

## **Running on the dynamics of a disaster**

### **Don't be anxious about your future. You don't have one**

I wrote the book *After the future* in the year 2009 while the centenary of the Manifesto Futurista was approaching. It was essentially a book about the precarious perception of time, about the growing impossibility of a progressive imagination of the future. It also was an attempt to get free from the sense of anxiety produced by the consciousness that progressive future is over.

Five years have passed since, and many things now appear in a more clear light (I mean in a more dark light).

Five years ago the world was astonished for the sudden collapse of the financial system, but also hopeful because of the victory of Barack Obama in the United States. Obama came to the fore announcing: yes we can. Now it is crystal clear that his announcement was not a promise but an exorcism. He was trying to exorcise the consciousness of the impotence of political will in the face of the overwhelming force of the techno-linguistic automatism embedded in the corporate power. And the exorcism failed. The impotence of the human will became evident by many points of view. We cannot, we can no more.

We cannot stop the environmental devastation, as the summit on climate change of Copenhagen (2009) and the summit of Warsaw (2013) have declared. We cannot stop the financial aggression against social civilization, as the recent obliteration of democracy and welfare in Europe and the tragedy of Greece have unveiled. We cannot stop the resurgence of nationalism and the coming back of the worst nightmares of the Second World War as the current Ukrainian catastrophe is dramatically showing. We cannot stop the affirmation of religious fanaticism, the last bulwark of identity as communities feel aggressed by the brutality of global deterritorialization.

In the wake of the financial breakdown a wave of movement has spread in many cities of the world, creating new expectations. While the financial abstraction was swallowing life and future of the new generation a movement of unprecedented extension exploded reaching a peak in the year 2011. The London riots of November 2010, the Spanish *acampada* of May June 2011, and the Greek strenuous resistance, involving students, precarious workers, artists and intellectuals tried to overthrow the financial dictatorship. In vain.

In the Spring of 2011 the Arab cities saw the most wide uprising of young people against local dictators and global financial capitalism, but the movement of precarious cognitive workers, the avant-garde of the Egyptian and Syrian rebellions proved unable to lead a long lasting democratic transformation of their countries, and the process was hijacked and diverted by all kinds of identitarian fanaticism.

In September 2011 the uprising exploded in New York city, the very heart of financial globalism. The outburst of Occupy Wall street was followed by a fresh wave of occupations aiming to the reactivation of the social body of cognitive precarious labor.

The occupy spirit resounded in many places of the world, particularly in the Gezi Park protests and occupations, in the Brazilian massive protests of Summer 2013. These processes of uprising have been different as different are the cultural contexts and the political outcome, but they share nonetheless a common ground: the social composition of labor, the emerging productive force of cognition that is simultaneously global and precarious.

The global uprising has obviously involved different social forces according to the diversity of the areas where it erupted, but precarious cognitarians mobilized everywhere giving the global process a common character and meaning: the search of autonomy of knowledge and technology from the grip of financial capitalism is the common content of the cognitarian forces which are the innovative core of the uprising.

Everywhere cognitive workers – students, researchers, journalists, artists and programmers – have been in the frontline of the mobilization, and precariousness has been everywhere their main concern, and autonomy of knowledge and technology has been their main issue.

The attempt to resist and subvert the corporate capture of knowledge and skills has been the defining novelty of this movement. The attempt to recompose the social and erotic body of the general intellect has been the main issue of the overall process named Occupy.

Media-activism, the development of P2P technologies, and also the experimentation of alternative currencies can be viewed as examples of the attempt to re-appropriate the product of knowledge, while the occupation of spaces has been the example of a process of recomposition of the erotic body of society and conjunction with the cognitive potency of the networked general intellect.

Both these processes so far have proved unable to break the chain of financial automatisms that are provoking the impoverishment of social life.

### **The black hole**

As the hyperworld, - parallel universe proliferating in the sphere of the virtual ubiquitous nowhere - is provoking a withdrawal of energy from the bodily sphere, competition is exalted as the only form of social relation, and ferocity is spreading wherever in the very fabric of daily life.

The public system of education is under dismantlement, and this is paving the way to the privatization of research and the submission of knowledge to private

profit. The unrelenting impoverishment of the social sphere is the predictable outcome of the accumulation of resources in the hands of a tiny financial class. Darkness is falling upon Europe, and it seems difficult to skip the harsh consequences of the war that financial capitalism is waging against the social civilization: poverty, violence, regression.

In Europe the next decades will be marked by impoverishment, decay in the institutions of civilization, identitarian aggressiveness and war, not to mention the environmental nightmare. The workers of the so called emerging countries are not going to take advantage from the collapse of the former colonial powers. Low salary, growing exploitation and skyrocketing pollution are their destiny, as the weakness of the Western workers is not empowering the workers of the new industrial world. Financial capitalism is acting as a draining pump, drying up social life and smashing the cultural foundation of social solidarity. As an attractor and destroyer of future, financial capitalism is capturing energies and resources and transforming them into monetary abstraction: nothing.

Heart of darkness of the Neoliberal agenda, Monetarism is based on the dissolution of the products of labor and intelligence into the abstraction of money, the most effective pathway to capital accumulation. The credit derivatives market is the place where destruction replaces production. Since the '80, when "futures" have become common place in the deregulated financial markets, financial agencies have started to invest their money in a paradoxical way: if they win they cash money, if they lose they cash more money from insurances on credit default swaps and similar financial tricks.

The old industrial model of accumulation was based on the cycle M-G-M (Money-Goods-more Money). The new financial model of accumulation is based on the cycle M-P-M (Money-Predation-more Money), which implies the following: Money - social impoverishment - more Money.

This is the origin of the Black Hole that is swiftly dissipating the legacy of industrial labor and of the very structures of Modern civilization.

A fissure is running in our perception of time, and we are trying to escape it. It is like a tectonic fault in the texture of our expectations, a deep cut in our imagination of the future.

The Modern art of politics, the rational prediction and the voluntary act of government is deprived of potency and effectiveness.

For the time coming after the future we have to learn how to ride on the dynamics of an irreversible disaster with undisturbed soul. The art of politics, with was a difficult art difficult in the modern times, has now turned into an impossible and useless exercise. We must invent a new art, the ironic art of detachment. A sceptic post-futurist ethics has to replace the modernist ethics of responsibility.