



For a sustainable use of soil resource

Giuseppe Caridi¹

Abstract

The essay tackles the key role that soil has had in the national and international scientific debate in the last few years. Referring also to still little known authors in Italy, three main topics are considered. The first one is targeted to the critique of the ideological and cultural trend according to which the soil resource is only a mere passive element for the market, an ordinary commodity. The second concerns the possible risks of such a vision related to the issue that the soil resource - especially in reference to the disciplinary scope of urban planning - continues to be the most vague and uncertain among the central terms of its vocabulary, though it continues to be the main conceptual and operational element at the base of the disciplinary epistemology. Finally, it is discussed a new and original perspective of useful work to mitigate such risks that should put at the core of the elaborations and good urban planning practices a basic point of view: that is the conception of the soil as a common good. This request about common goods, although technically amorphous, should be a central issue in the debate on the “destinies” of urban planning, and more generally, on the new paradigms for an authentically aware and self-determined society.

Keywords: commons, soil, land use, settlements, urbanization, spatial development..

Il saggio tratta del ruolo chiave che il suolo ha avuto nel dibattito scientifico nazionale ed internazionale degli ultimi anni. Facendo anche riferimento ad autori ancora poco noti in Italia vengono presi in considerazione tre argomenti principali. Il primo è mirato alla critica della piegatura ideologica e culturale secondo la quale la risorsa suolo rappresenta, esclusivamente, un mero elemento passivo per il mercato, una banale merce. Il secondo riguarda i possibili rischi di tale visione connessi alla questione che la risorsa suolo, soprattutto in riferimento all'ambito disciplinare dell'urbanistica, continua a essere il più vago e incerto fra i termini centrali del suo lessico, sebbene continui a rappresentare il principale elemento concettuale ed operativo posto alla base dell'epistemologia disciplinare. Infine, si discute su

⁽¹⁾ Università Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria, Dipartimento Patrimonio Architettura Urbanistica (PAU), giuseppe.caridi@alice.it

una nuova ed originale prospettiva di lavoro utile a mitigare tali rischi che dovrebbe porre al centro delle elaborazioni e delle buone pratiche urbanistiche un punto di vista fondativo: la concezione del suolo come bene comune. Un'istanza questa dei beni comuni che, ancorché tecnicamente amorfa, dovrebbe costituire un nodo centrale nel dibattito sui "destini" dell'urbanistica e, più in generale, sui nuovi paradigmi per una società autenticamente consapevole e autodeterminata.

Parole chiave: *beni comuni, suolo, uso del suolo, insediamenti, urbanizzazione, pianificazione spaziale.*

1. For the ethics of soil

In the last few years many contributions have highlighted, starting from different point of views, the key-role of soil in the current stage of the national and international scientific debate (Sugden *et al.*, 2004). Two conceivable approaches emerge and both, even though closely complementary and related to each other, seem to be developed in activities of critical observation with an attitude of mutual indifference (and impatience).

On the one hand the aspects having a technical peculiarity prevails; what counts it is the definition of methodologies, criteria and tools for the soil use control. On the other hand, the attention is focused on the *epistemological* aspects with an aim of re-defining the modalities of thinking such a resource; a need that also emerges about the need to indicate the overcoming of the development notion intended as indefinite increase of commoditization, as well as of the same notion of development taken in as a natural and positive condition (Pileri and Granata, 2012). Within this second approach the various lines of conceptual revision establish a very variegated framework of critical issues which testifies a drastic phase of re-configuration of the theme and for which is already very early to focus clear convergences. Anyway we can find a strong trend to very attentive attitudes to "formal" economical/juridical aspects instead of "substantial" aspects congruent with a particular idea of soil toward a system of clear and precise values. In this sense we can highlight the lack of an explicit stance about some basic principles that it's necessary, very shortly indeed, to mention. The first one is connected to the aware or not adhesion to neo-liberal ideology. This has consequences on the theme of the management of the urban revenue whose absolutely dominating role has brought about a reorganization of the building sector where the financial component of the soil plays an increasing role ("financialization of the building block"). Second, the support to the dismantling of the public government system of urban and territorial transformation (authoritative planning)