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IN
URBAN
STUDIES *(Part II)*
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KEY CONCEPTS IN URBAN STUDIES *(Part II)*

The series is organised by
Antonio G. Calafati and Francesco Chiodelli

For more information on each seminar, please visit: www.gssi.infn.it

PLANNING

Francesco Chiodelli

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MAY

Even if sharp differences exist among different contexts, the effects of planning decisions are very deep in the majority of the cities. This is true not only with reference to the shape of the urban fabric, but also with reference to the population that lives and uses the city: in fact, spatial planning has major economic and social effects. It is for this reason that spatial planning has inevitably a redistributive nature. For instance, some groups will benefit from the creation of a new park in their neighbourhood; on the contrary, some others will have to bear the negative externalities of the localization of a dump in their area; then, some landowners will see the value of their plots rise enormously because of the zoning of a former agricultural area as residential, others will see their plots expropriated for public needs. Even if spatial planning is often regarded as a purely technical activity, it is, on the contrary, an intimately political activity. This is true from a procedural viewpoint: the final decision about a land use plan is always – at least in our democratic countries – in the hands of the politically elected bodies. However, this is true also from a substantial viewpoint: every spatial choice influences the sphere of rights, economic values, and power relations; implicitly or explicitly. The seminar aims at shedding light on the complex relationship between technical components and political components in planning, and tries to pinpoint what are the limits to the competence and pertinence of planners action.

Francesco Chiodelli is research fellow at GSSI. His research focuses on themes of planning theory, urban conflicts, tolerance and pluralism in public and private spaces. His papers have appeared in a number of international journals, such as *Planning Theory*, *Cities*, *Geoforum*, *Town Planning Review*, *Journal of Urban Affairs*.

Knowledge in policy analysis calls for discussion of the variety of sources of information and the multiplicity of methods employed in government policy making or in social problem solving. Pragmatist social theory discarded the epistemology that went with the concept of the *public interest*. As Dewey observed (1927, *The Public and Its Problems*), there is not one public, but a universe of publics. Lindblom's and Cohen's suggestive line of analysis is very similar. In their landmark theoretical contribution (1979, *Usable Knowledge*) they emphasised that inadequate information and inquiry play an important role in policy failures or conflicts. In rejecting received notions of professional inquiry as basic (if not exclusive) instruments of social problem solving, they suggested that the activity of inquiry, more than the stock of findings, is the core concept. The underestimation of ordinary and non professional knowledge in public policy-making processes has impairing influences on people's capacity and opportunities to probe problems and learn through action – conjoint activity and interaction, as an alternative to understanding, analytical/rationalistic thought. Thus, inquiry is social or interactive; it is not a special ability of social scientists and other experts.

The revolutionary proposal is to consider social learning as a method of problem solving. Recalling Wildavsky's words: "do not ask 'What is policy analysis' as if it were apart from us. Ask rather 'What can we make analysis become?' as if we were a part of this art and craft" (1979, *Speaking Truth to Power*).

Francesca Gelli is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University IUAV of Venice, where she has been teaching Policy Analysis and Public Administration since 2006. She has authored a number of books, chapters and articles on democratic theory and public participation, city politics, policy analysis, case-study analysis.

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Massimo Bricocoli and
Marco Cremaschi

18
JUN

The notion of neighbourhood recalls the very origin of city foundation: two crossing axes - cardo and decumanus - setting the reference for urban development and meanwhile defining, organizing and separating four different 'quarters'. In urban studies, the neighbourhood has been a consistent and long-lasting analytical frame for guiding and structuring social and spatial analysis. Yet, the neighbourhood has also been a very powerful reference in a normative sense: as a unit in the modern planning of housing estates, as a policy instrument in area-based urban regeneration policies, as well as the chimera/objective of large-scale development projects since the end of the 1980s. Neighbourhoods may be considered as a lens through which to observe how the coupling of places and people is designed, organized and managed and from which new social problems emerge and challenge public policies. In Anne Power's words, Neighbourhoods frame people's lives, providing a bundle of services that people need, a vital anchor to individual lives, the 'container' within which different social groups develop contact with each other.

The seminar will discuss neighbourhoods as dense and complex bases of information, as a visible and material dimension of public action and forms of government. This interpretation and research perspective is especially valid in a phase which is strongly characterized by a diffusion of forms of 'government of people through the government of space', considering places as terrains in which projects, intentions, strategies and public action devices are inscribed.

Massimo Bricocoli is Full Professor at the University of Luxembourg. In the past ten years he has been Assistant Professor in Urban Policies at the Polytechnic University of Milan.

Marco Cremaschi is professor at Science Po and scientific director of the master programme in Urbanism. He teaches Urban Policies at the School of Architecture, University of Roma Tre.

SHARING

Angelo Sampieri

30
JUN

The contemporary city is strongly influenced by sharing. The term is ambiguous: it alludes to a consolidation of social relationships caused by the anxiety of individualisation. It assumes different forms, usually short-lived even when repeated: associationism of different kinds, collective but not necessarily long-lasting actions, and either little or very determined communalities. These are indistinct forms, based on living "side by side, walking in step", which Bauman described as "a desperate need for networking"; and Sennett said was "the force of wandering emotions shifting erratically from one target to another". They are characterised by values such as ecology, frugality, reciprocity and solidarity. The key issue is understanding whether these forms are capable, as they say they are, of metaphorically rebuilding the city. In other words, can they implement a different concept of urbanity by adopting the role played in late capitalist cities by conflict, rationality, functionalism, and the market? To tackle the problem we must first understand how they affect three different issues: the first involves changes in the values assigned to living; the second, the new logic of spatial organisation; the third, revision of the notion of public and its political consequences.

Examining *shared territories* means reasoning out of the box about the city and looking beyond certain more or less common clichés. It also means rethinking a project, emphasising the practices adopted in places, measuring their scope, persistence and continuity.

Angelo Sampieri is Associate Professor of Urbanism at the Polytechnic of Turin, where he works at the Interuniversity Department of Urban and Regional Studies and Planning (DIST). His research deals with themes related to urban planning and landscape design. Among his publications: *Nel paesaggio* (Donzelli 2008), *L'abitare collettivo* (ed., FrancoAngeli 2011), *Landscapes of Urbanism* (co-ed., Officina 2011).

EXCLUSION

Laura Colini

Defining “exclusion” is far from straightforward. The main theoretical problem is that exclusion is closely related to other concepts frequently used for similar, and yet not exactly analogous, phenomena, such as poverty, inequality, marginality, inaccessibility, peripherality, and the like, whose disciplinary borders are conveniently blurred. Some accounts focus on exclusion as a matter of resource distribution versus relational issues, static versus dynamic, lack of resources versus wealth of opportunities, conditions (legal, institutional, educational) versus feeling of being excluded etc. There is hardly any consensus that goes beyond the core negative meaning of “exclusion”, and even less on its production, manifestations and reproduction. Moreover, just as the idea of exclusion has many meanings, so it can also serve a variety of political purposes. As a consequence, different political understandings of exclusion have crucial impacts on people’s lives. Similar to matters of definition, there also exists a vast range of methodological approaches when it comes to studying exclusion empirically. We argue that both the focus on macro-economic trends as well as the attention on micro-level effects of exclusion have their merits – yet both may also prove troublesome if assumed to be devoid of theoretical and methodological research perspectives.

In this seminar, we will briefly review and systematize the plurality of meanings of social, spatial and financial forms of exclusion both in theory and in policy practice.

Laura Colini works on urban policies, multi-level governance and marginalization. She is an architect and PhD in Urban and Territorial Studies at the University of Florence in Italy and MIT Boston (USA), postdoctoral Marie Curie Fellow at the Mediacity Programme, coordinator of the PhD Urban Heritage Programme at Bauhaus University Weimar (DE). Currently, she is a researcher at IRS, Leibniz Institute in Berlin (DE).

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JUL

ENVIRONMENT

Lorenzo Pellegrini

09
JUL

In mainstream economics, environmental concerns are often interpreted as technical issues related to the inefficient allocation of natural resources. According to this perspective, scarcity drives the need to establish environmental policies, and 'correct prices' - reflecting environmental costs and benefits - are the instrument of choice to leverage on market forces to solve environmental problems. In this seminar we will introduce environmental degradation as a phenomenon central to economic processes and will discuss the implications of the distribution of environmental goods and bads from an environmental justice perspective. The political ecology and ecological economics approaches will inform the presentation and highlight the political, rather than technical, nature of (global and local) environmental struggles challenging the hypothesis that environmental goods are luxury goods. These struggles demonstrate that the centrality of environmental inputs and outputs in economic processes is reflected in the processes of production by economically marginalized individuals and communities.

Lorenzo Pellegrini is Associate Professor at the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University, the Netherlands. His (action-oriented) research focuses on the socio-environmental impacts of natural resources extraction in Latin America and on environmental justice. He has published in several peer reviewed journals, including *World Development*, *Capitalism Nature Socialism* and *Development and Change*.

GOVERNING

Tommaso Vitale

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An American political scientist, D. Yates, when reflecting on New York in 1977 wrote a book about the “ungovernable metropolis”. His argument was that there were too many interests, too many actors, too many diverse populations, too much inequality, too much informality, too many problems, too many suburbs, too many economic sectors. The city had become ungovernable. Since then the theme has become popular and has been widely mobilised to analyse the governance of the large metropolis in different parts of the world. In my lecture I will try to challenge the often-made assumption that large cities are so complex and big that they have become ungovernable or that globalisation pressures make political and policy choices irrelevant. Are large metropolis governed? Together with Patrick Le Galès I have attempted to nuance this question, exploring what is governed, and what is not governed, comparing different metropolises in the world. By focusing on a governance framework to analyse large metropolises and their dynamics, we implicitly or explicitly underline the limits and discontinuities of governing processes. Governing a city has to do with public policies with collective action, institutions, collective actors, protest, implementation; and something is always not governed at all. Does it matter? Not always, but modes of governance, even incomplete, or chaotic, and full of discontinuities have long term consequences for cities’ inhabitants, and governing failures may have severe negative effects.

Tommaso Vitale is Associate Professor of Sociology at Sciences Po, Centre d’Études Européennes (CEE), and scientific director of the programme *Governing the large metropolis*. He has co-founded the International Research Network *UrbaRom*, he is member of the research group *Cities are back in town*, and he is Affiliated Faculty at the Vincent and Elinor Ostrom Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis (Indiana University).

CHANGE

Antonio G. Calafati

The concept of 'stationary state' - like that of 'equilibrium' - has been recurrently given a descriptive and normative value in modern social science, yet it has been also used - in economics, in particular - as a heuristic device to understand 'change' better. When 'growth' and 'development' again became central themes in social science, economics tried to reduce the intricacy of the phenomenon of 'change' by introducing the concept of 'steady-state', framing it in terms of logical time and radically reducing the variables that were allowed to change in time - and also stereotyping 'change' to make it analytically manageable. Then the 'complexity paradigm' emerged, marking a new approach to the study of change in social science. The methodological perspective that one takes on studying 'change' has straightforward implications for the understanding of cities' development trajectories. In cities, 'change' is at the same time pervasive and continuous. Cities are valued for their capacity to generate *progressive* change leading to innovation and to higher static efficiency, thus preserving or increasing the economic, social, political viability of the city. Understanding how cities work requires understanding how 'change' emerges and propagates, how it is promoted or impeded, and how - and through what mechanisms - its costs and benefits are distributed in the local society and beyond.

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Antonio G. Calafati coordinates the 'Doctoral Programme in Urban Studies' at the GSSI and teaches 'Urban Economics' at the Academy of Architecture (USI). Previously he taught at the Marche Polytechnic University (Italy) and at the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena (Germany).

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