

**Addressing each and every one**  
Popularisation/populism through the visual arts  
April 21 and 22, 2016



Oliviero Ponte di Pino

**A Stand Up Politician  
for Democracy 2.0**

**Beppe Grillo  
and New European Populism**

MoVimento 5 Stelle, a political party that has almost no history, becomes one of the three major players in Italian Parliament, with 163 MPs, thanks to eight million votes (more or less the same as the centre-left and centre-right coalitions).

# Why do people vote Grillo?

## Demopolis: le ragioni del voto al Movimento 5 Stelle

Rispondenti: elettori del M5S



I N S T I T U T O  
**DEMOPOLIS**

# Theatre & Revolution (why I wrote this book)

**2013, Italy**

A stand up comedian becomes a charismatic leader in a XXI Century democracy.

Beppe Grillo (Luigi Comencini, *Cercasi Gesù – Looking for Jesus*, 1982).



Antonin Artaud as Marat (Abel Gance, *Napoléon*, 1927).

**1789-1793, Paris**

A great number of actors and theatre people are revolutionary leaders (Claudio Meldolesi).

# Prologue

## L'Uomo qualunque

“L'Uomo  
qualunque”  
 (“The Ordinary  
Man”), July  
1947.

**1946, Italy**  
Fronte dell'Uomo  
qualunque,  
a political party  
led by playwright  
and tax consultant  
Giancarlo  
Giannini, gets  
more than  
1.200.000 votes  
and 30 MPs, but  
soon disappears  
from the political  
arena.





# Prologue

## Coluche

**1980, France**

In the country of Poujade, the stand up comedian Coluche gets 16% in surveys at the Presidential elections before he steps off.



**1985, Italy**

Coluche is an actor with Grillo in a movie by Dino Risi, *Scemo di guerra*.

*Grillo vs  
Grillo*  
(poster),  
2016.



*“Sorrisi e  
Canzoni  
TV”*  
(cover),  
April 6,  
1981.



*The Hand  
(Maurizio  
Di Bona),  
Beppe  
Grillo  
(cartoon).*

# Grillo 1.0 & Antonio Ricci theatre & tv

Beppe Grillo  
and Antonio  
Ricci, 1979.



**1986**

Beppe Grillo is one of the most popular Italian actors, with shows in prime time on Saturday night. His main character: the Italian Everyman travelling abroad (USA, Brazil). Texts by Antonio Ricci.



# Grillo banned from Italian state tv



## 1986

Grillo is banned from RAI (Italian state tv), because of a joke on corruption and on prime minister Bettino Craxi's trip to China.

## 1994

The big Italian corruption scandal, Tangentopoli (Bribe town), wipes out traditional parties. Craxi is condemned and ends his life in exile in Tunisia.

# Gabibbo: Beppe Grillo's avatar?

**1988**

Antonio Ricci begins working for Silvio Berlusconi's television.

His greatest success, on air since 1988, is a daily satirical news program,

news program, *Striscia la notizia*.

The star of Italian infotainment is a phallic puppet, called Gabibbo:

he exposes the scandals that Italians report to *Striscia la notizia*.



# Grillo 1.0

## Everybody & Italy's guts



**1995**

The tour *Energia e informazione* (*Energy and Information*) has an audience of 400.000 in 60 towns.

**1987-2004**

"I am not a comedian any more. I am a psychopath, I scream, I get a load off, and they pay me!"

"These are not my shows, these are electoral happenings. I do not satirize any more, but I have to do it because people want me to do it."

"I do a serious job, I study, I tour for three months and I do research for eight months, because I like it. If truth didn't exist any more, we would have anarchy."

# Parallel Lives

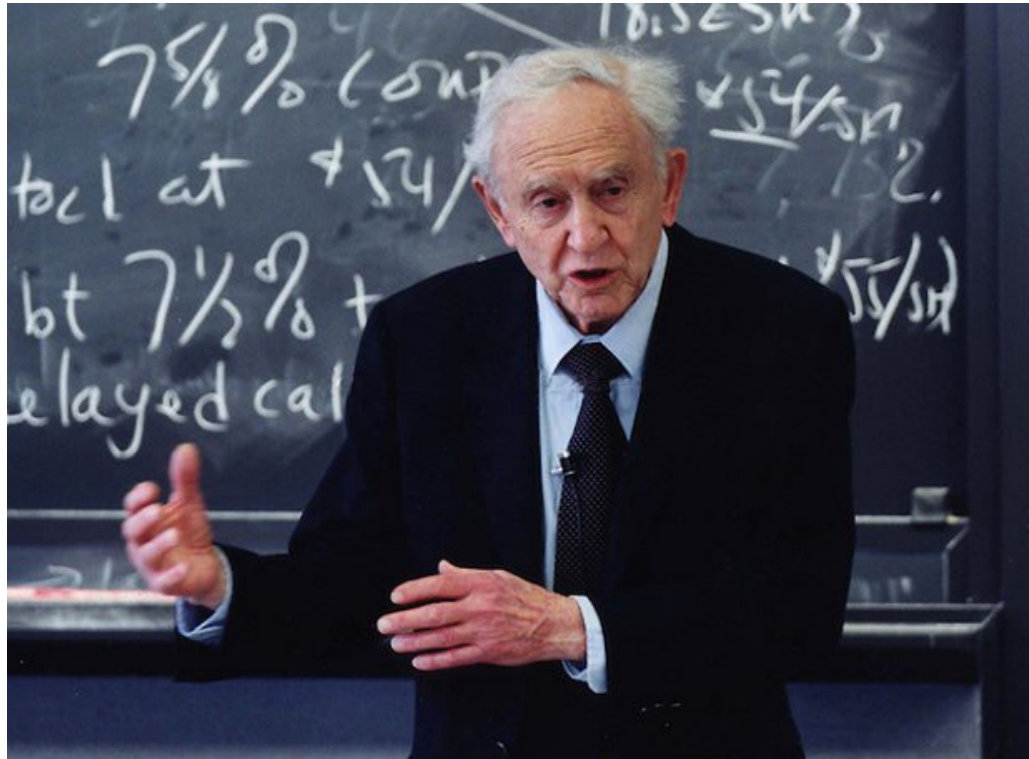
## Dario Fo & Beppe Grillo



- Two very popular and outspoken comic actors.
- Both banned from RAI (in 1962 and 1986) for political reasons.
- They begin touring with their shows on independent circuits.
- The first is now a Nobel Laureate & the second a political leader.

# Franco Modigliani & Beppe Grillo

## The Cult of the Amateur (wikipolitics)



**1996, September**

A discussion with the economist Franco Modigliani, Nobel Laureate. Citizen Grillo is not a journalist asking an expert his advice, he stands on the same level of the Great Professor and can contradict him on economic theories.



# TE LA DO IO L'EUROPA

# TOUR



## BEPPE GRILLO

[WWW.BEPPEGRILLO.IT](http://WWW.BEPPEGRILLO.IT)

SABATO  
**5**  
APRILE  
ORE 21.15

**PALAROSSINI  
ANCONA**

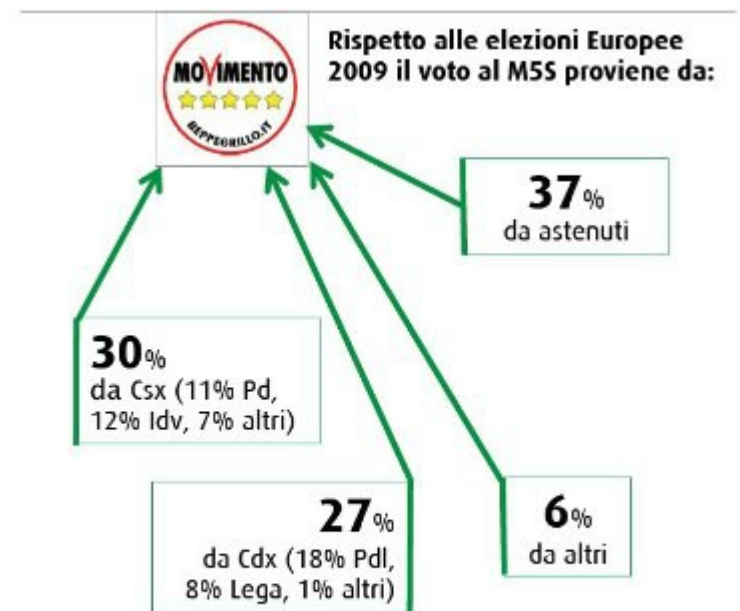
PUNTO VENDITA  
AUTORIZZATO

**viva**ticket  
by BEST UNION

*Te la do io  
l'Europa  
(poster)  
2014.*

# Grillo 1.0 Grillo 2.0 Europe is Evil

Beyond left & right.



L'ITALIA CHE VOTA - 26/02/2013

SWG Tutti i diritti riservati.

# From Grillo 1.0 to Grillo 2.0

## Computers from Hell to Paradise



Beppe Grillo, *Tutto il Grillo che conta*, 2000.



“Internazionale” (cover), May 12, 2005.

# Grillo 2.0 & Gianroberto Casaleggio theatre web politics

**2004**

Grillo meets  
Gianroberto  
Casaleggio, web  
entrepreneur and  
media guru.

**2005, January 26**

beppegrillo.it is  
online, promoted by  
the theatre show with  
the same title.

**2005, February 1**

The first political  
campaign of  
beppegrillo.it.





# The Everybody on stage meets the Everybody on the web

**2005, Autumn**  
beppegrillo.it has  
200.000 visits per day,  
and is one of the 10  
most visited websites  
of the world.  
According to “Time”  
Magazine, Beppe  
Grillo is among the  
“2005 Europeans  
Heroes”, “mixing the  
physicality of John  
Belushi with the social  
conscience of José  
Bové”.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Beppe Grillo website. At the top, there is a banner for the book "PRENDIAMOCI IL FUTURO" with the subtitle "Perché nel Lambro si muore e nel Tamigi sguazzano i delfini?". Below this is the header "Il Blog di Beppe Grillo" with a profile picture of Beppe Grillo and the date "28 Settembre 2010". The main content area features a post titled "Un click contro l'inceneritore di Ravenna" with a video player and text. The text discusses the proposed incinerator in Ravenna and the impact on the environment and local community. To the right of the main content, there is a sidebar with a section titled "Un click contro l'inceneritore di Ravenna" and a video player. Below the main content, there is a section for "WOODSTOCK 5 STELLE" with the dates "Cesena, 25-26 settembre 2010" and a "PARTECIPA" button. On the far right, there is a vertical sidebar with a "MOVIMENTO" logo, a "Grillorama" section for DVD and books, and a "Maglietta bianca" section for a t-shirt.

**PRENDIAMOCI IL FUTURO**  
Perché nel Lambro si muore e nel Tamigi sguazzano i delfini?  
LEGGI LA PRESENTAZIONE DEL LIBRO

**Il Blog di Beppe Grillo**  
OFFICIAL HONOREE  
2010 WOBBY AWARDS  
Raffaella Pirini  
28 Settembre 2010

Home Meetup LISTE CI VICHIE MOVIMENTO Newsletter Registrati GrilloNews Tour 2010

**WOODSTOCK 5 STELLE** musica & futuro  
Cesena, 25-26 settembre 2010  
**PARTECIPA**

**Un click contro l'inceneritore di Ravenna**

*Cosa rimarrà della nostra civiltà? Gli inceneritori? Accanto a un sito incantevole del ravenstate sta per essere costruito l'ennesimo inceneritore. Oltre alla vita distruggono anche la bellezza. [Cliccate contro l'inceneritore](#) e adottate il sito di Palazzo San Giacomo. "A poco più di 100 metri dal sito identificato per la costruzione di un inceneritore di biomasse, sulle rovine dell'Ex-Eridania e all'interno di una area naturalistica a protezione speciale europea, sorge un importante palazzo del 1600 di una nobile famiglia ravenstate (definito per sua sontuosità la Versailles dei Conti Rasponi) ed un'area archeologica con i resti di un'importante villa romana. Entro il 30 settembre gli Italiani possono esprimere un proprio parere su questo scempio che si sta per consumare. Per portare l'attenzione su questa vicenda il [Cian-Destino](#) ha inserito il Palazzo San Giacomo all'interno dell'iniziativa*

**Un click contro l'inceneritore di Ravenna**

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**MOVIMENTO** ENTRARE NELL'AREA  
★★★★★

**Grillorama**  
I DVD e i libri di beppegrillo.it  
Catalogo | Area negozi

Prendiamoci il futuro +  
Un Grillo mannaro a Londra

NOVITA  
18,90 euro (+ spediz. da 2 €)  
**Acquista »**

**Maglietta bianca**  
La t-shirt ufficiale di Woodstock 5 Stelle  
Scegli una taglia - +  
da 8€ (+ spediz. da 2€)

# MeetUp Groups

## Everybody can be a friend & participate



Reflective  
communities

**2005, July 16**

Grillo opens a MeetUp group: “I created a category, I called it 'Beppe Grillo', I opened a first group in Milan, and baptized it 'Friends of Beppe Grillo'. I will try to meet the groups at their hometown during my tour and wherever I will attend an event”.

**2011**

According to Grillo, the “Friends of Grillo” groups on MeetUp were 366, with 100.000 users in 28 towns and 11 countries.



# V-Day

## Everybody in the street



**2007, September 8** V-Day (V=Vaffanculo=Fuck Off): actors, rock stars, and journalists on stage, more than 100.000 persons in Bologna, with parallel events in 200 towns.

The petition for a “Clean Parliament” gest 300.000 signatures.

**2008, January 24** beppegrillo.it becomes a political tool.

**2008, March 3** A political program for local elections, where M5S gets 1-2%.

**2008, April 24** V-Day in Turin: more than 100.000 persons attend.

# MoVimento 5 Stelle Is Everybody One?

## **A radical experiment in direct democracy...**

- # One head one vote.
- # No intermediate bodies.
- Representatives are “speakers” and the assembly can recall them from their office.
- # MeetUp groups to discuss issues and programs.
- # The candidates are chosen through electronic voting, mainly on the basis of a youtube video (XFactor politics).
- # The new Rousseau Platform (2016).

## **...with the support of a charismatic leader**

- # A showman as a symbol and icon.
- # The Party symbol, and therefore the Party, are privately owned.
- # Casaleggio Associati controls the servers, used to choose the candidates in local and political elections.
- # The internal rules (and the programs) are apparently very simple, too simple, and can easily be manipulated.
- # Dissent almost always leads to immediate expulsion from the party.

# Irritation & Provocation

**2009**

Grillo announces he will run to become leader of PD (ex Communist Party).

The party leaders reaction: "A political party is not a bus, nor a cabaret".

In a video, Piero Fassino declares: "If Grillo really wants to be a politician, he just has to create a party and we will see how many votes he gets". After the electoral triumph in 2013, the video with this statement is a hit on youtube.



# Irritation & Provocation

**2012, October 10**

To launch the campaign for the elections, Grillo swims across the Messina Strait: 3 km in 75 minutes.

Other political swimmers were Benito Mussolini and Mao Zedong, with the famous raid on the Yangtze River in 1966.



**Beppe Grillo, 2012.**

**Mao Zedong, 1966.**



# Irritation & Provocation



**2016, March 16**

Grillo's Sacrament: he gives crickets (= grilli) to his followers, the way priests give consecrated hosts during the Mass.



# Paradoxes

## Can a King of Fools become King?



**Beppe Grillo outside Teatro Ariston,  
Sanremo Festival, February, 2013.**



**Charles Laughton as King of Fools  
(*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*,  
1939).**

# Paradoxes

## Can Everybody become a Hero?



**2013, February**

After the electoral triumph, Beppe Grillo decides to go for a run on the beach near his holiday house. He is the man of the day and the building is surrounded by cameras and reporters. He decides to wear a mask and a special outfit.

# A global Everybody?

**2004, May 24**

*Fahrenheit 9/11* by **Michael Moore** wins the Palme d'Or (Cannes). In 2005, "Time" magazine names Moore one of the world's 100 most influential people.

**2004**

**Syriza**, the Greek coalition of the Left, is founded. After the 2015 elections, it is the largest party in the Hellenic Parliament, with party chairman Alexis Tsipras serving as Prime Minister of Greece.

**2006, January 1**

**Piratepartiet**, the first Pirate Party, is established in Sweden.

**2010**

In **Iceland**, after the 2008 economic crash, the new **Constitution** is written through crowdsourcing, virtually involving all the citizens. In 2013 the process ends, when the Parliament stops it.

**2011, May**

The protest against the government in Spain gives birth to the Movimiento 15-M, aka the **Indignados**.

**2011, September 17**

**Occupy Wall Street**, a protest movement against big business and big finance (1% vs 99%), begins with the occupation of Zuccotti Park, New York.

**2014, March**

**Podemos** is established in Spain. After the elections of 2015, with 21% of votes, it is the third party of the country, with 69 MPs.

**2014-15**

Rise of **populist right** wing parties in several european countries.

**2016**

**Donald Trump** leads the race in the Republican primaries (USA).



**TE LA DO' IO L'AMERICA**



STEREO  
SC 1155

**BEPPE GRILLO**

**Beppe Grillo,  
*Te la do io,  
l'America,*  
1981.**