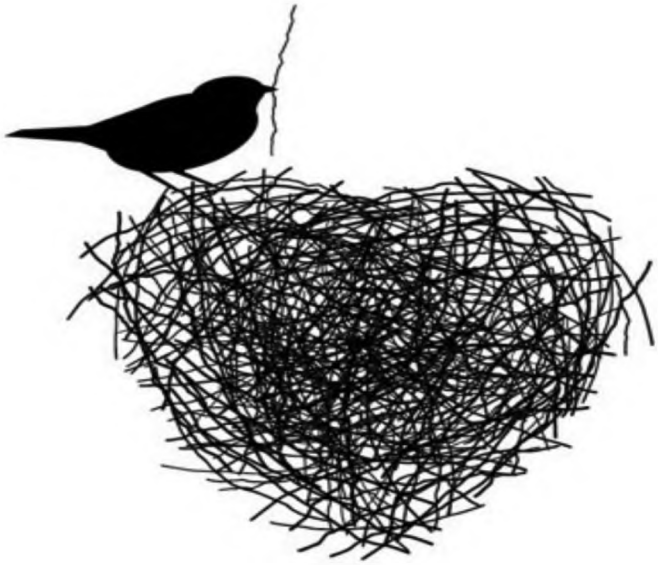

EMANUELE COCCIA

FILOSOFIA DELLA CASA

Lo spazio domestico e la felicità

EINAUDI

STILE LIBERO EXTRA

Emanuele Coccia

Philosophy of the house

Domestic space and happiness

Giulio Einaudi editore

Introduction

The house beyond the city

Philosophy has always had a privileged relationship with the city. It's there that she was born, it is there that she learned to speak and it is within its walls that she has always imagined her history and her future. The stories about his past speak of streets, markets, assemblies, spaces of worship and palaces of power. Rather than a novel, its story resembles the immense map of a Grand Tour that saw this esoteric and elite knowledge migrate and be transmitted through the cities of different nations and continents.

In this imaginary cartographic biography a privileged place would go to Crotone, the city of Great Greece, in present-day Calabria, where Pythagoras founded his School in 532 BC. C.: it was there, it is said, that philosophy found its ironic, never translated name. «Philosophie» in the language of the time meant something halfway between the desire to know and a declaration of amateurism by someone who refuses to be recognized as an «expert». Not far from Crotone, on this ideal map, there would be Athens, where Plato founded his Academy in 387 BC. C. and Aristotle founded his Lyceum in 335 BC. C.: this is where philosophy found its own definitive consecration, and was itself thought of as a city. If in Crotone philosophy was the rule of life of a community of individuals he had chosen to live differently from others, in Athens it claims to become the material form of the relationship that binds all other human beings. It's in Syracuse, it seems, that philosophy has succumbed to the temptation to take power, of transform into sovereign, source of the law that regulates actions and opinions and custodian of all the truth that the city has the right to recognize and cultivate. TO In Rome, this desire to become "living justice" ***[lex animata]*** became so radical as to identify thought with right and law. In this Paris should certainly appear on the paper, where philosophy has become an object of teaching, and Frankfurt, where it has learned to be a force of contestation that prevents all cities from coinciding with themselves.

The list of cities in which philosophy appears and is said to have lived is infinite. Contrary to what one might suspect, this geography imaginary is not only "Western" or European. It is said, for example, that in Alexandria, Egypt, philosophy met Jewish culture and religion and allowed itself to be hybridized with its spirit, especially in writings of Philo, which will have as much importance in the way as all we continue to talk about divinity. It was in Hippo, the corresponding city to the current 'Annÿba in Algeria, that philosophy learned to speak in the first person, to say "I", to incarnate itself completely in the daily life of a human being: it was in this city, in fact, that Augustine wrote his ***Confessions.***

K is in Baghdad that philosophy was thought of as the place of meeting of cultures: it is here that since 832 the personal library of the caliph Hyryn¨a¨l-Rashyd häs been located is transformed into a "house of wisdom" open to meetings between philosophers, astronomers, mathematicians and scholars and the comparison between different languages, cultures and religions.

This urban autobiography of philosophy does not only include metropolises and imperial capitals. Sometimes philosophy has needed to inhabit the province or the margins. Many of the most intense and moving treatises in its history were written in extremely modest urban centers: for example, Spinoza's ***Ethics*** was composed in Voorburg, on the outskirts of The Hague, and in The Hague; Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit in the small town of Jena , ***where*** the great protagonists of German romanticism also lived, such as the Schlegel brothers, Novalis, Ludwig Tieck or Clemens Brentano. Each of these cities seem to have tattooed an indelible signature on the body of philosophy, as if to make thought a single hieroglyph capable of transmitting and harmonize the atmosphere, the light, the existence of each of them.

Yet this long diorama hides something, or rather, pretends to forget it. Athens or Rome, Baghdad or Alexandria are just a hypnotic and lysergic scenography, certainly larger and more solid than any other theatre, but which has the same consistency as an immense spectacle of shadows. That whether or not they were the theater of the birth of philosophy, all the cities of planet are nothing but immense stages, open-air decorations that exist they allow us to imagine ourselves elsewhere, to hide the place where we really find ourselves. We all pretend not to know but none of we actually live in a city. No one can do it, because cities are, literally, uninhabitable. We can spend endless hours there, living thanks to them

sublime or infernal moments. We can stop in the office and wander around the shops, wander around the labyrinths of streets and side streets or lock ourselves in theaters and cinemas, sit on the terraces of bars and eat in restaurants, run in stadiums and swim in swimming pools. But sooner or later we will have to return home, because it is always and only thanks to and within a home that we inhabit this planet. Its shape is completely indifferent: it can be a hotel or an apartment, a room that coincides with a sofa or a skyscraper, it can be messy and confused like a closet, poor like a barn or sumptuous like a princely palace, it can be made of stone or animal skin, foldable enough to be carried with you. But underneath, inside, behind the city there is always a house that allows us to live there. Life that tries to coincide with urban space, to inhabit it without mediation, is destined to die: the only true and absolute citizen is the homeless, the homeless; it is vulnerable life, that which, by definition, is exposed to death. It is always and only through

the mediation of a house that we are in the city: whether it is Paris or Berlin, Tokyo or New York, I have been able to inhabit the cities in which I have lived always and only thanks to bedrooms and kitchens, thanks to aunts to chairs, desks, wardrobes, bathtubs and radiators.

This is not just a spatial problem. Living does not mean being surrounded by something or occupying a certain portion of earthly space. It means weaving such an intense relationship with certain things and certain people that happiness and our breathing are inseparable. A house is an intensity that changes our way of being and that of everything that is part of its magic circle. Architecture or biology have little to do with it.

It is certainly not to protect ourselves from the elements that we build houses, and it is not to make space coincide with the order of genealogy or our aesthetic taste. Every house is a purely moral reality: we build houses to welcome in a form of intimacy the portion of the world - made up of things, people, animals, plants, atmospheres, events, images and memories - which make our own possible happiness.

On the other hand, the very existence of the practice of building houses is evidence that morality - the theory of happiness - can never be reduced to a set of precepts relating to our psychological aptitudes or to a discipline of good feelings, attention or to a form of mental hygiene. It is a material order that involves objects and people, an eco-

nomey that intertwines things and affections, oneself and others in spatial unity minimum of what we call "care", in the broadest sense: the house. Happiness is not an emotion, nor a purely subjective experience. It's harmony arbitrary and ephemeral that binds things and people for a moment in a relationship of physical and spiritual intimacy.

Yet, philosophy has always spoken very little about the house. As if inebriated by the dream, for centuries associated with male identity, of shining in society, of having power and influence in the city, philosophy has forgotten the domestic space to which it is linked much more than to any city in the world, planet. Thus, after the first great treatises in Greek ***on oikonomia,*** on order and on governance of the home, whose influence has been unparalleled, philosophy has divested the domestic space from the horizon of its concerns. This negligence is anything but innocent: because of it the house became one space in which wrongs, oppressions, injustices and inequalities have been hidden, forgotten and reproduced unconsciously and mechanically For centuries. It is in the house and through the house, for example, that inequality between genres it has been produced, affirmed and justified. It is in the house and through the house, and in the order of property that it establishes and embodies, that society has been organized in economic inequality. It is through the modern house - a space in which, with some very rare exceptions, only human beings can stay - that the radical opposition between the human and the non-human, between the city and the forest, between the «civil» and the wild.

Forgetting home was a way for philosophy to forget itself itself. This hidden decoration, in fact, was also the hatchery of great part of the ideas that have nourished the planet and its history. It is in this space with variable geometry, never identical to itself even in the same one city, that meat becomes a verb.

Forgetting home meant, for philosophy, making oneself unhappy, and making happiness unthinkable, subordinating it to the city and politics. Abandoning the house to the forces of genealogy and property, philosophy it forced it to shrink until it adhered to the anatomical body and expelled outside the walls, in the cities, everything that has to do with bliss. If happiness has become a spectacle of shadows it is precisely because it has been removed from the domestic dimension - in which there was no longer room for it - it sought to become a political fact, a purely urban reality. Vice versa,

the modern city was nothing but the extraordinary invention of a disparate set of places, techniques, devices built in opposition to the order domestic with the task of producing the freedom and happiness that was not possible to generate at home. In the city, through work, consumption, education, culture or simple entertainment, one could overcome it strange state of naturalized negligence or unexpected naturalness in which the things did not change because they were dictated by an alleged "biological" order or of primary needs. For centuries the world in which, at least on paper, was It was possible to be equal to the others and to the others it began as soon as she closed the front door behind her. Schools, cinemas, theatres, restaurants, bars, museums, discos, shops, parks, streets, but also parliaments, churches, synagogues, mosques: it was outside the home that the world truly became an experience; era outside the house which was populated with faces, objects, ideas too intense and too large to fit all within the closed space of bedrooms and kitchens.

From Plato to Hobbes, from Rousseau to Rawls, the modern city has been the great sleight of hand of philosophy: a true philosophical trompe-l'ceil, an open-air dream of freedom and collective phantasmagoria whose the main task was to make people forget about the house, to reduce it as much as possible to a closet in which something is stored in order to be able to forget it without guilt feelings.

In this, philosophy has never been alone. The house was the object of a theoretical negligence; over time it is as if it had transformed itself same will in a sort of strange machine that must collect everything what we can't talk about publicly or need to forget. For centuries the house was the "rest": what remained one once the show was over, the sum of everything we weren't never been able to share with others.

Unlike cities, the houses that make up their body are places whose story we only rarely share publicly: except for very rare ones exceptions it is impossible to have a clear idea of who inhabited that space, of how the houses have been furnished over the decades, or what events there have been theater. And even where this memory exists, it is never shared as the memory of the city is. The vast majority of homes remain publicly anonymous devices, without a name that can last over time, and identifiable only through topographic coordinates: through the address or a label which by definition must be able to be replaced

tuible. A comparison with any city would be enough to realize how much
It's strange: how would we think of cities if instead of calling them Venice, Marseille, Beijing or Dakar, we used longitude and latitude or label-names destined to change every five or ten years?

It's as if all the houses ask not to be recognized over time, of being able to burn their story in order to start another without memory. As if housing were the machine that allows life to stop leave traces. As if time inside it couldn't accumulate in the form of a story and was the repetition of awakenings of a conscience who does not remember anything that happened before or during sleep dream.

In recent decades, however, something of this mechanism of marginalization and oblivion has broken. The cohort of imagined, produced objects and consumed by industry was aimed at populating the spaces above all domestic. The invention of television collapsed the psychic frontier between urban life and life inside the home, bringing public space into homes. Then, social media created a portable public space without a geographical anchor, almost entirely modeled on image and likeness of our apartments.

This invasion of the city and its ghosts has changed radically the way and rhythm of living, but has not yet been able to modify it the structure radically. It is as jf py ,forcing ourselves to leave home to invent and find our happiness, we had remained imprisoned in the dream of men and women about whom we no longer know anything. The bathrooms, the kitchens, the corridors, the bedrooms in which we spend at least half of our lives, the same functional division of the house according to this typology, are the projection of thousands of "egos" who have no longer lived on this planet for centuries. The contemporary house is a sort of Platonic cave, a moral ruin of an archaeological humanity. And it's only by revolutionizing the way we give form and content to this experience that we will be able to have again world a possible space of common and shared happiness.

Philosophical modernity has staked everything on the city: the future of the globe but it can only be domestic. We need to think about the house: we live in the urgency of making this planet a real home, o better than making our home a real planet, a space capable of welcome everyone. We are at the modern project of globalizing the city

replaced that of opening our apartments to make them coincide with the Earth.

Conclusion

The new house or the philosopher's stone

The era that has just begun is different from all those in human history and non-human - has recorded so far. It is not the random result of the minimal deviation of a handful of landscape elements. Nor is it the consequence of the appearance of new eyes and new minds that observe the world.

The break with the past is much more important. It's not the people of the planet to be changed. It is the planet itself that has transformed. In recent decades, the Earth has experienced technological acceleration, unprecedented biological, climatic and geological. A huge army of machines and artifacts has covered the earth's surface and consumes enormous amount of energy to maintain oneself.

Thousands of species have disappeared, triggering unstoppable mechanisms of alteration of the ecological balances built over centuries of evolution common.

The new climate regime imposes changes on the form of life and on geographic distribution of thousands of plants, animals and species, altering irreparably the balance of the biomes.

The combination of human activities has transformed the geological surface so much as to make it incomparable with the past.

We are on a different planet from the one our ancestors knew, described, painted and photographed.

It's as if all of us - people, plants, animals, fungi, bacteria, archeology - had landed on another planet. Nobody saw it before us.
No one saw his forms. No one measured his strength.

We are pioneers: new Eves and new Adams, forced to explore the world, to give names to things, to burn our tongues tasting flavors that no one has ever tried, to skin our knees walking on hitherto uninhabited territories.

Contrary to the biblical myth, however, it is we who must transform this new planet into a garden. We have no way out. Not we have other solutions.

We are not his daughters and sons and the Earth is not our mother. The link it is even stronger, more radical, more inevitable. We are flesh of his flesh. Our life is intimately linked to his body: we live in his body and his body.

Despite everything, we owe everything to the stones.

We live mostly in stone buildings. They are no longer caves, but enormous mineral constructions that we model in the most diverse shapes. We spend most of the day surrounded by stones of all kinds. We eat, sleep, make love, cook, wash and regenerate in stone spaces. It is between stone walls of different composition chemistry that we think, imagine, dream, write, draw and we build works of art.

Stones are not only the silent witnesses of our lives. They also accompany us in other ways. We use stone and metal tools for move. We call them "cars" and they are objects made of glass and metal which feed on a strange form of liquid stone, oil, and allow us to move on Earth. Other metallic objects, airplanes, also extracted from stone, allow us to move in the sky. Still other artifacts, boats, also made with a combination of metals,

they allow us to move on water. Thanks to these modified stones, we are able to radically transform not only our lives but also that of the entire planet. Thanks to them, in fact, our species does not only he radically multiplied his movements and redefined the fauna and the flora of all spaces, but has also altered geography itself. The stone is everywhere, even where there are seas and skies. And virtual stone corridors yes they are open to allow all species to change position, to migrate to the surface of the planet.

But it is above all the stones that determine our life today. It is in objects made of stones and minerals - computers - that we record all our things memories and thoughts. Polymers, plastic, ceramic, copper, iron, nickel and silicon. Our brains are now made of the same stuff as the planet. Our archives are made of the same material as the world. And it's thanks to the stones black - mobile phones - that we can communicate with anyone on the whole

the surface of the planet. Copper, silver, gold, tantalum, nickel, dysprosium, praseodymium, terbium, neodymium, gadolinium, silicon, oxygen, antimony, ar-senic, phosphorus and gallium. And many others. The Earth allows us to connect with anyone. Our feelings are now transmitted not only through our bodies, but through Gaia's own body. Through its stones. After all, we have never emerged from the Stone Age.

ANDANas if we were transferring more and more of our life into his body, as if we had made the Earth an appendage, a prosthesis of ours anatomy. This humanization of the Earth has been called Anthropocene. We wanted to acquire all the powers of the Earth, to take possession of everything the power of stones, occupying the matter of the planet with our thoughts, our emotions, our life. It was an unconscious form of obsession narcissistic: we demanded at all costs that our face be reflected on that of the planet. We tried to hide his appearances.

We are at home everywhere: everything is inhabited or has been inhabited by man, every portion of the globe has been transformed into a room, garage, kitchen, closet, cosmic bathroom. One way to describe the Anthropocene is that the planet itself has become home. There is no longer any form of exteriority, there isn't no longer any form of spatial otherness. The city is also finished for this reason: we can't leave the house anymore. It's not a question of quarantine at all and lockdown. The house has included so much of the world and so much of the "planet" so as not to leave any residual space. We can also reverse the perspective and say that the house itself has become a planet. The planet has invaded us, its forces have passed through us, its powers have shaped us.

Being penetrated by Gaia means having to often change your life, being forced to transmit your life to other species, considering your own form as a simple mobile configuration of life on the planet. AND also for this reason that the opposition between the local and the global, as well as that between the internal and the external, can only be articulated in terms of the opposition between the terrestrial and the extraterrestrial. But also when (and if) we flee up other planets, we could do nothing but take our home with us - even if it is reduced to a simple aerospace suit. We are condemned to replicate the domestic model everywhere.

It is difficult to measure the consequences of this metamorphosis. It is first and foremost about the end of modernity, understood as the illusion of creating and produce an alternative space to the home. Modernity began by tearing

I give the ancient ***oikos*** production: transforming the production of wealth in a public, political affair. The return of work to homes is just one of the first symptoms of the end of the modern. Now it is the house-planet that stands taking production away from the cities in order to become autonomous.

The city had absorbed all sensitive life: the museums, the department stores, the panoramas, the universal exhibitions had created the circus of shadows which transformed city life into an open-air party. Little by little this festive explosion of sensations has found the channels and openings for enter the house and settle inside permanently. It is at home that the excitement of the senses seems to take place: it is here that we make discoveries, we meet others, we have unparalleled visions.

In this new space, in this house made planet, it is impossible not being cosmopolitan, as well as claiming a local identity: the continents and nations are rooms in a single enormous apartment. It is impossible to desire to conquer something: it would be like launching yourself into imperialism of the bathroom starting from the kitchen or vice versa.

It became impossible, as the tragic heroes had tried to do with which modernity opened (first of all Hamlet), dreaming of founding a public space by shaking off domestic truth - the figure of the repressed destiny par excellence. Especially because, even if everything is house, in this house everything remains unknown. At home now there are billions of people we know nothing about; at home there are forests and flocks of animals of which we don't know the slightest detail; at home there are objects of which we do not know the function and meaning.

The house that has become as big as the planet explodes every form of geography and every form of genealogy. Every smallest living being is cooking the cosmos and preparing to change its flavor forever. Every smaller one portion of the planet was cooked by roommates we no longer have trace.

The genesis of the world-home also marks the end of ecology. Ecology is was the first to imagine the planet in terms of a single global home space. It was one of the students of Linnaeus, the Swedish biologist to whom we owe the system of biological classification of living beings, who proposed it in 1749 in what is often considered the first great treatise on ecology ***(Oeconomia naturae).*** The reasons for this orientation were, at the time, of a theological nature. At the time, most biologists didn't believe it

in the transformation or evolution of species: it was believed that all species were immutable over time. In a similar context, the only way to understand if there is a relationship between an Arizona buffalo and a Australian fly (and to understand it) consisted of taking the point of sight of the one who had imagined, designed and created both: God. Being responsible for the existence of both, he must have designed and a relationship has been established between these two species, as well as between all species living. In the Christian universe, God relates to the world not as a simple governor or a political leader relates to his people, but rather how a father relates to his family and his own home: he exercises power over the world only because he created it. On the other hand, the world does not relate to God as a subject relates to the sovereign, but rather like a son to his father. All life on Earth is therefore one home and one family of the one Father-God. For this reason, Bi-berg and Linnaeus called this science "economics of nature". The planet has transformed today into the domestic space of one of the species: it is the contrary to the perfect balance that the great fathers of ecology dreamed of. Precisely because now all living beings are at home (our home, the human home) there is no longer any possible "natural" balance.

How to live in this house as big as the entire planet? And in what way philosophy - which has always been thought of as urban knowledge - will be able to help us? How can we make the stones that have invaded the Earth something different? A long and ancient esoteric tradition has identified philosophy with chemistry. This tradition, for centuries, has taken the name of alchemy. The term is the Arabic transcription of a Greek term, ***khymeia,*** whose meaning is "mixture". Thinking of philosophy as a form of chemistry means, on the one hand, reject any separation between thought and matter: thought is stone, a certain movement of stones. On the other hand, make thought one chemistry of the world, capable of transforming it into its own material structure, means imagining that every thought is an act of cosmic synthesis - which can indifferently reproduce what exists or, on the contrary, introduce something new. Thinking no longer means representing and projecting an abstract form onto matter, but synthesizing a new one, materially changing the world. Every minimal material transformation is then itself an act of thinking, an idea.

It is through this new chemistry that we could save ourselves. It's not about it to come out of the age of the stone and the house but to restore the stones and the houses different, thinner, more ductile. We must try to imagine homes capable of transforming as quickly as the climate can change or time. The task of alchemy was the synthesis of the philosopher's stone: not another structure of the stones, but the principle that allows transformation every stone in any other form and therefore to affirm the unity and equivalence of every centimeter of the flesh of the planet. The house of the future should be this philosopher's stone: the principle that allows all things to transform among themselves and to each life to know that it is equivalent to any other life. If the house of the past was a machine of distinction, in future will have to become the collective discipline of mixing: mixing of classes, mixing of identities, mixing of peoples and mixing of cultures. Homes will be the kitchens of the planet: inside them there will be Earth having to find a new flavor.