
PAOLO PRODI
Homo europaeus

 Bologna: il Mulino, 2015

PAOLO PRODI, storico dell'età moderna, professore emerito presso l'Università di Bologna, scomparso alla fine del 2016, fissa nel suo saggio quelli che ritiene i fondamenti costitutivi della modernità dell'Occidente europeo, e cioè: la laicità, il distacco del potere spirituale dal potere temporale proprio della cristianità occidentale, il tema del giuramento con una divinità "super partes" che diviene così testimone di un patto politico, la separazione del diritto naturale-divino dal diritto positivo, civile e canonico, il sorgere del dualismo tra la sfera della coscienza e quella della giustizia umana. Questi stessi assunti – uniti da un filo comune – appaiono oggi in uno stato di crisi profonda che investe non solo il campo economico e politico, ma la stessa dimensione antropologica, identitaria. Le ragioni di questo fenomeno sono complesse ma l'autore evidenzia come l'uomo europeo, il cui profilo si caratterizza per una duplicità dimensionale, della coscienza e della legge, sia chiamato a misurarsi, spesso con difficoltà, con la globalizzazione.

Questo compito, nella sfida attuale, non spetta dunque all'Europa storica, economica o geografica ma anzitutto al singolo cittadino nella consapevolezza della sua articolata e complessa appartenenza. Anche lo storico è chiamato nel contempo a interrogarsi sulla questione della "identità europea", poiché l'Europa costituisce un laboratorio della modernità in quanto "insieme di esperienze, tra le quali alcune (si pensi alla rinascita del diritto romano, fondamento della costruzione dello Stato) risalgono al medioevo, mentre molte altre si sono estese e sviluppate sino ai nostri giorni" (p. 15).

Il testo, edito dalla nota casa editrice il Mulino di Bologna, della cui associazione culturale costitutiva Paolo Prodi fu cofondatore nel 1965, si inserisce in quel filone di riflessione storiografica sugli assetti costitutivi della civiltà europea di cui Prodi fu attento interprete, come dimostrò nei suoi volumi sulla Chiesa post-tridentina, il giuramento politico e la figura del "Sovrano Pontefice" nella prima età moderna. □

 ALBERTO CASTALDINI

YVONNE RYDIN
Governing for Sustainable Urban Development

 London: Taylor & Francis, 2010

IT IS A known fact that within the contemporary urban management it is imperative how the growing complexity of urban systems is administered and the extent to which the development of these systems is managed by adopting the most effective attitudes and instruments in order to deliver sustainable urban development. Nevertheless, even if writings on this topic continue to expand, scientific research lacks empirical studies on such policy tools and specific technical details that sustainable urban development can be engineered with. Therefore, Yvonne Rydin's *Governing for Sustainable Development* (2010) provides not only a conceptual overview but also a resource on how sustainable urban development can be delivered in practice through such an explicit, methodological yet comprehensive analysis that is quite rare amongst studies dealing with this particular research topic. Hence, the book serves as a brilliant guide and essential reading not only for academ-

ics and students but also for professionals from various related fields such as spatial planning, architecture, urban design, etc. Even though the title suggests a general approach to sustainable urban development, Rydin's work offers a much more definite analysis placed not only on the urban scale—or more specifically on the building or the development site—but also in broader regional and national perspective. Based on the inclusive analysis of different modes of governing, the aim of the book is to explore the role of urban development in the complex process of achieving sustainable development. The focal point of the book is that market forces alone cannot be accountable for the success of sustainable urban development. It is subject to a governance procedure that is shaped by a network created with the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders and based more on a trust-based model which has knowledge and learning at its heart. Hence, Rydin introduces the reader not only to a conceptual analysis of the subject but also to a range of financial, construction and planning elements necessary to be taken into account in delivering sustainable urban development.

The book is organized into ten chapters. In the first two chapters Rydin focuses on the broader conceptual understanding of sustainable development and accurately connects it to the scales of building, development site, urban area and the region. Chapter 1, "Sustainable Development and the Urban Agenda," introduces the holistic nature of the concept captured through the interrelationship of economic, social and environmental dimensions and illustrated with the help of different models. Rydin intuitively reveals the different conceptual interpretations by drawing a contrast between the strong-weak sustainability duet which flashes upon the relevancy of

different perspectives towards this topic. In the rest of the chapter the author brings the term of sustainable development into an urban context stressing in particular the impact and relevancy of climate change on this scale. As an addition to the previous chapter, Chapter 2, "Dimensions of Sustainable Urban Development," takes the concept of sustainability to the level of its applicability in an urban context, features its practical facet by contrasting it to its environmental, economic and social aspects on the building, development site and overall on the urban and regional scale. There is no doubt that the thorough analysis performed by the author is an extremely valuable compilation of the technical elements that help explain the focal point of the chapter. However, what gives perhaps a demanding understanding of this section is the detailed technological account. Nevertheless, the various examples given by the author in support of her analysis assist the reader in understanding what presently rates as sustainable urban development. After discussing the complex notion of sustainability in the context of urban development, in Chapter 3, "Producing Urban Development," Rydin discusses the interactional processes that lead to sustainable Urban Development by which she sets the scene for the following two chapters. In trying to conceptualize such processes that produce sustainable urban development, the author draws on Patsy Healey's (1991) four models. Nevertheless, a variant of the agency model proves to be the most appropriate for conceptualizing urban development as "a network process and emphasizing relationships between actors, the resource flows between them and, hence, the way that power can be exercised across the network" (p. 32). In order to illustrate the market processes and networks that frame the production of ur-

ban development through more pragmatic means, Rydin presents some evidence on the construction process and elaborates on the role of finance by drawing a distinction between construction and development in a well-crafted manner.

The following two chapters are yet again conceptual in their nature and ground the rest of the chapters of the book. The main terms that both chapters are built around are governing and learning from the sustainability's point of view. Chapter 4, "Governing for Sustainability," discusses the notions of government, governance and governmentality. It relates to the different modes of governing from the conventional approach to the contemporary systems, the resurrection of governance, governmentality and their coexistence with policy systems. A special focus is given to the urban scale and a discussion of power as a feature of policy systems and of various modes of governing is also an interesting ingredient that Rydin fits elegantly under the governance-governing heading. The chapter ends with a framework of governing tools which sets the scene for the last part of the book. Chapter 5, "Governing and Learning," acts as a platform where a central governing feature considered by the overall perspective of the book is discussed, the importance and role of learning in the governing system. With the opening thought of "movement towards sustainable development requires learning and places new demands on knowledge resources" therefore "such movement will require change and change requires learning" (p. 61) Rydin entices the reader to think about the inseparable learning-knowledge relation and their interplay with the policy process. The chapter calls for the need to emphasize the importance of networks, the rightful selection and engagements of different actors as well as the selection of the appropriate arenas for

interaction. The pervasive reflection dominating the chapter is to think about how knowledge and learning is central to governing for sustainable urban development.

In chapters 6 through 9 Rydin elaborates on the framework of policy tools for analyzing governing for sustainable urban development. Lastly, in chapter 10 the main idea of the book with specific recommendations is developed. Chapter 6, "Information and Sustainable Urban Development," focuses on various informational policy tools that set and shape urban development in a sustainable manner. The discussion has a technical dimension and covers different assessment schemes on energy efficiency, carbon emissions and zero-carbon development. The analysis of difficulties and conflicts related to definition, policy development and regulatory processes make the discussion rather captivating. Chapter 7, "Financial Incentives and Sustainable Urban Development," elaborates on policy tools that consider financial instruments and in particular taxes, subsidies as relevant. Nevertheless, the author mainly stresses upon the level to which justification is based on rational economic decision-making or more dependent on a social context where behavior is determined by various backgrounds. Therefore, emphasis is placed on the importance of institutional arrangements and their ability to change behavior.

The following two chapters explore the way spatial planning and regulatory processes contribute to sustainable urban development. Chapter 8, "Spatial Planning for Sustainable Urban Development," summarizes how social capital can contribute at making spatial planning through governance an effective tool. The chapter joins in the key elements of spatial planning—energy, waste, transport, water, housing systems—that deliver sustainable

urban development and stresses the relevance of learning in this process. Chapter 9, “Regulating for Sustainable Urban Development,” shows how regulatory processes play a vital role in the sustainability agenda. Quite constructively the author brings the key themes discussed in the book together in Chapter 10, “The Prospects for Sustainable Urban Development,” reevaluates whether the different modes of governing truly lead to sustainability and deliberates on future prospects, the eventual need for alternative governing modes in order to deliver sustainable urban development.

In conclusion, Yvonne Rydin, with this insightful, well-structured and comprehensive material provides a concise conceptual background, a clear argument supported with the help of various examples and captures some of the existing challenges and addresses vital deficiencies of the governing process of sustainable urban development. There is no doubt that the author provides an extremely valuable investigation of delivering sustainability in the urban development.

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JÚLIA A. NAGY

VASILE SEBASTIAN DÂNCU
Politically incorrect: Scenarii pentru o Românie posibilă

 (Scenarios for a possible Romania)
 Cluj-Napoca: Școala Ardeleană, 2017

VASILE SEBASTIAN Dâncu is an important personality of current Romanian political and intellectual life, characterized by a very complex personality. Such is his present book, which is practically a cross-sectional view of Dâncu’s beliefs, a true synthesis of

his political credo for Romania, a mixture of objective facts, subjective statements and paradigms of values, centered around the author, who is present through the whole text as some kind of observer-narrator-analyst, due to his large and diverse life experience—professor in sociology and career politician—and comprehensive knowledge concerning the life of the elites and of the rural and urban working masses in Romania. The various subjects of this present book are reflexions on these topics.

Most of the essays and the studies in this volume have been published in the *Sinteza* journal. As a structure, the book is divided into five large collective chapters, centered around the notion in their title. Such are “Politics,” “The State,” “Society,” “Culture” and last, but not least, “Us,” this latter concept being a synonym in this case for the contemporary society in Romania, with all of its achievements, but even more with its issues.

Two Romanias are intersecting in this book. First, the Romania visible day by day in the news and TV is present through its fragments. Second, the invisible, but perceived Romania is present and largely explained through the whole book, as a complex, but malleable dimension, consisting of a sum of perceptions, based on fragments of realities. Even if the tone is critical, in many places melancholy being mixed with nostalgia, it is not a “Black Book,” the approach being constructive towards the main issues of Romanian society. There is no aggression toward politics, and the volume is not offering a structured political program to replace the current trends of the Romanian political life; experience shows that the common elements of such theoretical programs are short term, they are not put into practice. At the same time, the title—*Politically Incorrect*—introduces