

THE ART OF DEMOPRAXY

This post-ideological era of ours arises from the realization that the system of representation of the people through political parties has not fulfilled the promise of full democracy. The word democracy derives from the Greek words *demos* (people) and *kratos* (government, power) and means power of the people. But the people consist of a large number of individuals who, separately from one another, cannot exercise power. How can individuals be united so that the people are able to exercise power, bypassing the political parties? Through the Art of demopraxy,¹ in which the term *praxy*, that means practice, replaces the term *kratos*, power. How can this shift from party-political ideology to the practice of democracy be made?

It is time for us to take full account of the fact that people are already united in the organizations that make up society: associations, foundations, companies, public and private bodies, commercial enterprises and nonprofit institutions, consortia, committees, clubs, work teams and every other form of organized collaboration. In fact people spend hours, days and years in them, and every day make choices and decisions that have a concrete impact on their life as workers, entrepreneurs, suppliers, customers, partners, supporters and members of a family. Every organization is already in itself a micro-government or a micro-parliament, spread around the social fabric. The practices that are carried out in it are *de facto* exercises of power.

The function of Demopraxy is to make these organizations visible and conscious of their role and to connect up their practices to form systems of government in which the whole of society really is involved.

The method that Cittadellarte² is experimenting with makes it possible for organizations to participate actively in way that, if it were extended to the whole of society, would make government by the people feasible.

THE DEMOPRACTIC METHOD

The United Nations has summed up the most urgent global needs in terms of sustainable development in 17 key points, through a process of consultation in which all 193 member countries and representatives of international civil society took part. Seventeen goals to be reached by 2030. They are the primary reference of the method initiated by Cittadellarte, used to define its principal fields of action, in connection with local necessities. The demopractic method is subdivided into three phases of operation: **Mapping, Forum, Workshop.**

The coordination of the process is carried out by the Rebirth/Third Paradise Embassies (hereafter Embassies), independent bodies that make up an international network linked with Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto.

1

The term and the concept were presented for the first time in P. Naldini, "L'Arte della Demopraxia," *Journal di Cittadellarte* (Biella, October 2012).

2

See enclosures/attachment

MAPPING

The Mapping phase serves to identify organizations open to the sustainable development goals outlined in Agenda 2030 of the United Nations that are active in the region and interested in taking part in the Forum. Their pinpointing is done both through direct contact by the Embassies and through distribution of the notice of participation, published online and in the press.

The Embassy puts on a public exhibition, in which the organizations present themselves through interviews, videos, photographs, texts and illustrative and descriptive materials. The exhibition serves to introduce the organizations to one another and to get each of them to see itself in relation to the others.

The organizations are requested to draw attention in the exhibition to the most impelling and important problems that need to be tackled in the FORUM.

On the basis of these indications the Embassy will have the task of defining the Essential Themes on which the Forum is going to focus.

FORUM

Each mapped organization signs up for the Forum, assigning one of its members the formal responsibility for participation. Each Forum will have up to 100 participants, divided up into Working Groups of 8/10 people coordinated by facilitators trained by the Embassies. These take turns at plenary sessions. The groups are made up of members of the participating organizations. In addition, trade associations, professional bodies, scientific research centers, schools and universities are invited to send delegates. Representatives of local, regional, national and international public institutions are also invited to take part.

Taking account of the proposals that emerge from the Mapping, the Embassy proposes the subject of discussion in the form of a question.

Each group gathers the reflections, experiences and proposals of its participants. The results are presented in plenary session, for general comparison. In this context, a common plan of action is drawn up that will be put into effect by the participants over the course of the following twelve months, an activity to which we have given the name Workshop, until the next Forum at which the results achieved will be assessed and the plans of action updated.

On the third day the Forum will hold a public session at which the results of the previous two days and the plan of action will be presented.

WORKSHOP

The Workshop is an active continuation of the Forum. It lasts for 12 months, between one Forum and the next. Each participant in the Forum presents the plan of action to his or her own organization and its propositions are taken up, discussed, studied in depth and modified. The proposals and initiatives of organizations that are related in their activity or nature are brought together at meetings specific to that field. These meetings prepare for the staging of intermediate Forums, called Sectorial Forums, whose objective is to come up with plans of action specific to the sector.

The plans are subjected to scrutiny by university research departments. The role of the universities is to gather all the recommendations of the organizations operating in that field and examine them from their own perspective. The aim of this is to develop the proposals

of the Forum and the Workshops with input from the most advanced expertise in the specific fields of economics, politics, science and technology, the environment and all the other areas of the social fabric.

The constant involvement of private and public institutions, along with trade associations, schools, universities, and public bodies of all levels in both the Annual Forums and the Intermediate Forums makes it possible to integrate the demopractic method into institutional politics.

While the private system and the public system have traditionally been regarded as separate and in many cases antagonistic worlds, with the development of the demopractic Forums and Workshops the individual organizations that make up the social fabric, which are in part private and in part public, all take on a public role of a social and political character.

Through the demopractic method, even private organizations are involved in the administration of the *res publica* and consequently every single person is included in this participation.

Through the Art of Demopraxy, therefore, the democratic ideal is achieved.

The organization of the demopractic method entails outlay costs that are met by a participation fee levied on the basis of the member's capacity for payment and handled in complete transparency by the Embassy.

Biella, 10 October 2018

Cittadellarte,

Michelangelo Pistoletto and Paolo Naldini

Michelangelo Pistoletto and Cittadellarte

Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto was born with the launch of the “[Progetto Arte Manifesto](#)” in 1994, in which Michelangelo Pistoletto declared that it was time for the artist to take on the responsibility of establishing ties between all other human activities, from economics to politics, from science to religion, from education to behavior, in short between every aspect of the social fabric.

Adopting this manifesto as its *raison d'être*, Cittadellarte was set up as a workshop-school open to artists, entrepreneurs, social innovators, scientists, administrators and politicians from all over the world united by a common commitment to develop practices for the regeneration of society in every sphere.

Cittadellarte works in collaboration with a network of thousands of public and private bodies that share its vision.

Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto is a not-for-profit organization with its headquarters in Biella (Italy).

The Third Paradise

The symbol of the Third Paradise was created at Cittadellarte in 2002 (www.terzoparadiso.org).

The Third Paradise is a fusion of the first and second paradise. The first is the **natural** one in which human beings were totally integrated with nature. The second paradise is the **artificial** one that gives rise, alongside its beneficial effects, to irreversible processes of degradation and depletion of the natural world. The Third Paradise is the third phase of humanity, which is achieved in the **balanced connection between artifice and nature**.

Third Paradise signifies the transition to a completely new stage of world civilization, indispensable to ensure the survival of humankind. To attain this goal it is necessary first of all to reform the ethical principles and rules of conduct that guide communal life.

The symbol of the Third Paradise, a reconfiguration of the mathematical symbol for infinity, is composed of three consecutive circles. The two outer circles represent all the differences and antinomies, including nature and artifice. The central one is the interpenetration of the opposing circles and represents the womb of the new humanity.

Trinamics

The symbol of the Third Paradise is a sign-formula, in that it expresses the Theorem of Trinamics: “Trinamics is the dynamics of the number three. It is the combination of two units that gives rise to a third distinct and new unit. In Trinamics three always represents a birth, which occurs by fortuitous or deliberate combination of two subjects. Trinamics comes into effect in the process of conjunction, connection, combination, conjugation, interaction and fusion of two elements that are in themselves simple or complex. The Trinamic phenomenon occurs in chemistry and in physics, extends to the physiology of bodies and can even be applied to social life in its cultural, political, economic and religious aspects. [...] Trinamics is the science of relations and balances. But above all, it is the principle of creation.” Michelangelo Pistoletto

The Rebirth/Third Paradise Embassies

As December 21, 2012, was the date the Maya Long Count calendar reached the end of its

cycle, this became the basis for a popular belief that the world would come to an end on that day. At Cittadellarte we decided to choose that day as the moment of the world's rebirth. Since then December 21 has been celebrated as Rebirth Day. Already on that first occasion artists, individuals and entire communities, along with private and public institutions, took part all over the world with works and events symbolizing a commitment assumed for the future, giving rise to the combination of Rebirth and Third Paradise. Out of this came the Embassies that are gradually being set up on the different continents. The Rebirth/Third Paradise Embassies represent, in the region in which they are located, the very idea of the Third Paradise and promote its development through multiple initiatives and events. Among these coordination of the process of shaping and implementing demopractic policy assumes primary importance.