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GOOD GOVERNMENT, GOVERNANCE, HUMAN COMPLEXITY

GOOD GOVERNMENT,  
GOVERNANCE,  
HUMAN COMPLEXITY

Luigi Einaudi's legacy and  
contemporary societies

Edited by  
PAOLO HERITIER and PAOLO SILVESTRI



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PAOLO HERITIER – PAOLO SILVESTRI

INTRODUCTION.

LUIGI EINAUDI: POISED BETWEEN IDEAL AND REAL \*

1. AN UNUSUAL PREMISE: THE ROOTEDNESS OF THE MAN AND HIS WORK

Luigi Einaudi (1874-1961) was a liberal thinker, a leading economist and journalist, and one of the most eminent political figures in the pantheon of Italy's founding fathers: a member of the Constituent Assembly, governor of the Bank of Italy, minister for the Budget and first elected president of the Republic. Although among scholars he is best known for his works on public finance, his long-lasting research into the foundations of a good government, broadly understood as good polity or good society, still remains today an unknown and unexplored field. This book, for the first time, provides the English-speaking world with a collection of essays aimed both at focusing on Luigi Einaudi's good government and questioning its fecundity and relevance in contemporary human society.

Accordingly, and in an attempt to give shape to a new research path prompted by the "Osservatorio sul buon governo" [Observatory on good government], which follows on from initiatives already developed by the "Associazione Polis", in 2009 the editors of this volume organized a conference on "The ideal of good government: Luigi Einaudi and the nexus between individual and society" (Cuneo-Dogliani, November, 26-27-28, 2009). A number of the articles in this volume are revised drafts of contributions first presented and discussed at the conference; others come from scholars who kindly gave us their contribution, expanding, piece by piece, our perspectives and representations of good government.

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\* We wish to express our debt of gratitude to Luigi Roberto Einaudi for his trust in us, for his continuous support and for having believed in this volume, even in the most adverse circumstances. Special thanks also goes to Rachel Barritt Costa for having supervised and reviewed the English language of some of the contributions here included, as well as this introduction and the afterword.

The focus on the issue of good government, by its very nature interdisciplinary and elusive, called for the involvement of scholars from a number of different disciplines: history and philosophy of politics, law and philosophy of law, economists, philosophers and epistemologists. The main objective of the conference was to reopen an interdisciplinary inquiry into the issue of good government, understood in the Einaudian sense as a unitary figure related to both the individual and institutional level. What guidelines were to be pursued in this research path which, starting out from Einaudi's quest, lead us beyond Einaudi, into the heart of many contemporary debates?

As a starting point for our reflection we suggested an 'ideal' *locus classicus* of the Einaudian search for good government, to which the choice of the 'real' *locus* of the conference was profoundly linked, for it would have been impossible to address the topicality of the good government issue without symbolically restoring Einaudi to his beloved birthplace from which his quest for good government drew sustenance and inspiration. The inaugural session of the conference was held in what was from the very beginning the elected place of Einaudi's teachings (and preachings): the Faculty of Law of the University of Torino and, in particular, in its relatively new detached site in Cuneo, whereas the second part was held in Dogliani (Cuneo), the land to which Einaudi always returned, as every man travels back to his home to rediscover his roots and draw afresh on the symbolic and trusted resources – constantly to be reappraised in the light of the ever-changing contemporary scene – without which no "crisis", whatever its nature, can be overcome.

The 'ideal-real' *locus classicus* of Einaudian research is the introduction, written *in memoriam*, to the *Appunti per la storia politica e amministrativa di Dogliani dell'Avv. Francesco Fracchia* [Notes on the Political and Administrative Life of Dogliani by the Lawyer Francesco Fracchia] (1922). These *Notes* were a collection of writings by Einaudi's uncle, selected and edited by Einaudi himself, as if to gather together and build on the legacy of this symbolic figure, who, after the death of Einaudi's own father, welcomed the young boy into his family home, and whom Einaudi, in turn, "worshiped like a father". The introduction, written while the old liberal system was being swept away by World War I and during the ensuing social and economic crisis, recalls this father figure, dwelling on many of his characteristics, for instance "his predilections" for "facts and monuments" of the city, in particular its institutions that were at one and the same time both concrete and symbolic, "highlighting the forces that hold steadfast the machinery of human society". These reflections also underpinned the Einaudian quest for the foundations of a good society, searching for a dynamic equilibrium between private and public, past and future:

This manner of living that I used to observe in the family home represented the universal habits of the Piedmontese bourgeoisie for the greater part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. [These habits shaped] a ruling class that left a profound imprint of honesty, capabilities, parsimony, devotion to duty in the political and administrative life of the Piedmont which subsequently created Italy itself. [At that time] man, the family, were not conceived in isolation from their rootedness in the land, the home, the local area, and these are sentiments that also engender dedication to the homeland and the spirit of sacrifice which, alone, is capable of nurturing the young shoots that will burgeon into sound states.<sup>1</sup>

This ‘picture’ can also be likened to another topical moment of Einaudi’s search for good government, which evokes the ethos of those components of the middle class who

deemed that the most consummate art of statesmanship lay in ensuring ‘good government’ of public affairs, where ‘good government’ was to be understood as that wise and prudent manner of administrating which they adopted in private affairs.<sup>2</sup>

Last but not least, this allusive-narrative mode of portraying good government seems to assume particular significance when the then president of the Italian Republic interspersed within his collection *Il buon governo* (1954)<sup>3</sup> a few details of Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s fresco, *The effects of good and bad government*, as if he sought to bring to light, in a condensed and allusive form, an aesthetic-ethical foundation of the good society.

Hence, there are several reasons that prompted us to start out again from this ‘ideal-real’ *topos* of Einaudian speculation. But above all, this research and the related conference were also driven by a sense of dissatisfaction or lack which is still far from being overcome. The frustration springs from the fact that a liberalism seeking to champion liberty must better thematize and develop a reflection on the ‘institutional’ from a philosophical-anthropological perspective. By ‘institutional’ we mean not only the statual, governmental, political, legal and economic sphere but also that of culture, within which religion, myths, narratives, images, values, beliefs, traditions and norms

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<sup>1</sup> L. EINAUDI, “Avvertenza del compilatore” [1922], in *Pagine doglianesi, 1893-1943*, ed. by the Municipality and the “Luigi Einaudi” Civic Library, Dogliani, 1988, pp. 32-34. On the significance of this essay, “a key text to fully understand Luigi Einaudi’s thought”, see M. EINAUDI, *Presentazione*, in *Pagine doglianesi, 1893-1943* cit., pp. 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> L. EINAUDI, *La condotta economica e gli effetti sociali della guerra italiana* (Bari, Laterza, 1933), p. 400.

<sup>3</sup> ID., *Il buongoverno. Saggi di economia e politica (1897-1954)*, E. ROSSI (ed.) (Bari, Laterza, 1954).

should be encompassed. A concept of ‘institutional’, therefore, broadly understood as ‘instituting’ ‘educating’ or ‘founding’ the human, but without falling into the sociological and/or holistic view which results in an annihilation of the individual into the whole.

From this perspective, we felt it was still meaningful to note that in Einaudi’s *sui generis* liberalism there remains a fruitful tension, a duality, which is interesting precisely because it is not resolved into a dualism or a monism. On the one hand, there is an institutional sphere that is, *lato sensu*, foundational, while on the other there is also, undoubtedly, an anthropological-individualistic foundation of the good society, that makes an appeal to the freedom, responsibility and dignity of every individual man.

If one wishes to achieve a more penetrating insight into Einaudi’s anthropology, the above-mentioned ‘ideal-real’ *locus classicus* must be borne in mind and compared with a second and more famous *topos* of Einaudian speculation, *The beauty of struggle* (1923). There he declares his “repugnance” for any form of paternalism and his “sympathy” for the “efforts of those who desire to elevate themselves under their own impetus and who, in this struggle, fight, falter and rise again, learning at their own expense how to win and to better themselves”.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, this is nothing short of a veritable eulogy of the modern *homo faber fortunae suae*, of man as the free, responsible maker of his destiny, but also of *fallible* man, who learns through experience by “trial and error”, always open to “risk” and the “unknown”. This is the Einaudi who is prompted by the awareness that there is no father, law, science, institution or welfare state capable of shielding us from the risk and contingencies of life, but also that this original deficiency intrinsic to human beings is the very element which opens up the potential for life and the emergence of novelty.

By the same token, it is these fallibilities themselves, this ignorance and deficiency within mankind, this impossible perfection, which kindle that tension, that reaching out “towards”, expressed by Einaudi in the title *Verso la città divina* [Towards the divine city], another veritable eulogy,

a hymn to discord, struggle, disunity of spirits [...]. What on earth reason is there for the state to have its own ideal of life, and then be compelled to force men to conform with it, *à la Napoleon*? Why only one religion rather than many different kinds? Why only one political, social or spiritual point of view and not an infinity of opinions? Beauty, perfection, cannot be equated with uniformity, nor with unity: the essence resides in variety and contrast.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> L. EINAUDI, “The Beauty of the Struggle” (1923), in ID., *Selected Economic Essays*, L. EINAUDI, R. FAUCCI and R. MARCHIONATTI (eds.) (NY, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 66-72: 66.

<sup>5</sup> L. EINAUDI, “Verso la città divina” (1920), in ID., *Il buongoverno* cit., pp. 32-33.



Such considerations, in our view, are also closely linked to the Einaudi who, as was recently recalled, had always heeded the moral commandment “never forget the common man”, which he was wont to express with the motto “the only person who knows whether the shoes really fit him is the one who is wearing them”. By this he implied that “the intellectual and the politician have no right to decide what’s good for the peasant or the worker”, thereby expressing “a profound conviction of the individual value of the person and the respect due to all persons irrespective of their social status, and without political sectarianism”.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps this view may illuminate Einaudi the storyteller of tales from the life of everyday people, in whose circles he moved comfortably and from whom he picked up more useful teachings than those drawn from the learned:

If I took in little from intellectuals or politicians I learned much every time I had the chance to enter into conversation with tradespeople, industrialists, bankers, businessmen [...]: each one of them, in talking about his own affairs, utters truths based on observation, which theoretical economists are sorely wrong not to take to heart.<sup>7</sup>

Here we have not only a lesson in epistemological humility, but a testimony of Einaudian awareness that no form of knowledge, nor any scholar, should fail to be mindful of the freedom of each individual; it also demonstrates that the goal of human sciences and scientists should be a representation, however asymptotically ideal, of “*the whole man*”, that is to say, a representation of the human that is not fragmented and split up by the different branches of knowledge. Accordingly, in his spiritual last will and testament, *Politici ed economisti* [Politicians and economists] (1961), Einaudi wrote:

The task of the economist who is not only an expert in one or several branches of social and economic science is that of considering the relationships between the economic operation and the political or moral or spiritual action.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> L.R. EINAUDI, “Le molteplici eredità. Un ricordo personale di Luigi Einaudi”, in *Luigi Einaudi nella cultura, nella società e nella politica del Novecento*, R. MARCHIONATTI – P. SODDU (eds.) (Firenze, Olschki, 2010), pp. 319, 320, 322.

<sup>7</sup> L. EINAUDI, “Prefazione”, in *Id.*, *Cronache economiche e politiche di un trentennio (1910-1914)*, vol. III (Torino, G. Einaudi, 1959), pp. XXIV-XXV.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*, “Politicians and economists”, *Il politico*, XXVII, 2 (June 1962), pp. 253-263: 260. On the complexity of the Einaudian methodological approach see F. FORTE – R. MARCHIONATTI, “Moralista, storico, economista. L’economia liberale di Luigi Einaudi”, in *Luigi Einaudi nella cultura, nella società e nella politica del Novecento* cit., pp. 3-56.

In conclusion, keeping in mind the above mentioned two *topoi* and the suggestions highlighted as a sort of starting point for contributors, we may sum up the issues here briefly introduced as follows: *Einaudian anthropology* is still deserving of attention precisely because it takes shape within a *fertile line of tension between institutional and individual, rootedness and restless wandering, heteronomy and autonomy, tradition and innovation, state and market, science and life, model and reality, theory and practice, law and freedom.*

## 2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK, POISED BETWEEN IDEAL AND REAL

The collection of essays presented thus appears poised, as it were, between past and present, between the theoretical and the practical, between interpretation of the work of Einaudi and a rereading of his *oeuvre* in the light of problems that illuminate it in a contemporary perspective. The book offers a miscellany of studies, some referring explicitly to Einaudi and others which, while presupposing his work, do not make specific mention of his writings. This methodological approach was prompted by two underlying assumptions:

a) the conviction that a first stage in the analysis of Einaudi's thought, above all as far as his reflections in the economic or historiographic-institutional sphere are concerned, has to a large extent already been carried out during the fifty years that have elapsed since his death – although the potential lines of enquiry are far from having been exhausted – and that a number of conclusions have been reached;

b) the belief that Einaudi's thought can continue to kindle theoretical and practical effects that extend far beyond the studies and research already published, in particular if the composite body of his works is read as a complex and structured whole, midway between the ideal and the real, spanning a variety of different genres and disciplines.

This book seeks to outline an attempt within this perspective, proceeding along a line of research that endeavors to hold together, in a manner that may not always appear orderly and systematic, insights of a theoretical but also of an exegetic nature, as well as interests of relevance for the contemporary world, in the recognition that such traits belonged at one and the same time to the lifelong work and production of Einaudi but also to his personality. Indeed, this very feature can highlight an element that would otherwise remain in the background: the Einaudian conception and interest in a global vision of man. But it is a vision that never became an organic and self-contained philosophical system: rather, it was an open-ended conception which

never forgot the concrete and practical action of man, yet also appealed for an in-depth appraisal of the epistemological status of social science and earnestly pleading not to be mummified in a cult of achieved results or of personality. On the contrary, in order to maintain its vital spirit, it begs to be succeeded, yet without being merely set aside and stored in the attic.

Einaudi still has something to say with regard to the contemporary scene – something which has perhaps not yet been fully grasped, and not merely “unimplemented” (starting from his *Useless Preachings*). This is the challenge the book seeks to launch, circumscribing a specific theme (but the same operation could be attempted in other settings): namely, the relation between the ideal of good government and the practice – still conceptually undefined but currently very much in vogue – of governance.

The book is divided into three parts, as follows.

I) *The Einaudian legacy: good government, and the relation between private and public*

Part I gathers together the essays more directly aiming to re-read the sense of the Einaudian quest for good government. This part is opened by Massimo L. Salvadori, *Luigi Einaudi. Reflections on the lifelong journey of a great Italian*. Retracing Einaudi’s life path, Salvadori paints an introductory fresco of one of the most prominent Italian intellectuals, a great master and journalist, liberal economist, statesman and protagonist of Italy’s rebirth and reconstruction. Through the analysis of three momentous issues in Einaudi’s extended speculation – his quest for the good society and good government; his search for the good élite and, in this context, his praise of the *pars sanior*; his position midway between the conservative liberal and utopian Europeanist – Salvadori highlights the ultimate foundation of Einaudi’s good government as residing in “civil ethics, honest hard work, the enterprising spirit and courage of industrious individuals”.

Francesco Forte, in *The architecture of Luigi Einaudi’s good government*, offers an original rereading and reinterpretation of some of Einaudi’s lesser-known pages, and casts new light on the typical Einaudian “*distensio*” (which indeed is also a tension) between private and public, *oikos* and the public sphere. Forte maintains that Einaudi’s vision of good government can be construed as an urban, social and political ‘architecture’ characterized by “imperfectism”, not “perfectism”. It represents a variegated society, allowing the possibility of social ascent but free from excessive social inequality, in which the middle class plays a fundamental mediating role. In conclusion, the *ethos* of the Einaudian *oikos* and local community not only emerges as the ultimate

and concrete foundation of good social bonds but also constitutes the scaffold of the resulting institutions of liberty.

In *Government and market failures in Luigi Einaudi and today*, Franco Reviglio examines Einaudi's good government with special reference to the government-market paradigm. Charting identities and differences, Reviglio offers a comparative assessment of Einaudi's thought and the more recent debate on liberty, equality and opportunity (Rawls, Sen and others), underscoring the continuing relevance of Einaudi's contribution to the definition and correction of market inefficiencies caused by Government.

Giuseppe Garofalo's article, *Luigi Einaudi and Federico Caffè: outlines of a social policy for a good governance*, opens with an approach which, in sketching a comparative picture of the two thinkers, endeavors to free them from old stereotypes and mistaken interpretations. After outlining Caffè's thought in relation to the Italian liberal tradition, Garofalo goes on to explain why Einaudi's thought cannot be reduced to an argument in favor of an unbridled market. In his conclusion, he illustrates how the proposal of a social, liberal-democratic, reformist policy aimed at good governance can emerge from a synthesis of their work. In this perspective a 'good' policy for an open society should be based on ethical values, a long-term perspective, efficiency and equity, individual and collective responsibility.

In the article that concludes the first section, *The ideal of good government in Luigi Einaudi's thought and life: between law and freedom*, Paolo Silvestri offers an appraisal of some crucial nodes in Luigi Einaudi's speculation, construed as if they were five variations on the law-freedom nexus. "Law" is assumed here, *lato sensu*, as a figure of the limit, and limits are taken as the foundation or conditions of possibility, as much on economic, political and legal institutions as on thought and human action. Consequently, it can be argued that in Einaudi's thought there emerges phenomenologically an awareness that the question of freedom involves not only the relation of individuals with their own respective limits, or a community's relation with its limits, but also the problem of overcoming such limits in the pursuit of novelty and improvement. "Good government" and Einaudi's allusive reference to the Lorenzetti fresco thus seem to take on importance precisely as an "ideal" tension, by virtue of which the gap between reality and possibility, law and liberty, cannot and must not be bridged.

## II) *Good government and public governance*

In part II, we asked contributors to freely reinterpret or focus on the Einaudian search for good government in terms of the current issues or theories

of (good?) “governance”, in this case referring to public powers or legal-political institutions.

In *Patterns of identity in the perspective of European governance*, Alessio Lo Giudice analyses the different approaches – mainly essentialism and constructivism and those derived from or related to these – to the problem of identity at an individual and collective level. He then shows to what extent the legal and political translation of these approaches to collective identity leads to several useful models that could be of relevance in shaping the political and legal *mise en scène* of European governance.

János Frivaldszky, in *Good governance and right public policy*, beginning with a brief analysis of the transition from the 18-19<sup>th</sup> century models of parliament, government and governance to the contemporary models of good governance, raises the question of whether ‘good governance’ and ‘good government’ should be considered as opposites or whether, instead, there is a need to find a third model. In Frivaldszky’s view, if the goal to be pursued is that of guaranteeing the principles of the common good, personalism, justice and participation, then the paradigm of the subsidiary state provides the answer. He concludes by sketching some guidelines of good governance and the most suitable political form, in an attempt to propose a normative concept and the institutional reality of a global political community.

The following two articles address the issue of good government from a public law perspective. Roberto Caranta, in *Good administration in the age of governance*, after a few opening remarks on the pre-administrative State approach to ‘*buon governo*’, directs his attention to the legal rational government model and then analyses the emergent patterns – especially governance and new public management – in order to investigate how they have changed our understanding of ‘good administration’.

András Zs. Varga’s *Legal control of administration: premise of good government* argues that traditional instruments of control of public power, such as democracy and the rule of law, as well as legal remedies against abuses attributable to the public administration, are sometimes, and in some specific situations, ineffective and need to be completed with special institutions and procedures. Ombudspersons, public prosecutors and ordinary civil proceedings of courts could have important roles in effective legal control of administration and could lead to a better government.

In *Freedom of contract and good government*, Alessandro Ciatti, taking his cue from Einaudi’s critique of the concept of “social usefulness” (as stated in art. 41 of the Italian Constitution) and from the Einaudian search for the good law that governs the market – “law as a frame” (or *nomoi* in Hayek’s sense) –, interprets “good government” from the specific point of view of a civil-law

scholar, seeking to find a workable equilibrium between freedom of contract and social usefulness.

This second section is concluded by Alberto Andronico's *The dark side of governance*. It is a philosophical reflection on the notion of *Governance* and its use (and abuse) in legal, political and economic discourse. Starting from the paradox according to which "governance" is "a word without sense", he analyses the ways in which governance, after the decline of the state – "too big and too small" – seems to have become a sort of passepartout to govern the complexity of contemporary society, in the name of its alleged immanence and capacity to produce an "intrinsic" order, thus without an "external" authority and/or law. Nevertheless, "shadows" appear on the horizon: it may well be that the governance discourse is just another (new) mask of the (new) powers.

### III) *Governance and liberty: the complexity of the human*

Part III takes as its starting point some elements and results already obtained by the Einaudian interpreters in the contributions of Part I, but it is also spurred by the impetus to introduce novel questions not typically addressed in studies which, as in Part II, inquire into Einaudian thought. Thus, in a perspective poised between the ideal and the real, between the contemporary world and that of the past, a range of considerably diverse elements are presented, such as the theory of complexity, the classic themes of liberalism and rationalism as well as new anthropological and aesthetic readings of Einaudi's works. These elements are framed within a horizon which, although by no means professing to be theoretically organic and complete – given the heterogeneity of the contributions and the themes analyzed – nevertheless endeavors to identify features of vitality and new research lines traceable to the Einaudian heritage (objectively difficult though it may be to pinpoint them exegetically within his works).

This book does not make so bold as to claim among its overall accomplishments the presentation of theoretical results or practical formulas applicable to genuine problems. But it is our hope that it will be regarded as an endeavor not to dismiss that unitary feature of Einaudi's theoretical vision and social action, both private and public, that feature which, however challenging the task may have appeared – and even though admitting of no easy solution – stood for the foundation of the freedom and life of the institutions.

The first two articles of the third part present the question of complexity in reference to social sciences and economic theory. Flavia Monceri's *Rethinking 'good governance'. Complex societies and individual differences*, is a critique

both of the idea of “good” and of that of “governance” implied by the notion of good governance, and presents arguments in defence of individual differences, even the most radical ones. The critique and the defence are argued from the perspective of radical constructivism, system theories and the epistemology of complexities theories, applied to contemporary societies.

Magda Fontana, in *Policy in complex social systems*, adopts the complexity perspective, examining the issue of governance in terms of policy. She formulates the hypothesis that the cause of policy failures is not to be found in economic theories: rather, it resides in their underlying ontology – such as assimilation of the economy to a machine ruled by equilibrium. Complexity implies a radically different perception of the nature of economic phenomena (in comparison to the mainstream view), as complexity relies on heterogeneity, processes and evolution. In turn, with regard to economic theorizing and modelling, this results in rejection of several crucial notions, namely not only linearity, the perfect rationality postulate, equilibrium, reductionism, but also economics as a purely mathematical science, and last but not least, the notion of prediction on which many policies are based. All in all, any aprioristic position must be reconsidered in the light of the uniqueness of economies in time and space.

The next two articles are an attempt to provide an epistemological foundation for good government, here taken to mean open society. Francesco Di Iorio’s article, *Mind, market and open society in Hayek’s thought*, underlines the linkages between Hayek’s political philosophy and his theory of mind, also highlighting the connections by comparing Hayek’s work with some recent contributions from the cognitive sciences, namely the neurophenomenological paradigm of the self-organization of the mind in the framework proposed by Maturana and Varela. From a neurobiological point of view, Hayek’s theory justifies Gadamer’s idea of the “historical finitude” of man by offering arguments in favour of pluralism and an open society.

*The laic chooses critical reason*, by Enzo Di Nuoscio, may be interpreted as a comprehensive attempt to develop – in societies characterized by religious pluralism – a sentence from Einaudi which Di Nuoscio places as an epigraph to his paper: “‘Trial and error’, the possibility of making an attempt and being mistaken; freedom of criticism and opposition; these are the characteristics of free regimes”. The argument is developed through five central propositions: the laic is such precisely by virtue of being critical; but this does not mean that for the laic everything is possible; the advocates of laicity and confessionality are not laics; we must be laic because we are fallible and ignorant; we must be laic if we seek to achieve the best fulfilment of religious sentiment.

In *The economy of images, or the symbolic horizon of social exchange*, Graziano Lingua takes his cue from Einaudi's choice to include the images of Lorenzetti's frescoes on Good government in his collection of essays, *Il buon governo*, taking up again, albeit from a different vantage point, the aesthetic references present in the articles of Part I. Lingua then reflects on the political significance of images, and thus on their role in the social construction of sense and, more generally, the comprehensive symbolic frame of "living in common", which he also terms the "general economy of exchanges of sense that constitute the bond of a society".

With a title that suggests a critical perspective, in *Useless non-preachings? The critical point and the complex anthropology of freedom in Luigi Einaudi*, Paolo Heritier proposes an anthropological and philosophical-juridical reading of a specific text, the third part of *Lezioni di politica sociale* [Lectures on social policy], considering the text as though it were a "fresco made of words". In such a perspective, this work by Einaudi is seen as embodying an ideal and figurative vision of the human, equivalent to the reference to Lorenzetti's fresco on Good government, which formed the theme of the articles in the first part of this book. Heritier attempts to forge a link in which the "sacrificial" vision of the theory of savings and the family emerging from the Einaudi of the *Lectures* ties up with contemporary readings of the intersection between economics and the sacred in terms of social complexity. Heritier thus raises the problem of a research program on the anthropology of freedom, connected to the work of Einaudi, in a critical perspective as well.

In the afterword, Silvestri, drawing some conclusions in an attempt to further re-launch this research program, will return once more, as a token of literary and quintessentially allusive leave-taking, to this anthropological-aesthetic reading of the Einaudian *oeuvre*, suggesting analogies between the search for good government and Italo Calvino's (re-search for) *invisible cities*. Are there unfrequented paths of Einaudi's journey in search of a good society?