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Almost a year after her untimely death, “Who is the city for” collects the conversations that Marina Dragotto, a trained urban planner and professional researcher, had with Federico Della Puppa, a Venetian economist who has always been involved in sustainable development. An exchange of thoughts and analyzes on topics of common interest but also an exchange of affections, which gave substance and quality to the months of forced isolation due to the pandemic and Marina’s illness. Now, collected and edited by Federico Della Puppa, these reflections in the form of dialogue tell us about the richness of cities as places of exchange and complexity, places of cultural stratification that shapes our daily life, becoming “the heart of our pulsating life”. A dialogue that became book as the desire to discuss the change in cities, how the pandemic has impacted our social life, turned into a reflection on the last 40 years of urban planning, on policies which led to the emptying of historic centers and the construction of the widespread city, creating suburbs intended as dormitory areas without aggregation and sociality points and poor in collective services.

The failure of this model, the aging of the population, the domination of the logic of the cost per square meter at the base of the myth of private real estate property, to the detriment of the quality of living, urban regeneration and the loss of residents in historic centers, which brings the risk to jeopardize the very identity of the city, the potential of the suburbs to be protagonists of a real change, also highlighted by the pandemic: these are some of the points of discussion that emerge from the alternating questions and answers. Ideas that often have Venice as a point of arrival and departure, a paradigmatic reality of many phenomena that become here more exasperated than elsewhere and that anticipate problems common to many cities. Venice is a city that “combines the infinitely small with the infinitely large, because it is an international city crossed by flows of intelligence and creativity, and at the same time a city that has a human dimension, where you meet everyone on the vaporetto because it is the only means of transport”. Venice as model of a social city, which finds a vital and successful example on the island of Giudecca, where Marina had a home.

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Marta Moretti - *We ask the editor Federico Della Puppa about the genesis of the book.*

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BOOK REVIEW: A chi serve la città Riflessioni postume

di Marina Dragotto

A chi serve la città. Questo è il tema sviluppato in una serie di riflessioni di Marina Dragotto sulla città e che oggi dà il titolo ad un volume uscito postumo per Zel Edizioni. Riflessioni che spostano l'attenzione dell'urbanista dalla pianificazione fisica e funzionale al fattore umano e al ruolo che le città hanno svolto nel passato e devono tornare a svolgere quali "luoghi di costruzione soprattutto del capitale sociale, oltre a quello economico, perché è nel capitale sociale che si trova la chiave dello sviluppo di tutto il paese".

A quasi un anno dalla sua prematura scomparsa, "A chi serve la città" raccoglie le conversazioni che Marina Dragotto, urbanista di formazione e ricercatrice di professione, ha avuto con Federico Della Puppa, economista veneziano da sempre impegnato sui temi dello sviluppo sostenibile. Uno scambio di pensieri e analisi su temi di comune interesse ma anche uno scambio di affetti, che ha dato sostanza e qualità ai mesi di isolamento forzato dovuto alla pandemia e alla malattia di Marina. Ora, raccolte e curate da Federico Della Puppa, queste riflessioni sotto forma di dialogo raccontano la ricchezza delle città quali luoghi dello scambio e della complessità, luoghi della stratificazione culturale che plasma il nostro vivere quotidiano divenendo "il cuore della nostra vita pulsante". Un dialogo che si è fatto libro mano a mano che la voglia di confrontarsi sul cambiamento delle città, su quello che la stessa pandemia aveva scatenato nei confronti del nostro vivere sociale, si tramutava in una riflessione sugli ultimi 40 anni di pianificazione urbanistica, sulle politiche che hanno portato allo svuotamento dei centri storici e alla costruzione della città diffusa, creando periferie intese come aree dormitorio senza punti di aggregazione e di socialità e povere di servizi collettivi.

Il fallimento di tale modello, l'invecchiamento della popolazione, il dominio della logica del costo a metro quadro, alla base del mito della proprietà privata immobiliare, a discapito della qualità dell'abitare, la rigenerazione urbana e la perdita di residenzialità nei centri storici, che porta con sé conseguenze tanto gravi da mettere a repentaglio l'identità stessa della città, le potenzialità delle periferie ad essere protagoniste di un vero cambiamento, anche sollecitato e messo in evidenza dalla pandemia, sono alcuni degli spunti di discussione che emergono dall'alternarsi di domande e risposte. Spunti che spesso hanno Venezia come punto di arrivo e di partenza, realtà paradigmatica di alcuni fenomeni che qui assumono aspetti più esasperati che altrove e che anticipano problematiche comuni a molte città. Venezia è una città che "coniuga l'infinitamente piccolo con l'infinitamente grande,

perché è una città internazionale attraversata da flussi di intelligenze e creatività, e allo stesso tempo una città che ha una dimensione umana, dove ti incontri con tutti sul vaporetto perché è l'unico mezzo di trasporto". Venezia come modello di città sociale, che trova nell'isola della Giudecca, dove Marina aveva casa, un esempio vitale e di successo.

La Parola all'autore

Marta Moretti - *Chiediamo al curatore Federico Della Puppa la genesi del libro.*

Federico Della Puppa - "Ho conosciuto Marina tanti anni fa. Tutti e due eravamo interessati ai temi dello sviluppo urbano, alla città e al territorio, al tema della casa, temi sui quali siamo riusciti spesso a lavorare assieme. Erano almeno dieci anni che volevamo scrivere un libro assieme sulle città e l'occasione si è presentata lo scorso anno, durante il primo lockdown, quando Marina già combatteva le ultime battaglie con la sua malattia, ma la sua forza e la sua determinazione la portavano a guardare sempre avanti. Le ho proposto di fare una serie di conversazioni che poi avremmo trasformato finalmente nel nostro libro".

Marta Moretti - *Emerge dal libro quindi un grande amore per la città in quanto "luogo ideale per costruire un pensiero politico collettivo, perché è una società ricca di diversità, perché si nutre di incontri casuali negli spazi collettivi, perché permette la relazione e la commistione di vite diverse, a differenza della città diffusa che, non creando connessioni, riduce anche la capacità di dialogare tra cittadini". Un amore per le città che necessitano però di essere rigenerate non solo dal punto di vista fisico quanto dal punto di vista del tessuto sociale attraverso strumenti nuovi e adeguati.*

Federico Della Puppa - "Marina amava le città, erano il suo primo amore e lo sono state per tutta la sua vita, compresa Venezia, alla quale nel libro sono dedicati molti pensieri e molte riflessioni. Ma in generale Marina amava il fatto che le città rappresentano il vero luogo di costruzione del capitale sociale, la nostra vera ricchezza, quella data dalle relazioni tra le persone".

Marta Moretti - *Il titolo del libro riassume in poche parole la 'chiave' particolare con cui Marina voleva approcciarsi al tema.*

Federico Della Puppa - "Pensando al titolo del libro, Marina ha puntato subito sul tema sul quale, secondo lei, bisogna lavorare oggi, cioè "a chi serve la città", e in queste poche

parole c'è tutta l'essenza del suo pensiero, del suo amore per la città come luogo essenziale per lo sviluppo comunitario e collettivo, quell'amore che era anche il suo amore per Venezia, vero esempio di città sociale”.

Marta Moretti - *“Quindi, per rispondere al quesito iniziale ‘a chi serve la città’, si evince la necessità di ripartire dall’uomo, la città deve dare risposta alle domande che emergono dai cittadini, dalle persone, e deve servire alla “costruzione del capitale sociale”. Per far questo, va riconosciuta la centralità della collaborazione tra ‘pubblico’, inteso come istituzione e come bene comune, e ‘privato’ ovvero le imprese, i proprietari, il terzo settore, i cittadini, attivando una nuova cultura amministrativa che passi dall’idea del controllo alla pratica della collaborazione. Perché la politica dovrebbe servire come arte della mediazione e dell’ascolto.*

Federico Della Puppa - “In tutto il lavoro di Marina, ad esempio per Audis, c'è questa tensione a individuare obiettivi, indirizzi, azioni. Perseguendo con tenacia l'obiettivo di introdurre nuovi approcci che andassero oltre l'urbanistica tradizionale, voleva dimostrare quanto importante sia oggi essere al fianco di chi amministra per costruire visioni e scelte utili a produrre la qualità urbana necessaria a sostenere uno sviluppo sociale migliore”.

Marta Moretti - **È questo un auspicio che sta alla base dell’approccio al lavoro e alla vita condiviso da entrambi gli autori di questa riflessione, un’etica della partecipazione e dell’impegno che Federico Dalla Puppa ha riassunto, citando una canzone, in tre parole: “andare camminare lavorare”, quale sintesi del nostro tempo e del posto nella società di oggi.**

Author Biography

Marina Dragotto

(Milano, 1968 - Venezia 2020). Urbanista, è stata ricercatrice al Centro Internazionale Città d’Acqua prima e poi Direttore di Ricerca al COSES-Consortio per la Ricerca e formazione di Venezia. Successivamente era diventata funzionario del Comune di Venezia nel settore delle Politiche comunitarie. Fondatrice e poi direttrice di AUDIS, Associazione Aree Urbane Dismesse.

Federico Della Puppa

(Venezia, 1961). Economista territoriale e attualmente responsabile dell’area Analisi e

Strategie di Smart Land srl, società veneziana di studi, analisi e valutazioni
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