

EXPO UNIVERSALE, FUTURIBILI E IL “CLUB DI ROMA”, METODI SCIENTIFICI E ISTITUZIONALI

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PRESENTATION

The first 2017 issue of “Futuribili” is divided into four parts, or macro-themes: *The World’s Fair – the present from the future predicted in the past, and advantages derived from the remote past; Inside globalisation, from Expo to the future; Along the journey of Futuribili, the Club of Rome and prediction; and lastly, Prediction – Scientific methods, institutional methods.*

Part one is made up of three articles. The first, *Expo 2014, or rather 2015, seen from 1964*, reprises the classic piece written by Isaac Asimov for the New York Times in August 1964 after a visit to New York’s World’s Fair. The 2014 predicted by Asimov is strong in the predominant fields of 1964 (technology and daily life, demographics, agriculture) but weak on problems which did not yet exist or had little visibility, such as mass migration, strategic terrorism (mentioned above), the new western societies and new forms of globalisation.

The second piece is written by Mario Boffi, Matteo Colleoni, Licia Lipari and Francesca Zajczyk of the University of Milan Bicocca, on Expo 2015 in Milan. Entitled *The material and cultural legacy of Expo 2015 in Milan*, it offers a critical reflection on the legacy left by World’s Fairs in general and the Milan exhibition in particular.

The third article in part one focuses on Expo 1998 in Lisbon, discussing the legacy it left to the city in terms of the reorganisation of its planning and urban fabric, services, residential patterns and quality of life. Its author, Francesca Cosmi, entitled it *Lisbon – the Oceano of change in Europe’s most hospitable capital*. In an illustration of the profound changes triggered by the Lisbon Expo, the article explores its principal economic consequences at city and national level.

Part two of the journal deals with the role played by World’s Fairs in strengthening globalisation on specific themes as an effect of the contact between the many participating countries, which provides an opportunity to discuss: 1) development models for poor countries, 2) the intrusion of globalisation in daily life, 3) global human ecology, 4) populations of goods and their future, 5) water and religion as factors of integration in many communities. The general title we have given to this part is *Inside globalisation – from Expo to the future*. It is composed of the following five chapters.

The first is *Let the poor world grow*, by Graeme Maxton and Jorgen Randers (2016: 183-192). The authors propose an approach to economic development

for the poor world which will enable its countries to grow through rapid leap-frog strategies which are distinct from the models adopted by developing and rich countries.

The second chapter, *Paradigms of global society and intrusion into everyday life*, by Giuseppe Scidà, is theoretical in character. Following a discussion of the concepts of globalisation, modernisation and the nature of contemporary social change, examples are provided of some consequences of globalisation at a macro-structural level, on economic life and in terms of the changes affecting human spaces in daily life.

In the third chapter Eleonora Barbieri Masini deals with *Human ecology, light and shadow – a look at the future*. She reconstructs the definitions, meanings and processes of the concept of human ecology, emphasising that its nature is essentially transdisciplinary as well as interdisciplinary.

In the fourth article, *Populations of goods and their future*, Giorgio Nebbia discusses prediction and globalisation not only in terms of human populations but populations of goods. As a result of technological innovations, as time passes products change, are replaced, are integrated, share markets and roles, and co-exist.

In the fifth article Roberto Cipriani considers *Water and religion as factors of integration*. In all communities water is an essential element, and is thus charged with profound religious significance, particularly in traditional communities. The author details the specific features common to water and religion which contribute to the formation of a globalisation at the base of which lie integration at all levels, purification and pilgrimage.

The third part of this issue of *Futuribili* surveys the journal's own history and objectives, at the beginning and over time, looking at the context of its foundation and subsequent return. Hence the title we have chosen for this part: *Along the journey of Futuribili, the Club of Rome and prediction*. It comprises five articles.

The first is by Pietro Ferraro, the journal's founder. It appeared as its first editorial, with the title *Is it possible to open a dialogue on future problems? The role of Futuribili* (Ferraro 1967). It describes the context of its inception, its ties to "Futuribles", the objectives it set itself and its organisational links with IREA (Institute for Applied Economic Research) in Rome. The first series of *Futuribili* came to an end with the founder's death in 1974.

In 1994 the journal was brought back to life by Alberto Gasparini, who wrote *1994. Why relaunch Futuribili (Series two) after 20 years?* (Gasparini 1994a). He gave

the reason: the international revolution which caused the fall of communism (1989) and the consequent transformation of one of the international system's political, economic and cultural poles – represented by the former communist countries – and its consequences for the rest of the world. The journal's organisational base was provided by ISIG (Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale di Gorizia), a prominent centre of research on prediction and international culture.

The next two chapters illustrate the context in which *Futuribili* was founded and the movements of social and cultural renewal in various countries in the late 1960s and early '70s. Alberto Gasparini describes *Pietro Ferraro. From the discovery of what is on the borders of human possibility to the exploration of how to choose the colours of the new world* (Gasparini 1994b) and Umberto Gori looks at *Aurelio Peccei and the Club of Rome – a pioneer of predictive studies*.

In the last article of the third part a Round Table (Barbieri Masini 1994) deals with *The meanings and uses of prediction* explored by six Italian scholars in the field: Eleonora Barbieri Masini, Franco Ferrarotti, Luciano Gallino, Umberto Gori, Giuseppe O. Longo and Antonio Papisca.

The fourth part of this edition of *Futuribili*, entitled *Prediction – scientific methods, institutional methods*, offers readers some scientific insights, theoretical and methodological alike.

The opening article is *Prediction and Futures Studies*, by Alberto Gasparini (2004). After providing a conceptual definition of prediction, emphasising that it is a process, the author focuses on the link between prediction and utopia, pointing out how modern society shifts the viewpoint from the perfection of utopia to the laboratory of the process.

In the second piece, *The legacy of utopias*, Bernardo Cattarinussi analyses the themes recurring in about forty utopias conceived by a range of authors.

The third article is more methodological in character. *Multicriterion model of selecting management strategies for UAV design and production* is written by Y. Sidelnikov, M. Afasanov and E. Minaev. It looks at the mathematical model for decision-making in a problematic situation by a group of individuals.

Concluding this last part is the fourth article, *The role of Igor Bestuzhev-Lada in the institutional planning of prediction in Gorizia and in Italy*, by Alberto Gasparini. Bestuzhev-Lada has been active in developing predictive studies in Italy in general and at ISIG in Gorizia and at the University of Trieste in particular.

That is the selection of writings we offer readers and anybody else interested in the future and its construction in an issue of *Futuribili*, series three, designed to stimulate new ways of facing the future of societies and the individuals in them. It includes an analysis of current problems and the effectiveness of prediction in offering ways of solving them and identifying, at least in conjectural terms (with assessments and operational constructions), the paths of decision-making and the results to which they may lead. Secondly, the analysis of various points in the journal's history, and that of other publications (starting with *Futuribles* and *Futures*) is useful for awareness and assessment of a past for the future, so as to be able to look at past predictions and see the extent to which they succeeded, and if not, where they failed and how they could be put right. The last part is a collection of more scientific elements which assist in understanding and building theoretical and methodological knowledge for the prediction of the future.

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