

The end of the modern economy —Filoponía: diffused capital and the shifting of the boundary

I conclude with these stentorian words: If the modern economy was born two and a half centuries ago with the moral philosophy of The Wealth of Nations, I can say that Filoponía, also partly a work of moral philosophy, closes its era. Diffused capital and the shift from the economy to the environment remove the economy from its central position in society, and if, on the one hand, they return it to its etymology, on the other, they free it from the yoke of the GDP rectangle to develop it fully. This is the intrinsic singularity of Filoponía: society free of the economy and the economy free of debt.

Andrea Surbone



Anonymous, 'The Ideal City', second half of the 15th century.

In a previous essay,¹ I wrote: To pretend to propose a model outside the current dualism seems like a gamble or even a bluff. Today, the research I am carrying out has taken me much further, to the point of affirming that

¹ Andrea Surbone: [Filoponía, a distinctive economic model. An introspective open letter to humanity](#) — The Jus Semper Global Alliance, December 2022.

Filoponía, if materialised, would constitute the end of the era of the modern economy: such a powerful statement that it only needs this explanatory essay. Therefore, it is fair to pick up where I left off.

The last stretch

The last stretch takes us up to the hill leading to the other side of the mountain.

As happens on the mountain, at the mountain pass, we stop, lingering our gaze both on the route already completed and on the vista that suddenly opens up before us. Resting a little, we catch our breath and scan the new landscape in search of the path: how much immensity before us, unimaginable at the exit of the night camp. But looking back, what a long way and what climbs to get here.

In the same way, I returned to the text, starting a reordering of the chapters and an update that would normalise and adapt the old concepts to the new ones so that it would trace, if not an actual path, at least a direction. I received a message in June 2023 from Federico Della Sala of Luiss University Press when he asked me if I considered Filoponía an economic or philosophical work.

As this is not a detective novel, the latest version includes a chapter, Twenty Thousand Years Under Accumulation, a phrase used later as a subtitle; here it is:

We begin with the chapter on accumulation. However, this is the final result of more than six years of research: an appetiser that heralds the sensory triumph expressed by the main courses to come.

In the continuation, as in the Introduction, we will find concepts that become more vivid when examined in the light of this chapter, above all diffused capital and the non-accumulation of sustainability; above all, the otherness of Filoponía, to which the text hints from the very first writings, is definitively emphasised.

We will find one in particular when defining diffused capital: like an archaeological campaign, Filoponía has been excavating for a long time in search of the 'layer' of the lowest common denominator that underlies the two great current problems: social inequality and environmental plunder.

At first, it was thought to be money, then debt, and finally, capital accumulation.

Accumulation could be described as the anomalous behaviour of the first communities based on a sense of community, with someone who, going beyond immediate and egalitarian exchange, begins to accumulate until the growing accumulation becomes power. Together, they set out on a path that leads right up to us.

We can summarise humanity's path through the succession of discovery of abundance (agriculture), accumulation, debt, writing, money, and capital accumulation. On this last point, all economic theory is born and refined.

Hence, the lowest common denominator and capital accumulation are identified.

This is an apparently correct statement, but one that contains a myopic error: we are looking at the finger, not the moon; the moon is the human being, and the finger is the economy.

Assimilating the common denominator and the capital of accumulation is a mistake. It means leaving aside a few thousand years of the human journey as if it had occurred in the Garden of Eden. We have to go back again to get to the starting point, accumulation: humanity has lived and acted - and developed economic theories - in the paradigm of

accumulation for nearly 20,000 years and has suffered its consequences, although in some cases, it has opposed them (socialism and degrowth, to give two critical examples).

And it means reducing human beings to a mere economic fact: fortunately, humanity is something else. As we approach dawn, Aesop, with The Ant and the Grasshopper, perfectly describes anomalous behaviour. Accumulation is positive if it is a way of preparing for an uncertain future; it becomes an aberration of community behaviour when it is linked to power, giving rise to malfeasance: 'Now dance!' is the quintessence of the brutal, rude, and shameless arrogance of the paradigm of accumulation.

The accumulation society is intrinsically inclined to accumulate (money, territory, goods) and consequently plunder and subjugate both people and nature. In contrast, thanks to diffused capital, which is not accumulation and therefore not based on indebtedness, both individuals and their organisations, from companies to states, are emancipated from subjection to such ignominies. This brings true self-determination to humanity, which is the key to overcoming known economic theories and achieving an innovative social theory: equality, freedom, and sustainable humanisation.

In short, today's society, built on this paradigm, is no longer capable of improvement. It must be replaced and requires a change of course as essential as going beyond the very idea of a different society to involve a new humanity; technically, it is feasible, environmentally, socially, and politically. It is an obligation to leave the paradigm of accumulation and finally enter the paradigm of self-determination!

But why should we believe that we have reached our destination? I fell into the error three times, dazzled not by the sun but by its radiance: why should we be there now?

From my point of view, going further back in time would be a gamble, as there is no written or archaeological documentation except for cave graffiti and the remains of utensils.

Although it is possible to go further back economically, one comes across anthropological discoveries about the communal sense of hunter-gatherers.

Filoponía raises the original sin precisely by turning us into farmers, with which accumulation is linked to power, undermining the community.

These two elements make me think that I have identified the common denominator of inequality and environmental plunder.

I am left, however, with one doubt, to which I have only dedicated one note - number 106 - but which I consider a real regret for humanity: Although the large production of Palaeolithic cave art, for example, shows how unproductive activities were already known even before [the transition to farmers with the consequent birth of sedentary societies], we know what happened afterwards and we can propose, as Filoponía does, what could happen in the future. Unfortunately, we cannot know what would have happened to unproductive Palaeolithic activities if humans had maintained the commons.² So, unfortunately, we have to seriously ask ourselves: what development would humanity

² Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Epilogue*.

have undergone if it had maintained a sense of community? Above all, in the light of today's society, what evil has led us to this choice, and what opportunity have we missed?

Now that the advances are finished let's get back to order.

Before the final subtitle, taken from Jules Verne, there was no debt: equality and freedom, which condensed three main concepts of the filoponic proposal into five words—the same ones that pointed the way forward.

In fact, the Introduction chapter begins with a specification of the debt: *The essential character of the new filoponic society is the abolition of debt and the consequent non-existence of the monetisation of credit, the main instrument for the creation of money by individuals and for purely lucrative purposes; [...].*

At this point, a feeling of unease takes hold: What makes Filoponía different from socialism and capitalism while being so similar to both?

Why does the left reject it for not being Marxist and being disguisedly capitalist, while it is rejected by the capitalists for being socialist?

I admit that I am more interested in understanding the comparison with socialism than the one made with capitalism. But it is not a question of preference or superiority, but a practical one: production or, as Filoponía defines it, doing business.

Producing is common to all living beings, from chlorophyll photosynthesis to algorithms, and capitalism is just one of several ways of interpreting doing business. It does so based on concepts such as accumulation, exploitation and growth, which are the opposite of the filoponic ones: *not capitalist, because although it is very similar to capitalism [Filoponía], it is the opposite in its social terms: the whole model is built on respect for the environment and people and dismantles any possibility of subjugation. The similarity is nothing more than a synecdoche: capitalism to do business. Filoponía operates in a free market, but it does so by setting itself stakes that prevent it from being capitalist and making relations of production and distribution the main context of power, exploitation and domination.*³

On the other hand, I am very interested in the question of growth/decline: how to combine an economy that tends to stagnate with business profitability. Indeed, *global environmental equilibrium*⁴ limits internal growth,⁵ and the answer is evident from the title of the essay itself: the end of the modern economy (but I have not yet reached that conclusion). Here, I anticipate, or reiterate (depending on how much you already know about the filoponic model), that the key lies in the virtuality of money and the consequent formation of prices.

More generally, it is essential to reconcile business activity peacefully with equality. Convinced that the otherness of Filoponía lay in the comparison with socialism and capitalism, and having ruled out the latter as a synecdoche, I came to find an otherness consistent with collectivisation. Thus, *Filoponía maintains private ownership of the means of production [...]. What if the ownership of the means of production were not state-owned but collective? Well, diffused capital, due to its characteristics as a Common Good on a par with air, constitutes a variant of the collective ownership of the means of production and expresses fraternity in the economy: available to anyone and in the exercise of free will.*

³ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Class Struggle, Value and Surplus Labour, Price*.

⁴ From the chapter 'The market and the non-accumulation of sustainability': *For the Market, Filoponía proposes a single but sovereign rule: global environmental equilibrium, calculated for the world as a whole, from individuals to all the forms of organisation they create (associations, companies, states, etc.), to bring the Anthropocene back below the insurmountable limit of what the Earth provides annually, both in terms of resources and resilience to anthropogenic degradation.*

⁵ For more information, consult the text or at least the [Filoponía en tres páginas](#).

It is a necessary variant because it temporarily transfers its management to the individual. At the same time, humanity acquires the full range of cognitive tools. It achieves that universal epistocracy, which is the indispensable basis for a collectivisation of the means of production whose management does not generate hierarchical and class differences within production itself. In this sense, the filoponic model can also be a model of transition towards a fully humanist and collectivist society. To paraphrase: collectivity, freedom, fraternity.⁶

Next comes 2023, the year in which the relationship with Cuba takes shape, born of the desire to tell Filoponía to those who live the Revolution: although I define the model I propose as evolutionary, I consider it more understandable and acceptable in revolutionary eyes than in reactionary ones; the former, in fact, aim for change in any case, while the latter only for the conservation of the status quo.

On 19th September 2022, therefore, I am writing to the Embassy in Rome, requesting a meeting, which will take place on 16th March 2023 with Alejandro Betancourt Peña, cultural attaché at the Embassy, with him and with Enrico Tramutola de Lucania, whom I had met shortly before in online meetings, solid collaborations⁷ and, above all, deep friendships are born; thanks to them, Filoponía begins to hatch: in July, an intense week of presentations in Basilicata and in September the first Conference in Cuba are important moments of growth and confrontation, which culminate in the November revision containing the manifestations on accumulation.

These, centred on the capital of accumulation, propose broader scenarios than mere otherness with respect to the two aforementioned systems. *But there is also an essential aspect: with diffused capital, Filoponía turns today's society upside down. Its definitions - Homo oeconomicus, Anthropocene, Capitalocene - all refer, albeit with different opacity, to the economic aspect. In Filoponía, on the other hand, the basis is diffused capital, and the rule is global environmental equilibrium. This means that the limit shifts from money, which is borrowed or accumulated/expropriated, to the environment, which is deeply respected; here, the current definitions are abandoned and replaced by homo socialis, a species that, through work and commitment, is finally dedicated to the environment and to humanity.⁸*

Finally, Alberto Pérez Lara, a philosopher from the Institute of Philosophy, comes to us from Cuba. Having met him at an online conference, I was lucky enough to bump into him in Italy when he brought me the notes from his reading of Filoponía: a handful of extremely useful pages to point the way forward. His interpretation, in effect, highlighted how social relations change radically when they come into action in the Filoponic model.

I find myself debating with a philosopher trained in Marxism but critical of orthodoxy and dogmatism, and the impulse to frame what I propose theoretically remains and intensifies, especially in reference to socialism. *However, in a world that suffers from severe and exacerbating problems, it is neither possible nor correct to avoid taking sides; the legitimate question is: is Filoponía environmentalist, capitalist, or socialist? The answer is yes, no, maybe.*

If the first two are easy, the third is immediately articulated.

[...]

So what then? Is Filoponía socialist? One would be tempted to respond with an easy joke: to posterity the arduous judgement; [...]. However, despite Filoponía's claim to otherness, it is correct to say that it was born and developed in a socialist environment, albeit with an update provided by environmentalism (already widely combined with socialism)

⁶ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Class Struggle, Value and Surplus Labour, Price*.

⁷ Without further ado, here are the results of our great work together: <https://www.surbone.it/filoponia/calendario.pdf>.

⁸ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Full Employment*.

and an awareness of the fundamental importance of the production and distribution of goods, but with the need to revolutionise the relationships that derive from it; [...]. Which, we reiterate, is the economic chrestomathy that makes Filoponía the society that finally sees equality, freedom and sustainable humanisation coexisting serenely.⁹

However, the change in social relations permeates the entire text. On the other hand, changing social relations at their roots is fundamental for a paradigm shift. [...]. Otherwise, Filoponía realises the ideal of the golden age: an infinite cake that no longer has to be shared but from which to take, and that eliminates the limit of the economy to recognise and respect it in the real scarcity of resources and, in this way, restoring the natural ground of human relations, leads humanity to the new flow of self-determination.

The new social relations must also be accompanied by new ties between humanity and the environment and between humanity and the State; for the change to be total, it must also extend to these two spheres. [...].¹⁰

The end of the modern economy era

We are approaching our destination: among the many paths, having taken that of social relations has opened my mind, freeing it from the torment of ideological accommodation. If, before, my gaze stopped exclusively at Rosa and the Monte Cervino, now it extends and encompasses the Bianco and the Gran Paradiso, which makes it easy to move from social relations to the effects of the modern economy.

The first step was to conclude the text's transition: it was born as an economic model, then changed to a social model, and now to a humanistic model.

It went from the economic to the social thanks to an overall vision that evaluates individual proposals in relation to their own and general context, while the next step was to free the pen, allowing it to use a writing style closer to moral philosophy. In such a way, [diffused capital] *can be called inverse collective capital, while that of accumulation sees a 'movement to place' of money from the collectivity to capital to form its accumulation. The filoponic, in contrast, always registers a movement to place but in reverse, with diffused capital, already formed by the virtuality of money, going to the collectivity in the form of availability to anyone.¹¹*

The final part of the ascent consists of no less than six stages.

The first and most substantial has social relations as its axis, which are included and emphasised mainly in the Introduction as a prelude to the issues addressed later and as a form, above all, moral philosophy. For this stage, I must also thank Alberto, whose concepts, expressions and phrases I have picked up; one example is note 38: *With the concern for financial security having disappeared thanks to an economy based on self-determination, the remaining interests of individuals, groups and societies (while class interests will be seen in the chapter on how they will change), crossed by various ideologies and which today clash harshly both in reality and in institutions, will find a context more serene and more open to consultation in the filoponic model. It is not the purpose of Filoponía to detail the path and the instruments of this concertation: as a model, it is about creating a favourable context for it, leaving to subsequent social research and daily practice the elaboration and refinement of the modalities to articulate or bring together, to make the best choices, the diversity of political, ideological, social, religious, etc. points of view..¹²*

⁹ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Class Struggle, Value and Surplus Labour, Price*.

¹⁰ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Introduction*

¹¹ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Diffused capital*.

¹² Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Life*.

This revision, then, sees the cicada rise as the heroine not only of the fable¹³ but particularly of the filoponic proposal: *humanity is also so because it pursues not only quantity but also quality, which becomes the true discriminator between societies, places, communities, jobs, leisure: in short, all the containers of relationships. The social reading, therefore, emphasises the stigmatisation of the ant and its arid, petty and ruthless response that profoundly denies humanity. And here, at last, is the moral of the story of the cicada.*¹⁴

Above all, I owe Alberto the correction, by lowering the automation restriction from principal to complementary, of an error, seen from the point of view reached, that Filoponía had carried over from its first version, the one published in the 2019 book: *'This is where the third constraint also becomes an essential complementary primary tool: as in an Escher engraving it changes fluidly, becoming a powerful ally [...] used to free oneself from work as a source of resources for living. In fact, it will be a catalyst that will flank the actual building blocks of the model: the protection of the environment, self-determination brought about by the conversion of capital accumulation into diffused capital, the culmination of the cognitive tools necessary to understand the reality in which one lives, the change that a citizenry involved in participatory democracy will bring about in both the State and in everyday social relations, and so on.'*¹⁵

Alberto's other significant contribution is exquisitely philosophical: to consider the act of thinking never as finite but always in the process of becoming and, above all, elastic in its contextualisation, respecting the founding principles: *Each community, territory, country or society will, therefore, adopt and adapt Filoponía according to modules that are adjusted both to their own tradition and culture and to their practices, knowledge, natural resources, etc.; in fact, it is not a question of imposing a recipe but of offering a proposal based on a system of principles that remains flexible in its application: in each situation, the model will be followed, but it will also be given its own characteristics and identity. Because the universalisation of the model, when it happens, will require a change of civilisation in which the diversity of filoponic nations and regions can coexist without the imposition of models and rules on one another, it is the embodiment of the paradigm of self-determination. A new historical coexistence will be born, fraternal and supportive, on a universal level and in caring for our most precious asset, Life and Nature.*

*On the other hand, a model's peculiarity is that it is a container with a few precise rules within which one can move freely. This is what has happened and is happening in the world with the capital of accumulation, which has seen the Community of the Apostles enter its enclosure, as well as the societies of the Enlightenment, democracy, absolutism, socialism, and the most unbridled neoliberalism.*¹⁶

The second is approaching, but without reaching the end of the era of the modern economy: it completes the filoponic otherness, but the peak is still shrouded in mist; and so, a few metres away, Part IV arrives - Epilogue:

An open letter to the readers, in reality, to humanity

*At the end of these pages, there may be perplexity, dejection, and bewilderment.
Far from being a chrestomathy, this is incoherent and contradictory gibberish!*

¹³ *The ant and the grasshopper, a fable attributed to Aesop.*

¹⁴ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Conclusions*.

¹⁵ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Sinopia*.

¹⁶ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Distribution and Redistribution*.

Accumulation, breeze, environment, self-determination, balance, money/power binomial, diffused capital, capitalism, classes, CSE, debt, degrowth, unemployment, inequality, doing business, Filoponía, finance, labour force, fraternity, PJL, commitment, de-accumulation, freedom, Mother Earth, equalisation, full employment, redistribution, income, reward, socialism, tachyproduction, equality, humanity, SLV... and so on.

On the other hand, where are Titius, Gaius, and Sempronius and their analyses and theories?

Beloved humanity - for that is what we are, humanity: that is to say, the sum of individualities and not the often divisive agglomeration of genders, creeds, races, ideals, cultures... - if it is true that, as Titius or Gaius or Sempronius or, perhaps, all three said, we are a social product of the relationships between us, then it is true that what we have created has in turn shaped us and, consequently, has brought us to the current point.

The current point derives from the anomy of accumulation linked to power, which leads to inequality and the destruction of the environment. This has seen humanity subdivided into all kinds of classes and factions in conflict with each other, which has seen and sees multipolarity as division and war instead of a diverse contribution of ideas and experiences, which has seen and continues to see irremediable fractures and contrasts between the environment and the economy, to the detriment of the former.

Let us, therefore, try to change the basis, the plaster on which we paint ourselves and our future.

On the other hand, the disappearance of apparently untouchable aristocracies, such as the current financial one, is a common practice in history: this is the case, for example, of feudal rights and ecclesiastical privileges.

If it is true that accumulation has brought us to this point today, it is no less true that filoponic self-determination will almost certainly not be able to take us to the same point today; however, we do not know to what point we will be led, nor if the feared inconsistencies and contradictions will arise and, if so, if they will do so in the same known terms; nor do we know if the inconsistencies, according to current dogmas, will they be such or will the new wealth naturally erode them, like a torrent with a valley.

But we do know that a basis opposed to the current one, and on which we have lived for millennia, will take humanity elsewhere.

It will then depend on us whether that other place is better than where we are today: let us start the social production of ourselves and the rules we will set for ourselves from scratch, and let us finally use the thoughts of Ticio, Cayo and Sempronio not to criticise before setting out on the journey, but to help us start and continue along the new path: even with this help we will not have a mess, but a chrestomathy and we will be able to optimise it.

Indeed, we don't deserve it, but it could be a unique opportunity to atone and start over.

The third and fourth clarify certain aspects (and this brings us to the basic oxymoron: accumulation and freedom¹⁷) and get to the basis of the final and abrupt rupture: [...] the increasingly heavy global domination of accumulation and its sedimentation over millennia imply, above all, a cultural struggle; which in turn requires an ambitious, all-encompassing, inciting objective, such as the terrestrial humanism that is filoponic and renewed: located on Earth and in close relationship with it; peaceful; linking social and economic options to respect for the environment and people through inclusive social relations; exalting collectivity and singularity.

In short, it is a social project capable of contrasting and replacing, culturally as well as, in reality, that of accumulation.¹⁸

¹⁷ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Class struggle, value and surplus labour, price*.

¹⁸ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Can you start with a single territory?*

I owe the fifth to a trip to the Mountain Museum¹⁹ when I visited the exhibition The Bones of the Earth. Primo Levi and the Mountain: a few verses from a poem in which I fully recognise the development of the filoponic thought of which I speak:

*A Valley
I found the way in on my own.
I spent years
Often getting lost, as happens,
But it wasn't wasted time.
I don't know who was there first,
One, a few, no one:
It doesn't matter.
There are marks on slabs of rock,
Some beautiful but all mysterious,
Clearly some aren't by a human hand.²⁰
And at last, I reach the top!²¹*

The sixth, in effect, concludes the ascent at the foot of Bistolfi's work and the search for otherness; placed at the foot of the letter to humanity, immediately before Levi's poem, a few lines - those quoted at the beginning of the essay - set in stone a journey that has lasted seven years.

So here is the difference: Filoponía would mean the end of the modern economic era if it were to happen. They are certainly communicating vessels, and, at least in the experimental phase, they are present at the same time: They see the decanting of humanity and its cultural baggage. This is undeniable; in fact, it is indispensable. But they are still two different vessels or, rather, two dissimilar humanities.

In the transition from hunter/gatherers to farmers, the economy, through taxation, becomes the binding agent of society, although eclipsed by the political and the military, and then, with the advent of industrialisation and the modern economy, at the social centre with the rectangle of GDP.²² With the mind freed and a circular panorama of summits, rivers and valleys, thought becomes inductive: once it has been established that the common denominator has been found, it searches almost unconsciously for the effects of the restorative proposal. And what do they mean, on the one hand, a diffused capital that replaces voluntary and compulsory savings in covering public consumption and investments and causes the exit from the GDP rectangle and, on the other hand, the displaced limit of resources that an economy that is no longer central in society implies? They mean the end of the era of the modern economy and, more generally, the end of the accumulation paradigm.

Thus, the otherness of Filoponía is evident, not concerning socialism and capitalism, but concerning its sphere of action, that accumulation linked to power that has distorted the path of humanity. I, therefore, leave it to two great voices, Lenin

¹⁹ <https://www.museumontagna.org>

²⁰ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter An open letter to our readers; in reality, to humanity.

²¹ The Complete Works of Primo Levi Edited by Ann Goldstein. Liveright Publishing Corporation, New York – London 2015

²² This is how the economy works: everything produced in a year - the GDP - is converted into purchasing power in the form of earned and capital income. Equilibrium is reached when the sum of income from labour and income from capital covers the three uses: private consumption, public consumption and investment. Public consumption and investment are covered by savings, which in turn is divided into voluntary savings - what we set aside - and compulsory savings - that is taxes.

and Graeber, first the ability to identify a ductile path, which in Filoponía is an experimentation in a territory with dimensional characteristics such as being a statistically valid sample, and then to Graeber a heartfelt rant in favour of new models, to which Filoponía belongs.

In his ruling pragmatism, Lenin, dealing with the grave situation in Russia in 1921, wrote:²³ *Capitalism is evil concerning socialism. Capitalism is fair concerning the medieval period in relation to small-scale production and the bureaucratism associated with the dispersion of small producers. Since we do not yet have the strength to transition from small-scale production to socialism immediately, capitalism is inevitable, in a sense, as a spontaneous product of small-scale production and exchange. We must use capitalism (channelling it, especially in the sphere of state capitalism) as a transmission link between small-scale production and socialism, as a means, a way, and a method of raising the productive forces.*

Emphasising how in a phase of profound crisis, like Russia in 1921 and today's society, it is crucial to have a precise objective and a flexible path.

And Graeber, in *Bullshit Jobs*, argues as follows: *Today, most economists consider labour theory of value to be a curiosity dating back to the birth of the discipline. However, that was never the point for the labour movement - and probably for revolutionaries like Marx. The real question is a philosophical one, which consists of recognising that we created the reality in which we live collectively as a society and that, therefore, we could also have done it differently. This is true for almost all the physical objects we have to hand at any given moment: each one was cultivated or manufactured by someone based on what they imagined about us and what they believed we wanted or needed. Even more so in the case of abstract concepts such as 'capitalism', 'society' or 'government', which only exist because we fabricate them daily. John Holloway, perhaps the most poetic of contemporary Marxists, once set out to write a book entitled 'Stop Building Capitalism'. After all, he pointed out that although we all act as if capitalism were some giant towering over us, it is simply a product of us. Every morning, we get up and recreate capitalism, so if one day, when we wake up, we collectively decide to create something else, then capitalism would no longer exist. Something else would be there instead.*

One could even say that this is the essential question - perhaps, in the end, the only real question - of all social theory and all revolutionary thought. Together, we create the world we inhabit. However, if we tried to imagine a world in which we would like to live, who would think of one exactly like the one that exists now? We are all capable of imagining a better world. Why, then, can't we create it? Why does the simple idea of stopping building capitalism seem so inconceivable?

But let's return to the opening of the essay: *the end of the era of the modern economy*—a statement so powerful that it only needs this explanatory essay. *If the panorama from the accessible summit*—an excursion that, on the other hand, does not present any particular difficulty, according to a specialised site—is clear and precise, I realise that from these lines, it may not be so much so.

So, relying on Wikipedia's accessible knowledge, which we all consult, here are three clarifying examples, with the obedient premise that What would happen in Filoponía is a projection and, as such, should be read.

²³ V. Lenin, *On the Tax in Kind in Selected Works*, volume II, Foreign Language Publishing, Moscow 1948.

COVID

What happened - <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19>

[...] This first group of patients was somehow related to the local wet market, which consisted of about a thousand stalls selling chickens, pheasants, bats, marmots, snakes, spotted deer and rabbit organs, among other wild animals. [...] On 1 January, the level of hygiene in the place was found to be appalling, with animal carcasses and remains lying around everywhere.

Several studies indicate that atmospheric pollution plays a role in the spread and persistence of the virus in suspension in the atmosphere.

Worldwide, there were some 7 million deaths (from the English Wikipedia).

There was also a trade war between the pharmaceutical giants to establish their vaccine and share a multi-million dollar business.²⁴

What would happen in Filoponía

Renewed earthly humanism does not contemplate profit above all else; in fact, it is the opposite of profit above all else, in this case in reference to both the role of atmospheric pollution and profit above the hygienic conditions of a market. Self-determination income,²⁵ being flexible because it is linked to the local consumer price index, absorbs the higher cost of compliance with hygiene standards and global environmental equilibrium. Filoponía, in fact, proposes not the race for personal profit but the race for collective well-being.

Similarly, at the beginning of the pandemic, production could have been paralysed without suffering any economic effect: diffused capital, made up of virtual money, is by nature unlimited and available to humanity. If the paralysis of production in Region X involves a cost, in salaries and lost sales, of X million, the X million, both for people and for production structures, is disbursed instantly and without inflationary repercussions.²⁶

As for research, some sectors, such as basic research and research carried out in state sectors (medical and pharmacological research, for example), will be classified as common goods and, therefore, supra-state; in other words, science will make use of an open source modality that shares paths and results;²⁷ the petty trade war that we have seen and suffered would not have arisen. On the contrary, the chain of vaccines would have been open source patent (an oxymoron: perhaps it is better to say open source formula) and pharmaceutical companies acting as local producers, obtaining their fair share of profits from the production and distribution of an open source formula; exactly as is already the case with generic medications.

2007 - 2008

What happened - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_financial_crisis

At the end of the summer the subprime mortgage crisis erupts in the United States. It will have consequences for financial markets, banks and credit guarantee companies around the world; it is compared to the crisis of '29.

²⁴ <https://www.money.it/Quanto-vale-business-vaccini-Covid-Big-Pharma>

²⁵ From the chapter 'The People': From the state and for life: a self-determination income, therefore a universal basic monthly income, of equal real value for all and above and beyond what is necessary for basic necessities, linked to the local consumer price index and taking into account the free services provided by the state. The self-determination income will therefore guarantee, in that place, the satisfaction of primary, secondary and some voluptuary needs, that is to say, a good life: Filoponía believes that humanity, exhausted at this stage, is ready to rebuild itself and proposes a new society no longer of anxiety, economic and social environment, but of serenity.

²⁶ See Book I, paragraph VII, of Smith's The Wealth of Nations.

²⁷ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Doing business*.

What would happen in Filoponía?

[the blank lines indicate the forced absence of indications; forced because the generalised capital that replaces savings, and consequently indebtedness, render the financial system useless, which, therefore, disappears in Filoponía; and with it, the crises linked to it].

EVERYDAY LIFE

What happened

[fill in the blank lines with your social problems, that is, those reflected in your daily life].

What would happen in Filoponía

Given that the change in social relations also affects personal problems - but does so indirectly²⁸ - the Filoponic outlook foresees:

- the income of self-determination, for which we refer you to note 23, to which is added the remuneration of the workforce, the remuneration of Filoponía, dividends and a pension, which adds up to and replaces the previous three at the age of 50
- abolition of debt
- elimination of taxes
- full employment
- full and free welfare: relations with the state will be free, including the welfare state; precisely because it is free, it will be fully developed and, in addition to guaranteeing a good existence for all through self-determination income, it will be able to take care of both the weakest sections of the population and the quality of life: among other things, education for all until a qualification is obtained or, for those who prefer the application to study, replacing university with apprenticeships; as long as the objective of providing everyone with the full range of cognitive tools necessary for a deep understanding of the reality in which they live is achieved: to arrive at reasoned options, to avoid being easy prey to naivety, to fully enjoy life.²⁹
- Free access to business: diffused capital which, by being available, emancipates both individuals and their organisations, from companies to states, from being subject to debt, providing them with true self-determination without the need to look for it, ask for it, borrow it or use their capital.³⁰

Many, if not all, of the everyday concerns with which you have filled the blank lines above will be at least alleviated when not eliminated.

²⁸ From the chapter 'Breaking the Chains': [...] let's think, for example, of the universal basic income experiments that have seen the number of divorce increases, which shows how omnipresent the power of the binomial [money/power] can be; and the first link that breaks is precisely the economic domain within the basic social structure - be it the family, the tribe or another: the income of self-determination makes all members equal and independent, thus taking power away from the dominant figure, mainly in patriarchy.

²⁹ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *The State*.

³⁰ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Diffused Capital*.

Gungrissini

Brief notes, collateral thoughts that arose while scanning the landscape in search of the path: will they lead to anything? I don't know; they are mere indications, some fruitful, others impervious. And, for what they are, the indecision is strong: should we include them in the essay? Ultimately, I include them because they connote the context, the whirlwind of considerations, and the paths explored. To give an idea of both the creative chaos and the vast period in which they manifested themselves, I present them in random order,³¹ except for the last one, for which you will understand the reason.

Getting out of the food chain

The human species changed its position in the food chain for safety's sake, with food on one side and predators on the other. It has certainly achieved the serenity of no longer being prey in the food chain, but in the long run, it has fully realised that it has jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire, to the extent that in mythology, that period has become the Golden Age.

The discovery of abundance, with its consequent sedentariness, offered humanity the security of abandoning the food chain in the face of social subjugation. It didn't take humanity long to realise its mistake, but there was no going back: such is the force of the combination of accumulation and power. Filoponía proposes a way out of this binomial and charts a course for its implementation.

On the other hand, the game with security is also being played out in our current society, in which we have all accepted, voluntarily or involuntarily, the reduction and limitation of our freedom for the sake of supposed greater security.

Accumulation linked to power

It has meant and means control of the driving force, capital, a power that it has managed to extend even to its direct opponents, socialism and degrowth, precisely because they continue to use the capital of accumulation subject to inherent coercion while distorting its subsequent rules.

Within the constraints and their subsequent rules, there is very little alternative space: isolation, constituted by the various virtuous communities scattered throughout human history; support, through almsgiving, charity; in either case, relegating people—or peoples, when charity takes the form of international cooperation—to a state of subordination, of both psychological and material domination;³² or involutive forms such as barter.

Original sin

The myth of the golden age, which has spread throughout the world in different guises, always envisages a pejorative change: from a time of abundance in which people lived without working to a time of work as servitude.

However, for every living being, whether animal or vegetable, work is the means of obtaining food, protection, reproduction and education; therefore, it is a common and inevitable condition. But what makes the difference is how that work and its fruits are managed: the communitarian nature of hunter-gatherers as opposed to the accumulation and indebtedness of farmers.

So, if the Golden Age is the reminiscence of the community, the pejorative change takes on importance.

For Christians, the Golden Age is the Garden of Eden, and the expulsion from it is a consequence of original sin: the guilt of humanity.

And this is interesting; power, which has always controlled communication - in this case religious communication - turns the myth in its favour: the fault lies not with those who sold us the combination of accumulation and power or forced us

³¹ <https://www.blia.it/utili/casuali/>

³² Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Distribution or redistribution*.

to do so, but with us, and we bear the burden on our shoulders; in short, we would have wanted change so much that we even committed the original sin.

Growth

Viewed ecologically, the GDP rectangle, which we can define as the interpretation of the accumulation of the modern economy, implies growth at the expense of the environment: growing demographically, we have to grow in GDP to sustain the system; growing economically, we have to grow in GDP to finance the system.

The demographic figure is almost universally cited as a problem with respect to resource scarcity, and I'm not going to go into that. It is its inclusion in the rectangle that catches my attention here.

As the world's population grows, the system can only be sustained through growth: even the stationary economy proposed by degrowth is unviable; the costs of the state, which include welfare for the benefit of all, increase because of the greater number of people using it, and higher costs mean higher savings, which in the rectangle cover those costs.

Economic growth also needs investment, which is covered by savings.

So, if growth is bad for the environment and GDP is intrinsically linked to growth, it can be deduced that the GDP rectangle is terrible for the environment.

And that within it, there can be neither degrowth nor stationarity.

Does the third party enjoy it?

In the interpretation of doing business, environmentalism has been added to the two opponents, socialism and capitalism, increasing the spectrum of options, but always within the rectangle of GDP and with each centred on its objective: in order, equality, freedom, sustainability.

Regarding the triad, an old proverb says that between two disputes, the third one benefits, but are we sure that, in this case, sustainability benefits and prospers?

By reaching the common denominator, Filoponía has shown that sustainability, equality, and economic freedom can only prosper by breaking the accumulation paradigm.

Theories and natural laws

A theory can be fair, convenient, or even desirable, but it is always just a theory: that is to say, a point of view, an interpretation, an opinion. A theory will never be a law, in this case, a mathematical law, like the Pythagorean theorem; not even Pythagoras himself thought of turning his philosophical theories into natural laws.

Filoponía itself is not a law; it is a theory expanded into a model, but it is still my opinion.

Value is a theory, the opinion of eminent scholars, but it is still their opinion; modern economics elevated it to law, and with that law, it created around us the prison of the GDP rectangle.

The relationship between humanity and the State

The relationship with the State, that is to say, with the institution par excellence, has always been based on taxation: among the first testimonies that have come down to us is the Mesopotamian jubilee, the liberation of debtors to the State and the cancellation of their debt. Not only that, within the myriad means of payment, a currency, among the many in circulation, becomes official when the State accepts it to pay taxes. In short, social relations have shaped humanity, but the State has also played a fundamental role in our shaping. Moving away from the accumulation paradigm, as Filoponía proposed, also means the non-existence of tax. While social relations, entrusted to individuals and their will, will change over time, relations with the State, which, on the contrary, take place as a result of a decree and are therefore immediate, will be the example of the new humanity: We will see how the shifting of the boundary from the economy to the environment and the abolition of taxes are based on the same founding idea: to bring both relationships back to a direct

relationship, eliminating the mediation constituted by the economy. Concerning the environment, the non-accumulation of sustainability is obvious. At the same time, the meaning concerning the State is less immediate. However, asking people for personal commitment rather than tax money disrupts the relationship with the State, which has always been based on taxes.³³

The theory of value

According to Graeber, although rooted in the past, the theory of value remains in our daily lives as the foundational basis of the GDP rectangle.

It should also be noted that, if we want to remain within it, in Filoponía, the surplus value is very high, largely compensated by the amount of the self-determination income.

However, the real issue is not this but the virtuality of money and its disconnection from the real economy: apart from the convincing philosophical diatribe about the unit of measurement of goods, what relevance is there to money, and consequently to capital, which is formed elsewhere?

Let us be clear: we already have this virtual (or, in this case, fictitious—in a negative sense) money. Today, elite capital is created through finance, the enormous mass of funds available only to the elite.

That is why I call it fictitious; it becomes virtual—with a positive meaning—when it becomes diffused capital available to everyone and, therefore, popular. It is capable of taking humanity out of the GDP rectangle and the economy out of the debt prison.

Equality and economic freedom

If we look at it from the point of view of socialism, it is time for equality to develop a theory that can compete with capitalism on its ground, economic freedom (which, by the way, is proclaimed and, in fact, is very unrealistic).

Capitalism, in effect, wins today because it has fought by instilling individualism in everyone. We are in favour of satisfying the needs of the community, but only if they are combined with individual needs; otherwise, the latter prevails. Filoponía, in this case, the coach of equality, not only reveals the debt cage for doing business but also achieves, in addition to equality and sustainable humanisation, full economic freedom, that of self-determination: final score Equality - Capitalism 3 to 1!

Gungrissini

Calembour formed from Gundrisse, the antonomasia of notes in common sense, declined to the diminutive - gundrissini - given its essence of short side notes, and grissini, the lightest form of bread.

I am, and firmly intend to be, very seriously not serious; after all, Filoponía reflects that definition and could not be otherwise. It is imbued with a libertarian spirit, playful in its own way, certainly about achieving serenity, attention to the who and the what is less, especially dedicated to the who and the what is less: a set of characteristics that is very far from muddy writing.

In short, this is one more aspect of the otherness of Filoponía.

³³ Quote from Filoponía, from the chapter *Introduction*.

Related links:

- The Jus Semper Global Alliance
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- Andrea Surbone: [Filoponía, a distinctive economic model](#)
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❖ **About Jus Semper:** The Jus Semper Global Alliance aims to contribute to achieving a sustainable ethos of social justice in the world, where all communities live in truly democratic environments that provide full enjoyment of human rights and sustainable living standards in accordance with human dignity. To accomplish this, it contributes to the liberalisation of the democratic institutions of society that have been captured by the owners of the market. With that purpose, it is devoted to research and analysis to provoke the awareness and critical thinking to generate ideas for a transformative vision to materialise the truly democratic and sustainable paradigm of People and Planet and NOT of the market.

❖ **About the author:** Andrea Surbone, writer, publisher, ex-winegrower and visionary; author of Filoponía - Uscire dal paradigma del denaro in the book Il lavoro e il valore al tempo dei robot - Intelligenza artificiale e non-occupazione, by D. Astrologo, A. Surbone, P. Terna, Meltemi, Milano 2019 – www.meltemieditore.it/. He has written fiction with Dusts and since November 2007 writes have a nice week, a small column of glances at the world, sent every Monday by email. Publisher of the magazine Nuvole (for paper issues from 16 to 23) and still a member of the Editorial Board (www.nuvole.it). Spokesperson of a proposal for political economy (www.propostaneokeynesiana.it). Promoter of a political proposal (www.surbone.it/per). Andrea is a graduate from the SAA School of Management in Turin.



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Portal on the net: <https://www.jussemper.org/>
e-mail: informa@jussemper.org