

Futuribili

Rivista di studi sul futuro
e di previsione sociale



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Alberto Gasparini

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Amministrazione e Distribuzione

EUT (Edizioni Università Trieste), via Edoardo Weiss 21, 34128 Trieste.

In copertina: Expo Universale, da prova di tecnologie avanzate dell'abitare alla ricerca di utopie extraterrestri.

Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Trieste n. 1277 del 07.07.2014. Direttore Responsabile: Prof. Alberto Gasparini.

I semestre 2017.

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ISSN 1971-0720 (print)

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This year marks the 50th anniversary of the appearance of *Futuribili* in Italy, and for about 40 years it has analysed Italy, the world and prediction methods in the hundred or more editions published from 1967 to 1974 and from 1994 to the present day.

There is always “a need for prediction”, but in truth there are historical moments when this need is great and others in which prediction is all but superfluous because future events are implicit in the current orientation. This unevenness in the need for prediction is reflected in the history of *Futuribili*, coinciding with the forms it has taken over time. It started out in 1967 at a time of great turmoil in western societies, caused by a desire for greater democracy in productive and bureaucratic organisations and the need to promote a fresh awareness of the environment and its resources, and the risk that they would cease to be reproducible. In 1994 the relaunch of the journal coincided with a need to find a way of dealing with the disappearance of the communist regimes; that is to say how to respond to the transition of a large number of European and non-European societies into free and democratic societies, how to manage a world no longer bi-polar but possibly mono-polar or multi-polar – each of which were forms of globalisation with their own types of instability. Since 2008 the worldwide economic recession (triggered by a typically financial phenomenon) has engendered attempts to find new models of economic development, and since 2001 the rise of Islamic strategic terrorism (Picco 2005) has resulted in the violent destabilisation of national political systems and a consequent mass emigration from failed states to the north of the world. These conditions have produced the development of a real or feared destabilisation in European countries (and in North America and much of the rest of the world) and a search for another form of globalisation. How to find a way out of these unforeseen and unforeseeable situations, to which are added novelties such as domestic populism, Trump’s America, the latter-day Putin’s Russia, and the weakness of an increasingly less integrated European Union and other European countries?

Under these circumstances the need for prediction becomes increasingly acute – everything seems unpredictable and many institutions which were previously able to cope are progressively weaker. This means we must be very careful about the content of our prediction, manifested in scenarios, studies and alternative hypotheses.

If this is the heart of the current need for prediction, for *Futuribili* it is more essential than ever to rethink its framework and structure, to broaden its target to a large number of groups, to reach a target readership that is sensitive to effective solutions to the problems posed.