

## **Italy : State of reanimation**

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The general crisis – health, economic, institutional – continues to tighten the screw. A revolt in Naples, hospitals shut down, the renewal of work contracts for logistics and factory workers, the question of prison. We are just at the beginning. And the stink of the spectre of half-lockdown is starting to appear, which will be worse than the first.

### **Why half-lockdown is worse than a whole one**

The press are now giving it for certain: maximum 7-10 days. It should be noted that in recent weeks all forecasts have been “reviewed” in anticipation of events. But what will the half-lockdown be? It will still be the same old mass quarantine like last spring, with the difference of continuing to go to work.

In this permanent dystopia, reality continues to surpass the most perverse imagination of science-fiction authors: not just a virus reducing humanity to house arrest, we are now facing a society where we only get out of our domestic cell in order to go to be exploited. As written in the latest issue of *Vetriolo*, which has just come out, «in this era of ours the energies of the exploited are being frozen in many senses so that they can be defrosted later, only in the moment of production » (see *Vetriolo*, issue 5, ‘State of pandemic’). A post-consumerist capitalism, where the old produce-consume-die is no longer

there, now reduced to the binary: produce-die. In this system women and men in flesh and blood are only useful if they can work.

### **Will the exploited let themselves be shut up in a freezer?**

#### **Programmed inequalities**

The media of the regime are squawking that coronavirus and the policies to face it are accentuating social inequalities further. Put this way it seems an objective dynamic; at best politics seems guilty of not being able to intervene efficiently. But is that really so? The truth is that inequalities are necessary to capitalism and the State, rather, intervenes to accentuate them.

In the milieu of conspiracy theorists there was a big uproar about the State secret, put by the Head of Government, on the documents drawn up by the technical-scientific committee (cts). Shame that as the secret was unveiled a few weeks ago, nobody has shown any interest in the in the content of these documents written by the most important technical body on the Covid-19 pandemic. It came out, in fact, but nobody has mentioned it, that the technical-scientific committee never asked for a national lockdown! The committee of nerds wanted only Lombardy and 17 provinces in the north-east to be put in lockdown! It was the Confindustria [national federation of employers] – lo and behold – that demanded a national lockdown, the very people who hadn't wanted to put Bergamo and Brescia in lockdown a few weeks earlier, supported by the blackmail of Matteo Renzi's party.

Why? Because the bosses need inequalities! If the North had been put in lockdown, the South would have overcome its centuries-old disadvantage. This must not happen. Therefore, first, when there was still time, they lobbied to keep Bergamo and Brescia open, then, after the horse had bolted, the whole country was put in lockdown.

A lockdown which, to tell the truth, was not even such in the production context: this is well known by those who since March, especially in northern regions, in times of full pandemic and home segregation, still had to go to work to maintain the profits and interests of the bosses, even in sectors which were not exactly part of those indispensable to the economy, to capital.

Now that contagions are flaring up in the South, the opposite road is being pursued: they are closing Naples, starving an already poor area. And if for now there has not been total lockdown, that is only thanks to the revolt a few nights ago.

When Mattarella [the president of the republic], in his presidential regality, blabs on about the need to reduce social inequalities, he should wash out his mouth: the inequalities were programmed by the State.

### **See Naples and die**

If the first wave was managed in an atmosphere of gloomy social peace (with the exception of the strikes in March), it seems that the second won't go so well for these gentlemen. Right from the first night of curfew, thousands of people took to the streets in Naples, overthrowing skips, starting fires and

clashing with the police. Obviously the leftists are playing the same score since 1948 in Piedmont against the partisans who didn't want to hand in their weapons: talking of fascists and provocateurs. But those in the streets on Friday night wrote it everywhere: there were no fascists, there is a protest that has been growing for a long time, with committees that have been meeting for at least a couple of weeks.

The images of the revolt tell us about a certain insurrectional organizational ability. Moped lookouts, barricades when needed, intelligent withdrawals (only 2 arrests). Some say: only the camorra can do this kind of thing. Very well and what have we been doing, what have we been talking about in our papers and places in recent years?

An analysis of the class composition of this revolt seems necessary. It was essentially made up of two social groups: traders and Neapolitan underclass. It seems that in the heated hours before the revolt there was a test of strength between these two realities and that the latter upset the applecart.

The report made by an opportunistic electoralist group such as Potere al Popolo, can for once be useful to unravel the problem:

«Actually there has been a subterranean conflict for days in this mobilization. Those who have something to lose, such as bigger traders or some local boss aiming at political promotion, against violence and wanting to negotiate, are ready to applaud the police, etc.

On the contrary, more lumpen-proletarian segments who also frequent football stadiums and also have a propensity to

organized clashes with the police, have more interest in playing the game that way for various reasons, from pure nihilism to the acquisition of personal or gang prestige » (from the leftists' Facebook page).

Obviously the reformists of PaP talk about «nihilism» and «gang prestige». But this report is certainly very clear. There was a class conflict in the protest of Naples, which, to use the categories of the old French Revolution, saw shopkeepers and sans-culottes opposing each other. The sans-culottes ruined the shopkeepers' parade. Nice one.

The respectable left are complaining about gangs and ultras, about those who can do the revolutionary job better than them. Let them start preparing themselves then, instead of complaining.

### **War in the mountains**

Looking at the more placid Umbria scenario, this week was characterized by the Spoleto's inhabitants' struggle against the closure of the local hospital to make it a centre only for patients with Covid. The closure of wards, including A&E, led to spontaneous demos of about 500 people in the city, road blocks soon removed with the mediation of the politician on duty. These little episodes also qualify as «programming of inequalities». Not by chance residents in Valnerina will be the most affected by the closure of A&E, as they will have to drive for an hour and a half to get to the nearest hospital. Populations already struck by the earthquake of 2016, that the State (in this specific case the Region) keeps coming down on. The not very well concealed goal is the death of a territory, the desertification of the Apennine, which would also favour giant

works such as the SNAM Gas Pipeline.

Unlike Naples, they didn't succeed in breaking the interclassist unity towards this "common" goal in Spoleto. As a result, the Region won and the hospital was closed down.

The paradox is that if the pandemic was caused by globalization and excessive urbanization, the system can only respond through a further worsening of its causes: more war on the mountains, more discomfort for those who don't live in the city; more urbanization, more new crises.

### **Break the Front**

What to do in this chaos? The first thing is undoubtedly to break the Front. They tell us we are all in the same boat. That's not true. Those who want to continue to produce in Bergamo, those who want to starve Naples, who close hospitals, are not in our boat. But shopkeepers are also not in our boat nor those who want to carry on doing business while people are dying.

It is possible to break the United Front, it happened in Naples. We hope it will open up the way to new events against the coming authoritarian laws. But we must also be capable of strategic thinking, we must look "two moves ahead".

If the first wave of repressive measures will eventually pass – and hopefully we'll make them pay the highest possible price – we must be fast as we move on to the second goal, the more appealing one. Stopping the economy. Unmasking the neo-slavery of the half-lockdown. You say it's dangerous to go out? Well then, let's not go to work either. All this at a time

when complicated questions such as the renewal of logistics and factory workers contracts, are intertwining. Let's follow the example of the strikes in March, stop everything. For real.

Finally, if there really is something that scares shopkeepers and over which you can really break up the Front, it is the question of prisons. There we can see how many shopkeepers are prepared to continue the revolt. Because as an old Russian comrade taught, there can be no freedom as long as one man or one woman remains prisoner.

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**Translated by act for freedom now!**