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Bruno Munari and the invention of modern graphic design in Italy, 1928 - 1945

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A. Statements on topics related to the subject of the dissertation

1. Bruno Munari's figure is an exemplary case study to better understand Italian modernist developments in graphic design.
2. Italian modernism grew out of the interplay of advertising, Futurism, and rationalist architecture: the outcome however turned out to be a modernism of its own kind.
3. Under the fascist regime, the new constructivist aesthetic was assimilated only in its formal aspects, leaving all social components out of the picture.
4. Lacking a unifying theory, Italian graphic artists like Munari went along gropingly, by trial and error, sometimes pulling together contrasting idioms.
5. Notwithstanding his accommodation to Fascism, a progressive social utopia sustained Munari's artistic activities in the postwar period.
6. Munari's creative workshops for children assume an explicit ideological (utopian) connotation that makes him one of the most radical Italian designers of the 20th century.

B. Statements on topics related to the area of study

7. Despite its mainstream status, the constructivist paradigm is but one version of modernism in 20th century graphic design: France and England, for instance, were notable exceptions. Fascist Italy too had its own special way to Modernity.
8. Munari's career was shaped by both Futurism and Constructivism: the futurist aesthetic guided his formal research, while the modernist attitude brought a progressive ideological dimension to it.
9. Modern Italian graphic design is defined by the intimate connection with the fine-arts milieu, and can best be described as a spontaneous achievement by a group of self-taught artists.
10. In the 1960s art criticism imposed its own methodologies and language on Italian design historiography: as a consequence, most of the existing literature is anecdotal, romanticising, and abstruse.
11. It has been argued that Munari is the only designer of his generation that did not succeed in 'making money.'

C. Statements on more general topics

12. Italy is a country that never saw any revolution happen (Branzi 2008): this fact is reflected in the continuing oscillation between modernity and tradition.
13. Italians' general indifference to politics is a legacy of Croce's Idealism, and evidence of backwardness.