ISIA. Anno 1936/37', staff list and teaching hours, ASM, III.342.2.

Edoardo Persico. Their involvement, together with the attendance of prominent students such as Giovanni Pintori and Costantino Nivola, has attracted the attention of design historians.[161]

Dallapiana and Prina argued that 'teaching graphic composition and advertising, [Nizzoli] brought to ISIA intimate knowledge of different avant-garde conceptions and an experimental attitude to new visual language'.[162] Indeed, by having Nizzoli and Persico as teachers of the Commercial Art Course, experimentation with new modern and avant-garde visual languages is what one would expect to have occurred. Yet, my archival research has suggested that both the direct involvement of Nizzoli and Persico, and their influence on the visual language adopted at ISIA, need to be reassessed. No evidence of Nizzoli and Persico's collaboration with the Commercial Art Course after 11th December 1934 was, in fact, found in the admittedly heavily damaged and scattered archive of ISIA.[163] On that date, Palazzo wrote a letter to the mayor of Monza and commissioner of the Milan-Monza-Umanitaria Consortium, Ulisse Cattaneo, reporting the 'dismissal of two teachers of the Commercial Art Course', and these are likely to have been Nizzoli and Persico.[164] No mention was made as to the replacement, but the painter, textile designer and book decorator, Ugo Zovetti, later became the commercial art teacher as his name appears in the staff list for the academic year 1936-37.[165]

Moreover, no archival evidence could be found to corroborate a substantial adoption of experimental visual language. Posters designed by students at the Commercial Art Course present rather a figurative style, testifying to a pictorial approach to graphic design that favours hand drawn lettering and illustrations (see Illustration **1.20**). The use of photomontage is limited and the combination with decorative elements tends to limit the communicative potential of photographic medium (see Illustration **1.21**). By contrast to the Scuola del Libro, ISIA's

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161   On Costantino Nivola and Marcello Nizzoli at ISIA, see: *Nivola, Fancello, Pintori. Percorsi del Moderno: dalle Arti Applicate all'Industrial Design*, ed. by Roberto Cassanelli, Ugo Collu and Ornella Selvafolta (Cagliari: Editoriale Wide, 2003).

162   Dellapiana and N. Prina, 'Craft, Industry and Art', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, p. 118.

163   Edoardo Persico died mysteriously in January 1936. On Persico's death, see: Andrea Camilleri, *Dentro il Labirinto* (Geneva; Milan: Skira, 2012).

164   '[…] sono stati aboliti due insegnanti per la sezione di Arte pubblicitaria […]'. Letter from Elio Palazzo to Ulisse Cattaneo, 11 December 1934, ASM, II.695.1, p. 6.

165   'Elenco. Personale dell'ISIA. Anno 1936/37', staff list and teaching hours, ASM, III.342.2, p. 2. On Ugo Zovetti and his teaching experience at ISIA, see: Alberto Crespi, *Ugo Zovetti: la Donazione al Comune di Monza* (Monza: Musei di Monza e Associazione Amici di Monza, 2000).

1.20   double-page spread from a promotional booklet, ISIA in Monza, 1937-38; featuring works by students of the commercial art (left) and the mural painting courses (right)

1.21   poster design by Turati (student), ISIA in Monza, 1932-34
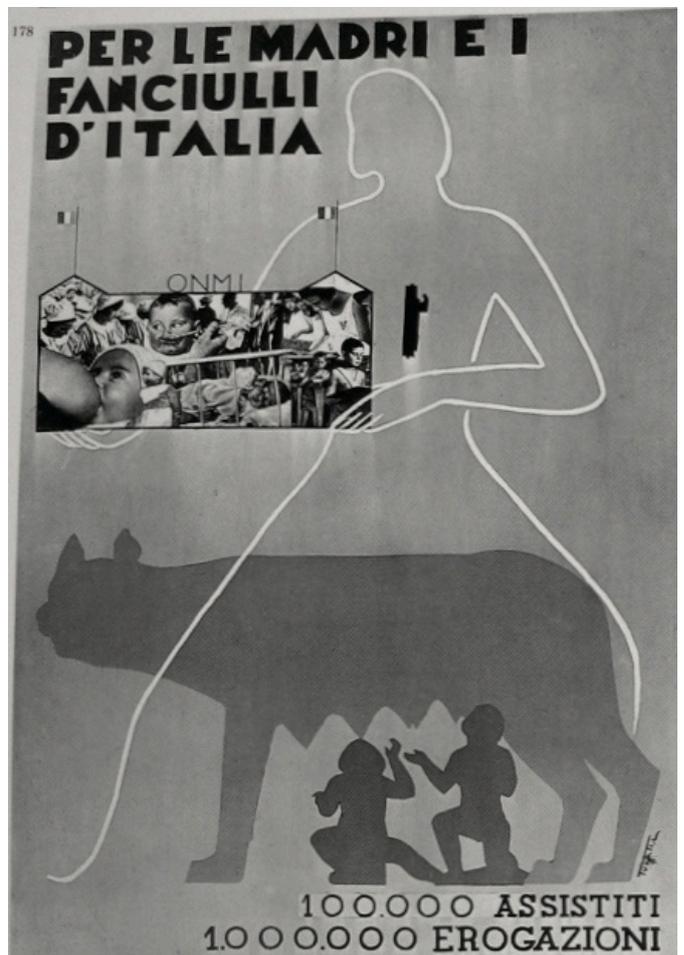
graphic output appears barely touched by visual and technological innovations promoted in the 1930s. Students' works show no evidence of Persico's 'clear and persuasive application of typography to poster design' nor use of photography as formal element in combination with type.[166]

I would suggest that scholars' interest in the Commercial Art Course at ISIA, usually to the detriment of the Scuola del Libro, is a symptom of one of the major biases afflicting Italian graphic design historiography – that is, the focus on designers' originality and design celebrities.[167] Moreover, the highlighting of Nizzoli, Persico, Pintori and Nivola's involvement in ISIA conveys an idea of design education whose success depends on the individual brilliance of teachers and students, and relies on personal intuition and creativity.[168] This view has been challenged in this chapter, which has highlighted the importance of formalised education and training.

Differences in approach to design education between the Scuola del Libro and ISIA mirrored differences in approach to the graphic arts themselves. In contrast with the Scuola del Libro, the Commercial Art Course at ISIA ignored any printed matter and graphic work other than posters. It remained closer to an idea of graphic arts as the commercial application of fine arts aesthetics and technique, with an emphasis on individual's creativity rather than a functional approach to graphic design. While the Scuola del Libro adapted its curriculum in the attempt to train a new professional figure that could bridge the gap between the typographer's technique and artist's creativity, the Commercial Art Course at ISIA reiterated the gap that distinguished poster art – assigned to artists or practitioners with a fine arts background – from everyday printed matter – tasked to typographers, printers and technical labourers.

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166   '[...] applicazione chiara e convincente della tipografia al manifesto'. Guido Modiano, 'Manifesti', *Campo Grafico*, 4 (1), December 1935, p. 245. The original article was published in *Graphicus*: Guido Modiano, 'Cinque Manifesti', *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, pp. 21-23.

167   Maddalena dalla Mura and Carlo Vinti, 'A Historiography of Italian Design', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, p. 46; Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza and Carlo Vinti, 'TDM5. Un Museo per una Storia Ancora da Scrivere / TDM5. A Museum for a Story Yet to Be Written', in *TDM5*, ed. by Camuffo, Piazza and Vinti, p. 28.

168   On the idea of design education based on individuals' intuition and creativity rather than formalised methods, see: Katherine MCCoy, 'Education in an Adolescent Profession', in *The Education of a Graphic Designer*, ed. by Steven Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 2005), pp. 4-6.

By 1943, when the Scuola del Libro was forced to close temporarily until September 1946, the definition of the 'progettista grafico' was still ongoing. The development of a specialist language and the agreement on a shared body of professional skills and knowledge, nevertheless, demonstrates the gradual taking shape of the new professional identity, while the transit from practice into professional education attest to the profession's greater confidence and awareness. Bridging the gap between typographers' technical skills and artists' creativity, the new profession was the result of a methodological shift from mere execution to conception. Sketching and collaborating with modern artists were identified as tools in the hands of the graphic designer.

As a case study, the Scuola del Libro in Milan afforded the opportunity to explore the infancy of graphic design education in interwar Italy. The school's focus on vocational education enabled the process of professionalisation to be examined beyond the mere distinction between artists and technical labourers. The historical overview highlighted the ways in which the school adapted to graphic practitioners, industrialists and critics' requests and played an active part in the construction of the graphic designer's professional identity. By pointing out the personal relationships both Bertieri and the campisti had with the school, I positioned the Scuola del Libro at the centre of a heated debate and presented it as a breeding ground for the modernisation of graphic design in Italy. Moreover, I addressed changes in the school organisation under the Fascist regime and introduced issues related to the relationship between graphic design and Italian Fascism that will be explored further in the next two chapters.

In the quotation that opened this chapter, Antonio Boggeri complained to the Swiss graphic designer, Max Huber, about the lack of specialist schools in graphic design in Italy in 1940. His criticism was correct. Yet, this chapter has shown that in the interwar period Italian graphic practitioners and critics were aware of the need for professional training and were actively seeking to bridge the gap between design education and practice. The next chapter will focus on Boggeri himself, and will question the widely held assumption that the Milanese Studio Boggeri played a leading role in the history of Italian graphic design. By referring to unpublished primary material collected in Anna Boggeri and Bruno Monguzzi's archive in Mendrisio, Switzerland, the chapter will reassess Boggeri's role in the

modernisation of Italian graphic design and at the same time raise questions concerning the relationship between professionalisation and the spread of modernism in Italy.

2. All graphics lead to Boggeri

In 1933 the Studio Boggeri opened its doors in via Borghetto 5, walking distance from Porta Venezia within the walls of Milan. It was a 'modern and simple looking graphic design studio in an old patrician building' facing a courtyard with a 'permanently dripping palm tree', as the German graphic designer Käte Bernhard recalled, apparently upset by the poor weather conditions in Milan.[1] The Studio was divided into several rooms with big windows and drawing desks, and included a photographic studio with a darkroom. Not all rooms overlooked the courtyard. The only view from the desk of Xanti Schawinsky was a weathered wall that the Swiss designer, former Bauhaus student and collaborator of the Studio between 1933 and 1936 wryly nicknamed the 'wall of inspiration'.[2]

Antonio Boggeri, founder and owner of the Studio Boggeri, was a keen self-trained photographer and professional violinist who had spent the previous eight years in charge of the typo-lithography department at Alfieri&Lacroix.[3] This was the most advanced typo-lithographic press in interwar Italy. It specialised in periodicals that featured extensive use of photography and an innovative graphic look, such as *La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia* and one of the first popular science magazines entitled *Natura*. In 1924, the press was taken over by Giuseppe Crespi, who called in Boggeri, an acquaintance of his from Officer Cadet School. Although started by chance, his work experience at Alfieri&Lacroix enabled Boggeri to familiarise himself with graphics and printing techniques and liaise with the diverse professional figures involved. He gained a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of graphic works and acquired expertise in the management of the whole production process. He became aware of the new developments in modernist graphics and photography through a number of foreign publications that were

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1   'Dentro il vecchio palazzo patrizio, lo studio era moderno e semplice [...] palma perennemente gocciolante di pioggia'. Käte Bernhard's recollection of her work experience at the Studio Boggeri is quoted in: *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1973. Comunicazione Visuale e Grafica Applicata* (Cinisello Balsamo: Pizzi, 1974), unpaged.

2   'Mauer der Inspiration'. Xanti Schawinsky, unpublished autobiography, undated and unpaged.

3   For a concise history of Alfieri&Lacroix, see: *Editori a Milano (1900-1945): Repertorio*, ed. by Patrizia Caccia (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 2013), pp. 33-34.

available at Alfieri&Lacroix.[4] Finally, Boggeri developed a network that proved to be instrumental once he opened a business on his own.[5]

The Studio Boggeri is widely recognised in the Italian graphic design historiography as the first full-service graphic design studio in Italy and is indicated as one of the agents that transformed the year 1933 into the so-considered date of birth of modern Italian graphics.[6] Antonio Boggeri is generally remembered as the forerunner of the art director and his figure has been romanticised over time.[7] Writing in 1952, Leonardo Sinisgalli described Boggeri as a charismatic leader who 'acted as a manager and a catalyst, inspired and stimulated [...] his pupils who presented different tastes and inclinations as well as diverse cultures and sensibilities, [...]

4   International magazines, such as the British magazine *Commercial Art* and the Soviet Union propaganda journal *USSR in Construction*, which was designed by Alexander Rodchenko and El Lissitzky, were addressed to the director of *La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia* and *Natura*, Marco Luigi Poli. See: *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1981*, ed. by Bruno Monguzzi (Milan: Electra, 1981), unpaged.

5   For instance, Marco Luigi Poli introduced Boggeri to Bruno Munari who later became one of the first design consultants of the Studio. On Munari's graphic work in interwar Italy and his collaboration with magazines and trade journals, see: Alessandro Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari and the Invention of Modern Graphic Design in Italy, 1928-1945' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leiden, 2011), pp. 89-91, and pp. 155-62; Luigi Corato, 'Bruno Munari Illustratore e Grafico Futurista', in *Il Presente si fa Storia: Scritti in Onore di Luciano Caramel*, ed. by Cecilia de Carli and Francesco Tedeschi (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2008), pp. 209-26.

6   On the position of the Studio Boggeri within the Italian graphic design historiography, see: *La Grafica in Italia*, ed. by Giorgio Fioravanti, Leonardo Passarelli and Silvia Sfligiotti (Milan: Leonardo Arte, 1997), pp. 8-10 and 76-79; *Storia del Design Grafico*, ed. by Daniele Baroni and Maurizio Vitta (Milan: Longanesi & Co., 2003); Carlo Dradi, *1933: Nasce a Milano la Grafica Moderna* (Milan: Ufficio Stampa Commune di Milano, 1973); *Grafica e Design a Milano, 1933-2000*, ed. by Aldo Colonetti (Milan: Editrice Abitare Segesta, 2001); Giovanni Anceschi, 'Il Campo della Grafica Italiana: Storia e Problemi', in *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 8-12; Steven Heller and Louise Fili, *Italian Art Deco: Graphic Design Between the Wars* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993), p. 17. The Studio Boggeri is also included outside Italian graphic design historiography, see for example: Richard Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design: The Origins and Growth of an International Style, 1920-1965* (London: Laurence King, 2006), p. 135; Bettina Richter, 'Italian Influence in Post-War Swiss Graphic Design', in *Italian Design Is Coming Home. To Switzerland*, ed. by William Georgi and Tommaso Minetti (Amsterdam: Polyedra, 2011), p. 11; Davide Fornari, 'Swiss Style Made in Italy: Graphic Design Across the Border', in *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, ed. by Davide Fornari and Robert Lzicar (Zurich: Triest Verlag, 2016), pp. 152-89; Jeremy Aynsley, *A Century of Graphic Design* (London: Mitchell Beazley, 2001), pp. 84-85.

7   The use of the term 'art director' to indicate Antonio Boggeri's professional figure in the interwar period is incorrect since the Anglicism was not in use in Italy before the mid-1950s. See: 'Artisti Italiani per la Pubblicità', *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954, p. 32; *Dizionario della Pubblicità: Storia, Tecniche, Personaggi*, ed. by Alberto Abruzzese and Fausto Colombo (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1994), pp. 25-26.

understood their talent and promoted their personal skills'.[8] Nowadays, the Studio Boggeri maintains its appeal over new generations of graphic designers who still refer to it as a source of inspiration.[9]

Despite its ubiquity, the role played by the Studio in the professionalisation of graphic design is often taken for granted. Narratives are limited to the repetition of already known formulas and anecdotes based on secondary sources. The list of three generations of Italian and Central-European graphic designers, who were attracted to work at the Studio by what Boggeri himself described rhetorically as 'an imaginary and dreamed Eden of illuminated clients that were flocking to the Studio Boggeri, synonymous with the advertising avant-garde', is generally considered as self-explanatory evidence of the success of the Studio.[10] By focusing on individual personalities, this biased approach reduces the Studio Boggeri to a neutral space in which prominent figures of advertising and graphic design passed by. It simplifies the complexities of the studio-system, rather than exploring it as, borrowing graphic designer and critic Adrian Shaughnessy's witty metaphor, 'a fuzzy cocktail of real estate, psychology and creativity'.[11]

In order to move beyond this unsatisfactory narrative, this chapter questions existing assumptions and reveals overlooked details. It addresses networks and verifies key points and changes of professional practice. Moreover, it explores the process of running and mediating a graphic design studio from the interwar period to the mid-1940s. In doing so, I employ the Studio Boggeri as a case study to advance the understanding of the emergence of the graphic design profession in Milan in this period. Whereas Chapter 1 rooted the origins of graphic design in the lineage of typography and the printing trade, this chapter introduces advertising as actor in the professionalisation of graphic design.[12] To this end, I contextualise

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8 'Ha fatto da manager e da catalizzatore, ha ispirato, ha sollecitato […]. I suoi pupilli hanno gusti e inclinazioni diverse, hanno diversa cultura e sensibilità, […] ne ha capito il genio e ne ha sviluppato le capacità personali'. Leonardo Sinisgalli, 'Boggeri Regista Grafico', *Linea Grafica*, 5 (3-4), March-April 1952, p. 67.

9 See: Adrian Shaughnessy, 'The Graphic Design Studio: Real Estate, Psychology and Creativity', in *Studio Culture: The Secret Life of the Graphic Design Studio*, ed. by Tony Brook and Adrian Shaughnessy (London: Unit Editions, 2009), p. 13.

10 '[…] un immaginario e sognato eden di illuminati committenti affluiti allo Studio Boggeri, sinonimo di avanguardia pubblicitaria'. Antonio Boggeri, 'Una B Rossa fra Due Punti', *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 20.

11 *Studio Culture*, ed. by Brook and Shaughnessy, p. 12.

12 For a critical perspective on the relationship between graphic design and advertising and the biased absence of the latter in most of the accounts of graphic design's origins, see: Steven Heller, 'Advertising, Mother of Graphic Design', in *The Design History Reader*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei and Rebecca Houze (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2010), pp 435-40, first published in *Eye*, 5 (17) (1995).

the Studio Boggeri within the interwar debate on the rationalisation of advertising, and investigate the dialogue between graphics and advertising professionals. Self-promotional printed artefacts are approached as evidence of Boggeri's professional confidence and as an expression of the Studio's aesthetic principles and design methodologies.[13] Self-promotional vocabulary is understood within a narrative of the Studio that was strategically constructed by Boggeri over the years. The chapter illustrates the ways in which Boggeri promoted the circulation of cutting-edge photography and modernist graphics. The last section problematises Boggeri's attempt to position the Studio at the vanguard of national and international graphic design by hiring designers who were trained, worked and had networks abroad. By interrogating so far neglected or unpublished visual material, primary sources and archival documents, I examine how and why the Studio promoted modernist techniques and aesthetics, and question its key role in the layout of the graphic design profession in Milan.

2.1 TYPOGRAPHIC RATIONALISM AND THE RATIONALISATION OF ADVERTISING[14]

Whereas Boggeri's early work experience at Alfieri&Lacroix began almost by coincidence, the setting up of the Studio Boggeri in 1933 was timely and must be contextualised and understood within the interwar debate over the rationalisation of advertising and graphics rationalism. This debate was the foundation upon which Boggeri constructed his business and the context within which he negotiated his professional identity while taking part in the articulation of graphic design both as a discipline and as a profession. In this section, I argue that advertising provided graphic practitioners with the means to articulate their unfledged professional identity as primarily concerned with communication rather than self-expression and aesthetic formalism. As design historian Carlo Vinti suggested, the Studio Boggeri offers the opportunity to explore the 'alliance between rationalist and

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13 Giovanni Anceschi, 'Archetipi della Seduzione Grafica', in *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1981*, ed. by Monguzzi, unpaged.

14 In using the terms 'typographic rationalism' and 'rationalisation of advertising', I make direct reference to Carlo Vinti's chapter on the relationship of graphic design and advertising in Italy from the 1930s to the 1970s. See: Carlo Vinti, 'Grafica e Pubblicità in Italia (1933-1970) / Graphic Design and Advertising in Italy (1933-1970)', in *TDM5: Grafica Italiana*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza and Carlo Vinti (Milan: Corraini Edizioni, 2012), pp. 217-21. The term 'razionalismo' (rationalism) was in use at the time and features in specialist magazines of the period: Gabriel Delmas, 'Organizzazione Razionale della Tipografia', *Graphicus*, 19 (238), April 1929, pp. 1-3; 'La Scusa del Razionalismo', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 29 (9), September 1932, pp. 501-02; Carlo Frassinelli, 'Arte, Vita... e Razionalismo', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (1), January 1933, pp. 45-49.

so-called rationalisers'.[15] With its focus on advertising and its use of modernist aesthetics and cutting-edge techniques, the Studio is employed here as a case study of how, at a time when professional boundaries were still fluid, Milan's graphics and advertising practitioners found themselves on common ground and joined forces.

Writing in *Risorgimento Grafico* in 1931, Nino Caimi, founder of the Enneci advertising agency and former director of the Milanese branch of the American agency Erwin Wasey & Co., argued that, since the majority of graphic production consisted of commercial artefacts, it was crucial for the graphics industry to join forces with the advertising sector.[16] He called for graphic practitioners to complement their technical skills with some knowledge of advertising. They were invited to study modern advertising and familiarise themselves with its principles: economy, rationality, sincerity, effectiveness and suitability to purpose.[17]

Caimi's demand was answered in the following decade by a new generation of graphic practitioners who aimed at extending the field of graphics beyond book design and poster art. Led by the editors of *Campo Grafico* – the 'campisti' – exponents of typographic rationalism demanded a shift of focus from book design toward everyday printed matter, and called for the replacement of the painterly dimension of poster art with modernist aesthetics and techniques. Advocates of modernist graphics considered 'tipografia-arte' (typography as art) as 'an anachronistic and pseudo-humanistic tendency' and deemed it to be 'detrimental and fatal to the development of the profession'.[18] By contrast, they expected typography to address the 'rules of industrial capitalism' and engage in real-life conditions of industrial society.[19]

Graphic practitioners' interest in commercial artefacts coincided with the impact of a modern approach to advertising in Italy. This was based on alleged

15   Vinti, 'Grafica e Pubblicità in Italia (1933-1970', in *TDM5*, ed. by Camuffo, Piazza and Vinti, p. 220.

16   Nino Caimi, 'La Pubblicità e l'Industria Grafica', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 28 (5), May 1931, pp. 237-40.

17   Caimi, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 28 (5), May 1931, p. 238.

18   '[...] anacronistica tendenza pseudo umanistica [...] dannoso e esiziale ai fini del progresso del nostro mestiere'. 'Ostacoli', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (5), May 1934, p. 101

19   'leggi del capitalismo industriale'. *Campo Grafico*, 2 (5), May 1934, p. 101.

scientific methods, and was heavily influenced by American models.[20] Since the turn of the century, the United States had been the major reference point for European companies.[21] American models influenced European management practices and corporate culture, as well as patterns of consumption and distribution, with an increasing impact in the postwar period. 'The American example', sociologist Adam Arvidsson argued, 'was an obvious referent for any serious discussion of advertising, selling and mass consumption'.[22] Advertising was, of course, no novelty in interwar Italy. However, the American model challenged the local practice of poster art that went back to the 1880s by promoting an idea of advertising as science based on the principles of rationalisation and efficiency.[23]

20   On the impact of American advertising in the Italian context, see: Luciano Segreto, 'Changing a Low Consumption Society. The impact of US Advertising methods and Techniques in Italy', in *Americanisation in the 20th Century Europe: Business, Culture, Politics*, ed. by Matthias Kipping and Nick Tiratsoo, vol. 2 (Lille: Centre de Recherche sur l'Histoire de l'Europe du Nord-Ouest Université Charles-de-Gaule, 2001), pp. 75-91; Simona De Julio and Carlo Vinti, 'La Publicité Italienne et le Modèle Américain', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire*, 101 (2009), pp. 61-80; Victoria De Grazia, 'The Arts of Purchase: How American Publicity Subverted the European Poster, 1920-1940', in *Remaking History: Discussions in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Barbara Kruger and Phil Mariani (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989, pp. 221-57; Adam Arvidsson, 'Between Fascism and the American Dream: Advertising in Interwar Italy', *Social Science History*, 25 (2) (2001), pp. 151-8; Adam Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity: Italian Advertising from Fascism to Postmodernity* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 44-64; Gian Luigi Falabrino, *Effimera e Bella: Storia della Pubblicità Italiana, Venezia 1691 – Roma 2001* (Turin: Gutemberg, 2001), pp. 215-39.

21   For a comparative study on the impact of the American example on European companies and industries, with a focus on the process of selection and adaptation, see: *Americanisation in the 20th Century Europe*, ed. by Kipping and Tiratsoo. See also: Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economy and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982); Victoria De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA; London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

22   Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity*, p. 44.

23   For a history of Italian advertising, see: Giuseppe Priarone, *Grafica Pubblicitaria in Italia negli Anni Trenta* (Florence: Cantini, 1989); *Grafica Pubblicitaria in Italia*; *Dizionario della Pubblicità*, ed. by Abruzzese and Colombo; Gian Paolo Ceserani, *Storia della Pubblicità in Italia* (Rome; Bari: Laterza, 1988); Vanni Codeluppi, *Storia della Pubblicità Italiana* (Rome: Carocci Editore, 2013); Falabrino, *Effimera e Bella*; Gian Luigi Falabrino, *Storia della Pubblicità in Italia dal 1945 a Oggi* (Rome: Carocci, 2007); Claudia Salaris, *Il Futurismo e la Pubblicità* (Milan: Lupetti & Co., 1986); Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity*; Karen Pinkus, *Bodily Regimes: Italian Advertising Under Fascism* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

The alleged scientific methods of American advertising met the favour of a new professional figure that was seeking social legitimation in interwar Italy.[24] The 'tecnici pubblicitari' (advertising technicians) lacked any artistic training and were professionals or academics often coming from the fields of journalism or law. Like their American counterparts, Italian advertising technicians considered modern advertising as a new branch of business administration that relied on scientifically developed and practically verified methodologies. The purported scientific legitimacy hinged upon the application of the latest techniques of behavioural psychology, marketing research and statistics to advertising.[25] In contrast to their American colleagues, as Arvidsson has argued, Italian advertising technicians 'paid little attention to any empirical investigation of the actual mental make-up of consumers' and market research and advertising testing were adopted only in the late-1930s.[26]

Borrowing the rhetoric of American rationalism, advertising technicians questioned the old Italian system, which was based on direct contact between industrialists and commercial artists, and asserted their credentials as mediators.[27] Methods of American advertising were not accepted unanimously by people working in the advertising field. Some exponents of the old system began what historian Victoria de Grazia has defined as a 'strategy of resistance'.[28] Giuseppe Magagnoli, founder and director of the internationally successful poster workshop

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24   On American advertising, see: Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: a History of American Advertising* (London: Heimann, 1984); Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Terry Smith, *Making the Modern: Industry, Art, and Design in America* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1993); James Sloan Allen, *The Romance of Commerce and Culture: Capitalism, Modernism and the Chicago-Aspen Crusade for Cultural Reform* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2002), pp. 3-38; Ellen Lupton and J. Abbott Miller, 'A Time Line of American Graphic design, 1829-1989', in *Graphic Design in America: a Visual Language History* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Centre, 1989), pp. 24-65; *The Promise and the Product: 200 Years of American Advertising Posters*, ed. by Victor Margolin, Ira Brichta and Vivian Brichta (New York; London: MacMillan Publishing, 1979); Michele H. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); *Advertising in America: The First 200 Years*, ed. by Charles Goodrum and Helen Dalrymple (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, 1990); Ellen Mazur Thomson, '"The Science of Publicity": An American Advertising Theory, 1900-1920', *Journal of Design History*, 9 (4) (1996), pp. 253-72.

25   For an insight on the everyday of an American advertising agency, see Ralph M. Hower's survey of N. W. Ayer and Son: Ralph M. Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939).

26   Arvidsson, *Marketing Modernity*, p. 49.

27   See: Nino Caimi, 'Grazie per Cenerentola!', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 28 (7), July 1931, pp. 345-50; Leonardo Sinisgalli, 'L'Arte Pubblicitaria nell'Estetica della Città', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (7-9), September 1938, p. 223.

28   De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, p. 256; see also pp. 257-58.

Maga, was amongst the most vehement opponents to the rationalisation of advertising. According to Magagnoli, the aim of advertising was to 'take the audience by surprise' in order to 'firmly fix the name of the product in their minds'.[29] Hence, its success relied on creativity and originality, rather than on scientific methods. By contrast, advertising technicians challenged the notion of advertising as an artistic expression based on 'trovata' (improvised intuition). Rather than pursuing aesthetic purposes, modern advertising was expected to shape behaviours and opinions. Its goal was effectiveness and not beauty in itself. To accomplish this, creativity was expected to be subordinated to systematic rules and rigid methodologies.

The reception of American ideas on advertising in Milan was mediated through diverse channels. A number of American advertising agencies set up offices abroad in the late 1920s in order to 'position themselves as masters of the global market'.[30] The advertising company J. Walter Thompson established about twenty foreign offices between 1927 and 1929, one of which was in Milan. Similarly, Erwin Wasey set up a Milanese branch in 1928.[31] Courses on advertising and business

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29   Giuseppe Magagnoli, 'La Pubblicità Parlata', *Pugno nell'Occhio*, March 1923, quoted in: De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, p. 257. From the mid-1920s, Magagnoli launched a campaign in the pages of the company house organ *Pugno nell'Occhio* (Punch in the Eye) in defence of the artistic autonomy of poster art. On Giuseppe Magagnoli and Maga, see: Gino Pesavento and Antonio Palieri, *Chi e in Pubblicità* (Milan: L'Ufficio Moderno, 1953), p. 202; Falabrino, *Effimera e Bella*, p. 116. On Giuseppe Magagnoli's defence of the poster art, see also: Arvidsson, 'Between Fascism and the American Dream', *Social Science History*, 25 (2) (2001), pp. 164-65.

30   De Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, p. 203. For a detailed description of the London branch of the N. W. Ayer and Son advertising company abroad, see: Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency*, pp.172-78.

31   Both J. Walter Thompson's and Erwin Wasey's business experiences in Milan did not last long due to the 1929 depression and the autarchy policy of the fascist regime. Although short-lived, American advertising companies were taken as reference points by the many American-style agencies that were set up in Milan by people who had some kind of hands-on experience of the American advertising methods and practises. Luigi Dalmonte worked for George Ethridge & Co. advertising agency in New York before establishing the agency ACME Dalmonte in 1922. Pier Luigi Balzaretti worked in the advertising office at Macy's in San Francisco before he co-founded, together with Giulio Cesare Ricciardi, the agency Balza-Ricc in 1929. Nino Caimi, founder of the agency Enneci in 1931, and Antonio Domenghini, founder of IMA (Idea Metodo Arte, Idea Method Art) in 1933, worked for the Milanese branch of Erwin Wasey & Co., respectively as director and as consultant. See: *Dizionario della Pubblicità*, ed. by Abruzzese and Colombo, pp. 7-9.

management were taught at the Milan Polytechnic.[32] American advertising and marketing techniques had been documented through theoretical treaties and how-to manuals since the beginning of the twentieth century.[33] Specialist periodicals set out to convince businessmen of the effectiveness of advertising and offered a platform for the circulation of the most modern principles, methods, and planning to improve the quality of advertisements. The editors of Milan-based periodicals like *L'Ufficio Moderno*, *L'impresa Moderna* and the house organ of the fascist syndicate of advertising, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, favoured the circulation of aspects of the American business and managerial culture, promoted professional awareness and informed public opinion. Together with typography and graphic arts magazines, they encouraged a dialogue between advertising and graphic practitioners. Conferences and discussion groups were further occasions for debate on aspects of modern advertising amongst a heterogeneous group of attendees.[34]

Between 1931 and 1933 the editors of *L'Ufficio Moderno* promoted the discussion group Gruppo Amici della Razionalizzazione (Friends of Rationalisation Group – G.A.R.),.[35] This aimed to 'create, maintain and promote a friendly environment around the study of issues specific to contemporary society that [were]

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32   The lecture notes of the course were published in 1936. See: Roberto Pomé, *Concezione Moderna della Pubblicità: Lezioni Tenute al Politecnico di Milano per il Corso di Dirigenti di Aziende Industriali (Aprile-Maggio 1936-XIV)* (Rome: Edizioni della Federazione Nazionale Fascista Dirigenti Aziende Industriali, 1936). In addition to the lectures held at the Milan Polytechnic, the journalist and director of the advertising and business management magazine *L'Ufficio Moderno*, Guido Mazzali, launched in 1918 a correspondence course in collaboration with the École Supérieure de Publicité Pratique in Paris. See: Elena Bauer, 'L'Ufficio Moderno', in *Libri, Giornali e Riviste a Milano*, ed. by Fausto Colombo (Milan: Segesta, 1998), pp. 162-64.

33   See, for instance: Giuseppe Prezzolini, *L'Arte di Persuadere* (Milan: Lumachi, 1907); Carlo Cassola, *La Réclame dal Punto di Vista Economico*, (Turin: 1909); Arturo Lancelotti, *Storia Aneddotica della Réclame* (Milan: Riccardo Quintieri Editore, 1912); Egisto Roggero, *Come si Riesce con la Pubblicità* (Milan: Hoepli, 1920). Further evidence of the circulation of specialised foreign literature can be found in the first bibliography on advertising that includes many American and German titles: *Mille Opere sulla Pubblicità* (Rome: Enios, 1936).

34   The 1st International Congress of Advertising was held in Rome and Milan in September 1933. It was the occasion to assess, amongst international experts the status of Italian advertising. On the 1st International Congress of Advertising, see: Ceserani, *Storia della Pubblicità in Italia*, pp. 129-43; *L'Ufficio Moderno*, special issue September 1933.

35   Meetings ended abruptly in 1933 when the fascist regime forced the G.A.R. to be absorbed into the Centro Studi di Economia Corporativa (Corporative Economics Study Centre) in an attempt to keep the so-felt subversive character of the discussions under control. On the G.A.R., see: Ceserani, *Storia della Pubblicità in Italia*; Bauer, 'L'Ufficio Moderno', in *Libri, Giornali e Riviste a Milano*, ed. by Colombo, pp. 162-64; '"L'Ufficio Moderno" di Guido Mazzali e il G.A.R.: una Presenza Culturale Democratico-Socialista nella Milano degli Anni Trenta', in *Saggi, Sguardi e Testimonianze a Milano dal 1891 al 2000*, ed. by Carlo Carotti (Milan: Lampi di Stampa, 2014), pp.157-92; Segreto, 'Changing a Low Consumption Society', in *Americanisation in the 20th Century Europe*, ed. by Kipping and Tiratsoo, pp. 75-91.

grouped under the generic name of rationalisation'.[36] The concept of rationalisation was widely interpreted by G.A.R. members.[37] Members included journalists, economists, managers, statisticians, solicitors, advertising technicians, as well as illustrators and graphic practitioners. Future collaborators of the Studio Boggeri, such as Bruno Munari, Erberto Carboni and Marcello Nizzoli, also took part in the G.A.R., thereby suggesting Boggeri's familiarity with the rationalist stance in advertising.

Caimi's call for collaboration between graphics and advertising practitioners in the early 1930s was not an isolated stance. On the contrary, articles promoting cooperation appeared regularly in specialist magazines and trade journals of the period. An article in *L'Ufficio Moderno* described the advertising technician, advertising artist and typographer as the 'inseparable trinomial' of advertising work.[38] Implicit in the promotion of the collaboration between graphics and advertising practitioners was the notion of specialisation – i.e. the definition of a set of professional skills and knowledge needed to fulfil a specific task. Collaboration implied also that no one but professionals was to be employed, and that professionals should oversee the whole process of production, from design through to execution.[39] Knowledge of psychology, good organisational skills, and a focus on commercial efficiency were the requirements of advertising technicians. Since they were expected to oversee the work of advertising artists and typographers, familiarity with graphic aesthetics and techniques were essential features of their professional profile. Advertising artists' essential requirements were not only creativity and aesthetic sensitivity, but also expertise in graphic technique and visual language, as well as familiarity with modern advertising. The criterion for evaluating their work was not aesthetic pleasure, but rather how efficiently and effectively their design served the purpose of advertising. Likewise, typographers

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36   '[...] creare, mantenere e diffondere una atmosfera di simpatia attorno allo studio dei problemi caratteristici della civiltà contemporanea che vanno sotto il nome generico di razionalizzazione'. 'Gruppo Amici della Razionalizzazione', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 4, April 1931, p. 197, quoted in *Saggi, Sguardi e Testimonianze a Milano dal 1891 al 2000*, ed. by Carotti, p. 166.

37   In addition to advertising, members of G.A.R. discussed topics related to micro- and macroeconomics, entrepreneurial behaviours, marketing, staff education, corporate politics and the like. For an overview of the topics debated during the meetings of the G.A.R., see: *Saggi, Sguardi e Testimonianze a Milano dal 1891 al 2000*, ed. by Carotti. pp. 170-71.

38   Alfredo Marzagalli, 'Pubblicitario, Artista, Tipografo: un Trinomio Inscidibile', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 28 (5-6), May-June 1943, pp. 84-86.

39   See: Bruno Munari and Riccardo Castagnedi, untitled article, *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 11 (4), April 1936, pp. 174-76.

were in charge of the execution of the work, but in addition to technical expertise they were also expected to be familiar with both advertising and graphics in order to collaborate effectively with the other two members of the 'inseparable trinomial'.

Between 1933 and 1942 Giulio Cesare Ricciardi, co-founder of the advertising agency Balza-Ricc in 1929, published three editions of the *Guida Ricciardi*.[40] This was a gazetteer for people working in the advertising field and their clients, whose intent was defined in the preface to the first edition in these terms:

> The goal of the *Guida Ricciardi* is to facilitate the use of advertising means, remove or reduce the causes of the waste of time and money and prevent improvised intermediaries from stealing businesses illicitly, hence to contribute to the minimisation of costs and the greater efficiency of advertising through a simpler, more logical and more rational use of advertising means.[41]

The gazetteers clarified the importance of advertising in contemporary society, explained the principles of modern advertising and described the different professional figures involved in the advertising industry. The second and third editions of 1936 and 1942 also included a section devoted to propaganda, defined as a particular form of advertising whose aims went beyond 'the presentation of a product or the launch of a company, to acquire […] national interest'.[42] Indeed, in interwar Italy the boundaries between advertising and propaganda were fluid and the term propaganda was often used as synonym for publicity. They were hues of the same activity and 'what [was] called advertising in the bourgeois regime', explained graphic and architecture critic Giulia Veronesi in 1937, '[went] under the name of propaganda under the fascist regime'.[43]

The Studio Boggeri articulated its own business identity by taking part in the dialogue between typographic rationalism and the rationalisation of advertising. It featured in all three editions of the *Guida Ricciardi*, but was listed under a different category in each one. In 1933 the Studio was included among the advertising photographers, demonstrating the paramount role of photography that is explored

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40   On Balza-Ricc, see: *Dizionario della Pubblicità*, ed. by Abruzzese and Colombo, p. 47.

41   'La *Guida Ricciardi* ha il compito di facilitare l'impiego dei mezzi di pubblicità, di eliminare o di ridurre al minimo le cause di sciupio di tempo e di denaro, di porre un freno all'illecito accaparramento di affari da parte di intermediari improvvisati, di contribuire insomma al minor costo e al maggior rendimento della pubblicità attraverso un più facile, logico e razionale impego dei mezzi pubblicitari'. *Guida Ricciardi: la Pubblicità in Italia*, ed. by Giulio Cesare Ricciardi (Milan: Edizioni L'Ufficio Moderno, 1933), p. 8.

42   '[…] presentazione di un prodotto o del lancio di un'industria, assumendo […] interesse nazionale […]'. *Guida Ricciardi: Pubblicità e Propaganda in Italia*, ed. Giulio Cesare Ricciardi (Milan: Edizione Pubblicità Ricciardi, 1936), p. 8.

43   '[…] ciò che in regime Borghese si chiama pubblicità, in regime fascista ha nome propaganda'. Giulia Veronesi, 'Pubblicità', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (5-6), June 1937, p. 38. The article was republished in *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 12 (9), pp. 442-45.

later in the chapter. By contrast, in 1936 it was labelled as both a specialised photographer and an 'advertising technical agency', and listed under the broad category of 'advertising agencies, companies, studios and consultancies' in 1942.[44] The shift is indicative, on the one hand, of the growing range of professional categories. On the other hand, the ambiguity suggests a difficulty with categorising the Studio. Its activity was close to the advertising technical agency, but did not entirely match that definition. Similar to an advertising technical agency, the Studio selected the most suitable media, technique and visual language, and appointed the most appropriate graphic practitioner to fulfil the client's requests. Yet, it lacked the service of strategic consultancy – i.e. market analysis, study of competitions and potential consumers, distribution and efficiency control – that an advertising technical agency was expected to offer.[45]

By describing the Studio as an advertising technical agency, Boggeri was establishing a clear distance between its business and the category of advertising artists, which in the 2nd edition of the *Guida Ricciardi* included many of the Studio's design consultants, such as Munari, Nizzoli, and Schawinsky.[46] In doing so, he was differentiating the services offered by the Studio as a whole from those of its individual collaborators. Whereas advertising artists dealt only with the design of graphic artefact and display of product, the Studio also took care of the management of each step of the production. Moreover, the label is informative about the way in which Boggeri envisioned his professional identity. Hence, if the Studio Boggeri was an 'advertising technical agency', the most appropriate term to describe Boggeri's profession is probably 'advertising technician'.[47]

Mirroring the promotion of advertising rationalisation in the 1930s, graphic practitioners systematised the methodologies, techniques and visual languages of

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44   *Guida Ricciardi*, ed by. Ricciardi (1933), p. 179; *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1936), p. 378 and 393; *Guida Ricciardi Pubblicità e Propaganda*, ed. by Giulio Cesare Ricciardi (Milan: Edizione Pubblicità Ricciardi, 1942), p. 301.

45   See: 'Aziende Tecniche e Tecnici di Pubblicità', *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1936), p. 391.

46   *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1936), p. 371.

47   When the alliance between advertising and graphic practitioners was called into question in the postwar period – as Chapter 5 will address by exploring the split of ATAP (Associazione Tecnici e Artisti Pubblicitari – Association of Advertising Technicians and Artists), into AIAP (Associazione Italiana Artisti Pubblicitari – Italian Association of Advertising Artists), and TP (Tecnici Pubblicitari – Advertising Technicians), in 1954 – Boggeri recognised himself as part of the technicians' rather than the artists' category. See: 'I Consigli Direttivi dela FIP e delle Otto Associazioni Nazionali Aderenti', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 9 (12), December 1955, p. 8.

advertising in order to lend an air of scientific credibility to their practice.[48] A series of articles in graphics and advertising magazines documented the systematic study of promotional material. The articles showed the use of New Typography in advertising in an attempt to codify principles and unify standards. Advertisements were investigated according to the type of media and goods advertised. Indeed, the techniques that were considered effective for a catalogue were not the same as those that were recommended for an advertisement in a magazine, or for a pamphlet.[49] Likewise, pharmaceutical products could not be promoted with the same visual language used for hats.[50] Articles were also an occasion for graphic practitioners or studios to indirectly circulate and showcase their works. This was certainly the case for the Studio Boggeri, whose commercial artefacts often featured in periodicals as samples of effective advertising design.[51]

This section demonstrated that the adoption of an allegedly scientific approach to advertising and graphics mirrored the emergence and gradual articulation of two new professional figures: the advertising technician and the graphic practitioner or advertising artist. They were expected to take care of the marketing

48   Systematisation was a shared concern among European graphics movement advocating the updated visual communication. In his book on German graphic design, design historian Jeremy Aynsley argued that the standardisation of typography and graphic design could be taken as a case study of the way in which standardisation became synonymous with modernism. Jeremy Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany 1890-1945* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), pp. 103-09.

49   On promotional catalogues, see: Armando Mazzanti, 'Tecnica del Catalogo Commerciale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 26 (8), August 1929, pp. 423-27; Guido Modiano, 'Cataloghi', *Campo Grafico*, 3 (1), January 1935, pp. 6-8; 'Cataloghi', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 4 (37-38), July-August 1940, pp. 64-71. On advertisements in magazines, see: Nino G. Caimi, 'Gli Annunci Pubblicitari nei Quotidiani, nei Periodici e nelle Riviste Italiane di Oggi', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 32 (5), May 1935; 'La Pubblicità nelle Riviste: Problema di Tecnica e di Stile', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 9 (6), June 1936; 'Pubblicità su Riviste', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, pp. 29-33; Ezio D'Errico, 'Composizioni Pubblicitarie Italiane d'Avanguardia', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 36 (7), January 1940. On pamphlets, see: M. Fischetti Salvia, 'Campo Pubblicitario: il Dépliant', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (3), March 1934, pp. 62-63; Augusto Calabi, 'Pieghevoli Scopi e Requisiti', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (6), June 1937, pp. 236-45.

50   See, for instance: 'Pubblicità ai Cappelli Italiani', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 4 (33-34), March-April 1940, pp. 2-8; R., 'Le Specialità Farmaceutiche di fronte alla Pubblicità', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 4 (35-36), May-June 1940, pp. 33-37; Antonio Boggeri, 'Stampati Pubblicitari per Medici', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 5 (50-54), August-December 1941, pp. 28-35.

51   For instance, a pamphlet and a poster promoting the coffee roasting company Illy-Caffè, which was designed by Schawinsky for Boggeri in 1934, were included in an article about packaging written by Guido Modiano, who praised the coherence and clarity of the advertising campaign. The catalogue for the office furniture and storage solutions manufacturer Kardex appeared in *La Pubblicità d'Italia* as a good example of advertising publication that illustrated the goods and described functions and characteristics, while encouraging the purchase. See: Guido Modiano, 'Necessità Pubblicitaria della Confezione e dell'Imballaggio', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 9 (7-8), July-August 1934, pp. 361-65; *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 4 (37-38), July-August 1940, pp. 64-71.

and of the visual aspects of the advertising campaign, respectively. Advertising historian Giuseppe Priarone argued that, 'with the rationalist culture taking centre stage, the history of advertising reached a crucial juncture [since] advertising was no longer entrusted to the *painter* but to the adverting *graphic practitioner*'.[52] The premises for this conceptual and professional shift were the awareness of the specificity of advertising aesthetics and techniques and the understanding of their role within the system of mass communication, as well as the acknowledgment of the new professional figures. The systematic study of promotional material and the insistence on their specificity implied the notion of specialisation. Writing in 1940, Ezio D'Errico claimed the exclusive jurisdiction of graphic practitioners over commercial printed matter and argued that 'the number of very successful advertisements would significantly increase if there was a regulation compelling each man to carry out nothing else but his own job'.[53] Only graphic practitioners had the skills and knowledge that would guarantee the success of an advertising campaign and clients were expected to acknowledge their professional authority.

2.2 A RED B BETWEEN TWO BLACK DOTS

In 1932, Nino Caimi asked the readers of *Risorgimento Grafico*: 'Why is it that graphics do not self-promote?'.[54] Referring to an unnamed American advertising theorist, he stated that the best way to assess the development of the advertising industry was to look at the self-promotion of graphics and advertising practitioners.[55] Alas, according to Caimi, the item 'advertising' was missing from the majority of graphic practitioners' financial statements and its absence was a symptom of the backwardness of advertising in Italy. Therefore, he prompted the professional readership of *Risorgimento Grafico* to self-promote and use the techniques of modern advertising not only to list their services and recommend aesthetic practices, but also to condition clients' demands and educate their tastes. As tautological as

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52   'Con l'imporsi della cultura razionalista, matura una scelta decisiva nella storia della pubblicità: la pubblicità non è più affidata al *pittore* ma al *grafico* pubblicitario'. Priarone, *Grafica Pubblicitaria in Italia*, p. 13, italics in the original.

53   '[...] il numero degli annunci pubblicitari veramente riusciti potrebbe essere molto maggiore, se ci fosse una legge atta a costringere ogni uomo a far soltanto il suo mestiere'. D'Errico, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 36 (7), January 1940, p. 244.

54   Nino Caimi, 'Perché i Grafici non Fanno Pubblicità?', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 29 (9), September 1932, pp. 515-517.

55   For an example of self-promotional strategies undertaken by American advertising agencies, see: Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency*, pp. 231-35.

the argument might seem, graphic practitioners were expected to be the first to benefit from their own services by means of self-promotion.

Departing from the analysis of printed ephemera, this section addresses the ways in which Boggeri carried out a comprehensive self-promotional campaign from day one of his business. Self-promotional strategies that were employed in the construction of the Studio's public image included the use of modernist graphics and the application of principles of modern advertising such as the then-debated concept of 'personalità aziendale' (corporate identity).[56] In line with the notion of rational advertising, the corporate identity was expected to be manifested in every aspect of a company, from business stationery to window design. It was based neither on improvisation, nor on a rigid and uniformed visual identity. Rather, it consisted of a recognisable and coherent image that could vary according to the type of media and for specific purposes.[57]

In 1933 Boggeri commissioned Deberny&Peignot, a Parisian type foundry at the forefront of European type design since the mid-eighteenth century, to design the

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56   See: Modiano, *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 9 (7-8), July-August 1934, pp. 361-65; 'La Coerenza in Pubblicità', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 14 (4), April 1939, pp. 178-80.

57   A fitting example of a coherent but variable corporate identity was the typewriter manufacturer Olivetti, who set up in the early-1930s an in-house advertising office in charge of the supervision of all visual communication. Firms were invited to follow the example of Olivetti by not leaving anything to chance since logo, letterhead, packaging, and advertisements contributed to the shaping of the corporate identity, and guaranteed the success of an advertising campaign. On Italian graphic design and Olivetti, see for instance: Caterina Cristina Fiorentino, *Millesimo di Millimetro: I Segni del Codice Visivo Olivetti 1908-1978* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2014); Adriana Castiglio, *Essere Impresa nel Mondo: l'Espansione Internazionale dell'Olivetti dalle Origini agli Anni Sessanta* (Bologna: Mulino, 2012); Sibylle Kicherer, *Olivetti: a Study of the Corporate Management of Design* (London: Trefoil Publications Ltd, 1990); *Olivetti 1908-1958*, ed. by Riccardo Musatti, Libero Bigiaretti and Giorgio Soavi (Zurich: Tiefdruckanstalt Imago AG, 1958); Nathan H.Shapira, *Design Process: Olivetti 1908-1978* (Milan: Olivetti, 1979); Carlo Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965: Immagine e Politica Culturale nella Grande Impresa Italiana* (Venice: Marsilio, 2007), pp. 27-57. On Olivetti as an example in interwar debates on the corporate identity, see: *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 19 (4), April 1939, pp. 178-80.

Studio's first logo (see Illustration **2.1**).[58] 'I wrote to Paris', Boggeri recalled, 'and after a short while I received the letterhead with a red B between two black dots that I used during the first years of the Studio Boggeri'.[59] Boggeri expressed his awareness of the crucial role played by the logo within the corporate identity in his theoretical writings. In 1953 he wrote that:

> A logo must be concise and expressive, simple and exact, stylised and definitive [...]. Big [...] or very small [...] it will be very noticeable and impossible to plagiarise. It must include an idea that is reduced to the simplest expression [...]. Given the many requirements and the importance of their function, we believe that the design and realisation of logos should be considered one of the most difficult assignments undertaken by modern graphics.[60]

By turning to Deberny&Peignot, Boggeri was commissioning the renowned type foundry with the clear intention of positioning the newly launched Studio within the typographic tradition and the graphic vanguard at the same time.

For the launch of the Studio, Boggeri picked a logo that is reminiscent of the typographic tradition, but also nods discreetly to the newest approaches of modernist graphics. The red B between two black dots is a simple but original typo-symbol.[61] Set in 'Didot', the capital *B* is evocative of French neoclassic typog-

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58   Deberny&Peignot marketed the newest and most popular typefaces, such as Paul Renner's 'Futura', through smartly designed specimens that were distributed for free to printers and typographers. At Alfieri&Lacroix, between 1924 and 1932, Boggeri had the chance to examine Deberny&Peignot's promotional materials. Amongst the promotional publications, the typographer Maximilien Vox designed the magazine *Les Divertissement Typographique* in which Deberny&Peignot typefaces appeared in innovative typographic compositions. These highlighted the inherent formal beauty of letterforms, while providing readers with examples of their use, often in combination with photographs in accordance with the modernist technique of typo-photo. On the history of Deberny&Peignot, see 'History of the Deberny et Peignot' on the Rochester Institute of Technology website: http://amg-web.rit.edu/dphist1.htm. See also: Steve Heller and Louise Fili, *French Modern: Art Deco Graphic Design* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1997), p. 15 and p. 115; Stephen J. Eskilson, *Graphic Design a New History* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2007), pp. 177-78. Deberny&Peignot acquired the copyright for the marketing of Paul Renner's 'Futura' typeface within France in 1930. See: 'L'Europe et la France', in Alexandre Dumas de Rauly and Michel Wlassikoff, *Futura: une Gloire Typographique* (Paris: Norma Éditions, 2011), pp. 66-77.

59   '[...] scrissi a Parigi e poco dopo mi giunse la carta da lettere con la B rossa fra I due punti neri che adottai nei primissimi anni dello Studio Boggeri'. Boggeri, *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 21.

60   '[...] un marchio deve essere conciso ed espressivo, semplice ed esatto, stilizzato e definitivo [...]. Grande [...] molto piccolo [...] sarà visibilissimo e di impossibile plagio. Ma deve contenere un'idea ridotta all'espressione più semplice [...] crediamo di poter concludere che per i molti requisiti richiesti, per l'importanza della loro funzione si debba collocare la concezione e realizzazione dei marchi fra i più ardui assunti della grafica moderna'. Antonio Boggeri, 'Un Segno, un Tabù', *Civiltà delle Macchine*, 1 (3), March 1953, p. 23.

61   A typo-symbol is a symbol designed using typography only, whose advantages were listed by Jan Tschichold as 'no block costs, the facility for reduction and enlargement, and the strength inherent in all things whose appearance comes from a technical manufacturing process'. Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2006), p. 109, first published in Berlin, 1928.

2.1 the red B between two black dots, first logo of the Studio Boggeri designed in 1933 by the Parisian type foundry Deberny&Peignot

raphy and reminiscent of the local 'Bodoni'.[62] The elemental geometry of the two black dots that enclose the red letter draws attention to the geometrical structure of the letterform, whose simple appearance is characterised by a very strong contrast between thick and thin strokes, straight and curved lines. The type-symbol is an easily recognisable and noticeable logo that conceals a clever stratagem. In fact, the red B between two black dots is a fragment, a close-up of the brand name 'Studi*o Bo*ggeri' (see Illustration **2.2**). The two black dots, which seem at first a simple geometric decoration framing the initial, turn into the two *O*s of the Studi*O* B*O*ggeri, and the monumental red *B* is now placed between twelve letters arranged symmetrically, six per side, along the line where the two bowls of the *B* meet.

Seven years later, Boggeri asked the Swiss graphic designer, Max Huber, to revamp the logo (see Illustration **2.3.a**). Huber simplified the original design replacing the elegant serif with a sans-serif built on geometrical lines of uniform width, in which the two bowls of the *B* mirror each other. The two black dots are replaced with two circles. The rebranding of the corporate identity was employed systematically across business stationery and promotional materials. Huber's logo stands out in the heading of the redesigned A4 letterhead (see Illustration **2.3**). It is enclosed by two thin vertical red lines that separate it from the address of the sender. The address combines a serif typeface with lowercase lettering, thereby resulting in a compromise solution between tradition and New Typography. Finally, two small red *B* in the top-left and bottom-right corners enliven the asymmetrical layout moving your attention away from the top-right corner. The bottom-right *B* acquires a further function once the letterhead is used. Indeed, it restates the signature 'Antonio Boggeri' by initialising the sender's surname.

A closer look at the way in which the letter paper was used reveals a further aspect of the shaping of the Studio's identity. Boggeri used to sign adding a small mark before his surname (see Illustration **2.3.b**). In combination with the dot of the *i*, the added mark transforms Boggeri's signature into the Studio logo. Scholars have not noticed the tiny dot so far, but I would argue that it demonstrates the way in which Boggeri took the idea of corporate identity to the extreme, making no distinction between himself and his business.

From 1933 to the early-1940s, a number of advertisements promoting the Studio Boggeri appeared in graphics magazines, printing and advertising trade

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62   For an overview on the history and characteristics of typefaces, see Ned Drew, 'Didot', and Rob Carter, 'Bodoni', in *Typographic Specimens: The Great Typefaces*, ed. by Philip B. Meggs and Rod Carter (New York: John Wiley & Son, 1993), pp. 128-37, and pp. 50-60.

STUDIO⦁ B⦁GGERI S.A. MILANO VIA BORGHETTO 5 TELEF. 23725

1933
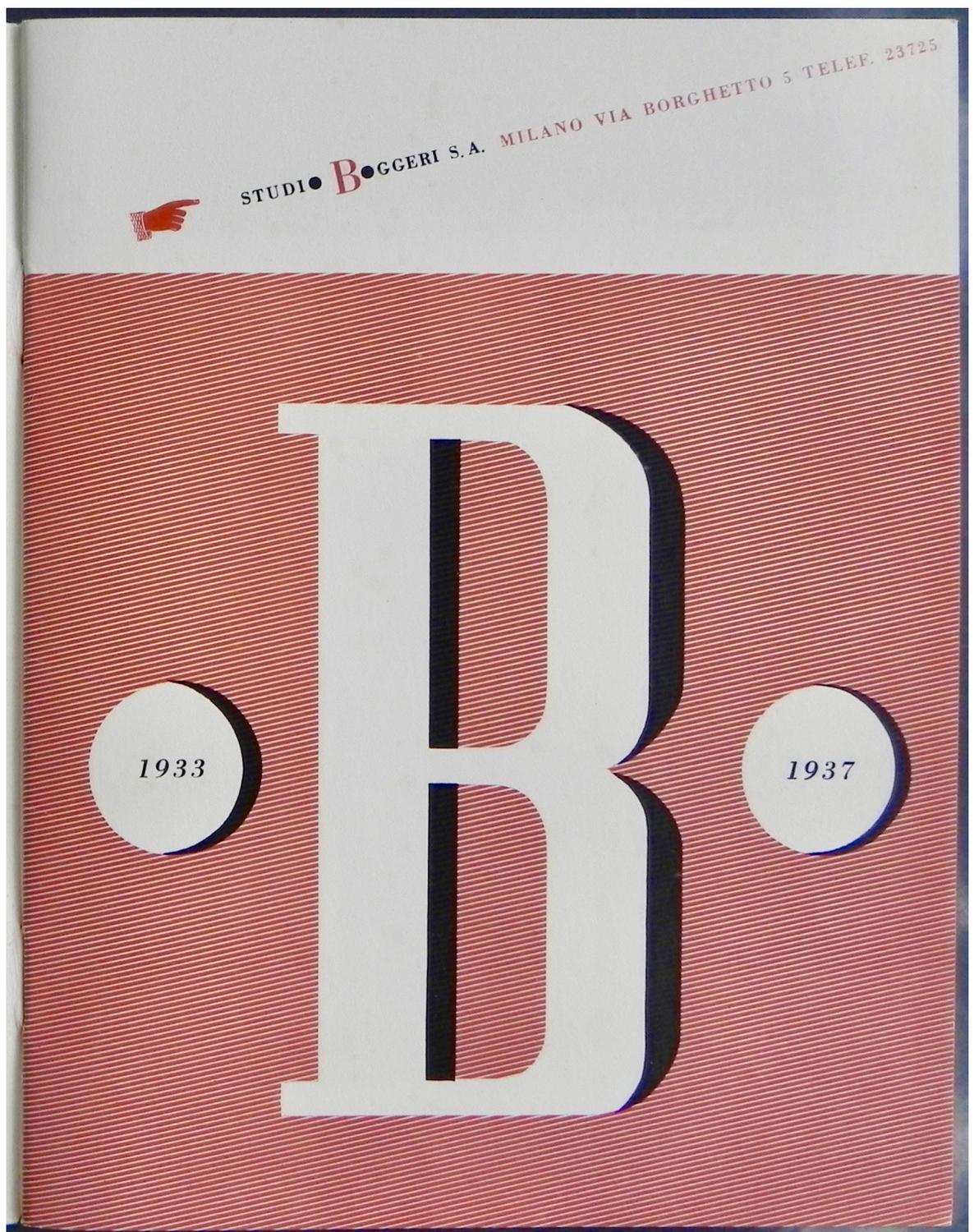
1937

2.2   frontispiece of the promotional pamphlet *L'Uovo di Colombo*, Studio Boggeri, 1937,
        15.5 × 20.5 cm
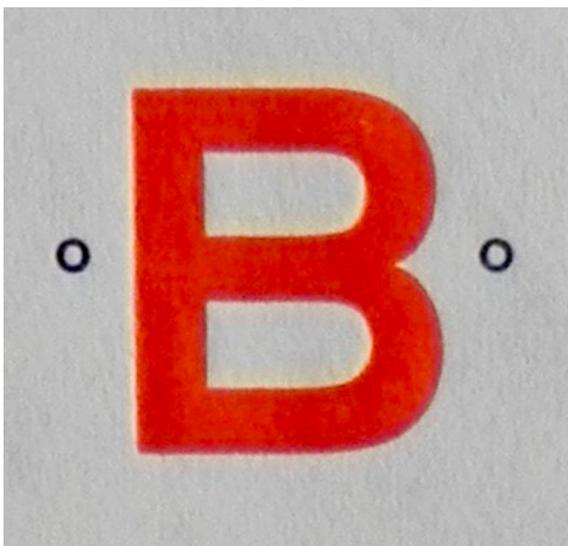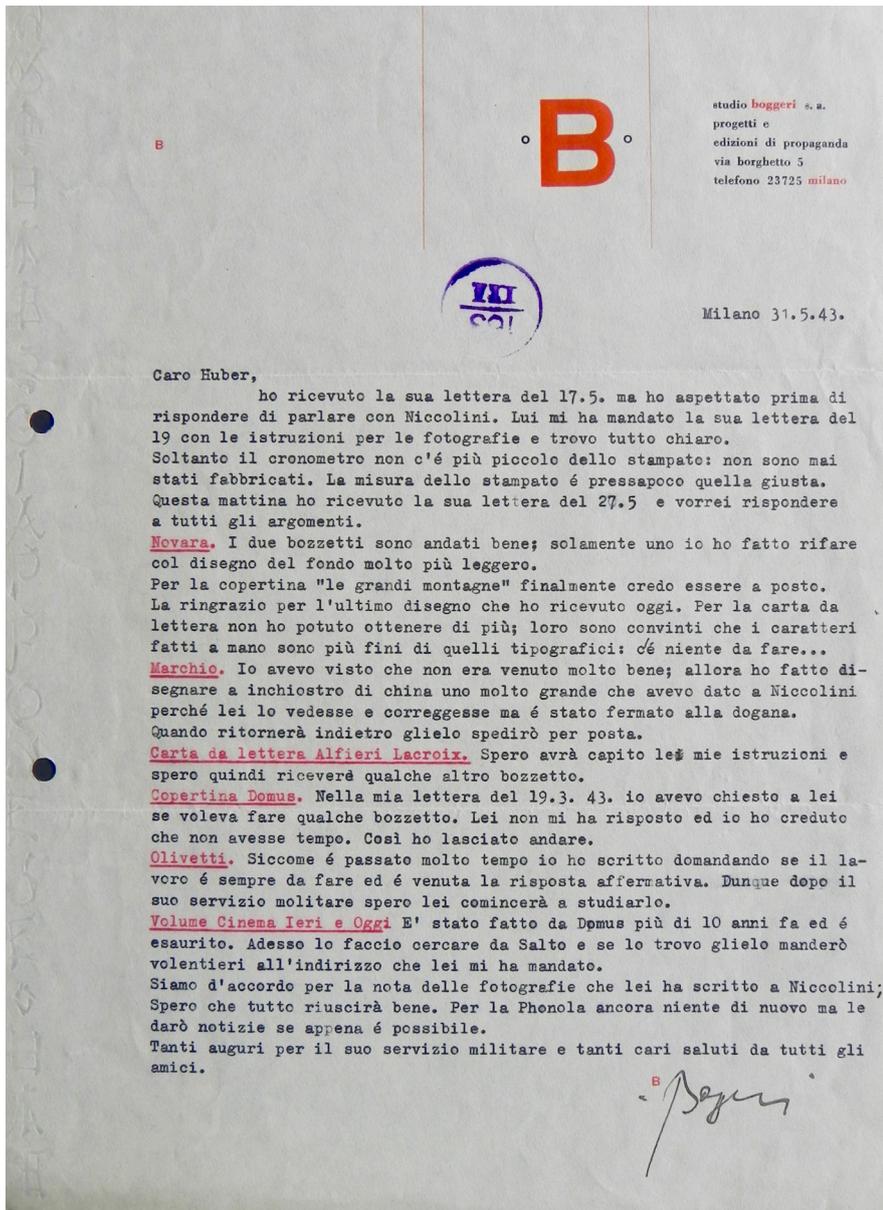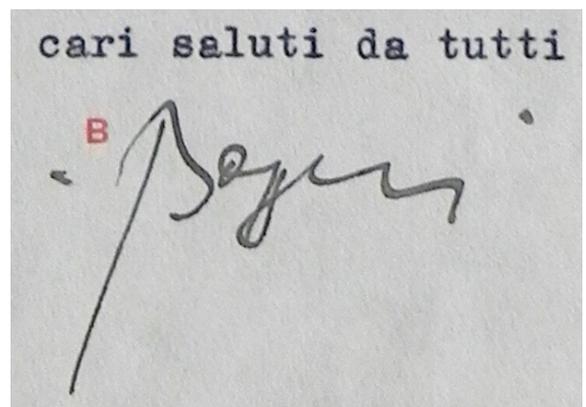
2.3 Max Huber – Studio Boggeri, letterhead of the Studio Boggeri, 1940: **.a** detail of the logo of the Studio Boggeri designed by Huber; **.b** detail of Antonio Boggeri's signature

journals. These were useful media for directly targeting the advertising industry and presenting the Studio to prospective customers already interested in advertising and familiar with modernist graphics. Bruno Munari designed one of the earliest advertisements for the Studio, published in the first edition of the *Guida Ricciardi* in 1933 (see Illustration **2.4**). By combining photography and drawing, the picture illustrates the text according to which the Studio Boggeri dealt with 'any kind of graphic arts work', with 'advertising photography', and in particular with the most innovative and experimental technique of photomontage as suggested by the graphic composition itself.[63] Ironically, the page layout of the gazetteer creates an accidental, or possibly planned, dialogue between Munari's composition and the advertisement of the Organizzazione Pubblicitaria Italiana (Italian Advertising Organisation – OPI). In a sort of visual pun, the target hit by an arrow on the facing page illustrates the handwritten capitalised text on the arrow, which asserts the ability of the Studio 'to hit the bull's eye'.[64]

Photography, drawing and graphic works were the keywords of Boggeri's promotional vocabulary and featured constantly in promotional materials. The advertisement included in the second edition of the *Guida Ricciardi* in 1936 was no exception (see Illustration **2.5**).[65] Designed again by Munari in collaboration with his studio associate Ricas – Riccardo Castagnedi – the two-colour advertisement conveys a clear promotional message similar to the previous version. Yet, the predominantly figurative style and the catchy metaphor of the archer hitting the target is replaced with three circles that illustrate the written caption 'photography – drawings – graphic works'.[66] The so far explored promotional strategy features also in two advertisements designed by the Swiss, Hungarian born, type and graphic

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63 'Ogni lavoro d'arti grafiche – Foto pubblicitarie'. *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1933), p. 180. The picture of the female archer is a cut-out of a picture that was previously published in *Natura*. See: G. Poggi Longostrevi, 'L'Estetica Femminile', *Natura*, 4 (11-12), November-December 1931, pp. 83-85.

64 'Colpire nel segno'. *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1933), p. 180. Since the metaphor of the arrow and the target to represent the effectiveness of the advertising message was a very common trope, it is quite difficult to establish whether the visual pun was a layout accident or whether it had been actually planned.

65 *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1936), p. 387. A black and white version of the advertisement was published in the magazine *L'Ufficio Moderno* in May and August 1935. See: *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 10 (5) and (7-8), May and July-August 1935.

66 The lower circle, in particular, features a number of works produced by the Studio Boggeri and designed by Schawinsky and Carboni, with photographs by Boggeri himself. One can identify, clockwise from the top: Xanti Schawinsky's posters for the hat manufacture Cervo and for Cosulich cruises, the promotional catalogue of the Studio Boggeri entitled *L'Uovo di Colombo*, a pamphlet for the Italian chemical company Montecatini designed by Erbeto Carboni, and Antonio Boggeri's advertising photography for a hat manufacturer.
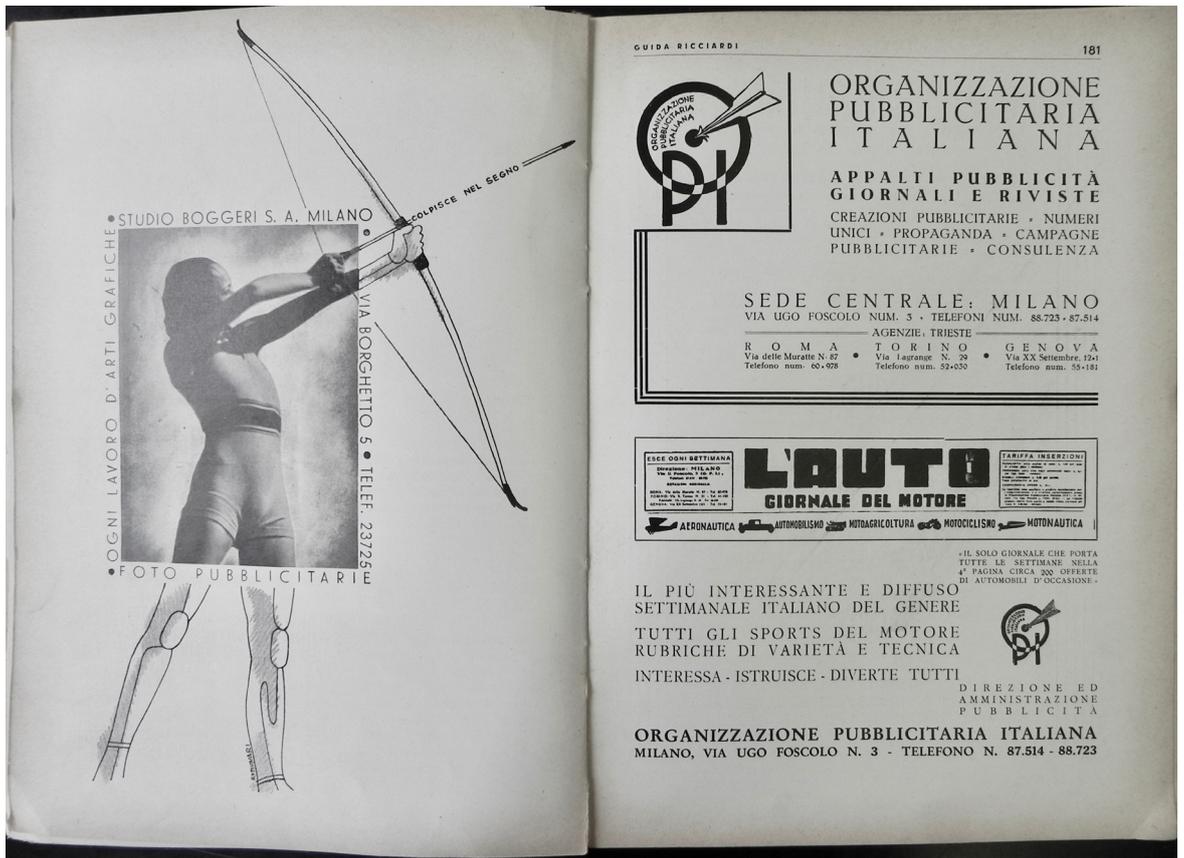
2.4 Bruno Munari – Studio Boggeri, advertisement for the Studio Boggeri, published in the *Guida Ricciardi*, 1933, p. 180

2.5   Bruno Munari and Ricas (Riccardo Castagnedi) – Studio Boggeri, advertisement for the Studio Boggeri, published in the *Guida Ricciardi*, 1936, p. 387

designer, Imre Reiner, and Huber in 1934 and 1941, respectively (see Illustrations **2.6** and **2.7**). Reiner's advertisement describes the Studio production as 'design and execution of any kind of graphic arts, advertising photography, photomosaic, advertisements for illustrated magazines and journals'.[67] The detailed list of services is synthesised in Huber's advertisement in which the words 'edizioni di propaganda' (propaganda editions) are blended in the graphic composition, almost concealed in the self-explanatory picture.

All three advertisements present the working tools of the graphic practitioner: palette, square ruler, paintbrush, halftone screen, camera lens, paint tubes, nibs, compass, pins and paper clips. The insistence on the representation of the working tools is anything but accidental or neutral.[68] On the one hand, the working tools shift the focus away from the final product toward the design and production process. They imply the presence of skilled practitioners and suggest they could be found at the Studio Boggeri. On the other hand, square ruler, compass and camera – the instruments of the engineer rather than the tools of the artist – are a trope of the modernist imagery, Bauhaus visual vocabulary and Constructivism machine aesthetics.[69] The reference cannot be confused with mere coincidence. On the contrary, I would argue that, given the circulation of reproductions of works by exponents of the European graphics vanguard through specialist magazines in interwar Milan, readers and potential clients were likely to recognise the reference, understand its implications and acknowledge Boggeri's intentions in using it.[70]

Selected works in promotional pamphlets and leaflets provide further information about the articulation of the identity of the Studio Boggeri, as well as details

67   'Progetti ed esecuzione di ogni lavoro d'arti grafiche. Foto pubblicitarie. Fotomosaici. Annunci per riviste e periodici illustrati'. Advertisement for the Studio Boggeri by Imre Reiner, *Campo Grafico*, 2 (12), December 1934, p. 267.

68   Roland Barthes, 'Myth Today', in *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), first edition 1952, pp. 217-74.

69   For a more complete discussion of Constructivist interest in engineering techniques as a means to replace subjectivity, authorship and ego driven expression with objectivity, anonymity, and neutrality, see for example: Victor Margolin, *The Struggle for Utopia: Rodchenko, Lissitzky, Moholy-Nagy, 1917-1946* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997).

70   For instance, El Lissitzky's self-portrait – also known as *The Constructor* (1920) – was published in *Casabella* in 1931. The photomontage features graph paper and a compass, while the prominent eye stands for the lens of the camera that enhance the artist's visual possibilities. Moreover, Boggeri was not the only one to employ modernist visual rhetoric and techniques for self-promotional purposes. Both compass and square ruler also feature in Luigi Veronesi's and Erberto Carboni's advertisements published respectively in the second and third edition of the *Guida Ricciardi*. See: 'Il Libro Bello: Occhio e Fotografia', *Casabella*, 41, May 1931, p. 57; Luigi Veronesi, advertisement, *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1936), p. 376; Erberto Carboni, advertisement, *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1942), p. 308.

2.6   Imre Reiner – Studio Boggeri, advertisement for the Studio Boggeri, published in *Campo Grafico* 2 (12), December 1934, p. 267

2.7   Max Huber – Studio Boggeri, advertisement for the Studio Boggeri, 1941, 21 × 29.7 cm

about its collaborators and clients. To celebrate its fourth year of activity, the Studio published the promotional pamphlet *L'Uovo di Colombo* (see Illustration **2.8**). The egg standing on its tip illustrates the expression 'Columbus' egg' that is used to refer to a brilliant idea or discovery, which seems very easy and obvious after the fact.[71] Columbus' egg 'is the simple and universal expression of the advertising expedient'.[72] As simple and easy as an advertisement might appear, one still needs creativity and inventiveness to conceive it, and the text implies that both qualities were of course available at the Studio Boggeri. A rich selection of works demonstrates the fulfilment of the inaugural agenda, which described the Studio as 'the latest expression of the techniques and art of advertising' and assured clients that 'its specialised Italian and foreign artists, and its technical organisation [would] provide [their] ideas with the safest guarantee of effective and brilliant outcomes'.[73]

The selection also shows that Boggeri could count on the collaboration of the most prominent figures of the Milanese graphics scene. The success of the business is demonstrated by the list of prestigious clients that the Studio could boast after only four years of activity: the typewriter manufacturer Olivetti, the porcelain manufacturer Richard-Ginori, the chemical company Montecatini, the American cosmetic company Helena Rubinstein, the coffee roasting company Illy-Caffè and the Swiss food and beverage company Nestlé. Private firms apart, the selection shows that the Studio had also worked for the insurance company INA (Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni – National Insurance Institute), and the association of advertising space brokers Unione Pubblicitaria Italiana (Italian Advertising Union – UPI). The Studio had also produced a poster, which was designed by Schawinsky, for the Esposizione dell'Aeronautica Italiana (Italian Aeronautical Exposition) that – as the next chapter will explore – was organised by the Fascist

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71   The expression 'Columbus' egg' or 'egg of Columbus' refers to an apocryphal story told by the Italian historian and traveller Girolamo Benzoni in the mid-sixteenth century according to which Christopher Columbus challenged some noble Spanish men, who had ridiculed his discovery of the American continent, to make an egg stand on its tip. Once the challengers tried without success, Columbus tapped the egg gently on the table so as to flatten its tip and make it stand. The moral of the story being: a challenge looks easy once you know and you are shown how to solve it, the difficult part is to be the first to succeed by trying something new that has never been done before.

72   '[…] è l'espressione semplice e universale della trovata pubblicitaria'. *L'Uovo di Colombo*, promotional pamphlet, 1937, unpaged, ASB.

73   '[…] l'espressione ultima della tecnica e dell'arte pubblicitaria. I suoi artisti specializzai, italiani e stranieri, e la sua organizzazione tecnica, offrono alle vostre idee le più sicure garanzie di realizzazione efficace e geniale'. *L'Uovo di Colombo*, promotional pamphlet, 1937, unpaged, ASB.

2.8   promotional pamphlet *L'Uovo di Colombo*, 1937, 15.5 × 20.5 cm
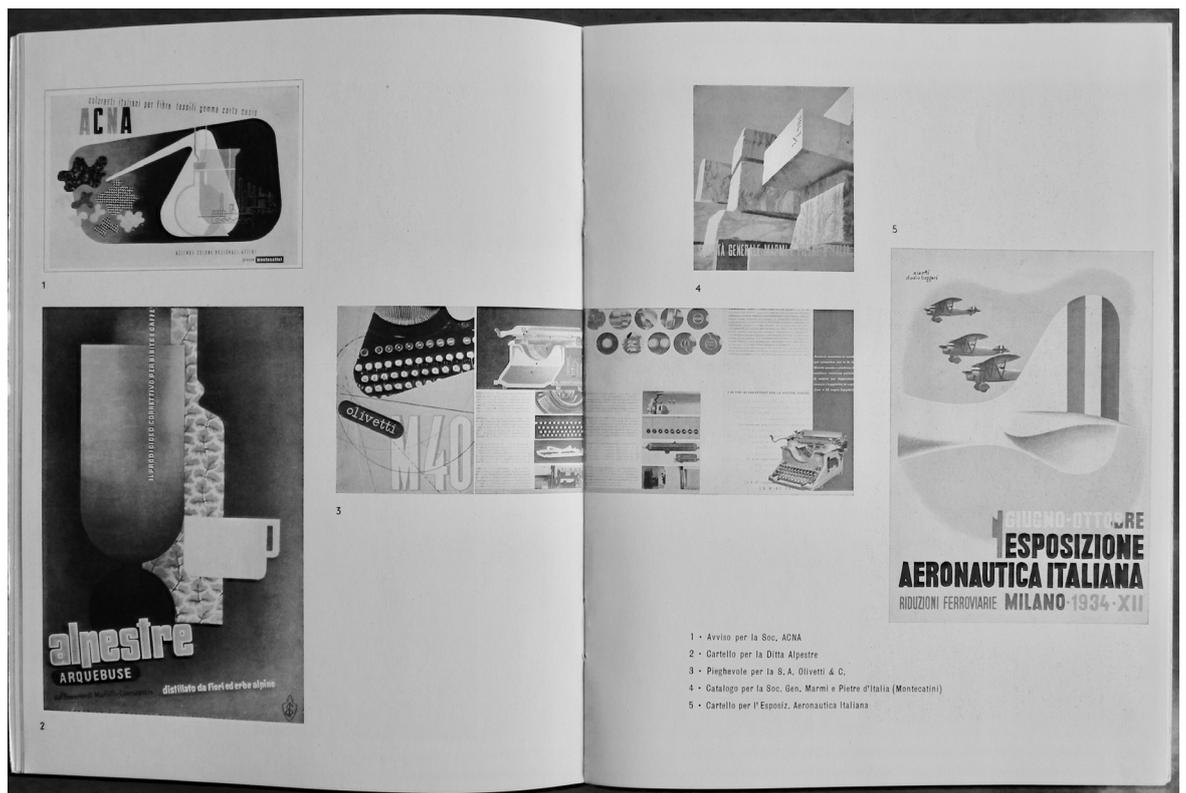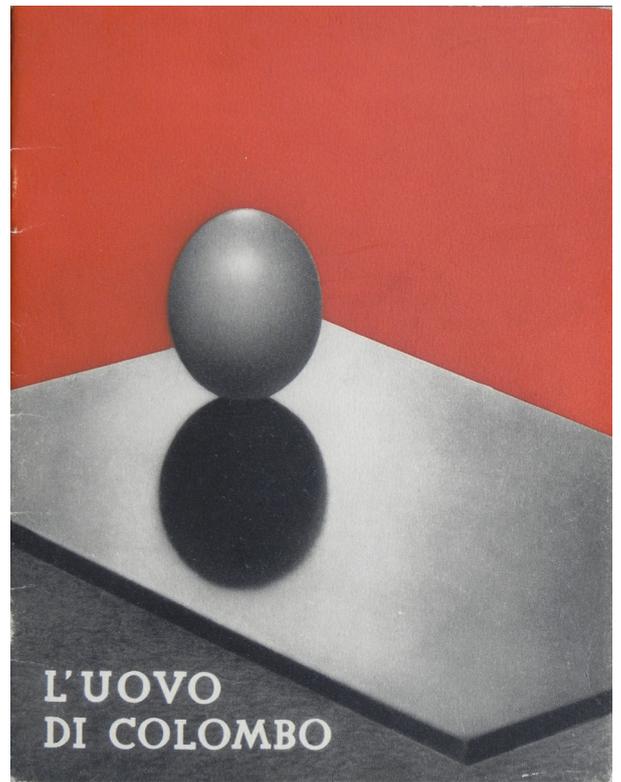
regime in 1934 in Milan. Thus, *L'Uovo di Colombo* demonstrates that Boggeri had built a mutually nurturing network of designers and clients that he used for self-promotional and self-representational purposes with the intention of attracting more clients and possibly new collaborators.

Changes in the selected works that featured in the following self-promotional ephemera suggest a pragmatic adjustment by Boggeri of the Studio's identity to adapt to new agendas and different political circumstances. Boggeri's negotiation of the public image of his business according to context and networks of power is especially evident in the immediate postwar period. Whereas in 1937 the involvement of the Studio with activities or events relating to the Fascist regime might have furthered promotional goals, the controversial relationship was discretely omitted in the postwar period. The dummy of a pamphlet designed by Huber after 1945 shows a strategic omission (see Illustration **2.9**). Black and white cut-outs and text clippings are pasted and arranged according to typology: advertisements, catalogues, logos, letterheads, packaging and window design. Pencil and ink marks sketch the arrangement of the written text, while handwritten annotations – such as 'cut', 'move left' and '?' – indicate whether pictures must be reframed, repositioned or possibly replaced with more suitable ones. An underlined 'NO' and a cross, which is drawn twice to reinforce the imperative message, warn that the cover of a publication on architecture must be taken out. Yet, the editing affects only the cover and not the publication as a whole. Indeed, the cover features the Fascist dating system – 1936-XIV – and three lictorian fasces. Conversely, the two pages of architectural drawings, pictures and floor plans do not contain any compromising reference to Fascism and could therefore stay.[74]

Whereas the dummy is evidence of the way in which Boggeri consciously adjusted the Studio's identity to align with the new political situation of postwar Italy, a multilingual – Italian, French and English – pamphlet designed by Huber in 1945 indicates Boggeri's prompt response to the reopening of the international market and his desire to keep the Studio at the vanguard of the national and international graphics scene (see Illustration **2.10**). The pamphlet presents bright and bold colours, a grid-based yet dynamic and pulsing layout. The text recalls discussions over graphics rationalism and the rationalisation of advertising that were addressed in section 2.1. Indeed, it reminds local and foreign prospective clients

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74   Max Huber's pamphlet was not published. The Archivio Studio Boggeri holds two other different versions of the cover.
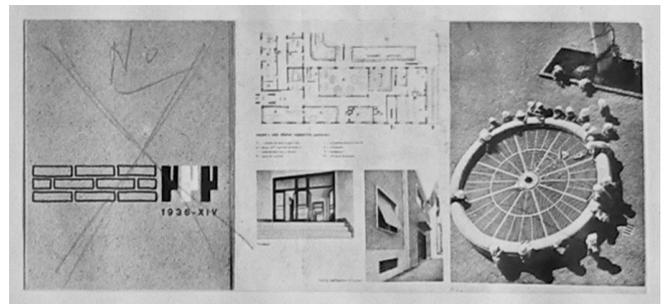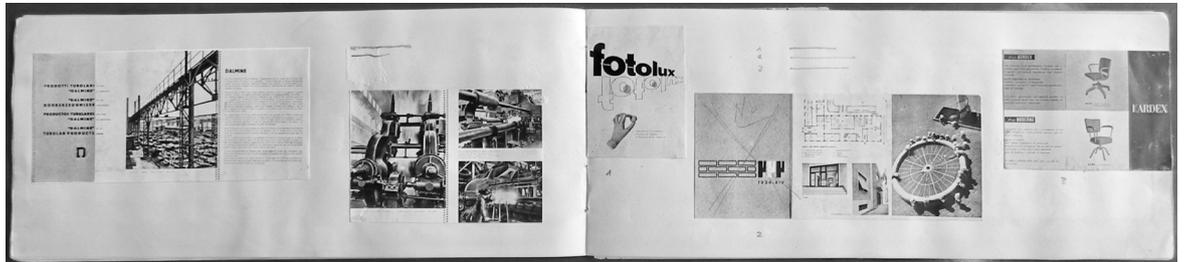
a

2.9   Max Huber – Studio Boggeri, two double-page spreads from a dummy for a promotional pamphlet, after 1945, 42 × 10.5 cm; .a detail of Antonio Boggeri's editing

2.10 Max Huber – Studio Boggeri, promotional pamphlet for the Studio Boggeri, 1945, 21 × 10.5 cm (unfolded)

that 'the design and execution of an advertising printed artifact based on modern ideas and style should be entrusted to specialists and technicians of the complex graphic field'.[75] Visual communication was to be put in the hands of professionals and the Studio was able to supply clients with effective, clear, modern looking and technically faultless advertisements.

In the postwar period the self-promotional effort of the Studio Boggeri diminished and advertisements disappeared from graphics and advertising publications.[76] Nevertheless, the Studio was still always present since articles about and by Boggeri featured frequently in national and international specialist magazines and trade journals. Boggeri was also involved in graphic design exhibitions and he was an active participant of professional associations, as will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 5. Despite infrequently resorting to direct advertising, Boggeri never ceased to take care of the corporate identity that varied but stayed recognisable over the years.

2.3 SIGNED ADVERTISING AND SIGNATURE AS ADVERTISING

The name 'Studio Boggeri' features in peripheral yet very visible positions in posters, graphic works and advertisements, alone or together with the name of the designer. The detail represents a further aspect of Boggeri's promotional strategy. As I speculate in this section, signatures also provide hints to explore professional networks and power dynamics between different groups of interest involved in the studio-system: the designers, the clients and the Studio itself.

In her book on American advertising illustrators during the first half of twentieth century, art historian Michele H. Bogart explored the question of signature, and asserted that it was 'a controversial subject of discussion in the trade press [... that] raised the larger issue of artistic status of advertising work and of the position of the artist'.[77] In the American context, whether to allow the illustrator to sign was ultimately a decision of the art director. Some advertising agencies, such as J. W. Thompson, opposed the practice of signing because they deemed the signature to be counterproductive to the promotional purposes of the advertisement. In Italy,

75   'La progettazione e la realizzazione di uno stampato pubblicitario di concezione e gusto moderni dovrebbero essere affidate a specialisti e tecnici del complesso settore grafico'. Max Huber, Pamphlet, 1945, ASB.

76   According to Anna Boggeri's arguably biased point of view the reason for the decrease in direct self-promotion was motivated by the fact that the Studio was by then well-known and, therefore, did not need to recur in direct advertising. Anna Boggeri, interview with the author, 13 April 2015, Meride (Switzerland).

77   Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art*, p. 143.

by contrast, the common practice of signing advertisements was barely discussed or directly addressed in specialist publications. Despite the lack of extensive primary sources on the topic, visual material, archival documents and sporadic comments in specialist magazines provide details to explore the subject and speculate on the meaning and function of the signature.

Issues related to the practice of signing were addressed indirectly in an article on the need to educate the taste of clients that was published in 1928 in *Risorgimento Grafico*.[78] The author, graphic theorist Armando Mazzanti, presented the practice of signing as a double-edged sword, thereby demonstrating contemporaries' awareness of the connotative potential of the signature. He warned graphic practitioners to avoid signing works that corresponded to the alleged bad taste of the client. According to Mazzanti, 'signing the printed material' could jeopardise graphic practitioners' reputations, since the signature 'would make [them] known to the public not for what [they were], but rather for what they [were] forced to be'.[79] The argument was based on the idea of authorship that is implied by the signature. By signing the visual artefact, the graphic practitioner was implicitly using this as a demonstration of professional skills and aesthetic sensitivity. Thus, the signature could be used as a self-promotional device, but could also turn into a self-damaging pitfall and convey a misleading and self-damaging image.

In her research on American advertising, Bogart analysed the practice of signing from the perspective of commercial artists, advertising agencies and advertisers, and listed pros and cons for each category. She argued that the signature draws attention away from the advertised product toward the name of the designer or of the agency that executed the advertisement. In doing so, it 'lessens the effectiveness and strength of advertising [and] augments the name recognition of the artists, his reputation and hence his price'.[80] At the same time, the signature commodifies the advertisement and attracts viewers to the image itself, thereby making them more likely to give notice to the advertised product too. Given the familiarity of the audience with the name of a commercial artist, the disadvantage of signed advertisements can potentially turn into an advantage. The signature becomes a sign that indicates the good taste of the advertiser who commissioned

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78 Armando Mazzanti, 'Tipografi e Clientela', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 25 (5), May 1928, pp. 217-20.
79 '[...] firmando lo stampato che ci farà conoscere al pubblico, non per quello che siamo, ma per quello che ci fu imposto di essere'. Mazzanti, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 25 (5), May 1928, p. 218.
80 Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art*, p. 144.

the renowned commercial artist. Good taste is consequently reflected in the advertised product and then transferred to the purchasing public.

The promotional strategy adopted by the porcelain manufacturer Richard-Ginori in the interwar period follows the above described approach towards signed advertising. During the 1930s Richard-Ginori ran a consistent advertising campaign in illustrated magazines that specialised in architecture and design. The advertisements feature modernist aesthetics and include the names of the designers, as in Franco Grignani's black and white assemblage of 1936 (see Illustration **2.11**) or in two advertisements from 1935 that were labelled 'Studio Boggeri' and 'Studio Boggeri – Erberto Carboni' (see Illustrations **2.12** and **2.13**). The advertising strategy was coherent with Richard-Ginori's attempt to associate the company's name with design excellence: a strategy that had begun in the early 1920s with the hiring of architect and industrial designer Gio Ponti as art director.[81] The effectiveness of signed advertisements hinged upon the fact that the promotional campaign was pitched to a particular type of readership. Indeed, readers of the architecture and design magazine *Domus* were familiar with and appreciated modern design, and thus were likely to associate names with cutting-edge visual communication.

To be associated with Richard-Ginori was also beneficial for the designers – i.e. Grignani and Carboni – and for the Studio Boggeri. As I argue in section 2.2, Boggeri built a mutually nurturing network of clients and designers and consciously used current clients and collaborators to chase new ones. On the mutually advantageous relationship between professionals and clients, sociologist Andrew Abbott has rightly suggested that those 'who serve high-status clients receive some reflected glory' and that 'high-status clients [tend to] pick high-status professionals to the extent that they can'.[82] Attracted by the name of the high-status client, new potential clients were likely to follow their example and commission Boggeri. By including the label 'Studio Boggeri' in Richard-Ginori's advertisements, Boggeri was then capitalising on the high-status commission in order to forge the businesses' reputation and his own professional credibility, and attract new clients.

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81   On Richard-Ginori and Gio Ponti, see: Manna Loris, *Gio Ponti: le Maioliche* (Milan: Biblioteca di Via del Senato, 2000); *Gio Ponti e la Richard-Ginori: una Corrispondenza Inedita*, ed. by Olivia Rucellai and Livia Frescobaldi Malenchini (Milan: Corraini Edizioni, 2015). For a historical perspective on the named designers and the status and desirability they add to products, see: Penny Sparke, *Consultant Design: The History and Practice of Designers in Industry* (London: Pembridge Press, 1983), in particular pp. 12-21.

82   Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labour* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 122.
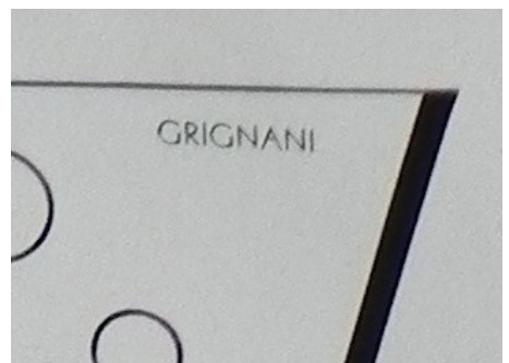
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2.11   Franco Grignani, advertisement for Richard-Ginori, published in *Domus* 9 (100), April 1936, p. XI; **.a** detail of the signature
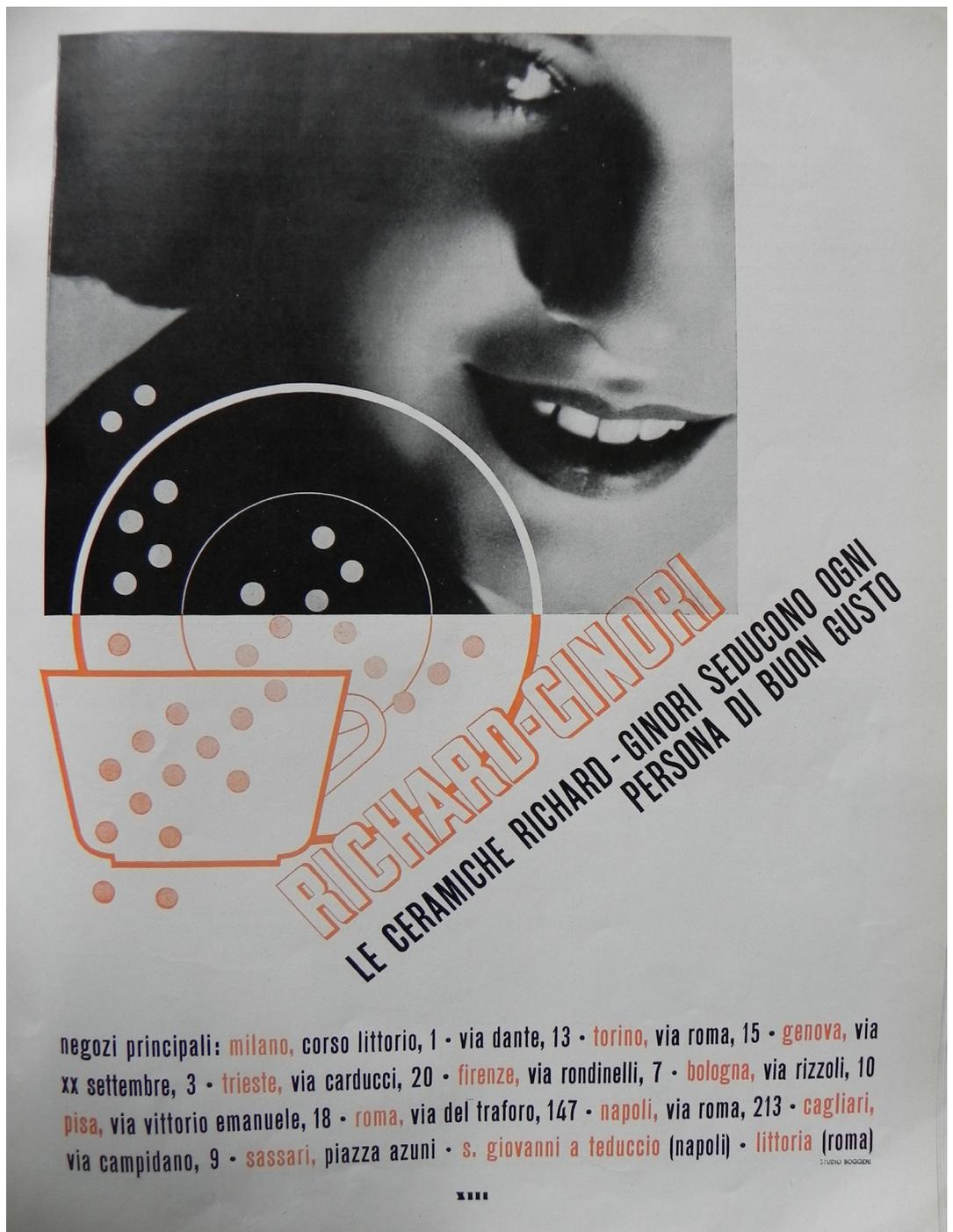
a

2.12 Studio Boggeri, advertisement for Richard-Ginori, published in *Domus* 8 (92), August 1935, p. XIII; **.a** detail of the signature
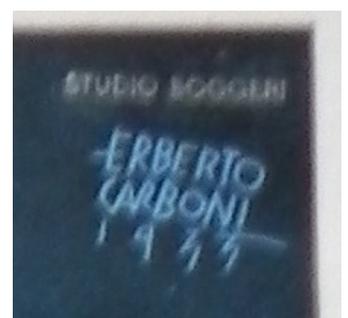
a

2.13 Studio Boggeri – Erberto Carboni, advertisement for Richard-Ginori, *Domus* 8 (96), December 1935, p. XIII; **.a** detail of the signature

The concurrent presence of 'Studio Boggeri' and the designer's name suggests a further reading of the practise of signing. Art and visual culture historian Gennifer Weisenfeld has questioned the practice of signing advertising in interwar Japan and related it to the emergence of the new professional figure of the commercial artist. According to Weisenfeld, advertising works, 'which were labelled with the artists' names, made a strong statement about the important role of the designers' since they allowed designers 'to be pulled out from behind the scenes and given the social recognition they deserved'.[83] Yet, in the case of the Studio Boggeri, the double signature pulled out from behind the scenes not only the designer, but also the professional hierarchy within the advertising and graphic industries. My argument is corroborated by Anna Boggeri and graphic designer Bruno Monguzzi. The daughter and the collaborator/son-in-law of Boggeri suggested that whether to include both the name 'Studio Boggeri' and the designer's signature depended on the type of professional relationship between Boggeri and his collaborators.[84] Since people such as Carboni, Nizzoli and Munari were freelancers and their role within the Studio was of external consultants, it was in their own interest to assert their independence and distinguish themselves from Boggeri's graphic studio.

Handwritten signatures further problematise the practice of signing and might reveal different approaches toward the fledging profession of the graphic designer. Indeed, a handwritten signature connotes an advertising or graphic artefact by recalling ideas such as authorship, originality, personality, hand-made, authenticity and uniqueness. By contrast, a typeset signature acknowledges the reproduction process and loosens the relationship between designer and designed artefact. One roots the profession in the lineage of fine arts; the other is symptom of a different approach that moves attention away from creativity and self-expression towards design efficiency, objectivity and methods.

Carrying this idea further, it might not be too farfetched to suggest that the above mentioned mutually beneficial relationship between client and designer also applies in this context. By allowing consultant designers to sign their works, Boggeri was showing off the Studio's extended team of design consultants and

83   Gennifer Weisenfeld, 'Japanese Modernism and Consumerism: Forging the New Artistic Field of "*Shôgyô Bijutsu*" (Commercial Art)', in *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from 1910s to the 1930s*, ed. by Elise K. Tipton and John Clark (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), p. 79.

84   Anna Boggeri and Bruno Monguzzi interview with the author, Meride (Switzerland), 13 April 2015.

hence claiming credibility for his business. On the other hand, the professionalism of the designers was certified by the very fact that they were included among the consultant designers of the Studio Boggeri. Richard-Ginori's advertisement featuring the double signature 'Studio Boggeri – Erberto Carboni' is then a multi-layered picture whose meaning varies depending on the context.

Drawing on Roland Barthes' approach to sign as a contingent and historical concept whose reading depends on the concrete situation of the subject, I would argue that a different context suggests a different use and a different meaning for the signature.[85] The primary promotional purpose – i.e. the promotion of Richard-Ginori's porcelains – prevails when the picture is seen as a full-page advertisement in a magazine. The viewer's attention might be drawn to the two signatures on the top-left, but the advertiser's name speaks louder. The picture of the advertisement was reproduced in *L'Ufficio Moderno* (July-August 1936) and in *La Pubblicità d'Italia* (November-December 1937). In the first case, the picture featured in a monographic article devoted to Carboni's work in which the Studio Boggeri is mentioned neither in the text nor in the captions.[86] Thus, the designer's voice overwhelmed the primary function of the advertisement. Rather than promoting the purchase of porcelain, the picture was used as a sample of Carboni's advertising design. In *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, however, the picture was included in an article on the use of photography in advertising written by Boggeri himself.[87] Given the small dimensions of the reproduction, the designer's name is barely visible, while the label 'Studio Boggeri' is repeated in each caption. Thus, the meaning of the picture in this context is neither the promotion of Richard-Ginori, nor the demonstration of Carboni's skills, but a strong statement about the position of the Studio – with its prestigious clients and renewed collaborators – within the advertising industry.

The inclusion of the designer's name was also a subliminal way to assert Boggeri's supervision over the design and production process. This might have been the reason behind the signature 'R+MUNARI' in Munari's 1933 advertisement for the Studio Boggeri (see Illustration **2.4**). The argument for the mutual benefit of the Studio and the designers reaches the limit of its paradox when analysing Boggeri's self-promotional material. It is, indeed, difficult to explain why Boggeri

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85   Barthes, *Mythologies*, pp. 231-42.
86   See: *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 11 (7-8), July-August 1936, pp. 301-22. Richard-Ginori advertisement in reproduced on p. 319.
87   See: Antonio Boggeri, 'La Fotografia nella Pubblicità', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, pp. 16-25. Richard-Ginori advertisement in reproduced on p. 24.

would not only turn to the competition – i.e. to Munari and Castagnedi, who had opened the graphic design studio Ricas+Munari in 1931 – but also allow them to sign a self-promotional advertisement for the Studio.[88] However, the signature suggests the idea, or the suspicion, that what the designers did when working alone was different from what they could potentially do when collaborating with the Studio Boggeri.

The signature is thus an actor in the power relations within the studio-system. Archival documents provide evidence of Boggeri's awareness of the connotative potential of the signature. In February 1942 the Swiss magazine, *Typographische Monatsblätter*, decided to publish a special edition on Italian graphics. On this occasion, Boggeri asked Huber to provide the editors with exemplars of his works for the Studio. In his letter, he specified in capital letters that 'it [was] necessary that [he] presented his works as STUDIO BOGGERI – HUBER'.[89] Yet, the Studio Boggeri was not included in the captions, and the text described Huber's works as 'designed in complete freedom at the Studio Boggeri, Milan'.[90] The anecdote suggests that the balance between designers' authorship and Boggeri's demand for recognition was an open issue with no consistent solution.

Despite the fact that exemplars of the Studio's graphic and commercial output featured often in specialist periodicals of the interwar period, the acknowledgement of the Studio Boggeri was sporadic. The name of the Studio was neglected in articles devoted to single designers so as to underline their authorship and independence.[91] When mentioned, the stated role of the Studio was inconsistent. Works were described as 'composed by' or 'edited by' the Studio Boggeri.[92] On the other hand, Boggeri might have overstated the Studio's contribution when he defined the graphic works that featured in *La Pubblicità d'Italia* in 1941 as 'designed

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88   On the graphic design studio Ricas+Munari, see: Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari', pp. 123-75.

89   '[…] bisogna che lei presenti I lavori come STUDIO BOGGERI – HUBER'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 6 February 1942, ASB. The special number of the *Typographische Monatsblätter* was published in September of the same year. See: *Typographische Monatsblätter: Sonder Heft Italien-Schweiz*, 8-9, August-September 1942

90   '[…] er im Studio Boggeri in Mailand in voller Freiheit gestalten durfte'. Karl Reitz, 'Max Huber', in *Typographische Monatsblätter: Sonder Heft Italien-Schweiz*, 8-9, August-September 1942, unpaged.

91   This was the case for the aforementioned article on Carboni, and for the special issue of *L'Ufficio Moderno* devoted to Xanti Schawinsky, in which the Studio Boggeri is not mentioned although the majority of the illustrated works were made in collaboration with Boggeri. See: *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 11 (7-8), July-August 1936, pp. 301-22. Richard-Ginori advertisement is reproduced on p. 319; *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 10 (10), October 1935, pp. 437-67.

92   'composto da' or 'editato da'. See: *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 4 (37-38), July-August 1940, pp. 64-71; *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 4 (33-34), March-April 1940, pp. 2-8.

and realised by the Studio Boggeri, Milan', without mentioning the name of any designer.[93] A middle ground, and arguably more appropriate caption, was given by typographer and graphic theorist Guido Modiano who described the poster for Illy-Caffè, which was designed by Schawinsky in collaboration with the Studio Boggeri in 1934, as 'Poster for a branded coffee – Design Xanti – Ed. Boggeri'.[94]

To argue that Boggeri had some kind of 'personal resentment' towards his collaborators due to envy of the 'relative autonomy and creative talent of the artists with whom [he] collaborated', as was the case, according to Bogart, for American art directors, seems to overdo the dispute over appropriate captioning.[95] It is safer to acknowledge a tacit misunderstanding between those involved, which might have been caused simply by the fact that the professional identity of the graphic practitioner and the advertising technician were both still vague and unclear.[96]

2.4 ADVERTISING PHOTOGRAPHY

This section explores the role of photography in the shaping of the Studio's corporate identity and contextualises Antonio Boggeri's enthusiasm for modernist photography within interwar advertising and graphics. On a micro level, it offers a different perspective on Boggeri in line with the chapter's goal to reassess him as multifaceted. On a macro level, the section aims at contributing to what graphic design historian and critic Rick Poynor has defined as the 'unwritten history of graphic designers and photography'.[97] By exploring the relationship of photography and graphic design in Milan during the interwar period, I argue for a more prominent role of photography in the formulation of graphic design as a professional practice.

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93   '[…] progettati e realizzati dallo Studio Boggeri di Milano'. See: Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 5 (50-54), August-December 1941, pp. 28-35.

94   'Cartello per un caffè di marca – Creazione Xanti – Ediz. Boggeri'. See: Modiano, *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 9 (7-8), July-August 1934, p. 380.

95   Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art*, p. 137.

96   The balance between individual authorship and design teamwork within the graphic studio was not a concern limited to the Studio Boggeri. The designers Ricas and Munari, for instance, conveyed their flexible attitude towards working both in tandem and individually by signing alternatively their works 'R+M', 'RICAS+M' or 'R+MUNARI'. A similar strategy was adopted by the duo composed by the campisti Carlo Dradi and Attilio Rossi who exchanged the order of their surnames – i.e 'Dradi-Rossi' or 'Rossi-Dradi' – to signal the main contributor. Massimo Dradi, interview with the author, 10 April 2015.

97   Rick Poynor, 'The Unwritten History of Graphic Designers and Photography', *Print Magazine*, 67 (2) (2013), http://www.printmag.com/featured/picture-this-rick-poyner/ [accessed, 13 January 2017].

Writing to Huber in February 1940, Boggeri defined photography as his greatest passion and the origin of his success. He then added that 'many people were still considering [photography as his] only speciality'.[98] A self-trained photographer, Boggeri had been endorsing the use of photography in advertising and promoting the circulation of modernist aesthetics since the late-1920s through a number of articles and, from 1933 onwards, through the Studio's output. The very name of his business referred to photography by recalling the name of the Parisian Studio Lorelle.[99] This was managed by the French advertising photographer Lucien Lorelle, and was the photographic department at the aforementioned type foundry Deberny&Peignot that designed the Studio's first logo.

In between Deberny&Peignot's (1933) and Huber's (1937) versions of the red B, the Studio used a completely different logo. Conceived by Munari, the logo appeared on the letterhead designed by Reiner in 1933 (see Illustration **2.14**). By simply using graphic elements and geometric forms, Munari designed an iconic logo that is open to different interpretations. Drawing on semiotics, I would argue that to read Munari's logo only as the sign of Boggeri's business is reductive.[100] Indeed, it can be interpreted as a schematic representation of the camera obscura.[101] A box or a room with a hole in one side, the camera obscura is an optical device that reproduces the image of its surroundings. The light from the external scene passes through the hole and projects the image upside-down on a surface inside. The image preserves colours, perspective and proportions. The black square signifies the camera, and the *B* on a red background its surroundings. The two straight lines delimit the light cone and intersect at the hole in the side of the black square. Once inside, the *B* turns upside-down and a smaller and inverted *b* is projected on the black background.

Potential ambiguities are clarified in a graphic composition included in *L'Uovo di Colombo* in which the relationship between Munari's logo – signifier – and the camera – signified – is made more explicit (see Illustration **2.15**). The black square is arranged on a photomontage that represents a camera by juxtaposing two elements, a squared shaped halftone screen with a lens in its side, that refer

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98   '[…] molti credono ancora oggi sia la mia solo specialità'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 4 February 1940, p. 3, ASB.

99   See: Boggeri, *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 21.

100   See: Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (London: Vintage, 1974); Barthes, *Mythologies*.

101   In his PhD thesis on the early graphic works of Bruno Munari, Alessandro Colizzi defines the logo as 'subtly recalling the printing tradition'. See: Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari', p. 157.
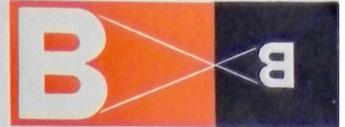
studio **BOGGERI** s. a. edizioni e fotografie pubblicitarie, via Borghetto 5, telefono 23725, **MILANO** 1. 1. 1940

Egr. Sig. Max Huber
Grafiker
B A A R   Juwilerstrasse

Caro Signor Huber,

ho avuto molto piacere dalla vostra lettera
che aspettavo da molto tempo.

Vi ringrazio per la confermata intenzione vostra di venire in
Italia e presso il mio studio appena vi sarà possibile.

Io farò volentieri il tentativo per un permesso che risulti richie-
sto da Milano e speriamo che esso abbia esito positivo.

Intanto vorrei chiedervi se vi fosse possibile imparare un poco
di francese o di italiano; ciò è indispensabile per poterci in-
tendere.

Inoltre vorrete dirmi dove avete lavorato prima ; sarei contento
di vedere qualche lavoro "stampato " anche se non concepito da
voi solo.

M'interessa sapere se normalmente l'esecuzione del primo "schizzo"
per un qualsiasi lavoro vi riesce rapidamente oppure vi richiede
piuttosto un certo tempo.

Desidero chiedervi tutta la vostra fiducia nel tentativo che io
faccio con l'assumervi nel mio studio. Voi troverete in me prima
di tutto un amico ed è percio che una prova di fedeltà da parte
vostra mi è necessaria quanto la sicurezza del vostro valore di
artista.

Poichè i primi mesi saranno i più difficili ed io mi sento pron-
to ad aiutarvi a superarli, vorrei chiedervi di assicurarmi che in
seguito voi non mi lascerete per accettare offerte che vi venis-
sero fatte da altri.

Ciò che vi chiedo vi sembrerà meno strano quando sarete da qualche
tempo a Milano.

C. P. E. MILANO N. 198382

2.14   Imre Reiner – Studio Boggeri, letterhead for the Studio Boggeri featuring Bruno Munari's logo, 1933

166
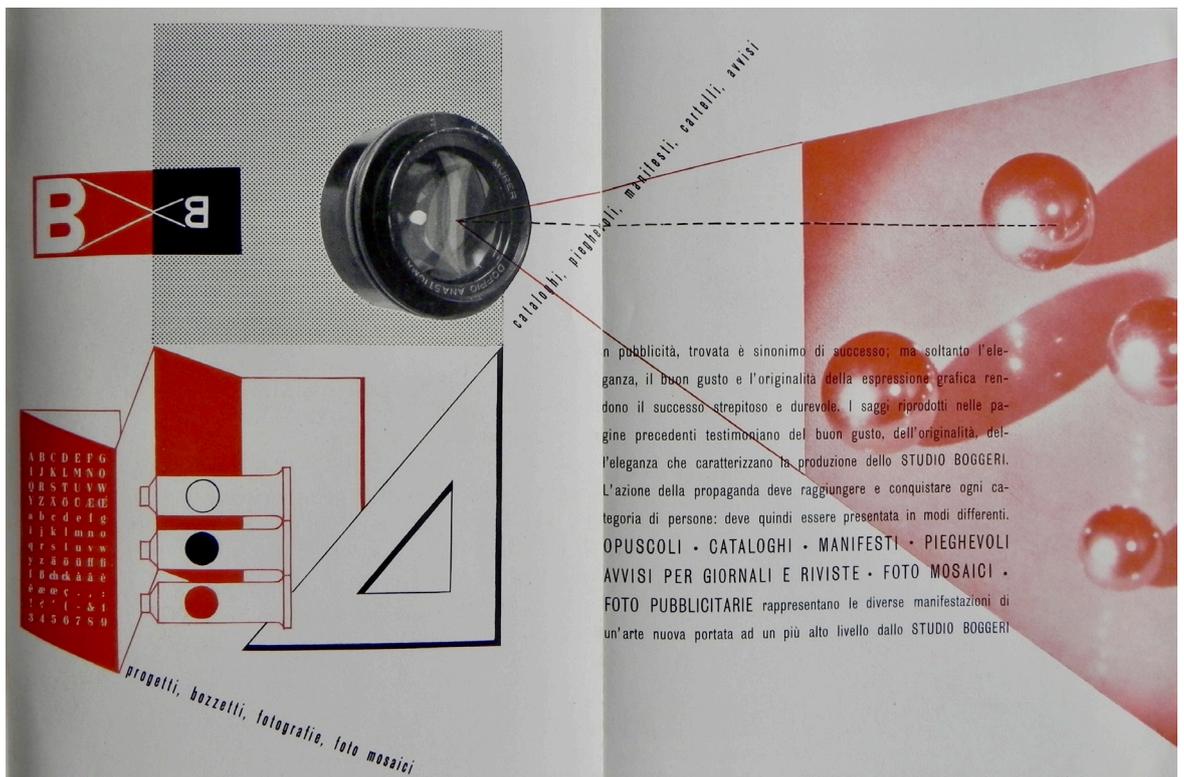
2.15   double-page spread foldout from the promotional pamphlet *L'Uovo di Colombo*, 1937,
31 × 20.5 cm

respectively to photographic reproduction and execution. The larger *B* on the red background mirrors symmetrically the foreshortened red picture, which is a photograph by Boggeri himself, that is contained in the visual field of the camera. Pushing the semiotic reading further, Munari's logo not only signifies both Boggeri's business and a photographic camera, but it also embodies one of the main features of the Studio: the use of photography.

In promoting photography as one of the distinctive aspects of the Studio's identity, Boggeri was specific about the kind of photography the Studio offered to its clients. To avoid misunderstandings, Reiner's advertisement of 1934 spelled out the photographic aesthetics advocated by the Studio (see Illustration **2.6**). The eye on the lens illustrates literally the main principle of the New Vision photographic movement. 'The photographic camera', wrote Laszlo Moholy-Nagy in the mid-1920s, 'can either complete or supplement our optical instrument – the eye'.[102] The lens becomes a second eye for looking at the world and discovering hitherto unseen aspects of the everyday. The reference to the New Vision was impossible to miss out. Reiner's advertisement was, in fact, strategically included in a special issue of *Campo Grafico* devoted to photography and photomontage.[103] The allusion to modernist photography was less literal, though always present, in other exemplars of self-promotional ephemera. None of the working tools represented in Huber's advertisement of 1941 directly relate to the photographic medium. Nevertheless, modernist photography is recalled by the composition itself, which combines a photogram with typographic elements in accordance with the principles of typo-photo (see Illustration **2.7**). In so doing, Huber put the experimental use of the photographic medium, which had been marketed as one of the keywords of the Studio self-promotional vocabulary since the opening, directly into practice.

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102   Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, *Painting, Photography, Film* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), p. 28. The book was first published in 1925. On Moholy-Nagy's photography, see also: Eleanor M. Hight, *Picturing Modernism: Moholy-Nagy and Photography in Weimar Germany* (Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 1995); Oliver A.I., Botar, *Sensing the Future: Moholy-Nagy, Media and the Arts* (Zurich: Lars Müller, 2014). On German photography, see: *Germany: the New Photography*, ed. by David Mellor (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978); John Roberts, *The Art of Interruption: Realism, Photography and the everyday* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 40-57; Christopher Phillips, 'Resurrecting Vision: the New Photography in Europe between the Wars', in *The New Vision: Photography between the Wars*, ed. by Maria Morris Hambourg and Christopher Phillips (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, 1989) pp. 65-108; *The Radical Eye: Modernist Photography from the Sir Elton John Collection*, ed. by Shoair Mavlian (London, Tate Publishing, 2015).

103   *Campo Grafico*, 2 (12), December 1934.

The most recent developments in photography circulated in interwar Milan mainly through published sources.[104] Central-European cutting-edge photographers – such as Eli Lotar, Germaine Krull and Martin Munkácsy – were regularly featured in Italian advertising trade journal and graphics magazines. In the early-1930s, for instance, the architecture and product design magazine *Casabella* dedicated a recurring column to German photography.[105] In 1932, an article by Moholy-Nagy was published in the magazine *Note Fotografiche*.[106] Two years later, Boggeri had a chance to debate about photography with Moholy-Nagy in person during his stay in Milan to visit Bauhausler and friend Schawinsky.[107] In 1935 Schawinsky also introduced Boggeri to the photographer and teacher at the Zurich Kunstgewerbeschule, Hans Fisler.[108]

Boggeri himself had been a vocal photography theorist and critic since the late-1920s when he was still working at Alfieri&Lacroix. There he had the chance to experience in person the impact of the New Vision photographic movement and

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104   The first attempts to situate Italian photography within the concerns of European avant-garde went back to June 1913 when the photographer Anton Giulio Bragaglia published the book-manifesto *Fotodinamismo Futurista* (Futurist Photodynamism). Yet, because of his excommunication from the futurist movement, photodynamism lacked any immediate followers, but it was only in the mid-1920s that the second-generation of futurists – such as Ivo Pannaggi and Tato (pseudonym of Guglielmo Sansoni) – renewed their interest in photography. As suggested by art historian Christopher Phillips, this revived interest rather than being a belated acknowledgement of Bragaglia's pioneer work was a recognition of the increasing importance of photography and photomontage among German and Soviet avant-garde movements. The list of international periodicals distributed in Italy in the early 1930s included several magazines on art, architecture, commercial art and adverting, such as: *Abstraction-Création*, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, *Archiv für Buchgewerbe und Gebrauchsgraphik*, *Art Concret*, *Arts et Métiers Graphiques*, the series of *Bauhausbücher*, *Cahier d'Art*, *Cercle et Carré*, *Commercial Art*, *Deutsche Drucker*, *Farbe und Form*, *Gebraichsgraphik*, *La Publicité*. On futurist photography, see: Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Fotodinamismo Futurista* (Turin: Einaudi, 1970); Giovanni Lista, *Futurismo e Fotografia* (Milan: Edizioni Multipla, 1979); Giovanni Lista, *Futurism and Photography* (London: Estorick Collection, 2001); *The New Vision*, ed. by Hambourg and Phillips, p. 69. For the complete list of international publications available in interwar Italy, see: Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari', p. 95.
105   The column featured reviews of pivotal publications such as *Foto Auge* – co-edited by Frank Roh and Jan Tschichold in 1929 – and Moholy-Nagy's monograph *60 Fotos* (1930), as well as reproductions of works by exponents of modernist photography such as El Lissitzky and Man Ray. See: 'Fotografia Tedesca', *Casabella*, 39, March 1931, pp. 48-49; 'Fotografia Tedesca', *Casabella*, 40, April 1931, pp. 52-53; *Casabella*, 41, May 1931, pp. 57-58; 'Fotografia Tedesca', *Casabella*, 49, January 1932, p. 60.
106   Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, 'Su l'Avvenire della Fotografia', *Note Fotografiche*, 9 (2), August 1932. Quoted in: Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari', p. 101, footnote 272.
107   The visit is recorded in: *Xanti Schawinsky: Malerei, Bühne, Grafikdesign, Fotografie*, ed. by Peter Hahn (Berlin: Bauhaus Archiv, 1986), p. 18-20.
108   Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design*, p. 22.

the increasing prominence of photography within mass media communication.[109] In a series of articles that appeared in *Natura* and in the photography annual *Luci ed Ombre* in 1929, he illustrated the principles of modernist photography.[110] Aerial photography, cinema and scientific photographs were indicated among the premises of the new language of modern photography. Methods included unusual and sharply angled viewpoints, bird's eye perspectives, radical cropping, extreme close-ups, strong figure-ground contrasts, dramatic plays of light and shade, and composition oriented on the diagonal to create and an overall dynamic effect.[111] Paraphrasing Moholy-Nagy, Boggeri argued that, in contrast to artistic photography – also known as pictorialism – that turned to painting as a source for subject matter and technique, modern photography 'turned to the own qualities of the medium [in order to reach] a new way of seeing the world and its objects and reveal the hidden photogenic character through unknown images'.[112] In accordance with the principles of New Vision, Boggeri advocated the superiority of the camera lens to the eye. Yet, the objective and impersonal eye of the camera did not annihilate the photographer, since 'the ability of selection, juxtaposition, reconstruction – in other words – the composition of the photographic theme' were still dependent on the photographer's aesthetic sensitivity and technical skills.[113]

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109   For an overview on the impact of modernist aesthetic and technique on Italian photography, see: Maria Antonella Pellizzari, *Photography and Italy* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2011), pp. 82-101; Francesco Alivoni, 'Fotografia', in *Gli Annitrenta. Arte e Cultura in Italia* (Mazzotta: Milan, 1982), pp. 409-16; Colizzi, 'Bruno Munari', pp. 97-105.

110   Antonio Boggeri, 'Fotografia Moderna', *Natura*, 2 (7), July 1929, pp. 47-49; Antonio Boggeri, 'La Fotografia dei Dilettanti', *Natura*, 2 (9), September 1929, p. 57; Antonio Boggeri, 'A Proposito del Nostro Concorso Fotografico', *Natura*, 2 (10), October 1929, p. 58; Antonio Boggeri, 'Commento', in *Luci ed Ombre: Annuario della Fotografia Artistica Italiana* (Turin: Il Corriere Fotografico, 1929), p. 14. Boggeri collaborated regularly with the magazine *Natura* until 1932. On Boggeri's activity as photographic critic and theorist, see: Anna Bianchi, 'Antonio Boggeri, Fotografia Modernista e Pubblicità', *L'Uomo Nero*, 8 (7-8) (2011), pp. 275-91.

111   Photographs by the Studio Boggeri – executed by Boggeri himself, both alone and in collaboration with the Studio's collaborators – featured in illustrated magazines and specialist publications such *Natura*, *L'Ufficio Moderno* and *Campo Grafico*. Photographs featured both as illustrations of articles and as independent pictures. The emphasis on formal elements, close-up capture, high light and shadow contrasts, and careful arrangement of objects in patters, showed Boggeri's interpretation of modernist photography. Art historian Anna Bianchi has suggested that the photographic and graphic activities were two different, though intertwined, specialisations within the Studio Boggeri up to the end of the 1930s. See: Bianchi, 'Antonio Boggeri', *L'Uomo Nero*, 8 (7-8) (2011), pp. 275-76.

112   '[..] affida alle qualità proprie del mezzo i risultati di un modo diverso di vedere il mondo e i suoi oggetti svelandone il riposto carattere fotogenico in immagini inedite'. Boggeri, *Luci ed Ombre*, p. 14. On the contrast between modernist photography and pictorialism, see: Hight, *Picturing Modernism*, pp. 97-103.

113   'Le facoltà di selezione, do accostamento, di ricostruzione, in una parola, di composizione del tema fotografico, [...]'. Boggeri, *Natura*, 2 (9), September 1929, p. 57.

Boggeri's interest in photography was specific to its application to graphics and advertising. In line with the principles of New Typography – according to which photography was 'the obvious means of visual representation, [...] an essential typographic tool of the present [... and] the factor that distinguish[ed the New Typography] from everything that went before'[114] – he defined photography as 'favourite working tool, ultimate medium and nearly main collaborator' of today's graphic artist.[115] In 1937, Boggeri directly addressed the use of photography in advertising in an article entitled 'Fotografia nella Pubblicità' (Photography in Advertising) in *La Pubblicità d'Italia*.[116] The article began with a 'meaningful anecdote' about:

> [...] a client that pretended to pay only half [of the agreed payment] for a sketch presented by an artist, because the latter had pasted a pair of photographic legs rather than drawing them. The client shouted that he had been played on and that he felt swindled since he claimed that he too was capable of a similar witticism.[117]

By denouncing the sceptical attitude of clients towards photography, the anecdote implies that photography was still misconceived as less worthy than hand-drawn illustrations and that much was still to be done in order to sensitise people toward its value.

Exponents of graphics and advertising circles backed Boggeri's attempt to promote advertising photography. The *campisti* were on the frontline in the promotion of modernist photography. In their opinion, 'it [was] by then undisputed that photography had revolutionised graphics aesthetics and enriched its means in a paramount way'.[118] Advertising photography was advocated also in *Risorgimento Grafico*. The graphics critic, Mario Ferrigni, argued that photography was not only an incredibly effective and economic medium, but it could also 'provide with artistic contribution and attractive potential' any form of advertising and graphic output.[119] Photography was considered particularly suitable for advertising thanks

114   Tschichold, *The New Typography*, pp. 88-92.
115   '[...] strumento di lavoro favorito, il mezzo risolutivo, il collaborator quasi principale [...]'. Antonio Boggeri, untitled article, in *Campo Grafico*, 2 (12), December 1934, p. 271.
116   Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, pp. 16-25.
117   '[...] storiella piena di significato: quella del cliente che pretendeva pagare la metà un bozzetto presentatogli da un pittore perché questi vi aveva incollato un paio di gambe fotografiche invece di disegnarle. Il cliente strillava di essere stato giocato, si sentiva defraudato, era capace, diceva, lui pure di simili spiritosità'. Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, p. 16.
118   'Che la fotografia [...] ha rivoluzionato l'estetica grafica e ne abbia arricchito in modo grandioso le possibilità e ormai pacifico'. 'Fotografia e Tipografia', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (12), December 1934, p. 269.
119   '[...] dare un contributo d'arte e una forza di attrattiva'. Mario Ferrigni, 'Fotografia Pubblicitaria', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (2), February 1934, p. 89 and p. 103.

to the immediacy of its communication and its purported accordance with reality that promotes consumer' confidence.[120] As argued by a contributor of *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 'the public will always believe more in a product when it is portrayed in a photograph than when the same object is represented through a drawing or a painting'.[121] The effectiveness of the photographic medium relied on the viewers' belief that photography corresponded to reality and that an advertisement featuring photographs could not lie.[122]

Advertising photography was also considered the 'most appropriate field' for the application of photomontage.[123] In the aforementioned article 'La Fotografia Pubblicitaria', Boggeri indicated the pioneers that had paved the way to the use of photomontage in advertising.[124] These were Moholy-Nagy, Marx Ernst, Max Burchartz, E. L. T. Mesens, and Man Ray. Pictures of Moholy-Nagy's and Herbert Matter's photomontages featured next to exemplars made at the Studio Boggeri (see Illustration **2.16**). The visual comparison gives evidence of Boggeri's attempt to frame the Studio within the international modernist movement. He claimed legitimacy for the Studio's output by drawing comparison with renowned artists and graphic designers. In doing so, he also demonstrated self-confidence that the selected exemplars would not make a bad impression with the viewer.

The effective use of photomontage as a communication device and an advertising tool relied on several factors. First, since photomontage could include both figurative elements and lettering, it was a suitable medium for advertising photography, which featured both pictures and captions.[125] Second, thanks to its fragmented quality and dynamism, photomontage was considered more suited than documentary photography to represent 'the thousand contingencies of today's life [that was] turbulent and eccentric, rapid and unpredictable, unsettled, vibrant and

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120   For a critical analysis of the literal realism attributed by common sense to photography, see for instance: Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), p. 87.

121   '[…] un prodotto messo bene in evidenza in foto sarà sempre più creduto dal pubblico, che non il medesimo oggetto presentato in disegno o in pittura […]'. *L'Ufficio Moderno*, September (?) 1933, quoted in: Ceserani, *Storia della Pubblicità in Italia*, p. 132.

122   On advertising capitalisation on the pretended 'sincerity' of the photographic medium, see: Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, pp. 149-53; Bogart, *Artists, Advertising, and the Borders of Art*, pp. 171-204.

123   '[…] campo più appropriato'. Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (2), February 1934, p. 99.

124   Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, p. 19.

125   Guido Modiano, 'La Tecnica dell'Annuncio VI: L'Illustrazione', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 10 (3), pp. 129-30; Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (2), February 1934, p. 95.

2.16 four double-page spreads from Antonio Boggeri, 'La Fotografia nella Pubblicità', *La Pubblicità d'Italia* 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, pp. 16-25

dynamic' and thus more appropriate for advertising.[126] As argued by photographer Veronesi and artist Batista Pallavera in 1934, photomontage was 'the one and only manifestation of modern illustration. A book, a magazine, and a newspaper willing to be part of today's spiritual mood depend on photography and on the dynamism imposed on it by the artist through photomontage'.[127] Third, the efficiency of the photomontage relied on photography's aforementioned pretended reliability and clarity.[128] Photomontage provided a manipulated version of the so-perceived transparent and unmediated representation of reality of the photographic medium.[129] The juxtaposition of the parts favoured formal and non-linear narrative interrelations creating visually compelling and emotionally persuasive images that, in spite of appearing curious or even absurd, kept a degree of plausibility to the advantage of advertising's efficiency.[130]

Finally, advocates of advertising photography reversed the roles of the discussion and, instead of listing the benefits provided to advertising by the photographic medium, they questioned whether advertising was beneficial to photography itself.[131] As photography historian Maria Antonella Pellizzari has observed, 'it was in the domain of advertising that photography and graphic arts thrived

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126   '[...] mille contingenze della vita d'oggi che è tumultuosa e stramba, rapida e capricciosa, irrequieta, vibrante, dinamica [...]'. Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (2), February 1934, pp. 99-101. On photomontage as a the most effective medium to express modern life and industrialised metropolises, see: Christopher Phillips, 'Introduction', in *Montage and Modern Life, 1919-1942*, ed. by Christopher Phillips (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), p. 22.

127   '[...] l'unica espressione dell'illustrazione moderna. Un libro, una rivista, un giornale che vogliono veramente appartenere al clima spiritual d'oggi devono dipendere dalla fotografia e dalla dinamica imposta dall'artista nella creazione del fotomontaggio'. Luigi Veronesi and Battista Pallavera, 'Del Fotomontaggio', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (12), December 1934, p. 278.

128   On the use of photomontage in advertising, see: Maud Lavin, 'Photomontage, Mass Culture, and Modernity: Utopianism in the Circle of the New Advertising Design', in *Montage and Modern Life*, ed. by Phillips, pp. 37-59. For a detailed analysis of the use of photomontage in periodical publications in interwar Italy, see: Silvia Bignami, 'Il Fotomontaggio nelle Riviste Illustrate degli Anni Trenta tra Ricerche d'Avanguardia e Cultura Visiva di Massa', in *Gli Anni Trenta a Milano tra Architettura, Immagini e Opere d'Arte*, ed. by Silvia Bignami and Paolo Rusconi (Milan; Udine: Mimesis Edizioni, 2014), pp. 199-222. For a semiotic reading of montage as an attempt to infiltrate reality with interpretation, see: *L'Amour Fou: Photography & Surrealism*, ed. by Rosalind E. Krauss and Jane Livingston (New York; London: Abbeville Press, 1985).

129   Articles about the techniques of solarisation and the photogram appeared in periodical publications of the period. See, for example: 'La Solarizzazione', *L'Industria della Stampa*, 7 (1), January 1934, pp. 37-38; *Domus*, 11 (128), August 1938, p. 41.

130   Modiano, *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 10 (3), pp. 131-32.

131   The mutual dialogue between advertising and fine arts has been the subject of a rich academic literature and of numerous exhibitions. See, for example, the exhibition catalogues: Kirk Varnedoe, *High & Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1993); *Art et Publicité 1890-1990* (Paris: Édition du Centre Pompidou, 1990); *Montage and Modern Life*, ed. by Phillips.

as experimental forms'.[132] Contributors to the interwar Milanese discussion about advertising photography agreed on the experimental potential of advertising. Advertising was expected to free photographers 'from the portrait and the landscape, which are certainly very important but do not constitute the whole of the suitable field for photography'.[133] Contributors insisted on the specificity of advertising photography and distinguished it from artistic photography. Whereas artistic photography was the outcome of artist's creative and expressive intentions, advertising photography was a particular type of photography whose 'formal and expressionistic aesthetic depended on and reflected a theme'.[134] In other words, the goals of advertising were intrinsic in the picture and it was the assignment rather than the photographer that dictated the formal and expressive qualities of the photograph.[135]

The two approaches to advertising photography as experimental medium, on the one hand, and purpose-built picture, on the other hand, seem apparently in contrast. On the contrary, the very limits imposed on the photographer by the assignment were expected to favour innovative responses that would lend new excitement to ordinary imagery in order to attract viewer's attention. According to Boggeri, advertising was 'a training ground for experimenting with and testing the ever more daring expressions of pure art'.[136] Advertising professionals and graphic practitioners were invited to borrow techniques and visual language from 'pure art', but were also alerted of the need to adapt and simplify avant-garde excesses. 'From a practical point of view', Boggeri wrote, 'it is indeed essential that readability and clarity are spotted, since without them [the advertising and graphic work] would miss the goal'.[137]

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132   Pellizzari, *Photography and Italy*, p. 91.

133   '[...] tende a liberarli da ritratto e dal paesaggio, che sono certo importantissimi ma che non sono tutto il campo utile per la fotografia'. Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (2), February 1934, p. 91.

134   '[...] un'estetica formale ed espressionistica dipendente e riflessa dal tema'. Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, p. 19.

135   Articles analysing the specificities of advertising photos insisted also on the need for photographers specialising in advertising. See: Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (2), February 1934, p. 99; Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, p. 16; *L'Ufficio Moderno*, September (?) 1933, quoted in Ceserani, *Storia della Pubblicità in Italia*, p. 132.

136   '[...] una palestra di esercitazione e di collaudo di particolari modi, sempre più audaci dell'arte pura'. Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, p. 19.

137   'è indispensabile infatti che sul terreno pratico siano riscontrabili quella leggibilità e chiarezza senza di cui si mancherebbe allo scopo'. Boggeri, *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 1 (5-6), November-December 1937, p. 23.

As argued in this section, photography was, on a micro level, a key feature of the Studio Boggeri's practice and public image. Boggeri himself actively promoted the use of the photographic medium in advertising and graphics as well as the modernisation of the photographic aesthetics. On a macro level, photography was a crucial actor in the work-in-progress articulation of the graphic design field and profession. It favoured a so-considered objective approach to visual communication that valued clarity, immediacy and reproducibility over subjectivity and self-expression.

2.5 CHASING THE SWISS

From the early days of the Studio until the 1960s, Antonio Boggeri carried out a steady search for collaborators on the other side of the Alps. The outcome of this recruiting policy was the transit of a succession of Central-European, mainly Swiss, graphic designers many of whom used their work experience at the Studio Boggeri as a springboard for their subsequent career in Italy.[138] Swiss, Hungarian born, graphic designer Imre Reiner was the first foreign designer to collaborate with the Studio.[139] Boggeri came across Reiner's work while visiting the German Pavilion at the 5th Milan Triennale. According to Boggeri, the collaboration allowed him 'to verify in person methodologies and execution procedures yet unknown [in Italy] that Reiner mastered with the ease and quickness of an expert professional'.[140]

By recruiting foreign designers, Boggeri turned his Studio into 'a school working directly in the field' that promoted an update of the visual language of Italian graphics in line with modernist aesthetics, while contributing to the definition of the new professional figure of the graphic designer.[141] As seen in the previous chapter, education and professional training were a major concern in interwar Milan. The 'backwardness' of design education in Italy created a favourable situation

138   On Swiss graphic designers working in Milan, see: Bettina Richter, 'Zurich-Milan', in *100 Years of Swiss Graphic Design*, ed. by Christian Brändle, Karin Gimmi, Barbara Junod, Christina Reble and Bettina Richter (Zurich: Lars Müller, 2014), pp. 137-43; Richard Hollis, 'The Italian Connection', in Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design*, pp. 135-37; *Italian Design Is Coming Home*, ed. by Georgi and Minetti; Fornari, 'Swiss Style Made in Italy', in *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, ed. by Fornari and Lzicar, pp. 152-89.

139   On Imre Reiner, see: Besomi, Ottavio, *Imre Reiner* (Bellinzona: Banca dello Stato del Cantone Ticino, 1984).

140   'Così di verificarono dal vivo metodi e procedimenti di esecuzione sconosciuti, che Reiner padroneggiava con la disinvoltura e la rapidità del professionista esperto […]' Boggeri, *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 20.

141   'Scuola operante direttamente sul campo'. *La Grafica in Italia*, ed. by Fioravanti, Passarelli and Sfligiotti, p. 78.

for the highly trained graphic designers coming from neighbouring Switzerland. Eventually, some of them also became involved in professional training. This was the case, for instance, of Huber who, as I explore in Chapter 4, taught at the Convitto Scuola Rinascita and the Scuola del Libro in Milan in the postwar period.

Boggeri's interest in Swiss graphic design and designers was not unconditional. On the contrary, he was aware of the qualities and deficiencies of modernist aesthetics. He criticised the risk of sterile and rigid repetition of aesthetic principles and technical rules, and advocated that graphics should refrain from intolerant formalism. Answering a question about the differences between Swiss and Italian graphic design in an interview in the early-1980s, Boggeri argued that:

> A creative process that makes exclusive use of an inventory of tireless purism, no matter what the object to be visualised, discovers sooner or later its limits: the risk of repetition and tautology. [The creative process] succeeds when it abandons the abstract schematic convention and bases the outcome on the cultural content and the specificity of the subject matter.[142]

According to Boggeri, graphic designers were expected to evaluate, in each specific instance, the cultural content and the specificity of the subject matter in order to design the most appropriate and effective communication device, rather than follow abstract conventions and rigid rules out of context.

The German graphic designer Käte Bernhardt joined the team in the autumn of 1933 soon after Reiner, but the event that established the Studio as the focal point of progressive graphic design in interwar Italy was the arrival of Xanti Schawinsky in late-1933.[143] The Swiss graphic designer, photographer and set designer had enrolled at the Bauhaus school in 1924. With Hitler's rise to power in 1933, Schawinsky escaped from Germany. He went first to Italy and stayed in Milan until 1936 when the Italian political situation forced him to leave once more and move to North Carolina.[144] According to Schawinsky's unpublished autobiography, he was introduced to the Milanese artistic scene and design and architecture circle

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142   'Un processo creative che fa esclusivo ricorso a un repertorio di strenuo purismo qualsiasi sia l'oggetto da visualizzare, scopre ala fine i suoi limiti, il rischio della ripetizione, della tautologia. Si salva vittoriosamente quando abbandona l'astratto schematismo convenzionale e fonda il risultato sul contenuto culturale e lo specifico convenzionale del soggetto'. Boggeri, *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 21.

143   For a brief account of Käte Bernhardt's work experience at the Studio Boggeri, see: *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1973*, unpaged.

144   In between Milan and the us Schawinsky spent a year in London. Once in the us he rejoined with former friends at the Bauhaus who had also escaped from Nazi Germany and began teaching at the Black Mountain College in North Carolina. On Xanti Schawinsky, see: *Xanti Schawinsky*, ed. by Hahn, pp. 18-20 and 107-25; Xanti Schawinsky, *La Fotografia: dal Bauhaus al Black Mountain* (Locarno: Edizioni Flaviana, 1981); Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design* (London: Laurence King, 2006), p. 22.

by the rationalist architect Luciano Baldessari.[145] Soon after his arrival in town, Schawinsky became part of the Milanese avant-garde circle that gathered around the Galleria Il Milione. He was welcomed by artists, architects and graphic practitioners who were eager to hear about his first-hand experience of the European avant-garde. It was Gino Ghiringhelli, the co-founder of the Galleria il Milione, who put Schawinsky and Boggeri in contact.

Boggeri made his Studio immediately available to Schawinsky who began collaborating as a consultant while opening a studio on his own in Corso Venezia 68, less than five minutes' walk from the Studio Boggeri.[146] In about two years of collaboration with the Studio Boggeri, he worked for a series of prestigious clients such as Motta, Illy-Caffè, Cinzano and Olivetti. For the latter Schawinsky co-designed – together with the architects Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini – the typewriter 'Studio 42' in 1935. The majority of the works made during the Milanese stay are, nevertheless, signed 'Xanti – Studio Boggeri' suggesting the pivotal role played by Boggeri as intermediary between the Swiss designer and the Italian clients. The 1933 New Year's greetings card offers an insight into Boggeri and Schawinsky's relationship (see Illustration 2.17). By mocking masculinity and authority, the card is reminiscent of the Bauhaus culture of gift giving. In particular, the card recalls the 'photomontaged gifts' that art historian Elizabeth Otto described as 'given by or exchanged among some of the most creative practitioners of photomontage at the Bauhaus, [and included] playful images [... that] situated the terms of gender as shifting and in play'.[147] The representation of Boggeri and Schawinsky as effeminate gentlemen wearing military decorations on lacy waistcoats suggests a friendship based on a common sense of humour and self-mockery rather than a mere business relationship.

L'Ufficio Moderno dedicated the October 1935 issue to Schawinsky (see Illustration 2.18). An article by Schawinsky himself promoted the concept of 'functional advertising'. In accordance with both the rationalisation of advertising and the typographic rationalism, functional advertising 'turn[ed] to technique rather

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145   Xanti Schawinsky and Luciano Baldessari had probably met in Berlin during Baldessari's stay between 1922 and 1926, or they might have been introduced by their common acquaintance Walter Gropius. Xanti Schawinsky, unpublished autobiography, no date, unpaged.

146   See: *Guida Ricciardi*, ed. by Ricciardi (1936), pp. 370-1.

147   Elizabeth Otto, 'Designing Men. New Vision of Masculinity in the Photomontages of Herbert Bayer, Marcel Breuer, and Laszlo Moholly-Nagy', in *Bauhaus Construct: Fashioning Identity, Discourse and Modernism*, ed. by Jeffrey Saletnik and Robin Schuldenfrei (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 183.

2.17   Xanti Schawinsky – Studio Boggeri, greetings card for the Studio Boggeri,
photomontage, 1933

2.18   *L'Ufficio Moderno*, special issues on Xanti Schawinsky, 10 (10), October 1935
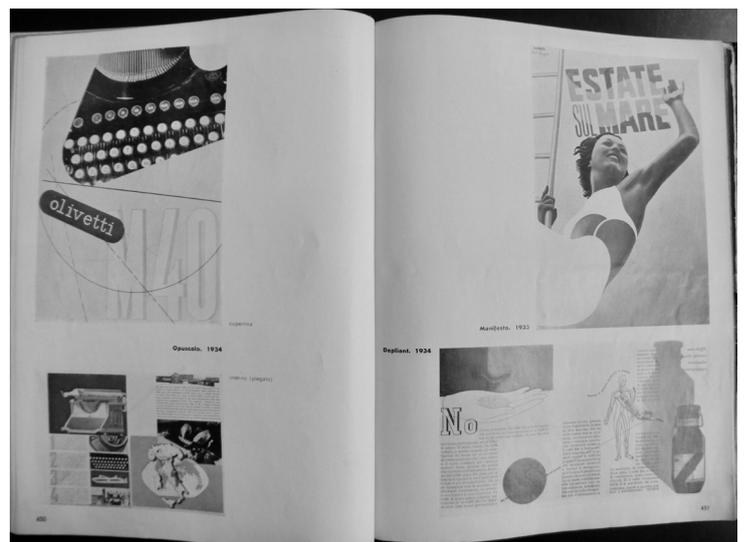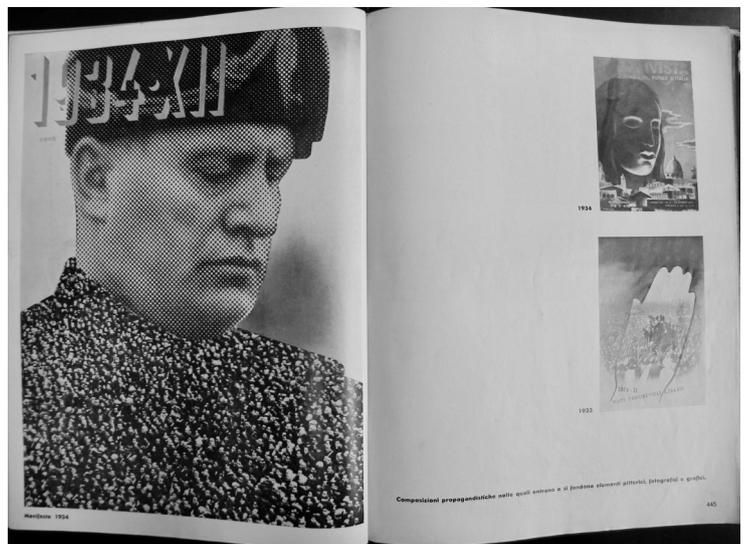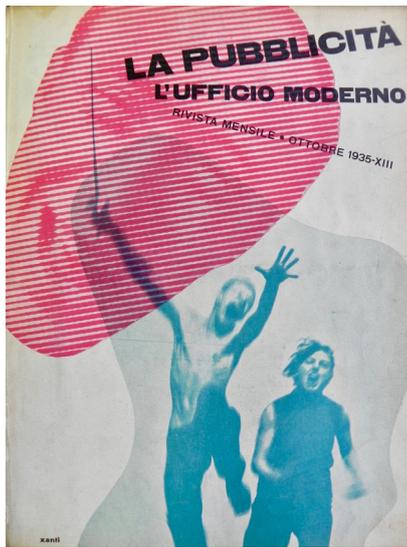
than mysticism – to rigor rather than monumentality – to realism rather than symbolism – to logic rather than depiction – to functionalism rather than decoration – to documentary rather than theatrical'.[148] The selected works illustrate Schawinsky's innovative, never seen before in Italy, use of the enlarged halftone screen, photomontage and the typo-photo. The selected works also demonstrate the ways in which Schawinsky adapted his visual language according to circumstances and cultural context. The more traditional painterly style of some of the propaganda posters and magazine covers that were designed by Schawinsky between 1933 and 1934 evidence his flexible approach to visual communication. By contrast, his iconic poster for the 1934 Fascist plebiscite exemplifies the regime's use of modernist visual language that is further problematised in the next chapter.[149]

According to Boggeri, the arrival of Schawinsky in Milan proved to be 'crucial for the characterisation of the Studio and its work plan'.[150] By collaborating with Schawinsky, Boggeri was pragmatically capitalising on his reputation and his relationship with the Bauhaus to overcome what he saw as Italian provincialism and position his business at the forefront of European graphics. Schawinsky fostered the reputation of the Studio Boggeri and attracted other Swiss graphic designers who followed his example. After Schawinsky's departure, Boggeri began an enduring scouting campaign on the other side of the Alps. Whereas Schawinsky was an already established and internationally renowned artist and designer, the following collaborators were often young graduates. Despite having little work experience, their training in Switzerland was for Boggeri a guarantee of professionalism. In Boggeri's opinion, Swiss design schools 'provid[ed] students with a foundation of fundamental rules in order to deal with the main assignments of typography without any hesitation'.[151]

148   'Si rivolge alla tecnica anziché al misticismo – alla precisione anziché alla monumentalità – al realismo anziché al simbolismo – alla logica anziché alla rappresentazione – al funzionalismo anziché all'ornamento – al documentario anziché al teatrale'. Xanti Schawinsky, 'Pubblicità Funzionale', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 10 (10), October 1935, p. 467.

149   On Xanti Schawinsky's poster for the Fascist referendum of 1934, see: *Revolutionary Tides: The Art of the Political Poster 1914-1989*, ed. by Jeffrey T. Schapp (Milan: Skira, 2005); David Crowley, 'National Modernism', in *Modernism: Designing a New World, 1914-1939*, ed. by Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), pp. 351-54.

150   '[...] determinante per la caratterizzazione dello Studio e del suo programma di lavoro'. Boggeri, *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 20.

151   '[...] dà ai suoi allievi una base di regole fondamentali per affrontare senza incertezze i compiti principali della tipografia [...]'. Boggeri, *Rassegna*, 6 (1981), p. 20.

When he arrived in Milan in February 1940, Max Huber was only twenty-one.[152] From 1935 to 1939, he attended the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zurich where he was taught by the prominent Swiss graphic designer and member of the group Abstraction-Création, Alfred Williman and by the graphic designer and educator Ernst Keller.[153] He befriended photographer Werner Bischof, graphic designers Josef Müller-Brockmann and Carlo Vivarelli, and painter Hans Falk, who were also studying in Zurich. Thus, he became from an early stage of his career part of a lively design and art circle. Once in Milan, Huber visited the Studio and left behind a business card that appeared to be printed but was actually executed by hand. Once he spotted the visual deceit, Boggeri hired Huber instantly, or at least this is how the event has been passed on in the literature.[154] Yet, unpublished primary sources found in the archive question this anecdote.

According to correspondence between Boggeri and Huber, the latter was recommended by the graphic designer Gérard Miedinger with whom Boggeri had got in touch in the Autumn 1939 asking for a 'young Swiss artist' who would be willing to join the Studio.[155] Before moving to Milan, Huber and Boggeri exchanged several letters. Huber was asked to provide references and a portfolio, recommended to learn some French or Italian, and questioned about design methodology, sketching aptitude and familiarity with the photographic medium. Boggeri demanded that Huber guarantee not to accept any other work offer that might have come his way once he had begun working at the Studio.[156] Finally, they discussed the way in which they envisaged their collaboration. Huber complained about the lack of independence that had prevented him from demonstrating his talent during

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152   For more biographical information about Max Huber, see: *Max Huber*, ed. by Gianpiero Bosoni, Mara Campana and Stanislaus von Moos (London; New York: Phaidon, 2006); Max Huber, *Max Huber: Progetti Grafici 1936-1981* (Milan: Electa, 1982); 'Max Huber: Note sull'Astrazione', in *Abecedario: la Grafica del Novecento*, ed. by Sergio Polano and Pierpaolo Vetta (Milan: Electa, 2008), pp. 140-51; *Huber*, ed. by Laura Faraci, Antonio Gambino and Matteo Mari (Milan: Edizioni Politecnico di Milano, 2014).

153   For a brief overview of Ernst Keller career at the Kenstgewerbeschule in Zurich and his pivotal role in the articulation of Swiss graphic design, see: Peter Vetter, 'History of the Kunstgewerbeschule Zürich and Following Institutions', in *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, ed. by Fornari and Lzicar, pp. 95-112.

154   See: *Max Huber*, ed. by Bosoni, Campana and von Moos, p. 8; *Huber*, ed. by Faraci, Gambino and Mari, p. 6; Camilla Chiappini, 'Antonio Boggeri: Considerazioni su un Protagonista della Grafica Italiana', *Ricerche di S/Confine*, 3 (1) (2012), p. 141.

155   '[...] jeune artist [sic] suisse [...]'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Gérard Miedinger, 1 September 1939, ASB.

156   Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, Milan 1 January 1940, ASB; letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, Milan 4 February 1940, ASB.

previous work experiences.[157] In response, Boggeri promised him a working relationship based on mutual respect and creative autonomy.[158] Thus, the hiring of Huber was the outcome of Boggeri's programmatic recruiting campaign rather than a serendipitous encounter as the anecdote of the business card suggests.[159] Nevertheless, despite doubtful veracity, the anecdote plays more than a negative role. It yields, in fact, evidence to the way in which designers portrayed themselves and their history, drawing on the rhetoric of the creative individual.[160]

Soon after Italy's entrance into war, Huber returned to Zurich. From 1941 until 1945, when the Swiss graphic designer moved back to Milan, Boggeri and Huber worked long-distance on many projects.[161] During wartime the Studio Boggeri kept receiving commissions from diverse clients such as Alfieri&Lacroix, and the pharmaceutical companies Glaxo and Le Petit. Some collaborations were one-off. In the midst of WW2, for instance, the cosmetic company Rival commissioned the packaging and labelling of a new line of nail varnish.[162] Others were long-term collaborations such as the one for the publisher De Agostini, which commissioned the Studio Boggeri in summer 1942 to 'change the entire typographic taste of their editions' and business stationery.[163] Some clients commissioned works to be explicitly realised after the end of the war. The forward-looking advertising strategy suggests

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157   Letter from Max Huber to Antonio Boggeri, Zurich 21 January 1940, ASB.

158   Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, Milan 4 February 1940, ASB.

159   It is, however, undeniable that Huber's business card caught Boggeri's attention. Indeed, Boggeri was not only impressed by Huber's creativity and manual skills, but also intrigued by the motif of the entwined white line – often referred as a 'rubber band' – that appeared on the card. The motif was later adopted by the Studio in a self-promotional panel designed by Huber in 1940, as well as on the cover of the monographic catalogue published by the Studio in 1981. *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1981*, ed. by Monguzzi.

160   On the meaningfully questionable truth of anecdotes, see for instance: Brian Donnelly, 'Locating Graphic Design History in Canada', *Journal of Design History*, 19 (4) (2006), pp. 283-94.

161   Despite several interruptions – due to the compulsory military service that Swiss men were expected to undertake on a regular basis at the eve and during the WW2 – the collaboration with the Studio continued throughout the war period. The long-distance collaboration was favoured by Niccolini, a collaborator of Antonio Boggeri, who acted as intermediary between Boggeri and Huber traveling on a regular basis from Milan to Zurich for work purposes. The correspondence includes also Huber's invoices. Some letters suggest that Boggeri was often remunerating Huber with books, magazines, work tools – e.g. an airbrush – and other in kind payment. The exchange of goods was often prevented by export bans, as was the case for the radio Phonola model 547 designed by the brothers Castiglioni that Huber requested repeatedly without any success.

162   Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 20 January 1943, ASB.

163   '[...] cambiare tutto il gusto grafico delle loro edizioni [...]'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 13 August 1942, ASB.

an underlying belief that the conflict was soon going to end, in one way or another, and the awareness that industries should prepare for reconstruction.[164]

In addition to providing previously unknown details on commissioning practices during the war period, the correspondence between Boggeri and Huber reveals new insights into the Studio's work practice. The long-distance collaboration followed a pattern: Boggeri briefed Huber, referred clients' requests and suggested possible solutions; Huber wrote back, sent sketches and included a verbal description; then an exchange of ideas about appropriate changes followed. In the winter of 1941, the magazine *La Pubblicità d'Italia* commissioned the Studio for the layout of an article on advertising for pharmaceutical products. The article was written by Boggeri himself.[165] Four days after Boggeri's briefing letter dated November the 24th, Huber sent back the sketch of the layout and specified that he envisioned a light grey or a bright green background for the first page with a horizontal window framing the sloping title. Pictures of works designed at the Studio were expected to be freely arranged in the following pages and the text was to be set in 'Bodoni'.[166] The proposal did not completely satisfy Boggeri who would have preferred a 'geometric taste'.[167] Huber defended his design and argued that he wanted 'to do a livelier and not too cold' layout.[168] The actual layout corresponded to Huber's design, thereby suggesting Boggeri's flexibility and openness to dialogue (see Illustration **2.19**). In February 1942, Olivetti commissioned the sketches for two advertisements promoting the typewriter 'Studio 42' to feature in the magazine *Illustrazione Italiana*. The theme was free, but Boggeri suggested that at least one advertisement should refer to the 'modern house'. He insisted with Huber about high standard for the sketches since Olivetti 'was likely to approve really good and modern artefacts'.[169] This time, Huber followed Boggeri's advice featuring an

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164   The war and the political situation are barely mentioned in the correspondence, except for two letters written by Max Huber in summer 1943 in which he congratulated Boggeri for the beginning of the Italian Campaign and asked about the consequences of the Allies' bombing over Milan in August. See, letter from Max Huber to Antonio Boggeri, 13 August 1943 and 06 September 1943, ASB.

165   Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 24 November 1941, ASB. The article appeared a month later in a bilingual – German, Italian – issue of the magazine. See: Boggeri, '*La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 5 (50-54), August-December 1941, pp. 28-35.

166   Letter from Max Huber to Antonio Boggeri, 28 November 1941, ASB.

167   '[...] gusto geometrico [...]'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 07 December 1941, AS.

168   '[...] fare una cosa un po' mossa e non troppo fredda'. Letter from Max Huber to Antonio Boggeri, 11 December 1941, ASB.

169   '[...] è possibile fare accettare cose veramente belle e moderne'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, Milan 1 February 1942, ASB.
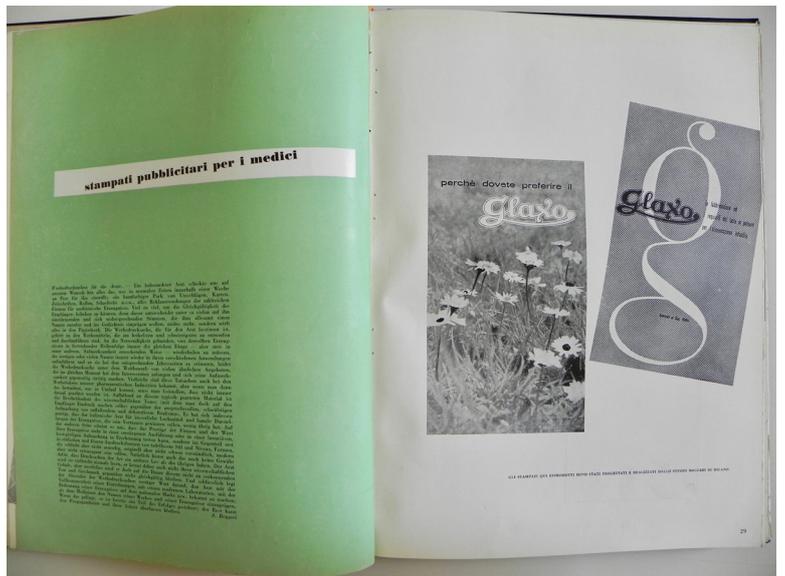
2.19 double-page spreads from Antonio Boggeri, 'Stampati Pubblicitari per i Medici', *La Pubblicità d'Italia*, 5 (50-54), August-December 1941, pp. 28-35; layout design by Max Huber – Studio Boggeri

architectural plan of a two storey building and the picture of an office interior (see Illustration **2.20**).[170]

In some cases, Boggeri also included some drawings that were added to the verbal briefing as examples and were possibly intended to limit misunderstandings that might have occurred due to Huber's not-yet fluent Italian. For instance, Boggeri sketched the logo and the packaging for the dried fruits and vegetables company Vitam (see Illustration **2.21**).[171] Huber replaced the apple with the 'more characteristic shape' of a pear and merged brand image and name – negative letters on a positive space (see Illustration **2.22**).[172] By positioning the brand name in correspondence with the core of the fruit, and by using dynamic lettering, he fulfilled the client's request of a logo that was expected to convey the idea that the dried fruits and vegetables had conserved all the vitality and vitamins of the fresh product.

All the above anecdotes provide hints on Boggeri's practice and relationship with collaborators. Unpacking the complex system of the graphic design studio, graphic designer and critic Adrian Shaughnessy identified the answer to the problematic balance between designers' egos and the studio's interests in the building of 'a sense of communal purpose that nevertheless leaves enough space for the individual to retain his or her own voice'.[173] Shaughnessy's advice fits for Boggeri's approach to the management of the studio. As suggested by his correspondence with Huber, Boggeri established a working relationship that was based on mutual trust. Boggeri's technical know-how and aesthetic awareness allowed him to conduct a peer dialogue with his collaborators, discuss methodologies, provide feedback and advice, overview the conception and production process while trusting the individual's judgement. Working without someone looking over their shoulder, collaborators were encouraged to take responsibility for their own work and were likely to develop a self-motivating attitude favourable to the studio system.

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170   In his description of the sketch, Huber identifies the architectural plan as belonging to a house by the architect Le Corbusier for which he had already asked permission for reproduction from Max Bill. People at Olivetti considered the two sketches that Huber sent back from Zurich too refined for advertisements and decided to use them instead for a brochure. For a description of the two original sketches, see: letter from Max Huber to Antonio Boggeri, 9 February 1942, ASB. See also, letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 23 February 1942, ASB.

171   Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 7 March 1942, ASB.

172   '[...] forma più caratteristica'. Letter from Max Huber to Antonio Boggeri, 14 March 1942, ASB.

173   *Studio Culture*, ed. by Brook and Shaughnessy, p. 15.

2.20   Max Huber – Studio Boggeri, advertisement for the Olivetti Studio 42, 1942
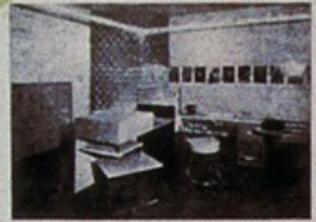
Nel marchio io ho scritto solo la parola Vitam
ma c... potrebbe anche essere. Perchè
il nome vitam da solo non dice niente e il
dicente vuole dire : è un prodotto vitam
(anche questo vitam si può scrivere come si vuole
adesso hanno fatto una brutta carta da lettera
(sono a Bologna) che però un giorno cambieremo.)
– Dunque se lei crede di poter fare il marchio
con tutta la frase "è un prodotto vitam" bene
se no studi la cosa in modo che il segno
del marchio sia a parte così
Il segno va fatto in modo da
poterlo stampare anche su sacchetti di carta.

veda anche per l'applicazione sul
sacchetto di carta   130

← 130 →

è un prodotto
di carta.
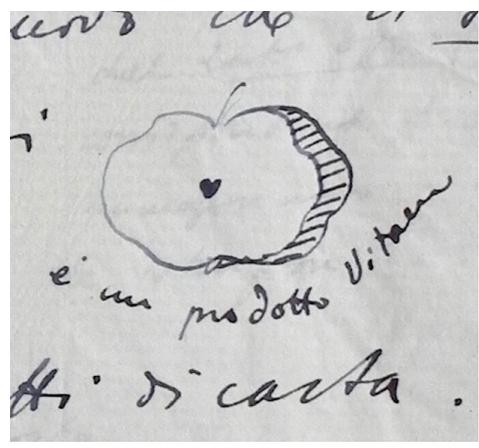
a

2.21   letter from Antono Boggeri to Max Huber, 7 March 1942; .a detail of Boggeri's suggestion
for the logo design of the dried fruits company Vitam

2.22   Max Huber – Studio Boggeri, logo design for Vitam, 1942

Despite the apparently effective management of the collaboration by correspondence with Huber, Boggeri was aware that not all works could be carried out remotely.[174] In the early-1940s, the Studio could count on the collaboration of Italian graphic practitioners such as Remo Muratore and Albe Steiner at least up to the end of 1943, when Steiner began his military engagement with the partisans of the Valdossola battalion. However, Boggeri turned tirelessly to Huber and other acquaintances on the other side of the Alps for advice in finding another Swiss graphic designer to replace Huber. In June 1942, he wrote: 'I want at least one "graphic" that always stays in Milan'.[175] A couple of months later he informed Huber that '[he had written] also to [Emil] Schulthess for advice about the "graphic"'.[176] The inverted commas enclosing the word 'grafico' (graphic practitioner) hint at the specificity of the professional figure and imply a shared understanding of the required professional skills and knowledge. Thus, the inverted commas suggest that by the early-1940s the new professional figure of the graphic designer had reached a point of self-awareness and was gradually moving forward toward social recognition.

One might argue that Boggeri's persistence in looking for a graphic designer outside the national borders downplays the professionalism of Italian graphic designers.[177] Yet, as this section has shown, what made Swiss graphic designers so attractive in Boggeri's eyes was not only their professional skills and knowledge, but also their lively international network of designers, photographers, publishers and clients that was unlikely to be comparable with that of any Italian graphic designer in the period. They were used by Boggeri as a business card to access and claim a position in the international graphic design circle.

2.6 BEYOND THE LABEL

To describe the Studio Boggeri only as the first full-service graphic design studio in Italy is to reduce its role to an unsatisfactory label, which does not fully

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174   Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 24 September 1942, ASB.

175   'Io voglio che almeno un "grafico" resti sempre a Milano'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 10 June 1942, ASB.

176   'Per il "grafico" ho scritto anche a Schulthess per un consiglio'. Letter from Antonio Boggeri to Max Huber, 5 September 1942, ASB.

177   Commenting on the employment of a number of foreign graphic designers at Olivetti, design historian Penny Sparke suggested that the practice implies Adriano Olivetti's awareness of the pre-eminence of foreigners – in particular German and Swiss designers – in the field of visual communication. See: Penny Sparke, *Italian Design: 1870 to Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), p. 51.

acknowledge its role in the gradual shaping of graphic designers' professional identity. Likewise, the list of the many Italian and Central-European collaborators is not self-explanatory evidence of the Studio's contribution to the updating of visual communication in interwar Milan, but rather it runs the risk of reducing it to an empty space in which prominent figures of advertising and graphic design happened to pass by. Focusing on printed artefacts and interrogating primary sources and archival documents, the chapter diverted master narratives and brought contemporaries' voices to the fore in favour of a many-sided narrative that verified the so far unquestioned relevance of the Studio Boggeri and his owner in the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan.

As a case study, the Studio Boggeri contributed to the thesis broader argument on professions as socially negotiated and historically constructed, by revealing power dynamics within and beyond the studio-system. By exploring the debate about the rationalisation of advertising and its connections to the renewal of Italian graphics, the chapter addressed the dialogue between advertising and graphic practitioners. The dialogue will be put into question in the postwar period once the two professional figures become gradually more defined, as will be investigated in Chapter 5. The focus on the practice of signing has problematised the signature as a strong statement about the important role of both individual designers and Boggeri himself as mediator and supervisor of the entire production process.

The analysis of the shaping of the Studio's corporate identity has demonstrated how, despite being conceived by different designers, the self-promotional artefacts shared a common vocabulary and relied on similar features. They conveyed a well-defined image of the Studio – the services it offered, the techniques it used and the aesthetics it advocated – that is revealing of the way in which Boggeri created and managed a narrative and attempted to position its business at the forefront of the Milanese advertising and design scene. The chapter has then addressed the circulation of modernist photography in interwar Italy and acknowledged the pivotal role played by Boggeri in the promotion of the most up-to-date graphics methods and aesthetics and the use of photographic medium in advertising and graphic artefacts. The relationship between the Studio and Swiss graphic designers has been contextualised within Boggeri's programmatic recruiting campaign on the other side of the Alps in search for graphic practitioners that were better trained, more familiar with cutting-edge technique and aesthetics, and

already part of the international design network. The correspondence between Boggeri and Huber has provided as yet unexplored details on commissioning practices during WW2 and working practices at the Studio. Primary sources and visual artefacts have, moreover, provided evidences of the ways in which Boggeri renegotiated the Studio's corporate identity according to the national political context and maintained his international networks throughout the war period.

The next chapter questions graphic designers' mediation strategies. Taking the Milan Triennale as a case study, I explore the strategic use of mediating channels in order to advertise the profession of the graphic designer, acquire a status and create a market for both graphic products and profession.

3. The Milan Triennale and the 'educated client'

In May 1936 the editor of the Turin based magazine *Graphicus*, Ezio D'Errico, complained about the distance separating technological progress from Italian typography. According to D'Errico, the typographer was acting like a 'countryside coachman [wearing] nineteen-century top hat and gown while driving a racing car'.[1] With the opening of the 6th Milan Triennale approaching, D'Errico urged his colleagues to capitalise on the public platform in order to:

> [...] put before the eyes of the public "what one should do" next to "what should not be done"; demonstrate that what has been done yesterday is wrong and why it is wrong; demonstrate that what we are advocating is right and why it is right. [...] The Milan Triennale provides us with a good opportunity to proclaim a crusade that will shape the new mentality of Italian typography. Let us try not to miss this opportunity![2]

Ironically, graphic design was omitted from the 6th Triennale. Nevertheless, D'Errico's appeal was not in vain. Indeed, his was one of many voices that took part in a lively debate about the opportunity to use the Milan Triennale as a showcase to educate the client and foster professionalisation.

In this chapter, I investigate graphic designers' self-promotional strategies and their struggle to acquire a social status, create a market for graphics products and to market their profession. To do so, I employ the Milan Triennale as a case study. By exploring the presence of graphic design at the Milan Triennale, this chapter traces the gradual articulation, negotiation and mediation of graphic design's public image from the early-1930s to the late-1950s. I argue that the Milan Triennale is crucial for an understanding of the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan, first, as a mediating device between graphic designers, their clients and the general public and, second, as a client itself.

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1   '[...] un cocchiere padronale in tuba ottocentesca e palandrana, al volante di un'automobile da corsa.' Ezio D'Errico, 'Lo Spirito Moderno e la Tipografia Italiana', *Graphicus*, 26 (5), May 1936, p. 9.

2   [...] mettere praticamente davanti agli occhi del pubblico "quello che si deve fare" vicino a quello "che non si deve fare". Dimostrare che quello che si è fatto ieri è sbagliato e perché è sbagliato. Dimostrare che quello che vogliamo noi è giusto e perché è giusto. [...] La Triennale di Milano, ci offre una buona occasione per bandire la crociata che formerà la nuova mentalità tipografica italiana; cerchiamo di non perdere questa occasione.' D'Errico, *Graphicus*, 26 (5), May 1936, p. 10.

The chapter build on existing scholarship on the Milan Triennale.[3] The participation of graphic design in the Milan Triennale has received increasing attention over the last decade. Scholars have recognised its 'key function in the birth of design and the development of graphics' in Italy.[4] Nevertheless, the study of the relationship between graphic design and the Triennale is still fragmented, being the subject of few publications that concentrate either on specific aspects – as in Mario Piazza's catalogue on the promotional material and visual identity of the Triennale – or on individual exhibitions – as in Carlo Vinti's article on the 7th Triennale in 1940.[5] In recent years, graphic design historians have moreover begun questioning the way in which graphic designers have over time used exhibitions as a space for visibility and exchange.[6] Drawing on this recent literature on graphic

3   For a comprehensive historical overview on the Milan Triennale, see: Anty Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale* (Milan: Longanesi & Co, 1974); Anty Pansera; The Triennale of Milan: Past, Present, and Future', *Design Issues*, 2 (1) (1985), pp. 23-32; Alessandro Rocca, *Atlante della Triennale: Triennale di Milano* (Milano: Charta, 1999).

4   '[...] funzione cardine per la nascita del design e lo sviluppo della grafica'. Raimonda Riccini, 'Disegno Industriale Italiano. La Costruzione di una Cultura fra Istituzioni e Territorio', in Alberto Bassi and Raimonda Riccini, *Design in Triennale 1947-68: Percorsi fra Milano e Brianza* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004), p. 17.

5   See: *Come Comete: Annunci e Messaggi nella Grafica della Triennale*, ed. by Silvana Annichiarico and Mario Piazza (Milan: Charta, 2004); Carlo Vinti, 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica" alla VII Triennale', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), pp. 50-63. On the participation of graphic design at the Milan Triennale, see also: Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza, and Carlo Vinti, 'TDM5. Un Museo per una Storia Ancora da Scrivere / TDM5. A Museum for a History yet to be Written', in *TDM5: Grafica Italiana*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza, and Carlo Vinti (Milan: Corraini Edizioni, 2012), pp. 18-28; Marinella Pigozzi, 'Grafica Industriale: La Grafica Industriale nel Sistema della Comunicazione', in *Gli Annitrenta. Arte e Cultura in Italia* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1982), pp. 467-76.

6   See, for example: *Graphic Design, Exhibiting, Curating*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo and Maddalena Dalla Mura (Bolzano: Bolzano University Press, 2013); Teal Triggs, 'Curating Graphic Design and its History', in *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, ed. by Davide Fornari and Robert Lzicar (Zurich: Triest Verlag, 2016), pp. 18-44.

designers' curatorial practices, I explore the Milan Triennale in order to question Italian graphics' strategic use of mediating channels.[7]

The chapter also investigates the relationship between exhibition and graphic design. I suggest that exhibition design favoured the development of Italian graphics and the articulation of the new professional figure of the graphic designer. Furthermore, I problematise the use of modernist visual language by the Fascist regime, and discuss graphic practitioners' involvement with, and reaction to, fascist political and thematic temporary exhibitions. The analysis of the Milan Triennale in the postwar period is contextualised within the social, political and moral reconstruction of Italian society. In doing so, the chapter introduces postwar discussions over designers' responsibility towards society and issues related to the problematic position of graphic design in between the advertising and design domains, which will be explored in detail in the following two chapters. Finally, I address the organisers of the Milan Triennale as 'educated clients' who shared a common vocabulary with graphic designers, recognised their specialist knowledge and put the visual identity of the event in their hands.

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7   On exhibitions as key agents of mediation, see: Grace Lees-Maffei, 'The Production-Consumption-Mediation Paradigm', *Journal of Design History*, 22 (4) (2009), pp. 251-76; Kjetil Fallan, *Design History: Understanding Theory and Method* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2010), pp. 34-38 and 103-104. In particular, on the Milan Triennale as key arena for the mediation of international design and on the ways in which countries used the event to shape their international reputations, see: Kjetil Fallan, 'Milanese Mediations: Crafting Scandinavian Design at the Triennali di Milano', *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift*, 83 (2014), pp. 1-23; Kerstin Wickman, 'Design Olympics: The Milan Triennials', in *Scandinavian Design Beyond the Myth: Fifty Years of Design from the Nordic Countries*, ed. by Halén, Widar, and Kerstin Wickman (Stockholm: Arvinius Förlag/Form Förlag, 2003), pp. 33-45. The chapter is informed by museum studies. For a discussion of exhibitions and museums as instruments of articulating identities and vehicles of power and knowledge, see: Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995); *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. by Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington; London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

In this section, I explore the ways in which Milan's graphic practitioners employed a discourse of 'design reform' to foster professionalisation.[8] Since Henry Cole's design reform movement in mid-nineteenth-century Britain, the introduction of moral qualities into design has been employed to improve production standards by simultaneously indoctrinating the consumer and the maker.[9] In the mid-twentieth century, the 'good taste' rhetoric and the association between 'good design' and modernism were institutionalised through the activity of design organisations and museums, which advocated a morally-charged approach to design and promoted modernism as the international canon of taste.[10] Yet, as I argue here, the aims of a discourse of 'design reform' are not limited to the education of the client's taste, or to the improvement of industrial competitiveness. Milan's graphic practitioners employed, in fact, the 'good taste' discourse as a means to demand authority over the client and attain professional legitimation.[11]

8   The discourse of 'design reform' and 'good design' is a central issue in the history of design. History of design scholars have identified in Victorian England – with the Great Exhibition (1851), the Chamber of Horrors at the Museum of Ornamental Art (1852-53), and the opening of the South Kensington Museum (1857) – the turning point in the good taste discourse consisting of the shift from a production- to a consumption-orientated perspective. See, for instance: Suga Yasuko, 'Designing the Morality of Consumption: "Chamber of Horrors" at the Museum of Ornamental Art, 1852-53', *Design Issues*, 20 (4) (2004), pp. 43-56; Lara Kriegel, *Grand Designs: Labour, Empire, and the Museum in Victorian Culture* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2007); Deborah Cohen, *Household Gods: The British and their Possessions*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006).

9   Henry Cole's design reform movement attempted to control consumption through discourses on morality and through didactic displays within large-scale public exhibitions. On the influence of the South Kensington Museum model in Italy during the late-nineteenth century, see: Monica Amari, *I Musei delle Aziende: la Cultura della Tecnica tra Arte e Storia* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1997); Annalisa B. Pesando and Daniela N. Prina, 'To Educate Taste with the Hand and the Mind. Design Reform in Post-Unification Italy (1884-1908)', *Journal of Design History*, 25 (1) (2012), pp. 32-54. For an international perspective, see: Michael Conforti, 'The Idealist Enterprise and the Applied Arts', in *A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum*, ed. by Malcolm Baker and Brenda Richardson (London: V&A Publishing, 1997), pp. 23-47.

10   For an outline of mid-twentieth-century developments of the 'good design' discourse – especially with regards to didactic exhibitions promoting modernism as the international canon of taste (in particular the MoMA in New York), and to the institutionalisation of the notion of good design through the activity of design organisations (such as the Council of Industrial Design, CoID, in Britain) – see: Jonathan Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 154-60.

11   Italian graphic practitioners were not alone in this approach to the good design discourse. Design historian Gennifer Weisenfeld has, for instance, identified similar claims of aesthetic and social legitimacy in interwar Japan. See: Gennifer Weisenfeld, 'Japanese Modernism and Consumerism: Forging the New Artistic Field of "Shogyô Bijutsu" (Commercial Art)', in *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s*, ed. by Elise K. Tipton and John Clark (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), pp. 75-98.

As sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has famously written, 'taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier'.[12] In other words, taste is a class-marker, an identity-building element that legitimises social differences, orders the relationships between social groups and distinguishes social subjects. Drawing on Bourdieu's concept of taste and Foucault's understanding of discourse, design historian Stephen Hayward suggested regarding the good taste discourse in terms of an 'exercise of power'.[13] Referring to this idea of good taste as a way to exercise power, I address graphic practitioners' demand for educated clients as a legitimation device. Hence, I argue that graphic practitioners' request for the exclusive privilege to define – and eventually modify – the criteria that differentiate 'good' from 'bad' design can be interpreted as a means of articulating their affiliation to a specific social group, as well as a way to create, expand and maintain the profession's area of exclusivity. The argument of the 'good taste' discourse as a legitimation device is developed throughout this chapter.

Historians and sociologists of professions have identified an occupation gaining authority over its clients as being one of the steps it takes in achieving professionalisation.[14] Its prerequisites are: public recognition of the occupation, and acknowledgment of its expertise, degree of specialisation and exclusive right to determine and evaluate the way a work should be performed. This authority over the client is something that occupations are expected to demand, attain and then maintain over time in order to create, assert and defend their exclusive jurisdiction over certain tasks, services, products or areas of interest. In order to reach a social status and create a market, the members of a new profession must explain who they are, what they do and what differentiates them from other occupational

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12   Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 6.

13   Stephen Hayward, '"Good Design is Largely a Matter of Common Sense": Questioning the Meaning and Ownership of a Twentieth-Century Orthodoxy', *Journal of Design History*, 11 (3) (1998), p. 222.

14   See: George Ritzer, 'Professionalism and the Individual', in *The Professions and their Prospects*, ed. by Eliot Freidson (Beverly Hills; London: Sage Publications, 1971), pp. 59-73; Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labour* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), in particular chap. 3 'The Claim of Jurisdiction', pp. 59-85; Willem Tousijn, *Le Libere Professioni in Italia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987); *Professions in Theory and History: Rethinking the Study of the Professions*, ed. by Michael Burrage and Rolf Torstendahl (London: Sage Publications, 1990); Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism: The Third Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). For an application of methodologies borrowed from sociologists and historians of professions to architecture history, see: Mary N. Woods, *From Craft to Profession: The Practice of Architecture in 19th Century America* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1999).

groups offering similar services and products. In other words, they have to find a problem, label it and then convince the general public and potential clients that they must exclusively use a member of the profession to find the solution.

In May 1928, graphic theorist Armando Mazzanti called for the 'moral preparation of the Clientele'.[15] From his perspective, the clients' moral preparation had two aims: first, improve the clients' aesthetic sensitivity; second, let them truly understand the requirements of the graphic work. The article included a rhetorical question that suggests the professional advantages of 'morally prepared' clients:

> Would it be possible to promote a clever campaign that would prepare the Clientele to listen to and follow us with greater confidence, and that would let them recognise us as the exclusive designers and executors of a printed work, as well as the most appropriate [professional figure] to deal with its graphic details?[16]

The quote provides evidence of the way in which the education of the client was not only intended to improve production standards. It was not just a matter of executing a well-designed graphic work, by illustrating and explaining, for instance, why the use of a certain font was preferable to another, or why a format was not suitable for a specific purpose. Mazzanti was exhorting graphic practitioners to demand from their clientele a 'greater confidence' in their own competence and expertise. By recognising graphic practitioners as the 'exclusive designers and executors' of printed matter, the client was recognising their authority and was leaving all judgements in their hands.

According to the editors and contributors of *Campo Grafico* – the 'campisti' – the client's bad taste was nothing more than a 'dishonest excuse' that was used to blame the client for graphic practitioners' taste-less graphic production.[17] Responsibility was placed back in the hands of graphic practitioners who had the right and the duty 'to stimulate a good modern taste'.[18] The promotion of a greater understanding of the profession was the condition sine qua non for graphic practitioners' success. The magazines *Campo Grafico*, *Risorgimento Grafico* and *Graphicus* joined forces to claim authority over the client and construct a self-conscious pub-

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15   '[…] preparazione morale della Clientela'. Armando Mazzanti, 'Tipografi e Clientela', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 25 (5), May 1928, pp. 217-20.

16   'È possibile una intelligente propaganda che prepari la Clientela ad ascoltarci e seguirci con maggiore fiducia, facendoci riconoscere come gli unici ideatori ed esecutori dello stampato, i più adatti a fissarne i particolari grafici di esso?'. Mazzanti, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 25 (5), May 1928, p. 218.

17   '[…] disonesta scusa […]'. 'Come si Suscita il Gusto Grafico', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (6), June 1934, pp. 124-25. See also 'Il Gusto del Cliente', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (4), April 1934, pp. 77-78.

18   '[…] stimolare nel cliente quel buon gusto moderno […]'. *Campo Grafico*, 2 (6), June 1934, p. 125.

lic image of the profession. They agreed that Italian graphics was suffering from a general misunderstanding regarding its aesthetic principles, technical aspects and production costs by clients and the general public. This misunderstanding was perceived as the cause of the devaluation of the printed work and the little consideration showed for the profession.

The promotion of a greater understanding and revaluation of the profession and discipline also addressed other professions and, more in general, all members of the community, who were both the users of the graphic product and the potential clients of graphic practitioners.[19] Writing in *Risorgimento Grafico* in 1932, the editor-in-chief, Raffaello Bertieri, concealed an attempt to control inter-professional relationships behind a demand for collaboration between the graphic and advertising industries.[20] Since mutual respect and understanding were the basis of a fruitful collaboration, Bertieri invited graphic practitioners to abandon any preconceptions toward advertising, and asked advertisers to familiarise themselves with graphic techniques and production costs. Moreover, Bertieri stated that advertising artists should recognise that:

> [...] the *graphic expression* is the secret of success for any serious advertising campaign [... Since] the first impression that a recipient receives is a purely visual impression, [...] the entire effect of an advertisement may depend upon the way even only one word is arranged, the typeface used, or the space added between letters. [...Thus] the advertiser that intends to catch the attention of the reader must be aware that the effect is lost when the sentence is presented in the wrong way.[21]

Asserting the agency of the medium over the message, Bertieri demanded exclusive control for the graphic practitioners over the visual aspect of advertisements.

But how did graphic practitioners intend to educate the public taste, attain authority over the client, have their expertise recognised and establish a market both for themselves and their products? In June 1934, the campisti recommended that their readers follow the example of architects and product designers. How was it possible, they wondered, that the same client who was still asking for floral

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19   See: Enrico Bona, 'Pubblico e Grafici', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (7-9), July-September 1938, p. 195.

20   See: Raffaello Bertieri, 'Grafici e Pubblicitari', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 24 (5), May 1932, pp. 261-65; Raffaello Bertieri, 'La Pubblicità e le Arti Grafiche', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (9), September 1933, pp. 501-15.

21   '[...] *l'espressione grafica* è il segreto del successo di ogni seria iniziativa pubblicitaria [...] la prima impressione che il destinatario riceve è una impressione puramente visiva [...] dal modo come è posta anche una sola parola, dal carattere che si è usato, dallo spazio che si è aggiunto tra una lettera e un'altra può dipender tutto l'effetto di una pubblicazione pubblicitaria. [...] il pubblicitario che ritiene di attrarre di colpo l'attenzione del lettore deve sapere che se la frase non è ben presentata l'effetto è perduto [...]'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (9), September 1933, pp. 503-06, italics in the original text.

decorations and ornamental fonts was sitting behind a 'perfectly rational desk'?[22] To explain this contradiction, they suggested that architects and product designers had stopped considering the client's opinion and were designing furniture according to their own taste. Shown the evidence of the benefits of the new design, the clients had accepted the architects' and product designers' judgement. Readers of *Campo Grafico* were invited to use their own promotional material as examples of good taste. Font specimens, for instance, could be sent to clients together with a selection of graphic compositions illustrating the correct use of each font.[23] The 'clear superiority in practice' was expected to convince even the most reluctant client.[24]

Enrico Bona articulated a more structured mediation strategy in 1938, when he argued in *Campo Grafico* that 'all the experimental means of the modern technique of propaganda' should be used to obtain a social status for the profession and establish a market: radio programmes, articles and advertisements in newspapers and magazines, temporary displays in shop windows, and conferences.[25] Exhibitions were the first form of the 'modern technique of propaganda' mentioned by Bona. Printed artefacts illustrating 'the concept of good and bad [taste] in graphic arts' should be on display in order to provide visitors with the opportunity to grasp the criteria of good taste.[26] Visitors were also expected to gain an understanding of printing techniques and production costs in order to correct misconceptions and misunderstandings. Two of the exhibitions that, according to Bona, should be taken as examples by graphic practitioners were the German Pavilion at the 5th Milan Triennale in 1933, and the 1932-34 Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista (Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution – MRF) in Rome, which are analysed in the next two sections, respectively.

3.2 A HUMILIATING COMPARISON: THE PADIGLIONE DELLA STAMPA AND THE GERMAN PAVILION AT THE 5TH MILAN TRIENNALE, 1933

At the 5th Milan Triennale of 1933, graphic practitioners' first endeavour to promote a different public image and a better understanding of graphic design received

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22   '[...] perfette scrivanie razionali'. *Campo Grafico*, 2, (4), April 1934, p. 77.
23   *Campo Grafico*, 2 (6), June 1934, pp. 124-25.
24   '[...] evidente superiorità pratica'. *Campo Grafico*, 2 (4), April 1934, p. 78.
25   '[...] tutti i mezzi sperimentali della tecnica propagandistica moderna'. Enrico Bona, 'Pubblico e Grafici', *Campo Grafico*, 6 (10-12), October-December 1938, pp. 245-48.
26   '[...] il concetto del bello e del brutto in arte grafica'. Bona, *Campo Grafico*, 6 (10-12), October-December 1938, pp. 245-46.

criticism from within the profession. By exploring this internal debate, this section maps out the gradual negotiation of the graphics professional identity between different interest groups. Discussions about the presence of graphic design at the Triennale over the following years will employ similar arguments, suggesting that to reach an agreement on how to represent the profession was far from a straightforward task and that the profession's public image was always under ongoing renegotiation.

The 5th Triennale was the first to take place in Milan at the newly built Palazzo dell'Arte. Previous events – three Biennials (1923, 1925 and 1927) and one Triennial (1930) – had taken place in Monza at the Villa Reale.[27] Before 1933, the presence of graphic arts was restricted to book design. The Mostra del Libro (Book Exhibition) at the 1st Monza Biennale in 1923 'assert[ed ...] for the first time [...] the existence of a book design art, or the idea of the book as a typographic artwork'.[28] The futurist artist Fortunato Depero was commissioned by the Treves publishing house to design the Padiglione del Libro (Book Pavilion) for the 2nd Monza Biennale in 1925.[29] At the 4th Monza Triennale in 1930, the painter Mario Sironi and the architect Giovanni Muzio curated the Galleria delle Arti Grafiche (Gallery of the Graphic Arts), which, according to a reviewer of the period, featured nothing but books and endless repetitions and reinterpretations of the 'Bodoni' font.[30]

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27   See: *1923-1930 Monza Verso l'Unità delle Arti*, ed. by Anty Pansera (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004).

28   '[...] afferma [...] per la prima volta [...] l'esistenza di un'arte di fare il libro, o la considerazione del libro come opera d'arte tipografica'. 'Continuazione', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 20 (7), July 1923, p. 338. On the Mostra del Libro at the 1st Monza Biennale see also the official catalogue: *Prima Esposizione Internazionale delle Arti Decorative: Catalogo* (Milan: Casa Editrice Bestetti & Tumminelli, 1923), pp. 61-63; Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale*, pp. 139-41.

29   Depero's Padiglione de Libro was a typographic architecture in which monumental typographic characters were turned into architectural elements. See: *Seconda Mostra Internazionale delle Arti Decorative: Catalogo* (Milan: Case Editrici Alpes e F. de Rio, 1925).

30   On the Galleria delle Arti Grafiche, see: *IV Esposizione Triennale Internazionale delle Arti Decorative ed Industriali Moderne: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: Casa Editrice Ceshina, 1930), pp. 171-75; Emily Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism: Art and Politics under Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 105; Marinella Pigozzi, 'Grafica Industriale', in *Gli Annitrenta*, p. 472. For a critical perspective on the gallery by a reviewer of the period, see: Carlo A. Felice, *Arte Decorativa 1930 all'Esposizione di Monza* (Milan: Casa Editrice Ceschina, 1930), p. 20 and pp. 61-62.

The rationalist architect Luciano Baldessari was appointed to design the Padiglione della Stampa (Press Pavilion) (see Illustration **3.1.a**).[31] This featured two distinct bodies: a monumental entrance and main hall covered with red brick cladding; and a L-shaped gallery space enclosed in a curtain wall that, according to the official catalogue, 'met clear and obvious utilitarian and functional targets' (see Illustration **3.1.b**).[32] The pavilion included four different exhibitions. The Mostra Storica del Giornalismo (Historical Exhibition of Journalism) and the Mostra della Stampa Contemporanea (Exhibition of Contemporary Press) were displayed in the main hall and in the first section of the L-shaped gallery.[33] The Mostra delle Arti Grafiche (Exhibition of Graphic Arts) and the Mostra Internazionale della Fotografia (International Photographic Exhibition) were installed in the second section of the gallery.

Before entering the Mostra delle Arti Grafiche, visitors encountered a linotype machine in front of a large-scale photomontage (see Illustration **3.2**). The installation is neither included in the exhibition catalogue, nor has it been mentioned in the literature on the 5th Triennale so far. By contrast, I would argue that it reflects graphic practitioners' attempt to promote a different public image for

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31   On Luciano Baldessari, see: *Luciano Baldessari*, ed. by Zita Mosca Baldessari (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1985); Vittorio Fagone, *Baldessari: Progetti e Scenografie* (Milan: Electa, 1982); Giulia Veronesi, *Luciano Baldessari, Architetto* (Trento: Collana degli Artisti Trentini, 1957); Cesare De Seta, *La Cultura Architettonica in Italia tra le due Guerre* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1972), pp. 218-47; Doordan, Dennis P., *Building Modern Italy: Italian Architecture 1914-1936* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), pp. 70-71. On the Padiglione della Stampa, see also Luciano Baldessari's digital archive: 'Padiglione della Stampa, V Triennale di Milano, 1933', http://baldessari.densitydesign.org/opere/project/PT5 [accessed 10 May 2015].

32   '[...] risponde ad obbiettivi nettamente ed esclusivamente utilitari e funzionali [...]'. *V Triennale di Milano: Padiglione della Stampa* (Milan: 1933), p. 6. The same text is also printed on the official catalogue of the Triennale, see *V Triennale di Milano: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: 1933), pp. 475-527.

33   Both exhibitions carried a political and propagandistic message. Fascist symbols, propaganda pictures and Benito Mussolini's own quotes covered the walls and featured in the vitrines together with newspapers, magazines, Fascist publications, photographs and historical documents. Many details of the Padiglione della Stampa recalled Mario Sironi's previous exhibition design for the Italian Pavilion at the Pressa Exhibition in Cologne in 1928 and for the Italian Press and Book Exhibition at the Esposición International de Barcelona in 1929. On the Mostra Storica del Giornalismo and the Mostra della Stampa Contemporanea, see: *V Triennale di Milano: Padiglione della Stampa* (Milan: 1933); *V Triennale di Milano: Padiglione della Stampa, Mostra Storica del Giornalismo* (Milan: 1933). For a critical perspective, see: Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism*, pp. 143-45. On Sironi's curatorial works in interwar Italy, see also: Jeffrey T. Schnapp, 'Flash Memories (Sironi on Exhibit), in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts: History and Modernity in the Visual Culture of Fascism*, ed. by Claudia Lazzaro and Roger J. Crum (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 223-40; Vanessa Rocco, 'Exhibiting Exhibitions: Designing and Displaying Fascism', in *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 180-83.

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b

3.1   Luciano Baldessari, Padiglione della Stampa, 5th Milan Triennale, 1933: **.a** façade of the
         pavilion with an exterior view of the Mostra delle Arti Grafiche (right); **.b** exterior view of
         the Mostra delle Arti Grafiche (wall panels) and the Mostra Internazionale della Fotografia
         (wall in the background)
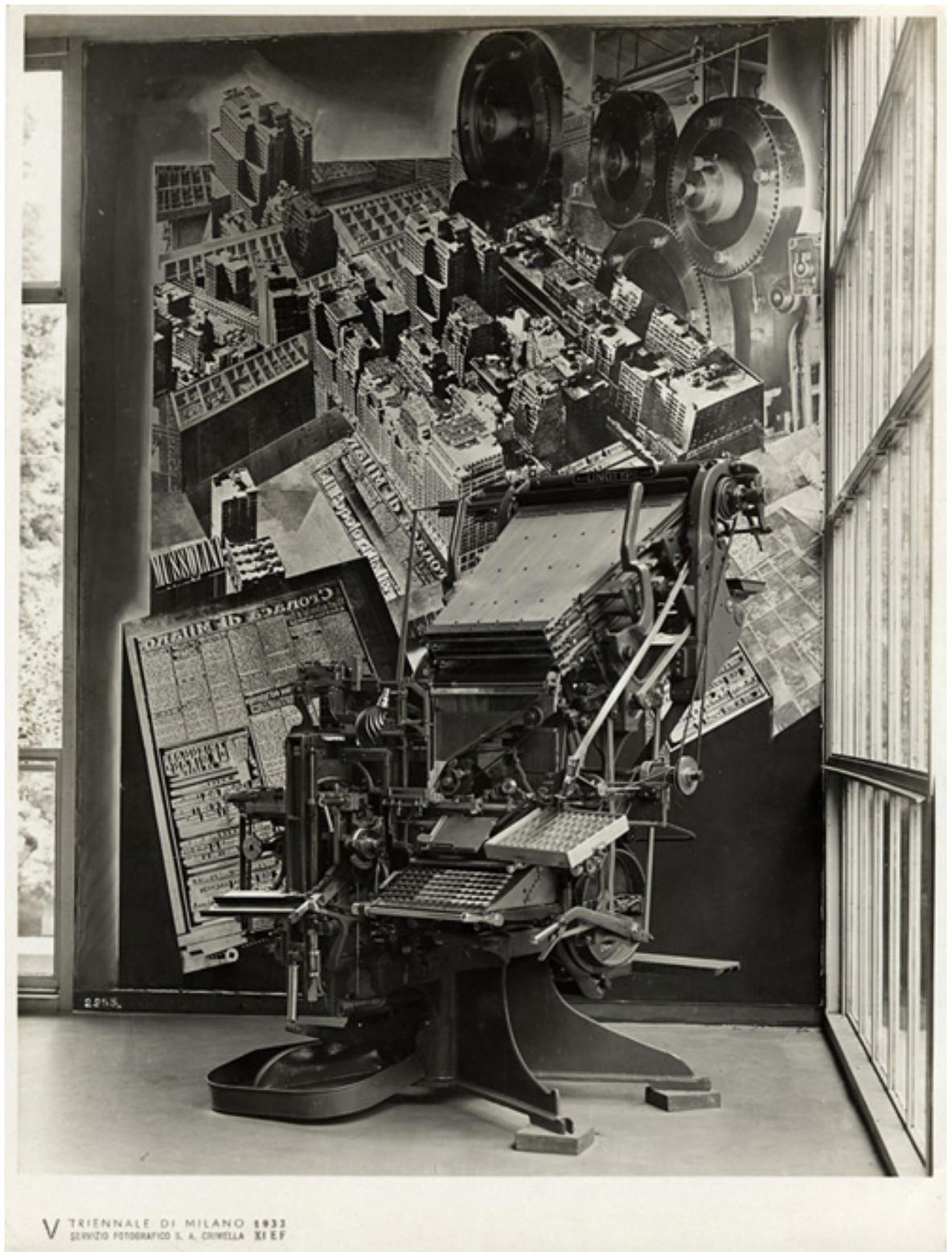
3.2   installation, Mostra delle Arti Grafiche, 5th Milan Triennale, linotype machine and large-
scale photomontage, 1933

their profession. This reading comes to the fore when the installation is compared with the five high reliefs designed by Sironi for the entrance of the pavilion (see Illustration **3.3**). Sironi's high reliefs exemplify the modern classicism of the Novecento art movement and its attempt to create a modern aesthetic rooted in the Italian cultural past and artistic tradition.[34] They are supposed to represent the technical processes behind the printing of a newspaper, but their iconography is rather ambiguous.[35] Tools and engines are difficult to identify and they are combined with elements of archaic monumentality, such as the heroic posture and theatrical gestures of the nudes.

Sironi's rhetorical vocabulary presents the graphic arts as a craft and practitioners as skilled executors. Conversely, the installation conveys an opposite image that is indicative of the gradual articulation of the graphic design profession. The photomontage, in which metal types, letter compartments of the type cases and composing sticks turn into the representation of a metropolis with skyscrapers and industries, is reminiscent of modernist machine aesthetics and of Paul Citroen's dada collages. Both the visual language and technique of the photomontage emphasise impersonality, mechanical reproduction and efficiency over creative genius and handicraft. In doing so, the installation connotes graphic practitioners as urban and industrial, at pace with the technological progress, embedded in the contemporary society and not isolated in a heroic no time and space as in Sironi's high reliefs. On the one hand, the comparison evidences the lack of a coherent official visual language, and illustrates the eclectic and ambiguous patronage policy of the Fascist regime.[36] On the other hand, it suggests a shift from an artisanal to an industrial notion of graphic design.

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34   On the Novecento art movement, see Rossana Bossaglia, *Il Novecento Italiano: Storia, Documenti, Iconografia* (Milan: Feltrinelli Editore, 1979).

35   The high reliefs were made by the sculptor Leone Lodi in coloured concrete. All panels except one were destroyed during the bombing of Milan in 1943. The surviving high relief was exhibited at the 10th Milan Triennale in 1954 and at the 31st Venice Biennale in 1962. On Mario Sironi's work for the 5th Triennale, see also: Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism*, pp. 172-73.

36   On the Fascist 'flexible patronage' see: Marla Stone, 'The State as Patron: Making Official Culture in Fascist Italy', in *Fascist Visions: Art and Ideology in France and Italy*, ed. by Matthew Affrom and Mark Antliff (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 205-238; Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist-Modernities: Italy, 1922-1945* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2001); Laura Malvano, *Fascismo e Politica dell'Immagine* (Turin: Bollati e Boringhieri, 1988).

256 - PADIGLIONE DELLA STAMPA - Bassorilievi (pitt. M. Sironi, Scult. L. Lodi).

3.3   Mario Sironi (design) and Leoni Lodi (execution), three high reliefs for the portal of the Padiglione della Stampa at the 5th Milan Triennale, coloured concrete, 1933

For the first time everyday printed ephemera made their entrance into the Triennale.[37] 'Graphics and Enthusiasts of the decorative and illustrative graphic arts' were invited to submit graphic works that had been made in the previous three years.[38] The submitted works were then selected by a committee according to the four points on the agenda of the 5th Triennale: modernity, originality, technical perfection and production efficiency.[39] In contrast with previous events, eligible works were not limited to books. Pages from trade magazines, specialist periodicals, books, commercial visual artefacts and advertisements were pinned onto the wall panels and arranged in the vitrines (see Illustration **3.4.a**).[40] Writing in *Risorgimento Grafico*, graphic critic Mario Ferrigni drew the readers' attention to the display of Chiattone's typographic workshop (see Illustration **3.4.b**).[41] The display featured a selection of invoice forms, letterheads, business cards, return receipts and wrapping paper. Ferrigni pointed out the effective way in which Chiattone had turned its own business stationery and printed ephemera into a self-promotional material as a hint at improving their clients' tastes, and he prompted readers to follow the example.

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37   Potential exhibitors were allowed to send all kinds of printed work or samples of work, and all techniques were accepted. Illustrations, decorative prints and bookbinding were also eligible. The admission fee was 100 Lire. This amount was deducted from the exhibition fees, which amounted to 200 Lire for each work of large dimensions, or for five small works, and included installation, lighting, surveillance, sales services, maintenance and advertising costs. *V Triennale di Milano: Le Arti Grafiche* (Milan: 1933); and 'Regolamento Particolare della Mostra d'Arti Grafiche', in *V Triennale di Milano: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: 1933), p. 37.

38   '[...] i Grafici e i Cultori dell'arte illustrativa e decorativa grafica [...]'. *V Triennale di Milano: Le Arti Grafiche* (Milan: 1933), unpaged. The agenda and application guidelines for the exhibition of the graphic arts are also printed on the official catalogue: see *V Triennale di Milano: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: 1933), pp. 36-37.

39   The committee included Giulio Barella, Mario Sironi, Raffaello Bertieri, Angelo Cesare Rossi and Marcello Nizzoli. *V Triennale di Milano: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: 1933), p.16.

40   The exhibition display was arranged by designer with no explanatory texts nor captions except for the name of the exhibitors themselves. Amongst others, visitors could see works printed by the Alfieri&Lacroix and Vanzetti&Vanolenti typographic workshops, and the Nebiolo type foundry. The selection of magazines included: *Risorgimento Grafico*, *Campo Grafico*, *Graphicus*, *Casabella*, *Domus* and women's periodicals, such as *Rakam* and *Per Voi Signora*. *Campo Grafico* was awarded a special mention. The graphic arts exhibition changed over time. However, photographic documents illustrate only one display. Few details, regarding the rearrangements that followed, can be found in reviews of the period, which complained about the decreasing quality of the exhibits. See: 'Le Arti Grafiche alla Triennale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (9), September 1933, p. 518. For the complete list of exhibitors, see: *V Triennale di Milano: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: 1933), pp. 525-27; *V Triennale di Milano: Padiglione della Stampa* (Milan: 1933), pp. 61-63. On the special mention awarded to *Campo Grafico*, see: 'La Cronaca Campista', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (3), March 1934, p. 59.

41   Mario Ferrigni, 'Gli Artisti Grafici alla V Triennale di Milano', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (1), January 1934, pp. 29-31.

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b

3.4   Mostra delle Arti Grafiche, 5th Milan Triennale, 1933: **.a** exhibition display; **.b** detail featuring pages from *Campo Grafico* (left) and a selection of works by Chiattone (right)

Discussions around the graphic arts exhibition at the 5th Milan Triennale ran in specialist magazines and trade journals for about two years. The majority of the reviewers agreed on the importance of the event. According to Ferrigni, 'the acknowledgment that graphic arts [had] its own distinctiveness within the bigger picture of the decorative arts and artistic industries deserved to be evaluated by graphic artists with a sense of self-conscious pride and [...] honour'.[42] The pavilion was thus perceived as an achievement, marking a first step towards legitimation and recognition of both profession and discipline.

The main criticism was that the inclusion of press media and graphic arts within the same pavilion was misleading.[43] Indeed, the joint exhibition was considered a dangerous mistake that reinforced misunderstandings.[44] To present printing as synonymous with press, as well as to imply a relationship between journalism and graphics, corroborated the confusion of the general public and damaged the ongoing articulation and mediation of the profession. The second criticism regarded the gallery space that was unanimously criticised for having the wrong lighting.[45] Some reviewers thought that the positioning of Baldessari's Padiglione della Stampa was too marginal. Located in the park and set apart from the main building the pavilion was ironically dubbed the 'farming tool shed' by typographer and graphic theorist Guido Modiano.[46] Mockery apart, reviewers commented on the absurdity of building a pavilion on purpose for the exhibition without consulting any graphic practitioner. The remark supports graphic practitioners' demand for the exclusive right to determine and evaluate how their work should be exhibited and presented to the public. Writing on the politics of museum displays,

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42   '[...] il riconoscimento di una individualità propria alle arti grafiche nel gran quadro delle arti decorative e delle industrie artistiche, meritasse di essere considerate dagli artisti grafici con lo spirito di consapevole orgoglio e [...] onore'. Ferrigni, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (1), January 1934, p. 41.

43   See: Guido Modiano, 'Padiglione della Stampa', *Campo Grafico*, 1 (7), July 1933, p. 121; *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (9), September 1933, pp. 518-19.

44   The misunderstanding was due the ambiguity of the Italian term 'stampa'. Indeed, this can be translated both as 'print' or 'printing' – depending on whether one is referring to an image that has been reproduced in multiple copies or to the technique and process of reproducing that image – and, especially when preceded by the article '*la* stampa', as 'press' (as in newspapers). In an article published in January 1937, Guido Modiano pointed out again the ambiguous and misleading use of the word 'stampa', which was evidenced by the inclusion of printed textiles in Baldessari's Padiglione della Stampa at the 6th Triennale. See: Guido Modiano, 'Triennale 1936', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (1), January 1937, p. 21.

45   *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (9), September 1933, p. 521.

46   '[...] rimessa per gli attrezzi agricoli [...]'. Guido Modiano, 'Parole, Parole, Parole', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (4), April 1934, pp. 165.

anthropologist Ivan Karp argued that what is at stake in cultural-history museums presenting a cultural 'other' is the 'articulation of identity'.[47] Similar concerns apply to the graphic practitioners and to their attempt to attain the right to decide what was to be represented and who was to control the means of representation. The third criticism regarded the lack of an effective curatorial agenda. Reviewers complained that the display conveyed a fragmented and heterogeneous message that failed to represent the situation of Italian graphics and resembled a trade fair.

In March 1933 a lively controversy began between Modiano, who became the most hard-edged critic of the Mostra delle Arti Grafiche, and Bertieri. Indeed, Modiano had decided to boycott the exhibition, thereby incurring Bertieri's disapproval. According to Bertieri, 'there [were] too few [graphic practitioners] in Italy [that were] struggling for the recognition of [their] art to take the liberty of such no-show protests'.[48] Instead of boycotting, graphic practitioners should unite in a collective effort to demand social and economic status. The crossfire went on for almost a year.[49] Modiano pointed out that an open call did not guarantee the display of a representative selection of works. By contrast, he suggested that directly commissioning a group of graphic artists and typographers would have represented Italian graphics more successfully.[50] Finally, Modiano regretted the lost opportunity to promote the modernisation of Italian graphics by showing, both to practitioners and clients, examples of 'good design' in accordance with the principles of New Typography.[51]

Criticism was heightened by the inevitable comparison with the German Pavilion organised by the German Werkbund and curated by the type designer Paul Renner (see Illustration 3.5).[52] In contrast to the Padiglione della Stampa, the German Pavilion was a comprehensive exhibition conveying a coherent

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47   Ivan Karp, 'Culture and Representation', in *Exhibiting Cultures*, ed. by Karp and Lavine, p. 15.

48   'Siamo troppo pochi in Italia a faticare per il riconoscimento del valore dell'arte nostra per permetterci il lusso di certe proteste assenteiste'. Raffaello Bertieri, 'Ad un Collega che si Astiene', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (3), March 1933, p. 141.

49   Modiano, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (7), July 1933, pp. 121-22; Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (4), April 1934, pp. 159-67: 'Documenti: Fatti e Parole Intorno alla Mostra Grafica della V Triennale', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (8), August 1934, pp. 183-90; 'Ancora sulla Triennale: Onestà e Responsabilità', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (9), September 1934, pp. 197-99.

50   The suggested names were: Raffaello Bertieri, Carlo Frassinelli, Marcello Nizzoli, Bruno Munari, Erberto Carboni, and Modiano himself. Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (4), April 1934, pp. 161-63.

51   Modiano, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (7), July 1933, p. 122.

52   See: Christopher Burke, *Paul Renner: The Art of Typography* (London: Hyphen Press, 1998), p. 130.

and didactic message. According to reviewers, to compare the two exhibitions was humiliating.[53] The Pavilion included graphic artefacts by exponents of the New Typography, some of which were linked to the recently-closed Bauhaus: Herbert Bayer, Max Burchartz, Willy Baumeister, Heinrich Jost, Imre Reiner, Xanti Schawinsky, Kurt Schwitters and Paul Renner.[54] Exhibits were framed in simple and light, glass and steel structures, and arranged by type: advertisements, pamphlets, magazines, posters, and packaging. A slideshow illustrated the historical development of style in type design, comparing the letterforms with architecture and figurative arts of the same period. The curatorial choice was admired by Italian reviewers, who appreciated the dialogue between disciplines that presented typography as a product of its time subjected to technological progress and aesthetic changes.

The German Pavilion became the reference point for future exhibitions and its impact contributed to transforming the year 1933 into the so-considered 'birth' of Italian graphic design.[55] As recalled by Modiano in 1936, Italian graphic practitioners were 'indebted to Paul Renner' since his exhibition was one of the first occasions at which to see exemplars of what was at that time considered the modern good taste that he and the campisti were wishing to bring to Italy.[56] Moreover, it was at the 5th Triennale that Boggeri met the Hungarian-Swiss graphic designer Reiner who, as I discussed in Chapter 2, was the first of a number of Central-European graphic designers hired by Boggeri in order to position his studio at the forefront of the Milanese design scene.

3.3 RAFFAELLO BERTIERI AND THE 'EXHIBITION LAYOUT': THE MOSTRA DELLA RIVOLUZIONE FASCISTA, 1932-34

Together with the German Pavilion at the 5th Triennale of 1933, graphic practitioners and critics showed interest in the MRF and in what they perceived as a noteworthy use of graphics in the exhibition design. The MRF opened in Rome at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni (Exhibitions Palace) in October 1932 and celebrated the

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53   Modiano, *Campo Grafico*, 1 (7), July 1933, p. 122; *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (9), September 1933, p. 521; 'Arti Grafiche alla Triennale', *Campo Grafico*, 1 (10), October 1933, pp. 171-72; Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 31 (4), April 1934, p. 165; 'Ancora sulla Triennale: Onestà e Responsabilità', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (9), September 1934, p. 197.

54   See: *V Triennale di Milano: Catalogo Ufficiale* (Milan: 1933), pp. 415-17.

55   See, for instance: Carlo Dradi, *1933: Nasce a Milano la Grafica Moderna* (Milan: Ufficio Stampa del commune di Milano, 1973); *1933: Un Anno del Novecento a Milano*, ed. by Silvia Bignami (Geneva; Milan: Skira, 2001); *Grafica e Design a Milano, 1933-2000*, ed. by Aldo Colonetti (Milan: Editrice Abitare Segesta, 2001); *Campo Grafico, 1933-1939: Rivista di Estetica e di Tecnica Grafica* (Milan: Electa, 1983).

56   Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (1), January 1937, p. 22.

10th anniversary of the March on Rome.[57] It was a mass event, closing after two years with over 3,700,000 visitors coming from every part of Italy and abroad.[58] The MRF is a favoured subject of scholarship on fascist culture, patronage of the arts and strategies of propaganda.[59] So far, scholars have focused extensively on the architectural aspects of the exhibition, specifically the use of modernist techniques and vocabulary in the design.[60] Both perspectives are valid and are taken into consideration in this section. Yet attention is also drawn to the mutual relationship between graphics and the MRF. This aspect has, so far, been overlooked by scholars and, as I argue here, deserves further exploration. To this end, this section analyses graphic practitioners and critics' reception of the MRF, focusing in particular on Bertieri's review of the exhibition. Moreover, it addresses Bertieri's attempt to capitalise on the public visibility of the event in order to advance professionalisation and formulate a more comprehensive approach to graphics that included exhibition design as one of its expressions.

In a 1933 article entitled 'Alcuni Aspetti Grafici della Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista' (Some Graphic Aspects of the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution),

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57   The exhibition was originally planned for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Fasci Italiani di Combattimento (Italian Fasci of Combat). Curated by Dino Alfieri, the exhibition should have opened in 1929 at the Castello Sforzesco in Milan. The relocation of the exhibition to Rome, as well as the decision to celebrate the March on Rome rather than the Fasci of Combat, has been read as a political move aimed at asserting the transition of Fascism from a revolutionary movement, to a centralised regime. After its closure in October 1934, part of the exhibition was reassembled and displayed again in 1937, this time at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna (National Gallery of Modern Art), in conjunction with the Mostra Augustea della Romanità that celebrated the bimillennium of the birth of the Emperor Augustus. A third and final version of the exhibition opened in 1942 with an expanded documentation covering the full twenty years of the Fascist regime. It was supposed to become a permanent Centre of Fascist Studies – including a library and an archive of the Fascist party – based in the newly-built district E'42, also known as EUR. See: Jeffrey T. Schnapp, *Anno XX: la Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista del 1932* (Pisa; Rome: Istituto Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 2003), pp. 21-27. For a detailed overview on the exhibition, see: Gigliola Fioravanti, *Partito Nazionale Fascista: Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista. Inventario* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1990), pp. 15-56.

58   On the national and international campaign that used techniques of mass culture and the commercial tourism industry to promote the MRF, see: Francesco Gargano, *Italiani e Stranieri alla Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* (Rome: 1935); Schnapp, *Anno XX*, pp. 37-42; Marla Stone, 'Staging Fascism: The Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28 (2) (1993), pp. 232-36.

59   Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism*, p. 146.

60   See, for instance: Diane Ghirardo, 'Architects, Exhibitions, and the Politics of Culture in Fascist Italy', *Journal of Architecture Education*, 45 (2) (1992), pp. 67-75; Libero Andreotti, 'Architecture as Media Event: Mario Sironi and the Exhibition of the Fascist revolution, 1932', *Built Environment*, 31 (1) (2005), pp. 9-20; Stefano Cagol, 'Toward a Genealogy of the Thematic Contemporary Art Exhibition: Italian Exhibition Culture from the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista (1932) to the Palazzo Grassi's Ciclo della Vitalità (1959-1961)' (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal College of Art, 2013), pp. 28-82.

Bertieri urged his colleagues 'to visit [the exhibition] as Italians first and then to analyse it as graphic practitioners'.[61] The distinction is one of the few concessions to the Fascist regime that appear in Bertieri's review of the MRF. By urging his colleagues to visit the exhibition 'as Italians first', Bertieri was supporting the regime's propaganda, according to which all Italians were expected to make a patriotic pilgrimage to Rome. However, Bertieri also invited his colleagues to analyse the exhibition as graphic practitioners. In doing so, he implicitly recommended that they take a critical stance during their visit and focus on the way in which graphic media had been used. Implicit in Bertieri's comment is the awareness that the profession's 'cultural capital' provided graphic practitioners with an interpretative framework that exceeded the limits of general observers' apprehension and enabled them to discover, appreciate and decipher the artifices of the exhibition display.[62] Graphic practitioners' critical approach was in contrast with the curator's attempt to create an immersive experience that would appeal to emotions, affect the viewers on a subconscious level and let them passively accept the propaganda message.[63] It would be speculative to imply a political intent behind Bertieri's distinction between visiting practices. Nevertheless, his appeal to critical analysis suggests a certain degree of awareness of the manipulative use of media by the regime, if not a critique of it.

Bertieri described the MRF as a '"graphic" representation' of eighteen years of Italian history and the 'greatest, most original and most important "layout" that [he had] ever had the chance to see'.[64] The MRF was considered by far more influential than any other graphics exhibition of the period. According to Bertieri, both the taste and the understanding of the general public had been deeply affected by it. Therefore, he exhorted graphic practitioners to study the event and take into account the consequences of the changed attitude towards graphics. In other words, if the MRF could be said to have affected public expectations, the public

61   '[...] a visitarla come italiani prima e ad analizzarla come grafici poi'. Raffaello Bertieri, 'Alcuni Aspetti Grafici della Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (6), June 1933, p. 338.

62   Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel, 'Cultural Works and Cultivated Disposition', in Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel, *The Love of Art: European Art Museums and their Public* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 37-70.

63   For an historical discussion of different viewing and visiting practices of the spectatorship, see for example: Helen Rees Leahy, *Museum Bodies: The Politics and Practices of Visiting and Viewing* (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington: Ashgate, 2012)

64   '[...] la rappresentazione "grafica" [...] la più grandiose e la più originale e la più importante "impaginazione" che ci sia capitato di vedere'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (6), June 1933, p. 321.

image of graphics should be renegotiated. Whilst there is no documented evidence of the impact of the MRF on public attitudes, it is clear that Bertieri exhorted his readers to capitalise on the public visibility of the event.

Bertieri drew readers' attention to the decorative use of the letterforms, and to the application of graphic elements to the exhibition design. The physicality of the letterforms was exalted in two ways.[65] First, the oversized single characters transformed the letterforms into three-dimensional volumes of simple and geometrical forms. This was the case, for instance, with the façade of the Palazzo della Esposizioni that had been redesigned for the occasion by the rationalist architects Mario De Renzi and Adalberto Libera (see Illustration **3.6**).[66] Thirty black metallic characters, each of them 1.60-metre-high, stood above a 38-metre-long dark red metal archway. Four 25-metre-high, oxidised and polished copper fasces stood against a dark red background, while two 6-metre-high *X*s – the roman number 10 – framed the façade, stressing its symmetry and geometric monumentality. Second, the letterform was exalted by systematically repeating the same word. The most telling example was the Sacrario dei Martiri (Chapel of the Martyrs).[67] The word 'Presente!' (Here!) was endlessly repeated along the circular walls of the chapel, referring to the living memory of the fallen for the fascist cause and conveying the impression of a shouting crowd who was willing to sacrifice itself to answer the call 'Per la Patria Immortale' (For the Immortal Fatherland) inscribed on the central cross (see Illustration **3.7**). Bertieri also remarked the structural function

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65   On the official letterforms used during Fascism, see: Armando Petrucci, *La Scrittura: Idelogia e Rappresentazione* (Turin: Einaudi, 1986). For an overview of the Nazi's policy towards letterforms, see: Christopher Burke, 'Typography in a dictatorship, 1933-45', in Burke, *Paul Renner*, pp. 145-69.

66   The façade covered the original neoclassical façade of the Palazzo delle Esposizioni by Pio Piacentini (1882-83). It became an iconic image, reproduced on postcards, posters, stickers and other promotional material related to the MRF. See: Schnapp, *Anno XX*; Alessandra Capanna, *Roma 1932: Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* (Rome: Universale di Architettura, 2004), pp. 17-23; Stone, 'Staging Fascism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28 (2) (1993), pp. 218-21; Marla Stone, *The Patron State: Culture & Politics in Fascist Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 143-45; Claudia Lazzaro, 'Forging a Visible Fascist Nation: Strategies for Fusing Past and Present', in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts*, ed. by Lazzaro and Crum, p. 18.

67   The Sacrario dei Martiri, designed by Adalberto Libera and Antonio Valente, was a purely celebrative and propagandistic space that mourned and paid tribute to those who had fallen for the Fascist cause. The cathartic atmosphere and immersive experience of the Chapel were emotionally charged by the theatrical staging of the cross that was lit from above and stood on a blood-red pedestal, and by the fascist hymn – and unofficial national anthem – 'Giovinezza' (Youth) that was quietly broadcasted on loop in the room. See: Stone, 'Staging Fascism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28 (2) (1993), pp. 225-27; Stone, *The Patron State*, pp. 154-56.

3.6   postcard representing Mario De Renzi and Adalberto Libera's façade of the Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista, Rome, 1932, 14 × 9 cm
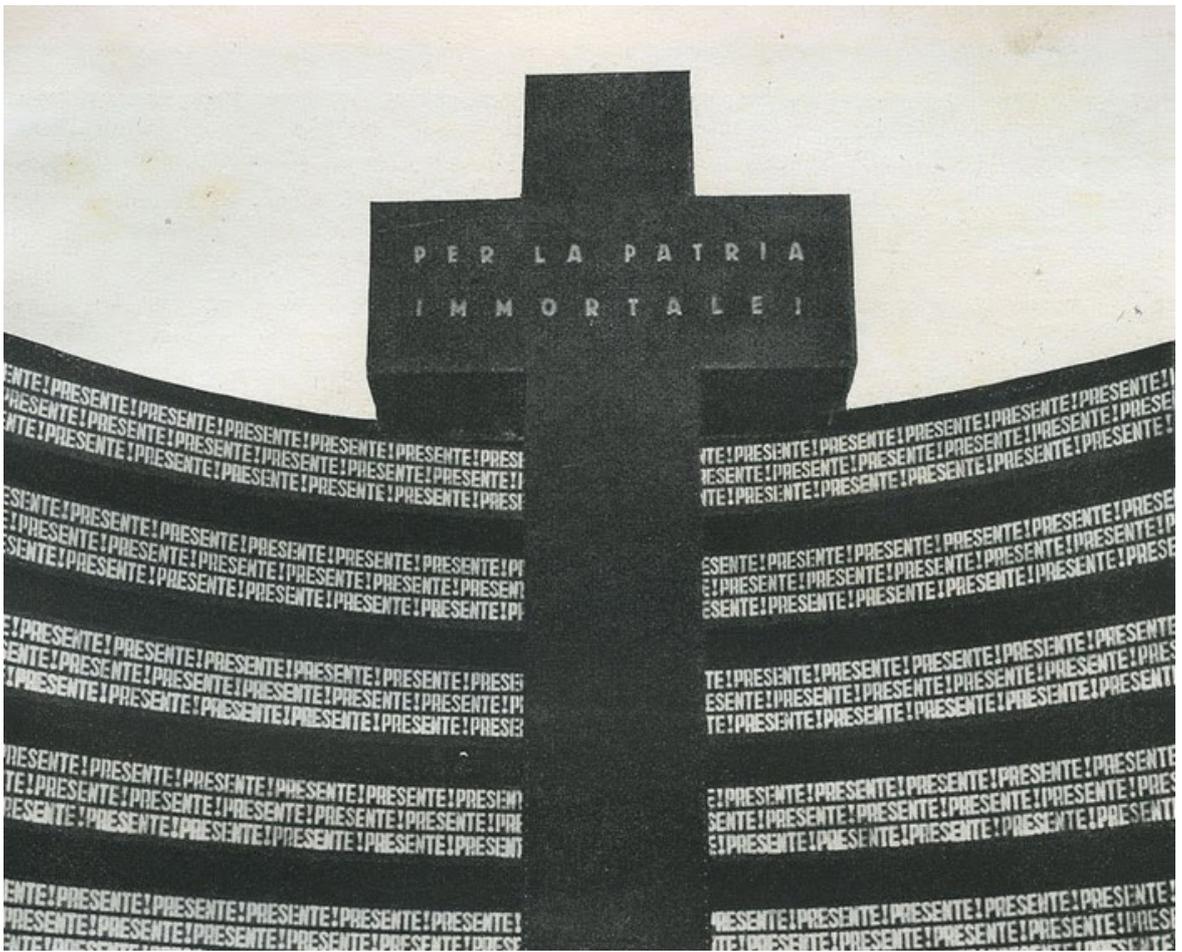
3.7   Adalberto Libera and Antonio Valente, Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista, Sacrario dei Martiri (room U), Rome, 1932

of the graphic elements. He pointed out the way in which the technique of photo-montage had been effectively used to frame together the heterogeneous materi-al.[68] Mussolini's phrases, mottoes and quotes from the fascist newspaper *Il Popolo d'Italia* were painted and plastered on the walls and ceilings, creating a 'narrative thread unifying the heterogeneous aesthetics of the different rooms'.[69] Again, it was a graphic technique that had been translated onto a larger and three-dimen-sional scale, moving from the page to the walls.[70]

Bertieri's use of the expression 'exhibition layout' suggests that he saw exhibi-tion and graphic design as part of a designed whole, and he was not the only one. Modiano, for instance, defined the MRF as 'one of the most extended and heroic "layouts" of this period', demonstrating that to approach exhibition design from a graphic design perspective was a common practice among graphic practitioners.[71] Bertieri drew a parallel between the graphical layout of a page, and the physical form of the exhibition. In his perspective, the exhibition rooms were the pages of a book which visitors could walk in instead of flip through:

> If one detaches some of the elements from the composition in which they can be found
> on the walls, one would notice that it is possible to effortlessly translate them into diverse

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68   On the use of the photomontage as a vehicle of Italian Fascism's ideology, see: Diane Ghirardo, 'Politics of a Masterpiece: The *Vicenda* of the Decoration of the Façade of the Casa del Fascio, Como, 1936-39', *The Art Bulletin*, 62 (1980), pp. 466-78.

69   Claudio Fogu, *The Historic Imaginary: Politics of History in Fascist Italy* (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2003), p. 139. See also: Claudio Fogu, 'To Make History Present', in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts*, ed. by Lazzaro and Crum, pp. 33-49.

70   Many reviewers of the period commented upon the way in which the exhibition design of the MRF was reminiscent of expressionist stage design, Central-European and Russian avant-garde, and in particular of Konstantin Melnikov and El Lissitzky's installations for the Soviet Pavilion at the Paris International Exposition in 1925 and at the Pressa Exhibition in Cologne in 1928. The painter Mario Sironi and the architect Giovanni Muzio curated the Italian Pavilion at the 'Pressa' Exhibition. Having had the chance to see in person El Lissitzky's display design for the Soviet Pavilion, Sironi began using photomu-rals in his propagandistic installations. Furthermore, works by Russian constructivists were exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1928. The following year, the Russian exhibition was held in Zurich. For comments on the MRF exhibition design by reviewers of the period, see: Anna Maria Mazzucchelli, 'Stile di una Mostra', *Casabella*, 80, August 1934, p. 8; Giuseppe Pagano and Giulia Veronesi, 'Dopo l'Ottocento', *Casabella*, n. 159-160, March-April 1941, p. 40. For further discussion on the Pressa Exhibition, see: Jeremy Aynsley, 'Pressa Cologne, 1928: Exhibitions and Publication Design in the Weimar Period', *Design Issue*, 10 (3) (1994), pp. 53-76; Benjamin H, D. Buchloh, 'From Faktura to Faktography', *October*, 30 (1984), pp. 82-119; Rocco, 'Exhibiting Exhibitions', *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, pp. 179-92.

71   '[...] una delle più vaste ed eroiche "impaginazioni" di questo periodo'. Guido Modiano, 'Cinque Manifesti', *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, p. 21.

page compositions. It could be said that [the elements] are arranged on the page by themselves.[72]

The exhibition catalogue had then the potential to be a 'graphic masterpiece'.[73] Ironically, the layout of the actual catalogue lacked any kind of experimental use of typography and was criticised by Bertieri for its poor use of photography. With its expressive use of typo-photo, the cover stands out from the rest of the catalogue layout (see Illustration 3.8). The syllables 'DU-CE DU-CE' are endlessly repeated both on the front and on the back cover and, as was the case with the word 'Presente!' in the Sacrario dei Martiri, they represent the disembodied chants of the crowd praising its leader, Benito Mussolini.[74]

In his review of the MRF, not only did Bertieri explain his concept of 'exhibition layout' verbally, but he also provided readers with a visual demonstration of the relationship between the exhibition walls and the page layout. The most effective example is the graphic interpretation of the Sacrario dei Martiri in which picture, text and coloured areas work together to reiterate the cross motif (see Illustration 3.9). Often chosen by avant-garde and modernist graphic designers for their greater intensity, the colours black and red recall the actual colours of the chapel: the black of the walls and cross, and the blood-red of the central pedestal.[75] Breaking the top right-hand page border, the upper line of text conveys the impression that the band of text repeating the word 'PRESENTE!' is a fragment of a longer one, which runs endlessly behind the central picture.

The graphic interpretation of the Sacrario dei Martiri conveys a different image of Boggeri that is in apparent contradiction with the one given in Chapter 1. This contradiction offers a chance to go beyond the historiographical dichotomy that sees Bertieri and *Risorgimento Grafico* as guardians of the Italian typographic tradition against a more experimental approach as advocated by the graphic

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72   'Se si distaccano alcuni elementi dalla disposizione nella quale si trovano nella realtà delle single pareti, ci si accorge di poterli tradurre senza sforzo in forme diverse di pagine: si direbbe che vadano da sé a disporsi in pagina'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (6), June 1933, p. 333.

73   '[...] capolavoro grafico [...]'. Bertieri, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (6), June 1933, p. 337. See: *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista*, ed. by Dino Alfieri and Luigi Freddi (Bergamo: Officine dell'Istituto Italiano delle Arti Grafiche, 1933), anastatic copy (Milan: IGIS spa Industrie Grafiche Italiane, 1982).

74   For discussion on the iconography of crowds and propaganda, see: *Crowds*, ed. by Jeffrey Schnapp and Matthew Tiews (Stanford: Stanford Univesity Press, 2006). On the use of visual media within the strategy of the 'Cult of the Duce', see: Malvano, *Fascismo e Politica dell'Immagine*, pp. 48-76.

75   On the use of colours in modernist graphics, see: Jan Tschichold, *The New Typography* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2006), pp. 72-73, first published in Berlin, 1928.
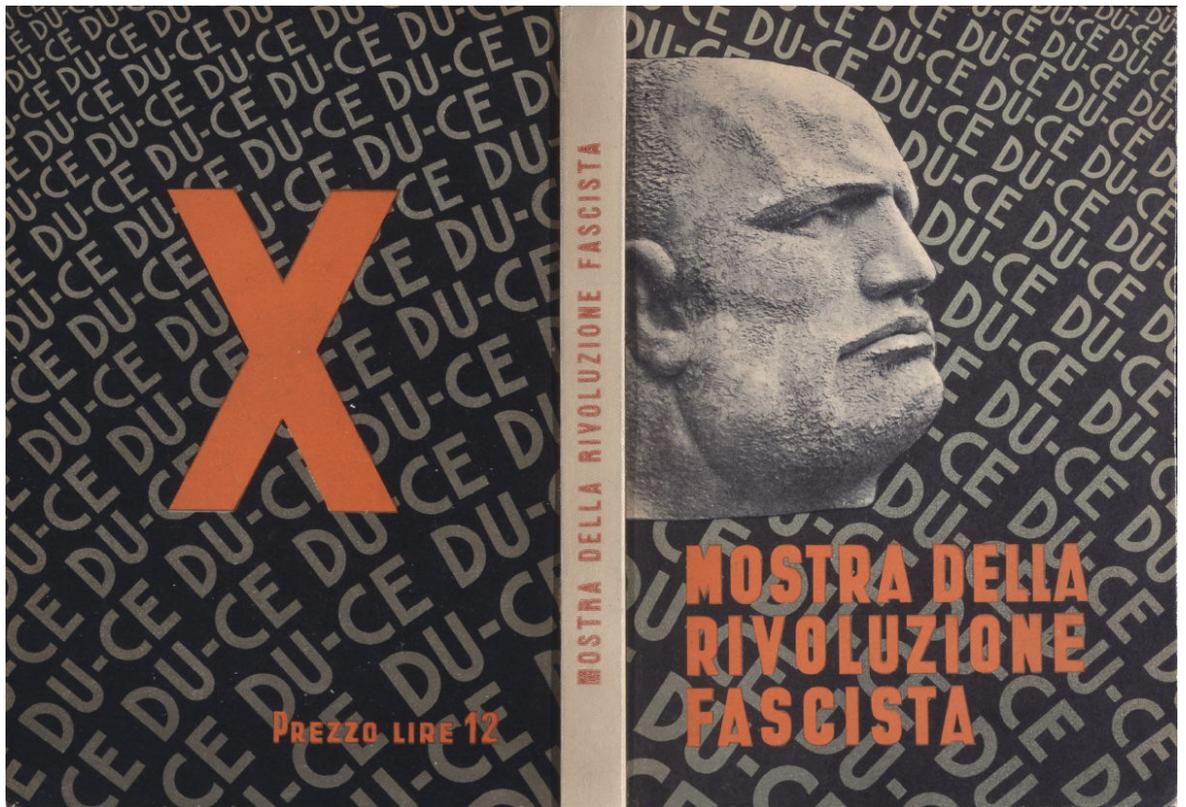
3.8 front and back cover of the exhibition catalogue of the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista, 1932

3.9 double page spread from Raffaello Bertieri's review of the Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista, 'Alcuni Aspetti Grafici della Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 30 (6), June 1933, pp. 334-35

practitioners and critics gathering around the magazine *Campo Grafico*.[76] The double-page spread of *Risorgimento Grafico* demonstrates the way in which a more conservative approach to the magazine page layout – i.e. the centred double columns of justified text and serif font on the left page – coexisted with a graphic composition, whose expressive use of sans-serif font, coloured forms, photography and white areas recall compositions closer to Russian Constructivism. I would thus argue that Bertieri's review of the MRF offers an opportunity to problematise his position within the historiography of Italian graphic design and reassess his ability to recognise the effectiveness of modernist visual language under the specific circumstances of display graphics, political propaganda and advertising.[77]

3.4 'GRAPHISM' AND THE TYPOGRAPHY OUTSIDE THE PAGE: FASCIST TEMPORARY PROPAGANDA DISPLAYS, 1934, AND EXHIBITION DESIGN AT THE 6TH MILAN TRIENNALE, 1936

As already introduced in the previous section, exhibition design became a subject for debate in the fields of graphics. In this section, I explore further the way in which political and thematic temporary exhibitions gave a chance to both graphic practitioners and architects to experiment with new visual languages, cutting-edge techniques, and innovative display structures.[78] Moreover, I argue that exhibition design enabled graphic practitioners to extend their field of action beyond typography and book design, adding new nuances to the layout of the graphic design profession in Milan.

In 1934, two temporary displays caught the attention of graphic practitioners who were looking for alternative ways to articulate their public image in order to correct the misleading message conveyed at the 5th Milan Triennale. The

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76   See, for instance: Carlo Vinti, *Grafica Italiana dal 1945 a Oggi* (Florence; Milan: Giunti, 2016), p. 7; Mario Piazza, 'Caratteri Italiani / Italian Typeface', in *TDM5*, ed. by Camuffo, Piazza and Vinti, p. 53.

77   Bertieri's compromise position deserves further analysis especially if one takes into account the fact that by the late-1930s Jan Tschichold himself turned against what he perceived as the intolerant formalism of the New Typography by objecting that it was limited to publicity work and modern subject matter, and thus was inappropriate for many purposes, book design above all. On Jan Tschichold apparent revisionism, see: Robin Kinross, 'Introduction to the English-Language Translation', in Tschichold, *The New Typography*, p. XXXVIII; Jeremy Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany 1890-1945* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), pp. 212-14.

78   On political and thematic temporary exhibitions during twenty year of Italian Fascism, see also: Marla Stone, 'The Rise and Fall of the Fascist Gesamtkunstwerk', in Stone, *The Patron State,* pp. 222-53; Ghirardo, 'Architects, Exhibitions, and the Politics of Culture in Fascist Italy', *Journal of Architecture Education*, 45 (2) (1992), pp. 67-75.

propaganda displays in the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan on the occasion of the Fascist plebiscite (26 March, 1934), and the Sala delle Medaglie d'Oro (Gold Medals Room) at the Esposizione dell'Aeronautica Italiana (Italian Aviation Exhibition) featured in graphics and architecture magazines as examples of 'exhibition layout'. Both exhibition displays were the outcome of the collaboration between the industrial and graphic designer, Marcello Nizzoli, and graphic and display designer, Edoardo Persico.

The Esposizione dell'Aeronautica Italiana was held from June until October 1934 at the Palazzo dell'Arte in Milan. It was extensively reviewed in the architecture magazine *Casabella* and was described as 'a show of the trends in European architecture and of its resonance in Italy'.[79] As art historian Marla Stone has convincingly argued, the exhibition marked the 'peak of modernist influence upon official culture'.[80] In the Sala delle Medaglie d'Oro, Persico and Nizzoli used modular elements to build a three-dimensional grid display – white tubing and black floor and ceiling – from which the display panel illustrating the heroic adventures of First World War pilots were hung (see Illustration **3.10**). The temporary display at the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II also consisted of a black and white gridded structure (see Illustration **3.11**).[81] Nevertheless, visitors' experience of the two exhibition displays was different. While visitors could only walk around the scaffolding in the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, they were put inside the exhibition space of the Sala delle Medaglie d'Oro where the transparency and overlapping of the grid structures created an immersive gridded space.

The posters hanging from the scaffolding in the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II illustrates the Fascist regime's integration of modernist imagery and technique into its propaganda. As such, they enable to further discuss the shadowy

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79   '[...] una rassegna delle tendenze dell'architettura europea, e della loro risonanza in Italia'. Mazzucchelli, *Casabella*, 80, August 1934, p. 6.

80   Stone, *The Patron State*, p. 224. Many exponents of Italian Rationalism – Luigi Figini, Gino Pollini, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, Luigi Banfi and Ludovico Belgioioso – took part in the event, transferring their architectural skills and knowledge into exhibition design. Comparisons were drawn between the exhibition design and works by Marcel Breuer, Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn, Konstantin Melnikov and Wassily Kandinsky. See: Mazzucchelli, *Casabella*, 80, August 1934, p. 6; Giuseppe Pagano and Giulia Veronesi, 'Dopo l'Ottocento', *Casabella*, 159-160, March-April 1941, p. 40.

81   The visible scaffoldings of the installation highlighted the ephemerality of the construction, which contrasted with the neo-classical interior of the two glass-vaulted intersecting arcades of the Galleria and recalled expressionist and constructivist theatre design. For a detailed description of the scaffolding structure, see: Antonio Pasquali, 'Marcello Nizzoli e Edoardo Persico: Costruzione di Propaganda nella Galleria V. E. Emanuele a Milano', *Casabella*, 76, April 1934, pp. 36-37.
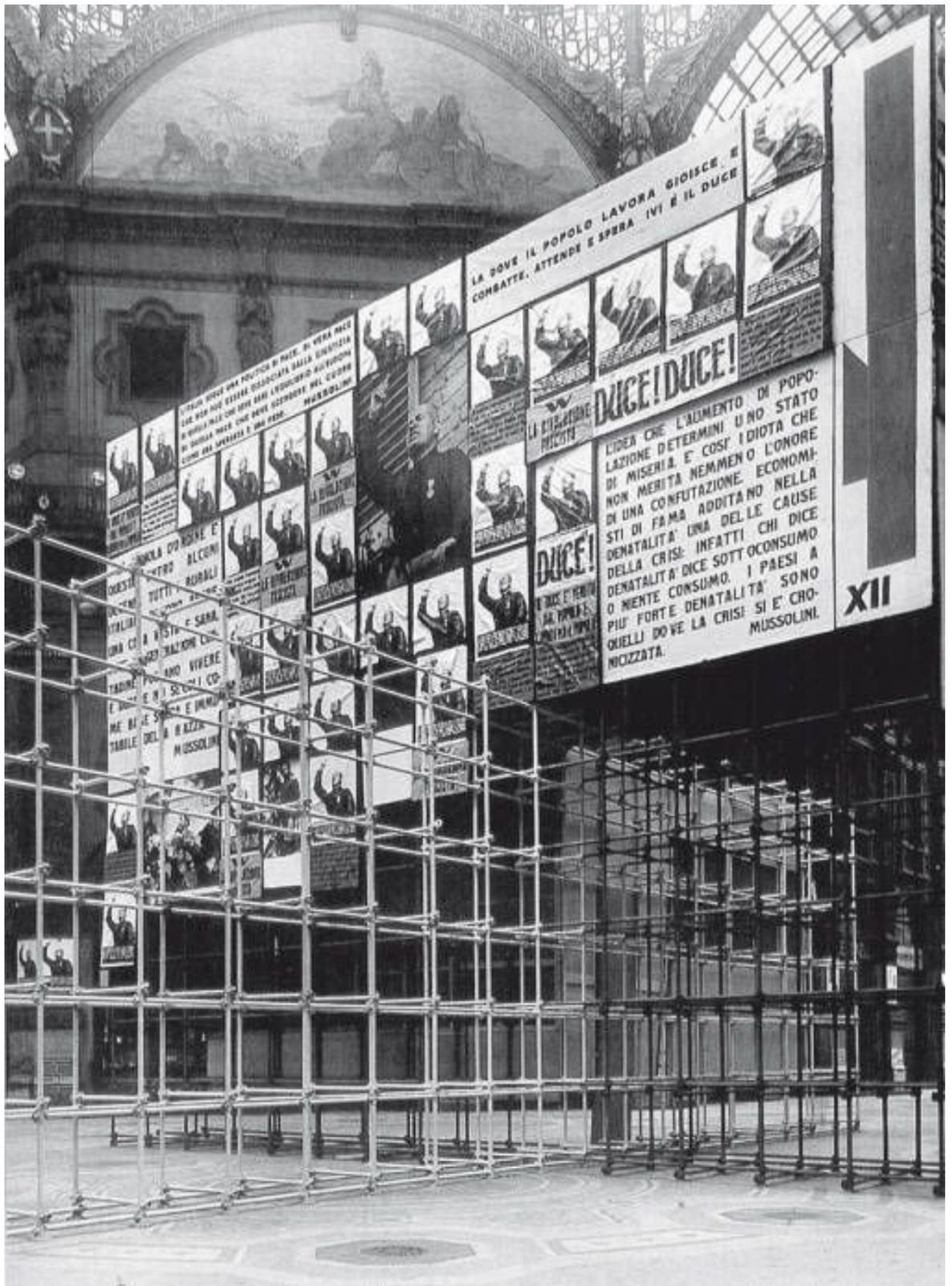
3.10 Marcello Nizzoli and Edoardo Persico, propaganda display on the occasion of the Fascist plebiscite on the 26th March 1934, Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, Milan, 1934
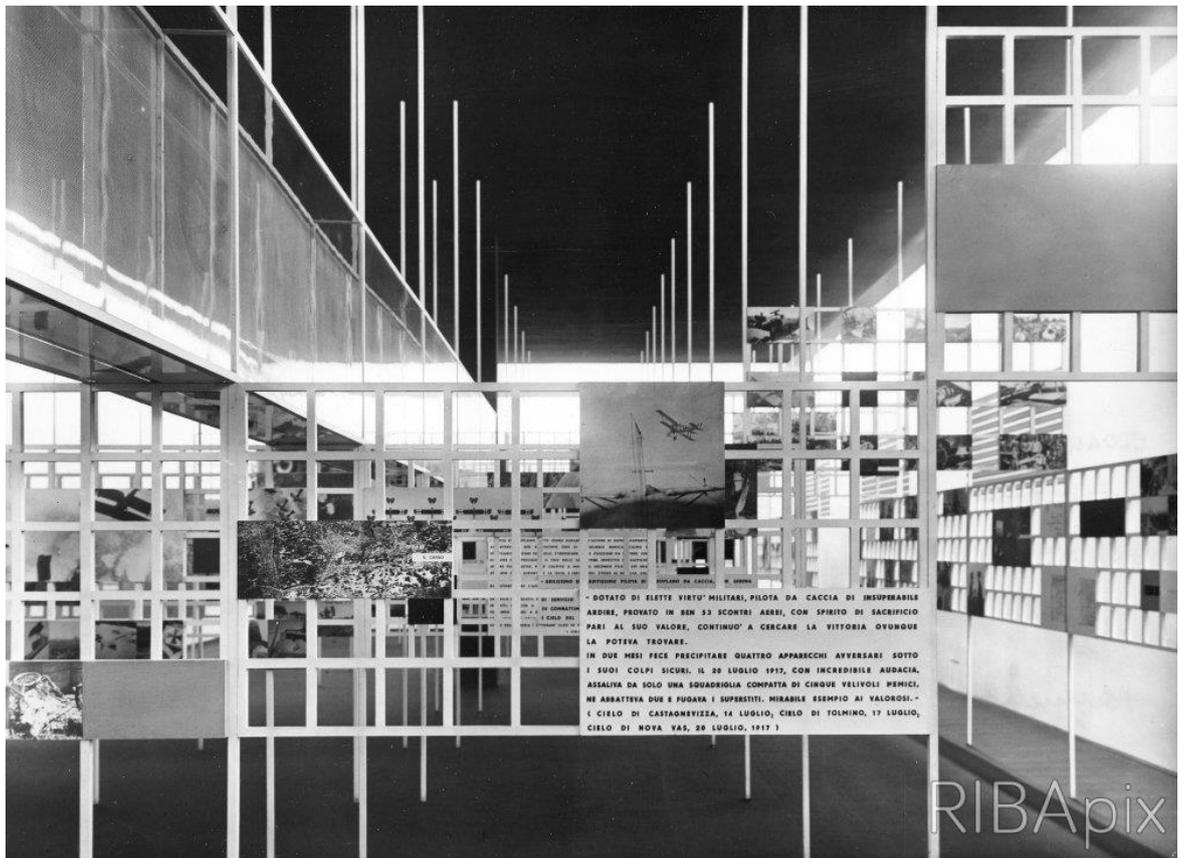
3.11   Marcello Nizzoli and Edoardo Persico, Sala delle Medaglie d'Oro, Esposizione dell'Aeronautica Italiana, Milan, 1934

relationship between graphic design and Italian Fascism, problematise the flexibility of modernist vocabulary and question the assumption of ideological and political stances based on form and style.[82] The posters were designed by Persico and featured photographs with extreme close-ups, dramatic silhouettes, unusual viewpoints, aerial perspectives, and unexpected changes of scale, combined with innovative typographic layouts and letterforms in accordance with the modernist technique of typo-photo. Some commentators criticised Persico's engagement in fascist propaganda, condemning the contradiction between form and content in his work. Co-founders and editors of *Campo Grafico*, Attilio Rossi and Carlo Dradi, retrospectively wrote that by refusing to publish Persico's propaganda posters for the Fascist plebiscite in the magazine, 'they opposed the way in which modern graphics – the most effective communication media – was used to spread lies'.[83] The anecdote has been frequently quoted in the literature as an early stance by Italian graphic designers against the Fascist dictatorship. However, I would argue that this interpretation simplifies the complex relationship between professionals and the regime, reducing it to a mere dichotomy between fascism and antifascism.[84] It is indeed correct that the campisti neither published, nor commented on Persico's design for the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II immediately. Yet my research on primary sources provided evidence that Persico's propaganda posters were published in the January 1936 issue of *Campo Grafico* (see Illustration **3.12**) and included in a series of articles in memory of Persico, who had tragically died on the 10th of January.[85]

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82   See: David Crowley, 'National Modernism', in *Modernism: Designing a New World, 1914-1939*, ed. by Christopher Wilk (London: V&A Publications, 2006), pp. 342-60; Andrew Hewitt, *Fascist Modernism: Aesthetics, Politics, and the Avant-Garde* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

83   'Ci si opponeva al fatto che la grafica moderna, efficacissimo mezzo di comunicazione, servisse a diffondere le menzogne'. Dradi, *1933*, p. 15. The graphic theorist Giulia Veronesi, who was the person that communicated the rejection to Persico himself, confirmed Rossi and Dradi's account in her book on the political implications of Italian architecture during the twenty years of the Fascist regime. Yet there is the possibility that the anecdote was simply an attempt of the campisti of self-repositioning after WW2 and adapting to the changed political context. See: Giulia Veronesi, *Difficoltà Politiche dell'Architettura in Italia: 1920-1940* (Milan: Christian Marinotti Editore, 2008), first edition 1953, pp. 110-12.

84   For a critical approach to the grey are between fascism and antifascism, see: Gabriele Turi, *Il Fascismo e il Consenso degli Intellettuali* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980); *Libere Professioni e Fascismo*, ed. by Gabriele Turi (Milan: Franco Angeli, 1994); Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities*.

85   Guido Modiano, 'Manifesti', *Campo Grafico*, 4 (1), January 1936, pp. 244-45. The article was a shorter version of a previous article: Modiano, *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, pp. 21-23. On Edoardo Persico's tragic and mysterious death, see Andrea Camiller's fictionalised yet well-researched inquiry: Andrea Camilleri, *Dentro il Labirinto* (Geneva; Milan: Skira, 2012).

3.12   double-page spread from Guido Modiano, 'Manifesti', *Campo Grafico*, 4 (1), January 1936, pp. 244-45; featuring Edoardo Persico's propaganda poster for fascist plebiscite, 1934

One could argue that since the posters were decontextualized from the original propaganda, the campisti were focusing on the form of Persico's work, rather than on the actual controversial content. However, Persico's propaganda posters were not the only time *Campo Grafico* featured graphic artefacts combining modernist graphics with the fascist rhetoric. In February 1937, in fact, the campisti reviewed an issue of *Nuova Guardia*, the journal of the Bolognese Gruppi Universitari Fascisti (Fascist University Groups – GUF).[86] Eluding once again any direct political reference, the review only focused on the formal aspect of the magazine designed by Renzo Bianchi.[87] Furthermore, in addition to these occasional references to fascist propaganda in *Campo Grafico*, Rossi and Dradi had designed the covers for the sports illustrated monthly magazine, *Lo Sport Fascista*, from April to December 1933.[88] Although it is not my intention to suggest that these events deny the afore-mentioned anecdote of the refusal to publish Persico's posters for political reasons, nor question the antifascist commitment of the campisti, I would argue that they reveal a grey area between alignment and resistance, which has often been neglected by scholars who have instead sought to provide a democratic legitimation to the protagonists of the modern movement in Italy.[89]

The relationship between graphic and exhibition design grew stronger in the mid-1930s to such as extent that graphic practitioners claimed jurisdiction over exhibition design, considered as a typographic grid in three dimensions. This was the case with the 6th Milan Triennale in 1936 where, according to the campisti, 'the graphic arts, left outside the door, enter[ed] through the window'.[90] The committee had decided to keep the graphic arts out of the Triennale, creating malcontent and

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86   'Recensioni', *Campo Grafico*, 5 (2), February 1937, unpaged.

87   For a comprehensive study on the magazines of the GUF with a focus on their position towards contemporary art, see: Cristina Palma, *Le Riviste dei GUF e l'Arte Contemporanea 1926-1945: Un'Antologia Ragionata* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2010).

88   Masimo Dradi, 'Appunti per una Storia della Comunicazione Visiva', *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici*, 61 (1-2), March-June 2009, pp.18-19. Issue of *Lo Sport Fascista* are accessible online: http://dlib.coninet.it/?q=node/1&id=21&anno=1933&col=1 [accessed 19 November 2016].

89   See: Andrea Branzi, *Introduzione al Design Italiano: una Modernità Incompleta* (Milan: Baldini e Castoldi, 1999), p. 117.

90   '[...] l'arte grafica, lasciata fuori dalla porta, entra dalla finestra [...]'. 'Le arti Grafiche alla VI Triennale di Milano 1936', *Campo Grafico*, 4 (5), May 1936, p. 85.

criticism amongst graphic practitioners and critics.[91] 'The exclusion of the Graphic Arts from the Triennale', reported an editorial in *Risorgimento Grafico*, 'means denying or misunderstanding how much has been done so far in this artistic-industrial realm'.[92] Practitioners had been waiting for a second chance to promote the profession's public image since the disappointment of the Padiglione della Stampa in 1933. Thus many prominent and vocal Milanese practitioners perceived the exclusion from the 6th Triennale as yet another defeat for the profession. In June 1935, a group of graphic practitioners made a formal request to the organising committee of the 6th Milan Triennale, in which they exhorted members 'to avoid wasting for a second time the opportunity to shape the conscience of modern typography in Italy'.[93] The document provides evidence of the desire to use of the Triennale as a public arena to claim aesthetic and social legitimacy for the profession. Alas, the requests fell on deaf ears.

The absence of a specific graphic design exhibition in 1936 did not mean the absence of graphic design itself at the Triennale. On the contrary, graphic design was ubiquitous: although not represented as content, it took part in the 6th Triennale in the exhibition design. Reviewers observed that 'the entire Triennale [was] arranged into a graphic layout with a marked tendency towards abstraction'.[94] They drew attention, for example, to the presence of graphic elements in Giuseppe Pagano's design for the vernacular architecture exhibition, and to the Salone d'Onore (Room of Honour) – also known as Sala della Vittoria (Room of Victory).

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91   The official reason for the exclusion of graphics from the 6th Triennale is not mentioned in primary sources and secondary literature. An article in *Campo Grafico*, suggested that one of the causes was Italy's military effort in the colonial war in Ethiopia (October 1935 – May 1936). The design historian Carlo Vinti has suggested that the unexpected death of Edoardo Persico (January 1936) and Giuseppe Pagano's resignation from his role in the Triennale committee as potential causes for the exclusion of graphics from the event. See: *Campo Grafico*, 4 (5), May 1936, p. 85; Vinti, 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica"', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), pp. 50-63

92   '[…] escludere le Arti Grafiche da una Triennale significa disconoscere o non conoscere quanto in Italia è stato fatto e si va facendo in questo ramo d'attività artistico-industriale'. *Risorgimento Grafico*, 33 (3), March 1936, unpaged.

93   '[…] non perdere un'altra occasione per formare una coscienza tipografica moderna anche in Italia'. 'Tipografia e Triennale', *Campo Grafico*, 3 (6), June 1935, p. 127. Signatories of the official request to the Triennale committee were: the typographer De Arcangelis (Pescara), the typographer Guido Modiano (Milan), the editor of *Casabella* Edoardo Persico (Milan), the editor of the magazine *La Nuova Guardia* Renzo Bianchi (Roma), the co-founder and editor of *Campo Grafico* Attilio Rossi (Milan), the director of the typographic school in Turin and of the magazine *Graphicus* Giulio da Milano (Turin), the graphic artist Nino Strada (Milan), Antonio Boggeri (Milan), and the director of the Olivetti advertising department Renato Zveteremich (Ivrea).

94   '[…] tutta la Triennale è stata impaginata graficamente con spiccata tendenza verso l'astrattismo […]'. Ezio D'Errico, 'VI Triennale di Milano', *Graphicus*, 27 (2), February 1937, p. 14.

With its use of standardised and modular elements and arrangement of the visual material in a chart-like layout, Pagano's exhibition design recalled Persico and Nizzoli's Sala delle Medaglie d'Oro (see Illustration **3.13**).[95] The exhibition design of the Salone d'Onore was the outcome of the collaboration between Persico, Nizzoli, the artist Lucio Fontana and the architect Giancarlo Palatini (see Illustration **3.14**).[96] A double row of white panels covered the walls, creating a play of light and shadows, of solid and void, which reinterpreted the classical theme of the colonnade in a modern and abstract key. One aspect of the exhibition design in particular caught the attention of reviewers: the five black and white portraits of ancient Rome Consuls and Emperors, Scipio, Caesar, Augustus, Trajan and Constantine.[97] Made of concrete inlay, the pictures resemble pixelated photographs. The likeness to enlarged halftone dots provide the historical figures with a modern appeal through the connotative value of the reprographic technique itself. Moreover, the extreme close-up recalls Persico's 1935 photo book *Arte Romana: la Scultura Romana e Quattro Affreschi della Villa dei Misteri* (Roman Art: Roman Sculpture and Four

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95   See: Doordan, *Building Modern Italy*, pp. 145-46.

96   On the occasion of the 6th Triennale, the committee announced three competitions for the decoration of the Palazzo dell'Arte. Persico entered and won the competition for the decoration of the Salone d'Onore. As previously remarked by the art historian Penelope Curtis, Persico's collaboration with Nizzoli, Palanti and Fontana was a convenient choice. Indeed, public competitions during Fascism were usually reserved to members of the Fascist unions, and while Persico was not a member, his collaborators were. For a detailed analysis of the Salone d'Onore at the 6th Milan Triennale focusing, in particular, on the relationship between architecture and sculpture, see: Penelope Curtis, 'Persico's Vision: Lucio Fontana at the Milan Triennale (1936)', in *Patio and Pavilion: The Place of Sculpture in Modern Architecture* (London: Ridinghouse Editor, 2008), pp. 28-41.On the coercive potential of prizes, competitions and commissions during the Fascist regime, see: Stone, 'The State as Patron', in *Fascist Visions*, ed. by Affron and Antliff, pp. 205-38.

97   By suggesting a relationship between the Roman Empire and the Fascist colonial war, the portraits aimed at legitimating the regime's imperialist policies. The support of the regimes' colonial war was made explicit by the text on the plinth of Fontana's sculpture, which read in capital, elongated sans-serif letters: 'IL POPOLO ITALIANO HA CREATO CON IL SUO SANGUE L'IMPERO. LO FECONDERÀ COL SUO LAVORO E LO DIFENDERA CONTRO CHIUNQUE CON LE ARMI. MUSSOLINI 9 V XIV' (The Italian people have created the Empire with their own blood. They will fertilise it with their work and defend it against whomever with weapons). The text was excerpted from Mussolini's speech that was broadcast on May 9, 1936. The appropriation of the Roman past was a propaganda device used by the regime, which steadily recurred to ancient Rome imagery and iconography. On the use of the 'romanità' (Roman spirit) by the regime's propaganda, see: Malvano, *Fascismo e Politica dell'Immagine*, pp. 151-56; Lazzaro, 'Forging a Visible Fascist Nation', in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts*, ed. by Lazzaro and Crum, pp. 13-31; Ann Thomas Wilkins, 'Augustus, Mussolini, and the Parallel Imagery of Empire', in *Donatello Among the Blackshirts*, ed. by Lazzaro and Crum, pp. 53-65.

3.13   Giuseppe Pagano and Guarniero Daniel, Sezione di Architettura Rurale nel bacino del Mediterraneo, 6th Milan Triennale, 1936

3.14   Edoardo Persico, Marcello Nizzoli, Giancarlo Palatini and Lucio Fontana (sculpture),
Salone d'Onore – Sala della Vittoria, 6th Milan Triennale, 1936

Frescoes of the Villa of the Mysteries). The likeness demonstrates the way in which his work as a graphic designer fed into his work as an exhibition designer.[98]

In his review of the 6th Milan Triennale, Guido Modiano suggested that the exhibition design exemplified – together with the MRF and the Mostra dell'Aeronautica – the concept of 'grafismo' (graphism).[99] Drawing attention to exhibition design as actor in the formulation of graphic design, Modiano's concept of graphism summarises the argument of this section. Graphism was a vague term with no boundaries that Modiano invented in the mid-1930s to paradoxically set up the boundaries of graphic design both as a discipline and as a profession.[100] The definition of this rather difficult to pinpoint concept was 'the typography to the non-typographers'.[101] However, graphism should not be confused with amateurism. It was rather a move away from the typographic tradition towards a cross-fertilisation between graphics, rationalist architecture and visual arts, all of which shared, according to Modiano, a tendency towards geometric and elementary design. This cross-fertilisation found expression in the exhibition design at the 6th Triennale, where 'modern architecture had found in the *typographic* taste an opportunity and a reason for new outcomes'.[102] Modiano identified a series of graphic elements that had been borrowed by architects and exhibition designers from typography, such as the rhythmic arrangements of modular forms and the use of letterforms as architectural elements. In a later article published in *Campo Grafico* in 1939, Modiano commented again upon exhibition design as expression of grafism. He described it as 'typography's greatest expression, [...] a projection into the third dimension of the graphic form'.[103]

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98   The book was a supplement to the magazine *Domus*. The oversized photo book featured portrait heads of Roman sculptures. Cut-out on black or white background the heads were close to life size. See, *Arte Romana: la Scultura Romana e Quattro Affreschi della Villa dei Misteri*, ed. by Edoardo Persico (Milan: Domus, 1935).

99   Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (1), January 1937, p. 30.

100   See: Modiano, *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, pp. 21-23; Guido Modiano, 'Gli Insegnamenti della Pittura Astratta', *Campo Grafico*, 2 (11), November 1934, pp. 246-49.

101   '[...] la tipografia ai non tipografi'. Modiano uses the slogan 'the typography to the non-typographers' as a provocative statement to spur the renewal of Italian graphics. The non-typographers he is referring to are Edoardo Persico, Marcello Nizzoli, Bramante Buffoni and Umberto Zimelli – none of whom was a trained typographer. Modiano, *Graphicus*, 24 (10), October 1934, p. 21.

102   '[...] l'architettura moderna abbia trovato nel gusto *tipografico* occasioni e motivi per espressioni nuove'. Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (1), January 1937, pp. 28-30, italics in the original text.

103   '[...] manifestazione di tipografia superiore [...] una forma grafica proiettata nella terza dimensione'. Guido Modiano, 'Un Posteggio e una Vetrina nel Commento di un Tipografo', *Campo Grafico*, 7 (3-5), March-May 1939, pp. 103-04.

The concept of graphism opened the door of the typographic workshop to the mutual influences of different scenes that were not strictly connected to the graphic industry and printing trade. In doing so, it contributes to the broader understanding of the graphic design practice as emerged at the intersection of closer fields of typography, commercial art, visual art, architecture and exhibition design.

3.5 TEN YEARS OF MODERNIST DEBATE IN ITALY: GUIDO MODIANO'S MOSTRA GRAFICA AT THE 7TH MILAN TRIENNALE, 1940

Officially absent in 1936, graphic design re-entered the Milan Triennale in 1940.[104] The Mostra Grafica at the 7th Triennale set out to finally meet graphic practitioners' expectations: attain professional legitimation, demand exclusive right to determine and evaluate 'good taste' and educate the public in modernist graphics once and for all. Curated by Guido Modiano, the Mostra Grafica was intended as the 'evaluation of ten years of modernist debate' and aimed to convey 'a persuasive documentation of "Graphism"'.[105]

Modiano faced the curatorial task taking, on the one hand, Renner's pavilion at the 5th Triennale as a reference point and, on the other hand, keeping in mind the aforementioned request of graphic practitioners – Modiano included – to the organising committee of the 6th Triennale. In line with the signatories' agenda, Modiano's exhibition aimed to find a solution to the 'incompetence of practitioners' and defeat the 'indifference of the audience (the consumers)', which were perceived as preventing and delaying the modernisation of Italian graphics in accordance with the modern taste.[106] As reported in the official catalogue:

> [the Mostra Grafica] aim[ed] at familiarising the public with the intimate aspect of graphics: its techniques, the sources of a lively typography, the artists that have been able to translate the modern taste into graphic terms and, finally, the noble page of the typography and the Italian publishing: i.e. the limited editions.[107]

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104   For a thorough analysis of Modiano's Mostra Grafica at the 7th Milan Triennale of 1940, see: Vinti, 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica" alla VII Triennale', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), pp. 50-63.

105   '[...] bilancio di una decennale polemica modernista [...] convincente documentazione del "Grafismo"'. *VII Triennale di Milano: Guida* (Milan: 1940), pp. 185-86.

106   '[...] impreparazione di quelli del mestiere [...] indifferenza del pubblico (il consumatore)'. *Campo Grafico*, 3 (6), June 1935, p. 126.

107   '[...] si propone di avvicinare il pubblico agli aspetti intimi della grafica: alle sue tecniche, alle fonti di una tipografia viva, agli artisti che hanno saputo tradurre in termini grafici il gusto moderno, e, infine, a una nobile pagina della tipografia ed editoria italiane: le edizioni a tiratura limitata'. *VII Triennale di Milano: Guida* (Milan: 1940), p. 185.

Since, according to Modiano, 'neither the deepest and most interesting characteristics of the graphic arts, nor a clear explanation of [its] requirements and purposes had ever been provided before to the audiences in Italy', the 'fundamental parameter' of the exhibition was didactic.[108]

In contrast to the 1933 Padiglione della Stampa, all members of the exhibition committee, co-curators and exhibition designers, were either graphic practitioners or worked in close contact with them. In this instance at least, graphic practitioners had gained exclusive control over who and what should represent their profession and discipline, how the graphic works should be displayed and who should control the means of representation. The Mostra Grafica was co-curated by Luigi Veronesi, Bruno Munari, Ezio D'Errico and Raffaello Bertieri. The poet and director of the Ufficio Pubblicità (Advertising Department) at Olivetti, Leonardo Sinisgalli, and the graphic designer at Olivetti, Giovanni Pintori, were in charge of the exhibition design.[109]

In an attempt to use the Triennale as a platform to mediate the profession's public image and officially associate modernist graphics with the notion of 'good taste', Modiano curated a comprehensive exhibition with a coherent and didactic message. Modiano's agenda distinguished the Mostra Grafica from the 1933 Mostra Arti Grafiche. This, as seen in section 3.2, was heavily criticised by Modiano himself for the weak curatorial agenda that was said to have reinforced public misunderstanding by conveying a fragmented and heterogeneous message. By contrast, the 1940 Mostra Grafica was carefully structured in seven sections. It included an historical perspective on Italian graphics, a selection of contemporary 'good' graphics, a description of printing techniques and a focus on the dialogue between typography, architecture and visual arts.

Curated by Veronesi, the first section clarified the graphic techniques and the role of the printing industry in the Italian economy. It also included a panel 'La Grafica nella Coerenza del Gusto' (Graphics within the Coherence of Taste). This illustrated the evolution of Italian graphics from the Renaissance to the present day, drawing a comparison with architecture and figurative arts (see Illustration

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108   'Criterio fondamentale [...] mai in Italia il pubblico è stato messo a contatto con gli aspetti più intimi ed interessanti delle arti grafiche o con i risultati chiariti nei presupposti e nei fini'. *La Mostra Grafica alla Triennale* (Milan: Società Grafica G. Modiano, 1940), ed. by Guido Modiano, unpaged.

109   Leonardo Sinisgalli also wrote the introductory text of the exhibition catalogue. See, *La Mostra Grafica alla Triennale* (Milan: Società Grafica G. Modiano, 1940), ed. by Guido Modiano, unpaged.

3.15). The panel also featured exemplars of international graphics and the modern graphic taste was represented by Bayer, Tschichold and Lissitzky.[110]

The sources of the modern graphic taste were further clarified in the second section. This was curated by Munari. Reproductions of futurist, abstract and constructivist artworks were displayed, together with rationalist architecture and photographic compositions, on four see-through panels around a tree trunk that represented the family tree of modern graphics (see Illustration 3.16). Thus modern graphics was represented as the result of the cross-fertilisation between typography, photography, rationalist architecture and geometric abstraction.

The third section was curated by Modiano himself and was intended as 'the triumph of the modernist idea'.[111] As such, it included a selection of what he saw as the most significant examples of modern graphic taste that had been designed in Italy since 1933. Exhibits were arranged by type: everyday printed ephemera, leaflets, pamphlets, booklets and catalogues. Whereas the first section acknowledged international influences, the display in the third section was also expected to provide supporting evidence against any charge of passively copying foreign models. According to Modiano:

> Whoever is familiar with Swiss, German or French typography will not miss the way in which the equilibrium, the "inventions", [...] the liveliness of plastic forms and colours of the Italian material distance themselves from the other typographies. With their controlled creativity and with their inventiveness freed from any strict method, they are quintessentially ours.[112]

Although vague, Modiano's argument for the Italianness of Italian graphic design as based on a balanced mix between creativity, inventiveness and method, but not limited to a rigid set of rules, has become a trope of the historiography of Italian graphic design.[113]

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110   From the picture one can identify El Lissitzky's book *Pro dva kvadrata. Suprematicheskii skaz v 6-ti postroikakh* (Berlin: Skify, 1922), published in Berlin in 1922. The book was recently reedited by the Tate: *About Two Squares: A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions* (London: Tate, 2015).

111   '[...] trionfo della tesi modernista [...]'. Guido Modiano, 'L'Arte Grafica alla VII Triennale di Milano', *Industria della Stampa*, 11 (4-5), July-August 1940, p. 194.

112   'Ma a chiunque conosca la tipografia svizzera o tedesca o francese non sfugge come l'equilibrio, le "invenzioni", [...] la vivacità di forme plastiche e coloristiche del materiale italiano, si distacchino dalle altre tipografie e siano quanto di più nostro, nella loro fantasia controllata, nella loro inventiva svincolata da schemi angusti'. Modiano, *Industria della Stampa*, 11 (4-5), July-August 1940, p. 196.

113   See, for instance: Paolo Fossato, *Lo Studio Boggeri: 1933-1973. Comunicazione Visuale e Grafica Applicata* (Cinisello Balsamo: Pizzi, 1974), unpaged; Carlo Vinti, 'Lora Lamm's "Third Way" to the Corporate Image', in *Lora Lamm. Graphic Design in Milan 1953-1963*, ed. by Lara Lamm and Simonetta Ossanna Cavadini (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2013), p. 28.

3.15   Luigi Veronesi (curator and exhibition designer), Mostra della Grafica, 1st section 'La Grafica nella Coerenza del Gusto', 7th Milan Triennale, 1940

3.16   Bruno Munari (curator and exhibition designer), Mostra Grafica, 2nd section 'Le Fonti del Gusto Moderno nella Grafica', 7th Milan Triennale, 1940

The forth section of the exhibition was devoted to mass propaganda (see Illustration **3.17**). Advertisements were displayed in a suspended structure designed by Pintori and Sinisgalli: a succession of three-dimensional white frames, enclosing a series of white panels in an accordion bookbinding-like arrangement.[114] Posters hung in a display case against the wall and included works by Carboni, Veronesi, Nizzoli, and by the Swiss graphic designer Xanti Schawinsky. Three exemplars of Persico's aforementioned propaganda posters for the Fascist plebiscite of 1934 were also on display.

Eleven monographic panels of the most important 'Italian technicians or graphic artists' were included in the fifth section (see Illustration **3.18.a**).[115] These were: Bertieri, Bianchi, Buffoni, Carboni, D'Errico, Dradi-Rossi (Carlo Dradi and Attilio Rossi), Modiano, Munari, Muratore, Nizzoli, Ricas (Riccardo Castagnetti), Persico, and Veronesi. A larger panel was dedicated to Persico (see Illustration **3.18.b**).

In the sixth section, pages and covers of magazines – *Casabella*, *Campo Grafico*, *La Lettura*, *Edilizia Moderna*, *La Rivista del Popolo d'Italia*, *Natura*, *Tecnica ed Organizzazione*, and *I Tessili Nuovi* – were displayed on a suspended, curved structure (see Illustration **3.19**). The section, which was curated by D'Errico, was arguably the most inventive installation designed by Pintori and Sinisgalli. The duo had used similar curved elements in a previous advertising display for Olivetti at the Mostra Leonardesca (Leonardo Exhibition) that was held in Milan at the Palazzo dell'Arte the previous year.[116] Recalling the impression roll of a rotary printing press, the suspended structure for the Mostra Grafica was an effective and suggestive display in line with Modiano's concept of graphism as the outcome of a fruitful dialogue between typography and architecture.

Finally, the last section provides evidence of Modiano's awareness of strengths and weaknesses of modernist vocabulary. Dedicated to book design – both paperbacks and limited editions – the seventh section was a compromise position with a more conservative approach to graphics. It was curated by Bertieri, who, as seen

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114   The list of exhibitors included: Alfieri&Lacroix, Istituto Grafico Bertieri, Studio Boggeri, Dalle Nogare & Armetti, Esperta, A. Luciani & Co., Grafa, Grafitalia (Pizzi & Pizio), Società Grafica G. Modiano, Rinaldo Muggiani, Ranotti (Turin), Officine G. Ricordi & Co., Stabilimento Grafico Vanzetti & Vanoletti, and Industria Grafica Vera. See, *VII Triennale di Milano: Guida* (Milan: 1940), pp. 188-89.

115   '[…] tecnici o artisti grafici italiani […]'. *VII Triennale di Milano: Guida* (Milan: 1940), p. 189.

116   In his review of the Mostra Leonardesca, Modiano described Pintori and Sinisgalli's installation for Olivetti as an example of 'graphism'. See: Modiano, *Campo Grafico*, 7 (3-5), March-May 1939, pp. 103-04.

3.17   Leonardo Sinisgalli and Giovanni Pintori (exhibition designers), Mostra Grafica, 4th
        section, 7th Milan Triennale, 1940: one can identify Xanti Schawinsky's posters for Illy
        coffee and for Cervo hats manufacturer (both 1934), Erberto Carboni's poster for the
        summer cruises 'Italia' (1937), Edoardo Persico's propaganda posters for the fascist
        plebiscite (1934)

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b

3.18   Leonardo Sinisgalli and Giovanni Pintori (exhibition designers), Mostra Grafica, 5th
section 'Gli Artisti Grafici Moderni più Significativi', 7th Milan Triennale, 1940: **.a**
installation shot; **.b** panel celebrating Edoardo Persico's career, featuring examples of the
two pages in one layout for the architecture magazine *Casabella*

3.19 Ezio D'Errico (curator), Leonardo Sinisgalli and Giovanni Pintori (exhibition designers), Mostra Grafica, 6th section, 7th Milan Triennale, 1940

in Chapter 1, had devoted his career to the study and revival of Italian typographic tradition. The inclusion of a more traditionalist approach might seem at odds with Modiano's celebration of the victory of modernism. On the contrary, it can be interpreted as implicit acknowledgement of the inappropriate use of modernist techniques and aesthetics to all types of printed material. As declared by Modiano himself in 1937, 'the layout of the literature and plain typography book [… was] the outcome of a centuries-old selection and its form [was], possibly, definitive'.[117] Thus, as already argued by graphic design historian Carlo Vinti, the seventh section suggests that by the early-1940s the quarrel between exponents of a more traditionalist approach to book design – e.g. Bertieri – and the advocates of the modern graphic taste – such as the campisti and Modiano – had mitigated, enabling in-between positions in the interest of graphics itself.[118]

The book design display was not the only aspect of the Mostra della Grafica at odds with Modiano's attempt to use the Triennale as a showcase for the modern graphic taste. The catalogue could not have been more distant from what one would have expected after reading the exhibition agenda. It is a letterpress and hand sewed booklet.[119] The text is printed in two colours – black and red – in italic, serif font, and arranged in a symmetrical and justified layout. Despite the serif font, the titles are the only exception to the otherwise conservative look of the catalogue (see Illustration **3.20**). By ignoring the central fold, the capitalised red titles link the double-page spread, creating a moderate version of the two pages in one layout.

After almost a decade of lively debate, the Mostra Grafica at the 7th Milan Triennale signalled a key moment in the professionalisation of graphic design in Italy, providing evidence of the greater self-awareness and professional confidence

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117   'Il libro letterario o di tipografia pura […] è costruzione portata da una selezione di secoli alla forma, forse, definitiva'. Modiano, *Risorgimento Grafico*, 34 (1), January 1937, p. 25.

118   See: Vinti, 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica" alla VII Triennale', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), pp. 56-59. Although mitigated, the quarrel was still alive as demonstrated by Mario Tortora's review of the Mostra della Grafica, published, not surprisingly, in *Risorgimento Grafico*. Bertieri's display was the only one to be excluded from Tortora's otherwise negative review. According to Tortora, the seventh section was, in fact, the only one to provide visitors with a chance to rest from a chaotic and overcrowded display and admire pages that recalled the Italian tradition of book design. See: Mario Tortora, 'Note alla Settima Triennale', *Risorgimento Grafico*, 37 (4), October 1940, p. 143. *Ufficio Moderno* criticised also Guido Modiano for the exclusion of renowned poster artists – such as Gino Boccassile and Sepo (Severo Pozzati) – from the forth section, and of *Ufficio Moderno* itself from the magazine display. See: 'La Grafica alla Triennale', *Ufficio Moderno: La Pubblicità*, 15 (6), June 1940, pp. 232-33.

119   1,000 copies of the catalogue were printed and distributed before the opening of the exhibition. I consulted the exemplar n. 456, TM BG.

SEZIONE SECONDA — IL GUSTO

In questa sezione saranno chiariti gli aspetti di una tipografia coerente con i tempi attuali, onde avvicinare il pubblico alla comprensione delle sue migliori espressioni.

Si insiste programmaticamente sulla tipografia *soltanto perchè essa è la* matrice *di tutte le arti grafiche e perchè, più della lito o della rotocalco, ripete le proprie espressioni da elementi autonomi.*

Si sottolineeranno, quindi, i procedimenti che, dalle forme classiche e neoclassiche, hanno portato ad una tipografia più espressiva, più aderente ai bisogni della propaganda moderna, più coerente col gusto del nostro tempo quale è stabilito dalle espressioni artistiche d'oggi;

si indicheranno riferimenti col « grafismo » dell'architettura moderna;

MODERNO NELLA TIPOGRAFIA

si segnaleranno rapporti con nuove espressioni artistiche (astrattismo):

Tali contatti nel gusto, nelle tendenze e nella espressione posti in evidenza con esempi suggestivi, risolveranno questa sezione in una delle più interessanti ai fini della coltura e della sensibilità contemporanea.

3.20   Guido Modiano, Mostra Grafica, exhibition catalogue, 7th Milan Triennale, 1940

reached by Italian graphic designers by the early 1940s. The resonance of Modiano's exhibition and his reception within the graphic and printing industry fields crossed national borders. The Mostra Grafica featured in two special issues devoted to the Italian graphics of the German magazines *Deutscher Drucker* and *Druck und Werbekunst*, printed in July 1941 and early-1942 respectively.[120] Writing in *Deutscher Drucker*, the former director of the advertising department at Olivetti, Renato Zveteremich, described the Mostra Grafica as a 'fundamental point' that had provided an overview of a decade of Italian graphic production.[121] Giovanni Pizzuto held a similar position in *Druck und Werbekunst*. Ex-collaborator of *Campo Grafico*, Pizzuto argued that the exhibition demonstrated the way in which 'the new aesthetics had penetrated the Italian production'. He then pointed out that, 'as foreseen by Modiano, the graphics [had become] the field of specialist artists rather than bona fide typographers'.[122] The comment refer to the aforementioned notion of 'graphism', according to which Italian graphic design was gradually taking shape at the convergence between typography, visual arts and rationalist architecture, and it had become the field of a new professional figure that was not strictly linked to the printing industry.

3.6 ADAPTING THE INTERWAR 'GOOD TASTE' RHETORIC TO THE POSTWAR AGENDA: GRAPHIC DESIGN AT THE 9TH AND 11TH MILAN TRIENNALE, 1951 AND 1957

In this section, I investigate whether and how graphic designers' use of the Triennale as an arena for the mediation of the profession adapted to the dramatically changed political, cultural and economic context of postwar Italy. To this end, I investigate the two graphic design exhibitions that were included in the Milan Triennale during the postwar period. These were the Mostra d'Arti Grafiche e

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120   Both issues featured bilingual German-Italian articles. Contributors acknowledged the impact of the New Typography on the modernisation of Italian graphic production over the last ten years. See: *Deutscher Drucker: Deutschland-Italien Heft*, July 1941; and *Druck und Werbekunst: Italienische Werbegraphic*, 1, 1942. According to Vinti, the special issues were one of the many outcomes of the cultural exchange and technological collaboration between the two allied countries that had been promoted since 1938. See: Vinti 'Modiano e la "Mostra Grafica"', *Progetto Grafico*, 4-5 (2005), p. 60.

121   '[…] punto fermo […]'. Renato Zveteremich, 'Panorana Attuale della Pubblicità Italiana', *Deutscher Drucker: Deutschland-Italien Heft*, July 1941, p. 387.

122   '[…] le nuove estetiche siano penetrate nella produzione italiana […] come prevedeva Modiano, la grafica è piuttosto un campo per gli artisti specializzati che per i puri tipografi'. Giuseppe Pizzuto, 'Guido Modiano, ein Italienischer Drucker – Evoluzione della Tipografia in Italia attraverso l'Opera di Guido Modiano', *Druck und Werbekunst: Italienische Werbegraphic*, 1, 1942, p. 7.

Pubblicità (Graphic Arts and Advertising Exhibition) at the 9th Triennale in 1951 and the Mostra di Arte Grafica (Graphic Arts Exhibition) at the 11th Triennale in 1957.[123]

The Mostra d'Arti Grafiche e Pubblicità at the 9th Triennale in 1951 recalled interwar rhetoric on the need to educate clients and the general public, suggesting the resilience of the 'good taste' discourse as a professional legitimation device. The exhibition was curated by the advertising technician, Dino Villani, and exhibition designer and advertising artist, Erberto Carboni. Its major goal was to illustrate the ways in which advertising and graphics recurred to experimental visual languages to attract viewers' attention. Attention was drawn to the way in which both advertising and graphics were expected to introduce the general public to a certain type of cutting-edge aesthetics that they would not otherwise come across.[124] A selection of the most recent advertisements from the United States, France, Britain, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, Japan and Italy welcomed visitors to the exhibition space, illustrating the curators' awareness of the relationship between visual communication and the socio-cultural context in which this was produced and consumed.[125] The exhibition continued with a retrospective of about fifty years of graphics and advertising in Italy. Finally, fifteen graphic designers and poster artists were invited to design a poster representing the 'advertisement of tomorrow', that is the 'advertising that the artist and technician will be able to make once they will be no longer dependent upon the arbitrary

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123   See the official catalogues: *Nona Triennale di Milano: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: S.A.M.E., 1951), pp. 86-88; *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), pp.121-32. For an overview of the Milan Triennale in the postwar period, see: *Design in Triennale 1947-68*, ed. by Bassi and Riccini; Rocca, *Atlante della Triennale*, pp. 46-53; Giampiero Bosoni, 'Le Triennali del Design', in *Milano Anni Cinquanta*, ed. by Gianfranco Petrillo and Adolfo Scalpellli (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1986), pp. 758-78; Pansera; *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale*; Giulia Ciliberto, 'Rappresentazioni del Prodotto Industriale. Triennale di Milano, 1940-1964', AIS/Design. *Storia e Ricerche*, 1 (2013), http://www.aisdesign.org/aisd/rappresentazioni-del-prodotto-industriale-triennale-di-milano-1940-1964 [accessed 1 April 2017].

124   *Nona Triennale di Milano: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: S.A.M.E., 1951), p. 86. See also the exhibition press release: 'La Sezione della Grafica Pubblicitaria', archival document, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 112.02 V, pp. 1-3. The exhibition was also announced in specialist magazine: Attilio Rossi, 'Ai Fatti le Conclusioni', *Linea Grafica*, 4 (1-2), January-February 1951, p. 5.

125   Archival documents evidence that the organisers of the Mostra d'Arti Grafiche e Pubblicità contacted the editorial staff of the main international specialist magazines to ask for a selection of graphic works that, according to them, would represent their own country at its best. Letter from Dino Villani to the editorial staff of *Graphis* (Zürich), *Graphik* (Stuttgart), *Gebrauchsgraphik* (Berlin), *Publimondial* (Paris) and *The Studio* (London), 13 March 1951, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 210 V.

requests of inexperienced clients'.[126] Implicit in the 'advertisement of tomorrow' initiative was the usual idea of the need to educate both public and clients by showing them exemplars of so-considered good design.[127]

The 1951 exhibition provided visitors with a historical overview on Italian graphics, focusing in particular on advertising and poster art. The focus was supported by Carboni's exhibition design. This drew visitors' attention to formal aspects and individual's creativity, showing no attempt to convey a coherent and comprehensive image of graphic design both as a discipline and a profession. Centre stage was taken by a semi-transparent, spiral structure intended as a tribute to the poster artist Leonetto Cappiello (see Illustration 3.21).[128] An anonymous commentator criticised Carboni for having designed 'scenery in which printed artefacts [were] used to fill up spaces, rather than rational supports that would have allowed [visitors] to see the printed artefacts in the best possible way'.[129] The resulting effect of this 'wrong reversal of principles', argued the critic, was that printed artefacts were perceived as 'meaningless in such large space, and even posters [lost] their actual size'.[130] The spiral structure was compared to the Tower of Babel, spreading the lies and misinformation through advertising. The bitter

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126   '[...] pubblicità che si potrà realizzare quando l'artista ed il tecnico non subiranno più arbitrarie imposizioni da parte di committenti poco esperti'. Letter from Dino Villani and Erberto Carboni to a list of 15 graphic designers, archival document, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 210 V.

127   Invited designers included well-known figures of the early 20th century poster-art such as Marcello Dudovich, Sepo (alias of Severo Pozzati) and Federico Seneca; protagonists of the interwar modernisation of Italian visual communication in accordance with modernist aesthetics and techniques such as Giovanni Pintori, Luigi Veronesi, Marcello Nizzoli, the Studio Boggeri and Bruno Munari; and the younger generation of graphic designers represented by Max Huber, Albe Steiner and Remo Muratore. Each designer was commissioned to design a poster for a different fake client advertising a variety of products from stockings to perfumes and lipstick, from cigarettes to televisions and oranges, from fashion brands to coffee and spirits. 'La Pubblicità di Domani', archival document, dated 27 February 1951, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 210 V.

128   The spiral structure recalled the orange peel in Cappiello's iconic poster for Bitter Campari that was reproduced – both in original and close-up versions – multiple times within the exhibition space. The structure was not the only floating element of Carboni's extravagant exhibition design. Suspended from the ceiling there were also a cone with a round screen at the base, and a geometric abstract installation. On Erberto Carboni exhibition design, see: *Erberto Carboni: Exhibitions and Displays* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1957) in particular pp. 134-35.

129   '[...] invece che dei supporti razionali per far vedere nel miglior modo possibile degli stampati, uno scenario in cui gli stampati gli servono per riempire gli spazi'. 'Le Arti Grafiche alla Triennale', *Bollettino Centro Studi Grafici*, 5 (31), June 1931, p. 1.

130   '[...] sbagliata in versione di principi [...] insignificanti in tanto spazio, perfino I cartelli perdono le loro dimensioni reali'. *Bollettino Centro Studi Grafici*, 5 (31), June 1931, p. 1.

a

b

3.21 Dino Villani (curator), Erberto Carboni (exhibition design), Mostra d'Arti Grafiche e Pubblicità, 9th Milan Triennale, 1951: **.a** and **.b** exhibition shots featuring reproductions of Leonetto Cappiello's poster for Bitter Campari (1921)

comparison hint to the troubled relationship between advertising and graphic design that was questioned at the time, as discussed later in Chapter 5.

By contrast, the Mostra di Arte Grafica at the 11th Milan Triennale of 1957 acquired a more nuanced purpose that exceeded the goal of mere professionalisation. According to the original press release, the 1957 exhibition set out to be yet another exhibition documenting 'the crucial contribution of the artist to printing and the evolution of taste and techniques, from the written page and the illustrated sheet of paper, to advertising'.[131] However, curators – Egidio Bonfante, Aldo Colombo, Franco Grignani, Attilio Rossi, Leonardo Sinisgalli and Ignazio Weiss – expanded its scope during the following months to include a far-reaching agenda aligned with postwar idealism.[132] Indeed, the exhibition shifted its focus onto the economic and cultural impact of graphic design and onto the resulting responsibility of graphic designers towards society.[133] Nevertheless, the profession's interest was not put aside. Illustrating once again the criteria of good design, the selection of visual artefacts and explanatory wall texts were intended 'against a slapdash attitude and unpreparedness, in defence of a frail profession'.[134]

The curators' overt political agenda was clearly expressed in the wall text that greeted visitors in the exhibition space (see Illustration **3.22**) and appeared in the catalogue with the unambiguous title 'Responsabilità della Grafica' (The Responsibility of Graphics).

> No other medium has proved to be more persuasive, more subverting, more dangerous and more edifying [than the printed paper]. Some pieces of paper are more offensive than an insult, more unpleasant than a purge. We will show you some uses of the printed paper as a tool of control, persuasion, information, culture and amusement. [...] Amongst the resources available to our civilisation, [visual communication] is the most corruptible, the most vulnerable, but certainly the least short-lived, the liveliest and the least suppressible. [...] Printed pages look for proselytes, accomplices and clients amongst often unprepared

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131   '[...] il determinante contributo dell'artista alla stampa e l'evoluzione del gusto e della tecnica dalla pagina di testo al foglio illustrato, alla pubblicità'. Ivan Matteo Lombardo, 'L'XI Triennale a Milano', *Stile Industria*, 3 (8), October 1956, p. 50.

132   On the impact of postwar humanism in international exhibition and design fairs, see for instance: David Crowley, 'Humanity Rearranged: The Polish and Czechoslovak Pavilions at Expo 58', *West 86*[th], 19 (1) (2012), pp. 88-105; Mil de Kooning and Rika Devos, '"Les Choses Ne Seront Plus Jamais Comme Avant". L'Architecture Moderne à l'Expo 58', in *L'Architecture Moderne à l'Expo 58: 'Pour un Monde Plus Humain'*, ed. by Mil de Kooning and Rika Devos (Brussels: Fond Mercator, 2006).

133   On the Mostra di Arte Grafica, see: Bassi and Riccini, *Design in Triennale 1947-68*, p. 127.

134   'Contro la faciloneria, l'improvvisazione, per la difesa di un mestiere delicato [...]'. Leonardo Sinisgalli, 'La Responsabilità della Grafica', in *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 121.

3.22 Egidio Bonfante, Franco Grignani and Aldo Colombo (exhibition design), Mostra di Arte Grafica, 11th Milan Triennale, 1957

and naïve people. It's better for the general public to learn how to recognise at a glance its invisible spokesperson.[135]

Addressing a general public that was perceived as 'more and more threatened by the proliferation of printed paper', curators were committed to nurture active, aware and informed viewers.[136]

Despite not being mentioned, the reference to the recent past of the Fascist dictatorship is difficult to miss, as it is the implicit mistrust of propaganda – being it either political or commercial. The author of the text was Leonardo Sinisgalli, eclectic figure of the Italian design community, a poet with a scientific background who had worked in the 1940s in the communication department at Olivetti and then moved in the postwar period to work for Pirelli and Finmeccanica. Sinisgalli's text irritated the journalist, former partisan and prominent member of the Italian Communist Party, Rossana Rossanda, who criticised the so-felt patronising tone and condescending attitude of the 'opening proclamation'.[137] She then sarcastically defined Sinisgalli as a 'hater of the written word […] who describes the circulation of the press around the world as one would speak about a locust's' infestation, and alerts "the simple and innocent people" to the evil power of suggestion of the printed page'.[138] Published in the Marxist cultural and political weekly magazine *Il Contemporaneo*, the article does not necessarily exemplify general public opinion, but it does raise the question of the audience's response to the exhibition. Furthermore, the wall text and the public response provide illustration of the political stance of visual communication in everyday practice.

In contrast with Carboni's distracting design for the 1951 exhibition, the Mostra di Arte Grafica was structured in a soberer way so as to avoid confusing

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135   'Nessun altro mezzo si è dimostrato più persuasive, più sconvolgente, più pericoloso più edificante. […] Ci sono pezzi di carta più offensivi di un insulto, più sgradevoli di una purga. Mostreremo alcune applicazioni della carta stampata come strumento di dominio, di persuasione, di informazione, di diletto. […] Tra i beni di cui dispone la nostra civiltà […] è il più corruttibile, il più vulnerabile, ma certamente il meno caduco, il più vitale e insopprimibile. […] le pagine stampate cercano proseliti, complici, clienti tra gente spesso sprovveduta e innocente. È bene che il pubblico impari a distinguere con un colpo d'occhio il suo interlocutore invisibile'. Leonardo Sinisgalli, 'La Responsabilità della Grafica', in *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 121.

136   '[…] pubblico ogni giorno più minacciato dalla inflazione della carta stampata'. *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 121.

137   '[…] proclama iniziale […]'. Rossana Rossanda, 'I Nodi Vengono al Pettine', *Il Contemporaneo*, 10 August 1947, quoted in Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale*, p. 440.

138   ' […] odiatore della parola scritta […] che descrive la diffusione della stampa nel mondo come si parla di una invasione di cavallette, e mette in guardia "la gente semplice e innocente" dal malvagio potere di suggestione della pagina stampata'. Rossanda, *Il Contemporaneo*, 10 August 1947, quoted in Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale*, p. 440.

and diverting visitors' attention.[139] Along both sides of the exhibition space stood a series of wall panels (see Illustration **3.23**). Detached from the walls at different angles, the panels partitioned the open space and articulated the exhibition discourse with different arguments, which were clearly differentiated by the alternation of white and black backgrounds. Four freestanding bookcases and two showcase tables stood along the exhibition route. The ceiling consisted of two opposing sloping and pleated white panels at different levels. It was a functional solution intended to reflect and diffuse the light projected from underneath. It was also a theatrical element that recalled paper folding, thus referring to graphic design's main material while adding a clever decorative feature to the exhibition design.

The 1957 exhibition was organised in eight sections. Six were curated by a member of the organising committee, with the remaining two, a section of trademarks (see Illustration **3.24.a**) and a section devoted to Bruno Munari's unreadable books, which were curated by Boggeri and Munari respectively.[140] Visitors could see a selection of black and white advertisements, national and international newspapers and book jackets. The explanatory text for a section on paperback editions and industries' in-house publications reiterated the belief in the socio-cultural impact of printed material and its role in the spread of literacy and culture at all social levels.[141] A section on avant-garde graphics introduced the professional figure of the graphic artist to the public. In line with the so far outlined description of the graphic designer, this was introduced as a new creative professional figure 'in-between figurative art and typography [...] that [had] merged the graphic sign

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139   On the graphic design exhibition at the 11th Milan Triennale, see: 'La Mostra della Grafica alla XI Triennale', *Linea Grafica*, 10 (9-10), September-October 1957, pp. 259-63; 'La Mostra della Grafica alla Triennale di Milano', *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici*, 11 (105), September 1957; Achille Perilli, 'Lungo Viaggio Intorno alla XI Triennale', *Civiltà delle Macchine*, 5 (5-6), September-November 1957, pp. 29-31.

140   Franco Grignani was responsible for the section on black and white advertisements and dust jackets, Ignazio Weiss for newspapers and industries' house organs, Aldo Colombo for specialist publications, Leonardo Sinignalli for scientific books and paperback editions, and Attilio Rossi for the colour reproduction section. Collaborators of the Studio Boggeri designed the majority of trademarks in the exhibition: the selection included trademarks by the Swiss graphic designers Walter Ballmer, Carlo Vivarelli and Warja Honneger-Lavater, and by Munari, Nizzoli and Steiner. A 19th century papal emblem of a silk manufacturer and a symbol from pre-Colombian Mexico suggested an approach to trademark design beyond temporal and geographical boundaries. See the correspondence held at the Triennale: TM BP, TRN 11 DT 058.01 V. On the trademark section, see: 'Il Marchio', in *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 122. See also the correspondance between Antonio Boggeri and the organising commitee: TM BP, TRN 11 DT 058.05.

141   'Collezioni Economiche e Stampa Aziendale', in *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 127.
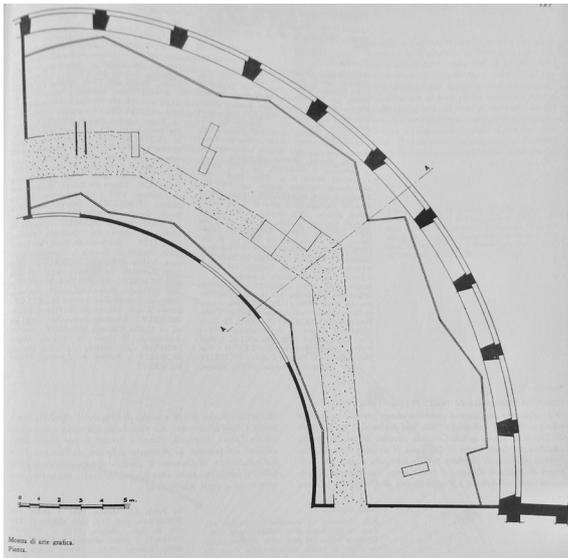
a
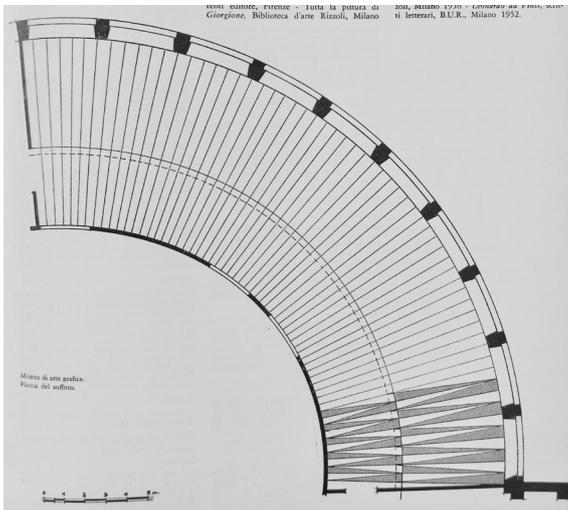
b
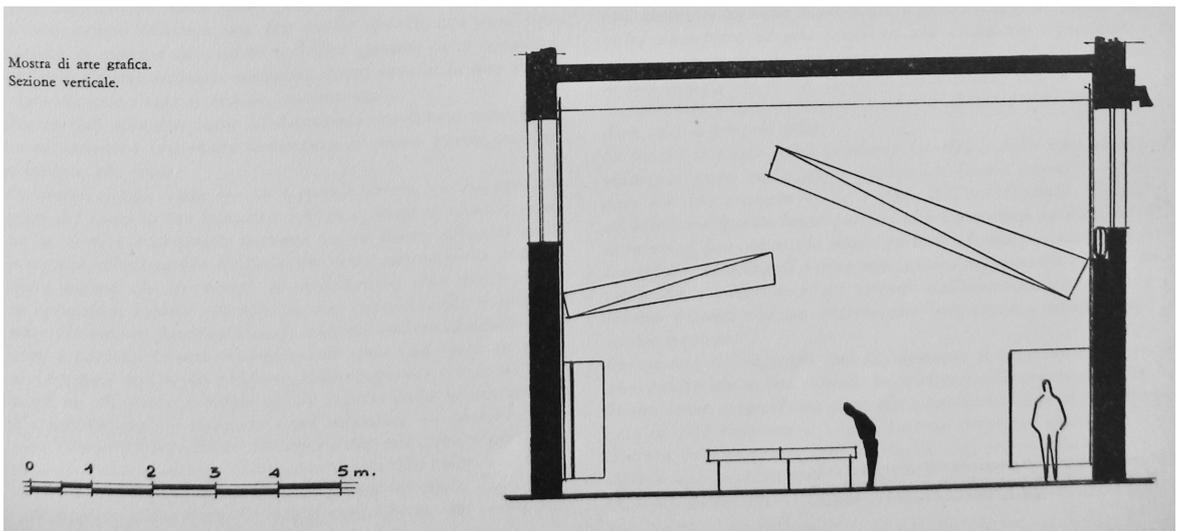
c

3.23   Mostra di Arte Grafica, 11th Milan Triennale, 1957: **.a** floor plan; **.b** ceiling plan; **.c** section drawing

a

b

3.24   Mostra di Arte Grafica, 11th Milan Triennale, 1957: **.a** Antonio Boggeri (curator), section on trademarks; **.b** Attilio Rossi (curator), section on colour reproduction

with creativity: mutual conditioning between the artist and the typographer'.[142] The exhibition ended with a section devoted to colour reproduction, focusing on art books and artworks' reproduction. The topic was not only approached as a technical problem, but also as a cultural one, highlighting the 'need for reproductive accuracy […] in order to be faithful to the "cultural message"' of the artworks.[143] Finally, three flickering disks demonstrated the additive and subtractive colour mixing techniques, and the techniques of colours printing (see Illustration **3.24.b**).[144]

Curators of the Mostra di Arte Grafica, sought to engaged visitors, providing both the specialist and the general public with the instruments to evaluate, obviously with different degree of understanding, the technicalities, outcomes and broader impact of graphic design. Archival documents provide evidence of this intention to outreach to different kinds of audiences. Minutes and correspondences for the 1957 exhibition make several references to the need to adapt the communication strategy depending on the targeted audience and provide both the general and the specialist public with a clear, easy to understand, yet precise and challenging content.[145] I would also add that the very makeup of the curatorial team suggests the intention to increase the audience outreach. It should be noted that Sinisgalli, who had previously collaborated with Modiano for the Mostra Grafica at the 7th Triennale, and Ignazio Weiss, chief of the communication department at Olivetti, were the only two members of the exhibition committee who were non-practitioners and had a humanities background. Although outnumbered – two out of six members – their involvement indicates, on the one hand, that the interest in graphic design had exceeded the circle of practitioners. On the other hand, graphic designers' availability to collaborate with outsiders suggests

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142   'Tra l'arte figurative e la tipografia […] che ha unificato il segno grafico con la sua fantasia: mutuo condizionamento tra l'artista e il tipografo'. *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 129.

143   '[…] necessità di fedeltà riproduttiva […] ai fini di non tradire il suo "messaggio culturale"'. *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 130.

144   In the first two, disk lights of three primary colours turned on at different times yielding white – additive colour mixing – and black – subtractive colour mixing. The third disk featured three typographical screens with diverse inclinations. 'La Riproduzione a Colori', in *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 131.

145   See: 'Riunione della Commissione della Mostra Grafica del 19 Settembre 1956', meeting minute, 19 September 1956, TM BP, TRN 11 DT 058.01 V.

an awareness of the benefit of including a different perspective so as to avoid a self-referential dialogue.[146]

A further aspect of the 11th Milan Triennale questions graphic designers' self-promotional strategies and provides evidence of their struggle to acquire professional recognition as partners with the industrial designers. In 1957, graphic design was also included in a smaller way in the Mostra Internazionale dell' 'Industrial Design' (International Exhibition of 'Industrial Design').[147] The exhibition followed the Mostra di Arte Grafica, thus visitors who had attended both we likely to make comparisons between the two. The showcase n. 17 was devoted to the 'grafica industriale' (industrial graphics).[148] It featured the June 1957 issue of the industrial design magazine and house organ of the Associazione per il Disegno Industriale (Association for Industrial Design – ADI) *Stile Industria* with a cover

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146   However, a document retrieved in Albe Steiner's private archive casts doubts on the actual fulfilment of curators' attempts to reach a broader audience. The document reports the statistical analysis of visitors' feedback. At the 11th Triennale, visitors were asked to fill in a feedback form and select their favourite exhibition by ticking one more boxes on the form. After thirty-eight days from the opening of the 11th Milan Triennale, only 8.8% of the visitors who had filled in the feedback forms selected the Mostra Grafica as their favourite exhibition. The statistics in the document refer to a sample of 13,649 respondents (about the 30% of the total visitors) over a period of thirty-eight days – from the 27th of July to the 2nd of September. The most successful exhibition was the Mostra Internazionale dell'Abitazione (International Exhibition of the Dwelling) with 56.2% of the preferences, followed by the exhibition of glass and pottery with 40.6%. The industrial design exhibition was ranked 11th with 15.2%. Although arguably biased and scientifically questionable, the statistics call into question the popularity of the exhibition and thus the curators' success in expanding its outreach. The same document also reports the feedback of visitors of the 9th Milan Triennale. In 1954, 5,042 visitors responded on the feedback forms that were distributed only during the last 60 days of the event. The Mostra d'Arti Grafiche e Pubblicità was ranked 12th with 27.6% of preferences. The glass and pottery exhibition were 1st and 2nd with 52.5% and 47.1%, respectively. See: 'Il Contatto con il Pubblico', archival document, Autumn 1957, AALS, D b.14 fasc.9.

147   'Mostra Internazionale dell'"Industrial Design"', *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), pp. 133-45.

148   *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 141. The exhibition was divided in twenty-five separated displays and included showcases, wall compartment, shelfs and tables. In addition to the showcase n. 17, graphic design was also included in the display of the cardboard manufacturer Container Corporation of America, CCA, that featured advertisements, packaging and exemplars of the company's corporate image. Graphic artefacts were designed, amongst others, by Herbert Bayer, former Bauhausler and chief of the visual communication department at CCA. The display included also Egbert Jacobson's book *Colour Harmony Manual* that offered visitors a different perspective on colour reproduction. On the output of the visual communication department at CCA, see: *Art, Design and the Modern Corporation*, ed. by Neil Harris and Martina Roudabush Norelli (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985). Egbert Jacobson's manual was the focus of the review of the CCA display at the 11th Triennale that appeared in *Stile Industria*: 'Container Corporation of America', *Stile Industria*, 4 (14), October 1957, p. 23.

design by Michele Provinciali (see Illustration **3.25**) and issues of the French publication *Esthétique Industrielle* and the American *Industrial Design* and *Design*.

By limiting 'industrial graphics' to industrial design magazines, the showcase presented graphic design as an agent of the mediation of industrial design products and companies rather than as a design form in its own right. Yet a detail of the catalogue suggests a different perception of graphic design that might counterbalance the somehow biased perspective of the showcase. In the catalogue, the graphic designers responsible for the graphic design of the Mostra Internazionale dell''Industrial Design' – Giulio Confalonieri and Ilio Negri – were clearly distinguished from those in charge of the exhibition design.[149] This small detail acknowledges graphic designers' new professional figure in postwar Italy and their jurisdiction over visual communication more broadly.

The presence of graphic design in the Mostra di Arte Grafica as well as its ambiguous position within the Mostra Internazionale dell' 'Industrial Design', introduces the issue of representing a profession that had equal footing in the worlds of advertising and design. This will be discussed at length in Chapter 5, which explores the foundation and early years of professional associations in Milan.

3.7 THE TRIENNALE AS AN EDUCATED CLIENT

To limit the analysis to graphic design exhibitions is to miss out a crucial aspect of the presence of graphic design at the Milan Triennale, that is the direct involvement of graphic designers in its promotion and communication.[150] As graphic designer Italo Lupi bluntly put it, 'the influence of the Triennale on graphics was not through exhibited objects but through its institutional graphics production. By making graphics, not by showing graphics. Graphic design is self-demonstrating'.[151] By commissioning graphic designers to design a more or less consistent visual communication system, the Milan Triennale turned from a mediating chan-

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149   *Undicesima Triennale: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1957), p. 133.

150   For an overview on visual communication artefacts for the Milan Triennale, see: *Come Comete*, ed. by Annichiarico and Piazza.

151   Italo Lupi, 'Intervista a Italo Lupi, Milano Luglio 2004', in *Design in Triennale 1947-68*, p. 136. Lupi worked as design consultant for the Milan Triennale from 1979 to 1980. He designed the visual identity for the 16th Triennale in 1979, and he co-designed with Achille Castiglioni the identity for the 17th Triennale in 1987. In 1983 he designed the official logo of the Triennale, and in 2014 he designed the visual identity for the 7th Triennale Design Museum exhibition. On Italo Lupi, see: Italo Lupi, *Autobiografia Grafica* (Milan: Corraini, 2013).

3.25   Michele Provinciali, cover design, *Stile Industria*, 4 (12), June 1957; the cover was exhibited in the showcase n. 17, Mostra Internazionale dell' 'Industrial Design' at the 11th Milan Triennale, 1957

nel, through which graphic designers attempted to educate the client's taste and articulate their professional identity, into an educated client itself that entrusted its very visual identity into the hand of professionals. To make this argument, this section returns to some of exhibitions covered in this chapter, and examines graphic practitioners' involvement in the visual communication of the Triennale.

For the first time in the history of the Milanese Triennale, the 7th Triennale in 1937 presented a consistent proto-visual identity. Indeed, all official publications, printed ephemera and souvenirs featured a recognisable visual language. In section 3.5, I argued that the catalogue of the Mostra Grafica at the 7th Triennale in 1937 was at odds with Modiano's vision of the exhibition as triumph of modernist design. Yet attention should be drawn to the logo on the cover of this catalogue (see Illustration **3.20.a**). Designed by graphic designer Enrico Ciuti, the logo illustrates the gradual shift from a painterly conception closer to poster art tradition, toward an increasingly more unified visual communication system. As design historian Mario Piazza observed, Ciuti's logo demonstrates 'the attempt to design a logo and express a visual synthesis that includes a combination of aspects: the regime's rhetoric, the centrality of Milan, the year of the event, but also a refined decorative feeling'.[152] Indeed, Ciuti's logo includes the regime's symbol of the fasces, the heraldic emblem of the House of Visconti – the so-called 'Biscione' – and the roman number seven.[153] Both fasces and 'Biscione' are stylised and reduced to outlined forms. On the poster, colourful rectangles alternate with the reiterated logo, creating a dynamic chessboard pattern (see Illustration **3.26.a**). The 'areas of pure colour – carmine red, emerald green, spectrum orange, ultramarine blue – vivid colours with no history nor time', as a commentator of the period described them, reflect the multifaceted nature of the event and suggest its

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152   '[...] il tentativo di progettare un marchio, formulare una sintesi visiva che contenga l'insieme degli aspetti: la retorica di regime, la centralità di Milano, l'annualità dell'evento, ma anche un fine senso decorativo [...]'. Mario Piazza, 'Le Storie Visive della Triennale', in *Come Comete*, ed. by Annichiarico and Piazza, p. 22.

153   The heraldic emblem of the House of Visconti became associated with Milan when the Visconti gained control over the city in 1277. The 'Biscione' is an argent and azure snake represented as eating to a human being (a child or moor). After the Visconti the emblem became part of the coat of arms of the House of Sforza. Nowadays, the 'Biscione' is used by the Milan-based football club Inter, by the car manufacturer Alfa Romeo and – in a modified version with a flower replacing the child – by Silvio Berlusconi's mass media company Mediaset.

a

b

c

3.26   Enrico Ciuti, visual communication system for the 7th Milan Triennale, 1940; **.a** poster, 68 × 99 cm; **.b** exhibition catalogue, 14.8 × 21.3 cm; **.c** admission ticket, 8.2 × 11.3 cm

internationalism.[154] The coloured pattern reappears in varied forms and arrangements in different media (see Illustration **3.26**).

Albeit officially absent, graphic design was embedded in the 8th Milan Triennale in 1947, articulating and mediating its very image. This was the first postwar Triennale. It was devoted to reconstruction, with a focus on housing, and set out to provide 'a prompt and real contribution to the recovery of Italian life by directing [...] all economic and technical powers towards the solution of the issues of reconstruction'.[155] Initially commissioned to Max Huber and Albe Steiner, the visual identity was later entrusted to Huber alone.[156] Featuring an elongated and bold sans-serif font of even width, in which the angular rigidity of the *T* is counterbalanced by the roundness of the *8*, Steiner's logo became the basis upon which Huber built up his visual communication system. This was as consistent and pervasive as ever before in the history of the Triennale. On a large scale, the *T8* invaded the cityscape: it approached commuters travelling on public transports, guided visitors through road signage, and tried to pique pedestrians' curiosity stencilled on the pavements in the environs of the Palazzo dell'Arte (see Illustration **3.27.a**). On a much smaller scale, it featured in the keyboards of the typewriters that were customised to include as 'an advertising prompt [...] the gigantic letters: T 8 Q in order to compose the acronyms: T8 [and] QT8' (see Illustration **3.27.b**).[157] The strategy was so effective that the 8th Triennale was rebranded and is indeed known as 'T8'.

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154   '[...] pure zone di colore, rosso carminio, verde smeraldo, l'arancio dello spettro, il blu oltremare, trasparenti colori senza storia né tempo'. G., 'L'Architettura alla VII Triennale', *Casabella*, 149, May 1940, p. 11.

155   '[...] tempestivo e reale contributo alla ripresa della vita italiana instradando [...] tutte le forze economiche e tecniche verso la soluzione dei problemi della ricostruzione'. Piero Bottoni, in *T8 Catalogo-Guida*, ed. by Lanfranco Bombelli Tiravanti (Milan: Meregalli, 1947), p. 7.

156   After having designed the logo, Steiner had, in fact, left Milan in April 1946 to spend a period in Mexico City. See letter exchange between Max Huber and Gian Giacomo Galligo, TM BP, TRN 08 DT 070.01 CM.

157   'Uno spunto pubblicitario [...] i caratteri giganti: T 8 Q per formare le sigle T8 QT8'. Undated archival document, TM BP. The QT8 – Quartiere Triennale 8 – was an experimental urbanisation project conceived by the communist architect Piero Bottoni, leading member of the interwar rationalist architecture movement. The experimental housing quarter was built in the northern part of Milan – the San Siro district – and was intended as a testing-ground for prefabricated building methods that were expected to respond promptly to the reconstruction agenda. Max Huber's visual communication system was also applied to the QT8. On the QT8, see, for instance: Graziella Tonon, 'QT8: Urbanistica e architettura per una nuova civiltà dell'abitare', in *Le case nella Triennale. Dal parco al QT8*, ed. by Graziella Leyla Ciagà and Graziella Tonon (Milan: Electa, 2005); Judi Loach. 'QT8: A Neglected Chapter in the History of Modern Town Planning', in *The Modern City Revisited*, ed. by Thomas Deckker, (London; New York: Spon Press, 2000), pp. 125-149.

a
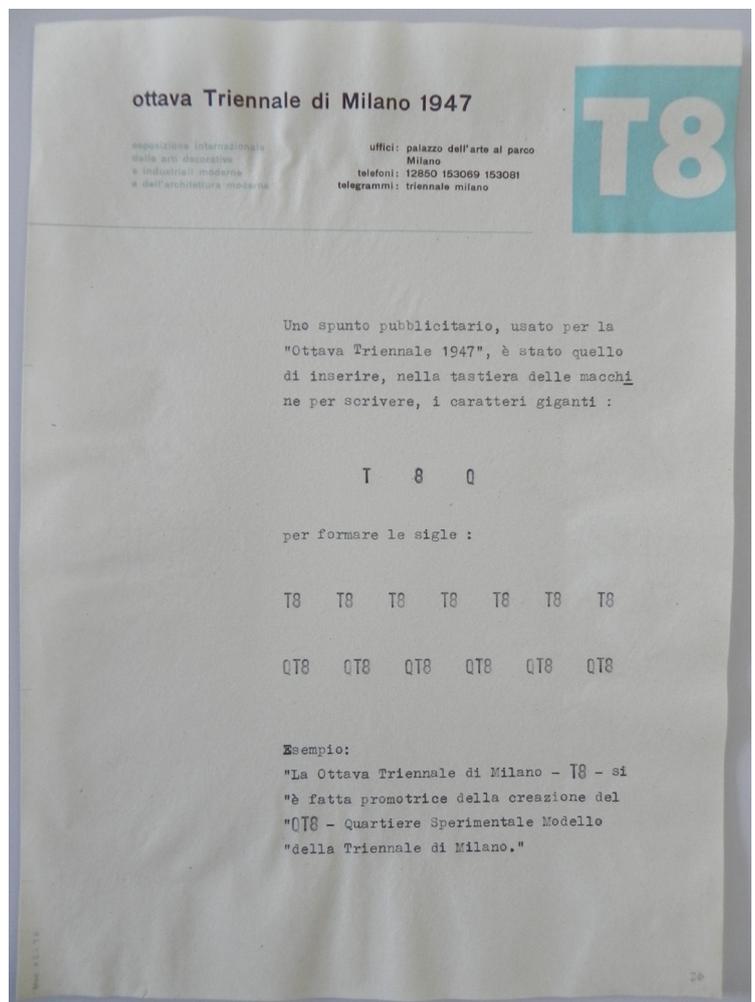
b

3.27 two exemplars from Max Huber's visual communication system for the 8th Milan Triennale, 1947, showing the consistent and pervasive use of Albe Steiner's logo *T8*: **.a** stencil signage; **.b** archival document illustrating the customised keyboards including special characters T, 8 and Q

Huber's visual communication system for the T8 is based on a visual vocabulary rooted in modernist aesthetics and aware of their further developments within the Swiss context. It features the 'Akzidenz Grotesk' font, lowercase writing, asymmetrical layout, grid compositions, active use of the white page, variation of type sizes and weights to emphasise content and rhythm in the typographic composition. Printed ephemera share a unified aspect (see Illustration **3.28**). Plain stationery could be customised, using ad hoc stickers and stamps (see Illustration **3.28.d**). The same visual vocabulary was also used for exhibits captions and signage (see Illustration **3.29**). Bright and bold colours add a touch of playfulness to the otherwise basic design, which was based on a limited set of visual elements whose sources are reduced to typography alone.

Although not yet a strict colour-coded system, the use of colours does not comply with mere aesthetic purposes. In the cover of the catalogue-guide a yellow and a blue line enclose a bright red *T8* (see Illustration **3.30**). Whereas the even width of lines and text highlights the geometric quality of the letterforms, the three primary colours seem to refer to colour reproduction. The enlarged halftone screen in the background reiterates the reference to reproduction techniques. Hence the use of colour is not finalised for decoration per se, but initiates a discourse with printing and graphic design at its centre. Recurring to the principles of Gestalt perception, the small dots in the background are perceptually grouped together to form a regular, simple and orderly pattern that is perceived as a form.[158] The T8 logo emerges from the halftone screen as a visual metaphor of graphic design giving form to the events.

Like the catalogue-guide, the Honour Award presents a symbolic use of colours (see Illustration **3.31**). Designed to be kept and possibly hung on a wall, the award is a hybrid: half promotional visual artefact and half limited edition print. The picture recalls the abstract and rhythmical compositions with strictly geometric elements and constructive design that feature in Concrete Art paintings.[159] However,

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158   On the use of Gestalt psychology in graphic design, see: Meredith Davis, *Graphic Design Theory* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2012), pp. 61-66.

159   Huber's lowercase signature appears to confirm the link to the Fine Arts world and the Concrete Art movement, which involved many graphic designers both in Italy and Switzerland. On Concrete Art and graphic design, see: Chiara Mari, 'Max Huber: Sinestesie tra Grafica e Pittura', *AIS/Design. Storia e Ricerche*, 1 (2013), http://www.aisdesign.org/aisd/max-huber-sinestesie-tra-grafica-e-pittura [accessed 16 December 2016]; Richard Hollis, 'Concrete Art, Architecture and Design', in Hollis, *Swiss Graphic Design*, pp. 169-71; Hans Rudolf Bosshard, 'Concrete Art and Typography', in *Max Bill: Typography, Advertising, Book Design*, ed. by Christoph Bignens, Hans Rudolf Bosshard and Gerd Fleischmann (Zurich: Niggli, 1999), pp. 56-106.
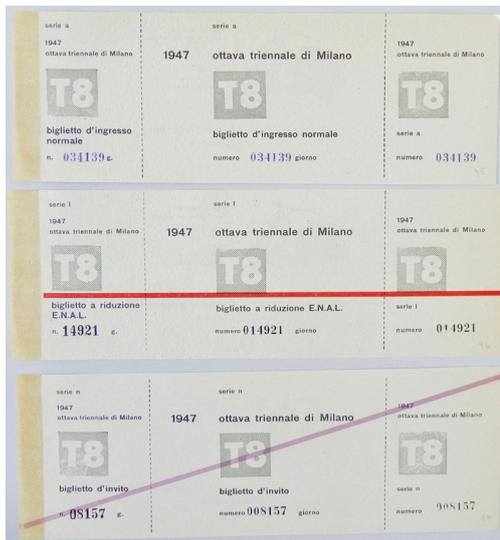
3.28   Max Huber, visual communication system for the 8th Milan Triennale, 1947; **.a** booklets, 21 × 14.7 cm; **.b** standard fare, discounted fare and guest tickets (from top to bottom); **.c** exhibitor's pass; **.d** customised envelope featuring a T8 sticker and stamp; **.e** banner

per informazioni
rivolgersi
al personale
di vigilanza

a

Fede Cheti, Milano
tessuti

Lini e Lane Fiorentine, Firenze
tovagliati

Scuola S. Caterina da Siena, Milano
ricami

Pezzi unici di Aligi Sassu

b

3.29 Max Huber, 8th Milan Triennale, 1947: **.a** signage; **.b** labels

3.30   Max Huber, catalogue, 8th Milan Triennale, 1947, 21 × 15 cm

3.31   Max Huber, Honour Award, 8th Milan Triennale, 1947, 47.4 × 34.5 cm
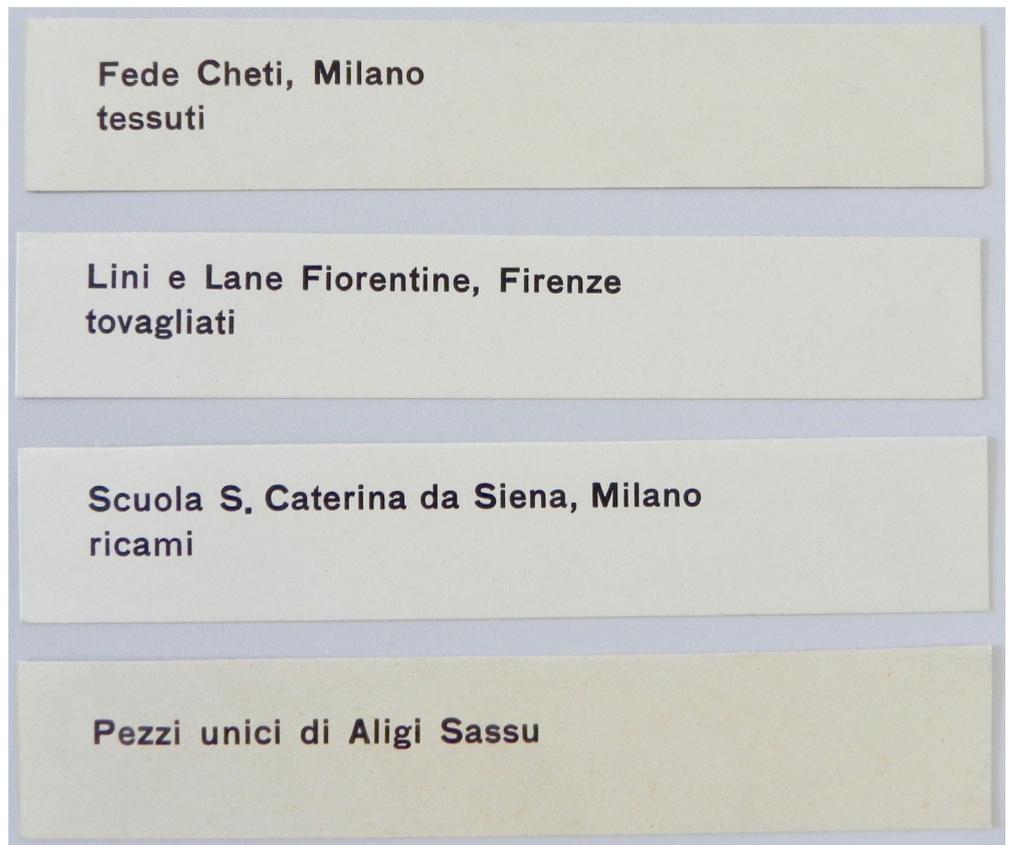
the colours refer to the flags of the seven countries that took part in the T8. The red of the Italian green-white-red flag moves on to the Belgian black-yellow-red flag. Then, it moves on again to the Czechoslovakian blue-white-red flag, while the yellow moves on to the Swedish blue-yellow flag. In the upper-right corner, the white of the red-white flags of Switzerland and Austria is combined with the colour blue to give the Argentinian blue-white flag. What at first glance appeared as an abstract composition of colourful triangles turns out to be a poetic graphic composition that makes a political statement about the renewed dialogue and mutual exchange between countries. Indeed, 'to strengthen [...] the basis of a new and human civilisation' after the trauma of WW2 was the ethical goal of the T8, whose so-intended pivotal contribution to the promotion of the renewal of international relationships is represented by the central position of the Italian flag.[160] More broadly, the visual analysis of the T8 Honour Award unmasked the ideological function of abstract compositions in the postwar period.[161]

Marcello Nizzoli was commissioned to design the visual communication of the 9th Milan Triennale in 1951. Archival documents report the back and forth dialogue between the Triennale and the designer, providing insights into the client-designer relationship. Internal communication provides evidence of the awareness of the secretary general, Giuseppe Gorgerino, of the importance of a consistent visual communication system and his confidence in Nizzoli's expertise. 'It is essential', Gorgerino wrote, 'for the official publications of the 9th Triennale to share a unique and coherent style'.[162] Nizzoli was invited to 'keep an eye on' the design of all printed matter in order to ensure they shared a 'certain familiar vibe'.[163] Captions, signage and notice boards were also under Nizzoli's supervision so as to create a 'unique system'.[164] Communication became more and more frequent with the approaching of the opening date and the designer's work did not terminate with the opening on May the 12th, 1951. On the contrary, at the end of the month

160   '[...] risaldare [...] le basi di una civiltà nuova ed umana'. Piero Bottoni, in *T8 Catalogo-Guida*, ed. by Lanfranco Bombelli Tiravanti (Milan: Meregalli, 1947), p. 12.

161   See: David Crowley, 'Europe Reconstructed, Europe Divided', in *Cold War Modern: Design 1945-1970*, ed. by David Crowley and Jane Pavitt (London: V&A Publishing, 2008), pp. 58-59.

162   'E necessario che [...] pubblicazioni ufficiali della Nona Triennale abbiano uno stile unico e concorde [...]'. Internal communication memorandum from Giuseppe Gorgerino to Marcello Nizzoli, 22 March 1951, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 014 C.

163   '[...] tenere d'occhio [...] una certa aria di famiglia [...]'. Internal communication memorandum from Giuseppe Gorgerino to Marcello Nizzoli, 22 March 1951, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 014 C.

164   '[...] schema unico [...]'. Internal communication memorandum from Giuseppe Gorgerino to Marcello Nizzoli, 29 March 1951, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 014 C.

Gorgerino wrote again to Nizzoli requesting the design of a sheet of paper to write restaurant orders on 'in tune with the characters and colours of the Triennale'.[165]

What this tells us is that, whereas in the interwar period graphic practitioners had often been protesting against the Triennale about not being recognised as the only profession having jurisdiction over visual communication, in 1951 roles were ironically reversed. This time, it was Gorgerino who had to insist with Nizzoli and urge him to come daily to the Palazzo dell'Arte to deal with last minute issues.[166] Speaking the same language, Gogerino – the client – and Nizzoli – the designer – had a professional relationship based on mutual respect. Graphic designers had managed to turn the Triennale into an 'educated client': a commissioning body that recognised and valued professional knowledge and pretended a certain degree of professionalism. More broadly, they had made progress towards attaining authority over the client and having the profession's jurisdiction recognised.[167]

As was the case with Huber' design for the T8, Nizzoli's supervision of the 9th Milan Triennale visual communication ensured a coherent system that featured sans-serif lowercase lettering, bright colours and asymmetrical layout (see Illustration 3.32). Nevertheless, Nizzoli's design represents a different approach to visual communication in contrast with Huber's strict modernism. The pictorial logo appears at odds with a design whose sources are otherwise largely drawn on typography. As explained in the official catalogue, the logo was 'a free interpretation of Egyptian ideograms' and it was intended 'to unmistakably postulate one of the oldest and best-known decorative traditions: that of the lapidary inscription, which is [...]truly the womb of any decorative expression, from the most ancient to the most recent'.[168] When contextualised within postwar humanism, Nizzoli's reference to ancient Egypt might be interpreted as an attempt to rediscover a

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165   '[...] intonato con I caratteri ed i colori della Triennale'. Internal communication memorandum from Giuseppe Gorgerino to Marcello Nizzoli, 31 May 1951, TM BP, TRN 09 DT 014 C.

166   Internal communication memorandum from Giuseppe Gorgerino to Marcello Nizzoli, undated (early May 1951), TM BP, TRN 09 DT 014 C.

167   For a recent perspective on the graphic designers' effort to educate the client and on the benefits of collaborating with 'competent' clients, see: Giovanni Anceschi, 'Il Committente Competente', *Progetto Grafico*, 24 (29) (2016), pp. 18-27.

168   '[...] libera interpretazione di caratteri ideogrammatici egiziani [...] postulare con molta evidenza una delle più antiche e illustri tradizioni decorative: quella della scrittura lapidaria, la quale [...] è veramente matrice di ogni forma decorativa, dalle più antiche alle più recenti'. *Nona Triennale di Milano: Catalogo*, ed. by Agnoldomenico Pica (Milan: S.A.M.E., 1951), p. 5. According to the description, if one ignores the two vertical lines on the left hand side, straightens and tips over the remaining signs, the logo recalls the hieroglyphic representing the name of the pharaoh Amenthotep.

3.32   Marcello Nizzoli, visual communication system for the 9th Milan Triennale, 1951: **.a** catalogue cover; **.b** Ernst Scheidegger, advertisement for public transport, 25 × 17.5 cm; **.c** press, exhibitors' and guests' passes

common cultural heritage beyond time and space boundaries; an attempt to erase differences and propose a universal language embedded in the history of human kind.[169] Nizzoli's eclecticism was not without its detractors. Writing in the specialist magazine *Linea Grafica* eight months before the opening of the 9th Triennale, a reviewer dispraised the 'wrinkled coldness' of the logo, criticised Nizzoli for having substituted 'the ugly logo of the fasces with an unappealing Assyrian or Egyptian one', and recommended a return to simpler forms of visual expression that eschewed allegory and symbolism.[170] Bearing in mind the use of ancient Rome symbolism for propaganda purposes during Fascism, the critique seems to suggest a sense of diffidence toward a rhetorical use of ancient emblems that problematises Nizzoli's logo, preventing an unambiguous interpretation of its meaning.

On a macro level, Nizzoli's hieroglyph problematises the postwar design stance that considered strict functionalism as the only visual expression of the democratic ideal, and presents a different approach to visual communication, which was to run parallel to a more orthodox interpretation of modernist aesthetics.[171] These two positions coexisted in the Italian graphic design as exemplified, for instance, by the visual communication of companies such as Olivetti or Pirelli.[172]

The following Milan Triennale provides further illustration of the coexistence of multiple voices. Bruno Munari's logo for the 10th Triennale in 1954 features a typographic approach to trademark design similar to Steiner's *T8* (see Illustration **3.33**). However, letterforms are smoothed, edges rounded and forms have moved

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169   On postwar fascination for primitive cultures and human origins, cave paintings in particular, see: Jane Pavitt, 'The Bomb in the Brain', in *Cold War Modern*, ed. by Crowley and Pavitt, pp. 113-15. It is also tempting to interpret Nizzoli's hieroglyph as a symptom of the estrangement from everyday life that affected the 9th Triennale. Indeed, the event suffered a lack of coherency, and put civil commitment and social issues aside to favour a formalism devoid of any political stance as was instead the case with the highly politicised T8. For a critical approach to the 9th Milan Triennale, see: Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale*, pp. 368-69, Catherine Rossi, *Crafting design in Italy: from Post-war to Postmodernism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), pp. 28-43.

170   '[...] freddezza rugosa [...] al brutto marchio del fascio il non bello assiro o egiziano'. 'Un Elogio e un Rimprovero', *Linea Grafica*, 3 (9-10), September-October 1950, pp. 276-77.

171   On the alliance between functionalist design and democratic ideal in postwar Europe and the ways in which the rationalist vision gradually grained critical ground from the second-half of the 1950s and 1960s, see: Jane Pavitt, 'Design and the Democratic Ideal', in *Cold War Modern*, ed. by Crowley and Pavitt, pp. 73-90. On alternative forms of postwar design departing from modernist functionalism in West Germany, see: Paul Betts, 'The Nierentisch Nemesis: The Promise and Peril of Organic Design', in *The Authority of the Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 109-38.

172   On visual communication at Olivetti and Pirelli in postwar Italy, see: Carlo Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965: Immagine e Politica Culturale nella Grande Impresa Italiana*, (Venice: Marsilio, 2007).

3.33   badges featuring Bruno Munari's logo, 10th Milan Triennale, 1954, 6.5 × 4.3 cm

away from rational geometry towards organic shapes to convey a sense of cosy gentleness with a hint of playful irony typical of Munari's works. Munari's smooth-edged interpretation of modernist vocabulary rediscovers the appeal of ornament as approachable interface between man and machine. Whereas Nizzoli recurred to history and culture, Munari favours smooth and sinuous forms inspired by the world of nature.

At the 11th Milan Triennale in 1957, both the Mostra di Arte Grafica and the visual identity aligned with an idealistic and political stance on design that characterised the postwar period. The former, as seen in the previous section, attempted to nurture an active and aware viewer and stressed designers' responsibility towards society. The latter mediated an image of the Triennale embedded in the postwar discourse on the renewal of society after the trauma of WW2. It did so by avoiding adopting either a utopic or dystopic attitude towards technology and by reducing the distances between individual and industry through references to a so-perceived global and primitive culture conveyed by the expressive, experimental, abstract visual language of logo and poster (see Illustrations **3.34** and **3.35**). These were designed by the architect and product designer Ettore Sottsass Jnr. and graphic designer and painter Eugenio Carmi, respectively.

Albeit included in the Mostra di Arte Grafica, modernist vocabulary was absent from the official visual communication of the 11th Triennale. Both Carmi's poster and Sottsass' logo share a pictorial approach to graphics that is rooted in the Arte Informale movement with its focus on expressive and spontaneous gesture, experimental and poor materials and performativity, which favours unstable processes over polished outcomes.[173] The ostensible contrast is less surprising when contextualised within the aforementioned postwar humanism. On the contrary, the adoption of forms derived from abstract expressionist visual vocabulary became a common feature of a certain kind of Western design that rejected the functionalist stance.[174]

Within the Italian context, Leonardo Sinisgalli – one of the curators of the 1957 Mostra di Arte Grafica – stood out as spokesperson for an alternative approach to

173   On Eugenio Carmi, his career as graphic designer at Cornigliano-Italsiader and his artistic work, see: Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965*, pp. 121-31.

174   Betts, *The Authority of the Everyday Objects*, pp. 122-28, see in particular Figure 28, p. 127. For a discussion of links between postwar and cold war cultural politics and the success of Arte Informale, in particular in its American version of Abstract Expressionism, see for example: *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate*, ed. by Francis Frascina (London: Harper & Row, 1985), pp. 91-133; Gay MacDonald, 'Selling the American Dream: MoMA, Industrial Design and Post-War France', *Journal of Design History*, 17 (4) (2004), pp. 397-412.

3.34   ephemera featuring Ettore Sottsass Jnr.'s logo for the 11th Milan Triennale, 1957: **.a** tickets, 10.5 × 6 cm; **.b** conference badge, 6 × 10.5 cm; **.c** sticker

3.35   Eugenio Carmi, advertisement for public transport, 11th Milan Triennale, 1957, 25 × 17.5 cm

visual communication that distances itself from a more rigid vision of functionalist design. Sinisgalli advocated a versatile approach to visual communication. He acknowledged the effectiveness of modernist graphics without disdaining a pictorial approach to visual communication, which recurred to illustrations, expressive drawings and decorative elements inspired by organic and biological forms in order to counterbalance contemporary anxieties towards technology and industry. As Vinti noted, Sinisgalli 'aimed at restoring the technological, economic and social reality of businesses within the realm of culture, to be understood in the broadest way possible'.[175] Sottsass himself kept a distance from a strict modernist formalism and was instead sympathetic to the artisanal roots of modern industrial design as reflected in his interest in craft and fine art and commitment to traditional material in his design practice. His 'retention of links with the artisanal and craft culture', as design historian Penny Sparke put it, seems consistent with the agenda of the 11th Triennale, which was devoted to the 'expressive qualification of today's civilisation', by exploring the relationship between arts, modern architecture, craft and industrial design.[176]

However, the very fact that the design of the logo of the 11th Triennale was entrusted to an architect and product designer – i.e. Ettore Sottsass Jnr – and not to a bona fide graphic designer brings into question my argument for the Milan Triennale as an educated client over which the graphic design profession had gained authority. Yet an archival document retrieved in Albe Steiner's private archive testifies that in January 1956 the Triennale invited a selected list of graphic designers – Ciuti, Huber, Munari, Pintori, Provinciali, Nizzoli, Rossi and Steiner – to submit a design for the logo of the forthcoming event.[177] All recipients of the invitation had previously been involved with the Triennale and were thus part of the network of design professionals that gathered around the international event. None of the submitted sketches, by Steiner or by the other graphic designers, was accepted since none of them was believed to 'encapsulate the aims and goals of the

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175   '[…] ambiva a reintegrare la realtà tecnologica, economica e sociale delle imprese nell'ambito della cultura, intesa nel senso più ampio possibile'. Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965*, p. 185. The launch in 1953 of the magazine *Civiltà delle Macchine* – house organ of Finmeccanica – was the outcome of Sinisgalli's attempt to humanise technology and industry by breaching the gap between the humanities and scientific disciplines. The magazine was indeed intended to introduce intellectuals to the machine realm and technicians to the art and literature world.

176   Penny Sparke, 'The Straw Donkey: Tourist Kitsch or Proto-Design? Craft and Design in Italy, 1945–1960', *Journal of Design History*, 11 (1) (1998), pp. 59-69.

177   Letter from Ugo Zanchetta to Albe Steiner, 10 January 1956, AALS, D b.14 fasc.9.

Milan Triennale'.[178] Steiner was again invited to submit some new sketches at the beginning of April.[179] Since it was not a graphic designer who eventually designed the logo, this second invitation must have been extended to a heterogeneous group of professionals within the network of the Triennale.

Providing insights into the relationship client-designer, the document demonstrates that the client-Triennale consulted first the graphic designers, thereby acknowledging their professional expertise. On the other hand, it also shows that graphic designers had not been successful in obtaining the exclusive jurisdiction over the design of a logo and visual communication more broadly, nor the right of determining how a graphic work should be performed and evaluating outcomes. Thus, they had convinced the organisers of the Triennale, and possibly the design community at large, that they were the best, but not yet the only, profession entitled to deal with visual communication issues.

3.8 GRAPHIC DESIGN AND THE MILAN TRIENNALE: BETWEEN MEDIATION AND COMMISSION

Although intermittent, the participation of graphic design at the Milan Triennale in the interwar and early-postwar period was not marginal. On the contrary, this chapter illustrated the way in which the event was perceived by graphic practitioners not only as a showcase for the criteria of good design and good taste in relation to graphics, but also as a public arena which could be capitalised upon for self-promotional purposes, hence as a crucial opportunity not to be missed. Articles in specialist magazines shed light on the lively debate that involved graphic practitioners and critics and gave evidence of their programmatic use of the Triennale, first as a mediating channel, and second a commissioning body.

By exploring the presence of graphic design at the Milan Triennale, this chapter traced the gradual articulation, negotiation and mediation of graphic design's public image from the early-1930s to the late-1950s. I argued that the good design discourse and the necessity to educate the client's taste related to graphic designers' attempts to attain professional legitimacy and was evidence of their increasing professional awareness and greater confidence. Drawing on Guido Modiano's concept of 'graphism', I reassessed the role of exhibition design, on the one hand, in the renewal of Italian graphics in the 1930s and, on the other hand, in the

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178   '[...] sintetizza gli scopi e le finalità della Triennale di Milano [...]'. Letter from Ugo Zanchetta to Albe Steiner, 20 February 1956, AALS, D b.14 fasc.9.

179   Letter from Ugo Zanchetta to Albe Steiner, 3 April 1956, AALS, D b.14 fasc.9.

articulation of the new professional figure of the graphics designer through the promotion of experimental approaches and multidisciplinary exchange between rationalist architects, typographers and artists.

By investigating the MRF and fascist propaganda and thematic temporary exhibitions, I addressed the malleability of the modernist aesthetic, questioned the grey area between consent and opposition to the regime and problematise tropes of the historiography of Italian design. I also problematised the ideological function of modernist aesthetics as expression of a postwar democratic and humanist ideal. The section on the Milan Triennale in the postwar period showed both continuity with the interwar good taste discourse, and an adaptation of the curator's agenda to the changed political circumstances in postwar Italy. The focus on the visual communication at the Triennale investigated a crucial aspect of the relationship between graphic design and the Triennale. Indeed, graphic designers were able to capitalise on the Triennale not only as a public and international platform to exhibit, clarify and promote their professional identity, but also as a potential commissioning body and educated client.

4. Training the 'sergeants' of graphic design

During a lecture on trademarks and visual identity held in March 1967 at the Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale (Industrial Design Graduate Course) in Rome, the Milanese graphic designer, and educator Albe Steiner defined himself as a self-taught and self-employed graphic designer. He then added:

> Through this freelance work experience, [...] I have come to realise that it was impossible for the new generations to train for a profession, which was involved in more and more areas of intervention in fields that we could have never even thought might exist. And this is why I began to be interested in Schools.[1]

Like many of his Italian colleagues, Steiner did not receive any kind of education in graphic design.[2] He was, in fact, an accountant by training and had learned the profession by working in the field. From 1948, he became involved in graphic design education, with a teaching career that lasted until his death in 1974.[3] At the Convitto Scuola Rinascita in Milan first, then the Scuola del Libro, and finally at the Istituto Superiore per le Industrie Artistiche (ISIA) in Urbino, Steiner trained what he termed the 'sergenti della grafica' (sergeants of graphic design). The nickname was used to describe the graphic design assistants at the Scuola del Libro, and suggests that Steiner saw these students as a new generation of graphic designers on the professionalisation battlefield.[4]

Through an investigation of the Scuola del Libro and the Convitto Scuola Rinascita in Milan, this chapter explores the experimental intermediate phase between the infancy of graphic design education in the interwar period

1   'Attraverso quest'attività di libero professionista, [...] mi sono reso conto che era impossibile che le nuove generazioni si preparassero ad una professione che aveva sempre più settori di intervento in zone che noi nemmeno si era pensato che potessero esistere. È per questo che ho cominciato ad interessarmi di Scuola'. 'Marchi e Immagini coordinate per l'industria'. Albe Steiner, *Il Mestiere di Grafico* (Turin: Einaudi, 1978), p. 7.

2   For instance, the graphic designer Giancarlo Iliprandi studied medicine between 1943 and 1946, and later graduated at Brera Academy in fine arts (1949) and set-design (1953). Education was an internationally common issue for early graphic designers who were very often self-taught. See: Katherine McCoy, 'Education in an Adolescent Profession', in *The Education of a Graphic Designer*, ed. by Steven Heller (New York: Allworth Press, 2005), pp. 3-12, first published in *Graphic Design World Views: A Celebration of Icograda's 25*[th] *Anniversary*, ed. by Jorge Frascara (Japan: Hpdansha, 1990), pp. 190-197.

3   On Albe Steiner' career as a design educator, see: Cristina Perillo, 'Anni Trenta – Anni Settanta. Dall'Illustrazione alla Grafica: Pensiero e Attività Didattica di Albe Steiner a Milano' (Unpublished master dissertation, University of Parma, 2004).

4   When asked about potential secondary meanings of the term 'sergeants', Giancarlo Iliprandi – a colleague of Steiner at the Scuola del Libro and later at the ISIA in Urbino – dismissed any political or militaristic implication explaining that Steiner was used to make jokes and invent rather peculiar nicknames. Giancarlo Iliprandi, email exchange with the author, 25 January 2016.

– approached in Chapter 1 – and a more defined phase of professionalisation in the 1960s.[5] A standardised educational system has been widely identified by sociologists and historians of the professions as one of the steps towards professionalisation.[6] However, education is often seen as a mere prerequisite and not as an active agent that affects professionalisation in return. By contrast and building on the approach articulated in Chapter 1, in this chapter I suggest that the relationship between education and professionalisation in the mid-century graphic design schools in Milan was mutual, and that design education and professional practice should be approached as 'equal partners'.[7] I also suggest that for Milan's graphic designers teaching was a means of questioning and defining their practice and professional identity.

The chapter contextualises design pedagogy in the prevailing spirit of social and democratic idealism and the sweeping reformist stance that characterised the years of reconstruction and the early-postwar period. It questions education both as a vehicle of social reconstruction and a political act aimed at forming professionals aware of the impact of design on contemporary society and willing to assume responsibility for it. Indeed, both the Scuola del Libro and the Convitto

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5   On educational experiences from the 1960s onwards, see: Anty Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia: Una Storia Lunga Più di un Secolo* (Venice: Marsilio, 2015); *ISIA Design Convivio. Sperimentazione Didattica: Progetti, Scenari e Società*, ed. by Marco Bazzini and Anty Pansera (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2015); Simone Bastianelli and Bianca Fabbri, 'CSAG di Urbino: la Prima Scuola Italiana di Graphic Design', *Progetto Grafico*, 24 (2013), pp. 58-64; Gianni Trozzi, 'Quelli di via Conte Verde: per una Storia del Corso di Disegno Industriale e Comunicazioni Visive di Roma', *Progetto Grafico*, 1 (2003), pp. 102-05; Chiara Rizzo, 'Il Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale di Venezia 1960/1972: Il Contributo per la Formazione del Designer (Unpublished master dissertation, IUAV, 2008); Monica Pastore, 'Il Corso Superiore di Design Industriale di Venezia 1960/1971:La Comunicazione Visiva nell'Offerta Didattica e il Suo Ruolo nella Formazione di Nuove Figure Professionali' (Unpublished master dissertation, IUAV, 2007).

6   See: *Vocational Education. International Approaches, Developments and Systems*, ed. by Linda Clarke and Christopher Winch (London; New York: Routledge, 2007); Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism. A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1977) Michael Burrage, 'From Practice to School Based Professional Education: Pattern of Conflict and Accommodation in England, France, and the United States', in *The European and American University since 1800. Historical and Sociological Essays*, ed. by Sheldon Rothblatt and Björn Wittrock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 142-190. For a design orientated perspective of professionalisation and education, see also: Grace Lees-Maffei, 'Introduction: Professionalisation as a Focus in Interior Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (1) (2008), pp. 1-18; Gerry Beegan and Paul Atkinson, 'Professionalism, Amateurism and the Boundaries of Design', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (4) (2008), pp. 305-13; Artemis Yagou, 'First Steps: Early Design Education and Professionalisation in Greece', *Journal of Design History*, 23 (2) (2010), pp. 145-61.

7   Richard Buchanan, 'Education and Professional Practice in Design', *Design Issues*, 14 (2) (1998), p. 64.

Scuola Rinascita were reform-orientated institutions that became involved in the re-democratisation of Italy. As such, they are means of exploring the pivotal role of design pedagogy in Italy in the aftermath of WW2. They enable this chapter to draw comparison with reform-orientated design institutes that were established abroad. They also provide illustration of the relationship between the graphic design profession and its anti-fascist stance.

Finally, I approach design schools as lively environments that facilitated the development of professional networks and transnational exchange. Thus, the chapter maps out the movement of people and ideas of design pedagogy and practice, and retraces the articulation of an international graphic design discourse through a close scrutiny of primary sources and archival documents.

4.1 REBUILDING THE SCUOLA DEL LIBRO FROM ITS RUINS

The premises of the Società Umanitaria was severely damaged during the Allied air bombing of Milan in August 1943. Located close to the Milanese courthouse and an army barracks, almost all of the Umanitaria's buildings were either destroyed or heavily damaged.[8] The Scuola del Libro was reduced into dusty ruins with only few pieces of technical equipment and machinery able to be salvaged (see Illustration **4.1**).[9] Reconstruction began promptly in the aftermath of WW2. In September 1945, about five months after the end of the Italian Civil War and the Nazi occupation of the country on April 25, a consortium was founded in order to finance the rebuilding and refurbishing of the school and allow it to reopen its doors as soon as possible.[10]

Members of the Consorzio per la Scuola del Libro (Consortium for the School of the Book) included: printing trade unions, graphic industrialists and publishers associations, the Chamber of Commerce, the city and district of Milan, associations of partisans and war victims, the Centro Studi Grafici (Centre of Graphic

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8 For details of the damages caused to the Sociatà Umanitaria by the Allied air bombing, see: *Società Umanitaria: Relazione sull'Attività Sociale dal 1945 al 1951* (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1951), pp. 20-21.

9 For a survey of the Scuola del Libro from 1945 to the late-1970s, see: Ada Gigli Marchetti, 'La Nuova Stagione della Scuola del Libro', in *Spazio ai Caratteri. L'Umanitaria e la Scuola del Libro*, ed. by Massimo Della Campa and Claudio A. Colombo (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004), pp. 68-89.

10 'Relazione della Riunione 12.09.1945', and 'Consorzio per la Scuola del Libro: Proposta di Statuto', archival documents, 1945, ASU, 1945-66.
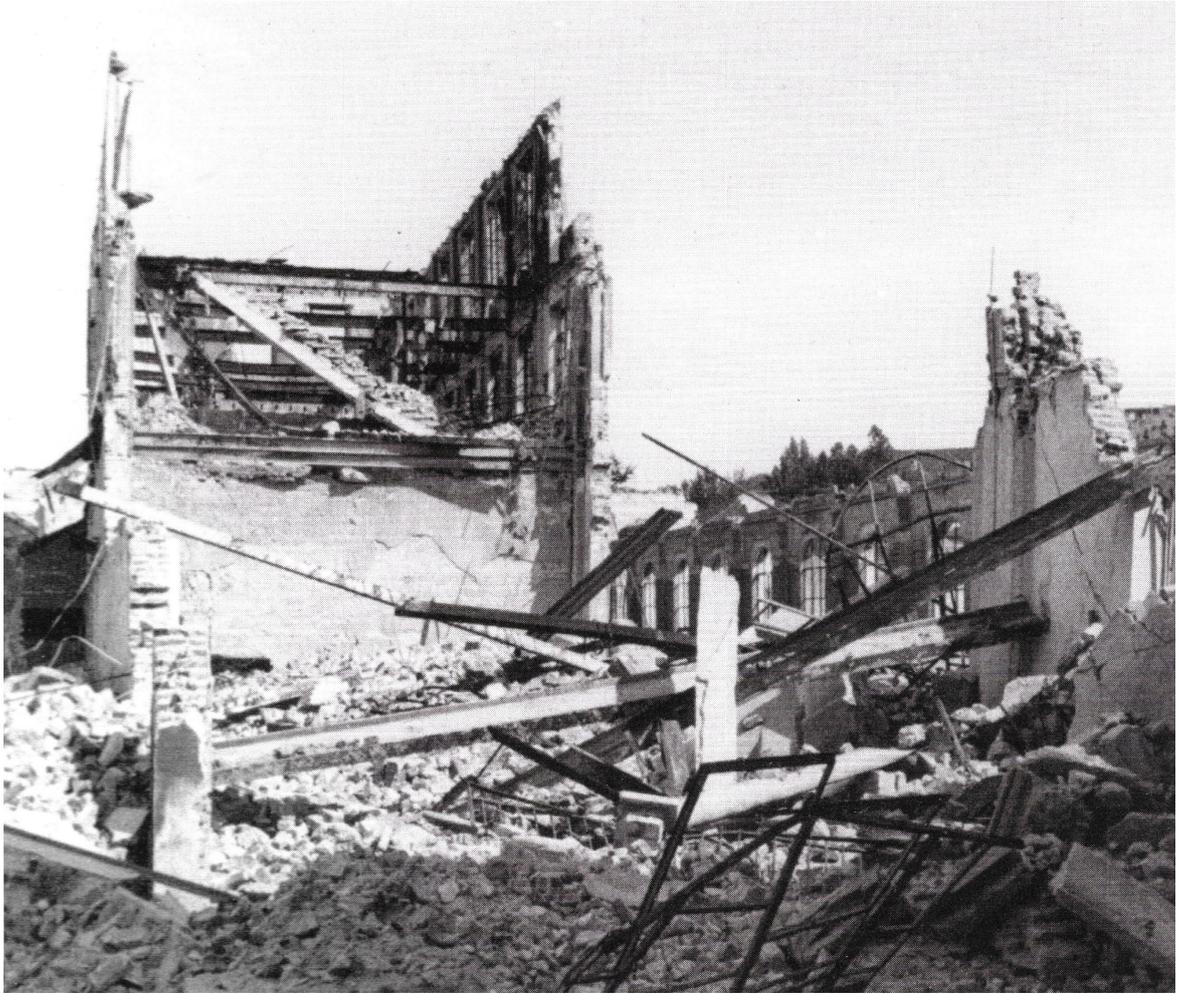
4.1 the Scuola del Libro in Milan after the Allied air bombing of August 1943

Studies) and the Umanitaria itself.[11] Private sponsors were also welcome, provided that they contributed at least 100,000 liras during a three-year period.[12] The Federazione Italiana Operai Poligrafici (Italian Federation of Polygraph Labourers) agreed that each member would give one lira of their weekly salary – nowadays corresponding to approximately 0.5 euros – to the reconstruction of the school. The head of the vocational schools at the Umanitaria, Elio Palazzo, was overwhelmed by the approximately half-million liras per annum promised by the Federazione and considered the offer a 'proof of the involvement in and attachment to that exquisitely democratic institution' that the Scuola del Libro was.[13] Industrialists offered support in-kind and donated technical equipment and materials. They also considered the possibility of doubling the contribution of the Federazione and donating one lira per week per employee.[14]

'The fundraising challenge is open', declared Piero Trevisani, teacher at the Scuola del Libro and member of the consortium, during a radio interview in January 1947, 'the Scuola del Libro in Milan must rise again from its ruins […] more beautiful, more effective, more modern, more lively, and more Italian. Whoever can, should give something!'.[15] Detailed reports of both financial and in-kind contribution from publishers, printers, type foundries and paper manufactures featured in specialist magazines.[16] These favoured the rebuilding of the Scuola del Libro by promoting a fundraising campaign and indicated its status within the printing and graphics communities. Yet minutes of meetings reveal the continu-

11 The Centro Studi Grafici, CSG, was founded in summer 1945 in Milan by a group of graphic practitioners and former-campisti. The CSG was member of the Consortium and one of the most active supporters of the reconstruction of the Scuola del Libro. It took over the campisti's legacy, and promoted professionalisation of graphic design and modernisation of graphic visual language in postwar Italy. A vibrant debate arose from the events organised on regular bases at the CSG, as well as from the pages of the organisation's house organ and publication: *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici* and *Linea Grafica*. On the activity of the CSD, see: *1945-1995: Cinquant'Anni di Grafica a Milano*, ed. by Marco Picasso (Milan: Centro Studi Grafici, 1996).

12 'Consorzio per la Scuola del Libro: Proposta Statuto', archival document, 1945, p. 1, ASU, 1945-66.

13 'Prova della loro sensibilità e del loro attaccamento verso questa Istituzione squisitamente democratica'. Letter from Elio Palazzo and Lodovico d'Aragona to the Federazione Italiana Operai Poligrafici, 22 September 1945, ASU, 1945-66.

14 'Riunione della Commissione Tecnica Provvisoria per il Funzionamento della Scuola del Libro', archival document, 2 December 1945, p. 1, ASU, 1945-66

15 'La gara di offerte è aperta. Dia chi può! La Scuola del Libro di Milano deve risorgere dalle rovine […] più bella, più fattiva, più moderna, più viva, più italiana'. Piero Trevisani, 'Per la Scuola del Libro: Radio Conversazione', script of a speech given by Trevisani on the radio, 31 January 1947, p. 2, ASU, 1946-110.

16 See: 'Notiziario', *Bollettino Centro Studi Grafici*, 3 (16), March 1949, p. 6; 'Contributo ad una Grande Iniziativa', *Bollettino Centro Studi Grafici*, 3 (8), June 1949, p. 1

ous struggle to overcome deficits and complaints about the missed payments of the agreed financial contributors.[17]

To date, scholars have interpreted the involvement and financial support of both trade unions and industrial associations as evidence of a revived trust in the outcomes of the school's education.[18] However, the motivations behind the interest in education and in the Scuola del Libro should not be taken for granted. It is, in fact, difficult to establish whether backers financed the school because they truly believed in the project or because they wanted to appear as though they did, or both. The support of both workers and industrialists was not new, but dated back to the founding of the Scuola del Libro in 1885, as I have explored in Chapter 1. But one could also speculate that to be associated with an institute that was renowned for its democratic agenda, such as the Umanitaria, was beneficial to those who were seeking rehabilitation from fascism.[19]

In the postwar period, Milan maintained its role as capital of the Italian publishing and advertising industry.[20] However, the Milanese publishing industry had been heavily compromised by the effects of the war. Many printing plants and publishing houses had been destroyed or damaged. The number of publications

17   On the delayed or missed payment of contributions by members of the consortium, see, for instance, the balance sheet for the academic year 1947-48 that is included in the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 1948. 'Consorzio della Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria, Seduta del 15 Marzo 1948, Ore 21', archival document, 15 March 1948, ASU, 1948-35, pp. 3-5.

18   Gigli Marchetti, 'La Nuova Stagione della Scuola del Libro', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by Della Campa and Colombo, p. 70

19   For instance, the need to have his father's consent to the regime forgiven or forgotten pushed Alberto Mondadori to radically renew the editorial programme of the eponymous publishing house and take active part in the re-democratisation of the country. See: Gabriele Turi, 'Cultura e Potere nell'Italia Repubblicana', in *Storia dell'Editoria nell'Italia Contemporanea*, ed. by Gabriele Turi (Florence: Giunti, 1997), pp. 383-448; Anna Lisa Carlotti, 'Editori e Giornali a Milano: Continuità e Cambiamento', in *Libri, Giornali e Riviste a Milano*, ed. by Fausto Colombo (Milan: Abitare Segesta, 1998), pp. 179-90; Enrico Decleva, *Arnoldo Mondadori* (Turin: Utet, 1993), pp. 290-92. On the question of intellectuals' consent and the legacy of Fascism, see: Gabriele Turi, *Il Fascismo e il Consenso degli Intellettuali* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1980); Duggan, 'Italy in the Cold War Years and the Legacy of Fascism', in *Italy in the Cold War*, ed. by Duggan and Waystaff, pp. 1-24.

20   On Italian economy in the postwar period, see: Antonio Gambino, *Storia del Dopoguerra dalla Liberazione al Potere DC* (Bari: Laterza, 1975), pp. 57-60; M. de Cecco, 'Economic Policy in the Reconstruction Period, 1945-51', in *The Rebirth of Italy: 1943-50*, ed. by S. J. Woolf (London: Longman, 1972), pp. 156-80; Mack Smith, Denis, *Modern Italy: a Political History* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 417-51; Valerio Castronovo, 'L'Economia Milanese alla Fine della Guerra e il Confronto sugli Obbiettivi della Ricostruzione', in *Milano fra Guerra e Dopoguerra*, ed. by Gabriella Bonini and Adolfo Scalpelli (Bari: De Donato, 1979), pp. 7-34; Pasquale Galea, 'L'Economia Milanese', in *L'Età della Speranza*, ed. by Gigli Marchetti, pp. 29-44; Luigi De Rosa, *Lo Sviluppo Economico dell'Italia dal Dopoguerra ad Oggi* (Bari: Laterza, 1997); Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943-1988* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp. 93-98.

had critically dropped since the interwar period and did not return to its pre-war level until 1951.[21] Nevertheless, the Milanese publishing industry was characterised by a widespread enthusiastic will to restart and take part in the reconstruction of the country.[22] Efflorescence in the publishing industry sector in the aftermath of WW2 was not unique to Italy and has been interpreted by scholars as a reaction to the censorship and suppression of free expression under dictatorial regimes. Writing on postwar Japan, historian John W. Dower observed that publishing was one of the first commercial sectors to recover in the defeated country in response to a 'hunger for words in print'.[23] Likewise, Milanese publishers responded to the postwar urge to communicate and exchange ideas that provided the publishing industry with commercial opportunities, favouring its recovery.[24]

To respond to needs and requests from the printing industry and thus contribute to its revival was a priority of the Scuola del Libro. 'What might be the situation of the Milanese graphic industry?', Palazzo asked rhetorically in August 1945, 'no doubt difficult: inadequately trained workforce, and lack of new energies to face

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21   On the publishing industry in Italy and Milan during the postwar period, see: Bruno Pischedda, 'Editoria a Milano: 1945-1970. Gli Anni dell'Entusiasmo', in *La Città dell'Editoria: dal Libro Tipografico all'Opera Digitale*, ed. by Giorgio Montecchi (Milan: Skira, 2001), 125-39; Alberto Cardioli and Giuliano Vigini, *Storia dell'Editoria Italiana: un Profilo Introduttivo* (Milan: Editrice Bibliografica, 2004); Luigi Cavalli, 'Editoria: Un'Età d'Oro dell'Editoria Italiana', in *Anni Cinquanta: la Nascita della Creatività Italiana*, ed. by Guido Aghina and Alberto Marangoni (Milan: Skira, 2005), pp. 51-55; *Storia dell'Editoria nell'Italia Contemporanea*, ed. by Turi; Alberto Cadioli, 'L'Industria Editoriale', in *L'Età della Speranza: Milano dalla Ricostruzione al Boom*, ed. by Ada Gigli Marchetti (Milan: Skira, 2007), pp. 63-68; Peppino Ortoleva, 'A Geography of the Media since 1945', in *Italian Cultural Studies: an Introduction*, ed. by David Forgacs and Robert Lumley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 189-90.

22   During the summer 1945, about sixty new publishing houses were founded in Milan. Many of the small publishing houses did not survive the initial enthusiasm. See: Carletti, 'Editori e Giornali a Milano', in *Libri, Giornali e Riviste a Milano*, ed. by Colombo, pp. 179-190; Alberto Cardioli, 'L'Editoria tra Impegno e Rotocalco', in *Milano Anni Cinquanta*, ed. by Gianfranco Petrillo and Adolfo Scalpelli (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1986), pp. 853-77.

23   John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (London: Allen Lane the Pengion Press, 1999), p. 180.

24   Books and periodicals were the privileged vehicles to spread postwar civil passion and intellectual zeal. As part of the de-fascistisation of Italy, schoolbooks and youth literature were reedited, updated and purged of fascist propaganda, while historical and biographical literature bloomed as evidence of the will to confront with the recent past. See: Cardioli and Vigini, *Storia dell'Editoria Italiana*, pp. 87-98; Turi, 'Cultura e Potere nell'Italia Repubblicana', in *Storia dell'Editoria nell'Italia Contemporanea*, ed. by Turi, pp. 383-448; Anna Ascenzi, 'L'Educazione alla Democrazia nei Libri di Testo: il Caso dei Manuali di Storia', in *L'Educazione alla Democrazia tra Passato e Presente*, ed. by Michele Corsi and Roberto Sani (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2004), pp. 63-85.

the several needs of the reviving industrial activity'.[25] Since the recovering printing industry called for skilled and immediately employable labourers, the retraining and re-education of current practitioners became the primary concern of the Scuola del Libro. The school focused all its energies and limited finances on the evening and weekend courses for apprentices and professionals, and the reactivation of the daily training courses for young pupils was put on hold for a later time. The first evening courses begun in autumn 1946 in makeshift classrooms and workshops in the former gym of the Umanitaria.[26]

The Scuola del Libro reacted promptly to the isolation of the war years and quickly re-established connections with an international network of schools and specialist magazines. In 1948, a number of letters were sent worldwide to announce the reopening of the school:

> We take the liberty and we are very pleased to inform you that the Printing School of Milan, after the war wasteness [sic] due to air bombs, has re-established its own activity since two years, as to obtain the ancient glory, well known by all people before war. [...] The director of the Società Umanitaria in union with the Director of the Printing School could [sic] be very pleased to enter into contact with the Direction of your Institute so as to exchange technical and didactic informations [sic] and literature of both Institutes.[27]

The London School of Printing, the New York School of Printing, the American Institute of Graphic Arts, the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, the Grafiske Højskole in Copenhagen, the School of Printing in Bristol and the Graphic School in Amsterdam were amongst the recipients who responded to the

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25   'Quale sarà la situazione del campo grafico milanese? Senza dubbio grave, mano d'opera insufficientemente preparata, nessuna immissione di nuove energie per far fronte ai molti bisogni della risorgente attività industriale'. Elio Palazzo, untitled archival document, 28 August 1945, p. 1, ASU, 1945-66.

26   Practitioners and apprentices with at least two years of work experience could attend the complementary courses and the vocational courses in hand and linotype composition, printing, lithography, bookbinding and photogravure, respectively. Besides practical training in the workshop, students also attended theoretical classes in technology, general culture, history of visual and graphic arts, and Italian grammar. Courses in free and technical drawing were taught by Ugo Zovetti, former teacher at the ISIA in Monza, and by the campista Carlo Dradi. From the academic year 1949-50 students of the hand composition course were expected to attend classes in 'Estetica Grafica' (graphic aesthetics). Teachers of graphic aesthetics were the campisti Veronesi and Dradi, Bruno Munari and the Czech graphic designer Davor Band Brunetti. The lack of detailed descriptions in the archival documents held at the Umanitaria prevents any attempt to explore the content of the graphic aesthetic classes. Yet, the involvement of protagonists of the interwar modernisation of Italian visual language suggests that students were likely to be familiar with modernist graphics. See: 'Corso di Completamento per Apprendisti Poligrafici', archival document, 1947, ASU, 1947-46; 'Scuola del Libro: Orario dei Corsi, Anno Scolastico 1949-1950', pamphlet, 1950, ASU.

27   The letter was written in English, French and Italian and sent between the 26th and the 29th of July 1948, ASU, 1948-39.

request for exchange of news, information, literature and specimens. The answer from the president of the Associacion Industriales Graficos in Buenos Aires was particularly emotional. The recipient, Ghino Fogli, happened, in fact, to be a former student of the Scuola del Libro who had studied there during the interwar period.[28]

In autumn 1955, the Scuola del Libro moved in a purpose-built building designed by the rationalist architect Giovanni Romano.[29] Romano had been actually working on the project since 1938, when he was commissioned to design the new premises of the Umanitaria.[30] Original plans envisaged the area around Porta Lodovica as a suitable location.[31] For reasons that remain unclear the construction never took place. The Umanitaria was instead rebuilt on the old premises between via Francesco Daverio, via S. Barnaba, via Pace and via Manfredo Fanti. Romano's design for the Umanitaria consisted of an open arrangement of different building blocks that were connected in a grid setting through colonnades and suspended passages for a total surface of around 113,000 m^3 (see Illustration **4.2**).

Romano's design for the Scuola del Libro aligned with the school's ethos and pedagogy. The building of the Scuola del Libro was the outcome of a careful

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28 Before moving to Buenos Aires, Ghino Fogli attended the course of typographic composition in the academic year 1907-08. Later in 1920, he attended the course of social legislation at the Umanitaria. In his letter to Riccardo Bauer, Fogli declared his special debt of gratitude to both the Scuola del Libro in Milan and the Società Umanitaria. For the correspondence between the Scuola del Libro and Ghino Fogli, see: archival documents, ASU, 1948-35 and 1948-39.

29 The relationship between Romano and the Società Umanitaria goes back to the early-1930s, when the architect worked as teacher in the furniture workshop at the ISIA in Monza.

30 Giulio Barazzetta, 'Sede e Scuole della Società Umanitaria', *Casabella*, 750-751, December 2006-January 2007, pp. 10-15.

31 The Umanitaria was supposed to be build beside the new buildings of the Università Bocconi – a private university specialised in economic, management, finance, law and public administration – by Giuseppe Pagano and Gian Giacomo Prederal (1938-1941) in the idea of developing around the public garden Parco Ravizza a new disrict devoted to technical, industrial and economic education. On the design of the Università Bocconi by Giuseppe Pagano and Gian Giacomo Prederal, see: 'La Nuova Sede dell'Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi', *Casabella*, 170-171, February-March 1942; Antonio Saggio, *L'Opera di Giuseppe Pagano tra Politica e Architettura* (Bari: Dedalo, 1984), pp. 82-93.

4.2   Giovanni Romano, reconstruction of the Società Umanitaria, 1956

research into Central-European educational architecture.[32] Its design was contingent upon the activities that would that place in it, thereby responding to functionalist criteria. Materials for flooring, for example, were selected differently according to the workshops.[33] Lavatory and service rooms were arranged on the north side of the building, whereas classrooms and workshops were located on the south side in order to benefit the most from natural light. Glass walls separated the classrooms from the corridor to improve lighting condition. Movable partitions allowed classrooms, which were designed to fit around twenty-five students, to have flexible dimensions (see Illustrations **4.3.a** and **4.3.b**). The framework of the glass curtain-wall on the façade created a suggestive comparison with the typographical page layout. Dissolving differences between interior and exterior, the glass façade allowed natural light to penetrate deep into the building to the advantage of students and staff working in the workshops and classrooms. All departments were included in the four-storey building (1,100 m² circa per floor). Workshops and classrooms were arranged along a central corridor and communicated directly with each other in line with the school's ethos of practice and theory as two sides of the same coin. Staircases on both sides of the corridors facilitated movement from one department to another conveying the idea of a school in which there was no specialisation without understanding of the entire process: a harmonious organism in which all parts work together.

The director of the Umanitaria, Riccardo Bauer, described Romano's building as a 'true example of modern and rational school building: simultaneously a workshop for the technical training and a centre of moral and civic improvement'.[34]

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32   In summer 1953, Romano and the school director, Enrico Gianni, visited a number of graphic arts and printing schools in Germany and Switzerland in order to make a comparative study of scholastic buildings. School and institutions included in Enrico Gianni's official report are: Höhere Fachschule für das Graphische Gewerbe (Stuttgart), Meisterschule für Deutschlands Buchdrucker (Munich), Druck und Verlagshaus (Frankfurt), Brönners Druckerei (Frankfurt), Druckerei Waisbecker (Frankfurt), Frankfürter Neue Presse (Frankfurt), Kust Gewerbe Schule der Stadt Zürich (Zurich). See: Enrico Gianni, 'Annotazioni: Studi per la Ricostruzione della Scuola del Libro di Milano della Società Umanitaria', report, 5 August 1953, p. 1, ASU, 1952-183; correspondence, ASU, 1952-218.

33   Rubber flooring was suggested for the hand composition in order to avoid damaging of the types in case they were to fall down; acid-resistant gres was considered the most appropriate material for the flooring of the photogravure department. Enrico Gianni, 'Annotazioni: Studi per la Ricostruzione della Scuola del Libro di Milano della Società Umanitaria', report, 5 August 1953, p. 8, ASU, 1952-183.

34   'Vero esempio di moderna e razionale architettura scolastica: officina per l'addestramento tecnico e in pari tempo centro di elevazione morale e civile'. Riccardo Bauer, *Scuola del Libro: Programmi di Insegnamento, Anno Scolastico 1954-1955* (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1954)

a

b

4.3   Giovanni Romano, interior of the Scuola del Libro, 1956: **.a** classroom; **.b** corridors

The building of Scuola del Libro was contemporary to Max Bill's building for the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) in Ulm. Like Bill's design, Romano's architecture corresponded to the most modern criteria of school building, while it embodied the school's ethos and didactic strategy. Yet, as recalled by former student Heiner Jacob, the HfG was 'quite a distance from the town, both physically and mentally'.[35] By contrast, as this section has shown, the Umanitaria was embedded in the cityscape and 'intimately integrated into the city's cultural life'.[36] Thus, the HfG's 'self-representation as a Zarathustra-like prophet of international modernism' was counterbalanced by the inclusive and participatory attitude of the Umanitaria and by its rootedness in the Milanese economic, industrial, social and cultural environment.[37]

4.2 EDUCATING FOR DEMOCRACY

In the immediate postwar years, education became a vehicle of political, moral, social and economic reconstruction of the country.[38] The years of reconstruction – in particular between 1945 and 1948 – were characterised by a social and democratic idealism and a reformist stance. It was not just a question of rebuilding bombed cities, but also a matter of rehabilitating society at large.[39] As seen in Chapter 1, the Scuola del Libro was one of a number of vocational schools managed by the Umanitaria, a non-profit and lay institution that was formed around left-inspired welfare programmes and had been promoting cultural and professional

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35   A forty-five minutes' walk separated the city centre from the HfG. This was situated on the outskirts of Ulm on the hilltop from which it dominated, both physically and ideologically, the town. Jacob Heiner, 'A Personal View of an Experiment in Democracy and Design Education', *Journal of Design History*, 1 (3-4) (1988), p. 224.

36   '[...] intimamente inserita nella vita culturale della città [...]'. Giovanni Romano, 'La Ricostruzione dell'Umanitaria a Milano', *Casabella Continuità*, 214, February-March 1957, p. 28.

37   Paul Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects. A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. 149.

38   On the relationship between education and politics in postwar Italy, see: Giovanni Gonzi, 'Una Scuola per la Nuova Italia. I Lavori della Costituente: DC, PCI e gli Altri Schieramenti Politici di Fronte alla Questione della "Scuola di Tutti"', in *Educazione e Politica in Italia (1945-2008): Identità e Legittimazione Politica*, ed. by Piergiovanni Genovesi and Giuseppe Papagno (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 2009), pp. 49-66; Roberto Sani, 'La Scuola e l'Educazione alla Democraia negli Anni del Secondo Dopoguerra', in *L'Educazione alla Democrazia tra Passato e Presente*, ed. by Corsi and Sani, pp. 43-62.

39   See: Jane Pavitt, 'Design and the Democratic Ideal', in *Cold War Modern: Design 1945-1970*, ed. by David Crowley and Jane Pavitt (London: V&A Publishing, 2008), pp. 73-90.

development of the urban working class since the late-nineteenth century.[40] Whereas during the Fascist dictatorship the regime took a stand against the left wing agenda of the Umanitaria and obstructed its activities by cutting down public funding, in the postwar period the institution became part of a widespread international movement to create reform-orientated educational institutions in the belief that pedagogy was a way towards the re-democratisation of Europe.[41]

The belief in education as a vehicle of social reconstruction was by no means unique to Italy, but was a shared concern of the many countries that were dealing with the creation of genuinely democratic and peaceful nations.[42] A well-known example of reform-orientated colleges is the aforementioned HfG in Ulm, whose original aims were 'eradicating German nationalism and militarism by providing postwar youth with badly needed cultural ideals and moral direction'.[43] Co-founded by Inge Scholl and the graphic designer Otl Aicher in 1946 as a school of democratic education, the Volkshochschule (Community College) in Ulm was originally dedicated to preserving and cultivating in new generations the resistance spirit of Scholl's brother and sister, Hans and Sophie Scholl, who were

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40   On the Società Umanitaria, see: Enrico Declava, *Etica del Lavoro, Socialismo, Cultura Popolare: Augusto Osimo e la Società Umanitaria* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1985); *Umanitaria: Cento Anni di Solidarietà*, ed. by Saverio Monno (Milan, Florence: Edizioni Charta, 1993); *La Società Umanitaria. Fondazione P.M. Loria Milano, 1893/1963*, ed. by Riccardo Bauer (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1964); Claudio A. Colombo, '"Sapere, Fare e Sapere Fare". La Società Umanitaria, un Modello Laico per la Formazione e l'Orientamento al Lavoro', in *L'Alchimia del Lavoro. I generosi che Primi in Milano Fecondarono le Arti e le Scienze*, ed. by Amilcare Bovo, Nimis Pietro, Mario Palmaro, Vincenzo Parisi, Helena Maria Polidoro, and Agnese Santucci (Milan: Raccolto Edizioni, 2008), pp. 93-145.

41   For a focus on the role of the Umanitaria and similar Milanese organisations in the early postwar period, see: Giorgio Pisano, 'La Difficile Ripresa dell'Associazionismo di Massa Dopo il Fascismo', in *Milano fra Guerra e Dopoguerra*, ed. by Bonini and Scalpelli, pp. 445-51; Pierluigi Panza, 'Le Istituzioni Culturali', in *L'Età della Speranza*, ed. by Gigli Marchetti, pp. 81-89.

42   For an international perspective on the reform of education systems during the reconstruction years, see: Brian M. Puaca, *Learning Democracy: Education Reform in West Germany, 1945-1965* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009); Dower, *Embracing Defeat*, pp. 244-51; Greg Castillo, 'Design Pedagogy Enters the Cold War: The Reeducation of Eleven West German Architects', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 57 (4) (2004), pp. 10-18; René Spits, *hfg ulm: The View behind the Foreground. The Political History of the Ulm School of Design, 1953-1968* (Stuttgart; London: Edition Axel Menges, 2002), pp. 40-65.

43   Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects*, p. 140.

assassinated by the Nazis in 1943 as members of the antifascist White Rose resistance group.[44]

In Scholl's and Archer's original intentions, the central concern of the HfG was to contribute to the dismantling of fascism and to the socio-political rehabilitation of the German society. To this end, they aimed 'to educate students to think politically and become familiar with modern methodology in order to influence, in a socially responsible manner, the way we live in this technical and industrial age'.[45] The project met the favour of the American occupation authorities who became the major stakeholders in financing the founding of the HfG.[46] However, patronage was contingent upon the drop of explicit socialist-orientated stances and a shift of emphasis from politics toward design. With the arrival in Ulm of Max Bill in 1949, a compromise between political education and formal training in design and architecture was found. The 1951 curriculum included four courses: Information, Architecture and City Planning, Visual Design and Product Form. Bill's plan to open a new Bauhaus was supplemented with classes in sociology, psychology, philosophy and contemporary history. These were meant to develop students' social awareness and correct what Scholl and Aicher considered the Bauhaus' antihistoricism.

The Umanitaria director, Riccardo Bauer embodied the postwar belief in education as the basis for a free and democratic society in which all citizens are expected to take part and feel a responsibility for.[47] He clarified his views on vocational education in an article published in January 1954 on *Linea Grafica*:

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44   On the HfG in Ulm, see: Heiner, 'A Personal View of an Experiment in Democracy and Design Education', *Journal of Design History*, 1 (3-4) (1988), pp. 221-34; Markus Rathgeb, *Otl Aicher* (London: Phaidon, 2006); Robin Kinross, 'Review: Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm: Recent Literature', *Journal of Design History*, 1 (3/4) (1988), pp. 249-56; *La Scuola di Ulm: una Nuova Cultura del Progetto*, ed. by Herbert Lindiger (Genoa: Costa & Nolan, 1988); René Spitz, *hfg Ulm: The View Behind the Foreground. The Political History of the Ulm School of Design 1953-1968* (Stuttgart; London: Edition Axel Menges, 2002; Betts, *The Authority of Everyday Objects*, pp. 139-77.

45   'Geschwister-Scholl-Hochschule', brochure, 1949, quoted in Rathgeb, *Otl Aicher*, p. 42.

46   On the role of the HfG in Ulm and the Bauhaus legacy within Cold War politics, see: Greg Castillo, *Cold War on the Home Front: The Soft Power of Midcentury Design* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), pp. 31-57; Greg Castillo, 'The Bauhaus in Cold War Germany', in *Bauhaus Culture: From Weimar to the Cold War*, ed. by Kathleen James-Chakraborty (Minneapolis, London: Minnesota University Press, 2006), pp. 171-93.

47   See: Riccardo Bauer, *L'Educazione degli Adulti* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 1964); Riccardo Bauer, *Il Dramma dei Giovani* (Milan: Pan, 1977); Riccardo Bauer, *Breviario della Democrazia* (Milan: Pan, 1978). See also: *Riccardo Bauer: Atti delle Giornate di Studio Organizzate dalla Società Umanitaria*, ed. by Mario Melino (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1984); *Riccardo Bauer: la Militanza Politica, l'Opera Educativa e Sociale, la Difesa della Pace e dei Diritti Umani*, ed. by Mario Melino (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1985).

> The professional School [...] is an organism that neither creates nor nurtures a monster of mechanical skills, but raises a *man*. [...] The vocational and technical education must be driven by a distinct *educational* criterion and aim at strengthening and enriching of the intellectual and moral personality of the pupil and future worker.[48]

Under the motto 'educare alla democrazia' (educating for democracy), Bauer and the Umanitaria took on responsibility for the re-education of a generation that had grown up under Fascism.[49] Despite the similar approach to vocational training, Bauer's Umanitaria differentiated from the Umanitaria under the Fascism for its renewed commitment to nurture free thinkers and politically conscious workers. Civic education and the promotion of individual initiative and independent judgment were the very basis of the pedagogy adopted at the Umanitaria in the attempt to promote student's civic responsibility and turn them into agents of democratic reform.

In Italy, the Umanitaria was one of a cohort of socially and politically orientated educational initiatives involved in the re-democratisation of the country. These included the Convitto Scuola Rinascita (CSR) set up in Milan in the aftermath of WW2 by a group of ex-partisans.[50] The CSR was a democratic school whose primary aim was allowing ex-partisans, war prisoners and orphans to return to school and complete their studies. The Milanese project was soon expanded at a national level with the financial support of the Ministero dell'Assistenza Post-Bellica (Ministry of Postwar Support) and the Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia (National Association of Italian Partisans – ANPI). The CSR were the 'Schools of the Reconstruction' in which students were expected to 'shape their training according to the requirements of the moral, social and economic rebirth

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48 'La Scuola professionale [...] è un organismo in cui non tanto si crea e si coltiva un mostro di abilità meccanica, quanto si allena un *uomo*. [...] L'istruzione tecnica professionale deve essere orientate, con chiaro criterio *educativo*, nel senso di potenziare, arricchire la personalità intellettuale e morale dell'allievo, futuro lavoratore [...]'. Riccardo Bauer, 'Problemi Vivi della Istruzione Professionale', *Linea Grafica*, 7 (1-2), January-February 1954, p. 18, italics in the original text.

49 On the fascistisation of Italian youth over twenty years of Mussolini's regine, see: Mabel Berezin, *Making the Fascist Self: the Political Culture of Interwar Italy* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1997); Victoria de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass Organization of Leizure in Fascist Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Tracy H. Koon, *Believe, Obey, Fight: Political Socialization of Youth in Fascist Italy, 1922-1943* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

50 The CSR Amleto Livi in Milan opened on the 26th of July 1945. Founders were: Antonio Banfi, Claudia Maffioli, Luciano Raimondi – teachers – Angelo Peroni, Guido Petter and Vico Tulli – students. On the Convitti Scuola Rinascita, see: *A Scuola come in Fabbrica: l'Esperienza dei Convitti Scuola della Rinascita* (Milan: Vangelista Editore, 1980); *Scuola e Resistenza nei Convitti Rinascita*, ed. by Alessandro Natta and Luciano Raimondi (Rome: ANPI, 1950).

of the country'.[51] The founders' intention to perpetuate and promote antifascism and resistance spirit in the new generations mirrors School and Aicher's original goals for the HfG. Indeed, the CSR were based on democratic principles and on the belief that the new Italian school should be founded 'on the right to study, on self-governance, on solidarity, on the predominance of the social not to the detriment but to the enrichment of one's personality'.[52]

By March 1946, eleven CSR were established in different cities of north-central Italy. Each school was named after a WW2 partisan who had died fighting the Fascist dictatorship, and each addressed a different type of profession depending on the local traditional craft and industrial production.[53] A course for graphics and advertising was established first in Rome, and then moved to Milan in 1948. The relocation of this course at the CSR Amleto Livi was motivated by economic factors. The advertising and printing industry was, very simply, more developed in the Milanese region and there were more work opportunities for students there than in Rome.

By the late-1940s, Italy entered a new political and social phase. Indeed, the 1948 parliamentary election marked a clear shift from leftist politics towards the centre. As historian Robert A. Ventresca argued, the 1948 election 'changed the face of Italian life irrevocably'.[54] It was 'the last act of transition to democracy' and it marked the birth of the Republic of Italy.[55] Voters were called to choose between two clashing ideologies, leaving no room for any middle ground: on the one hand, a conservative, Catholic and capitalist vision of the Italian society as embodied by the Democrazia Cristiana (Christian Democrats), DC; on the other hand, a progressive, secular and socialist Italy as envisaged by the Fronte Democratico Popolare (Popular Front). The DC's victory ended the inter-party coalition and anti-Fascist

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51   'I Convitti-Scuola sono Scuole della Ricostruzione [...] informano la loro preparazione alle esigenze della rinascita morale, sociale ed economica del paese'. *Statuto dei Convitti Scuola della Rinascita* (Rome: ANPI, 1948), p. 3.

52   '[..] sul diritto allo studio, sull'autogoverno, sulla solidarietà, sulla prevalenza del sociale non a detrimento ma ad arricchimento della personalità'. *A Scuola come in Fabbrica*, p. 8.

53   The locations of the CSR were Bologna, Cremona, Genoa, Milan, Novara, Reggio Emilia, Rome, San Remo, Turin, Varese and Venice. For instance, mechanical experts were trained in Turin, naval workers in Genoa, workers in the agriculture sector and food industry in Bologna. A guidance centre was established in Milan in order to verify interest, skills and predispositions of students and reccomend the most suitable Convitto. *Statuto dei Convitti Scuola della Rinascita*, p. 14.

54   Robert A. Ventresca, *From Fascism to Democracy: Culture and Politics in the Italian Election of 1948* (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), p. 7. On the 1948 election, see also: Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 112-20

55   Ventresca, *From Fascism to Democracy,* p. 19.

unity that had characterised the early years of reconstruction. Heightened by the Communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia in February 1948, the parliamentary election was, as observed by historian Martin Clark, held 'in a fervent, passionate atmosphere of crusading zeal and "Red Threat"'.[56]

With the DC governing the country, the CSR gradually lost official support. They became subject of frequent roundups by police forces in the search of evidence that could relate the school with extremist wings of the Communist party. The cutting of public funding brought about the closure of the majority of the CSR except for the Milanese branch.[57] Despite many difficulties of financial and political nature, the CSR Amleto Livi in Milan managed to stay open until the mid-1950s. The course of graphic design and advertising at the CSR in Milan forms the subject of next section.

4.3 THE COOPERATIVA RINASCITA

Members of the CSR were aware of the experimental nature of some of the courses, in particular those that related to new professions. This was the case with the graphic design profession. As recalled by one of the tutors at the CSR Giaime Pintor in Rome, the advertising and graphics course that later moved to Milan was 'invented' since at that time 'the poster artists, the window dresser, and the exhibition designer were still almost unknown [professional] figures in Italy'.[58] As I illustrated in the previous three chapters, this statement was not precisely accurate. Nevertheless, whether it was a personal opinion or a general feeling shared by other members of the profession, the comment confirms that graphic design was still under ongoing formulation. In this section, I explore the relationship between the course and the gradual professionalisation of graphic design, and question the socio-political stances acquired by both design education and practice in postwar Milan. Scholars' interest in the CSR's graphic and advertising course has been so

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56   Martin Clark, *Modern Italy: 1871 to the Present* (London: Longman, 2008), 3rd edition, p. 390.
57   Some members of the Italian parliament took position against the cutting of public funding of the CSR. For the minutes of the parliamentary session held on 20 October, see: www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/BGT/487399.pdf, [accessed 21 March 2017].
58   'Il cartellonista, il vetrinista, l'organizzatore di mostre erano personaggi allora pressocchè sconosiuti in Italia'. Lucio Lombardo Radice, quoted in *A Scuola come in Fabbrica*, p. 16.

far sporadic and circumscribed to the contribution of individual designers.[59] Thus the section also contributes to shed light on the CSR as a whole.

Tutors at the CSR Amleto Livi included graphic designers Albe Steiner, Remo Muratore, Max Huber, Sergio Rossi, photographer and graphic designer Luigi Veronesi, and painter and architect Gabriele Mucchi. Except for Mucchi, tutors – Huber, Muratore, Steiner and Veronesi – and students at the CSR – such as Tubaro who was hired by Steiner as his assistant – gradually migrated to the Scuola del Libro, moving from an experimental and militant experience to a more institutionalised and structured environment. Their involvement in the CSR can be interpreted as an outcome of their direct experience of the resistance movement and their will to preserve and transmit its spirit to new generations.[60] The militant experience also marked their career choices. Muratore, for instance, was in charge of the Communist Party visual communication and designed the party political posters in collaboration with fellow member of the CSR, Huber.[61] Albe and his collaborator and wife Lica Steiner, who was also involved in the CSR projects dealing with administration and liaising with clients, constructed their professional image on antifascism to the point where their entire career seems to be politically

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59   For individual contributions to the CSR, see: *Remo Muratore: L'Avventura della Grafica Opere 1936-1983*, ed. by Massimo Casamenti (Ravenna: Edizioni Girasole, 2005); Anna Steiner, '1945-50, Urge Documentare, Comunicare l'Essenziale', in *Germano Facetti dalla Rappresentazione del Lager alla Storia del XX Secolo*, ed. by Daniela Muraca (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana Editoriale, 2008), pp. 77-83; Marzio Zanantoni, *Albe Steiner: Cambiare il Libro per Cambiare il Mondo. Dalla Repubblica d'Ossola alle Edizioni Feltrinelli* (Milan: Unicopli, 2013), pp. 177-84.

60   During WW2, Steiner, Muratore and Mucchi joined the Val d'Ossola partisans, Rossi fought with the Garibaldi brigade on the Valsesia, while the student Germano Facetti – later art director at Penguin publishing house from 1960 to 1972 – was arrested for antifascist propaganda and deported to Mauthausen concentration camp. On the militant experience of Italian graphic designers, see: Zanantoni, *Albe Steiner,* pp. 49-70; *Germano Facetti dalla Rappresentazione del Lager alla Storia del XX Secolo*, ed. by Muraca, pp. 23-73; www.sergio-rossi.ch/biografia/partigiano.php [accessed 15 February 2016]. On Gabriele Mucchi, see: Gabriele Mucchi, *Le Occasioni Perdute: Memorie, 1899-1993* (Milan: Mazzotta, 2001).

61   Edoardo Novelli, *C'era una volta il PCI. Autobiografia di un partito attraverso le immagini della sua propaganda* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 2000).

engaged.[62] Indeed, antifascism is the leitmotiv of the existing scholarship on the couple.[63]

Students of the graphics and advertising course attended theory-based classes on the history of type design, graphic arts, advertising and propaganda, printing technology, Italian grammar and literature. They also attended drawing, photography and graphic layout classes. Theory-based learning was then put into practice in the workshop where students designed and executed commissioned works under the supervision of tutors. To fulfil the original goals of the CSR, that is the promotion of students' understanding of their responsibility towards society as members of a specific professional community, the course ended with a discussion on 'the perspectives of the graphic artist – his/her social duties and responsibilities'.[64]

In an attempt to reach economic autonomy, tutors and students at the CSR Amleto Livi established the Cooperativa Rinascita (CR) in February 1949. The CR was a graphic and advertising workshop that supplemented the CSR educational programme with paid, on-the-job training. Members were forbidden to take on commissions for works that were similar to those designed by the cooperative. Moreover, they could be forced out if they caused physical or moral damage of either the cooperative or its members. The CR offered services of 'graphic design, execution and consulting' in advertising, publishing, exhibition design, posters and window dressing.[65] The Milanese CR was a more mature version of a previ-

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62   Acknowledged by scholars but often overshadowed by Albe's name, Lica Steiner's graphic work deserves further analysis. Recent publications have begun reevaluating her work within and beyond the professional partnership as a couple. See: Anna Steiner, *Lica Covo Steiner* (Mantua: Corraini, 2015); Luisa Steiner and Mauro Begozzi, *Lica Steiner* (Milan: Edizioni Unicopli, 2015); Luisa Steiner and Mauro Begozzi, *Un Libro per Lica: Lica Covo Steiner, 1914-2008* (Novara: Istituto Storico della Resistenza e della Società Contemporanea nel Novarese e nel Verbano Cusio Ossola Piero Fornara, 2011). On women designers in postwar Italy and the problematic partnership with male designers – often husbands – see: Catharine Rossi, 'Furniture, Feminism and the Feminine: Women Designers in Postwar Italy, 1945 to 1970', in *Journal of Design History*, 22 (3) (2009), pp. 248-49. For an international perspective of the problematic relationship between design professionalisation and women, see: Jill Seddon, 'Mentioned but Denied significance: Women Designers and the Professionalisation of Design in Britain, 1920-1951', *Gender and History*, 12 (2) (2000), pp. 426-47; Suzette Worden and Jill Seddon, 'Women Designers in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s: Defining the Professional and Redefining Design', *Journal of Design History*, 8 (3) (1995), pp. 177-93.

63   See: *Licalbe Steiner: Grafici Partigiani*, ed. by Anna Steiner (Milan: Edizioni Corraini, 2015).

64   'Le prospettive dell'artista grafico – i suoi doveri sociali e sue responsabilità'. Albe Steiner, 'Proposta per un Breve Corso di Storia del Carattere, della Pubblicità e della Propaganda', archival document, 1948, p. 1, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

65   By collaborating with the woodwork and mechanic workshops at the CSR, the CR was also able to expand the scope of its activity beyond two-dimensional printed matter. 'Progetti, esecuzione e consulenza grafica'. Promotional pamphlet, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

ous iteration of the workshop that took place at the CSR in Rome, where a CR was founded in May 1948 and soon after relocated, together with the school, to Milan.

This earlier endeavour to run a workshop within a CSR was enriched by Steiner's work experience at Taller de Grafica Popular (People's Graphic Workshop – TGP) during his stay in Mexico between 1945 and 1948.[66] The TGP was an artist collective that produced politically conscious and affordable prints, which featured an expressive and realistic visual language designed to be accessible to a broad audience.[67] Antifascism was the primary focus of the TGP production and artists' resorted to caricature, vicious satire and heroic images to appeal to the masses and urge the viewer to action. Despite acknowledging the many differences – different historical context, social environment and economic issues – between the TGP and the CR, Steiner was keen on drawing comparisons between the two collaborative projects with regards to ways in which they both attempted to advance social causes through art and visual communication: revolutionary goals in the case of the TGP, re-democratisation and preservation of the resistance spirit for the CSR.[68]

During his stay in Mexico, Steiner had the chance to meet the architect and former director of the Bauhaus (Dessau, 1928-30), Hannes Meyer, who had moved to Mexico City in 1939.[69] In Steiner's words, 'the Bauhaus moved […] to North America with Moholy-Nagy at the Institute of Design in Chicago, and to Central America with Hannes Meyer and in Mexico it [was] renamed Taller de Grafica Popular'.[70] Steiner's experience of the Bauhaus was thus conveyed by the controversial figure of Meyer who was responsible for radically reshaping design pedagogy of the school by veering left and bringing the workshops in closer contact with trade unions and workers movements. Meyer was a figure that had almost been demonised and forgotten in the postwar period and was only rehabilitated in the

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66   Zanantoni, *Albe Steiner*, pp.145-67.
67   Diane Miliotes, *What May Come: The Taller de Gráfica Popular and the Mexican Political Print* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2014).
68   See, for example: 'Il Taller de Grafica Popular', *Rinascita*, (1948), reprinted in Albe Steiner, *Il Mestiere di Grafico* (Turin: Einaudi, 1978), pp. 120-122.
69   On Hannes Meyer, see: K. Michael Hays, *Modernism and the Posthumanist Subject: The Architecture of Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Hilberseimer* (Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 1992); Claude Schnaidt*, Hannes Meyer: Bauten, Projekte und Schriften* (London: Alec Tiranti Ltd., 1965); Andrea Maglio, *Hannes Meyer: un Razionalista in Esilio. Architettura, Urbanistica e Politica 1930-54* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 2002).
70   '[…] la Bauhaus si trasferisce […] in America del Nord con Moholy-Nagy nella Scuola di Disegno Industriale di Chicago, in America Centrale con Hannes Meyer e in Messico si e chiamata Taller de Grafica Popular'. Steiner, *Il Mestiere di Grafico*, p. 9. On Hannes Meyer and the TGP, see: Maglio, *Hannes Meyer*, pp. 42-46.

late-1950s by Tomás Maldonado at the HfG in Ulm.[71] After his return to Milan in 1948, Steiner kept in contact with Meyer, introduced him to his circle of friends and collaborators, and invited him to visit the CSR during the spring of 1950.[72]

The ethos and political agenda of the CR are suggested by its self-promotional material and business stationery, which present a uniform visual identity (see Illustration 4.4). Business cards, letterheads, filling forms and promotional leaflets feature simple grid-like layout, sans serif, asymmetrical compositions and primary colours in line with modernist aesthetics. The combination of the two capital letters of the logo seems to convey the spirit of community and collaboration on which the CR was based. It could be argued that the bold red *C* embracing the black *R* suggests that there can be no 'Rinascita' (rebirth) without cooperation; that only by partaking in the community and by accepting social responsibilities there can be rehabilitation of the country after the fascist regime and the war.

Yet collaboration at the CR was far from taken for granted. In line with the democratic ethos of the CSR, both tutors and students partook in the organisation of the school. Meetings were arranged on a regular basis to discuss curricula, pedagogy and activities. A meeting at the CSR on Friday the 25th of February 1949 at 11pm is captured in a photograph (see Illustration 4.5). Staging apart, the relaxed postures and easy-going attitude of students and teachers, who face each other around a table, suggest a rather informal working environment. Minutes of meetings, correspondence and reports held in Albe Steiner's archive, however, voice an internal conflict over the management of the collaborative work experience and the relation between CSR and CR. Topics of fierce discussion included workload distribution, work supervision, client management and sharing of income. A major cause of disagreement was whether works should be designed and executed within the CSR, or in companies outside of the school.

Since the very first meeting of the CR, two opponent stances were clearly defined and the two groups were nicknamed by Mucchi as the 'liberisti' (liberal)

71   Paul Betts, 'The Bauhaus as Cold War Legend: West German Modernism Revised', *German Politics and Society*, 14 (2) (1996), pp. 75-100; for an abridged and slightly modified version of the article see also: Paul Betts, 'The Bauhaus as a Cold War Weapon: An American-German Joint Venture', in *Bauhaus Conflict, 1919-2009 Controversies and Couterparts*, ed. by Philip Oswalt (Ostfildern: Hatie Cantz Verlag, 2009), pp. 190-208.

72   Hannes Meyer's visit to the CSR in May 1950 is reported by architecture historian Andrea Maglio in his monographic book on Meyer. See: Maglio, *Hannes Meyer*, pp. 125-26.

a

b

c

d

4.4   Cooperativa Rinascita, visual identity, after February 1949: **.a** promotional card, 14.8 × 10.5 cm; **.b** stamp; **.c** notepad, 14.8 × 21 cm; **.d** form to fill out with details on the commissioned work, 21 × 29.7 cm

4.5   meeting, Convitto Scuola Rinascita Amleto Livi in Milan, 25 February 1949. The names of the attendees are reported in the back of the picture: (from left to right) Artemio Bin, Gildo Manacorda, Ettore Lazzarotto, Antonio Tubaro, Piero Ottinieri (students), Remo Muratore, Gabriele Mucchi, Albe Steiner, Claudio Conte and Max Huber (tutors). The picture was taken by students of the photography course of Luigi Veronesi

and the 'cooperativisti' (cooperativist) group.[73] Veronesi, Muratore and Huber – the liberals – agreed that students should be placed in external companies. Tutors were expected to help students find jobs in graphics and advertising studios, publishers and printers; students were required to give part of their income to the CR. On the other hand, Steiner and Mucchi – the cooperativists – advocated that both the training and the work experience should be managed by the CR within the CSR. Tutors were expected to provide commissions for the cooperative, using their network of clients. As clearly put by Steiner during the founding meeting of the CR, according to the cooperativists 'all works must the brought inside the cooperative so as to a prevent individual's exploitation'.[74] Instead of aiming for profit for its own sake, the cooperativist approach envisioned the CR as an industry-like workshop that provided students with the opportunity to improve and test their skills and knowledge and gain some work experience outside the market-rules. Having to choose between two practically and ideologically different approaches, students opted for the cooperativist stance.[75]

The conflict between liberals and cooperativists reached its apex in the summer of 1949, when the course of graphic arts and advertising was temporarily suspended. Students complained that after the relocation of the CSR to Milan, and as a consequence of the loss of official financial support that followed the 1948 parliamentary elections, they had been subjected to an excessive workload.[76] In order to self-finance the purchase of materials and technical equipment, students had been made to devote an increasing amount of time to paid work to the detriment of formal training and studying. The course reopened in the autumn of 1949 with the definitive adoption of the cooperativist approach. In response to students' requests and complaints, educational and working activities were clearly defined and the latter were included in the programme rather than considered as extra-curricular activities. Students asked for a preliminary period without on-the-job training in order to acquire basic theoretical knowledge. Finally, the method of income

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73   'Verbale Riunione dei Tecnici Corso di Arti Grafiche', meeting minutes, 25 February 1949, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1. See also: letter by Gabriele Mucchi, 11 September 1949, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

74   'Tutto il lavoro deve essere portato nella coperativa per evitare che I singoli vengano sfruttati'. Albe Steiner, 'Verbale Riunione dei Tecnici Corso di Arti Grafiche', meeting minutes, 25 February 1949, p. 1, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

75   'Verbale Riunione dei Tecnici Corso di Arti Grafiche', meeting minute, 25 February 1949, p. 2, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

76   'Corso di Arte Pubblicitaria: Relazione degli Allievi sull'Andamento del Corso', students' report, 14 October 1949, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

distribution among students and tutors was clarified, and a portion was set aside for the purchase of materials and technical equipment.[77] An undated handwritten document found in Albe Steiner's archive contains some hints on the agreed method of income distribution.[78] This was contingent upon the kind of contribution to the collaborative work of individual members. The work was divided into four categories and points were assigned to each category: design and execution – respectively category 1 and 2 – were worth 5 points; exhibition and printed matter layout, and clients' liaison – category 3 – 4 points; day-to-day workshop practice – category 4 – 3 points. Points were then multiplied depending on the hours of work. The ranking evidences a growing professional awareness and the definition of a scale of values that puts design and execution – as two distinct moment of the production that were likely to be undertaken by different individuals – at the very top.

The dispute at the CR contributes to my broader argument about professionalisation as an endless process based on dialogue, negotiation and compromise. Archival material help to further clarify differences between the two opposing attitudes towards design pedagogy. In autumn 1954, Mucchi seized the opportunity of the course temporary closure to criticise and blame the liberal members of the CR. He declared himself 'firmly convinced […] that the "liberal" stance had crucially damaged the pedagogical trend, the manners and the spiritual orientation of the students'.[79] The accused tutors – Huber, Muratore and Veronesi – promptly responded to Mucchi's charges and declared their non-involvement in any activity that might have damaged the cooperative or the school.[80] The very existence of two opposing groups of interest was denied.[81] According to Veronesi, a school was expected to train students and prepare them for living and working in current

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77   Letter by the students to the CSR directorship, 20 November 1949, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.
78   Curiously, the document is titled: 'Proposta Hannes' (Hannes' Suggestion). Hannes whom? As I mentioned before, Steiner and Meyer kept in contact after Steiner's return in Milan. Thus, it does not seem too far-fetched to speculate that the 'Hannes' in the handwritten document might, in fact, be Hannes Meyer. Indeed, Steiner and Meyer spent the summer of 1949 together in Val d'Ossola, and Meyer visited the CSR in the spring of 1950, thereby giving Steiner the opportunity to discuss with the former director of the Bauhaus about the CR and ask his opinion regarding the management of the collaborative work. Albe Steiner, 'Proposta Hannes', handwritten undated archival document, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.
79   '[…] fermamente convinto […] che l'indirizzo "liberista" abbia nociuto in modo decisivo all'andamento dell'insegnamento a alla disciplina, e anche all'indirizzo spirituale degli allievi'. Letter by Gabriele Mucchi to the CSR directorship, 11 October 1949, p. 1, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.
80   See: letter by Remo Muratore, Max Huber and Claudio Conte to the CSR directorship, 20 October 1949, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.
81   Letter by Luigi Veronesi to the CSR directorship, 18 October 1949, p. 1, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

society. Thus, in his opinion, actual work experiences were beneficial in spite of the likely loss of teaching hours. Only by confronting themselves with 'real work requirements and difficulties, and with the demands of clients' management' during their training under the supervision of professionals, students were put in a favourable position that would allow them to understand and command market-rules.[82] Finally, Veronesi counterattacked and reported the danger of the cooperatist attitude. This run the risk of:

> [...] using students like guinea pigs to test work methods and systems that are excellent in other social structures, but unfortunately entirely utopian (at least in the specific case of the graphic and advertising work) within the social structure of today's Italy.[83]

Veronesi contested the cooperativists' good faith and suggested that Mucchi and Steiner were actually driven by ideological and political purposes, rather than be focused on the students' best interest. While I am not suggesting that Veronesi, Muratore and Huber – the liberals – were indifferent to the profession's social responsibility, I would argue that their more pragmatic and business-orientated stance on pedagogy suggests an internal disagreement within the design community and the coexistence of groups with conflicting agendas.

I would also suggest that the clash between liberalists and cooperativists mirrors on a micro level what design historians have described as a shift of emphasis within Italian design that took place in the late-1940s. As previously argued by Penny Sparke, after the conservative party DC won the 1948 election, Italian design moved away from democratic idealism, which prevailed during the reconstruction period, towards a more style-conscious aesthetics.[84] The liberals *vs.* collaborativists dispute in 1949 provides evidence for historians' interpretation according to which

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82 '[...] di fronte alle necessità e alle difficoltà del lavoro reale, delle esigenze dei rapporti col cliente'. Letter by Luigi Veronesi to the CSR directorship, 18 October 1949, p. 1, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

83 '[...] gli allievi sono considerati cavie da esperimento per modi e sistemi di lavoro ottimi in altre strutture sociali, ma purtroppo assolutamente utopistici (almeno nel caso specifico del lavoro grafico/pubblicitario) nella struttura sociale dell'Italia d'oggi'. Letter by Luigi Veronesi to the CSR directorship, 18 October 1949, p. 1, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

84 See: Penny Sparke, '"A Home for Everybody?": Design, Ideology and the Culture of the Home in Italy, 1945-72', in *Culture and Conflict in Postwar Italy: Essays on Mass and Popular Culture*, ed. by Zygmunt G. Barański and Robert Lumley (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), pp. 225-41; Penny Sparke, 'Industrial Design or Industrial Aesthetics?: American Influence on the Emergence of Italian Modern Design Movement, 1948-58', in *Italy in the Cold War*, ed. by Duggan and Wagstaff, pp. 159-65; Penny Sparke, *Italian Design: 1870 to Present* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1988), pp. 78-81; Penny Sparke, 'Italy's New Domestic Landscape, 1945-72', in *Design the Modern Interior: from the Victorians to Today*, ed. by Penny Sparke, Anne Massey, Trevor Keeble and Brenda Martin (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2009), pp. 183-93. See also: Jonathan M. Woodham, *Twenty Century Design* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 121-28.

the dominant design discourse in Italy shifted from social and political concerns, to private consumption; from neo-rationalism, to an approach based on middle-class aspirations.

A closer look at the output of the CR suggests that the two conflicting stances towards design were not mutually exclusive. Work commissions were discussed during meetings and selected according to their agreement with the leftist, reform-orientated intents of the cooperative. The CR was keen on working on 'all those kind of expressions that provide the broadest category of people with a greater knowledge through a clear and easily understandable language'.[85] Commissions featuring a cultural, political or social content were most likely to be accepted and, as suggested in a note written by Steiner in April 1950, the TGP and the Bauhaus were taken as models of an ideologically committed output.[86] Eligible commissions included, for instance, the visual identity of the 2nd Syndicates International Congress that was held in Milan during the summer of 1949 (see Illustration **4.6**). A postcard presents a seamless pattern of flags that departs from the overlapping hemispheres, thereby conveying an idea of international collaboration. The overflowing list of countries united for the workers' cause and the picture of a bricklayer carrying seemingly effortlessly a heavy load translates visually the slogan of the conference: 'unity is the strength of the workers'.

Frequent clients of the CR were the CGIL (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, Italian General Confederation of Labour) trade union, the partisans' association ANPI, the communist party PCI (Partitito Comunista Italiano, Italian Communist Party), and the cultural association Italy-USSR. The CR collaborated also with left-orientated publishers and newspapers such as the Edizioni di Cultura Sociale and *L'Unità* (see Illustration **4.7**). An anti-DC poster for the 1951 council election features an expressive visual language typical of anti-capitalist propaganda that is closer to the violent satire of the TGP prints than to the modernist aesthetics of the majority of CR production (see Illustration **4.8**). The DC shield on the top hat identifies the terrifying man and the words written on his fingers – war, unemployment, taxes and misery – warns voters what to expect in case of a DC victory. Viewer-voters are urged to take action in order to 'salvare Milano e l'Italia' (save Milan and Italy) from the claws of the DC and 'i suoi complici' (its

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85   'Tutte quelle manifestazioni che per il loro linguaggio chiaro e facilmente comprensibile alle più vaste categorie di persone contribuiscono a dare maggiore conoscenza'. Albe Steiner, handwritten meeting minutes, 4 November 1950, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.
86   Albe Steiner, handwritten meeting minutes, 17 April 1950, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

4.6 postcard for the 2nd Syndicates' International Congress, Cooperativa Rinascita, spring 1949, 14.8 × 10.5 cm

4.7 advertisement for the newspaper *L'Unità* on the occasion of the Giro d'Italia, Cooperativa Rinascita, 1949-55, 21 × 14.3 cm

4.8 black and white reproduction of a propaganda poster anti-DC, Cooperativa Rinascita, 1951. The caption says: 'Vote against the Democrazia Cristiana and its accomplices in order to save Milan and Italy'. The text written of the fingers says: War – index finger, Unemployment – middle finger; Taxes – ring finger, and Misery – little finger

accomplices), clearly identified as the United States of America by the *$* on the ring.[87]

However, members of the CR also designed commercial works for clients such as the household electrical appliances and white goods producers Triplex, Fargas and Ceramiche Pozzi, or the tyre company Pirelli (see Illustrations **4.9**, **4.10**, **4.11** and **4.12**). These seem to indicate a negative answer to the question raised by a member of the CR during a meeting: 'is it right or not to reject a capitalist work?'.[88] Commercial works show a preference for objective and informative representations of goods that feature photography, photomontage, asymmetrical layout, grid compositions. This modernist aesthetic is balanced with more subjective and hand-made compositions that present often a humorous appeal as in the sketched line drawings for Pirelli. Thus the CR output confirms the coexistence of different visual vocabularies within postwar Italian graphic, as introduced in Chapter 3 when discussing the visual identities of the Milan Triennale in the postwar period.[89] Except for the Fargas advertisements, which are signed by Antonio Tubaro, works are anonymously labelled 'Cooperativa Rinascita', thereby conveying the idea of a collaborative outcome in which the individual designer loses authorship. The commercial output manifests a different aspect of the CR that is less committed to the 'construction of a new world', and closer to commercial concerns of industry and market.[90] It suggests that to design commercial work was also acceptable for the more socially minded members of the CR. Finally, the commercial output evidences the way in which the cooperative benefitted from members' professional networks, particularly in cases of big clients like Pirelli for whom both Steiner and Huber were working at the time.

4.4 DESIGN PEDAGOGY: NATIONAL DEBATE AND INTERNATIONAL MODELS

In the sections 4.2 and 4.3, I investigated the alignment of design pedagogy with the re-democratisation of the country in the immediate postwar and explored its

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87   On the interference of the United State in the Italian election in support of the DC, see: Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 115-16, 143. On the relationship between Italy and the United States in the reconstruction period, see: John Harper, *America and the Reconstruction of Italy 1945-1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

88   'É giusto o no rifiutare lavoro di tipo capitalistico?'. Meeting minute, 26 June 1950, p. 2, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

89   On the coexistence of different registers within Pirelli advertising, with a reference to the CR advertisement, see: Carlo Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965: Immagine e Politica Culturale nella Grande Impresa Italiana* (Venice: Marsilio, 2007), p. 183-84.

90   '[...] costruzione del nuovo mondo'. Meeting minute, 26 June 1950, AALS, D b. 2 fasc. 1.

4.9   double-page spread from a promotional catalogue for Ceramiche Pozzi, Cooperativa Rinascita, 1949-55

4.10   sketch for the cover of promotional catalogue for Triplex, Cooperativa Rinascita, 1949-55

4.11   advertisements for Fargass, Antonio Tubaro – Cooperativa Rinascita, 1949-55, 21 × 29.7 cm
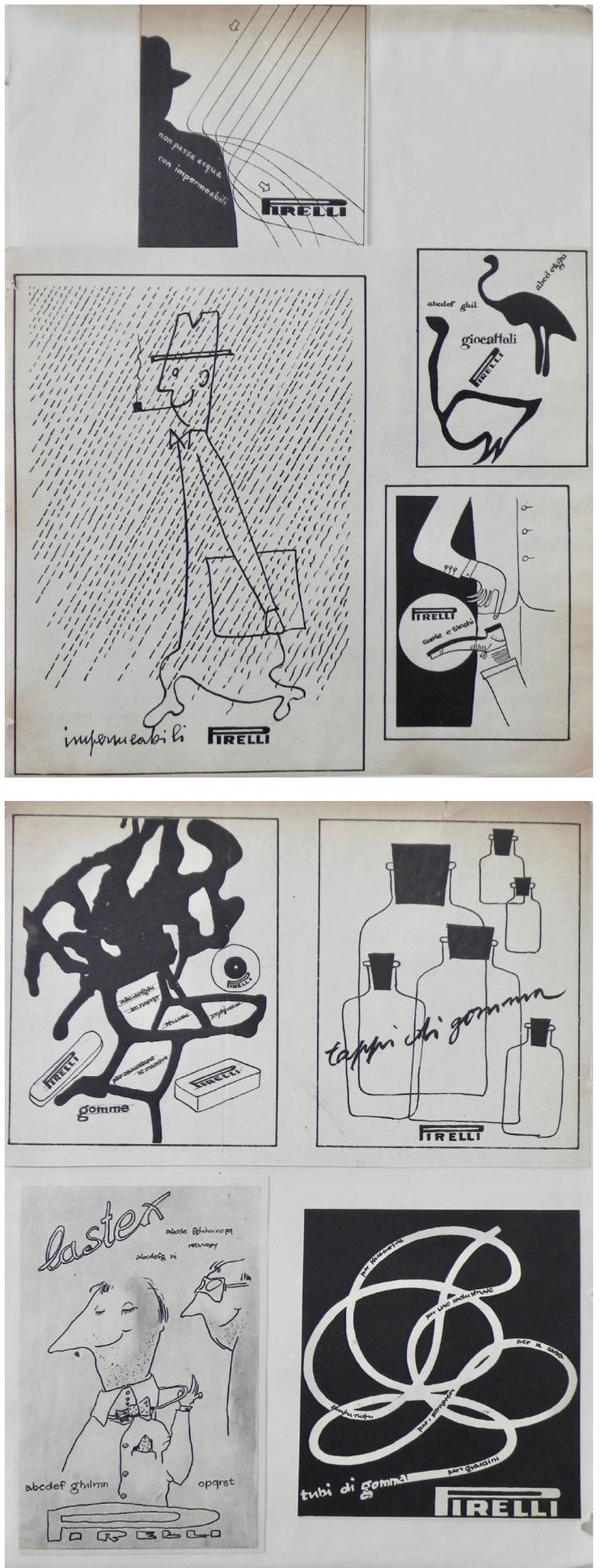
4.12 sketches for newspaper advertisements for Pirelli, Cooperativa Rinascita (Albe Steiner?), 1949-55

political stance. In this section, I expand my perspective and address educational issues within the 1950s and early-1960s design culture in Italy. The section illustrates the national and international debate on design education, and focuses in particular on graphic design education through the lens of design culture at large. In doing so, it provides a backdrop for the development of a graphic design course at the Scuola del Libro that is addressed in the next and last section of the chapter. More broadly, the section explicitly contributes to this thesis's attempt to provide a model for an integrative approach towards graphic design as integral, rather than marginal, part of the history of design.[91]

In spring 1959, architect, designer and chief editor of the industrial design magazine *Stile Industria*, Alberto Rosselli, introduced the March issue with the following statement:

> [...] the issue [of design education] is so urgent and as yet without an organic solution that the space devoted to what is currently happening also outside the country and to comments and suggestions from those who have specific experience on the topic will never be excessive.[92]

The editorial was one of a number of articles addressing design education that had been featured in *Stile Industria* since the launch of the magazine in 1954, and it was to be followed by many more over the following years.[93] Indeed, design education became a critical issue and a much-debated topic in the 1950s not only between design practitioners, but also amongst the Italian cultural élite. Historians, philosophers and scholars joined the debate. On the one hand, practitioners' interest on education evidences a growing professional awareness. On the other hand, the involvement of key figures of the Italian culture, such as art and architecture histo-

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91   Maddalena dalla Mura and Carlo Vinti, 'A Historiography of Italian Design', in *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 46-47.

92   'Il tema è talmente urgente ed ancora senza una risoluzione organica che non sarà mai eccessivo lo spazio dedicato a quanto viene oggi fatto anche fuori dal nostro paese, agli interventi ed al consiglio di quelle personalità che si sono formate una particolare esperienza in questo tema'. Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Insegnamento del Disegno Industriale e la Realtà Produttiva', *Stile Industria*, 6 (21), March 1959, p. 1.

93   Rosselli's attempt to disseminate ideas and stimulate a debate around design education was supported by the major design and architecture publications of the period, such as *Domus, Casabella* and *Civiltà delle Macchine*. By approaching the larger issue of design education and professional training from the perspective of graphic design, the *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici* and *Linea Grafica* acted as mouthpiece of the graphic design community. See for example: Alberto Rosselli, 'Per una Scuola di Disegno Industriale in Italia', *Stile Industria*, 5 (17), January 1958, p. 1; Tomás Maldonado, 'La Nuove Prospettive Industriali e la Formazione del Designer', *Stile Industria*, 6 (20), January 1959, pp. XIX-XXIV; Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Insegnamento del Disegno Industriale e la Realtà Produttiva', *Stile Industria*, 6 (21), March 1959, pp. 1-3; 'Discussione sull'insegnamento del Disegno Industriale', *Stile Industria*, 6 (21), March 1959, pp. XXI-VVV.

rian Giulio Carlo Argan, art and design critic Gillo Dorfles, philosophers Luciano Anceschi and Enzo Paci, suggests a widespread interest in the impact of design on the society and, consequently, a shared concern for designers' education.

As I explored in Chapter 1, specialist publications had acted as incubators for debates and vehicles for dissemination of new approaches to design pedagogy since the interwar period. In the mid-1950s professional associations joined the discussion, thereby bringing it to an official and institutional level. Since its founding in 1956, education was one of the most pressing concerns of the Associazione per il Disegno Industriale (Industrial Design Association – ADI).[94] The 'common effort towards and support to any of those initiatives that could lead to the establishment of specialised schools in Italy' was listed in the statute among the main aims of the ADI.[95] Giulio Castelli, co-founder of the plastic furniture manufacturer Kartell (1949) and member of the ADI organising committee, urged the participants to the first assembly to consider education as its primary goal. According to Castelli, the establishment of schools of industrial design was the only way in which 'the activity [of the industrial designer], which [was] still at an amateurish stage [in Italy], could acquire the efficiency, the authority and the means of protection that are proper to a *licensed profession*'.[96]

Aware that the professionalisation of design in Italy was also dependent upon what was happening abroad, the ADI also promoted its agenda across national borders. At the first meeting of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) which was held in London in June 1957, architect and designer Enrico Peressutti suggested that the council should accentuate its 'cultural and educational character', rather than act as a trade union.[97] According to the ADI spokesman, ICSID was expected to encourage the exchange of educational experiences in order to 'improve industrial designers' professional conditions in all countries'.[98]

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94   See: Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, pp. 38-44.

95   'f) azione comune ed appoggio per tutte quelle iniziative che possano portare alla formazione di scuole specializzate in Italia'. 'Statuto ADI', quoted in *Stile Industria*, 3 (7), June 1956, p. 2.

96   '[…] questa attività, che per ora da noi è ancora dilettantistica, acquisti l'efficienza, l'autorità e la possibilità di tutela di una *professione autorizzata*'. Giulio Castelli, 'La I Riunione dell'A.D.I. a Milano', *Stile Industria*, 3 (7), June 1956, p. 3, italics in the original text.

97   '[…] carattere educativo e culturale […]'. Enrico Peressutti, quoted in *L'Italia del Design: Trent'Anni di Dibattito*, ed. by Alfonso Grassi and Anty Pansera (Casale Manferrato: Marietti, 1986), p. 43.

98   '[…] per elevare le condizioni professionali dei disegnatori industraili in tutti i paesi'. Enrico Peressutti, quoted in *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera, p. 43.

In postwar Italy, two key international conferences on industrial design brought together members of the Italian design community and a leading international design personalities who convened for extensive theoretical debate about design education.[99] These were the 1st International Conference of Industrial Design at the 10th Milan Triennale in 1954, and the 2nd ICSID Congress in Venice, 1961. In the opening speech of the 1st International Conference of Industrial Design, the director of the Triennale, Ivan Matteo Lombardo, asserted that in 1954 'times [were] ripe for a thorough discussion on industrial design and its many-sided relationship with society'.[100] 'The promotion and encouragement of the establishment of cultural institutions in charge of the development of design practice and education in Italy' emerged as major concerns amongst participants to the international

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99   A number of events on design education were organised, mainly in Milan, during the 1950s and early-1960s. The Convegno degli Istituti di Istruzione Artistica (Congress of the Institutes of Arts Education) was one of the first occasions of discussion. This was a national conference organised by the Ministry of Public Education in Florence in 1952. During the conference, the then general inspector at the Ministry of Public Education, Giulio Carlo Argan, advocated the need for reforming the education system of architecture and design. Despite a minority of participants that argued the pointlessness of educational issues given that designers were successfully self-trained, the majority agreed on the need to establishing specialised schools. See: *Atti del Convegno Nazionale degli Istituti d'Istruzione Artistica* (Florence: CND Studi e Documentazione, 1952).

100   'I tempi sono maturi per un dibattito approfondito sul tema dell'industrial design e i suoi multiformi rapporti con la società'. *La Memoria e il Futuro: I Congresso Internazionale dell'Industrial Design, Triennale di Milano, 1954*, ed. by Luca Molinari (Milan; Geneva: Skira, 2001), p. 17. Generally speaking, the debate addressed the understanding and definition of industrial design, and questioned the role and responsibilities of designers. Industrial design was approached as a cultural artefact rather than a marketing tool. A major concern of the conference was the reintegration of culture within the industrial production. Each day addressed a different issue: industrial design and culture, industrial design and production process, industrial design in society. Participants to the 1st International Conference of Industrial Design included scholars, historians and philosophers such as Luciano Ancheschi, Giulio Carlo Argan, Gillo Dorfles and Enzo Paci; architects, designers and artists such as Max Bill, Lucio Fontana, Asgern Jorn, Tomás Maldonado, Ernesto Nathan Rogers, Alberto Rosselli, Walter D. Teague, Konrad Wachsmann and many others. For the proceedings of the 1st International Industrial Design Congress, see: *La Memoria e il Futuro*, ed. by Molinari. For comments of the period, see: 'Notiziario della X Triennale: Il Congresso dell'Industrial Design', *Stile Industria*, 1 (2), October 1954, p. 4; Mario Labò, 'Il Congresso dell'Industrial Design alla Decima Triennale', *Casabella*, 203, November-December 1954, pp. 88-89; Carlo Santi, 'Il I Congresso Internazionale di Industrial design alla X Tiennale', *Stile Industria*, 2 (3), January 1955, unpaged; Gillo Dorfles, 'Tecnica ed Estetica al Congreso di Industrial Design', *Domus*, 303, February 1955, p. 70; Giulio Carlo Argan, 'Arte e Produzione alla X Triennale, *Casabella*, 203, November-December 1954, p. 42. For a recent perspective on the 1954 Milan Triennale with a focus on the role of Alberto Rosselli and mediation issues, see: Kjetil Falllan, 'Annus Mirabilis: 1954, Alberto Rosselli and the Institutionalisation of Design Mediation', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Falllan, pp. 255-70. See also: *Atlante del Design Italiano 1940/1980*, ed. by Alfonso Grassi and Anty Pansera (Milan: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, 1980), pp. 35-36.

conference.[101] In his intervention, Argan defined design as an agent of social integration and advancement, and called for a reform of the national educational system and for the founding in Italy of design schools with an international character.[102] Likewise, Max Bill argued that the social commitment and responsibilities of design pushed educational issues to the fore. In the final document, the Triennale committed to put pressure on 'cultural institutions and productive organisations that were more responsive to [educational] concerns, so that a School of industrial design would be established in Milan'.[103]

Seven years later, the 2nd ICSID Congress was another key moment of the national and international debate on design education.[104] Organised by the ADI and held in Venice in September 14-17, 1961, the congress addressed three topics: 1) the function of the industrial designer within contemporary society; 2) the industrial designer's profession; 3) the industrial designer's education.[105] The American designer, professor at the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh and ICSID co-founder, Peter Müller-Munk opened the debate on profession. His intervention demonstrated the design community's awareness of the mutual relationship between professionalisation and education.[106] According to Müller-Munk, 'without an educational system that ensures the continuity of the professional practices and without a body of knowledge that are essential for the professional work: there is no profession'.[107] On a more pessimistic note, Maldonado's speech problematised the role of education as an agent of professionalisation. 'If it [was] correct to say that the education of the industrial designer [was] generally confused and con-

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101   '[…] promuovere e favorire l'istituzione di organi culturali atti a sviluppare in Italia l'esperienza e la preparazione dell'industrial designer'. *La Memoria e il Futuro*, ed. by Molinari, p. 101.

102   *La Memoria e il Futuro*, ed. by Molinari, p. 23.

103   '[…] fa noti presso gli enti culturali, gli organismi produttivi più sensibili a queste esigenze, affinché venga istituita a Milano una Scuola di industrial design'. *La Memoria e il Futuro*, ed. by Molinari, p. 101.

104   On the 2nd ICSID Congress, see: *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera (, p. 53; Renato De Fusco, *Una Storia dell'ADI: 50* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 2010), pp. 66-67; Pastore, 'Il Corso Superiore di Design Industriale di Venezia 1960/1971', pp. 26-29; Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, pp. 48-49.

105   Excerpts of the four-days debate were published in *Stile Industria*: 'Congresso dell'ICSID a Venezia', *Stile Industria*, 8 (34), October 1961, pp. 1- 28

106   On Peter Müller-Munk and the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh, see: Jim Leski, 'Industrial Design at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, 1934-1967', *Journal of Design History*, 10 (3), 1997, pp. 269-92.

107   'Mancando un sistema didattico che dia continuità alla pratica di una professione, e senza un insieme di conoscenze indispensabili per l'esercizio professionale: non v'è professione'. Peter Müller-Munk, 'Il Design Esiste Come Professione', *Stile Industria*, 8 (34), October 1961, p. 14.

tradictory', Maldonado suggested, 'this was mainly because industrial design as a whole – as both a profession and a philosophy of a profession – [was] still confused and contradictory'.[108]

In his intervention at the 2nd ICSID Congress, Maldonado argued that it was time for designers to step back from their working practice and think seriously about their own profession:

> For a long time, the industrial designer has been busier 'making' than becoming aware of his-her 'making', more involved in extending his-her activity than in examining it in depth. [...] But the new profession [...] has ceased for a while to be in its 'infancy'. Thus, an accurate self-reflection and a clarification of its goals and methods is no longer a luxury, but is nowadays a necessity. And it is an urgent necessity.[109]

As part of their professionalisation, industrial designers were urged to explore their own professional field, negotiate amongst themselves and with neighbouring professions a body of skills and knowledge and define the discipline boundaries. Teaching, as I argue in the next section, provided Milan's graphic designer with the opportunity to better understand their professional profile, the tasks and status of their own profession.

In 1960, a year before the 2nd ICSID Congress, the ADI curated an exhibition on international design schools at the 12th Milan Triennale. This was devoted to 'La Casa e la Scuola' (The Home and the School). On this occasion, the ADI invited the HfG in Ulm and the Royal College of Art (RCA) in London to document their educational activity and exhibit the outcomes of the industrial design course.[110] The exhibition was the first chance for Italian audiences to assess in person the achievements of design schools abroad. Yet, information on both the HfG and

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108   '[...] la formazione del disegnatore industriale è generalmente confusa e contraddittoria, la causa di ciò sta principalmente nel fatto che la totalità del disegno industriale, in quanto professione e filosofia di una professione, continua ad essere confusa e contraddittoria'. Tomás Maldonado, 'Formazione e Alternative di una Professione', *Stile Industria*, 8 (34), October 1961, p. 21.

109   'Per lungo tempo, il disegnatore industriale è stato più impegnato a "fare" che a prendere coscienza del suo "fare", più ad estendere la sua attività, che ad approfondirla. [...] Ma la nuova professione [...] ha già da tempo cessato di essere agli "inizi". Ne deriva che l'attenta riflessione su sé stessa, la chiarificazione dei suoi propri fini e metodi, oggi non è più un lusso, ma una necessità. E una necessità urgente'. Tomás Maldonado, 'Formazione e Alternative di una Professione', *Stile Industria*, 8 (34), October 1961, p. 21.

110   The exhibition included three sections addressing different aspects of the educational system: 1) theoretical, methodological and sociological principles and approaches to design education; 2) organisation of the school – i.e. criteria for hiring of professors and admission of students, funding system, relationship with industry and culture, and public opinion; 3) curricula, relationship between professional training and general culture and teaching methods. On the exhibition, see: *12ª Triennale di Milano*, ed. by Pier Carlo Santini (Milan: Arti Grafiche Crespi, 1960); Anty Pansera, *Storia e Cronaca della Triennale* (Milan: Longanesi & Co, 1974); Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, p. 44.

the RCA, as well as on other international experiences in design education, had been available since the mid-1950s in print. International educational models were, in fact, investigated in detail in design specialist magazines and commented upon. Some contributors expressed their awareness of the impossibility of merely applying them without previous adjustment to the Italian context. 'It is not easy', argued Rosselli in June 1958, 'to evaluate the interest of an experience that is taking place in countries so different from ours, but it is certainly dangerous to think that it would be possible to transplant systems and methods of those countries into Italy'.[111] International educational experiences had to be adapted to the Italian context in order to respond effectively to the requests and needs of Italian industry and to the cultural and social environment.

A close reading of primary sources – industrial and graphic design magazines in particular – provides evidence for the interest of the Italian design community in international design schools. The HfG, the RCA and Institute of Design in Chicago attracted designers and critics' attention. The coverage of the three schools is analysed here to map out the movement of ideas concerning design pedagogy and practice in postwar Italy. Attention is drawn, in particular, on graphic designers' reception of international models of design education, identifying direct connections with the Scuola del Libro in Milano.

By the mid-1950s both designers and the cultural élite in Italy had become interested in what was happening in Ulm. At the aforementioned 1st International Conference of Industrial Design in 1954, Bill's and Maldonado's speeches were followed by a lively exchange of comments that evidenced a keen interest in the educational experience provided at the HfG. Rogers expressed his gratitude to the speakers for the details provided on the HfG, and commented that 'anyone who knows Max Bill and his collaborators can have no doubt that the new school, despite being inspired by the great teaching of the past, was necessarily destined to be different'.[112] Maldonado himself clarified the differences between Bauhaus and HfG in a series of articles that were published in Italy in the late-1950s in which he illustrated his idea of the designer as a coordinator, a partner of the industry

111   'Non è quindi facile valutare l'interesse di una esperienza effettuata in paesi così diversi dal nostro, ma è senz'altro pericoloso pensare di poter trapiantare sistemi e procedimenti di questi paesi in Italia'. Alberto Rosselli, 'Per una Scuola di Disegno Industriale in Italia', *Stile Industria*, 5 (17), June 1958, p. 1.

112   Ernesto Nathan Rogers, in *La Memoria e il Futuro*, ed. by Molinari, p. 87.

and a collaborator of specialists, such as engineers and scientists.[113] Maldonado's well-known speech at the 1958 Brussels World's Fair was published in *Stile Industria* in January 1959.[114] In Brussels, the Argentinian designer criticised the Bauhaus methodology and its revivals, and formulated a radically different design methodology: the so-called 'scientific operationalism'.[115] In contrast to the Bauhaus aestheticism, expressionism, and learning-by-doing teaching method, which he considered an inadequate and outdated misconception of the role and meaning of design in contemporary societies, Maldonado proposed a design pedagogy and practice that were based on a scientific and technological core, and rooted in semiotics and information theory.

Maldonado's scientific approach to design pedagogy and practice met the favour of the Italian design community.[116] Whereas this section focuses on pedagogy, the impact of Maldonado's scientific approach on graphic design practice is discussed in Chapter 5. As argued by design historian Raimonda Riccini, in the late-1950s and along the 1960s, Italian 'architects, designers and artists considered an educational pilgrimage to the German city indispensable'.[117] In particular, critic and historian Gillo Dorfles became one of the main supporters of the Ulm model in Italy and his own approach to design education was reminiscent of Maldonado's scientific operationalism.[118] Invited as a guest scholar in May 1957, he had been the first Italian visitor at Ulm. When asked about this experience, he described

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113   See: Tomás Maldonato, 'L'Insegnamento Superiore e la Crisi dell'Educazione', *Civiltà delle Macchine*, 5-6, May-June, 1957, pp. 82-89; Tomás Maldonato, 'Scienza, Tecnologia e Forma', *Stile Industria*, 5 (18), August 1958, p. 44.

114   Tomás Maldonato, 'Le Nuove Prospettive Industriali e la Formazione del Designer', *Stile Industria*, 6 (20), January 1959, pp. XIX-XXIV.

115   On Tomás Maldonado and the Ulm Model, see: Betts, *The Authority of the Everyday Objects*, pp. 154-157, and pp. 168-173; Paul Betts, 'Science, Semiotics and Society: The Ulm Hochschule für Gestaltung in Retrospect', *Design Issues*, 14 (2) (1998), pp. 67-82; Castillo, 'The Bauhaus in Cold War Germany', in *Bauhaus Culture*, ed. by James-Chakraborty, pp. 186-88. See also: Tomás Maldonado, *Disegno Industriale: un Riesame* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2008), pp. 45-69; Tomás Maldonado, *Arte e Artefatti: Intervista di Hans Ulrich Obrist* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010), pp. 28-34.

116   See: 'Discussione sull'Insegnamento del Disegno Industriale', *Stile Industria*, 6 (2), March 1959, pp. XXI-XXV; Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Insegnamento del Disegno Industriale e la Realtà Produttiva', *Stile Industria*, 6 (21), March 1959, pp. 1-3.

117   Raimonda Riccini, 'Tomás Maldonado and the Impact of the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm in Italy', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees- Maffei and Fallan, p. 91.

118   According to Dorfles, design education was as important as any other scientific or artistic discipline. He advocated the global education at graduate level. This would stress the social, economical and artistic requirements of the designed object. See: Gillo Dorfles, 'L'Insegnamento del Disegno Industriale', in *Il Disegno Industriale e la Sua Estetica* (Bologna: Cappelli Editore, 1963), pp. 60-63.

Ulm as a 'design fortress' where 'something completely new' was being done.[119] He then evoked a curious anecdote of when his friend, the philosopher Luciano Anceschi, asked for advice about his son, Giovanni Ancheschi, who was interested in design. 'I told him to send his son to Ulm so that he would finally become a designer', recalled Dorfles and added rather proudly, 'if Giovannino has become a designer, it is also my merit!'.[120] Giovanni Anceschi was one of the Ulm 'pilgrims' – borrowing Riccini's expression – together with many others, such as the industrial designer Rodolfo Bonetto who was visiting professor from 1961 until 1965. At the HfG, Anceschi studied visual communication between 1962 and 1966. Once back in Italy, he began working as graphic designer and as tutor of Basic Design at the Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale e Comunicazione Visiva (Graduate Course of Industrial Design and Visual Communication) in Rome.[121] The impact of the HfG design pedagogy and practice on the Italian design culture intensified over the following decades.[122] The HfG was taken as a reference model by the first graduate schools of industrial design and visual communication that were founded in Venice, Florence, Urbino and Rome in between 1960 and 1965.[123]

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119   '[...] cittadella del design [...] qualcosa di completamente nuovo [...]'. Gillo Dorfles, interview with the author, Milan, 11 March 2016.

120   'Gli ho detto di mandarlo a Ulm così finalmente diventerà un designer. Se Giovannino è diventato in designer è gra a me!'. Gillo Dorfles, interview with the author, Milan, 11 March 2016.

121   On the CSDICV in Rome, see: Giovanni Anceschi, 'Design di Base, Fondamenta del Design', *Ottagono*, 70, September 1983, reprinted in *Notizie AIAP*, 10, June 2000, pp.18-28; *Rassegna della Istruzione Artistica: Numero Speciale Dedicato all'Attività del Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale e Comunicazioni Visive Ammesso all'Istituto d'Arte di Roma*, 7 (3-4), July-December 1972; Trozzi, 'Quelli di via Conte Verde', *Progetto Grafico*, 1 (2003), pp. 102-05; Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, pp. 86-90.

122   On the relationship between Italy design pedagogy and the HfG in Ulm, see: Giovanni Anceschi and Piero G. Tanca, 'Ulm e l'Italia', in *La Scuola di Ulm*, ed. by Lindinger, p. 248; Pansera, *La Formazione del Designer in Italia*, pp. 51-53. The influence of the Ulm model exceeded the context of design education. For instance, several Italian companies – Olivetti and La Rinascente in particular – collaborated with Ulm faculty members and graduates. On the impact of the HfG in Italy and in particular on the role of Tomás Maldonado as mediator whithin both the education and the industrial context, see: Riccini, 'Tomás Maldonado and the Impact of the Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm in Italy', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, pp. 89-105; Raimonda Riccini, 'Un'Impresa aperta al Mondo. Conversazione con Tomás Maldonado', in *Comunicare l'Impresa: Cultura e Strategie dell'Immagine nell'Industria Itaiana (1945 -1970)*, ed. by Giorgio Bigatti and Carlo Vinti (Milan: Guerini e Associati, 2010), pp. 135-52; Raimonda Riccini, 'Disegno Industriale in Lombardia: un Modello per il Made in Italy', in *Storia d'Italia*, ed. by Bigazzi and Meriggi, pp. 1185-88.

123   For a different perspective on the international impact of the HfG design pedagogy, see, for example: Silvia Fernández, 'The Origins of Design Education in Latin America: from the hfg in Ulm to Globalization', *Design Issues*, 22 (1) (2006), pp. 3-19.

In 1959, two articles provided Italian graphic designers with some insight into the graphic design course – its pedagogy and graphic output – at the HfG. Art historian and critic Pier Paolo Santini draw attention to the visual communication department in a review of school, published in the cultural magazine *Comunità*.[124] The primary goal of the department, Santini wrote, was 'the training of that category of specialists, which [was] usually referred to with the term graphics, that [was] conquering an ever-expanding field of action and involvement in modern life'.[125] A main concern was the design of 'the clearest relationship possible between messages and public [...] relying on [...] perception theory and semiotics'.[126] The output of the visual communication department at the HfG was reproduced in *Stile Industria*. The selected visual artefacts illustrated the adoption of a boldly abstract vocabulary and the use of a limited and systematic variation of a set of geometric forms and graphic elements (see Illustration **4.13**).[127]

By the early-1960s, the Italian design community was quite well informed about the RCA, having had several occasions – e.g. the 1960 exhibition at 12th Milan Triennale – to become familiar with its teaching methods and evaluate the outcomes of students' training and education. The British design educational system was reviewed as part of a survey of European design schools that the ADI

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124   *Comunità* was established by Adriano Olivetti in 1946 as the house organ of Movimento di Comunità (Community Movement). It was a weekly publication featuring articles on political and cultural arguments. Pier Paolo Santini, 'La Scuola di Ulm: Organizzazione e Metodi di Lavoro', *Comunità*, 72, August-September 1959, reprinted in *Notizie AIAP*, 89, May 1999, pp. 14-19.

125   '[...] preparare tutta quella categoria di specialisti, che solitamente si designano col nome di graficie che va conquistando un sempre più ampio campo d'azione e di impegno nella vita moderna'. Pier Paolo Santini, 'La Scuola di Ulm: Organizzazione e Metodi di Lavoro', *Comunità*, 72, August-September 1959, reprinted in *Notizie AIAP*, 89, May 1999, p. 16.

126   '[...] il più chiaro rapporto possibile fra i messaggi e il pubblico [...] appoggiandosi [...] alle cognizioni derivanti dalla teoria della percezione e dalla semiotica'. Pier Paolo Santini, 'La Scuola di Ulm: Organizzazione e Metodi di Lavoro', *Comunità*, 72, August-September 1959, reprinted in *Notizie AIAP*, 89, May 1999, p. 16.

127   Angelo Tito Anselmi, 'Hochschule für Gestaltung, Ulm: Documenti di una Scuola di Disegno Industriale', *Stile Industria*, 6 (21), March 1959, pp. 3-20

4.13 double-page spread illustrating the Department of Visual Communication at the HfG in Ulm, from Angelo Tito Anselmi, 'hochschule für gestaltung. ulm', *Stile Industria* 6 (21), March 1959, pp. 6-7

commissioned Giulio Castelli in 1958.[128] Castelli praised the cultural and technical competence of RCA students.[129] Yet, he pointed out what he saw as an intrinsic issue of the British educational system. The fact that the British industry was only then beginning 'to care about design, but [was] not yet clear about the role of the designer' resulted, according to Castelli, in a lack of consistent request for trained design professionals to the detriment of graduates' employability.[130] A demand for a major role of the designer within the industry was a common concern amongst the international design community, Italy included. Thus, rather than merely criticising the British educational system and industry, Castelli's comment evidenced the awareness of the need of acting on multiple fronts.[131] Further information on the RCA were provided to the readers of *Stile Industria* by Misha Black, professor of industrial engineering at RCA and ICSID president, in May 1962.[132] Black explained that the goal of the RCA was not to train expert industrial designers, but to act as a 'springboard for future education and training' taking place in the working environment.[133] The College provided a methodology, stimulated students' confidence

128 It should be noted that Giulio Castelli had no direct experience of the British educational system. His comments were based on readings – i.e. schools' promotional materials and articles – and personal contact with members of the British Council of Industrial Design. Despite general disappointment, Castelli drew attention to three industrial: the RCA, the Central School of Art and Crafts and the Birmingham College of Arts and Crafts. He criticised the Birmingham College of Arts and Crafts (now Birmingham School of Art) for its emphasis on formal aspects of design to the detriment of technical training. By contrast, the Central School of Art and Crafts (now Central Saint Martin College of Arts and Design) was praised for providing students with good technical training in collaboration with the industry. In addition to Castelli's review of the British system, the survey included also a number of educational experiences from Holland, Sweden, Czechoslovakia and East Germany. See: 'L'Insegnamento del Disegno Industriale', in *Stile Industria*, 5 (18), August 1958, pp. 37-44; in particular, Giulio Castelli, 'Le Scuole di Industrial Design in Inghilterra', pp. 37-38. For a history of the Central School of Arts and Crafts, see: *Making Their Mark: Art, Craft and Design at the Central School, 1896-1966*, ed. by Sylvia Backemeyer (London: Herbert Press, 2000).

129 On the RCA, see: Frayling Christopher, *The Royal College of Art* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1987); *Designs of the Times: One Hundred Years of the Royal College of Art*, ed. by Frayling Christopher and Claire Catterall (London: Richard Dennis Publications, 1996); Frayling Christopher, *Art and Design: 100 Years at the Royal College of Art* (London: Collins & Brown, 1999).

130 'L'industria incomincia a preoccuparsi del design, ma ancora non è chiarita la funzione del designer in seno a essa'. Giulio Castelli, 'Le Scuole di Industrial Design in Inghilterra', *Stile Industria*, 5 (18), August 1958, p. 38.

131 On the problematic relationship between design and industry in the UK during the 1940s, see: John Gloag, *The Missing Technician in Industrial Production* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1944). The book was reviewed in *Stile Industria* in the mid-1950s, thus is likely that Castelli's knowledge of the UK industry was based in part on Gloag's arguments. See: Enzo Frateili, 'Bibliografia di Disegno Industriale', *Stile Industria*, 2 (5), September 1955, p. 45.

132 Misha Black, 'The Royal College of Art', *Stile Industria*, 8 (32), May 1961, pp. 2-9.

133 '[...] un trampolino per la futura educazione [...]'. Black, *Stile Industria*, 8 (32), May 1961, p. 3.

in their skills and creativity and encouraged an experimental approach to design. A further concern of the RCA was the promotion of students' awareness of the designer's social responsibility.

However, coverage of the RCA in Italian design periodicals was focused solely on the industrial design course, lacking any relevant mention of any other department within the College. It was, in fact, only in March 1964 that the attention of the Italian design community, or at least part of it, was directed towards the graphic design course at the RCA, when the graphic design magazine *Linea Grafica* reviewed the exhibition 'GraphicsRCA' (see Illustration **4.14**).[134] This was the first-ever exhibition of graphic design that took place at the College on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the formation of the School of Graphic Design in 1948.[135] The reviewer described the exhibition as a 'revelation' and as the evidence of both the merits of the educational system and the vitality and originality of British graphic design, which had reached an 'average level that was indeed amongst the best worldwide'.[136]

The introductory text to the catalogue for the 1964 show 'GraphicsRCA' by Richard Guyatt testifies of the graphic design profession's awareness of its niche and ambiguous position within the design community, suggesting that British and Italian graphic designers were dealing with similar problems. Head of the School of Graphic Design, Guyatt declared that the boundaries of graphic design were still vague and widespread, 'on the one side overlapping many other branches of design, on the other becoming a medium of fine arts'.[137] According to Guyatt, the very term 'graphic design' was unknown before the war and when it was chosen 'with a certain sense of relief, but not conviction' to name the new department at

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134   R. Salvadori, 'La Nuova Grafica Inglese e il Royal College of Art', *Linea Grafica*, 17 (3-4), March-April 1964, pp. 105-108.

135   See the exhibition catalogue: *GraphicsRCA: Fifteen Years' Work of the School of Graphic Design, Royal College of Art* (London: Lion & Unicorn Press, 1963). For a critical reading of the exhibition 'GraphicsRCA', see: *GraphicsRCA: Fifty Years and Beyond*, ed. by Teal Triggs, Adrian Shaughnessy and Anna Gerber (London, Royal College of Art, 2014); Teal Triggs, 'Curating Graphic Design and Its History', in *Mapping Graphic Design History in Switzerland*, ed. by Davide Fornari and Robert Lzicar (Zurich: Triest Verlag, 2016), pp. 18-44. On the activity of the School of Graphic Design at the RCA, see also: Alex Seago, *Burning the Box of Beautiful Things: The Development of a Postmodern Sensibility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 25-48; Christopher Frayling, *Art and Design; 100 Years at the Royal College of Art* (London: Collins & Brown, 1999), pp. 252-309.

136   '[...] livello medio che è certo tra i più alti del mondo'. R. Salvadori, 'La Nuova Grafica Inglese e il Royal College of Art', *Linea Grafica*, 17 (3-4), March-April 1964, p. 108.

137   Richard Guyatt, 'Graphic Design at the Royal College of Art', in *GraphicsRCA: Fifteen Years' Work of the School of Graphic Design, Royal College of Art*, p. 22.

La nuova grafica inglese e il Royal College of Art

Copertina del volume che raccoglie i lavori degli studenti.

La recente mostra organizzata dalla Scuola d'Arte Grafica del Royal College of Art di Londra è stata per molti aspetti una rivelazione: una rivelazione dell'alto livello tecnico e dell'efficenza di questa scuola oltre che della sua profonda influenza sull'estetica industriale inglese.

La mostra celebrava il quindicesimo anniversario della School of Graphic Design ed esponeva non solo lavori degli studenti ma pure di ex-allievi già entrati nella professione. Tra questi ultimi figuravano alcuni degli artisti che sono oggi tra i più noti e qualificati in campo internazionale, come Alan Fletcher,

Raymond Hawkey, Gordon Moore, Romek Marber, David Collins, ecc. Una eloquente testimonianza del valore formativo di questa scuola che si è ormai imposta tra le migliori del mondo.

La School of Graphic Design, fondata nel 1948, fa parte integrante del Royal College of Art, istituto superiore per le belle arti e le arti applicate. L'insegnamento si suddivide in tre settori fondamentali: « Design Department », che include la sezione tipografica, il disegno pubblicitario e la produzione di libri; l'« Illustration Department », cioè l'arte grafica pura,

Particolare della Mostra.

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4.14   review of the exhibition 'GraphicsRCA' from R. Salvadori, 'La Nuova Grafica Inglese e il Royal Colege of Art', *Linea Grafica*, 17 (3-4), March-April 1964, p. 105

the RCA, 'no one was quite sure what it meant'.[138] Suspended between design and fine arts, graphic design's uneasy position was moreover jeopardised by its association with advertising. The problematic relationship between graphic design, advertising and industrial design and its impact on the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan is the subject of the next chapter.

As I mentioned before, the third international design school that attracted the attention of the Milanese graphic design circle, was the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago.[139] A report on the Institute appeared in the graphic design publication *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici* in March 1953.[140] The author, graphic designer Michele Provinciali, reported his personal experience as a student at the Institute (1951-52) back to his colleagues.[141] In Chicago, Provinciali attended Harry Callahan's and Hugo Weber's classes that encouraged him to adopt a design-lead approach to visual communication, and fuelled his long-lasting interest in experimental photography.[142] Back in Milan, Provinciali reported his experience through articles and public talks that introduced the

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138   Guyatt, *GraphicsRCA: Fifteen Years' Work of the School of Graphic Design, Royal College of Art*, pp. 21-22.

139   Originally named New Bauhaus, the Institute of Design was founded by László Moholy-Nagy in 1937 with the support of the president of the Container Corporation of America (CCA) Walter P. Paepcke. It offered a four-years graduate programme. After completing three semesters of Foundation Course, students could choose between four different specialisations: Product Design, Shelter Design and Building Research (i.e. architecture), Visual Design and Photography. Together with Joseph Albers' experience at the Black Mountain College in North Carolina, the Institute of Design revolutionised the American design educational system and promoted the spread of Bauhaus design pedagogy in the United States. On the Institute of Design of Chicago and Moholy-Nagy, see, for example: Hall Foster, 'The Bauhaus Idea in America', in *Albers and Moholy-Nagy: from the Bauhaus to the New World*, ed. by Achim Borchardt-Hume (London: Tate Publishing, 2006), pp. 92-102; Alain Findeli, *Le Bauhaus de Chicago: L'Œvre Pédagogique de László Moholy-Nagy* (Sillery: Septentrion, 1995); James Sloan Allen, *The Romance of Commerce and Culture: Capitalism, Modernism and the Chicago-Aspen Crusade for Cultural Reform* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2020, pp. 35-77; Barbara Jaffee, 'Before the New Bauhaus: From Industrial Drawing to Art and Design Education in Chicago', *Design Issues*, 21 (1), winter 2005, pp. 41-62.

140   See: Michele Provinciali, 'Institute of Design', *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici*, 8 (53), May 1953, unpaged; Michele Provinciali, 'I Martedì del Centro: Elementi per una Sintassi della Forma', *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici*, 8 (65), May 1964, unpaged.

141   After graduating in History of Art at the University of Urbino, Michele Provinciali was awarded a Fulbright scholarship that financed two years of study at the Chicago Institute of Design. Provinciali's funding application was recommended by the art historians Giulio Carlo Argan and Lionello Venturi, and Walter Gropius. On Michele Provinciali, see: Gillo Dorfles, *Michele Provinciali: Sentimento del Tempo* (Bologna: Grafis, 1986); *Maestri del Design: Provinciali*, ed. by Bruno Bandini (Rome: Gangemi Editore, 2006).

142   On the photography course at the Institute of Design in Chicago, see: *Taken by Design: Photographs from the Institute of Design, 1937-1971*, ed. by David Travis and Elizabeth Siegel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

Milanese design community to the educational system and design methodology of the Institute of Design. Moreover, and more relevant to this chapter, he brought his experience from the United States back to Italy, where he began teaching at the Scuola del Libro in 1954.

Provinciali was not the only faculty member at the Scuola del Libro who had first-hand experience with the Institute of Design. Graphic designer Massimo Vignelli joined the faculty in 1960 after a two-year teaching fellowship at the institute. In Chicago, Vignelli had 'the opportunity to verify in person the effectiveness of the kind of training offered at the Bauhaus, although in a milder American version'.[143] All Italian designers who were trained or worked at the Institute of Design in Chicago – such as the aforementioned Provinciali and Vignelli, but also architect, product designer and founding member of the ADI, Angelo Mangiarotti, and product designer, Roberto Lucci – got involved in design education after their return in Italy.[144] Their involvement ensured a circulation of practice and pedagogy of the Institute in the Italian design educational system that was gradually taking shape in the early-1960s.

The impact of the Institute of Design on Italian graphic design went beyond design pedagogy. Indeed, the opening of the international graphic design firm Unimark International in 1965 was the outcome of the professional network that flourished within the school.[145] At least three founding partners of Unimark International – Vignelli, Jay Doblin and Ralph Eckerstrom – met through the net-

143   '[…] l'opportunità di verificare sul posto la validità o meno del tipo di insegnamento fornito dalla Bauhaus, seppure nella blanda versione americana'. Massimo Vignelli, 'Umanitaria, Anni '60. Un'Aria Nuova per la Grafica', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by della Campa and Colombo, p. 134.

144   More information about the Institute of Design appeared in *Stile Industria* in two articles written by Angelo Mangiarotti, and the industrial designer, Jay Doblin. Mangiarotti spent two semesters as a visiting professor at the institute, teaching last year students in the Product Design department during the academic year 1953-54. For Mangiarotti, the teaching experience in Chicago was the first of a lifelong interest in education. Doblin, on the other hand, was the dean of the Institute of Design from 1955 to 1969. During his tenure, he transformed Moholy-Nagy's outpost of Bauhaus education into a professional school in line with his idea of design and art as two very different professional fields, and belief that the association with the arts was actually detrimental to design education and professionalisation. A further opportunity of exchange between the American institute and the Italian design community took place in summer 1959 on the occasion of an exhibition on Italian industrial design organised by the ADI at the Institute of Design in Chicago. See: Angelo Mangiarotti, 'Institute of Design di Chicago: Esperienze di Insegnamento', *Stile Industria*, 2 (4), April 1955, pp. 7-11; Jay Doblin, 'Institute of Design – Chicago', *Stile Industria*, 6 (24), September 1959, pp. 1-5; Alberto Rosselli, 'Design Italiano a Chicago', *Stile Industria*, 6 (23), July 1959, p. 1.

145   On Unimark International, see: Jan Conradi, *Unimark International: The Design of Business and the Business of Design* (Baden: Lars Müller, 2010).

work of professionals that gathered around the Institute.[146] A fourth co-founder of Unimark was the Dutch-born, Milan-based graphic designer Bob Noorda who met Vignelli when they were both lecturing at the Scuola del Libro in Milan. The case of Unimark International shows how schools – e.g. the Institute of Design in Chicago and the Scuola del Libro in Milan – can play a key role in fostering networks and creating a fertile environment for professional collaboration.[147]

The ways in which both Provinciali and Vignelli adapted the model of the Institute of Design to the Italian context 'by making it more Mediterranean, and less Nordic', to use Provinciali's own expression, is investigated in the next section.[148] The next section also suggests ways in which graphic designers clarified the profession's goals and methods while outlining the curricula and course structure at the Scuola del Libro in Milan. In doing so, I seek to provide further evidence to my initial statement on the reciprocal relationship between education and professionalisation.

4.5 TRAINING THE GRAPHIC DESIGN ASSISTANT

The 'sergeants' of graphic design and their training form the subject of this final section. As mentioned in the chapter introduction, they were the students of the course for graphic design assistants at the Scuola del Libro in Milan who were nicknamed 'sergeants' by their teacher, Albe Steiner. The Corso per Assistenti Grafici (Course for Graphic Design Assistants) was a three-year-long daily course – forty-two hours weekly during the first two years, to be increased to forty-four in the final year – for pupils aged at least fifteen.[149] It was launched in the late-1950s as Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici (Technical-Artistic Course for Graphics) and later renamed.[150] The course was an extension of a previous evening class

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146   On Jay Doblin, see: John Grimes, 'Photography on its Own: the ID in the 1960s', in *Taken by Design: Photographs from the Institute of Design, 1937-1971*, ed. by David Travis and Elizabeth Siegel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 153-56.

147   The relationship between Unimark International and the Scuola del Libro is not limited to the founding partners. In fact, Noorda and Vignelli employed students in the Milanese office. See: Bob Noorda, 'Eravamo una Squadra Molto Affiatata', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by della Campa and Colombo, p. 143.

148   '[...] rendendole più mediterranee, meno nordiche'. Michele Provinciali, 'Nel Regno della Sperimentazione', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by della Campa and Colombo, p. 126.

149   'Corso Serale per Assistenti Grafici: Organizzazione e Programmi', 22 October 1965, course outline, ASU.

150   'Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici: Orario e Linee Programmatiche', course outline, 1960, pp. 3-4, ASU.

of Progettazione Grafica (Graphic Design).[151] This was a one-year class launched in December 1952, which was then extended to a two-year course by Michele Provinciali after his arrival at the Scuola del Libro in 1954 from his experience at the Institute of Design in Chicago.[152]

Archival documents clarify who these 'sergeants' were and what was expected from them. 'One should not forget', the course outline advised, 'that the three years Technical-Artistic Course aims to train the studio assistant and not the bona fide "graphic designer"'.[153] The graphic design assistants were the 'preliminary stage of the profession of the graphic designer'.[154] They were expected to master both aesthetic and technical aspects of 'a profession that was already touching upon so many disparate domains, from editorial industry to advertising, from photography to signage, to packaging and so on until industrial design'.[155] In order to become a bona fide graphic designer, the assistants were expected to complete their on-the-job training in collaboration with professional designers and in contact with practical circumstances. Alternatively, they could continue studying at a graduate level. By the early-1960s, the second option gradually acquired the favour of the design community who, as seen in the previous section, was increasingly requesting the setting up of a graduate school of design in Italy.

In the outline of the Technical-Artistic Course, the term 'graphic designer' was used in English, in inverted commas.[156] I would argue that, rather than a mere linguistic curiosity, the use of the word 'graphic designer' in English – still uncommon at that time – rather than 'progettista grafico' or 'grafico' in Italian adds a particular connotation. The course outline provides hints to interpret the peculiar word choice. In fact, students were expected to attend English language classes and the choice of English as a foreign language was justified in these terms: not only was English a convenient language to learn given its widespread use, but also

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151   Letter from Riccardo Bauer to prospective students of the graphic design course, 12. November 1952, ASU, 1952-183. See also: Enrico Gianni, 'Anno 1953-54: La Scuola del Libro di Milano', *Linea Grafica*, 6 (9-10), September-November 1953, pp. 183-86.

152   'Consorsio per la Scuola del Libro: Verbale n. 15', meeting minute, 20 July 1954, p. 5, ASU, 1954-218.

153   'Non bisogna infatti dimenticare che il triennio del corso tecnico-artistico mira a preparare l'assistente di studio e non il "graphic designer" vero e proprio'. 'Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici: Orario e Linee Programmatiche', course outline, 1960, p. 3, ASU.

154   '[...] stadio preliminare alla professione del graphic designer'. *Società Umanitaria: Relazione sull'Attività Sociale dal 1956 al 1960* (Milan: Società Umanitaria, 1960), p. 44.

155   '[...] una professione che arriva ormai a toccare i più disparati campi, dall'editoria alla pubblicità, dalla fotografia alla segnaletica. Agli imballaggi e via via progredendo sino al disegno industriale'. *La Società Umanitaria*, ed. by Bauer, p. 209.

156   'Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici: Orario e Linee Programmatiche', 1960, p. 3, ASU.

an essential language from a professional point of view. Indeed, as clearly reported in the text, 'the most important texts about graphics and packaging [were] mainly written in this language'.[157] On a micro level, the use of the word 'graphic designer' in English without the Italian translation implies that English had become the lingua franca of design practice and education. On a macro level, it suggests that by the early-1960s 'graphic design', as both a concept and a profession, had acquired a shared meaning in which the international graphic design community recognised itself and one that Italian graphic designers wanted to join.

Since the graphic design assistant was 'very much involved from an intellectual point of view', classes in Cultura Generale (General Culture) were included in the syllabus.[158] In line with the ethos of the Umanitaria and the postwar belief that schools should form responsible citizens aware of their civil and social right and duties, the development of a professional ethos was a major concern of the General Culture classes. These classes were intended to familiarise students with 'key moments of the social, cultural and civic development' of contemporary society, provide them with 'the linguistic tools and critical attitude' that were necessary to act responsibly both as individuals and as professionals, and with the instruments to evaluate objectively technological, economic, cultural and social changes.[159] Thus, by exploring the social and political commitment implicit in the profession, the General Culture lectures aimed to make students aware of the impact of design on the society and take responsibility for it.

Cultura Figurativa (Visual Culture) and Cultura Grafica (Graphics Culture) were also included in the course for graphic design assistants. The study of modern and contemporary history of art and graphics was approached as a methodological device to analyse and solve issues of visual communication that students faced in the workshop. The involvement of art historian Mario De Micheli as Visual Culture lecturer ensured an approach to the history of art that went beyond connoisseurship, drew attention to the socio-political context and made no distinction

157   '[...] i più importanti testi concernenti la grafica e l'imballaggio sono prevalentemente scritti in questa lingua'. 'Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici: Orario e Linee Programmatiche', 1960, p. 2, ASU.

158   '[...] particolarmente impegnata dal punto di vista intellettuale [...]'. 'Corso Serale per Assistenti Grafici: Organizzazione e Programmi', 22 October 1965, p. 3, ASU. The General Culture class consisted in lectures on Italian grammar and orthography, Italian and foreign literature, contemporary history and civic education.

159   '[...] punti nodali dello sviluppo sociale, culturale e civile [...] fornirgli gli strumenti di linguaggio e l'atteggiamento critico [...]'. 'Corso Serale per Assistenti Grafici: Organizzazione e Programmi', course outline, 22 October 1965, p. 3, ASU.

between fine- and applied-arts.[160] The programme of the graphic design course included also technical and free drawing, technology, maths, hand composition and extracurricular activities, such as visits to museums and industrial workshops.

The Laboratorio di Progettazione (Design Workshop) was at the core of the training of the graphic design assistant.

> [The workshop was] the point of convergence of all theory based classes, and the point of departure of practice based training; where students can express their own personal voice with ease and are expected to gradually acquire an effective, well thought out and rational graphic language.[161]

First-year students explored the syntax of the visual vocabulary. Exercises in basic graphic design – such as experiments with colour, form, negative-positive compositions, rhythm, and layout – were carried out to ensure that students had a firm grasp of both potential and limitation of tools and techniques. For instance, Enzo Mari's students were asked to draw the same symmetrical subject – e.g. a wine glass or a saddle – in gradually more complex manners and different techniques in order to exercise their perception and manual skills.[162] Other exercises consisted of analysing carefully, taking apart, cutting and pasting examples of packaging and magazine or book layouts, to understand the design process in reverse.[163] During the second year, students collaborated with fellow classmates to design different types of printed material: posters, calendars, advertising, packaging, wrapping paper, covers, labels, and letterheads. The design process began with the careful analysis of the assignment and was aimed at acquiring a design methodology. To this end, second-year students' attention was directed toward a thorough consideration of all different aspects of the visual communication: subject, content, purpose, costs, distributions, social and cultural issues, audience, and technical aspects of the execution.[164] The third and final year of the Design Workshop was devoted to the design and execution of a project. This could be conceived by the

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160   For a detailed description of the Visual Culture classes, see: 'Cultura Figurativa, dr. Mario de Micheli', undated archival document, AALS, D.b. 22 fasc. 1. De Micheli's ground-breaking book on the avant-garde movements was used as schoolbook. Mario De Micheli, *Le Avanguardie Artistiche del Novecento* (Milan: Schawarz, 1959).

161   'È il punto a cui convergono gli insegnamenti teorici, e da cui si dipartono le esercitazioni pratiche; quello in cui l'allievo deve gradualmente giungere alla efficace, ragionata e razionale espressione grafica, avendo agio di manifestare il proprio linguaggio personale'. 'Corso Serale per Assistenti Grafici: Organizzazione e Programmi', 22 October 1965, p. 11, ASU.

162   Enzo Mari, 'La Scuola di cui Milano Aveva Bisogno', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by Della Campa and Colombo, p. 144,

163   Giancarlo Iliprandi, interview with the author, Milan 2 March 2014.

164   Albe Steiner, 'Programma del II Anno Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici: Paragrafo 9) Progettazione', 1961/1962, AALS, Db 22 fasc. 1.

students themselves or commissioned by graphic design or advertising studio, or by publishers.[165] The Florentine publisher Sansoni, for instance, commissioned from the Scuola del Libro in 1959 the design of the paperback edition of the theatre series 'Il Piccolo Teatro Sansoni' (see Illustration **4.15**).[166] The focus on the intrinsic beauty of the letterform, the geometrical composition, the shifting of foreground and background, the reversal of positive and negative forms, the bright and discordant colours of the covers, whose design is credited to four third-year students – Bollini, Brambilla, Comolli and De Roberto – are reminiscent of the book covers that Noorda and Vignelli – both tutors at the Scuola del Libro – were designing for Feltrinelli in the mid-1960s.[167]

The Design Workshop had a 'propelling function' within the Scuola del Libro.[168] The projects of third-year students of the graphic design course were realised in collaboration with the other departments. Students were encouraged to supervise the developments of their own designs and collaborate with compositors, printers and bookbinders.[169] The Design Workshop was also in charge of the design of all official printed material and students were expected to ensure that all works presented 'the characteristic mark of the school'.[170] Graphic design students had the exclusive right to establish the visual aspect of the school output. They guaranteed a coherent and recognisable aesthetics and supervised the correct execution. In other words, they had the privilege to set the criteria that differentiated good from bad design within the school context. The use of the 'good design' discourse as an exercise of power and a legitimation device for the fledging profession of the graphic designer was investigated in detail in the Chapter 3. Nevertheless, it is worth reiterating here that to put the graphic design department in charge of the school output was a way to establish a hierarchy within the graphics and printing industry with the graphic designer at the very top.

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165   'Corso Tecnico-Artistico per Grafici: Orario e Linee Programmatiche', 1960, pp. 3-4, ASU.

166   See correspondence between Albe Steiner and the Casa Editrice Sansoni, 1959-60, Archivio Albe Steiner, D. b. 22 fasc. 1.

167   Mario Piazza, 'The Lines of a Book', in *TDM5: Grafica Italiana*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo, Mario Piazza and Carlo Vinti (Milan: Corraini Edizioni, 2012), pp. 81-83, see illustration pp. 87 and 90.

168   '[...] funzione propulsiva [...]'. 'Corso Serale per Assistenti Grafici: Organizzazione e Programmi', 22 October 1965, p. 11, ASU.

169   'Corsorzio della Scuola del Libro: Verbale n. 14', meeting minutes, 11 September 1953, ASU, 1953-218.

170   '[...] l'impronta caratteristica della scuola [...]'. 'Corsorsio della Scuola del Libro: Verbale n. 14', meeting minutes, 11 September 1953, p. 5, ASU, 1953-218.
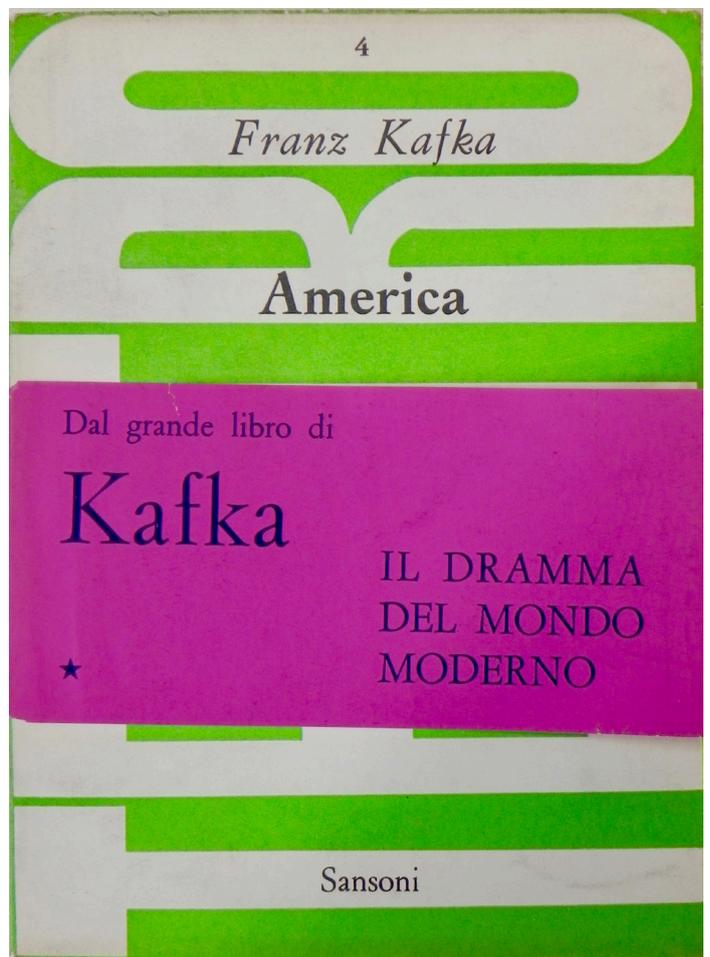
4.15   book cover design for the publisher Sansoni, design by Bollini, Brambilla, Comolli and De Roberto (3rd year students of the Graphic Design Workshop), Scuola del Libro in Milan, 1960 circa

Further details of the graphic works designed by the students of the course for graphic design assistants can be found in specialist magazine of the period. The annual exhibitions of the Scuola del Libro were reviewed regularly on specialist publications and attracted the interest of the larger design community and industry featuring in magazine such as *Stile Industria* and *Pirelli*. Students' works exhibited included both design exercises and finished graphic artefacts.[171] First-year students' formal exercises featured in Steiner's article on the 1962 exhibition (see Illustration **4.16**).[172] The article featured also third-year projects: poster design, packaging, type, book and magazines design, and exercises with the visual identity of the Scuola del Libro. Third-year students also designed logos and visual identity systems for – possibly made-up – companies such as the beer manufacturer Stülz or the soft drinks company Arancin-Lemoncin (see Illustration **4.17**). The study for a visual identity for Stülz is an interesting choice. In fact, the so-considered first visual identity in Italy to be based on a corporate manual was Noorda's design for the beer manufacturer Dreher in 1966-67.[173] It is not my intention to suggest that Noorda copied the students' design, nor that the Stülz visual identity was based on a corporate manual. Nevertheless, the event is a curious coincidence that illustrates the way in which students and faculty shared similar design issues, thereby making the collaboration and the reciprocal learning more interesting.

The 'sergeants' are portrayed in two black and white photographs from the early-1960s (see Illustrations **4.18** and **4.19**). Both pictures portray a tutor – Noorda and Tubaro – talking with the students of the Graphic Design Workshop. Students' exercises on type design and typographic composition hang on the wall, possibly to encourage comparisons and constructive criticism. Students sit behind the desks and appear to be working on different projects: such as the dummy of an olive oil can or the packaging and label for a beverage. The most certainly staged photographs draw attention to the three female students in the foreground. Their

171   See: 'Mostra dei Lavori degli Allievi', *Linea Grafica*, 14 (7-8), July-August 1959, p. 209; Albe Steiner, 'La Mostra a Fine Anno alla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria', *Linea Grafica*, 16 (7-8), July-August 1961, pp. 238-46; 'All'Umanitaria Mostra dei Lavori degli Allievi', *Linea Grafica*, 7 (33), 1961, p. 11; 'Una Mostra di Allievi dell'Umanitaria', *Stile Industria*, 7 (34), October 1961, pp. 56-58; 'All'Umanitaria Mostra dei Lavori degli Allievi', *Bolletino degli Studi Grafici*, 16 (163), pp. 2-3; Mario Melino, 'I Sergenti della Grafica', *Pirelli*, 6, 1962, pp. 100-04; Mario Melino, 'L'Esposizione di Fine Anno alla Scuola del Libro della Soictà Umanitaria', *Stile Industria*, 9 (39), September 1962, pp. 1-6; Arturo Maestri, 'Mostra dei Lavori alla Scuola del Libro', *Lombardia Poligrafica*, 19 (9-10), September-October 1963, p. 10.

172   Albe Steiner, 'Mostra Grafica di Fine Anno all'Umanitaria', *Linea Grafica*, 18 (7-8), July-August 1962, pp. 241-52.

173   *TDM5*, ed. by Camuffo, Piazza and Vinti, p. 293.

4.16 two double-page spreads featuring works by the students of the Graphic Design Workshop at the Scuola del Libro in Milan exhibited at the 1962 students' exhibition, from Mario Melino, 'L'Esposizione di Fine Anno alla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria', *Stile Industria*, 9 (39), September 1962, pp. 2-5

4.17 visual Identity for Birra Stülz and Arancin-Lemoncin, 3rd year students of the Graphic Design Workshop, Scuola del Libro in Milan, 1961-65

4.18   Bob Noorda and students in the Graphic Design Workshop, Scuola del Libro in Milan, 1963-64

4.19   Antonio Tubaro and students in the Graphic Design Workshop, Scuola del Libro in Milan, 1963-64

prominent position suggests that the very presence of female students was perceived as remarkable. Indeed, whereas until the 1940s the student body was composed only of male students who were usually sons of printing workers, from the late 1950's on, women also attended the daily courses for graphic assistants in addition to the sons and daughters of graduated parents. The extension in gender and social class of the students' body suggests an increased appeal of the profession to outsiders.[174]

Moving the focus away from the students towards the educators, the analysis of the course for graphic design assistants provides further evidence for the gradual articulation of the graphic design profession on Milan. First, it shows how design pedagogies experiment abroad were adopted and adapted at the Scuola del Libro in Milan. Second, it suggests that teaching was beneficial for Milan's graphic designers to define their own practice.

As discussed in section 4.4, Italian graphic designers were well informed about ideas of design pedagogy and practice formulated in design schools abroad. At the Scuola del Libro, as Steiner clarified during the presentation of the exhibition of the graphic design evening classes in 1961, it was not the case of 'following with pretentious laziness one experience or another (on the one hand the Bauhaus, and on the other the School of Chicago), but of deriving from our own economic, political, sociological, historic, cultural, etc. roots the typical elements that characterise *our own* way of living, thinking and working'.[175] International educational experiences were adjusted to respond to the national context and to the national and international debate over design education.

From his experience at the Institute of Design in Chicago, Provinciali brought back the emphasis on problem-based learning and the focus on a design-lead approach to visual communication, as well the student-centred and open-ended teaching methods. His experimental approach to design pedagogy affected not only the graphic design course, but also the photography course, and favoured a

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174   Magali SarfattiLarson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 42-46.

175   '[…] non si tratta di seguire con presuntuosa pigrizia una esperienza o un'altra (da un lato per esempio la Bauhaus e dall'altro la Scuola di Chicago) ma di trarre dalle nostre stesse radici economiche, politiche, sociali, storiche, culturali ecc. tutti gli elementi tipicamente caratteristici del *nostro* modo di vivere, di pensare e di operare […]'. Albe Steiner, 'La Mostra a Fine Anno alla Scuola del Libro della Società Umanitaria', in *Linea Grafica*, 16 (7-8), July-August 1961, p. 239, italics in the original. The text is reprinted in: Steiner, *Il Mestiere di Grafico*, p. 198.

fertile collaboration between the two disciplines.[176] Vignelli developed a course on colour perception based on Egbert Jacobson's book *Colour Harmony Manual*.[177] During the course on colour perception students filled out colour charts by painting different shades – from the brighter to the darker hue – of the same colour. By the end of the course, they exchanged charts amongst themselves so that each student would have a DIY version of Jacobson's manual.[178] In doing so, Vignelli turned the shortage of didactic materials into an exercise that aimed to improve students' manual skills and sharpen their colour perception, while developing their sense of responsibility towards fellow classmates.[179] The emphasis on effective visual communication based 'neither on abstract schemes nor on of the author's personal preferences, but rather functional to the material, the product, the audience, etc.', as well as the claim to objective and scientific approaches to the design process, responded to the international development of a system-orientated design methodology.[180]

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176   The photography course opened in 1954 and revolutionised both the teaching and practice of photography in Italy involving prominent figures such as the photography critic and historian Antonio Arcari and the photographer Paolo Monti. Students studied on Harry Callahan's book *L'Arte della Visione*. On the photography course at the Scuola del Libro in Milano, see: Luigi Veronesi, 'Proposta per l'Organizzazione di un Laboratorio di Fotografia presso la Scuola del Libro', undated archival document, AALS, Db. 22 fasc.1; Antonio Arcari, *Il Fotogramma: Riassunto delle Lezioni Tenute al Corso per Fotografi della Società Umanitaria* (Milan; Como: Foto Magazin, 1965); Antonio Arcari, *L'Immagine degli Occhi: Riassunto delle Lezioni Tenute al Corso per Fotografi della Società Umanitaria da Antonio Arcari e Emilio Frisia* (Milan; Como: Foto Magazin, 1965); Antonio Arcari and Emilio Frisia, eds., *La Fotografia di Materia: Riassunto delle Lezioni Tenute al Corso per Fotografi della Società Umanitaria da Antonio Arcari* (Milan; Como: Foto Magazin, 1966); Michele Provinciali, 'Un Nuovo Corso all'Umanitaria', *Linea Grafica*, 8 (7-8), July-August 1955, pp. 202-05; Roberto Mutti, 'Dalla Fotomeccanica alla Fotografa d'Autore', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by Della Campa and Colombo, pp. 90-104; *Tra le Carte di Antonio Arcari. Fotografia, Educazione Visiva 1950-1980*, ed. by Diletta Zannelli (Milan: Lupetti, 2010).

177   Egbert Jacobson, *The Colour Harmony Manual and How to Use It* (Chicago: Container Corporation of America, 1942). The manual was reviewed in *Stile Industria* in 1957 and praised as valuable instrument for both educational and professional purposes. See: 'Container Corporation of America', *Stile Industria*, 4 (14), October 1957, p. 23.

178   Massimo Vignelli, 'Umanitaria, Anni '60. Un'Aria Nuova per la Grafica', in *Spazio ai Caratteri*, ed. by Della Campa and Colombo, pp. 134-34; see also Narciso Silvestrini, 'Il Senso dell'Unita', pp. 148-49.

179   The shortage of graphic design didactic material was an issue up until the late-1960s when there was an efflorescence of how-to handbooks. Unitl then, teaching was based on tutors' own professional experience and supplemented with self-published didactic materials, international graphic design and photography magazines and actual graphic design artefacts that were analysed in the classroom. See: correspondence between Scuola del Libro and Studio Repetto (Turin), October 1962/January 1963, ASU, 1962-509.

180   '[...] non secondo schemi astratti, o perdilezioni personali dell'autore, ma in funzione del materiale, del prodotto, del pubblico a cui si rivolge, ecc.'. 'Relazione sull'Attività della Scuola del Libro nell'anno scolastico 1964-65', archival document, 1965, Archivio Albe Steiner, Db. 22 fasc. 1.

At the Scuola del LIbro, a cluster of Central European designers was a further agent of exchange of international educational experiences. As Iliprandi put it, 'another key role in [the] Italy-Switzerland relationship was played by the graphic design course for assistants held at the Umanitaria'.[181] Indeed, students were taught by highly-trained graphic designers coming from neighbouring Switzerland such as Max Huber and Carlo Vivarelli.[182]

Steiner, Iliprandi, Huber, Noorda, Vignelli, Tubaro, Negri, Weibl, Mari and the other tutors at the Scuola del Libro participated in a jointly articulated and understood discourse, and negotiated their own identity through shared experiences of design education and practice. Drawing on educational theorist Etienne Wenger's concept of 'community of practice', one could argue that they were active members of a community of practitioners.[183] Moreover, by attracting an outstanding number of local graphic designers and émigrés, the Scuola del Libro satisfied one of the requirements for the development of a specialised body of formal knowledge and skills that is, as observed by sociologist Eliot Freidson:

> [the presence of] a group of like-minded people who learn and practice it, identify with it, distinguish it from other disciplines, recognise each other as colleagues by virtue of their common training and experience with common set of tasks, techniques, concepts and working problems.[184]

While training a new generation of 'sergeants' of graphic design, faculty members set the criteria of access to the profession, established the boundaries of the discipline and collectively outlined their professional profile.

Steiner's notes in a proposal for a new editorial design course exemplifies the way in which faculty members were mutually negotiating the criteria of inclusion

181   Giancarlo Iliprandi, 'An Interview with Giancarlo Iliprandi', in *Italian Design Is Coming Home. To Switzerland*, ed. by William Georgi and Tommaso Minetti (Amsterdam: Polyedra, 2011), p. 19.

182   Max Huber and Carlo Vicarelli studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zurich in the interwar period and were acquaintance with prominent figures of the Swiss School, such as the graphic designer and design educator Joseph Müller Brockmann. On graphic design education in Switzerland in the postwar period, see: *The Basel School of Design and Its Philosophy: The Armin Hofmann Years, 1946-1986. An Exhibition of Posters* (Philadelphia: Goldie Paley Gallery, Moore College of Art, 1986). On Josef Müller-Brockmann carreer as design educator, see: Josef Müller-Brockmann, *The Graphic Designers and His Design Problems* (Niederteufen: Verlag Arthur Niggli AG, 1983); *Josef Müller-Brockmann: Pioneer of Swiss Graphic Design*, ed. by Lars Müller (Baden: Lars Müller Verlag, 1995); Kerry William Purcell, *Josef Müller-Brockmann* (London, New York: Phaidon, 2006), pp. 205-29.

183   See: Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Etienne Wenger and Berverly Wenger-Trayner, 'Communities of Practice a Brief Introduction', http://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/, [accessed 26 February 2017].

184   Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism: The Third Logic* (Chicago: Universtity of Chicago Press, 2001), p. 202.

or exclusion and delineating borders towards adjacent professions.[185] The syllabus was conceived by Negri and consists of a twenty-page detailed description of the editorial designer's professional profile. This is eagerly scribbled in from Steiner who criticised Negri for confusing roles and tasks of different people working in the publishing industry. As observed by architectural historians Mark Crinson and Jules Lubbock, 'debates over the content of the curriculum were debates over what the leaders of the profession believed that [they] should be and how their functions differed from those of other professions'.[186] Thus, by stressing the differences between editorial designers, editors, compositors and copywriters, Steiner was not only clarifying who the editorial designers were, but he was also acknowledging the network of professionals in which they were integrated and attempting to coordinate the relationship between the different members of the publishing industry.[187]

On a similar note, Iliprandi recalled that the time spent with his colleagues writing the course syllabi, outlining the professional profile and pinning down the students' requirements helped him clarify the tasks and status of his own profession:

> We tried to outline the so-called professional profile while keeping in mind the tasks that students were expected to fulfil once graduated [...]. We studied the professional profile and we observed which where the subjects that had to be taught on top of design, and we tried to bridge the gap.[188]

For Iliprandi, teaching was a way of questioning and defining the profession's requirements and aims. It was by getting involved in design education that graphic designers, who, like himself and Steiner, were self-trained and had learned how to do their job in the 'battlefield', defined their own practice. Teaching within the community of practitioners that gathered at the Scuola del Libro was an 'experience of identity formation [...] a process of becoming a certain kind of creative

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185   Ilio Negri, 'Grafica Editoriale', undated archival document, AALS, Db. 22 fsc. 1.

186   Mark Crinson and Jules Lubbock, *Architecture: Art or Profession? Three Hundred Years of Architectural Education in Britain* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 2.

187   For an overview of editorial design in postwar Italy, see: *Disegnare il Libro: Grafica Editoriale in Italia dal 1945 ad Oggi*, ed. by Aldo Colonnetti (Milan: Scheiwiller, 1988).

188   'Abbiamo studiato quello che era il cosiddetto profilo professionale, tenendo in mente quello che poi si sarebbe richiesto a questi ragazzi una volta finita la scuola [...]. Quindi studiavamo il profilo professionale e vedevamo quali erano le materie che andavano insegnate, a parte progettazione, cercavamo di tappare tutti i buchi'. Giancarlo Iliprandi, interview with the author, Milan 2 April 2014.

and critically minded design practitioner'.[189] Therefore, design education – both as learning and as teaching – was not only beneficial for students but also for tutors themselves who, as was confirmed by Pino Tovaglia, 'learn by teaching'.[190] The relationship between education and profession is thus reciprocal and they act as partners: the graphic design profession shaped education and was itself shaped by education in return.

4.6 THE 'SERGEANTS' OF GRAPHIC DESIGN ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF PROFESSIONALISATION

By exploring the Scuola del Libro and the Cooperativa Rinascita as case studies, I investigated design education in Italy from the early years of reconstruction until the eve of the Italian economic miracle. I studied the pivotal role of pedagogy in the re-democratisation of the country and I contextualised the Italian postwar social idealism within the broader international context. A closer look at the curricula has provided important details with regards to the social and historical construction of the graphic design profession. Moreover, by contextualising the educational experiences at the Cooperativa Rinascita and at the Scuola del Libro within the national and international debate of the design community, I illustrated the reciprocal relationship between education and practice. In so doing, I have tried to explore professionalisation not as a linear process, but as a continuous renegotiation between members, back and forth from the day-to-day practice to the formal codification in the classroom.

This chapter and Chapter 1 offered a detailed description of the Scuola del Libro and assessed its impact on the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan from the 1920s to the mid-1960s. My analysis embedded the school in the local, highlighting its tight relationship with the graphics and printing industries and its rootedness in the Milanese cultural, economic and political context. At the same time, it emphasized its roots in the Italian typography and the printing trade, and alignment with the social ethos advocated by the Società Umanitaria. It also suggested ways in which the Scuola del Libro contributed to the recovery of the printing industry and its involvement in the moral reconstruction of the country.

189   Mike Tovey, 'Design Education as the Passport to Practice', in *Design Pedagogy: Developments in Art and Design Education*, ed. by Mike Tovey (Farnham: Gower Publishing Limited, 2015), p. 38
190   'E insegnando imparavo'. Pino Tovaglia, in *Milano 70/70: un Secolo d'Arte, 1946-1970* (Milan: Museo Poldi-Pezzoli, 1971), v. 3, p. 170.

I contextualised the school within the postwar debate over design education, and pointed out the original contributions of Italian and Central-European graphic designers that worked at the school. Despite the fact that the Scuola del Libro was training assistants and not bona fide graphic designers, its experience was pivotal in establishing graphic design education in Italy. Indeed, it educated generations of graphic designers who would in turn become tutors across the country, thereby ensuring a legacy of the school's ethos and pedagogy continuing until the present.

The next chapter addresses graphic design's negotiation of its own boundaries with advertising and industrial design. To this end, it explores the setting up and early-years of design professional associations in Italy.

5. The 'poor relations' of industrial design

The Associazione Italiana Artisti Pubblicitari (Italian Association of Advertising Artists – AIAP) and the Associazione per il Disegno Industriale (Association for Industrial Design – ADI) were founded in Milan one year apart in 1955 and 1956, respectively. Both professional bodies are still active today. Whereas AIAP membership is restricted to visual communication, the ADI represents the multifaceted world of design, graphic designers included. Scholars of Italian design have studied both associations, and focused in particular on the ADI and its design-celebrity members.[1] However, the dialogue and power relationship between the ADI and the AIAP has not yet received thorough analysis.[2] By contrast, in this chapter I focus on conflicts, exchanges and alliances between the two professional bodies.

By exploring the setting up and early-years of design professional associations in postwar Italy, this chapter investigates graphic design's continuous renegotiation of its own boundaries with a network of neighbouring professions, and its adaptation to changing cultural, economic and social environments, shifting agendas and evolving design discourses.[3] It stresses frictions and dynamics between the AIAP and the ADI, and, in doing so, it addresses the struggle for graphic designers to assert their own profession within their troubled relationship with advertising and industrial design.[4] Despite both being national organisations, thus embedded in the Italian context, the AIAP and the ADI were part of transnational design

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1   For a history of the ADI, see: Renato De Fusco, *Una Storia dell'ADI: 50* (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 2010); *L'Italia del Design: Trent'Anni di Dibattito*, ed. by Alfonso Grassi and Anty Pansera (Casale Manferrato: Marietti, 1986), pp. 38-67; *Atlante del Design Italiano 1940/1980*, ed. by Alfonso Grassi and Anty Pansera (Milan: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, 1980). On the AIAP, see: Lorenzo Grazzani and Francesco E. Guida, *AIAP 70x70: Eventi, Personaggi e Materiali di una Storia Associativa* (Milan: AIAP, 2015); *La Pubblicità: Mensile della Federazione Itaiana Pubblicità*, 30 (10), October 1976, special issue.

2   Graphic designers' ADI membership is briefly addressed in: *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera, p. 58; *Visual Design: 50 Anni di Produzione in Italia*, ed. by Giancarlo Iliprandi, Alberto Marangoni, Franco Origoni and Anty Pansera (Milan: Idea Libri, 1984), pp. 19-21; Carlo Vinti, 'Graphic Designers, People with Problems. Some Thoughts from Italy', in *Graphic Design Worlds/Words*, ed. by Giorgio Camuffo and Maddalena Dalla Mura (Milan: Electa, 2011), p. 89.

3   My understanding of group formation, dismantling and renegotiation is informed by Bruno Latour's actor-network-theory. See, in particular: 'First Source of Uncertainty: No Group, Only Group Formation', in Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 27-42.

4   On professional associations as changing and internally divided institutions, see: Eliot Freidson, *Professional Powers: A Study of the Institutionalization of Formal Knowledge* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 185-208; W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations* (London: Sage Publications, 2001), p. 50.

networks.[5] While looking at the local networks, I problematise the ways in which Italian graphic designers participated in, contributed and responded to the articulation of an international design discourse and adapted it to national specificities.

I address the AIAP and the ADI both as actors on their own and as clusters of individuals who fostered the professionalisation of graphic design both locally and internationally.[6] More broadly, this chapter explores the continuous changing of the graphic design practice and the articulation of a new thinking in visual communications from the 1950s to the mid-1960s in Italy and within the international graphic design community at large. Through an investigation of the ADI, the AIAP and their membership, it contributes to my understanding of the relational nature and social construction of the graphic design profession in postwar Italy.[7]

5.1 ITALIAN ASSOCIATION OF ADVERTISING ARTISTS, AIAP

In the first two sections of this chapters, I present the AIAP and the ADI. I investigate their strategies of professionalisation, including the promotion of professional standards and the contribution to the visibility and better public understanding of the profession. I explore and compare their membership and their network. In doing so, I identify main differences between the two associations and suggest that while the AIAP was the offspring of the interwar alliance between

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5   On national bodies for design promotion, see, for example: Leah Armstrong, 'Steering a Course Between Professionalism and Commercialism: The Society of Industrial Artists and the Code of Conduct for the Professional Designer 1945-1975', *Journal of Design History*, 29 (2) (2016), pp. 161-79; Katarina Serulus, 'Design Promotion in Belgium in the 1960s: National Interests and European Ambitions', in *Design Frontiers: Territories, Concepts, Technologies. ICDHS 2012 - 8th Conference of the International Committee for Design History & Design Studies*, ed. by Marcos Braga, Anna Calvera, Priscila Farias and Zuleica Schincariol (São Paolo: Blucher, 2012) pp. 285-88; Christopher Thompson, 'Modernizing for Trade: Institutionalizing Design Promotion in New Zealand, 1958-1967', *Journal of Design History*, 24 (2011), pp. 223-39; Gülay Hasdoğan, 'The Institutionalization of the Industrial Design Profession in Turkey: Case Study – The Industrial Designers Society of Turkey', *The Design Journal*, 12 (3) (2009), pp. 311-37; Yagou, 'Unwanted Innovation', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (3) (2005), pp. 269-83.

6   For a critical perspective on international design organisations and their role in global design histories, see: Jonathan M. Woodham, 'Local, National and Global: Redrawing the Design Historical Map', *Journal of Design History*, 18 (3) (2005), pp. 257-67; D. J. Huppatz, 'Globalizing Design History and Global Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 28 (2) (2015), pp. 182-202.

7   On profession's relational nature and on professions as social constructs and historical product, see: Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labour* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988); Valérie Fournier, 'The Appeal to "Professionalism" as a Disciplinary Mechanism', *Social Review*, 47 (2) (1999), pp. 280-307.

graphics and advertising, the ADI offered graphic designers a means of renegotiating their professional identity and industrial role.

The setting up of the AIAP in October 1955 was the outcome of a referendum among the members of the Associazione Italiana Tecnici e Artisti Pubblicitari (Italian Association Advertising Technicians and Artists –ATAP).[8] This was a professional association founded in September 1945 that reunited the so-called 'tecnici pubblicitari' (advertising technicians) and the 'artisti pubblicitari' (advertising artists). The ATAP was part of the Federazione Italiana Pubblicità (Italian Federation of Advertising – FIP) which included a number of professional bodies, representing the different professions that populated the advertising industry's network.[9] Protagonists of the 1930s debate on Italian advertising and graphics, discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, – such as the campisti Carlo Dradi and Attilio Rossi, the graphic practitioners Marcello Nizzoli and Giovanni Pintori, the advertisers Nino G. Caimi and Dino Villani, as well as Antonio Boggeri – subscribed to the ATAP.

After a decade together in the ATAP, the cohabitation between advertising technicians and artists came to an end. Debates over the possibility of reorganising the ATAP began in spring 1953. The reorganisation was to happen gradually and two committees were put in charge of examining 'the respective issues of each category'.[10] Indeed, 'the Technician's interests [were] not only unrelated to, but also

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8   The AIAP recently celebrated its 70th anniversary. The anniversary provided an occasion to research into its history and to revaluate the role of prominent members. I collaborated in the research project that resulted in an exhibition at the Fabbrica del Vapore in Milan during the international graphic design week, AIAP DX 2015, from the 4th to the 8th of November 2015. The exhibition was accompanied by a catalogue: Lorenzo Grazzani and Francesco E. Guida, *AIAP 70x70: Eventi, Personaggi e Materiali di una Storia Associativa* (Milan: AIAP, 2015). On the early years of the AIAP, see: Mario Piazza, 'Grafica: Creativi negli Anni Cinquanta', in *Milano Anni Cinquanta*, ed. by Guido Anghia and Alberto Marangoni (Milan: Franco Angeli Editore, 1986), pp. 163-69.

9   FIP was originally named Unione Italiana Pubblicità (Italian Advertising Union, 1945-47), UIP. In addition to the ATAP, in the early-1950s the associations that were affiliated to FIP included: Associazione Agenzie e Studi Tecnici di Pubblicità (Association of Advertising Technical Studios and Agencies), ASSAP; Associazione Aziende Pubblicitarie Italiane (Association of Italian Advertising Companies), AAPI; Associazione Pubblicità Stampa (Association Advertising Publishing), APS; Associazione Capi di Aziende Pubblicitarie e Capi Uffici di Pubblicità (Association of Managers of Advertising Companies and Advertising Departments), ACAUP; Associazione Nazionale Produttori di Pubblicità (National Association of Advertising Producers), ANPP. On FIP and the advertising industry in postwar Italy, see: Antonio Valeri, *Pubblicità Italiana: Storia, Protagonisti e Tendenze di Cento Anni di Comunicazione* (Milan: Sole24Ore, 1986), pp. 81-93; *FIP: Personaggi e Fatti della Pubblicità Italiana, 1947-1978* (Milan: Editoriale Domus, 1978); *Annuario Federazione Italiana Pubblicità 1957* (Milan: FIP, 1957); *Annuario Federazione Italiana Pubblicità 1967* (Milan: FIP, 1967).

10   '[…] problemi relativi a ciascuna categoria […]'. 'ATAP: il Nuovo Comitato Direttivo', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 7 (3), March 1953, p. 6.

conflicted with those of the advertising Artist'.[11] As previously seen in Chapter 2, advertising technicians and artists were two distinct professional figures that had been gradually shaped since the interwar period. The technicians usually lacked any artistic training, often coming from the fields of journalism or law, and considered modern advertising as a new branch of business administration. Advertising artists were not only required to be creative and have a clear sense of aesthetic discrimination, but were also expected to be experts in graphic techniques and language, as well as being familiar with modern advertising.

According to the chairman of the ATAP, Antonio Valeri, to question the professional boundaries was in itself an 'evidence of maturity […], promoting the public understanding' of the advertising professions.[12] In demanding the reorganisation of the ATAP, advertising technicians and artists acted as distinct professional bodies. The internal schism is evidence of the growing self-awareness of the advertising professions, their quest for autonomy and need to distinguish themselves from neighbouring professions. In June 1954, the ATAP asked its members to express their opinion with regards to which membership structure they considered the most effective at protecting the interests of both professional bodies.[13]

In October 1955 a special general assembly was organised to discuss the 'constitution of two new and distinct Associations, for advertising technicians and artists respectively, to whom the current Members of ATAP and whoever was eligible would be able to subscribe'.[14] Outcomes of the assembly were the dissolution of the ATAP and the resulting constitution of the two new professional associations:

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11   '[…] il Tecnico […] ha interessi non solo estranei, ma addirittura contrastanti rispetto agli Artisti pubblicitari'. 'Proposte per una Eventuale Riforma della FIP', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 7 (6-7), June-July 1953, p. 3. Differences between advertising technicians and artists were clarified in the ATAP statute of 1954: *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 8 (4), April 1954, p. 3.

12   '[…] prova di maturità […] favorendo così un pubblico chiarimento […]'. Antonio Valeri, 'Il Problema dei Rapporti tra Tecnici e Artisti Pubblicitari', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 9 (9), September 1954, p. 1.

13   See: 'ATAP: Referendum tra i Soci', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 8 (6), June 1954, p. 5; 'ATAP', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 8 (7), July 1954, p. 4; 'Ancora in Discussione il Problema della Divisione dell'ATAP', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 8 (12), December 1954, p. 1.

14   '1) Costituzione di due nuove distinte Associazioni, rispettivamente dei tecnici e degli artisti pubblicitari, alle quali potranno appartenere gli attuali Soci dell'ATAP e quanti altri che ne abbiano il diritto'. Letter from Nino Maggioni and Antonio Valerio – president and director of ATAP, respectively – to all ATAP members, 3 October 1955, CDPG. The letter features in: Giangiorgio Fuga and Mario Piazza, *Ho Pagato la Quota. 50 Anni di Carte Intestate dei Soci Aiap* (Milan: AIAP, 1997), unpaged.

the AIAP and the TP (Tecnici Pubblicitari – Advertising Technicians).[15] The first members of the newly-founded AIAP totalled 70 in contrast to 105 members of the TP. Membership included well-known figures of early-twentieth-century poster-art such as Marcello Dudovich, Sepo (alias of Severo Pozzati) and Federico Seneca. It involved protagonists of the interwar update of Italian visual communication in accordance with modernist aesthetics and techniques such as the campista Carlo Dradi, Giovanni Pintori and Erberto Carboni. A younger generation of graphic designers, represented by Franco Grignani, Angelo G. Fronzoni and Pino Tovaglia, also subscribed.[16] From the very outset, the AIAP appeared as a heterogeneous body that mirrored the still unclear position of the graphic designer profession. It included both exponents of a more traditional approach to graphics, and promoters of a different perspective on visual communication similar to that of the Scuola del Libro, discussed in Chapter 4. The latter approach stressed design methodology and problem solving over originality and artistic personality, and was to gain increasing support from AIAP members in response to the shifting of graphic design discourses.

During its formative years in the mid-1950s, the AIAP functioned mostly as a social club within the Milanese design network. The association provided members with occasions for informal networking during parties, weekly dinners and field trips, thereby promoting a sense of community and favouring exchange. The Premio Giarrettiera Pubblicitaria (Advertising Garter Award) is evidence of

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15   On the dissolution of the ATAP and set up of the AIAP and the TP, see: 'L'Assemblea dell'ATAP', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 9 (10), October 1955, p. 3; 'Costituita la Nuova Associazione Italiana degli Artisti Pubblicitari', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 9 (11), November 1955, p. 5.

16   Membership includes: Augusto Ambroso, Arturo Assali, Anselmo Ballester, Davor Band Brunetti, Pino Barale, Umberta Barni, Aldo Battaglia, Bruno Bellesia, Domenico Belli, Carlo Benedetti (known as Benca), Italo Bergomas, Paolo Bianchi, Sandro Bidasio Imberti, Lucio Bojano, Tonino Boschiroli, Angelo Bray, Ercole Brini, Ugo Busarello, Serafino Campi, Giuseppe Cappadonia, Manlio Cappellato, Erberto Carboni, Eugenio Carmi, Mimmo Castellano, Alfredo Cavadini, Sergio Cottignoli, Carmelo Cremonesi, Bruno del Mestre, Walter Dodis, Carlo Dradi, Marcello Dudovich, Ovidio Faroni, Augusto Favalli, Enzo Forlivesi (known as Araca), Sergio Franciscone, Angelo G. Fronzoni, Luigi Gargantini, Oddo Giammattei, Gianni Angelini, Franco Grignani, Alfredo Lalia, Natale Ligasacchi, Alessandro Martelli, Luigi Martinati, Brunetta Mateldi, Giovanni Mingozzi, Alberto Momo, Franco Mosca, Luigi Oriani, Nino Pagot, Fulvio Pardi, Mario Perondi, Giovanni Pintori, Giordano Pitt Tessera, Severo Pozzati (known as Sepo), Giovanni Pozzi, Mario Puppo, Gian Rossetti, Franco Rossi, Alda Sassi, Alessandro Scarsi, A. V. Scalanbrin, Federico Seneca, Edoardo Sfogliarini, Armando Testa, Pino Tovaglia, Annaviva Traverso, Luciano Vegni, Dante Vernice, and Celeste Visigalli.

an informal approach to professionalisation.[17] The peculiar name of the award referred to the restaurant where AIAP members used to meet just outside the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, the Taverna della Giarrettiera, and was also inspired, ironically, by the British Order of the Garter. The Premio Giarrettiera Pubblicitaria was a more or less serious award. It consisted of an actual garter and a satirical graphic composition. The latter was designed by a fellow AIAP member and signed by all attendees at the evening.[18] The campista Carlo Dradi was awarded the Premio Giarrettiera Pubblicitaria in 1956 (see Illustration **5.1**).[19] The award plate by Gian Rossetti represents Dradi's logo for the Hotel Jolly with the caricatured profile of the graphic designer on the top of the *J* (see Illustration **5.2**). The duckling on the tip of the doorman's hat is also a humorous reference to Dradi's work for the Milanese public transport company. In 1962, it was Dradi's turn to design the award plate for the Turin-based type designer Aldo Navarese (see Illustration **5.3**). Pasted on the silhouette of a type shank, Navarese's head opens like Pandora's box and colourful letters and numbers, which are set in different fonts, come out in an irrepressibly creative impetus.

Simultaneously with its social agenda, the AIAP formulated a more cogent strategy for professionalisation. In line with sociologist Geoffrey Millerson's definition of 'qualifying association', the AIAP aimed at becoming a mediator and a guarantor of inter-professional, intra-professional, professional-client and professional-public relationships.[20] Since the early 1950s, when it was still part of the ATAP, the association had been trying to carve out a professional status for the advertising artists. To this end, it set out practical and ethical principles, promoted standards of professional conduct and advanced and protected members' interests. A first draft of the basic conditions for advertising artists' provision of

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17   On the Premio Giarrettiera Pubblicitaria, see: Francesco E. Guida, 'Giarrettiere, Puntine e Progettiste', in *AWDA: Aiap Women in Design Award, Premio Internazionale Design della Comunicazione*, ed. by Daniela Piscitelli (Milan: AIAP, 2015), pp. 34-36; Grazzani and Guida, *AIAP 70X70*, pp. 15-16.

18   From 1956 to 1968, the Premio Giarrettiera Pubblicitaria was awarded to figures of the advertising and graphics circle, as well as to exponents of show business – such as the cinema and theatre actor Vittorio Gassman (1960) – and specialist publications – e.g. the publisher Ufficio Moderno (1959), the Swiss magazines *Grafischer Bund Gestalter* and *Verband Schweirizischer Graphiker* (1962). For the complete list of award winning people, see: www.aiap.it/cdpg/?ID=3722&IDsubarea=&IDsez=131 [accessed 15 January 2017].

19   'La "Giarrettiera" Pubblicitaria a Carlo Dradi', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 10 (10), October 1956, p. 7.

20   Geoffrey Millerson, *The Qualifying Associations: A Study in Professionalisation* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), pp. 148-80.

risolvere in concreto il problema; 15) il problema delle sensibilità, dell'equilibrio e dell'autodelimitazione si può definire un problema non particolarmente tecnico: è tuttavia indispensabile una formazione tecnica, specifica per l'impiego razionale dei mezzi idonei allo svolgimento delle relazioni pubbliche in ogni organismo e al di fuori di esso.

I premi per le P.R.

Durante la conferenza sono stati proclamati i vincitori dei premi istituiti dall'A.I.R.P. per i migliori programmi di relazioni pubbliche svolti da enti statali e privati nel corso del 1956. Questi premi consistenti in due targhe ed in una medaglia d'oro sono stati rispettivamente assegnati alla società Shell Italiana, alla Prefettura di Vicenza e alla società Esso Standard Italiana. Quattro diplomi al merito sono stati inoltre consegnati alla società Althea di Parma, all'Ispettorato Agrario Compartimentale per le Venezie, alla società Nebiolo di Torino e alla Rinascente di Milano. Un attestato è stato pure dato al dott. Vittorio Follini, direttore dell'Airworld Economics Information Service.

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Comitato di Coordinamento tra l'A.I. Relazioni Pubbliche e l'Istituto Italiano P.R.

Si sono riuniti a Roma e a Milano i Consigli Direttivi dell'Associazione Italiana per le Relazioni Pubbliche e dell'Istituto per le Relazioni Pubbliche sotto la Presidenza del Cav. Gr. Cr. Umberto Baldini e dell'on. Roberto Tremelloni.

Preso atto del sempre maggiore sviluppo che le Relazioni Pubbliche stanno incontrando in Italia; considerata la necessità che i programmi di studio e di divulgazione e le attività e le iniziative attuate in questo settore dalle singole organizzazioni si uniformino a degli standards validi per l'Italia; riconosciuta la opportunità che l'inquadramento professionale e l'esame dei problemi relativi allo sviluppo della professione e dei servizi relativi trovino un organico inquadramento: i rispettivi Consigli Direttivi hanno formulato il voto che l'Associazione Italiana per le Relazioni Pubbliche e l'Istituto Italiano per le Pubbliche Relazioni operino in piena unità di intenti e di programmi.

È stata perciò deliberata la formazione di un Comitato di Coordinamento composto dai due Presidenti e dai segretari: dott. Guido de Rossi del Lion Nero e dott. Lorenzo Manconi, che esamini e attui le iniziative indispensabili al raggiungimento degli scopi sopraddetti nell'ambito della Segreteria unica sul Fattore Umano affidata al dott. Cima Tonelli, segretario di presidenza dell'AIRP.

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Un ufficio che legge migliaia di giornali

L'Eco della Stampa fondato nel 1901, vi rimette giorno per giorno articoli ritagliati da giornali e riviste sia che riguardino una persona e sia un argomento, secondo l'ordinazione che avete dato.

La sua sede è in Milano - Via Giuseppe Compagnoni, 28 - e potrete ricevere le condizioni di abbonamento, inviando un semplice biglietto da visita.

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La "giarrettiera" pubblicitaria a Carlo Dradi

Un numeroso gruppo di artisti e di tecnici pubblicitari ha inaugurato, la sera di mercoledì 3 ottobre, alla Taverna della Giarrettiera di Milano, la ripresa degli «incontri» conviviali, così brillantemente iniziati nella decorsa primavera.

Intorno a Carlo Dradi, festeggiato dai colleghi, che si sono felicitati con lui per il conferimento del Premio Lorilleux, erano, fra gli altri, il prof. Ricas, vice-presidente della F.I.P., Franco Mosca, presidente e arch. Grignani vice-presidente dell'A.I.A.P., Dino Villani, le pittrici Umberta Barni ed Elda Mafalda Torreani, Attilio Rossi e il nostro direttore.

Al termine della simpatica riunione è stata consegnata a Carlo Dradi la «giarrettiera pubblicitaria», illustrata felicemente dall'arguto pennello di Gian Rossetti. Come di rito, nessun discorso, ma molto brio e molta cordialità.

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Mercoledì, 7 novembre artisti, tecnici pubblicitari e tecnici della cinematografia pubblicitaria si sono riuniti alla "Giarrettiera" di Milano per festeggiare Nino Pagot. Ne daremo più ampia notizia nel prossimo numero.
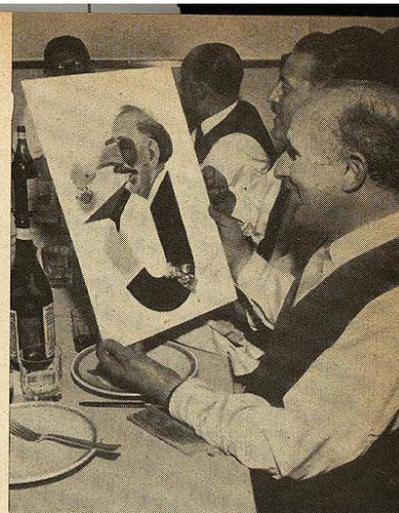
Dradi ammira l'originale «menù» disegnato da Gian Rossetti.

Grafici e pubblicitari

Scrive Piero Castellenghi nell'«Italia Grafica»:

«I grafici siano presenti alle manifestazioni pubblicitarie e facciano sentire la loro voce in senso costruttivo; l'assenteismo e le pubbliche lamentele non contribuiscono a migliorare la situazione. È comunque utile e necessario che ai congressi organizzati dai pubblicitari partecipino anche alcuni grafici qualificati non soltanto come semplici osservatori, ma anche per intervenire ad esprimere il pensiero di una categoria che alla pubblicità dà un sostanziale ed insostituibile contributo».

Molto giusto. E i grafici saranno i benvenuti nei Congressi della Pubblicità. Arrivederci dunque a Trieste, nel prossimo maggio.

Artisti e tecnici pubblicitari festeggiano Carlo Dradi alla « Taverna della Giarrettiera » di Milano. Da sinistra: Franco Mosca, Umberta Barni, Gian Rossetti, Carmelo Cremonesi, Pino Tovaglia e in primo piano a destra Dino Villani.

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5.1   page from *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 10 (10), October 1956, p. 7; above: Carlo Dradi awarded the Giarrettiera Pubblicitaria; below: AIAP members at the Taverna della Giarrettiera (Milan) celebrating Carlo Dradi's award

5.2   Gian Rossetti, Premio Giarrettiera
       Pubblicitaria for Carlo Dradi,
       1956, 35 × 51 cm. Signatures
       include: Bruno Bellasia, Carlo
       Benedetti (Benca), Serafino Campi,
       Domenico Chiaudrero, Franco
       Grignani, Alfredo Lalia, Natale
       Lighasacchi, Franco Mosca, Nino
       Pagot, Gian Rossetti, Elda Torreani,
       Pino Tovaglia, Antonio Valeri,
       Dino Villan

5.3   Carlo Dradi, Premio Giarrettiera
       Pubblicitaria for Aldo Navarese,
       1962, 36.5 × 51.5 cm. Signatures
       include: Bruno Bellasia, Bonetto,
       Domenico Chiaudrero, Franco
       Grignani, Giuseppe Mezzadri,
       Claudia Morgagni, Luigi Oriani,
       Gian Rossetti, Pino Tovaglia,
       Pietro Violi
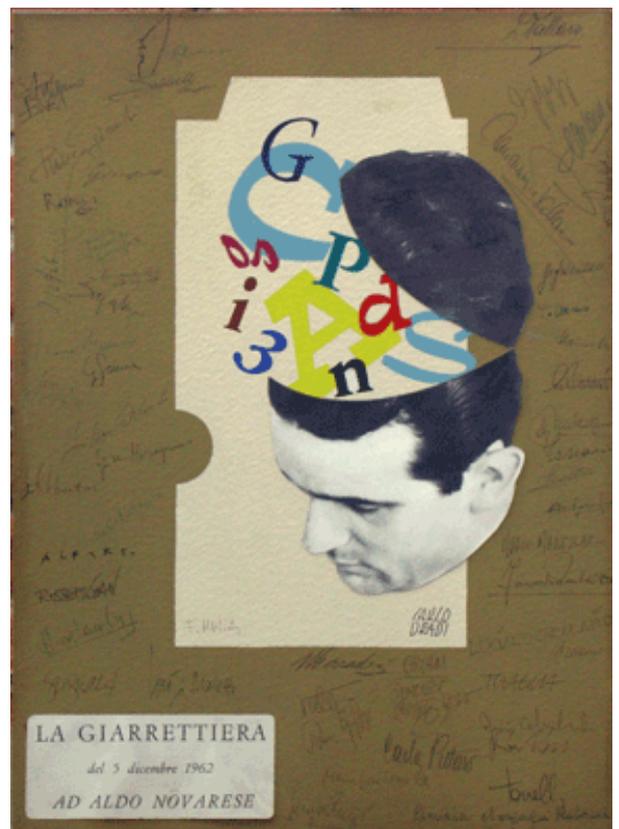
professional services was published in the FIP monthly bulletin in September 1951.[21] A number of revised and updated versions followed this early draft. However, about three years after its publication, the yet-to-be first chairman of the AIAP, Franco Mosca, expressed his scepticism with regards to the applicability of codes regulating the professional-client relationship. While praising initiatives in this direction, he considered the latest proposal unlikely to be adopted by clients in practice. To make his point, Mosca reported his experience with the chief of an unnamed advertising department who, despite being an ATAP member and thus supposed to follow the ethos of the association, had not only modified without his approval the original design for a poster, but also denied his request to remove the signature by arguing that 'the sketch had been paid for and thus could be used to their liking!'.[22]

A later endeavour to establish a set of professional code of behaviour featured in the first issue of the AIAP house organ, *Poliedro* (1962).[23] Whereas earlier drafts had aimed at safeguarding artists' interests against clients' unfair behaviour and had focused mainly on copyright and compensation, the seven clauses of the 1962 'Codice di Etica Professionale' (Code of Professional Ethics) ruled professional relationships between AIAP members. The clauses were also conditions of

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21   The document states that the work of an advertising artist must be paid and that the author owns the intellectual property over the design. The artists are entitled to request the return of rejected sketches even though they have been paid. The use of the purchased design is limited to the agreed purpose and medium as clearly stated on the invoice. In case of inappropriate, even if partial, use of the original design and thus violation of the copyright, the designer is entitled to compensation. The advertising artist has the right to sign the work and the signature guarantees the creative copyright. The artist is entitled to oversee and approve the printing proofs. See: 'Per le Prestazioni d'Opera degli Artisti Pubblicitari', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile d'Informazione per i Soci della FIP*, 5 (5), September 1951.

22   '[...] il bozzetto era stato pagato e potevano usarlo a piacimento!'. Letter by Franco Mosca to ATAP, Milan 28 April 1954, CDPG. The letter features in: Fuga and Piazza, *Ho Pagato la Quota*, unpaged.

23   'Codice di Etica Professionale', *Poliedro*, 1, 1962, p. 8.

membership.[24] Rules were set against unfair competition between members in an attempt to manage the balance between professionalism and commercialism.[25]

The first issue of *Poliedro* also featured a list of 'consigli' (tips) to protect members' interests, and ensure members received legal support from the association. Among others, members were advised 'to feature the caption "AIAP member" on their letterhead'.[26] The remark is less banal than one might think. Indeed, the statement of their membership promoted the visibility of the AIAP and consequently contributed to a better understanding of the profession. In doing so, the authority of the association increased, the profession gained public awareness and estimation, and membership was by consequence acknowledged by clients as a title of prestige.

A further strategy of professionalisation consisted in organising exhibitions and events that aimed at improving professional standards and promoting a better understanding of the profession. In the early summer of 1956, the AIAP curated the first national exhibition of advertising artists, held at the Palazzo della Permanente in Milan from the 30th of May to the 17th of June.[27] In Chapter 3, I investigated the way in which graphic practitioners used the Milan Triennale as a public platform to mediate for the emerging profession. I argued that the Milan Triennale gradually adopted a more embracing notion of visual communication, with a focus on modernist visual language and techniques and an increasing interest in design methods and designers' role in contemporary society. By contrast, at the first exhibition organised by the AIAP hardly any other type of visual artefact except for posters was acknowledged. In a black and white picture of the period, a young visitor

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24 Forbidden behaviour included: 1) charging lower rates than the minimum established in the approved fees table; 2) replacing another member's work; 3) executing works based on another member's design without previous agreement; 4) self-promoting in ways that might damage another member's public image; and 6) breaking client-designer confidentiality. A fees table featuring the minimum rates that members should charge clients followed the Code of Professional Ethics. It was organised by type of printed material, dimensions, techniques, quantity, and type of client. For the design of a logotype, for instance, the designer was expected to charge large companies at least 150.000 lire, more than the price asked of small companies (60.000 lire). The price of promotional ephemera varied according to the number of colours, or whether the designer used illustrations or photographs. See: 'Tariffario Minimale degli Artisti Pubblicitari', *Poliedro*, 1, 1962, unpaged.

25 On the problematic relationship between commercialism and professionalism within the design professions in the UK, with a particular focus on advertising policies, see: Armstrong, 'Steering a Course Between Professionalism and Commercialism', *Journal of Design History*, 29 (2) (2016), pp. 161-79.

26 '[...] far figurare sulla propria carta da lettera la dicitura: "iscritto all'AIAP"'. 'Consigli', *Poliedro*, 1, 1962, p. 11.

27 'Alla "Permanente" di Milan: il Successo della 1ª Mostra Naz. Degli Artisti Pubblicitari', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 10 (6), June 1956, pp. 2-3.

is staring at the poster of a wrinkled woman who, as suggested by the caption, has not used the cream Nivea (see Illustration **5.4**). It is impossible to say whether the visitor is appreciating the forms and colours of the illustration, the effectiveness of the advertising message, or simply wondering whether she should begin using an anti-ageing cream. Wrinkles apart, the exhibition emphasised the inventiveness and artistic skills of individual authors, rather than presenting them as a selected élite of a professional body based on common tasks and purposes. Indeed, the way in which the posters are arranged on the wall highlights their formal aspect and there seems to be no attempt whatsoever to convey any didactic message to the public with regards to either design methodologies or advertising strategies.

The catalogue for the AIAP's first exhibition exemplifies the contradictory understanding of the profession. One of the contributors congratulated the 'pittori pubblicitari' (advertising painters) for the artistic quality of the exhibits, whereas another underlined the social impact of advertising.[28] In his contribution to the catalogue, Dino Villani defined the advertising image as a 'nuovo linguaggio artistico' (new artistic language), and indicated the crucial role that was played by the 'artisti grafici' (graphic artists) within both advertising and the 'arte tipografica' (typographic art) in conveying effective and clear messages.[29] The two different linguistic registers reflect the issues of representing a profession which had an equal footing in the worlds of advertising and design. They also suggest that the 1930s debates about conflicting attitudes towards graphic design were not settled yet. As I will argue in the final section, the precarious coexistence within the AIAP of different and rather contradictory approaches to the graphic design profession was going to be challenged in the early-1960s, when graphic designers began questioning the commercial and artistic purposes of their practice and thus the pertinence of both the term 'advertising' and 'artist'.[30]

5.2 ASSOCIATION FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN, ADI

The ADI was founded on the 6th of April 1956 at the Museo della Scienza e della Tecnica (Science and Technology Museum) in Milan on the initiative of a group of

28   Aldo da Col and Leonardo Borgese, in *AIAP, 1ª Mostra Nazionale degli Artisti Pubblicitari* (Milan: AIAP, 1956), unpaged.

29   Dino Villani, in *AIAP, 1ª Mostra Nazionale degli Artisti Pubblicitari* (Milan: AIAP, 1956), unpaged.

30   A similar pattern can be observed in different national contexts. This is, for instance, the case for Japan and the Japan Advertising Artists Club, JAAC: Ori Bartal, *Postmodern Advertising in Japan: Seduction, Visual Culture, and the Tokyo Art Directors Club* (Darthmouth College Press, 2015), pp. 46-56.
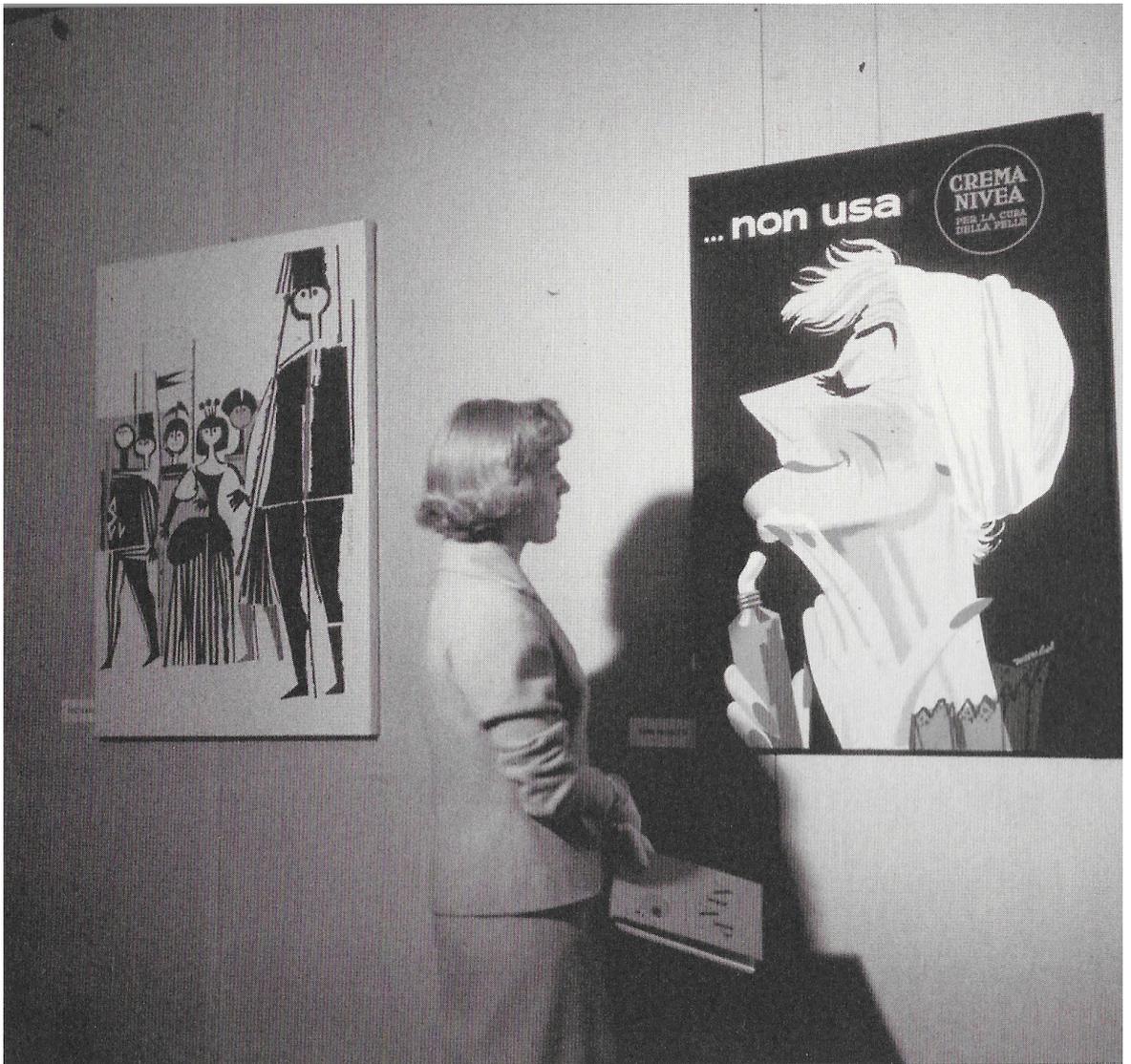
5.4   installation shot, 1st National Exhibition of Advertising Artists organised by AIAP at the Palazzo della Permanente (Milan), from the 30th of May to the 17th of June 1956; the visitor holds the exhibition catalogue in her hand

architects, designers, industrialists, graphic designers and intellectuals. The original idea behind its foundation can be traced back to 1952 and to the 'Manifesto per il Disegno Industriale' (Industrial Design Manifesto). Published in the architecture and interior design magazine *Domus* and signed by, amongst others, the architects and designers Gio Ponti, Ernesto Nathan Rogers and Marco Zanuso, and the industrialist Adriano Olivetti, the manifesto described the situation of Italian industrial design as 'the most peculiar, oddest [and] paradoxical'.[31] Although many Italian companies had reached high standards of design and several designers had achieved international renown, signatories of the manifesto denounced 'the "official" nonexistence of the profession of the "industrial designer"', and announced the imminent setting up of a professional design body.[32] The organisation was expected to bring representatives of design production, creation, and distribution together, and had already received the support of major companies such as Fiat, Montecatini, Pirelli and Olivetti. A preliminary meeting was held at the Collegio Regionale Lombardo degli Architetti (Lombardy Regional College of Architects) on the 31st of January 1956 on the initiative of Alberto Rosselli.[33]

From the outset, membership was very heterogeneous. According to its statute, the ADI addressed 'people who belong to professional, technical and industrial categories, operate in the very complex sector of industrial design and have made an acknowledged contribution to this activity'.[34] Yet membership was not restricted to practitioner and industrialists, but 'those personalities that [had] contributed, through their work in other fields of criticism and organisation, to the achievement of those goals, which are the bases of the modern movement of industrial

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31   '[...] specialissima, stranissima, paradossale'. Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Arte nella Produzione Industriale. Manifesto per il Disegno Industriale', *Domus*, 269, April 1952, pp. 54-55.

32   '[...] l'inesistenza "ufficiale" della professione del "disegnatore Industriale [...]"'. Rosselli, *Domus*, 269, April 1952, pp. 54-55.

33   The official setting up of the ADI was preceded by a number of preliminary meetings during which exponents of the Milanese design network drafted the statute and discussed the goals of the professional body, identified potential stakeholders and investigated international examples of design organisations. For further details, see: 'Associazione dei Disegnatori Industriali Italiani', and 'Riunione del 7 Febbraio 1956, per l'Associazione del Disegno Industriale', archival documents, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

34   '[...] persone che appartengono a categorie professionali, tecniche ed industriali, operano nel settore più complesso del disegno industriale ed hanno portato un riconosciuto contributo alla affermazione di questa attività [...]'. 'Associazione per il Disegno Industriale', undated archival document, underline in the original, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7. The statute of the newly founded association was published in *Stile Industria*: 'Lo Statuto dell'Associazione', *Stile Industria*, 3 (7), June 1956, p. 2.

Design, [were] also eligible to be members of the Association'.[35] Membership was open beyond a restricted group of design professionals and also included people who were interested in, or somehow concerned with, design issues such as design critics, historians and intellectuals. Giulio Carlo Argan, Leonardo Sinisgalli, Enzo Paci and Gillo Dorfles, whose role in the professionalisation of design in Italy was introduced in Chapter 4, were among the non-practitioners who became ADI members.

In contrast to the AIAP, whose membership was restricted to insiders of the graphics and advertising circles, the heterogeneous membership of the ADI suggests a wider acceptance and recognition of the association. On the one hand, the involvement of exponents of Italian culture is evidence of the growing awareness of the role of design in the postwar society, as well as of the spread of design culture within different, but nevertheless communicating, networks. By engaging in and supporting the activities of the association, intellectuals, industrialists and architects provided the ADI with a wider audience that was not limited to those directly connected to the profession. On the other hand, the inclusion of industrialists was expected to tighten the relationship between the realms of design and production. It ensured financial support and sponsorship for the ADI, as well as better political leverage at a governmental and institutional level.

The activity of the ADI was addressed both internally – by building unity within the design community based on a shared set of professional knowledge, behaviour and goals – and externally – by promoting the profession and validating its social and economic status within the society at large. 'To promote the development of a favourable environment for the flourishing of Industrial Design in Italy' was the major goal of the association.[36] To this end, it promoted 'the outward circulation and promotion [of design issues, and] the circulation and clarification of methods and principles that are the foundation of the work of the designer'.[37]

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35   'Possono far parte della Associazione quelle personalità che prestando la loro opera in altri campi della critica e della organizzazione, contribuiscono alla affermazione di quelle finalità che stanno alle origini del movimento moderno del Design industriale'. 'Associazione per il Disegno Industriale', undated archival document, ADI statute, underline in the original, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

36   '[…] promuovere la formazione di un ambiente favorevole agli sviluppi del Disegno Industriale'. 'Associazione per il Disegno Industriale', undated archival document, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

37   '[…] diffusione e la propaganda verso l'esterno […] diffusione ed il chiarimento dei metodi e dei principi che presiedono al nostro lavoro'. 'La 1ª Riunione dell'ADI a Milano', *Stile Industria*, 3 (7), June 1956, p. 2.

Like the AIAP, the ADI introduced a code of conduct that was meant as guidance for the professional behaviour and norms that were intended to regulate the client-professional relationship, thereby establishing members' responsibilities and protecting their rights.[38] Policies and strategies adopted and developed by the ADI included the organisation of committees in charge of defining legitimate from illegitimate activities with regards to copyright issues, rates regulation, consultancy requirements and confidentiality principles. In addition to offering legal support to its members, ADI was also expected to act as a pressure group and advocate for the legal recognition of the design profession.

As I demonstrated in Chapter 4, educational issues were on the agenda of the ADI since its outset. Indeed, the association drew attention to the need for design schools in Italy by organising and taking part in conferences both on a national and international level. It supported the first industrial design graduate schools – such as the Corso Superiore di Disegno Industriale (Graduate Course Industrial Design) in Venice – that opened in the early-1960s. Moreover, the ADI was an active member of the international design community. It subscribed to the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, ICSID, since the very first meeting in June 1957, and representatives of the association were a regular presence at ICSID annual congresses.[39] The ADI organised the 2nd ICSID Congress in Venice, 1961, whose impact in the articulation of a national and international design discourse was also discussed in the previous chapter.

The ADI organised conferences, publications and exhibitions in order to promote members' works and encourage a better understanding of the profession. During its formative years, the association attempted to establish a permanent exhibition of design products to be hosted at the Museo della Scienza e della Tecnica in Milan. Whereas the latter project never saw light, the ADI tightened its

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38   'Associazione degli Artisti Industriali', undated archival document, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7; 'Associazione per il Disegno Industriale', undated archival document, ADI statute, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7; '2 Ottobre 1956', meeting minute, 2 October 1956, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

39   Giulio Castelli, 'La I Riunione dell'A.D.I. a Milano', *Stile Industria*, 3 (7), June 1956, p. 3. The ADI representatives took also part in the preliminary meeting held in Paris on the 13th of April 1956, see: 'Notiziario: Incontro a Parigi per una Federazione Internazionale di Industrial Design', *Stile Industria*, 3 (7), June 1956, p. 48; letter from ADI to association members, 12 April 1956, archival document, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7. In September 1961, ADI organised the 2nd ICSID Congress in Venice. See: *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera, p. 53; De Fusco, *Una Storia dell'ADI*, pp. 66-67; Monica Pastore, 'Il Corso Superiore di Design Industriale di Venezia 1960/1971: La Comunicazione Visiva nell'Offerta Didattica e il Suo Ruolo nella Formazione di Nuove Figure Professionali' (Unpublished master dissertation, IUAV, 2007), pp. 26-29.

relationship with the Milan Triennale in such a way that, as previously suggested by design historian Anty Pansera, the stories of the ADI and the Triennale run on parallel tracks and often intertwine, featuring the same people in prominent roles.[40]

A further strategy through which the ADI promoted the industrial design profession and discourse in Italy was the now internationally renowned Compasso d'Oro (Golden Compass) award.[41] Set up in 1954 by the department store La Rinascente, the Compasso d'Oro was left in the hands of the ADI in 1962.[42] It was meant 'to honour the merits of those industrialists, artisans and designers who […] give to products the qualities of form and presentation, thereby making them a unitary expression of their technical, functional and aesthetic characteristics'.[43] In line with the 'good design' rhetoric discussed in Chapter 3, commercial aims and professional issues merged into the scope of the Compasso d'Oro award.[44] On the one hand, it fostered competitiveness with imported design products and favoured reconstruction efforts by encouraging the improvement of standards for the national manufacturing industry. On the other hand, it became a key vehicle of design professionalisation by mediating the design discourse within both the industrial environment and the public.

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40   *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera, pp. 41-43.

41   On the Compasso d'Oro award, see: *Design Italiano: Compasso d'Oro ADI*, ed. by Roberto Rizzi, Anna Steiner and Franco Origoni (Cantù: Clac, 1998); Kjetil Fallan, 'Annus Mirabilis: 1954, Alberto Rosselli and the Institutionalisation of Design Mediation', in *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design*, ed. by Grace Lees-Maffei and Kjetil Fallan (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 259-65; *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera, pp. 46-47; Renato De Fusco, *Made in Italy: Storia del Design Italiano. Nuova Edizione* (Florence: Altralinea Edizioni, 2014), pp. 171-78.

42   La Rinascente is a leading chain of department stores with branches in the major Italian cities. It trades a wide range of products including women's fashion, furniture, make-up and household appliances. On the history of La Rinascente, see: Elena Papadia, *La Rinascente* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005).

43   '[…] onorare i meriti di quegli industriali, artigiani e progettisti, che […] conferiscono ai prodotti qualità di forma e di presentazione tali da renderli espressione unitaria delle loro caratteristiche tecniche, funzionali ed estetiche'. 'Un Premio per l'Estetica del Prodotto', *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954, p. 6. Eligible products were initially limited to the kind of goods that were sold at La Rinascente: e.g. garments, furniture, household appliances, toys and packaging. Awarding criteria included: the originality of the product, the effective relationship between its form and function, the innovativeness of the technological and production techniques, the product's economic value and the response to market demands.

44   Jonathan M. Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 158.

The previous section introduced the ADI and its membership, highlighting its agenda, its relationship with local industrial and cultural circles, and inclusion in an international design network. In this section, I focus on graphic designers' position within the ADI to address the relationship between graphic design and industrial design at large. Commenting on the position of graphic designers in the ADI in relation to industrial designers, Giancarlo Iliprandi said: 'for a bit of time, and by a bit I mean for about 20 years, we felt like the poor cousins. We were indeed part of the same family, but we were considered poorer relations'![45] The quote, from which the title of the chapter is inspired, suggests that graphic designers held a secondary position in the association. As I discuss in this section, they were a minority whose arguably problematic role changed over time. I suggest that these changes mirror the growing awareness of the graphic design profession and their struggle to obtain official recognition.

Graphic designers participated in the ADI since the outset. Marcello Nizzoli, Giovanni Pintori, Max Huber and Albe Steiner were listed among the attendees of the first preliminary meeting in January 1956.[46] Michele Provinciali and Bruno Munari joined the group at the following meeting.[47] At the end of both evenings, some of them were selected for the organising committee – Nizzoli and Steiner – and the study committee – Munari, Nizzoli and Steiner. Steiner was the most committed to actively participating in the newly founded association. Indeed, he was elected as a member of the first directive committee, together with Enrico Peressutti, Giulio Castelli and Antonio Pellizzari.[48] Almost all of the successive directive committees included exponents of the graphic design profession. Their

45   'Noi ci siamo sentiti dei cugini poveri per un po' di tempo, e per un po' di tempo intendo dire quasi 20 anni. Cioè eravamo parenti, però venivamo considerati più poveri'. Giancarlo Iliprandi, interview with the author, Milan 7 January 2016.

46   'Associazione dei Disegnatori Industriali Italiani', undated archival document, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

47   'Riunione del 7 Febbraio 1956, per l'Associazione del Disegno Industriale', archival document, 7 February 1956, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

48   Antonio Pellizzari was also connected to the graphic design profession. He was, in fact, an unusual type of businessman who designed the advertising material for his own electrical appliances company. He created abstract geometric compositions that were inspired by the inner beauty of technology and machinery. Although acknowledged in the Italian graphic design literature, Pellizzari deserves further research. On Pellizzari's graphic works, see: Antonio Pellizzari, *La Pubblicità di Pellizzari* (Arzignano: Litografie Artistiche Faentine, 1952); A. M., 'I Cartelli di Pellizzari sono Astratti', *L'Ufficio Moderno*, 25 (9), October 1951, pp. 690-95; 'Pellizzari: Produzione e Disegno', *Stile Industria*, 3 (8), October 1956, p. 28. See also: Carlo Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965: Immagine e Politica Culturale nella Grande Impresa Italiana* (Venice: Marsilio, 2007), pp. 60-62.

involvement suggests an environment that was likely to at least acknowledge, if not to act upon, visual communication issues.[49]

Graphic designers' membership in an industrial design association is open to interpretation. On the one hand, the crossover between graphic and product design practices can explain graphic designers' early subscription to the ADI. Some professionals, such as Nizzoli and Munari, were in fact active in both fields of graphic and product design. Their twofold practice bridged a gap whose borders were going to become neater with the growing specialisation of the respective professional fields.[50] On the other hand, and more relevant to the argument of this section, graphic designers' commitment to the ADI can be seen as a means of distancing the graphic design profession from advertising. This second explanation is supported by Gillo Dorfles' comment on Steiner's long-term involvement in the ADI. According to Dorfles, Steiner was driven by the 'opportunity to include graphics – i.e. graphic design – within the industrial design sphere [and] recognise the "status" of industrial design not only with the three-dimensional, but also the two-dimensional graphic design, as long as it relied on a programmatic design'.[51] The comment suggests that graphic designers capitalised on their membership and used the ADI as a stage to affirm their own professional identity and stake claims for recognition as an independent profession to be re-categorised within the design domain.

So far I have provided evidence of the presence of graphic designers in the ADI; their actual active role within the association is, nevertheless, still opaque. Some of the archival documents that I retrieved in Albe Steiner's archive contain clues and hints that might help in tracing the way in which fellow ADI members perceived graphic designers in the early years of the association. Minutes from the ADI committee meetings suggest that graphic designers were recognised as practitioners other than architects, industrial designers and, of course, industrialists. Indeed, they were labelled as 'grafici' so as to clarify and distinguish their practice from other members' profession(s). A letter introducing the first directive

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49   The list of ADI directive committees from 1956 to 2010 features in: De Fusco, *Una Storia dell'ADI*, pp. 309-12.

50   See: Gillo Dorfles, 'Introduzione', in *Visual Design*, ed. by Iliprandi, Marangoni, Origoni and Pansera, p. 12.

51   '[...] opportunità di inserire la grafica – il graphic design – nell'ambito dell'industrial design [...] riconoscere la "dignità" di disegno industriale a quel disegno grafico che fosse tridimensionale, ma anche a quello che – seppur bidimensionale – sottostasse ad una globalità programmativa'. Gillo Dorfles, in *Albe Steiner: Comunicazione Visiva* (Milan: Fratelli Alinari, 1977), p. 11.

committee as composed by 'Arch. Enrico Peressuti, Eng. Giulio Castelli, Dr. Antonio Pellizzari, and graphic Albe Steiner' provides further evidence of professional distinctions among ADI members.[52] Here again, Steiner's practice is identified and distinguished. However, later official documents and correspondence lack any professional specification with regards to graphic designers. Steiner and Giulio Confalonieri are the only ADI members with no professional specification beside their names in the list of candidates to the directive committee of 1958-59 (see Illustration **5.5**).[53] In contrast to the capitalised titles 'Arch.', 'Ing.' and 'Dr.' – meaning architect, engineer and graduated person, respectively – the word 'grafico' corresponded neither to a recognised professional nor to an educational title, and could be, therefore, omitted. This suggests that graphic designers' social identity was still less stable than that of their peers.

Visual material provides further evidence of graphic designers' presence in the ADI. Indeed, one of the easiest ways for graphic designers to get occasionally involved in the ADI was to take care of the association's printed ephemera and publications. As suggested, not without sarcasm, by Iliprandi, the actual commitment of graphic designers to the ADI was dependent upon the character and interests of individual designers, but 'once a graphic designer was elected [ADI member] and laid indolent and relaxed to the side there was always a chance that someone would ask him-her for the design of a flyer or something similar'.[54]

For example, Steiner designed the ADI's first visual identity. A logotype, letterhead, business card, membership certificate and stationery items share a unified visual aspect that conveys a recognisable and coherent image (see Illustration **5.6**). The selected lettering is a sans serif that recalls interwar typefaces – e.g. Paul Renner's 'Futura' (1927) – and aligns the ADI's visual identity with the aesthetics of modernist typography. The three initials of the logotype are cut out from a pattern of irregularly shaped dots, creating a reversal of the usual perception with negative letters on a positive background. The incomplete letterforms activate the white background and even the difference between positive and negative spaces in the page layout. The decorative dotted pattern is actually the representation of

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52   '[...] Arch. Enrico Peressuti, Ing. Giulio Castelli, Dr. Antonio Pellizzari, grafico Albe Steiner'. Letter to ADI members, 12 April 1956, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

53   'Elezioni del Comitato Direttivo, 29 Maggio 1958', archival document, 29 May 1958, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7.

54   'Se un grafico veniva eletto ed era pigro e se ne stava tranquillo in disparte, c'era sempre la possibilità che qualcuno gli chiedesse di disegnare un volantino o una cosa simile'. Giancarlo Iliprandi, interview with the author, Milan 7 January 2016.

ASSOCIAZIONE PER IL DISEGNO INDUSTRIALE
A. D. I.
Via G.Dezza 49 – Milano – tel.483.161

ELEZIONI DEL COMITATO DIRETTIVO

29 maggio 1958

- Dott. Arch. Franco Albini   *24*
probo —— Dott. Arch. Sergio Asti
- Dott. Aldo Bay —— *37*
- Dott. Ing. Giulio Castelli — *50*
- Dott. Arch. Piergiacomo Castiglioni   *20*
- Giulio Confalonieri
- Dott. Arch. Gianfranco Frattini
- Dott. Ernesto Frua   *72*
- Dott. Arch. Roberto Menghi   *11*
- Dott. Augusto Morello
- Dott. Arch. Enrico Peressutti —— *35*
- Dott. Arch. Mario Righini
probo. —— Dott. Arch. Giovanni Romano
- Dott. Arch. Alberto Rosselli   *34*
- Dott. Arch. Carlo Santi
- Albe Steiner *43*
- Dott. Arch. Marco Zanuso *49*
- ....
- ....
- ....
- ....
- ....

5.5   'Elezioni del Comitato Direttivo, 29 Maggio 1958', archival document, list of the candidates
to the ADI directive committee of 1958-59, dated 29 May 1958

a
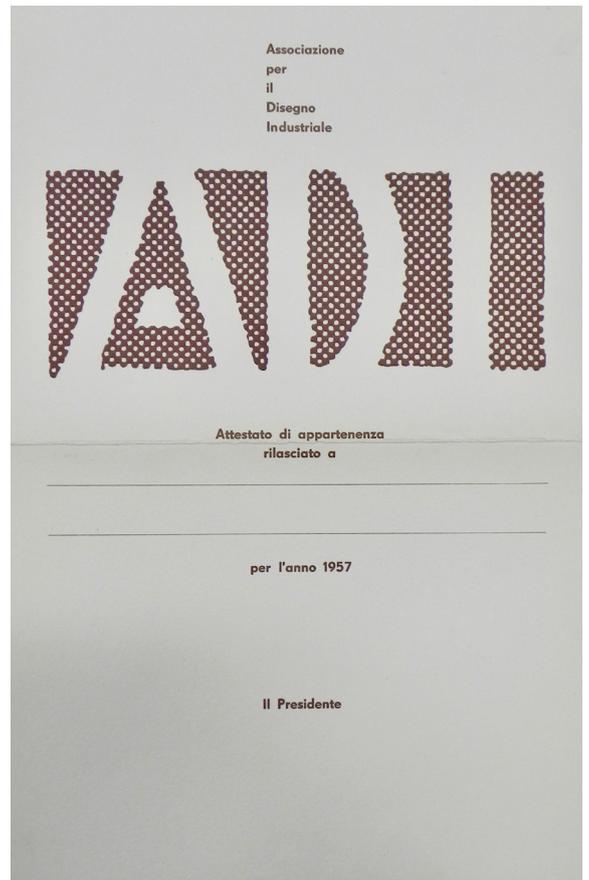
b

c

d
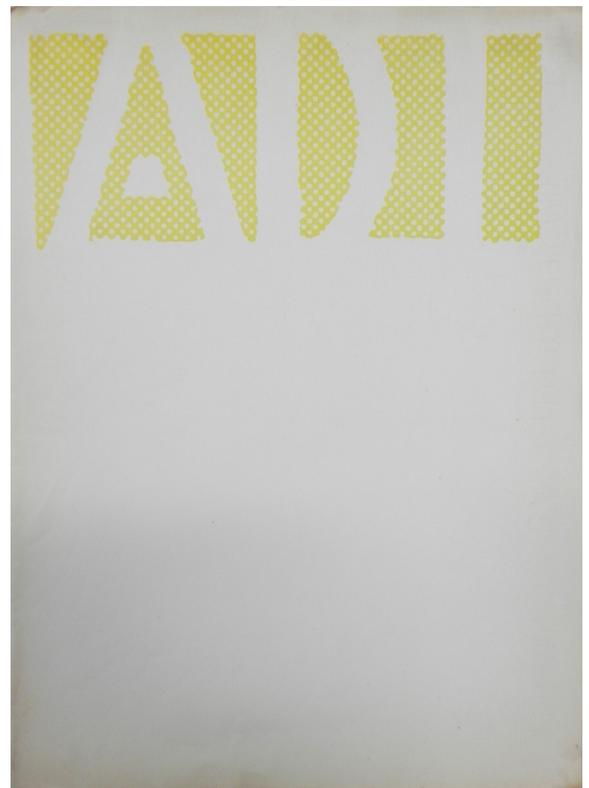
e

5.6   Albe Steiner, ADI visual identity, 1956 circa: **.a** letterhead; **.b** membership certificate;
          .c postcard; **.d** card; **.e** folder

a halftone screen. It explicates the printing medium while taking advantage of the ornamental quality of the enlarged halftone dots. As already seen in the previous chapters, the halftone screen is a recurring vocabulary of the modernist visual language. Therefore, one could argue that Steiner simultaneously used the halftone screen as a decorative element and as an aesthetic-conceptual statement that traced the lineage of the ADI to the modernist design discourse. Yet, this time, the logotype might also hint at graphic designers' position in the ADI. I would, in fact, argue that the logotype illustrates graphic designers' attempt to have their own profession included in the design domain and it does so by highlighting the mechanised aspect, the series production and reproducibility of graphic design. The irregular border of the letterforms seems to contradict the industrial flavour of the logotype, and acts as traces of the designer's hand. However, rather than a nostalgic reference to graphic arts craftsmanship, it could be read as an assertion of the presence of the graphic designer whose membership might be easily overlooked since the ADI omits any explicit reference to graphic design.

In 1964, Steiner was commissioned to revamp the ADI's visual identity. The halftone screen and the cut out letterforms are replaced with a simpler and bolder logotype. In the stationery, Steiner plays with the larger font size and the heavier weight of the lettering to differentiate the logotype from the rest of the text, which are set in the same Neo-grotesque sans-serif type and arranged in a rigid grid layout (see Illustration 5.7). The ADI's new visual identity concentrates on a limited set of visual elements and reduces design resources to typography alone. In doing so, it responds to the call for objectivity in visual communication that was advocated by exponents of the Swiss School and the HfG in Ulm – namely Josef Müller Brockman and Otl Aicher – amongst others. The then ADI deputy director, Marco Zanuso, approved Steiner's design. Despite being uncertain about the size of the text, Zanuso left 'any final decision' to Steiner since his 'judgement was surely more reliable'.[55] Zanuso's comment is telling and demonstrates that Steiner and fellow graphic designers had obtained exclusive jurisdiction over their professional field and had convinced ADI members, and possibly the design community

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55   'Naturalmente ogni decisione finale spetta a Lei [Steiner] che certo ha un giudizio molto più sicuro del nostro'. Letter from the ADI to Albe Steiner, 17 March 1964, AALS, D b. 14 fasc. 7. Steiner's design for the letterhead and the membership card are attached to the letter.
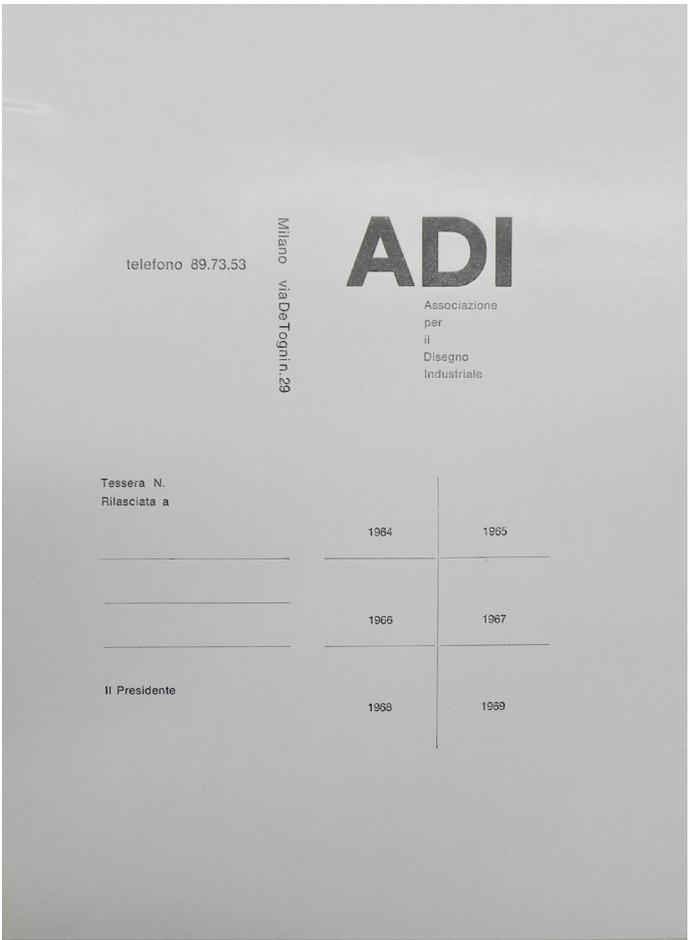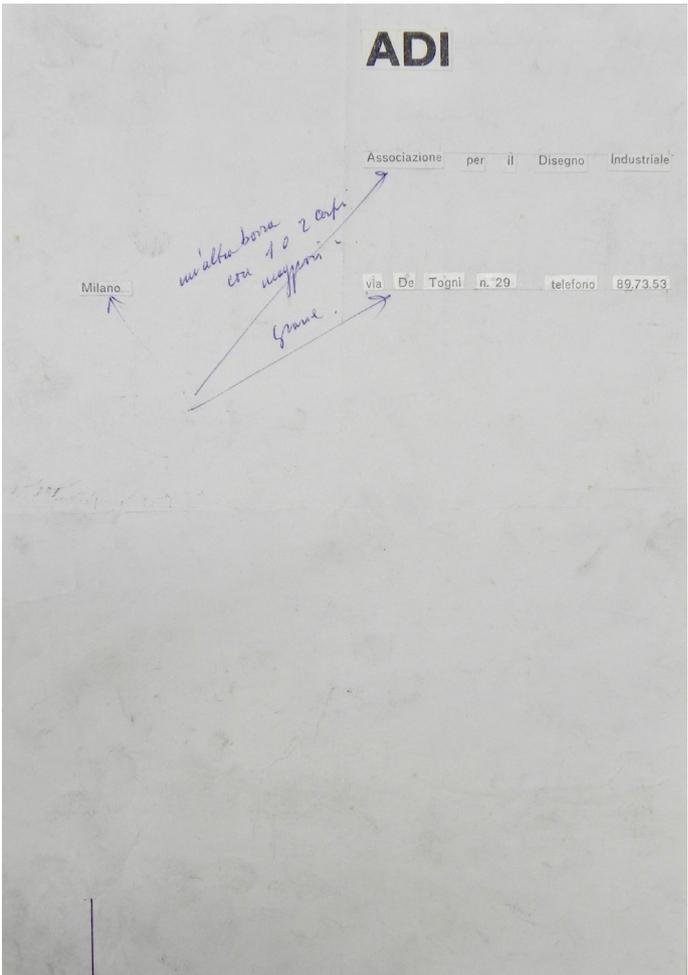
5.7   Albe Steiner, ADI visual
        identity, 1964: **.a** design for
        the letterhead; **.b** design for
        the membership card

at large, that they were the best profession entitled to deal with visual communication issues.[56]

By putting graphic designers in charge of all printed matter, the ADI implicitly recognised their expertise. However, as Iliprandi's aforementioned sarcastic comment might suggest, the commission could also be seen as a sweetener, as a partial and biased acknowledgment that confined graphic designers to a subordinated and rather superficial role within the association. In other words, as long as the ADI could directly benefit from graphic designers' expertise, their professional identity was not questioned. Yet, on a more official level, graphic designers' position within the association was still problematic.

In early May 1962, the increasing discontent of graphic designers in the ADI resulted in the foundation of the 'sezione grafici' (graphic design division).[57] Previously neglected details of the ADI graphic design division emerged from my archival research into Albe Steiner's archive. These under-researched primary sources have brought new insights into the graphic designers' changing agenda in the early-1960s and voice their discontent within the association.

There were sixteen participants to the first meeting: Walter Ballmer, Ezio Bonini, Aldo Calabresi, Enrico Ciuti, Giulio Confalonieri, Franco Grignani, Giancarlo Iliprandi, Bruno Munari, Ilio Negri, Bob Noorda, Michele Provinciali, Francesco (Cecco) Re, Albe Steiner, Pino Tovaglia, Massimo Vignelli, and Heinz Waibl.[58] Absentees – in particular Antonio Boggeri, Erberto Carboni, Max Huber, Remo Muratore and Giovanni Pintori – were urged to participate in the second meeting. The ADI graphic design division developed neither into an independent association nor into a proper section within the ADI. As recalled by Iliprandi, it was 'rather a group that met up occasionally' to talk about shared concerns and issues related to their so-felt uncertain position within the association.[59] Whereas, prior to division, graphic designers used 'to sit close to each other during the general assemblies', after it they became acknowledged as a cluster of professionals

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56   On the concept of professional jurisdiction, see: Andrew Abbott, 'The Claim of Jurisdiction', in *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labour* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 59-85.

57   On the 'sezione grafici' in ADI, see: *L'Italia del Design*, ed. by Grassi and Pansera, p. 58.

58   '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7.

59   '[...] piuttosto un gruppo che si riuniva in maniera molto libera [...]'. Giancarlo Iliprandi, interview with the author, 7 January 2016.

with their own area of interest and field of practice.[60] Within the ADI, the graphic design division resulted in a number of committees that were organised over the following years to investigate issues related to graphic design education, rates and copyright.[61] A draft of a quite comprehensive list of the different specialisations of graphic design was also attempted.[62]

The aims and concerns of the group are clarified in the minutes of the meetings in which it is stated that '[they] felt the need to constitute an ADI graphic design division in order to bring forward initiatives within this sector to be included in the ADI general agenda'.[63] Another archival document specifies the propositions, which included: the supplement of specific clauses about graphic designers to the ADI statute, the request that a graphic designer member to always be included on the ADI directive committee, the organisation of an annual exhibition, the publication of a catalogue and the promotion of an award for graphic design and packaging only, the organisation of conferences, the creation of a professional register, the establishment of recommended rates for graphic design works, and the setting up of a graduate school specific to visual communication.[64] The final goal of the division was 'the official (not only formal or accidental) recognition' of the graphic design profession within the ADI and the design community at large.[65]

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60   'Ci sedevamo vicini durante le assemblee generali', Giancarlo Iliprandi, interview with the author, 7 January 2016.

61   After the first meeting in early May 1962, the ADI graphic design division met on another couple of occasions that are recorded in Albe Steiner's archive. The second meeting took place on the 21st of May 1962. Archival documents in AALS evidence that at least another two meetings in July 1962 and February 1967 took place. See: 'Riunione dei Grafici dell'ADI del 5 Luglio 1962', meeting minute, 5 July 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7; 'Riunione del 7 Febbraio 1967', archival document, 7 February 1967, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7.

62   Graphic design was organised into eight subcategories that included: 1) advertising and propaganda design: posters, advertisements and printed ephemeral; 2) editorial design: books, periodicals and house organs; 3) signage design and infographics; 4) packaging; 5) exhibition design: window display and temporary architectures for fairs; 6) cinema and television: motion picture title sequences; 7) experimental and educational design; 8) corporate image. See: 'Riunione del 7 Febbraio 1967', archival document, 7 February 1967, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7.

63   '[...] si è sentita la necessità di costituire una sezione grafici dell'ADI, per portare Avanti delle iniziative nel settore da inserire nel quadro generale delle attvità dell'ADI'. '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 1.

64   'Prima Riunione Sezione Grafici dell'ADI', handwritten archival document, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7.

65   'Riconoscimento ufficiale (non solo formale o casuale)'. 'Prima Riunione Sezione Grafici dell'ADI', handwritten archival document, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 1.

Before claiming a professional status, graphic designers had to clarify, define and agree on their own professional identity. This was not at all a simple task. Indeed, graphic designers themselves were still unclear about it. 'I would really appreciate', commented Confalonieri during the founding meeting of the graphic design division, 'if somebody could explain to me where are the boundaries of our profession and clarify once and for all what a graphic designer is and what he-she actually does'.[66] There was disagreement even with regards to the most appropriate terminology. What should they call themselves? Munari suggested using the term 'organizzatore delle comunicazioni visive' (visual communication organiser), whereas Iliprandi preferred the definition 'ordinatore delle comunicazioni visive' (visual communication co-ordinator). Ciuti asserted that they needed to be selective. According to him, not all graphic practitioners could be ADI members since 'not all [of them] could be considered graphic designers'.[67] Likewise, Confalonieri declared that they were ADI members because they were 'graphics that practised design', but he specified that the design practice was just a portion of their profession.[68] ADI membership, continued Confalonieri, did not mean that they were industrial designers. In his opinion, the association accepted graphic practitioners whose practice was somehow involved in the industrial production, and it was unconcerned about whether 'one creat[ed] advertising pages and the other packaging designs'.[69]

Despite disagreement and general confusion, participants to the first meeting of the ADI graphic design division were able to agree on a vaguely common definition of their own professional field. A 'grafico' (graphic practitioner) was not exactly the same as a graphic designer and the two terms were not synonymous. A graphic designer was a graphic practitioner, but not all graphic practitioners were graphic designers. The distinction was also, but not only, contingent upon the types of artefacts produced. For instance, packaging was deemed more appropriate than advertising for graphic designers. A graphic designer was also not an

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66   '[…] vorrei proprio che qualcuno mi spiegasse quali sono i limiti nella nostra professione determinando una volta per tutte cosa è e cosa fa realmente il grafico'. Giulio Confalonieri, '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 2.

67   '[…] non tutti possono essere considerati dei graphic designers'. Enrico Ciuti, '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 2.

68   '[…] grafici che fanno del design […]'. Giulio Confalonieri, '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 2.

69   '[…] uno fa le pagine pubblicitarie e l'altro gli imballaggi'. Giulio Confalonieri, '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 2.

industrial designer. Nevertheless, members of the ADI graphic design section saw the two professions as sharing a similar approach to design practice and as both concerned with industrial production.

Whereas Confalonieri suggested establishing a new professional body restricted to graphic designers, Provinciali argued that it was actually in the interest of the graphic design profession to be part of the ADI and collaborate with the industrial designers. ADI membership and collaboration with fellow members were, in fact, means to become an integral part of the production process. Provinciali explained: 'we leave a phase based on sketches and we enter a phase based on methodology'.[70] The comment suggests that graphic designers had replaced the focus on creativity and manual skills with a more systematic approach to visual communication issues. This shift aligns the members of the ADI graphic design division with a new thinking in visual communication that was meanwhile articulated within the international design community, as explored in sections 5.5 and 5.6.

That ADI membership was used by graphic designers as a means for redefining their profession beyond advertising is demonstrated by the fact that the AIAP is not mentioned as a possible alternative professional body. The silence speaks volumes and suggests that members of the ADI graphic design division did not recognise themselves in the agenda of the AIAP. To be portrayed as an 'advertising artist' must have felt like an out-dated term that was counterproductive to their demand for a professional status in the design field. However, some of them were actually members of both associations. Indeed, Grignani, Tovaglia and Bonini had subscribed to the AIAP since its early years. Their twofold membership reinforces the still ambiguous perception of graphic designers' professional identity as if the ADI and the AIAP were to represent diametrically opposite aspects of the same profession whose boundaries, caught in between the domains of advertising and design, were still blurry and malleable according to circumstances.

The ADI graphic design division offers insight into more than the association's policy. Indeed, it was the offspring of a decade of debates over the relationship between advertising, graphic design and design that was hosted in the specialist magazines of the time. On a larger scale, national debate and local design practices were set within transnational networks that enrich the discussion about the

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70   'Usciamo dalla fase di tipo bozzetistico ed entriamo nella fase metodologica'. Michele Provinciali, '1ª Riunione della Sezione Grafici della A.D.I.', meeting minute, 8 May 1962, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7, p. 2.

professionalisation of graphic design in Italy and frame the Italian case within the wider international design discourse. This is discussed in the last three sections of the chapter. First, I discuss the role of the magazines *Linea Grafica* and *Stile Industria* in the articulation of the graphic design discourse in Italy. Subsequently, I contextualise the Italian debate within a macro narrative that maps out movements of relevant people and ideas within transnational circuits, such as international design organisations and conferences.

5.4 'TECHNICAL GRAPHICS' IN LINEA GRAFICA AND STILE INDUSTRIA

Linea Grafica was a bimonthly specialist magazine founded in 1946 as the official mouthpiece of the Milanese graphics cultural association, Centro Studi Grafici (Centre of Graphic Studies).[71] With *Campo Grafico* disbanded in 1939, it was meant to take over the campisti's legacy and further the professionalisation of graphic design and modernisation of visual language in postwar Italy. 'Bertieri and Guido Modiano, yesterday's masters, shall serve as an example; *Campo Grafico* shall serve as a lesson', declared the editorial team in the first issue, '[...we are] already gone beyond the argumentative phase, [and] we will be constructive, because it is a time of reconstruction'.[72] Dedicated entirely to the study and promotion of graphic design, the magazine was an important arena for debate among graphic practitioners. Professional education and training were recurring topics of discussion in *Linea Grafica*, and editors followed with interest the educational experience at the Scuola del Libro in Milan. The initial inward-looking perspective was redirected to include cultural stances that contextualised the profession within the society at large, rather than limiting the discussion to the relationship with the printing and advertising industry. Over the years, the initial focus on typography and printing was gradually extended to include issues related to the graphic professionals' increasing awareness of their socio-cultural and political responsibilities. Professional associations were rarely mentioned in *Linea Grafica*. Nevertheless, most of the editors and contributors were members of the AIAP and/or the ADI,

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71   On the activity of the Centro Studi Grafici, CSG, see: *1945-1995: Cinquant'Anni di Grafica a Milano*, ed. by Marco Picasso (Milan: Centro Studi Grafici, 1996). On *Linea Grafica*, see: *100 Classic Graphic Design Journals*, ed. by Steven Heller and Jason Godfrey (London: Laurence King, 2014), pp. 122-23.

72   'Bertieri e Modiano, i maestri di ieri, ci siano di esempio; Campo Grafico ci sia di insegnamento [...] superata ormai la fase polemica, saremo costruttivi, perché è tempo di ricostruzione'. 'Continuare', *Linea Grafica*, 1 (1-2), March-April 1946, p.1.

thereby suggesting a shared agenda between the magazine and the professional bodies, or at least an awareness of debates taking place within the associations.

Founded in 1954 by Alberto Rosselli and soon after adopted by the ADI as the mouthpiece for the association, the magazine *Stile Industria* was devoted to 'the promotion and development of industrial design through documentation, study and analysis of all its aspects, from bona fide design to advertising and graphic arts, from packaging to products display'.[73] For slightly less than a decade – from June 1954 to February 1963 – it provided the Italian design community with a platform for professional and cultural debate that involved design practitioners, industrialists, manufacturers and intellectuals. Albeit being mainly centred on industrial design, *Stile Industria* also addressed graphic design, as stated in its bilingual subtitle: 'disegno industriale *industrial design* – grafica *graphic art* – imballaggio *packaging*. Graphic design was also present in very form of the magazine that featured cover illustrations by graphic designers and ADI members, including Steiner, Provinciali, Munari, Grignani, Tovaglia and Waibl (see Illustration **5.8**). A foldout in the last issue of *Stile Industria* in February 1963 featuring portraits of its main contributors is informative of the magazine's consideration for graphic designers (see Illustration **5.9**). Milan's graphic designers and prominent foreign representatives of the graphic design international community are gathered along a jagged line that occupies a central position in the page layout, thereby visually suggesting their significant contribution to the design discourse promoted by *Stile Industria* from 1954 to 1963.

Despite their different focuses and audiences, both *Linea Grafica* and *Stile Industria* were concerned with graphic design and their respective attitudes are revealing of the gradual professionalisation of the new figure of the graphic designer. Design historian Kjetil Fallan has suggested that '*Stile Industria* provides an excellent barometer for assessing significant changes in Italian design culture during the turbulent decade in which it operated'.[74] As this section will discuss, I would add that, when compared with *Linea Grafica*, the magazine also provides a barometer for assessing the shifting position of graphic design at the intersection of advertising and design.

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73   '[...] diffusione e valorizzazione del disegno industriale attraverso la documentazione, lo studio e l'analisi dei suoi aspetti, dal disegno vero e proprio alla pubblicità e arte grafica, dall'imballaggio alla presentazione dei prodotti'. *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954.

74   Fallan, 'Annus Mirabilis', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, p. 258.
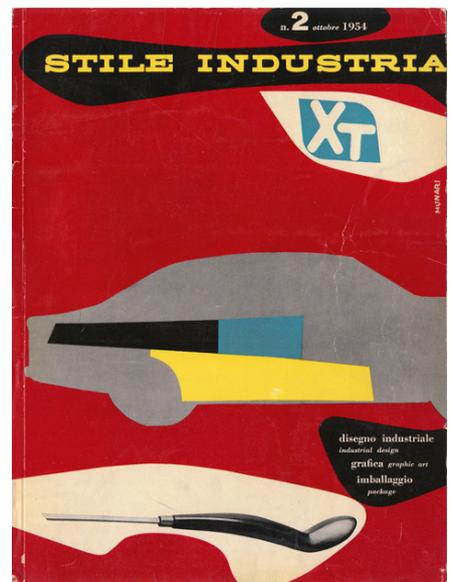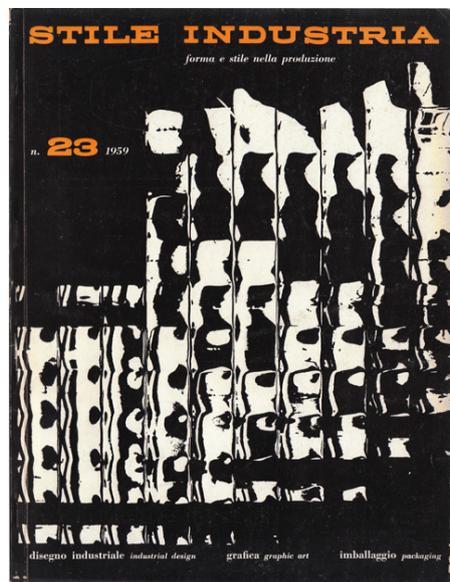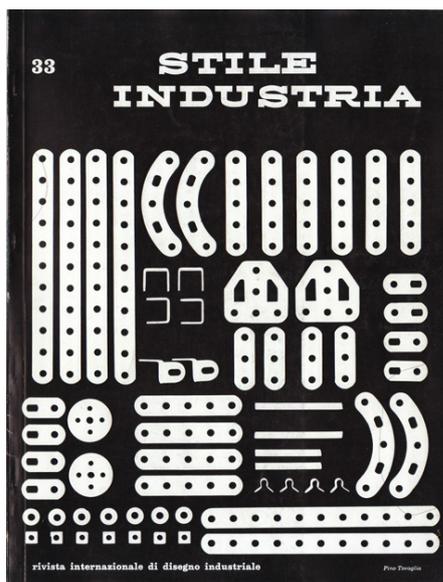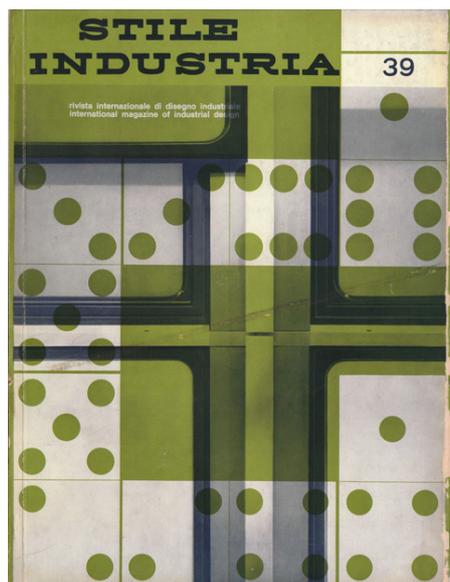
5.8 covers of *Stile Industria*: **.a** Albe Steiner, 1 (1), June 1954; **.b** Bruno Munari, 1 (2), October 1954; **.c** Michele Provinciali, 3 (9), December 1956; **.d** Franco Grignani, 6 (23), July 1959; **.e** Pino Tovaglia, 8 (33), 1961; **.f** Heinz Weibl, 9 (39), September 1962

5.9 foldout in *Stile Industria*, 10 (41), February 1963; featuring the contributors to the magazine. Contributors features in the jagged line from left to right are: graphic designers Paolo Veronesi, Ilio Negri, Giulio Confalonieri, Michele Provinciali, Pino Tovaglia, Roberto Sambonet, Heinz Waibl, Giovanni Pintori, Albe Steiner, Enzo Mari, Bruno Munari, Saul Bass (USA), Hiroshi Ohchi (Japan), Bob Noorda, Erberto Carboni, Max Huber, F. H. K. Henrion (UK), Otl Aicher (Germany) and Will Burtin (USA)

The changing attitude toward graphics is implicit in the inconsistent vocabulary adopted in both publications. Over more than a decade, the vocabulary changed from 'artista grafico' (graphic artist) to 'graphic designer' mirroring the profession's gradual estrangement from advertising. 'Graphic painter? advertising painter? graphic architect? graphic draughtsman?', wondered the editor of *Linea Grafica* and former campista, Attilio Rossi, in 1954, 'the vagueness of the term is not casual but mirrors the confused range of works that this [professional] figure must execute'.[75] Writing in the early-1950s, Dino Villani explained that the term graphic artist indicated a painter that designed printed works in accordance with their function and purpose.[76] They were 'more graphics than artists, more technicians than painters' and their artistic creativity was subordinated to the functionality and effectiveness of the visual message.[77] The next step was the 'grafico' (graphic practitioner). An artist who was regularly involved in industrial production, the graphic practitioner was 'the most competent and suitable figure for collaborating with and simultaneously integrating the work of the industrial designer'.[78]

The English term 'designer' was used in the late-1950s to indicate 'a new figure of corporate artist [... who] solves and coordinates all business issues relating to packaging, displaying and the advertising of products, as well as typographical issues with letterheads, catalogues and various publications'.[79] Mixing English and Italian words, Munari used the term 'designer grafico' in 1967 to indicate 'visual practitioners [...] specialists in visual communication [...] who work with a precise methodology in order to reach a possibly unmistakable outcome'.[80] The definition recall discussion among members of the ADI graphic design division, discussed

75   'Pittore grafico? pittore pubblicitario? architetto grafico? bozzettista grafico? La indeterminatezza del termine non è casuale ma rispecchia la confuse gamma dei lavori che questo personaggio deve eseguire [...]'. Attilio Rossi, 'Il Nostro Principio di Scelta', in *Linea Grafica*, 7 (5-6), May-June 1954, p. 127.

76   Dino Villani, 'Carlo Dradi Espone a Milano', *Linea Grafica*, 4 (5-6), May-June 1951, pp. 122-23.

77   '[...] sono più grafici che artisti, sono più tecnici che pittori [...]'. Dino Villani, 'L'Influenza degli Artisti sulla Fisionomia Generale della Grafica Pubblicitaria', *Linea Grafica*, 4 (11-12), November-December 1951, p. 233.

78   '[...] nello stesso tempo la figura più preparata ed adatta ad una forma di collaborazione col disegnatore industriale ed interviene ad integrare la sua opera [...]'. 'Artisti Italiani per la Pubblicità', *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954, p. 31.

79   '[...] nuova figura di artista aziendale [...] risolvere e coordinare quelli che sono i problemi aziendali relative all'imballaggio, presentazione e pubblicità dei prodotti, oppure problemi tipografici quali, ad esempio, carte intestate, cataloghi, pubblicazioni varie'. M. S., 'Una Mostra Grafica a Londra', *Linea Grafica*, 19 (7-8), July-August 1959, p. 201.

80   '[...] operatori visuali [...] specialisti per la comunicazione visuale [...] i quali operano con un metodo di lavoro esatto per ottenere un risultato possibilmente inequivocabile'. Bruno Munari, 'Il Marchio di Fabbrica', *Linea Grafica*, 19 (5), September-October 1967, p. 345.

in the previous section. Finally, the re-categorisation of graphics within the design domain was implicit in Steiner's definition of the 'graphic designer' – this time both words written in English – as a graphic practitioner that had differentiated him or herself from the advertising artist by getting involved with mass production, whose intervention was neither one-off nor dependent on individual stances, but coordinated and in accordance with a comprehensive design programme.[81]

Expected to address graphics and industrial design respectively, both *Linea Grafica* and *Stile Industria* felt the need to justify to their readerships their interest in advertising. Responding to critiques of digression from the main focus of the magazine, Rossi explained to the readers of *Linea Grafica* that it was impossible to document the work of graphic practitioners – namely Carboni and Bayer – without also taking into consideration their advertising output.[82] He then explained the criteria of selection: to be included in the magazine, advertising works were expected to feature 'original and complex layout solutions, and outstanding printing quality, in other words distinctly graphic qualities'.[83] The article continues by stating that 'the process of "visual conception" of a page, of an exhibition display or an advertisement is in short the same'.[84] Instead of adhering to a restrictive definition of graphics, Rossi adopted an open perspective that acknowledged the broadening field of action of graphic practices. His definition of 'creazione visiva' (visual conception) was based on design methodologies and a problem-solving approach. The change of focus from final output to design process is evidence of Rossi's awareness of contemporary debates relating, in particular, to design educational issues that were discussed in the previous chapter.[85] It also testify to graphic designers' attempts to shift the profession's image and industrial role from advertising to systematic design.

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81   Albe Steiner, in 'Tavola Rotonda del 5 Dicembre 1967: L'Art Director Oggi in Italia', *Linea Grafica*, 20 (1), January-February 1968, pp. 38-39.

82   See: Antonio Boggeri, 'Erberto Carboni', *Linea Grafica*, 6 (11-12), November-December 1953, pp. 232-40; F. Fortini, 'Herbert Bayer', *Linea Grafica*, 7 (3-4), March-April 1954, pp. 66-75.

83   '[...] originali e complesse soluzioni impaginative, doti eccezionali di stampa, vale a dire qualità spiccatamente grafiche'. Attilio Rossi, 'Il Nostro Principio di Scelta', *Linea Grafica*, 7 (5-6), May-June 1954, p. 127.

84   '[...] il processo di "creazione visiva" di una pagina, di un allestimento, o di una pubblicità è in sostanza il medesimo'. Rossi, *Linea Grafica*, 7 (5-6), May-June 1954, p. 127.

85   In the article, Attilio Rossi referred directly to the educational experience at the Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago that, as seen in chapter 4, was mediated in Italy by the graphic designer Michele Provinciali. Rossi, *Linea Grafica*, 7 (5-6), May-June 1954, p. 127.

Likewise, exactly at the same time and on a similar note but from a different perspective than Rossi's article, Rosselli explained to his readership the reasons for presenting the work of a group of Italian advertising artists in the first issue of *Stile Industria*.[86] As a sort of justification for his interest in the work of Pintori, Studio Boggeri, Grignani and Carboni, Rosselli argued that this was 'not considered in itself, but always contingent upon that unity between production and publicity that the magazine intend[ed] to assert'.[87] The inclusion of graphic design in *Stile Industria* was thus predicated on its role as mediator between industrial design production and the public.[88] It was no interest in its own right, but only as the medium for creating an image of both products and companies.[89]

In 1955, the two magazines came into direct conflict when the respective editors quarrelled over Rosselli's definition of 'grafica tecnica' (technical graphics). Taking the catalogue and the technical brochure as reference points, Rosselli differentiated 'technical graphics' from advertising.[90] Whereas the latter relied on the incessant search for the new and the surprising for its success, technical graphics was concerned with informing, describing and conveying a message in the clearest and most effective way. Rosselli identified the 'weaknesses' of Italian general graphics in 'the prevalence of graphics (or graphicism) over the entire [design] programme, the prevalence of the invention over the analysis and the research of the true aims of the design'.[91] Standing here for formalism, graphics and graphicism

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86   Alberto Rosselli, 'Artisti Italiani per la Pubblicità', *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954, pp. 31-37.

87   '[...] non consideriamo come a se stante, ma sempre in funzione di qualla unità fra produzione e propaganda che la rivista intede affermare'. Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954, p. 31.

88   Before *Stile Industria*, Alberto Rosselli had already discussed and investigated the relationship between graphics and industrial design in the pages of *Domus*. In 1949, he began editing a special section with articles relating to industrial, graphic design and packaging that can be considered a precursor of *Stile Industria*. See, for example: Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Arte nel Disegno Industriale. Produzione Italiana. Arte Grafica Italiana', *Domus*, 269, April 1952, p. 60; Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Arte nella Produzione Industriale. Arte Grafica: Olivetti', *Domus*, 271, April 1952, p. 58; Alberto Rosselli, 'L'Arte nella Produzione Industriale. Arte Grafica: Max Huber', *Domus*, 272, April 1952, p. 58.

89   On the role graphic design played in the mediation of industrial design in postwar Italy, see: *La Grafica del Made in Italy: Comunicazione e Aziende del Design 1950-1980*, ed. by Mario Piazza (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2012). For a different perspective on graphic design in design publications and design organisations official house organs with a focus on postwar Britain, see: David Crowley, 'Design Magazines and Design Culture', in *Communicate: Independent British Graphic Design since the Sixties*, ed. by Rich Poynor (London: Laurence King, 2004), pp. 182-99.

90   Alberto Rosselli, 'Grafica Tecnica', *Stile Industria*, 2 (4), April 1955, pp. 46-53.

91   '[...] debolezza [...] prevalere della grafica (o del graficismo) sulla concezione dell'insieme, dal prevalere dell'invenzione sull'analisi e la ricerca dei veri scopi del disegno'. Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 2 (4), April 1955, p. 47.

(graficismo) were in contrast with technical graphics' purpose-lead approach to visual communication. Besides works by Xanti Schawinsky – whose 1934 catalogue for Olivetti in collaboration with Studio Boggeri was identified as a forerunner of technical graphics – Will Burtin and Louis Danziger, Rosselli's article featured works by Muratore, Steiner, Carboni, Pintori, Bonfante, Huber, Grignani, Tovaglia and Ciuti (see Illustration **5.10**). The selected Italian or Milan-based émigrés graphic designers were all ADI members. As such, the selection suggests a substantial difference between their work and the work of other graphic practitioners, and reinforces the perception of ADI members as the representatives of the Italian graphic design élite.[92]

Rossi's reply appeared in the September 1955 issue of *Linea Grafica*. The title '*Grafica* non *Grafica* Tecnica' (*Graphics* not technical *Graphics*) synthetises the main argument. Rossi blamed Rosselli for his naivety and misunderstanding, and considered Rosselli's categorisation as nonsense. According to Rossi, 'it [was] a mistake to divide advertising into two categories: generic advertising and technical advertising'.[93] The ambiguous choice of words evidenced that graphics and advertising were still perceived as next of kin in some circles. Rossi responded to the charge of formalism and blamed the amateur graphic practitioners who, despite coming from different disciplines – e.g. architecture and fine arts, but also literature – had taken advantage of the experimental path opened by the New Typography movement, and had engaged with graphics on a merely formal level. Italian graphic artists, by contrast, had already begun 'to classify and differentiate every printed material based on its specific function, thereby solving it aesthetically through the most current graphic language'.[94] Finally, Rossi counterattacked and criticised *Stile Industria*, as well as *Domus*, for selecting graphic works for their mere formal aspect, rather than featuring works presenting a purpose-led and problem-solving approach to design practice. In sum, Rossi and Rosselli were apparently making the same accusation against each other.

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92   On the prominent role of the so-considered élite during the early-stages of professional associations, see: Eliot Freidson, *Professionalism: The Third Logic* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), pp. 142-43.

93   '[...] è un errore dividere la pubblicità in due gruppi: pubblicità generica e pubblicità tecnica'. Attilio Rossi, '*Grafica* non *Grafica* Tecnica', *Linea Grafica*, 8 (9-10), September-October 1955, p. 236.

94   '[...] tipizzare e differenziare ogni stampato in base alla funzione specifica, risolvendola esteticamente con il linguaggio grafico più attuale'. Rossi, *Linea Grafica*, 8 (9-10), September-October 1955, p. 236.

a

b

c

5.10   double-page spreads from Alberto Rosseli, 'Grafica Tecnica', *Stile Industria*, 2 (4), April 1955, pp. 46-53: featuring works by Xanti Schawinsky (.**a**), Will Burtin and Louis Danziger (.**b**), Remo Muratore, Erberto Carboni, Giovanni Pintori, Egidio Bonfante and Frits Frickel (.**c**), Pino Tovaglia, Ezio Bonini, Max Huber (.**d**) and others

d

In response to Rossi's article, Rosselli clarified again that the interest of *Stile Industria* towards graphics was restricted to graphic works that related to industrial design.[95] He then reiterated his understanding of technical graphics as a programmatic, consistent and comprehensive approach to industrial production that included both industrial design and advertising. The article ended with a statement of intent: the goal of *Stile Industria* was 'to cooperate with graphics in their research, to support them in affirming the necessity and esteem of their profession, and to establish a collaboration with architects and industrial designers'.[96] Graphic designers were thus positioned as exponents of a new professional figure whose demand for a place within the design community was to be supported by favouring a more analytical and systematic approach to graphic design and encouraging their equal involvement in industrial production.

What the quarrel between Rossi and Rosselli tells us is that, notwithstanding the different vocabulary, audiences and perspectives, both magazines aimed at extending the boundaries of graphics' professional field beyond the one-off advertising intervention. The underlying issue was the position of graphic designers in relation to industrial designers and whether to include or exclude graphics from the design domain. In September 1958, *Linea Grafica* published an article by Boggeri that recalled closely Rosselli's controversial article on technical graphics, suggesting a tacit agreement between the two publications.[97] Boggeri stressed the function of the catalogue as an information device over its propaganda intent, and urged graphics to adopt 'the same spirit of the "designer" [and] translate [design issues] into rational and aesthetics terms' so that the final output was going to be the outcome of the design process rather than an a-priori aesthetic decision.[98]

5.5 IS GRAPHICS PART OF DESIGN?[99]

In April 1962, Rosselli disclosed news of the forthcoming ADI graphic design division in *Stile Industria*, introducing 'a section of Italian graphics [that had] already

95   Alberto Rosselli, 'Grafica Tecnica', *Stile Industria*, 3 (6), February 1956, pp. 42-47.

96   '[...] affiancare i grafici nella loro ricerca, di aiutarli ad affermare una necessità ed un prestigio della loro professione, di stabilire una collaborazione con gli architetti ed i disegnatori industriali'. Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 3 (6), February 1956, p. 42.

97   Antonio Boggeri, 'Il Catalogo, Strumento di Informazione e di Vendita', *Linea Grafica*, 11 (9-10), September-October 1958, pp. 222-27.

98   '[...] stesso spirito del "designer" [...] tradurre in termini razionali ed estetici [...]'. Boggeri, *Linea Grafica*, 11 (9-10), September-October 1958, p. 227.

99   Gillo Dorfles, *Introduzione al Disegno Industriale: Linguaggio e Storia della Produzione di Serie* (Turin: Einaudi, 1972), reedited in 2001, p. 41.

expressed on several occasions, and recently again in the ADI, the desire to go beyond the conventional status of the profession and develop their practice with an attitude similar to industrial design'.[100] Members of the yet-to-be-established ADI graphic design division featured twice in the issue: first, in an introductory page that included portraits and short biographies of Mari, Noorda, Veronesi, Sambonet, Tovaglia, Munari and Iliprandi (see Illustration **5.11**); second, in a selection of works by the same graphic designers, which included among others: Sambonet's graphic output for the eponymous kitchen- and tableware manufacturer, Iliprandi's visual identity for the water-ski world championship, and Noorda's advertisements for Pirelli (see Illustration **5.12**). As diverse as it might at first appear, the selection illustrated Rosselli's concept of 'an organic graphic design planning [that] tend[ed] to release the graphic's interest from the field of mere advertising and increasingly insert him-her within the operating field of the modern industry'.[101]

The article continued, suggesting that graphics was indeed part of design, but only under certain circumstances:

> In principle, graphics can be considered part of industrial design, [but] the graphic expressions that address mainly advertising cannot be compared nor put on the same level with the methodologies of industrial design. [...] The basis for the development of the graphics' profession is then a new method of problem solving the many new issues of graphics, in particular an attitude proper to the "designer" who is set within the contemporary industrial realm as a whole.[102]

Inclusion or exclusion depended on design methodologies and approaches to graphic design, as well as on typologies of visual output.

Rosselli's position was by no mean unanimously shared by the ADI members or the design community in general, but found his main supporter in the critic Gillo Dorfles. Dorfles was quite vocal in conveying his views on the relationship between

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100   'Un settore dei grafici Italiani, già in diverse occasioni e ancora recentemente in sede ADI [...], ha manifestato la volontà di superare lo stato convenzionale della professione e di evolvere la propria opera in un atteggiamento affine al disegno industriale'. Alberto Rosselli, 'Grafici e Industrial Design', *Stile Industria*, 9 (37), April 1962, p. 13.

101   '[...] una organica impostazione grafica [...] tende a svincolare l'interesse del grafico dalla sola sfera della pubblicità e maggiormente lo immette nella sfera operativa dell'industria moderna'. Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 9 (37), April 1962, p. 14.

102   '[...] la grafica in linea di principio si può considerare nella stessa sfera d'azione del disegno industriale [...] le espressioni grafiche indirizzate in massima parte verso un'azione pubblicitaria, non permettono confronti e argomentazioni omogenei con il procedimento dell'industrial design. [...] Alla radice dell'evolversi della professione del grafico sta quindi un metodo nuovo di avvicinarsi e risolvere i molti nuovi problemi della grafica, ma soprattutto un preciso atteggiamento di "designer", inquadrato nel complesso della realtà industriale contemporanea'. Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 9 (37), April 1962, pp. 13-14.

Enzo Mari (Novara 1932). Vive e lavora a Milano dove si occupa di grafica e di disegno industriale nei suoi aspetti multiformi. La sua formazione risale al 1950-55 quando, nonostante la frequenza all'Accademia di Brera, i suoi interessi particolari lo portano ad iniziare una serie di ricerche sui rapporti tra colori e volumi, sulle variazioni tematiche e sulla cinematica, ponendosi al tempo stesso il problema della possibilità di poter utilizzare la tecnica e gli strumenti industriali nel campo delle arti plastiche, ricerche che proseguono tuttora e che sono integrative della sua attività professionale. Alcuni suoi lavori sono esposti al Museo di Arte Moderna di New York.

Roberto Sambonet, grafico e designer, è consulente della Sambonet s.p.a. di Vercelli, per la quale oltre a curare le campagne pubblicitarie, disegna vasellame, pentolame e posateria. Con questi prodotti vince il Compasso d'Oro nel 1956 (serie di vassoi in acciaio inossidabile) e il Gran Premio XII Triennale 1960 (pentole in acciaio inossidabile). Per Calderoni, Milano, disegna alcuni gioielli che ricevono nel 1956 la segnalazione d'onore al Compasso d'Oro. Allestisce mostre di notevole impegno (Mostra dell'India alla Rinascente, mostra « Stile Italiano » a Belgrado, Parigi, Vienna, Madrid, Barcellona).

Bob Noorda (Amsterdam 1927), studia all'Accademia di Belle Arti di Amsterdam dal 1944 al 1947 e nei tre anni seguenti lavora per conto del governo olandese alla pubblicazione di una rivista militare a Djakarta, Indonesia. Dopo il ritorno in Olanda nel 1950 svolge attività di grafico ad Amsterdam e due anni dopo si stabilisce in Italia. A Milano lavora per diverse ditte: Pirelli, Montecatini, Farmitalia, Remington Rand, C. G.E., Linoleum, Bassetti. Nel 1961 è stato Art Director della Pirelli ed è Professore in progettazione grafica all'Umanitaria.

Pino Tovaglia (Milano 1923) lievo di Gianfilippo Usellini Enrico Ciuti, insegna grafica tellonistica alla Scuola Superiore d'Arte del Castello dal 1947 1953. Nel 1954, 55, 56 alle tre importanti campagne di ann ci per la Finmeccanica. Nel ottiene la medaglia d'oro per bianconero al IV Premio Nazionale della Pubblicità; nel vince il Premio Linea Grafica. 1958 allestisce la campagna di nunci per la Lanerossi prem con la Palma d'oro all'VIII mio Nazionale della Pubblicità.

Bruno Munari (Milano 1907), autodidatta, si è sempre occupato di grafica e di allestimenti per mostre. Ha pubblicato libri per bambini tra i quali l'ultimo « Nella notte buia » è stato tradotto in quattro lingue. Sempre nel campo della letteratura per l'infanzia un particolare interesse ha il nuovo alfabetiere pubblicato da Einaudi. È consulente grafico della casa editrice Einaudi e del Club degli Editori. Attualmente si occupa di ricerche visive, di strutture e di design.

Luigi Veronesi (Milano 1908), pittore, partecipa al movimento astrattista sin dall'inizio entrando a far parte, nel 1934 del Gruppo « Abstraction-Création, Art non figuratif » di Parigi. Estende le sue ricerche dall'esperienza pittorica alla grafica, alla fotografia, al cinema e alla scenografia. Partecipa attivamente al gruppo di « Campo grafico », realizza due sezioni alla Mostra grafica della Triennale nel 1939 e, in collaborazione con G.C. Argan e gli architetti Labò e Gentili, la sezione dell'architettura alla Triennale del 1952. Tiene la sua prima mostra personale nel 1932 alla Galleria del Milione di Milano e da allora è presente alle più importanti manifestazioni di pittura astratta in Italia e all'estero. È membro dell'Accademia Ligustica di Genova per la pittura. Ha insegnato progettazione grafica alla Scuola Rinascita e alla Scuola del Libro di Milano. È consulente artistico di alcune industrie milanesi.

Giancarlo Iliprandi (Milano 1925) compie i suoi studi all'Accademia di Brera diplomandosi in pittura nel 1949 e in scenografia nel 1943, e li completa con corsi a Salzburg e a Berlino (alla Hochschule fur Bildende Kunste). Fino al 1955 lavora prevalentemente come pittore e scenografo dedicandosi dopo quell'anno interamente alla grafica. È consulente artistico della Rinascente e Art Director della rivista « Scinautico ».

5.11 page from *Stile Industria*, 9 (37), April 1962, featuring clockwise: Enzo Mari, Roberto Sambonet, Pino Tovaglia, Bruno Munari, Giancarlo Iliprandi, Luigi Veronesi and Bob Noorda

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5.12   double-page spreads from
Alberto Rosselli, 'Grafici
e Industrial Design', *Stile
Industria*, 9 (37), April 1962,
pp. 15-27; featuring works
by: **.a** Roberto Sambonet,
.b Giancarlo Iliprandi,
.c Bob Noorda

c

graphic and industrial design both in the specialist magazines of the period and in his own publications. Taking part in a roundtable on the relationship between graphics and design that was organised by *Linea Grafica* in the summer of 1969, Dorfles defined graphic design as a 'graphic work applied to an entire communication system'.[103] 'When graphic design is not merely two-dimensional, but consists of a whole operational strategy that concerns visual communication within different sectors', Dorfles observed, 'we can definitely consider graphics as a design matter'.[104] Inclusion or exclusion from the design domain was again a question of methods.

In 1963, Dorfles published one of the earliest Italian books on design entitled *Il Disegno Industriale e la Sua Estetica* (Industrial Design and Its Aesthetics).[105] In an attempt to formulate a definition of industrial design, Dorfles included packaging as one its many facets, albeit one with a close relationship to graphics and advertising.[106] He justified the inclusion by stating that packaging consisted of three-dimensional artefacts, which were designed to contain in an efficient way design products: it featured both functional and aesthetic qualities, and simultaneously mediated products' self-promotion. Packaging was indeed the object of a particular interest of graphic designers.[107] Its three-dimensional character was seen as a way to approach issues that were similar to product design.[108] In 1972, a second, revised and extended edition of the book included a chapter that addressed

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103   '[…] un lavoro di grafica applicato a un intero sistema comunicativo'. Gillo Dorfles, quoted in: Fabio Mataloni, 'Immagine Aziendale e Disegno Coordinato', *Linea Grafica*, 21 (4), July-August 1969, p. 267. Italian graphic designers adopted Dorfles's definition of graphic design. See: Albe Steiner, 'Rapporti tra Grafica e Design', *Linea Grafica*, 25 (5), September-October 1971, pp. 255-57. The text is included in Albe Steiner, *Il Mestiere di Grafico* (Turin: Einaudi, 1978), pp. 143-50.

104   '[…] quando la progettazione grafica non è solo bidimensionale e comprende tutto uno schema operativo che riguarda la comunicazione visiva in diversi settori, possiamo senz'altro considerare la grafica come un fato di design'. Gillo Dorfles, quoted in: Mataloni, *Linea Grafica*, 21 (4), July-August 1969, p. 270.

105   Gillo Dorfles, *Il Disegno Industriale e la Sua Estetica* (Bologna: Cappelli Editore, 1963).

106   Dorfles, *Il Disegno Industriale e la Sua Estetica*, pp. 15-16.

107   See, for example: 'Invenzioni: Grafica + Imballaggio', *Stile Industria*, 1 (2), October 1954, pp. 42-45; Albe Steiner, 'Imballaggio: Confezioni per una Penna', *Stile Industria*, 4 (10), January 1957, pp. 35-37; Raffaele Baldini, 'Grafica nella Produzione', *Stile Industria*, 9 (38), pp. 24-34.

108   Detractors often used graphic design alleged two-dimensionality to deny access to the design domain. For instance, in the early-1950s the Society of Industrial Artists, SIA, took into consideration the possibility, later rejected, of dividing designers into two categories: designers working in two dimension – e.g. typographers, graphic designers, surface and textile designers – on the one hand; and designers operating in the three dimension on the other hand. See: James Holland, *Minerva at Fifty: The Jubilee History of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers 1930 to 1980* (Westerham Kent: Hurtwood Publications Ltd, 1980), p. 16.

directly the problematic position of graphic design with the very title: 'La Grafica fa Parte del Design?' (Is Graphics Part of Design?).[109] Moving the emphasis away from the visual outcome towards the design process itself, Dorfles observed that to base the distinction between product and graphic design only on the fact that the first was three-dimensional and the second two-dimensional was overly simplistic. To be re-categorised within design graphic designers were expected to shift the focus of their practice towards a systematic approach to visual communication that favoured the design of a comprehensive communication system over sporadic intervention. Trademarks, logotypes and coordinated images were indicated as examples of visual output that could doubtlessly be included in the design domain.

In line with Dorfles' conditional inclusion of graphics within design, Rosselli and many other contributors of both *Stile Industra* and *Linea Grafica* considered the coordinated image as the most relevant outcome of design approaches applied to visual communication. It was the ideal field of collaboration between graphic designers, industrial designers and design-conscious industries.[110] Alternatively indicated as 'industrial style', 'house style', 'coordinated' or 'corporate image' in the specialised publications of the period, the concept of design coordination expressed the attempt to unify the visual output of a company over a period of time by using a set of consistent elements across various applications.[111] By achieving a coherent and easily recognisable image, design coordination programmes benefitted the industry that identified the graphic designer as an essential intermediary with the public.[112] Design coordination programmes also provided graphic designers with a chance 'to be redeemed from the subordinate role of people in charge of decoration or cosmetics, and instead be actively assimilate in the production

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109   Gillo Dorfles, *Introduzione al Disegno Industriale: Linguaggio e Storia della Produzione di Serie* (Turin: Einaudi, 1972), reedited in 2001, p. 41.

110   See: 'Grafica', *Stile Industria*, 2 (5), September 1955, pp. 37-41; Alberto Rosselli, 'Grafica', *Stile Industria*, 6 (20), January 1959, p. 33.

111   See: Renzo Salvadori, 'Henrion: un Maestro Inglese dell'Arte Grafica e del Disegno Industriale', *Linea Grafica*, 15 (5-6), May-June 1960, pp. 180-86.

112   A number of articles were devoted to the design of pharmaceutical companies' corporate images suggesting that these were considered as particular case studies. Commentators observed that, since it addressed a particularly qualified type of audience – i.e. doctors – the visual output of pharmaceutical companies provided graphic designers with the challenge to develop a consistent and unmistakable visual language that stressed information over advertisement. See, for example: Fritz Fricker, 'Attività Grafica di una Industria Farmaceutica', *Stile Industria*, 4 (10), January 1957, pp. 31-34; Albe Steiner, 'Presentazione e Propaganda di Prodotti Farmaceutici', *Stile Industria*, 4 (13), August 1957, pp. 31-34; Albe Steiner, 'Confezioni per Prodotti Farmaceutici', *Stile Industria*, 8 (30), January 1961, pp. 38-39.

process'.[113] In other words, the adoption of design coordination programmes sig-nalled graphic design's move away from the one-off, spontaneous and individual intervention towards a systematic approach to visual communication that allowed graphic designers to become an integral part of the industrial process, function as coordinators of a design programme and be recognised as entitled members of the design community.[114] Olivetti, Pirelli, Cornigliano, Barilla and La Rinascente were the Italian design-conscious companies whose visual output usually fea-tured in specialised magazines as examples of design coordination programmes.[115] Pintori, Noorda, Carmi, Huber and Steiner – all members of the ADI graphic design division – were the representatives of the new professional figure of the graphic designer.

From the mid-1950s, graphic designers' adoption of a systematic approach to visual communication intersected with an international debate over graphic design professionalisation. As seen in Chapter 4, Tomás Maldonado and the HfG Ulm were proponents of the so-called 'scientific operationalism': a new thinking in design practice based on an allegedly scientific and objective approach to design issues, rooted in semiotics, information theory and technology.[116] Maldonado advocated a new model of designer as a coordinator that would work in partner-

113 '[…] riscattato dal ruolo subalterno dell'addetto alla decorazione o alla cosmesi e si integra invece attivamente al processo produttivo'. Raffaele Baldini, 'Grafica nella Produzione', *Stile Industria*, 9 (38), June 1962, p. 33.

114 For a brief overview on the influence of design coordination programmes in the pro-fessionalisation of graphic designers in the UK, see: David Preston, 'The Corporate Trailblazers', in *Ultrabold: The Journal of St Bride Library*, 10 (2011), pp. 14-21.

115 See: Alberto Rosselli, 'Forma Grafica di un Grande Magazzino', *Stile Industria*, 1 (1), June 1954, pp. 40-42 Gillo Dorfles, 'Impostazione Estetica di una Grande Industria', *Stile Industria*, 4 (12), June 1957, pp. 36-39; F. C., 'Storia e forme di una Industria Italiana', *Linea Grafica*, 16 (11-12), November-December 1961, pp. 365-75. Except for the department store La Rinascente, they were all included in F. H. K. Henrion and Alan Parkin's *Design Coordination and Corporate Image* (1967) among a selection of European, North American and Japanese corporate identities case studies. F. H. K.Henrion, and Alan Parkin, *Design Coordination and Corporate Image* (London: Studio Vista, 1967), pp. 36-41, 86-101, 124-35, 148-53. For a comparative study of the house styles of Olivetti, Pirelli and Cornigliano, see: Vinti, *Gli Anni dello Stile Industriale 1948-1965*.

116 The Ulm approach to semiotics and information theory was based on the pivotal work of the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. Another influential figure was the German philosopher Max Bense who taught information theory at the HfG Ulm from 1954 to 1958. On the influence of Charles Sanders Peirce's work in semiotics on graphic design, see: Meredith Davis, *Graphic Design Theory* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2012), pp. 124-28. On Max Bense's experience at Ulm, see: Paul Betts, *The Authority of the Everyday Objects: A Cultural History of West German Industrial Design* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 171-73; 'Science and Visual Communication', in Josef Müller-Brockmann, *The Graphic Designers and His Design Problems* (Niederteufen: Verlag Arthur Niggli AG, 1983), pp. 117-18.

ship with industry and collaborate with specialists of other disciplines, such as engineers and scientists. He favoured design programmes based on teamwork over one-off design outputs that depended on individual skills and creativity and were mainly concerned with self-expression. Within the graphic design discourse, the goal was to achieve an alleged objectivity in visual communication. The use of a limited set of visual elements and their systematic variations was expected to allow the content of the visual communication to be quickly and obviously understood. The emphasis was put on the informative function and on the efficiency in fulfilling the needs of communication.[117]

International conferences provided Milan's graphic designers with the opportunity to take part in and contribute to this new approach to visual communication. This was, for instance, the case with the 1960 World Design Conference in Tokyo (WoDeCo).[118] The conference brought together exponents of the international design community from twenty-six different countries to discuss a wide range of topics, encompassing industrial and graphic design, architecture and urbanism. Participants included the graphic designers: Herbert Bayer, Otl Aicher, Josef Müller-Brockmann, Katsumi Masaru and Kamekura Yusaku. Rosselli, Munari and the Milan-based, Swiss graphic designer Huber represented the Italian design community, talking on design production, designer's personality, and the social responsibilities of the design professions respectively.[119]

> Maldonado's speech opened the WoDeCo session on visual communication:
> Visual communication has become the object of scientific research, and we are studying
> it in relation to social psychology, applied psychology, mathematical logic, information
> theory, cybernetics, etc. [...] However, the majority of designers still think that the most

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117   On 'objective' visual communication, see also: Müller-Brockmann, *The Graphic Designers and His Design Problems*; *Josef Müller-Brockmann: Pioneer of Swiss Graphic Design*, ed. by Lars Müller (Baden: Lars Müller Verlag, 1995); Kerry William Purcell, *Josef Müller-Brockmann* (London, New York: Phaidon, 2006).

118   On WoDeCo, see: Rem Koolhas and Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Project Japan: Metabolism Talk* (Köln: Taschen, 2011); Jilly Traganou, *Designing the Olympics: Representation, Participation, Contestation* (New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 77-79. On the impact of the WoDeCo within Japanese graphic design and advertising in Japan and abroad, see: Bartal, *Postmodern Advertising in Japan*.

119   Excerpts of the presentations were published in a special issue of *Stile Industria*. See: Alberto Rosselli, 'World Design Conference 1960', *Stile Industria*, 7 (28), August 1960, pp. XI-XXIII.

important aspect of communication media is the artistic creation and that the ways of communicating are only a secondary issue.[120]

Maldonado criticised 'the bad habit of explaining communication by restricting it to the field of advertising' and identified this misunderstanding as the cause of graphic designers' undervalued intellectual and professional status.[121] Finally, he stressed objective over persuasive communication, and prompted graphic designers to favour the design and planning of organic visual communication systems over individual products. According to Maldonado, graphic designers were expected to take into consideration not only the visual artefact in itself, but also the context – i.e. the physical, socio-cultural and technological environment – and the means of distribution, as well as the role of the participants to the communication, all of which took part in the transmission and construction of the visual message.

In his WoDeCo presentation on the social responsibility of the design professions, Huber recognised graphic designers' public service and called for designers' commitment to the recipients of visual communication by offering them objective, informative and easily readable visual representations that would appeal to rationality rather than provoke emotional reactions. He declared that 'the graphic designer must inevitably bear more and more in mind the needs of today's society'.[122] These were, for instance, the need for efficient systems of wayfinding, and the need for a global visual communication language. According to Huber, 'only a coordinated and unified use [...] of clear symbols, visually immediate and understandable by everyone would considerably improve the relationship between people of different countries and languages, and between people that are already acquiring an international mentality'.[123]

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120   'La comunicazione visiva è diventata oggetto di una ricerca scientifica e la si sta studiando in rapporto alla psicologia sociale, alla psicologia applicata, alla logica matematica, alla teoria dell'informazione, alla cibernetica, ecc. [...] Tuttavia la maggior parte dei designers pensa che la cosa più importante dei mezzi di comunicazione sia la creazione artistica e che il modo di comunicare sia solo un problema secondario'. Tomás Maldonado in Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 7 (28), August 1960, p. XIX.

121   '[...] cattiva abitudine di spiegare la comunicazione limitandola al campo pubblicitario'. Tomás Maldonado in Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 7 (28), August 1960, p. XIX.

122   'Il designer grafico deve necessariamente tenere sempre più conto delle necessità della società di oggi'. Max Huber in Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 7 (28), August 1960, p. XVII.

123   'Solo un uso coordinato e unificato [...] di simboli chiari, visivamente immediati e comprensibili a chiunque, potrebbe migliorare sensibilmente le relazioni tra individui di lingue e di paesi diversi, individui che già stanno acquistando una mentalità internazionale'. Max Huber in Rosselli, *Stile Industria*, 7 (28), August 1960, p. XVII.

By acknowledging, on the one hand, the impact of visual communication on people's behaviour and, on the other hand, the challenges of multicultural environments, Huber participated in the emerging debate over the articulation of an internationally understandable pictorial language. Like design coordination programmes, pictorial languages exemplified a systematic and scientific approach to visual communication. Rooted in modernist ideas of a universal language, drawn on Otto Neurath's interwar Isotype system and embedded in postwar humanism, the design of an internationally understandable pictorial language was going to be developed in the following years by Japanese and German graphic designers Katsumi and Aicher, both WoDeCo participants, for the Tokyo and Munich Olympics of 1964 and 1972, respectively.[124]

The 1964 Compaso d'Oro award is evidence of the impact of this changed perspective on graphic design practice within the Italian design culture. Four years after Huber's call for graphic designers' commitment to the needs of contemporary society at WoDeCo, the design of the stations and signage system for the first line of the Metropolitana di Milano (Milan Underground), MM1 (red line), was awarded the Compasso d'Oro.[125] Inaugurated in 1964, the MM1 was the outcome of the collaboration between the rationalist architects Franco Albini and Franca Helg with the Dutch-born, Milanese, graphic designer Noorda.[126] Noorda was responsible for the design of the entire visual output: from nameplates to diagrammatic maps, from the logo to the colour coding system.[127]

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124   On Otto Neurath and the Isotype system, see: *Isotype: Design and Contexts, 1925-1971*, ed. by Christopher Burke, Eric Kindel and Sue Walker (London: Hyphen Press, 2013); Otto Neurath, *From Hieroglyphics to Isotype: A Visual Biography* (London: Hyphen Press, 2010); Marie Neurath and Robin Kinross, *The Transformer: Principles of Making Isotypes Charts* (London: Hyphen Press, 2009). On Katsumi Masaru's and Otl Aicher's works of the Tokyo and Munich Olympics, see: Traganou, *Designing the Olympics*; Markus Rathgeb, *Otl Aicher* (London: Phaidon, 2006), pp. 113-33.

125   F. M., 'I Compassi d'Oro 1964: Denunciate dalla Giuria le Carenze Culturali e Produttive del Momento', *Linea Grafica*, 16 (9-10), September-October 1964, pp. 243-44.

126   On Bob Noorda, see: *On the Road: Bob Noorda il Grafico del Viaggio*, ed. by Cinzia Ferrara and Francesco E. Guida (Milan: Edizioni Aiap, 2014); *Bob Noorda: Design*, ed. by Mario Piazza (Milan: Moleskine, 2015); *Bob Noorda: Design*, ed. by Mario Piazza (Milan: 24 Ore Cultura, 2015); Nico Ventura, *Bob Noorda Design* (Ferrara: MusArc, 2005).

127   On Bob Noorda and the Metropolitana di Milano, see: Gabriele Oropallo, 'This Way to the Exit: The Re-Writing of the City through Graphic Design, 1964-1989', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, pp. 194-99; Paul Shaw, *Helvetica and the New York City Subway System: The True (Maybe) Story* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), pp. 18-21; Jan Conradi, *Unimark International: The Design of Business and the Business of Design* (Baden: Lars Müller, 2010), pp. 38-41.

For the first time in the history of the Compasso d'Oro, the award was given to a graphic designer for a graphic design artefact.[128] The event was a crucial moment in the professionalisation of Italian graphic design. The reasons behind the award might have been multiple. Having, for the first time, a graphic designer – Munari – as a jury member might have arguably favoured the decision. Furthermore, the fact that the award was not exclusively for the signage system but also for the design of the stations, and that the signage system had itself a spatial dimension might have helped convince even the most reluctant members of the ADI. Besides speculation, it is evident that the decision was in line with the contemporary debate on systematic and scientific visual communication, and in accordance with the interest in internationally understandable signage systems.[129] Indeed, Noorda not only designed a coordinated wayfinding system, but also put the final user at the core of his design methodology, thereby committing himself to the readability, clarity, objectivity and functionality of the visual information.[130]

5.6 MORE THAN REDESIGNING THE LABEL: FROM ADVERTISING TO VISUAL COMMUNICATION

International associations offered Milan's graphic designers the opportunity to be part of the international graphic design community, share common interests, contribute to the articulation of a new way of thinking in visual communication and foster professionalisation both on a local and international scale. This was the case with the Alliance Graphic Internationale (International Graphic Union – AGI) and the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA) founded in 1951 and 1963, respectively. Both associations and their changing stances towards graphic design practices are investigated in this final section to

128   On the Compasso d'Oro, see: *Design Italiano: Compasso d'Oro ADI*, ed. by. Rizzi, Steiner and Origoni; Michele Galluzzo, 'La Dialettica tra Grafica e Disegno Industriale in Italia' (Unpublished master dissertation, ISIA Urbino, 2013), pp. 60-61.

129   Articles by Ulmers on the need for efficient systems of wayfinding, and on the need for a global visual communication language featured in specialist publications of the period. See: Martin, 'Storia dei Segnali Stradali: Appunti per una Semantica Visiva', *Stile Industria*, 7 (32), pp. 23-34; Otl Aicher, 'Per una Revisione degli Attuali Signali Stradali', *Stile Industria*, 8 (33), June 1961, pp. 29-34.

130   In order to improve the readability of negative typeface – white letters on red matt background – and of the typeface from a distance – e.g. from the carriages of the train in transit – Noorda customised the typeface Helvetica. He selected matt surfaces that would not reflect artificial light and applied a reductive geometry easily recognisable. He was then the first to adopt the practice of repeating the name of the station at consistent intervals – five metres in the case of the MM1 – in modular enamel bands along the station walls above the platform that has since become standard worldwide. Oropallo, 'This Way to the Exit', in *Made in Italy*, ed. by Lees-Maffei and Fallan, p. 196.

contribute to the chapter's argument for a connection between the professionali-sation of graphic design in Italy and the adoption a systematic approach to visual communication within the international graphic design community at large. The analysis of AGI and ICOGRADA also provides insight into the relationship between ADI and AIAP, suggesting the way in which Milan's graphic designers turned to the international network of graphic designers that gathered around international design organisations in an attempt to emancipate the profession from advertising and access the design domain.

AGI is an élite club that unites world leading graphic designers, founded in Paris in 1952.[131] Carboni, Grignani, Munari and Pintori were invited to join the AGI at its the first meeting. By the end of the 1960s, Italian or Milan-based émigré members of the AGI included: Carmi, Steiner, Manzi, Huber, Vignelli, Calabresi, Noorda, Confalonieri, Boggeri, Noorda and Tovaglia.[132] A photocopy of the AGI statute found in the folder of the ADI graphic design division in Steiner's archive suggests a direct relationship between ADI members' experience in the AGI and their claim for a more prominent position within the association.[133]

During the first two decades of the AGI, exhibitions and congresses followed a pattern that closely mirrored the developments of graphic design in Milan evidencing that graphic designers were facing similar issues and sharing common experiences beyond national borders. Graphic designers and AGI members Ben and Elly Bos have observed that at the time of the setting up of the AGI graphic design was

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131   The AGI has often been perceived as a somewhat élitist and self-centred 'old boys' club'. Membership criteria are quite rigid and questionable: once they have attained an international reputation, prospective members must be invited and vetted by current members who can theoretically deny access to candidates only for personal reasons. Yet, in the last two decades, the association has begun adopting a more open approach especially toward young designers, women and designers from outside Europe and North America. On AGI, see: *AGI*, ed. by Bos; F. H. K. Henrion, *AGI Annals* (Zürich: Alliance Graphique Internationale, 1989); *Essays on Design 1: AGI's Designers of Influence*, ed. by Robyn Marsack (London: Booth-Clibborn Editions, 1997). For recent views on AGI, see: Linda Know, 'The Accessible Elite', *Eye Magazine*, (Autumn 2013), http://eyemagazine.com/feature/article/the-accessible-elite [accessed 12 August 2016]; Jan Middendorp, 'What Makes Designers Tick', *Eye Magazine*, (2010), http://eyemagazine.com/review/article/what-makes-designers-tick [accessed 12 August 2016]; 'No Pressure: A Glimpse at the Ethos Behind Alliance Graphique Internationale and the Upcoming AGI Open London 2013', *Eye Magazine*, blog entry, 15 April 2013, http://eyemagazine.com/blog/post/no-pressure [accessed 12 August 2016].

132   Italian but London-based graphic designer Germano Facetti, a former student of the Convitto Scuola Rinascita in Rome and Milan, was admitted in 1964 and elected AGI president three years later (1967-69). For the list of AGI members including dates of admission, see: *AGI*, ed. by Bos; Henrion, *AGI Annals*, p. 299.

133   'Codice dell'A.G.I.', 1957, archival document, AALS, Db. 14 fasc. 7.

a 'budding specialism', a vague concept that suffered from a lack of clarity, whereas 'the true profession [...] still had to wait a while to be invented'.[134] Taking part in the gradual 'invention' of the graphic design profession, the AGI slowly but steadily distanced itself from advertising and furthered the diversification of graphic design output.

The poster was the dominant medium at the first exhibition organised by the AGI in 1955 at the Louvre in Paris. The exhibition stressed advertising by its very title: 'Art et Publicité dans le Monde' (Worldwide Art and Publicity).[135] Reviews of the exhibition in Italian specialist publications included enthusiastic comments celebrating the 'place of honour' occupied by Italian graphics, besides colder reactions.[136] Steiner, whose work was exhibited, took the occasion to criticise the denial of the 'lively and universal social function' of the graphic design profession within the Italian context.[137] In 1961, the AGI organised its fourth annual exhibition in Milan at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna (see Illustration **5.13**).[138] Notwithstanding the title – 'Grafica e Pubblicità nel Mondo' (Worldwide Graphics and Advertising) – the exhibition presented exemplars of visual output that stressed informative over persuasive messages, and focused on design coordination programmes rather than individual posters. The following exhibition in 1962 was a turning point in the AGI's agenda. Held at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the exhibition illustrated the way in which graphic design was deeply ingrained in everyday life. As suggested by the witty title 'Graphic Design for the Community: Print Around the Clock', the exhibition featured printed materials encountered during an ordinary 24-hour day, such as beer labels, soap packaging, trademarks, and movie posters. Steiner's review of the exhibition in *Linea Grafica* featured excerpts from

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134   *AGI*, ed. by Bos, pp. 9-10.

135   On a similar note, the second exhibition (London, 1956) was entitled 'AGI Design in Advertising' confirming an earlier emphasis on commercial visual output that favoured posters over other types of printed materials. See: 'La Mostra della AGI a Londra', *Stile Industria*, 3 (8), October 1956, p. 22.

136   '[...] posto d'onore'. 'La Prima Mostra al Louvre dell'AGI con 70 Espositori: un Posto d'Onore all'Italia', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 9 (4), April 1955, p. 2.

137   '[...] funzione sociale, viva e universale'. Albe Steiner, 'Recensioni e Segnalazioni', *Linea Grafica*, 7 (5-6), May-June 1955, p. 154. On the reception of the Italian graphic design community, see also: Libero Bigiaretti, 'Pubblicità al Louvre', *Stile Industria*, 2 (5), pp. 35-36.

138   See: Giovanni Giudici, 'La Mostra dell'A.G.I. a Milano', *Linea Grafica*, 16 (7-8), July-August 1961, pp. 231-38.

Veduta parziale della Mostra AGI - Milano 1961.

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Mostra industria (Inghilterra).

Pannello di Lester Beall (U.S.A.).

Pannello di Albe Steiner (Italia).

Pannello di Pierre Boucher (Francia).

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b

5.13 AGI exhibition 'Grafica e Pubblicità nel Mondo' held at the Galleria d'Arte Moderna (Milan) from the 12th to the 30th of June 1961, illustration featured in Giovanni Giudici, 'La Mostra dell'A.G.I. a Milano', *Linea Grafica*, 16 (7-8), July-August 1961: **.a** installation shot; **.b** (clockwise) panels of British industries, Albe Steiner, Pierre Boucher (France), and Lester Beall (USA)

the catalogue, while the magazine cover reinterpreted the AGI motif designed by Henrion on the occasion of the London exhibition in 1956 (see Illustration **5.14**).[139]

The AGI annual congresses during the first half of the 1960s further demonstrated the move away from advertising and the adoption of a systematic approach to visual communication. In 1960 – a year before the founding of the ADI graphic design division in May, 1961 – the AGI members met in St-Germain-en-Laye for two days of debate around the question 'whether [graphic designers] should be equated with the free artist or with the scientist, who is entrusted with finding the solution for a given problem'.[140] In his presentation, Henrion called for graphic designers to explore all media of mass communication. He described the graphic designers 'as an intermediary, a conveyor of information, who should in a very professional and competent way pass information on to the receiving masses'.[141] Henrion argued that it was more important to be 'anonymous but extremely professional and competent in the use of the visual syntax' than developing a very personal style concerned with aesthetics for its own sake.[142] Four years later at the 1964 AGI congress in Alpbach, the Italian but London-based graphic designer Germano Facetti declared that visual communication had nothing to do with self-expression, persuasion and sale but rather was concerned with technology and information theory. The graphic designer's task had changed and now entailed 'visually expressing facts and making them as comprehensible as possible'.[143] In line with contemporary debates, Facetti presented an alternative view of the purpose of graphic design, thereby setting new tasks, priorities and professional standards. Artistic talent and creativity were no longer enough and graphic designers needed to adopt a problem-solving approach to visual communication and learn new methods of research and analysis that would allow them to attain consistent long-term planning.

139   See: Albe Steiner, 'Allo Stedelijk Museum di Amsterdam l'Esposizione dell'AGI', *Linea Grafica*, 17 (11-12), November-December 1962, pp. 364-73.
140   Fritz Bühler (AGI President), quoted in Henrion, *AGI Annals*, p. 102.
141   F. H. K. Henrion, quoted in Henrion, *AGI Annals*, p. 103.
142   F. H. K. Henrion, quoted in Henrion, *AGI Annals*, p. 103.
143   Germano Facetti, quoted in *AGI*, ed. by Bos, p. 121. On the Alpbach congress, see also: Henrion, *AGI Annals*, pp. 111-19.
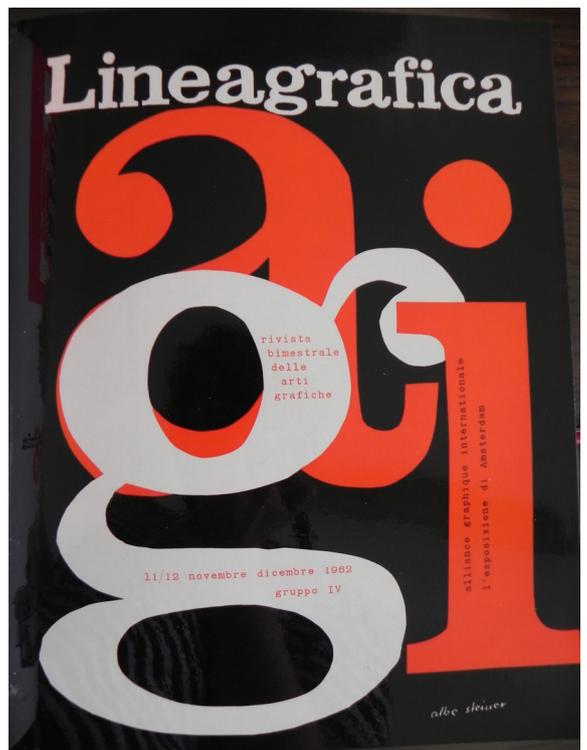
a

b

5.14 AGI exhibition 'Graphic Design for the Community: Print Around the Clock' held at the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam) from the 17th of November 1962 to the 3rd of January 1963: **.a** Albe Steiner, cover design; **.b** excerpts of the exhibition catalogue, *Linea Grafica*, 17 (11-12), November-December 1962

Whereas the AGI reunited leading individual graphic designers, graphic design associations – the AGI included – clustered around ICOGRADA.[144] Founded in April 1963 on the initiative of two members of Society of Industrial Artists (SIA) the illustrator Peter Kneebone and the graphic designer Willy de Majo, ICOGRADA was intended as the graphic design equivalent of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, ICSID.[145] According to co-founder and first secretary Kneebone, the early-1960s were 'exactly the right moment in the history of [the] profession and of its needs, [when] "commercial artists" discovered that they were really "graphic designers"'.[146] Recalling the first two decades of ICOGRADA, he observed that moving away from commercial art towards graphic design was not 'simply a matter of redesigning the label'.[147] On the contrary, it was the outcome of the profession's growing awareness of its own identity and responsibilities. While design education and professional associations were developing, graphic designers were facing more and more complex social issues and technological challenges. It was thus a time when a 'lack of international dialogue could not be afforded'.[148]

The first decade of ICOGRADA reflects the so-far investigated layout of the graphic design profession – from advertising to visual communication – within the local and transnational context. Point 7 of the statute of ICOGRADA recognised officially the social purposes and moral responsibilities of the profession. It declared the promotion of a 'better use of graphic design as a means to improve understanding between people everywhere' as one of the aims of the association.[149] Whereas the participants to the first congress (Zurich, September 1964) were yet again addressing the evergreen theme 'Commercial Artist or Graphic Designer', they doubtless defined themselves as 'graphic designers' two years later at the congress in Bled, Slovenia. However, 'just by calling ourselves a different name', observed Henrion in his presentation, 'we do not perform differently'.[150] Graphic

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144   The AGI was one of ICOGRADA's founding members. On ICOGRADA, see: *Graphic Design World Views: A Celebration of Icograda's 25th Anniversary*, ed. by Jorke Frascara (Japan: Hpdansha, 1990); *Icograda: The First Five Years* (London: Wynkynde Worde Society, 1968). On ICOGRADA official mouthpiece, *Icographic* (1971-79), see: Crowley, 'Design Magazines and Design Culture', in *Communicate*, ed. by Poynor, pp. 188-89.

145   See: *Graphic Design World Views*, ed. by Frascara, p. 12.

146   Peter Kneebone, '1963-1988 in ICOGRADA', in *Graphic Design World Views*, ed. by Frascara, p. 13.

147   Kneebone, in *Graphic Design World Views*, ed. by Frascara, p. 13.

148   Kneebone, in *Graphic Design World Views*, ed. by Frascara, p. 13.

149   *Icograda: The First Five Years*, p. 6.

150   F. H. K. Henrion, 'Graphic Design and Visual Communication Technology', in 2nd *General Assembly and Congress Icograda – International Council of Graphic Design Associations*, conference proceedings, 1966.

design was no longer a matter of creative ability and imagination alone, but rather a matter of research, methodology, information handling, understanding the recipient, long-term planning, coordination, and technology. In contrast to the commercial artist, the graphic designer was a problem solver in the field of visual communication and was expected to have an analytic approach to understanding communication issues and adopt a methodological process in solving them.

While members of the ADI graphic design division contributed the international graphic design discourse through their AGI membership, the AIAP was among the twenty-four graphic design associations from eighteen different countries that subscribed to ICOGRADA since the very first meeting in London in April 1963.[151] Representatives of the association took part in congresses and general assemblies, with updates on ICOGRADA featuring in the association's house magazine. The Norwegian graphic designer and president of ICOGRADA, Knut Yran, visited AIAP in November 1966 and was celebrated, by tradition, with a dinner at the Taverna della Giarrettiera in Milan.[152] The ADI, by contrast, did not join ICOGRADA until 1985.[153] The late subscription can be explained with the so-perceived different professional fields, interests and agendas between the ADI and ICOGRADA: a professional body officially representing industrial designers, but also including graphic designers among its membership; and an international association of graphic design organisations, respectively.[154] Graphic designers in the ADI were nevertheless represented in ICOGRADA either because of their AGI membership or because they were also members of the AIAP, or both as was the case with Grignani and Tovaglia.

Evidences provided so far suggest that the setting up of the ADI graphic design division in 1962 can be read as the outcome of its members' involvement in the articulation of a different approach to graphic design. Meanwhile, the impact of graphic designers' attempt to be emancipated from advertising, the diversification of the visual output and the articulation of new thinking in visual communication was also felt within the AIAP. Indeed, the association changed its name in 1964 and

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151   'AIAP: Assemblea Generale dei Soci', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 17 (5), May 1965, p. 30.

152   See: 'Il 2° Congresso Icograda a Bled, nel Luglio 1966', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 19 (12), December 1965, p. 9; 'AIAP: Il Presidente dell'Icograda in Visita all'AIAP', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 20 (12), p. 24.

153   See: De Fusco, *Una Storia dell'ADI*, p. 304.

154   The ADI was among the founding members of ICSID (1956) and the Bureau of European Design Associations, BEDA (1969). See: De Fusco, *Una Storia dell'ADI*, p. 304.

was retitled Associazione Italiana Artisti e Grafici Pubblicitari (Italian Association of Advertising Artists and Graphics), but kept the acronym AIAP.[155] Commenting on SIA's name changes over the years, design historian Jonathan M. Woodham observed that the use of changeable terms – e.g. advertising artists, commercial artists or graphic designers – 'can lend insights into the changing politics of professional validation'.[156] Although the term 'advertising' was still prominent, the addition of the term 'graphics' suggests the association's changing of direction. I would argue that the conjunction 'e' (and) is as important as the addition of the term 'grafici'. Indeed, AIAP members had chosen between Associazione Italiana *Artisti Grafici* Pubblicitari (Italian Association of Advertising Graphic Artists) and Associazione Italiana *Artisti e Grafici* Pubblicitari.[157] By adding the conjunction, the term 'grafici' turns from adjective that qualifies the noun 'artisti' into a noun itself that stands for a different profession with its own tasks, purpose, methodologies and approaches to visual communication that differ from those of the advertising artist.[158]

The changing attitude of the AIAP towards the graphic design profession is also suggested by a 1967 exhibition. In November 1967, the AIAP organised two exhibitions in central London in collaboration with the Designers and Art

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155   See: 'AIAP: Convocazione Assemblea', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 18 (4), April 1964, pp. 30-31; 'AIAP: Le Nuove Cariche Sociali', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 18 (6), June 1964, pp. 23-24; 'AIAP: Referendum', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 18 (10), October 1964, p.27; 'AIAP: La Nuova Denominazione dell'Associazione', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 18 (12), December 1964, p. 25.

156   Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design*, p. 167.

157   'AIAP: La Nuova Denominazione dell'Associazione', *La Pubblicità: Bollettino Mensile della FIP e Associazioni Aderenti*, 18 (12), December 1964, p. 25.

158   Over the years, the AIAP has changed its name at different times before acquiring the current name Associazione Italiana Design della Comunicazione Visiva (Italian Association of Visual Communication Design) in 2012. It was retitled Associazione Italiana Creativi della Comunicazione Visiva (Italian Association of Visual Communication Creatives) in 1980 – where the word 'creative' was still closer to art-related creativity than to design-lead methodology – and Associazione Italiana Progettazione per la Comunicazione Visiva (Italian Association of Visual Communication Design) in 1993. Grazzani and Guida, *AIAP 70x70*, p. 12. This uncertainty of connotation of terms is by no means unique to Italy. A very similar pattern can be found in England with the SIA, the Society of Industrial Artists. Founded in 1930, the society was renamed the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers (SIAD) in 1965 and then it dropped completely the artistry connotation and acquired the name Chartered Society of Designers (CSD) in 1976. ICOGRADA itself was retitled International Council of Communication Design in 2011, and is currently known under the acronym ico-D, International Council of Design. On the SIA, see: Armstrong, 'Steering a Course Between Professionalism and Commercialism, *Journal of Design History*, 29 (2) (2016), pp. 161-79; Woodham, *Twentieth Century Design*, p. 167.

Directors Association (D&AD).[159] Entitled 'Yesterday's Italian Posters' and 'Today's Italian Publicity and Graphic Design', the exhibitions are evidence of the association's move away from 'yesterday's' focus on poster art towards 'today's' research into the multiplicity of visual design output. Grigani's poster for the exhibition features a geometric graphic composition that includes a typographic element – set in Helvetica – and an abstract visual element, which illustrate the graphic designer's research on optical distortion (see Illustration **5.15**).[160] The white background is activated and brought to the fore creating a three-dimensional distortion of the flat surface, while the stripy ribbon conceals the Italian tricolour – green, white and red – flag. The Italian tricolour comes to the fore on the cover of the special issue of the AIAP house organ *Poliedro* devoted to the London exhibition (see Illustration **5.16.a**). The installation shot in the background shows the juxtaposition of four posters that created a sort of curtain, inviting visitors to enter into the exhibition space. This included a sequence of 70 x 100 cm panels arranged in a grid-like structure, and featured the works of about ninety advertising artists and graphic designers (see Illustration **5.16.b**).

A closer look at the participants in the exhibition 'Today's Italian Publicity and Graphic Design' enables to problematise further the relationship between the AIAP and members of the ADI graphic design division. Although eligibility criteria restricted participation to AIAP members only, organisers decided to make an exception and invite a number of non-members. In his review, Benca (Carlo Benedetti) explained that not all Italian graphics were members of the AIAP: 'they are actually just a few', he observed, 'and it is a shame that laziness, misinterpreted bohemian individualism or misunderstanding of the spirit of the association's

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159   The exhibition was held at Reed House, 82 Piccadilly Circus, from the 3rd to the 24th of November 1967. It had the patronage of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Trade and Chamber of Commerce. It later moved to Manchester and was installed at the Salford Technology College. See: *Poliedro: Bollettino dell'AIAP*, 5, January-April 1968; Benca (Carlo Benedetti), 'Gli Artisti Grafici Italiani AIAP a Londra: una Manifestazione di Prestigio per la Grafica Italiana che ha Avuto una Appendice anche a Manchester', *Linea Grafica*, 19 (6), November-December 1967, pp. 401-02; 'Notiziario. Londra: Mostra di Grafica Pubblicitaria Italiana', *Bollettino del Centro Studi Grafici*, 21 (227), November 1967.

160   On Franco Grignani, see: *Franco Grignani: una Metodologia della Visione* (Milan: Antonio Cordari, 1975); *Franco Grignani: Alterazioni Ottico Mentali*, ed. by Franco Guerra and Cristina Quadrio Curzio (Milan: Credito Valtellinese, 2014).

Today's
Italian
Publicity
and
Graphic
Design

from
november
3rd to 24th
1967

Reed House   82 Piccadilly Circus   London W.1

5.15   Franco Grignani, poster for the AIAP exhibition 'Today's Italian Publicity and Graphic
Design' held at the Reed House (London) from the 3rd to the 24th of November 1967,
50 × 70 cm

a
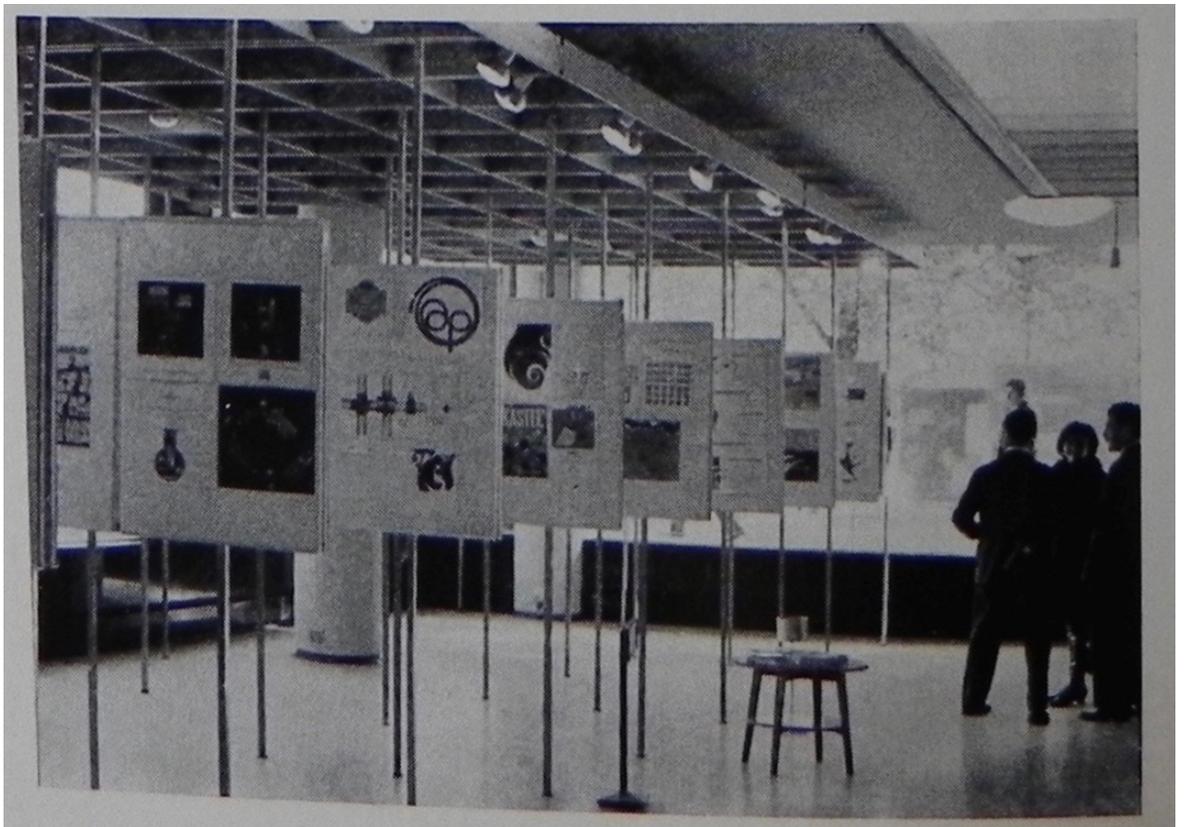
b

5.16   *Poliedro*, 5, January-April 1968: **.a** cover by Gino Sironi and photograph by Lelo Cremonesi; **.b** installation shot

statute' prevented otherwise qualified graphics from joining the AIAP.[161] Ciuti, Iliprandi, Muratore, Negri, Re and Steiner were among the non-members included at the London exhibition.[162] Together with AIAP members Bonini, Carboni, Grignani, Pintori and Tovaglia, they were representatives of the ADI graphic design division, but their membership was not acknowledged on the exhibition catalogue. The exception to the rule was described as 'evidence of [the AIAP's] generosity and maturity, [...] a kind demonstration of open-mindedness and equilibrium [...]. On the occasion of presenting abroad an entire professional category, the AIAP proved to be aware of its official national duties'.[163] The quote suggests that the AIAP decided to include non-members for the profession's sake in order to present abroad the best of Italian graphic design. By including ADI members, the exhibition could indeed count on several AGI members who demonstrated both international renown and the networks of the Italian graphic design community. Thus, their inclusion was also most likely beneficial to the promotion of Italian graphic design to new clients. On the other hand, by submitting their work to the exhibition, ADI graphic designers appeared to have overcome, at least for that particular occasion, their scepticism towards the AIAP's still close relationship with advertising. Yet, it is difficult to tell whether this temporary alliance between the two associations depended on ADI graphic designers' personal interest in being exhibited abroad and/or because they recognised that it might be beneficial for the professionalisation of graphic design in Italy and for its international acclaim.

Besides speculation, the London exhibition suggests that there was margin for negotiation between the two associations for the sake of their mutual goal: the professionalisation of graphic design in Italy and its promotion to potential clients.

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161   'Sono pochi per la verità ed è un peccato che la pigrizia, un malinteso individualismo bohémien o la errata interpretazione dello spirito dello Statuto associativo [...]'. Benca (Carlo Benedetti), 'La Migliore Pubblicità Potrebbe Essere Italiana', *Poliedro: Bollettino dell'AIAP*, 5, January-April 1968, unpaged.

162   For the list of participant to the exhibition 'Today's Italian Publicity and Graphic Design', see: *Poliedro: Bollettino dell'AIAP*, 5, January-April 1968, unpaged.

163   '[...] prova della sua generosità e maturità, [...] simpatica dimostrazione di apertura mentale e di equilibrio [...]. L'AIAP nell'occasione di presentare all'estero una intera categoria professionale ha dimostrato di avvertire i suoi doveri nazionali di ufficialità'. Benca, *Poliedro: Bollettino dell'AIAP*, 5, January-April 1968, unpaged.

The long-lasting struggle for graphic designers to be officially recognised is implied in the continuous calling into question of their professional identity and industrial role. For instance, the question as to whether graphic design is or is not part of design was yet again left unsolved at the end of a roundtable organised by *Linea Grafica* in collaboration with the ADI in the summer of 1969.[164] Graphic designers were declared 'affected by some kind of inferiority complex', whereas it was suggested that 'design, if not the designers themselves, suffer[ed] maybe from another kind of illness: the mythomania'.[165] Participants to the roundtable acknowledged the growing international awareness of the role of visual communication in contemporary societies, and declared that the issue at stake was not to decide once and for all whether graphic design belonged to the design domain or not, but rather whether the ADI was willing to accept graphic designers as equals with industrial designers. If this was not the case, then, it was not a problem for the graphic design profession as a whole, but it was rather 'a problem for those graphic designers who wanted to stay in the ADI'![166]

The anecdote exemplifies graphic designers' problematic sense of identity, both in relation to the profession's internal definitions, and its perceived inferior status with regard to industrial design. As I illustrated in this chapter, the position of the graphic design profession in postwar Italy was ambiguous and uncertain, holding a footing in both camps of advertising and design. Ambiguity and uncertainty are indicated by the many graphic designers that were, and sometimes still are, members of both the AIAP and the ADI, in contrast to those who considered the two associations incompatible since they were representative of two so-perceived completely different professions, one closer to advertising and the other rooted in design methodologies and at the service of communication.

In this chapter, I stressed the constant process of redefining the graphic designers' professional identity, negotiating professional tasks and purposes and clarifying vocabulary ambiguities. The focus on the ADI graphic design division

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164   Fabio Mataloni, 'Immagine Aziendale e Disegno Coordinato', *Linea Grafica*, 21 (4), July-August 1969, pp. 267-72.

165   '[…] affetti da una specie di complesso di inferiorità. […] forse il disegno, se non proprio i designer, è affetto da un'altra malattia: la mitomania'. Mataloni, *Linea Grafica*, 21 (4), July-August 1969, pp. 271-72.

166   '[…] il problema è dei grafici che vogliono restare in ADI'. Mataloni, *Linea Grafica*, 21 (4), July-August 1969, p. 272.

evidenced the way in which graphic designers capitalised on their membership and used the association as a platform for claiming a professional status and access to the design domain as industrial designers' partners. I demonstrated that Milan's graphic designers were aware of and took part in the international articulation of new thinking in visual communication and that the pattern of graphic design professionalisation in Italy reflects the wider debate within the international design community. I also demonstrated that by the end of the 1960s the professional status of graphic designers was still precarious as suggested by graphic designers' need to reaffirm over and over again their belonging to the design domain.

Conclusion

This thesis opened with the 'birth certificate' of Italian graphic design. Graphic design was born in Milan in 1933; was it not? The year 1933 doubtlessly is a crucial date in the history of Italian graphic design. The temporal and geographical convergence of multiple factors – Paul Renner curating the German Pavilion at the 5th Triennale, Antonio Boggeri opening his studio and hiring Xanti Schawinsky, and the campisti launching the first issue of *Campo Grafico* – suggests that the time was ripe for change. Nevertheless, as the previous five chapters have demonstrated, the 'birth' of Italian graphic design obviously did not happen overnight. It was rooted, as seen in Chapters 1, 2 and 3, in the tradition of Italian typography, poster art and the futurist typographic revolution, and enriched by the crossover between graphics and the abstract-rationalist movement in fine arts and architecture. It was, moreover, a long and uneven process that, as shown in Chapters 4 and 5, bridged the war years and never found a definite and uncontested outcome.

As the first large scale study on the professionalisation of graphic design in Italy, this thesis rethinks the existing history of Italian graphic design. By framing the articulation of the graphic design profession within the emergence of a design discourse in Italy, it also contributes to scholarship on Italian design more broadly. Moreover, it offers a framework for the analysis of design professions.

The thesis suggests that an emphasis on local networks, a close reading of primary sources, and a focus on design professionalisation, education and mediation may offer some means of reframing existing scholarship on modernism. In doing so, it makes further contribution to the history of design at large.

Furthermore, the thesis makes a methodological contribution through its argument for how to work with primary sources. In particular, it calls for a close analysis of primary literature, archival documents and visual material as key means for overturning familiar narratives, for bringing to the fore the voices of the protagonists and minor figures, and for articulating a multi-layered narrative.

Finally, by combining the previous three contributions, this thesis calls for an outward-looking and integrative approach to graphic design history and proposes a template for it.

In the 1960s, Milan's graphic designers were still having discussions among themselves about their practice. They were still struggling to be officially recognised by the design community and society at large. They were also as uncertain as before about which was the most appropriate term to define both their discipline and profession. These facts confirm the very premises on which the argument of this thesis was developed: professionalisation is an ongoing process of becoming, and professions are in a constant state of formation and under continuous renegotiation. Demonstrating this process through close attention to evidence is one of the contribution of this thesis.

Drawing attention to design education and practices, professional networks and mediation devices, this thesis provides a working basis on which to build a more comprehensive picture of the professional status of the graphic designer. In Chapters 2 and 5, I have explored the profession's relational nature. The focus on inter-professional relationships has put graphic designers at the core of a dynamic and multidirectional network of interrelated professions. I have demonstrated that the constant changing of the meaning of graphic design was the outcome of a conflict of interest between different professional groups and of the resulting loosening or tightening of networks between graphic designers and the advertising field, on the one hand, or the design scene, on the other.

By approaching professions as socially constructed and historically produced concepts, I have considered the social, economic, cultural and political background behind the emergence of the new professional figure. The focus on mediating channels, in general throughout the thesis and in particular in Chapter 3, has highlighted the strategies employed by graphic designers to establish the socio-economic and symbolic value of their profession. In Chapters 1 and 4, the stress on the mutual shaping between education and practice has identified education as a key actor of professionalisation. The thesis has also addressed graphic designers' pragmatic and/or ideological position in relation to the Fascist regime and investigated the re-negotiation of their professional identity in the post-war period.

II. UNPACKING MODERNISM

My account of the professionalisation of graphic design in Milan from the 1930s to the 1960s is intertwined with the spread of international modernism in Italy. In

an attempt to complicate what design historian D. J. Huppatz has described as 'design history's myopic focus on modernist design', I have adopted strategies and methodologies drawn from material history and visual culture studies, and used network theory as a theoretical framework.[1] These have revealed a wider picture by drawing attention to the process and taking into account local specificities.

First, the focus on local networks and power relations enabled me to investigate the dissemination of modernism as a multidirectional movement. In doing so, I have contributed to recent attempts by scholars of the history of design to overcome a concentric model of dissemination that disregards pre-existing stances, and overlooks mediation and adaptation processes.[2] I have traced connections, indicated dissemination agents and problematised the adoption and adaptation of modernism as both a formal and conceptual shift in the realm of design. For instance, in Chapter 1 and 4 I employed the Scuola del Libro in Milan as a case study to advance understanding of design pedagogy in Italy and its intersection with the gradual shift in graphic design practice. My study has rooted the school in the lineage of Italian typographic tradition as well as aligned its ethos with the pre-existing social agenda of the Società Umanitaria. I have then positioned it at the centre of a debate over the interwar modernisation of Italian graphics. Tracing the movement and agency of individual actors, I have mapped out the mediation of international models of design pedagogy and their adaptation to the Milanese context. At the Scuola del Libro, this was the case with émigré graphic designers trained in Switzerland, Albe Steiner's personal relationship with former Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer, Michele Provinciali's experience as a student at the Institute of Design in Chicago, and the circulation of the ideas about design pedagogy and practice formulated at the HfG in Ulm through magazines, international conferences and design associations.

Instead of looking at modernism as a one-way movement based on the old-fashioned concept of 'influence', I have analysed it as a subject of heated debate among practitioners and critics, thereby highlighting strategies of negotiation and resistance. In Chapter 1, the analysis of the conflict between *Risorgimento Grafico* and *Campo Grafico* has framed the circulation of modernist aesthetics in interwar Milan within a clear-cut clash between a traditionalist approach to

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D. J. Huppatz, 'Globalizing Design History and Global Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 28 (2) (2015), p. 193.

Huppatz, 'Globalizing Design History and Global Design History', *Journal of Design History*, 28 (2) (2015), pp. 191-93.

typography and book design, and a new approach to graphics in line with the 'modern taste'. By contrast, in Chapter 3 I have nuanced this dichotomy. Raffaello Bertieri's visual review of the 1932 Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista and Guido Modiano's Mostra Grafica at the 7th Triennale in 1940 have provided evidence for negotiation and compromise stances, and suggested graphic practitioners' awareness of strengths and weaknesses of modernist vocabulary.

Second, I have questioned the relationship between modernism and professionalisation. I have pointed out how the attention of modernist graphics to everyday printed material found fertile ground in interwar Italy. Indeed, it supported graphic practitioners' advocacy for a more comprehensive perspective on graphics beyond poster art and book design that favoured a temporary alliance between the graphic and advertising sectors. Conversely, I have shown that the articulation of a new thinking in visual communication in the postwar period distanced graphic design from advertising and moved the focus towards problem-solving, thereby favouring design methods and communication systems over one-off interventions and subjectivity. I have argued that graphic designers used the 'good taste' discourse to demand legitimation for their professional status. Furthermore, I have suggested that modernism enabled graphic designers to promote a different public image for their profession as an integral part of the industrial process and partner with industrial designers. Thus, in addition to addressing modernism as a purely design ideology, I have contextualised it within the socio-economic, cultural and political environment, and approached it as a strategic element within the power struggle between different interest groups with conflicting agendas.

Third, I have problematised the connotative potential of modernist visual vocabulary through visual analysis of graphic artefacts as part of the historical and political setting. To this end, my analysis has taken into consideration the intended use and the patronage within the changing political, cultural and economic context of Italian history from the 1930s to the 1960s. I have illustrated how modernism was often used in ways that cast doubt on the alleged social stance associated with it and reveal, by contrast, its problematic malleability. The use of modernist visual language and techniques by the Fascist regime arguably is the most obvious example. On the other hand, this thesis has argued that designers more or less consciously capitalised on the connotative meaning of certain modernist tropes – e.g. the enlarged dots of the halftone screen and the lowercase sans-serif – in order to articulate their public image and position their practice at the

forefront of the graphic design scene. In developing my argument on the strategic use of modernism for promotional and branding purposes, I did not solely take into account the intentions of the designers or the properties of the visual artefacts, but also considered how contemporaries might have perceived them. This was, for instance, the case with Boggeri who, by advertising his studio in design and architecture magazines, targeted a specific kind of audience, which was more than likely to respond to the connotative meaning of the advertisements, being familiar with the modernist discourse.

III. THE 'IMPORTANCE' OF INVERTED COMMAS

Throughout this thesis, the close reading of primary sources – be they archival documents, magazines or visual artefacts – has enabled me to look afresh at familiar accounts, verify or overturn taken-for-granted histories, add valuable details and different perspectives, and articulate a multifaceted narrative about graphic design and graphic designers in Milan. To provide evidence for my argument, I have drawn attention to the detail: to the small mark preceding Antonio Boggeri's signature that turns this into a logo and demonstrates Boggeri's embodiment of the Studio's corporate identity; or the conjunction 'e' (and) in the renaming of the AIAP (Associazione Italiana Artisti *e* Grafici Pubblicitari – Italian Association of Advertising Artists *and* Graphics) in 1964 that establishes a clear-cut distinction between the advertising artists and the graphic designers.

Instead of writing an artificially unified and design celebrities-centred narrative, I focussed on a multitude of individual voices – e.g. individual graphic designers and critics, but also specialist magazines and associations – and considered their place within the changing professional scene, design practice, turbulent political context, cultural and economic environment of Italian history in this period. Articles in specialist magazines and archival documents, in particular correspondence and meetings minutes, have enable me to voice contemporaries' concerns. They have given evidence of the growing self-confidence of the fledgling profession, and attested to the strategies of professionalisation employed by graphic designers over the years, from the Italian Fascism to the 'economic miracle'. I have stressed tensions and contradictions, often directly quoting from primary sources. In doing so, I have retraced discussions and identified protagonists – e.g. Raffaello Bertieri, Guido Modiano and the campisti in interwar Italy, and Albe Steiner, Max Huber and Alberto Rosselli in the postwar period – and minor figures – such as the

contributors to specialist periodicals, Enrico Bona, Ezio D'Errico and Dino Villani – who took part in the articulation of the graphic design discourse over a period of about thirty years. The continuous zooming-in and out has demonstrated that professionalisation was the unstable outcome of a dialogic process, rather than a linear evolution.

I have then drawn attention to the language itself. By thoroughly problematising the terminology every time I incurred a semantic shift, I have turned the problematic, incongruent vocabulary, which had initially placed myself at an impasse of not knowing how to indicate the very subject of my thesis, into a key to unlock the changes of the meaning of graphic design. As I discussed in the Introduction and demonstrated multiple times in the previous chapters, semantic shifts are not accidental, but symptoms of the changing definition of graphic design. In some cases, as with the members of the ADI graphic design division having discussions about the most appropriate term to call themselves in Chapter 5, specialist vocabulary was addressed directly. However, most of the time, semantic shifts were manifested indirectly by the appearance of new terms and the dying out of outdated ones. The persistence of terms such as 'advertising' and 'artist' betrayed the profession's background. It is evidence of the long-term disagreement amongst the members of the profession. It testifies to its difficulties to gain independence.

Sometimes, meaning was hidden in the details: in the use of the English vocabulary instead of the Italian equivalent, or in the enclosing of a word between inverted commas. For instance, this was the case with the use of the word 'graphic designer' in English in the 1960 outline of the course for graphic design assistants at the Scuola del Libro in Milan, which suggests that the term had acquired a shared meaning in which both the Milan's graphic designers and the international graphic design community recognised themselves; or with Boggeri's use of the inverted commas to enclose the word 'grafico' in his early-1940s correspondence with Max Huber that also implies a shared understanding of the specificities of the professional figure. These details might easily pass unnoticed, but are instead meaningful and, like a slip of the tongue, reveal secondary readings and connotative meanings that have been disentangled in the previous chapters.

IV. TOWARDS AN OUTWARD-LOOKING GRAPHIC DESIGN HISTORY

As graphic design historian Teal Triggs recently stated, 'the history of graphic design is more than a history of graphic objects; it is also a history of narratives

formulated around process, production, social interaction, and discourse'.[3] What is required to open the discipline to and engage a wider audience is a critical approach and historical analysis that goes beyond the largely affirmative and self-celebratory tendency of histories from within the field. The example set by graphic design historians before me – such as Jeremy Aynsley, Carlo Vinti and Triggs herself – has informed my understanding of graphic design as an agent of social and political change, which holds a crucial role within the cultural and economic fabric of a society.

My contribution to graphic design history and design history at large is three-fold. First, this thesis has attempted to overcome the inward-looking attitude of most of the previous literature. Second, it has called for graphics' equal position with other narratives – first and foremost with product design – within the history of Italian design and challenged the bias in the historiography. Third, and as a result of the previous two, it makes a methodological contribution through the articulation of a model for the writing of graphic design history and a template for a graphic design-based approach the study of design in Italy as elsewhere.

The thesis provides an interdisciplinary framework that neither explores graphic design as a mere intermediary, nor understands it as isolated from external forces, but rather takes into account its social significance and cultural function. In doing so, it has shown the potential of using graphic design as a starting point to think about broader research questions – such as design education and practice, designers' social responsibility, professionalisation processes and mediation strategies – and hopefully speak to a wider public. Therefore, this thesis proposes a model for an outward-looking graphic design history and a fertile terrain on which to start building a more accurate picture that considers graphic design as an integral part of the history of design in Italy.

V. CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE AND NEXT STEPS

From the 1960s onwards, graphic designers have carried on, and will continue, adapting their practice and negotiating their professional identity to respond to changing social, economic and cultural contexts, shifting design agendas and discourses, and evolving technologies. Despite the changing, shifting and evolving

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3   Teal Triggs, 'Curating Graphic Design and its History', in *Mapping Graphic Design in Switzerland*, ed. by Davide Fornari and Robert Lzicar (Zurich: Triest Verlag, 2016), pp. 18-44.

contexts, the graphic design profession seems to be facing similar concerns some fifty years later.

The definition of graphic design has radically changed since desktop publishing software made its public appearance in the 1980s.[4] 'At a time when anyone can be a graphic designer', Adrian Shaughnessy observed in the second edition of *How to be a Graphic Designer Without Losing Your Soul* (2010), suggesting that the profession is still struggling with a technological change that has undermined the jurisdictional boundaries between professionals and amateurs, 'designers are being forced to ask themselves two fundamental questions: what is our role in modern culture, and what is graphic design in the age of screen-based communications?'.[5] The difficult balance between the cultural and aesthetic value of graphic design and 'the mere trumpeting of commercial messages' has continued to be something graphic designers have trouble coming to terms with.[6] In the 1990s, for instance, the notion of design authorship questioned the designer-client relationship and advanced a different approach to graphic design as a self-initiated practice charged with ethical concerns and political-cultural aims, independent from a client's commission.[7]

Vocabulary, moreover, is as contested a space as it was during the period explored in this thesis, as demonstrated by ICOGRADA's decision at the 2007 General Assembly in Havana to replace 'graphic design' with the so-considerate more appropriate term 'communication design', and the consequent renaming of the international association in 2011, changing from International Council of Graphic Design Associations to International Council of Communication Design.[8]

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4 On the impact of new technologies on the graphic design profession, see for example: Ellen Lupton, 'The D.I.Y Debate', 24 January 2006, online article, www.aiga.org/the-diy-debate [accessed 31 January 2017]. See also: Ellen Lupton, *D.I.Y.: Design It Yourself* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006); Paul Atkinson, 'Boundaries? What Boundaries? The Crisis of Design in a Post-Professional Era', *The Design Journal*, 13 (2) (2010), pp. 143-44; Gerry Beegan and Paul Atkinson, 'Professionalism, Amateurism and the Boundaries of Design', *Journal of Design History*, 21 (4) (2008), pp. 306-07.

5 Adrian Shaughnessy, *How to be a Graphic Designer Without Losing Your Soul*, 2nd edn (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2010), p. 98.

6 Shaughnessy, *How to be a Graphic Designer*, p. 12.

7 On design authorship, see: Steven MacCarthy, 'Designer-Authored Histories: Graphic Design at the Golstein Museum of Design', *Design Issues*, 27 (1) (2011), pp. 7-20; Steven MacCarthy, *The Designer as: Author, Producer, Activist, Entrepreneur, Curator & Collaborator* (Amsterdam: Bis Publishers, 2013).

8 In recent years, ICOGRADA has changed its name again and is currently named ico-D, the International Council of Design. For more information, visit ico-D official website: www.ico-d.org/.

Graphic designers seem quite self-conscious and aware of the continuous rene-gotiation of their identity and practice. 'Our profession is one that undergoes con-tinual redefinition', graphic designer and historian Silvia Sfligiotti recently argued, 'within Italy it does not seem to have achieved a state of one might call "consolida-tion". [...] In defining the myriad approaches within our profession, sometimes one feels the ground slip away from under one's feet'.[9]

To conclude, this thesis offers only a partial perspective on about thirty years of graphic design in Milan. As I stated from the very outset, it makes no claim to be definitive or conclusive. More details could be added, other case studies could be analysed and additional comparisons could be drawn. For instance, a more comprehensive picture of graphic design education might require further research on alternative educational institutes, such as the Scuola Superiore di Tecnica Publicitaria Davide Campari (Higher School of Advertising Technique Davide Campari) in Milan and the Scuola Politecnica di Design (Polytechnic School of Design) of Nino di Salvatore in Novara. Likewise, the relationship between graphic design and exhibition design could be further explored by looking at the Milan fair or at the Mostra della Ricostruzione (Reconstruction Exhibition) in Milan, 1945. Although I have provided a comprehensive and detailed overview of the mediation of graphic design in specialist publications, more research into general publica-tions – e.g. newspapers and mainstream magazines – would further improve the comprehensiveness of the picture. Finally, the inclusion of female graphic design-ers within the history of graphic design in Italy is possibly one of the most pressing, among the subjects that have suggested themselves, as ripe for further research.

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9   Silvia Sfligiotti, 'Being in the World. Some Approaches to Graphic Design in Italy Towards the End of 2010', in *Graphic Design Worlds/Words*, ed. by Camuffo and Dalla Mura, p. 93.

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