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Italy

After the second national meeting of “Potere al popolo”

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A national meeting of “Potere al popolo” (“Power to the People”) took place on December 17, 2017, in Rome, to present a list for the parliamentary elections of spring 2018.

Potere al popolo: there were even more people this time. More than the 800 who came to the Teatro Italia twenty-nine days before. More than a thousand, this time, filling L'ambra Jovinelli after having held about eighty local meetings whose images, enlarged, appeared on a giant screen behind the podium. On the stands, we could also see the banners in several languages of the demonstration of the day before.

Potere al popolo has become, in the meantime, the name of the list. There is a logo, now, essential, with its red half-moons and a red star askew as if it had been drawn on a wall, very quickly, during a day of struggle. The Programme and the logo are already circulating on the internet. The Programme is credible, radical, radically reformist but it succeeds in recalling words that seemed obsolete and that were uttered by many speakers: revolution, passion and even people in its sense of the world of the humble, the excluded, the exploited without the ambiguity of Grillo or every kind of populism. The list of candidates will be decided at the local level before the final rush in search for signatures. In the meantime, to break the conspiracy of silence of the mainstream press, the list will make an appearance on December 26, with a distribution of leaflets at shopping centres.

The Rome meeting was intended to give momentum to activists from all over the place, many of whom stayed in the city after the Diritti per tutti (Rights for All) protest. And that's what happened. It was necessary to formalize the results of a work of constitution and of socialization which, in four weeks, has changed the landscape on the left.

A look around the theatre showed that “there is method in this madness”, to quote the words of Eleanora Forenza, the PRC/Altra Europa MEP. In short, it was a ceremony whose importance was the passage of witness by generations of a left which knew victories and defeats, to the new generations. It was Haidi Giuliani, Carlo's mother but also a former member of the PRC at the time of the second Prodi, who opened the meeting, followed by Nicoletta Dosio, historical representative of the No Tav movement who spoke after greetings from international guests (Moreneo, Podemos, Amard, France Insoumise and Maite Mola from Izquierda Unida). “This does not really look like an electoral meeting” she observed. Many voices, before and after, explained that this story will not end with the elections, that the irruption will be long lasting so as not to leave the left in the hands of the perpetrators of the social massacre of the last twenty years and to break with the period of neoliberalism that “taught the people to hate themselves”: Giorgio Cremaschi, from Eurostop, Mauricio Acerbo, secretary of the PRC, his PCI counterpart, Mauricio Alboresi, and Franco Turigliatto from Sinistra Anticapitalista.

“We are doing what is right”, said Turigliatto, “what was necessary from the social point of view and the political point of view: it would have been crazy for the supposed reconstruction of the left to come from characters like D'Alema and Bersani who are precisely our problem. It was they who created the conditions for the defeat of the workers' movement and who accompanied it, they who imposed the jobs act and abolished article 18. The demonstration yesterday demonstrated that we can rebuild the unity of the exploited and the new migrant proletariat. The challenge is unity across borders. The challenge is to say enough with delegations, only the struggles of the popular classes can achieve results. We want to build a new mass movement that is the actor of change. The construction of unity is also the construction of unity between generations. The problem is that the development of capital dominates and no new golden age is to be expected; we must reactivate the “old” class struggle because our lives must be worth more than their profits.”

At the podium, once again, two women from “Je so'pazzo”, the occupied Neapolitan social centre. Alternating at the

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microphone, with equal dignity, the voices of the struggles, the testimonies of local groupings - from Lampedusa to the Suza Valley, from Thyssenkrupp to Almaviva - and the most well-known faces of the political organizations. We heard the writer Christian Raimo, who is researching on students and politics, and the audience was roused by Francesca Fornario, a popular satirical author who now regularly attends Potere al Popolo.

“We all agreed to the challenge”, concluded the Je so 'pazzo speakers, “and we will meet it together, until the end. Because even if it is true that we have no money and we do not have famous names, that, for the moment, they do not talk about us in the newspapers and television ignores us, we have something unique. We are certain that we can count on each one of us, because we do not fill theatres, circles and streets with prepaid buses and well-known characters. Each one of us, and already thousands of us, is free from all interest and fear. We will face this battle with the weapons that are ours and that our enemies cannot neutralize. House by house, university by university, in the workplaces, in the struggles and in all the provinces we will continue to carry the ideas for which we fight. And they are simple, beyond the technical terms of endless programs, and they are the ones that unite us all: work without being exploited, not to be forced to emigrate and to live on lands that are neither exploited nor damaged. Because it is a madness which has started with these elections but will not stop one day in March with a percentage result; they will really understand that we are so crazy that we will continue until victory. ”

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