

# **IMAGES OF ITALY**

## ***representation of cities in Italian Photobooks***

### **(1950-1980)**

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MIRYAM CRISCIONE

University of Udine

[EN]

#### ***Abstract***

*The present contribute intends to focus on some authorial photobooks published in Italy, especially those that have the core of their narrative interest in the representation of the main Italian cities. The photobook is a publication quite different from the most popular touristic guides illustrated by photographs. In fact, it is always an authorial project on a chosen topic where the photographer carries on a predominantly visual discourse. I propose an analysis of the most important photobooks issued between the 1950's and the 1980's, focusing on a case study of Venice and Milan. The purpose of this paper is to compare the representations of these Italian cities during those decades, stressing how their different image is due not only to the different vision of Italian photographers but also to the different layouts of the photobooks, which apart from its content must be considered as a physical object as well.*

#### ***Keywords***

*Italy; Cities; Photobook; Postwar*

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***Resumo***

O presente contributo tem a intenção de se concentrar em alguns fotolivros de autor publicados em Itália, especialmente aqueles que baseiam o núcleo da sua narrativa na representação das principais cidades italianas. O fotolivro é uma publicação que difere dos guias turísticos mais populares ilustrados com fotografias, por, na verdade, consistir sempre num projeto autoral sobre um tema escolhido, no qual o fotógrafo desenvolve um discurso predominantemente visual. A autora propõe uma análise dos fotolivros mais importantes publicados em Itália entre as décadas de 1950s e 1980s, partindo de um estudo de caso sobre Veneza e Milão. O objetivo deste artigo é o de comparar as representações destas cidades italianas no espaço cronológico estabelecido, enfatizando como a disparidade entre ambas as imagens se deve não só à visão diferente dos fotógrafos italianos, mas também à própria configuração dos fotolivros, que, além do seu conteúdo, devem ser considerados enquanto objetos físicos.

***Palavras-chave***

Itália; Cidades; Fotolivros; Pós-guerra





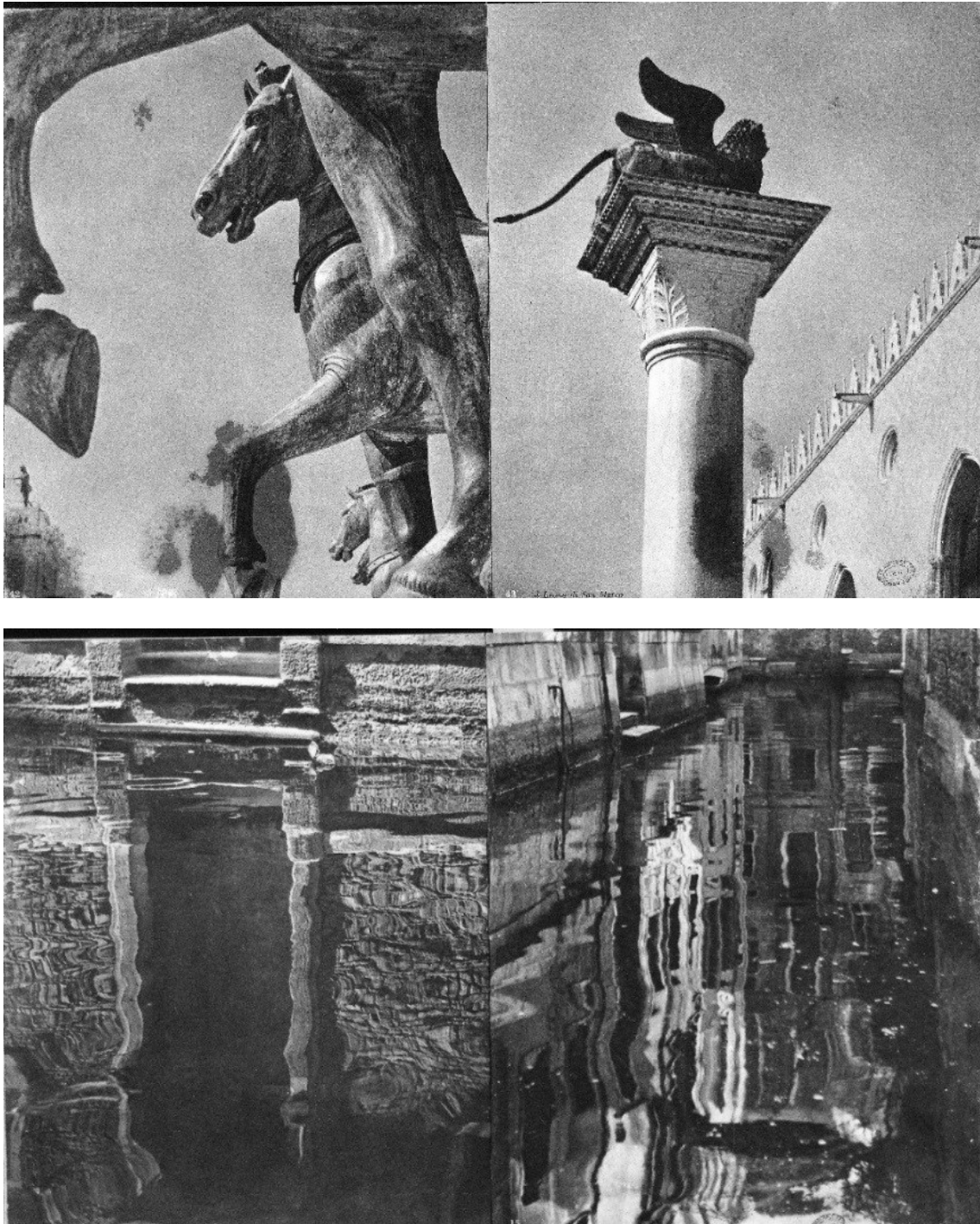
Following World War II, in Italian photographic publishing there was a progressive stabilization of the photobook as an authorial volume. The photobooks dedicated to Italian territory tried to exchange a photographic description focused on the most recognizable monuments and views for an authorial narrative in which photography would not have a merely illustrative function as in countless city guides. The circulation of international photographic publications accelerated this process, and among the cities most explored by the photographer's gaze was Venice, an artistic center of secular immobility, and Milan, a city that is perpetually in a state of evolution in its constant modernization. Two different cities, explored in two distinct ways: Venice has been described in terms of insisting horizontality, in which buildings tend to dematerialize because of their reflection on the canal waters that relegate the city to a time out of contingency; Milan has been represented instead as a city perennially fallen in its present, contradictory and dichotomous, characterized by unstoppable vertical growth.

Venice is certainly one of the Italian cities whose image seems increasingly crystallized in a canonical iconography, favored by the photographic practices of mass tourism that has helped standardize the city's photographic image. Therefore, when one considers the authorial photobooks relating to the city, one cannot overlook the importance of *Immagini di Venezia* by Ferruccio Leiss, an excellent amateur photographer, published by Daria Guarnati in 1953<sup>1</sup>. The *Note tecniche di F.L.* at the end of the photobook clarifies in fact the amateur origins of the author, who had been part of "La Bussola" amateur circle from 1947. In the text Ferruccio Leiss declares his own position regarding his photographic practice, distancing himself from both documentary photography, considered as antithetical to the

photograph intended in its purest artistic expression, and from pictorial photography. He claims, indeed, to avail himself of «strictly photographic tools» (Leiss, 1953: 119). *Immagini di Venezia* is a book whose aim diverges from the most popular guides or publications on the history of art and culture of the city of Venice: the traditional Venetian views as those seen in some publications on the city are replaced by Leiss' personal perspective of Venice. The transfiguration of the Venetian reality is in fact the ultimate purpose of Leiss' work, who turns his gaze to the detail rather than to set for a balanced and precise formal composition (*Ibidem*) (Figure 1).

In addition, the sky and the water in Leiss' photos seem to penetrate each other so that the streets seem compressed «between the immensity of the sky and the transparent reflection of deep water» (*Ibidem*: 123) (Figure 2).

It is, in fact, the dematerialization of forms that is one of the main threads that bind certain photographic iconographies of Venice. This kind of interpretation of the city, as suggested in 2013 by Alberto Prandi, also owes much to Sergio Bettini's reflections, published in 1953 in the volume on Venice issued by Istituto Geografico DeAgostini in which Bettini became a supporter of the idea of a Venice that «does not grant anything to the plastic or volumetric images of classicism» (Bettini, 1953: 12; Prandi, 2013). It stands to reason, therefore, that Alberto Prandi was able to determine the lesson of Bettini in the photographs of Fulvio Roiter, a Venetian who published a variety of photobooks on Venice. And it is even more certain that the dematerializing aspect obtained by photographing the reflections of the buildings on the canals corresponds to a taste that tended to experiment with the poetic possibilities of photography, as is deduced from various similar photographs published in specialized Italian photographic magazines of that time. In 1954, a *Guilde du Livre* edition published *Venise a fleur d'eau* by Fulvio Roiter<sup>2</sup>, who, as Prandi affirmed, borrowed from the lessons of Bettini. The photobook consists of well-planned photos, taken according to compositional rules so dear to Leiss,



Figures 1 and 2 — *Immagini di Venezia*: details of sculptures (above) and pictures of reflections on water (below). Double pages reproduced from the photobook (Leiss, 1953: 42-43, 14-15).

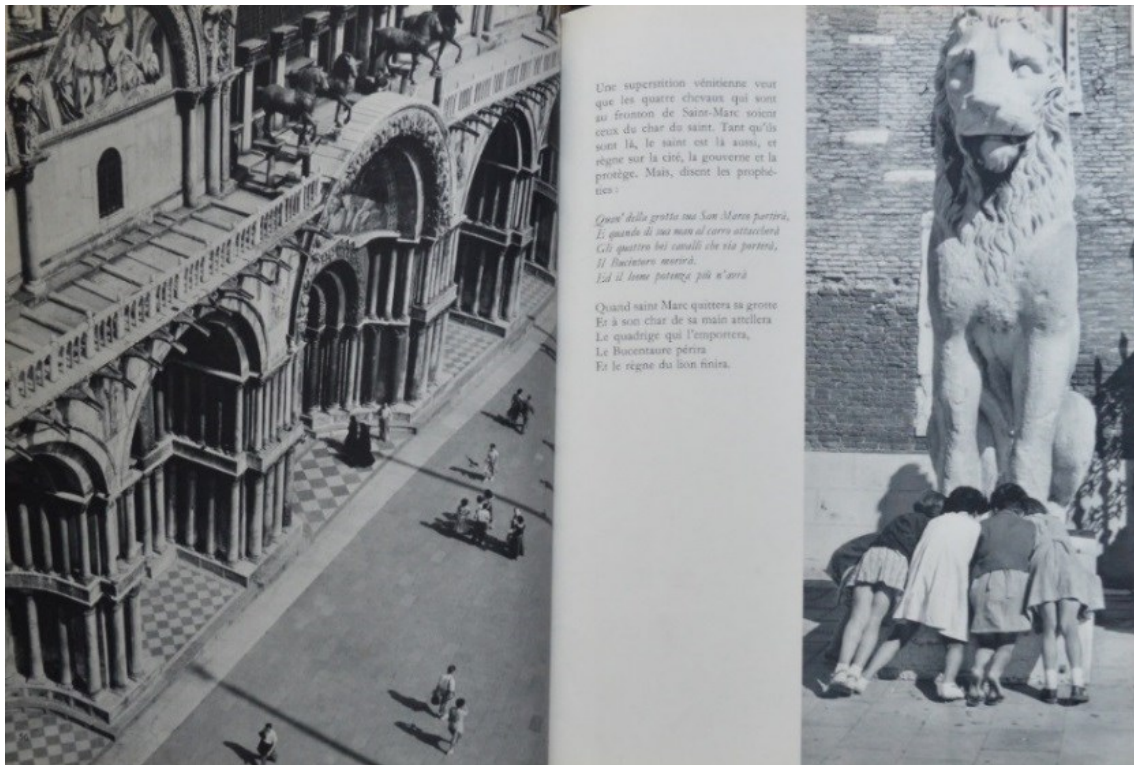


Figure 3 — *Venise a fleur d'eau* . Double page reproduced from the photobook (Roiter, 1954: 56-57).

alternate with documentary images, which, as stated by Roiter himself, show the subject within the surrounding environment in order to offer a “true image” of the lagoon city; a reference to a truth different from that of Leiss’ transfiguration, pertained to a certain esthetic and ethical renewal as promoted by the Venetian amateur circle “La Gondola”, in which Roiter himself took part before his professional transition, in 1954.

So, in Leiss the cutting operation is necessary to eliminate the nuisance of the image composition, while Roiter declares an inclusive glance, ready to seize the most diverse environmental notations, in the direction of the most spontaneous street photography of Gianni Berengo Gardin, author of *Venise des saisons* (1965), also edited by the Swiss publisher *Guilde du Livre*. As Giuseppe Turrone suggested in 1959, Fulvio Roiter’s photography displays a perfect balance between the pure picture postcard and the compositional practice of Leiss through a new attention directed to the everyday life (Turrone, 1959: 53-56) (Figure 3).

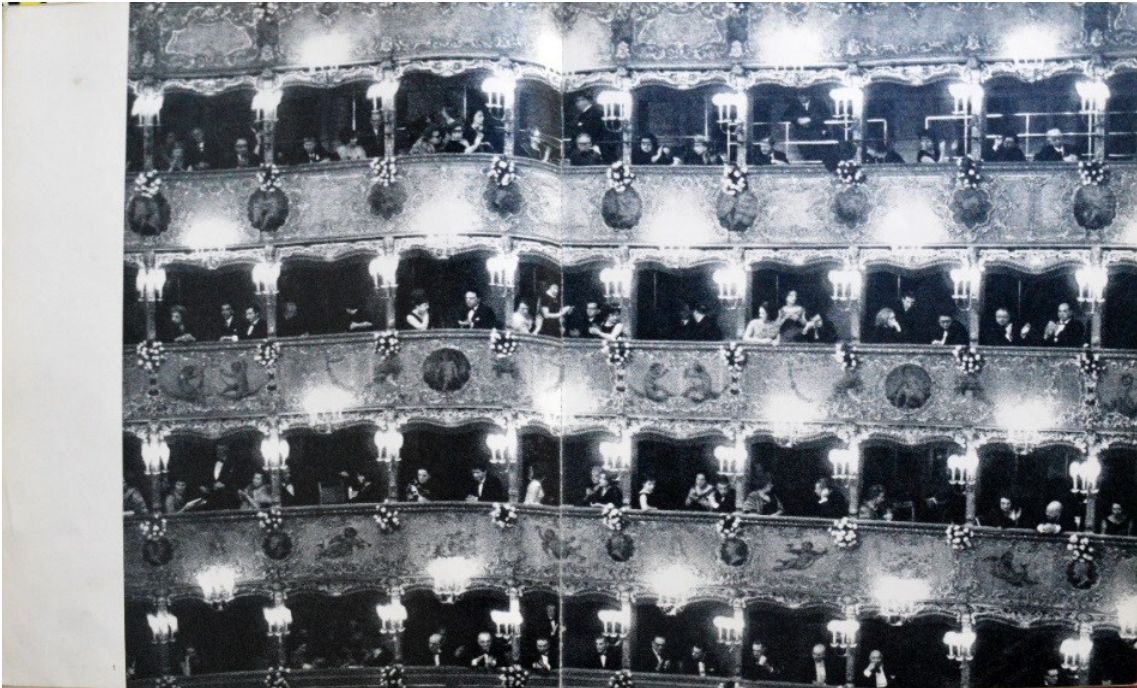
Roiter's introduction in *Venise a fleur d'eau* shows as the book represents a transient phase of Italian photographic culture: the text is, first of all, an affirmation of authorship in which it is reiterated that the photographic representation of the city is an act of interpretation by the photographer who is, at the same time, Venetian and capable of observing his city with a different gaze in order to offer an anti-monumental and anti-rhetorical image, bringing new perspective to the usual visual perception.

Thus, if in the unreal Venice described by Leiss, the human figure is evanescent as black and minute silhouettes immersed in the fog, in Roiter's photobook the presence of man becomes more pervasive, though limited to some typical figures such as those of children: "societal" interests are in fact farther still from the work of Berengo Gardin, heavily indebted to foreign influences ranging from William Klein's *Life is good and good for you in New York*, to the French humanist photography known in France but also spread in Italy through Paolo Monti and the photographic circle "La Gondola".

The first double page in *Venise des saisons*, disclosing a photo taken in La Fenice, the Venetian theatre, can be read as a statement of intent (Figure 4): Berengo Gardin does not intend to investigate Venice from the main stage populated by the usual actors, children and gondoliers moving around the scenery of Venetian monuments consecrated by time. He rather wants to give his viewers a central part in the narrative: humanity composed of Venetian society is investigated in his daily life to grasp situations and attitudes, individual and class, observed by a conciliatory attitude towards the humanity portrayed.

A certain irony in capturing some situations in the streets, in the bar, and on the ferry, is accompanied by a compositional attention mindful of Bresson's photography. However, it is the first time that the city of Venice is described from the aspect of humanity within, portrayed at the height of man (Figure 5).

Corinaldi's *Luci e colori di Venezia*, edited in Milan in 1969, does not differ in



Figures 4 and 5 — *Venise des saisons*: the Venetian theatre “La Fenice” (above) and caption of street scene (below). Double pages reproduced from the photobook (Gardin, 1965: 1, 48).



poetics from the ways of Gardin's "humanist" photography. On the other hand, Giorgio Lotti's *Venezia muore*, published in 1970, shows, in fact, the other face of the city: the less photogenic one, that threatens to disappear due to the ever-increasing elevation of the water level and the pollution caused by the industrial center of Venezia Marghera. Giorgio Lotti is a photojournalist member of the "Epoca" staff from 1964, and his photographic work on Venice started in 1968 on the occasion of the photo-reportage issued in "Epoca" on September 1968 titled *Venezia in rovina* (Lotti & Fagioli, 1968): in sixteen pages Lotti was forced to publish only a few parts of his photographs, about forty photos, that he had taken during the Venetian inspections.

Hence, Lotti looked for an autonomous space in which he could express himself, and found it in the pages of the photobook: «This book», Fagioli writes in the preface of *Venezia muore*, «originated as a special news feature and it is a collection of «discarded» photographic images that are the loveliest, most intelligent and sophisticated pictures; in other words, those which no Italian newspaper will ever publish» (Lotti, 1970). *Venezia muore* clearly demonstrates a different sensibility regarding the photographic representation of the city, towards the still enchanted gaze of Roiter, and the indulgent one of Berengo Gardin. Giorgio Lotti substitutes a visual research that presupposes the knowledge of the problematic condition of Venetian agony, from the abandonment of important historical sites to their transformation as gyms, while in a concluding series of photographs, he presents us with the industrial settlements on the mainland, the Venetian suburbs that generally escaped the visual behaviors of photographers (Figure 6).

Giorgio Lotti focuses also on the major architectural and artistic emergence of the city, not to enlighten their beauty but to reveal their fragility through the progressive and inexorable signs of their material disfigurement, accentuated by the strong black and white contrast of the printing press chosen, which differ from the reassuring grayscale of Leiss and Roiter. If we compare some images taken from the

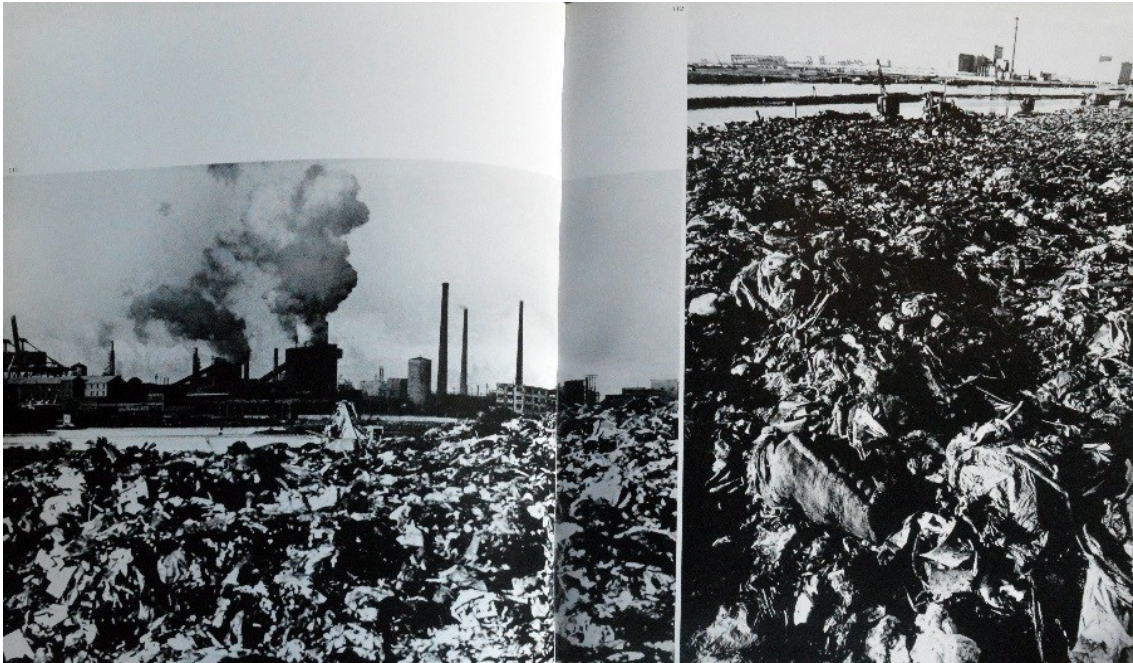


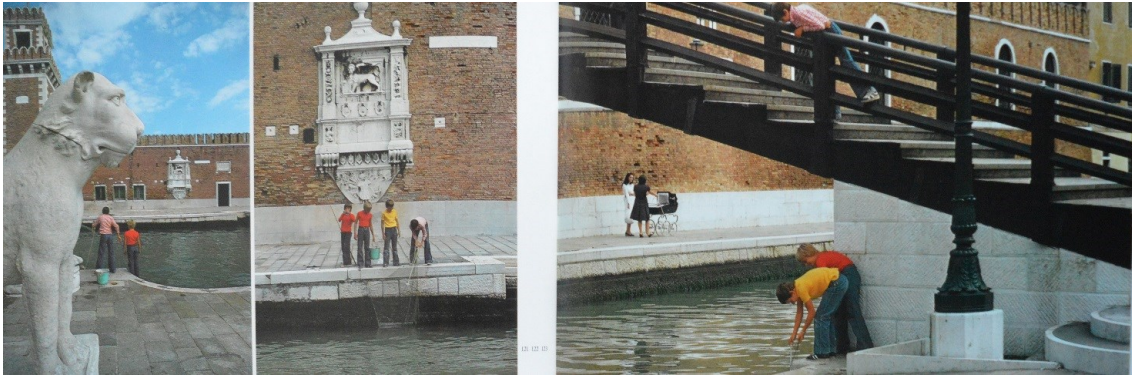
Figure 6 — *Venezia muore*: industrial settlements on the Venetian mainland. Double page reproduced from the photobook (Lotti, 1970: 99-101).

various photobooks on Venice mentioned above, we are well aware of the subtle changes of point of view.

The image of the bronze horses of St. Mark published in the Ferruccio Leiss' photobook, for example, is even printed on a cover responding to purely compositive reasons (Figure 1); however, in *Venezia muore*, it assumes a formal motif of insisting linearity while stressing the bad state of the bronze's conservation (Figure 7). The same pigeons, icons of the city in Venetian photobooks since the 1953's volume that opened with an image of two of these birds, become disturbing entities, hostile to man and his city: Lotti photographed them as hysterical raptors, or as carcasses in the gable roofs of the bell tower of the *Basilica della Salute* (Figure 8). Although absent from the majority of the book, Lotti affirms in every image the unmistakable trace of human presence: Venetians appear only in the last sequence of the book while protesting against the myopic policy destined to destroy Venice. These photos are also a testimony to the social agitation climate that characterizes Italian history from the late 1960's and most of the 1970's.



Figures 7 and 8 — *Venezia muore*: detail of bronze conservation (above) and caption of pigeons as disturbing entities to man an his city (below). Double pages reproduced from the photobook (Lotti, 1970: 3-4; 106).



Figures 9 and 10 — *Essere Venezia*: representations of Venice in Kodachrome (above), double page reproduced from (Roiter, 1977: 121-123); *Venezia e un popolo della laguna* (below), double page reproduced from (Bruno, 1978: 102-103).

However, after Lotti's publication, the image of Venice in photobooks has been shown to remain firmly attached to the usual imaginary of a quiet and outdated city, ignoring also the question of the survival of the lagoon. Contrasting with Lotti's decadent vision was Fulvio Roiter's *Venezia viva*, published in 1973, whose title seems to distance itself from the pessimism inherent to Lotti's photobook: the photographs are part of an iconographic discourse dear to the humanist poetics of the previous decades. On the other hand, *Essere Venezia*, the third photobook published by Roiter on his city, entails no reference to the infirmity of the lagoon, in favor of a representation of Venice in Kodachrome as a new expressive and personal research, whose horizontal format reiterates a consolidated way of capturing the city (Figure 9).

The idea of an outdated Venice will be reiterated, the following year, in *Venezia e un popolo della laguna* by Giuseppe Bruno, an exponent of the "La Gondola" group, whose volume can be considered as the last elegiac view of the immutable Venetian value close to the end. In fact, Giuseppe Bruno strolls along the alleys of the various lagoon realities, capturing evocative images of traditional crafts and the simple everyday life of the lagoon's inhabitants gathered around the sacred symbols of popular religions that have never been extinguished (Figure 10). The vivid irony of photographs taken by Berengo Gardin replaces here a more meditated and suspended vision, closer to the anthropological images from Southern Italy, while documenting the centrifugal forces towards modernization and the inevitable standardization, which, in turn, seem to have been more quickly assimilated in Northern Italy.

The photographer will have no other choice but to elevate some detail to abstract forms. With these words, Achille Bonito Oliva presented, in 1980, the photographic work on Venice of Franco Fontana, published in *Presenze Veneziane*, and issued by Maurizio Rossi. In Fontana's photographs, detail becomes an occasion for purely formal composition of tonal masses and geometric shapes, in which the



Figure 11 — *Presenze veneziane*. Double page reproduced from the photobook (Fontana, 1980: 30-31).

use of the color is chosen for its abstractionism, rather than its mimetic potential (Figure 11). In his introduction, Oliva associates the detailed selection operated by Fontana with the practice of Duchamp's ready-made: a way of giving new meaning to the photographed detail taken from the spatial continuum of the city and a way to include Fontana's photography in conceptual art practices. So, from the representation of the urban environment, as it was conceived in the previous decades with *Presenze Veneziane*, the lagoon town is described through the absoluteness of detail, in a Venice where the human figures are replaced by shadows.

Milan was an important post-war Italian photographic center. Despite being a city generally left out of popular tourism photography, it became a favorite subject for Italian photographers because it was free from the preconceived visual imprint of mass cultural icons.

Of note, are the calls to photograph Milan that we can read in some of the specialized Italian magazines of the mid 1950s. For example, in a review at Mario De Biasi's exhibition, the critic Guido Bezzola writes about the photographer's important contribution to the «rediscovery of Milan that has long been desired and unfortunately has not yet come to pass as we would wish» (Bezzola, 1956: 26). As a matter of fact, Milan is, for many artists and photographers:

«just an occasional encounter [...] and yet whoever neglects Milan is wrong, because its essence and its very modern structure make it more interesting, lively [...] than many other places that are more celebrated, but for too long have been stuck in time, detached from life and from the world of human beings» (*Ibidem*).

The stasis of Italian art cities, such as Venice, contrasts with the modernity and dynamism of a city like Milan, subject to sudden changes: «Of course, everyone knows that Milan is not a beautiful city. So, there is no danger of the illustrated postcard, always lurking for cities like Venice, Rome, Florence and others. The bare landscape of Milan offers figurative aspects that are well suited to feeling 'modern'», wrote Turrone, reviewing some exhibitions in Milan, in 1963 (Turrone, 1963: 17). However, the critic, in 1959, considered that Milan was still «the least photographed city in Italy» because of the difficulty in portraying its people (Turrone, 1959b: 34). Indeed, the photographer and critic Cesare Colombo, would confirm that the true novelty of Milan's iconography was the representation of the masses in his daily and apparently insignificant activities when he claimed: «Milan is her people. Here, in Milan, it feels as though there were a sort of collective consciousness [...] where the individual never wins» (Colombo, 1959: 32).

Therefore, in Milan, the photographic description of an anonymous crowd, testimony of the social dynamics and the collective feeling of the city, replaces the human "types" that populate other places of Italy, such as the unchanging characters of the Venetian lagoon or the stereotypical figures of Southern Italy.

As for the depiction of a peripheral Milan, it was already outlined in the pioneering *Occhio Quadrato* that Alberto Lattuada published in 1941 for Edizioni

Corrente. Contrasting to the mythical urban imagery promoted by the Fascist regime in the same years, this photobook presents an itinerary between some Northern Italian urban realities, facing their most marginal aspects through a photograph whose social implication foreshadowed the climate of Italian neorealism.

According to the chronology set for the present study, it's Mario De Biasi's *Idea di Milano*, published in 1955<sup>3</sup>, that portrays the Milan periphery as a place populated by a humanity devoted to work in the factories, and destined to live in cellblock dwellings that already seemed to be headed towards an unstoppable proliferation (Figure 12).

In this sense, and considering the contrast between center and periphery, the center presents itself as a place of lights, entertainment, culture and elegance, axis for finance and business (Image 13), while the margins of the city expand under the gaze of the inhabitants still unaware of the environmental and social consequences of such expansion and segregation. In the photographs of Mario De Biasi there is no condemnation, but a substantially optimistic representation of urban reality in all its nuances, obtained in images accurately composed by an author who had just completed his professionalization.

In 1966, about a decade later, William Zanca and Giuliano Gramigna would bring a 360-degree view of the city to an extreme conclusion with their photobook *Mi.h24*, in which Milan and its inhabitants were observed during a whole day. At regular intervals, every ten minutes from 5 a.m. to 4:50 a.m. of the next day, Zanca's camera recorded what transpired, in a photographic style of street photography owed to William Klein (Figure 14). Such style had already been adapted to the streets of Milan in Mario Carrieri's *Milano, Italia*, published in 1959 by Lericci Editore. However, the volume underwent severe criticism for being modeled after the example of Klein's book and, thus, choosing a photographic language too obedient to the American prototype.

Although the urban periphery portrayed by Mario Carrieri begins to be





Figures 12 and 13 — *Idea di Milano*: views of cellblock dwellings (above) and of the city center (below). Double pages reproduced from the photobook (De Biasi & Sacchi, 1955: 168-169, 186-187).



Figure 14 — *Mi.h24*. Double page reproduced from the photobook (Zanca & Gramigna, 1966: 52-53).

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**ore 12,10** *La Bowery? Mankattan?  
Regent Street? I Champs Elysees?  
È il minuto in cui tutte le grandi  
città si rassomigliano, tutti gli  
abitanti sono spalle, necke, darsi  
rigidi che si affrettano a casa, al  
barista, al ristorante,  
al self-service.*

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**ore 12,20** *L'ora del pranzo ha pompato  
i milanesi via dal centro, in mille  
rivoli periferici. C'è un momento  
di pausa, una specie di vuoto  
d'aria fisicamente percepibile.  
Come per sottolinearlo, appare  
una vecchia macchina, dall'alta  
seggiola tremolante e catalfica.*

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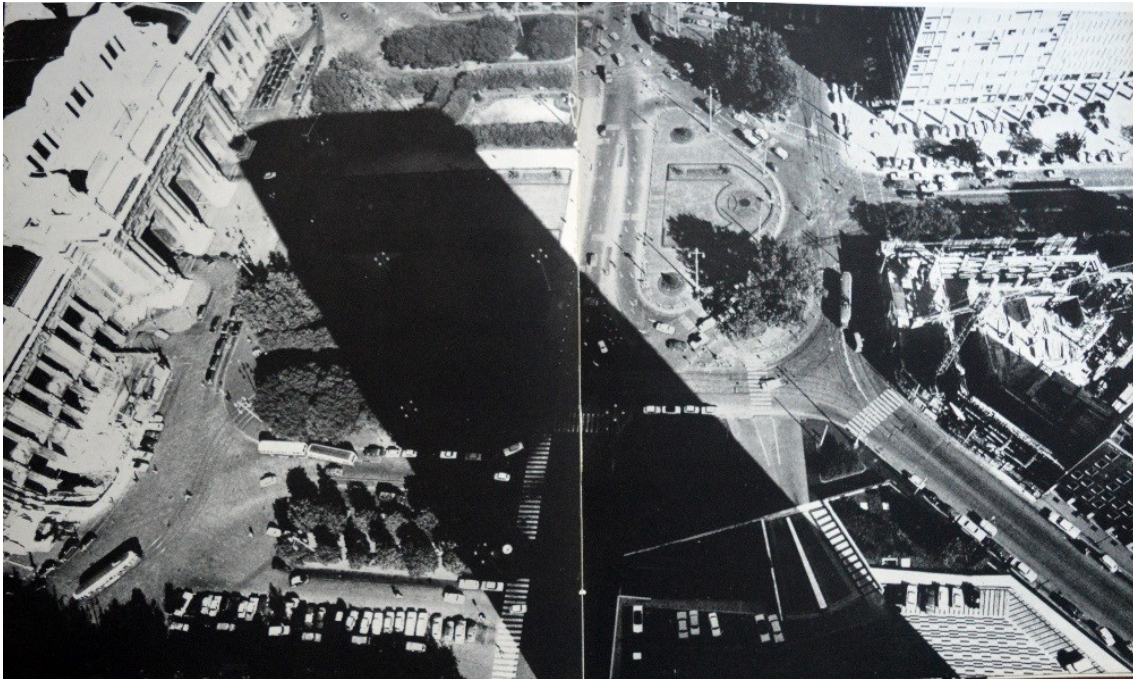
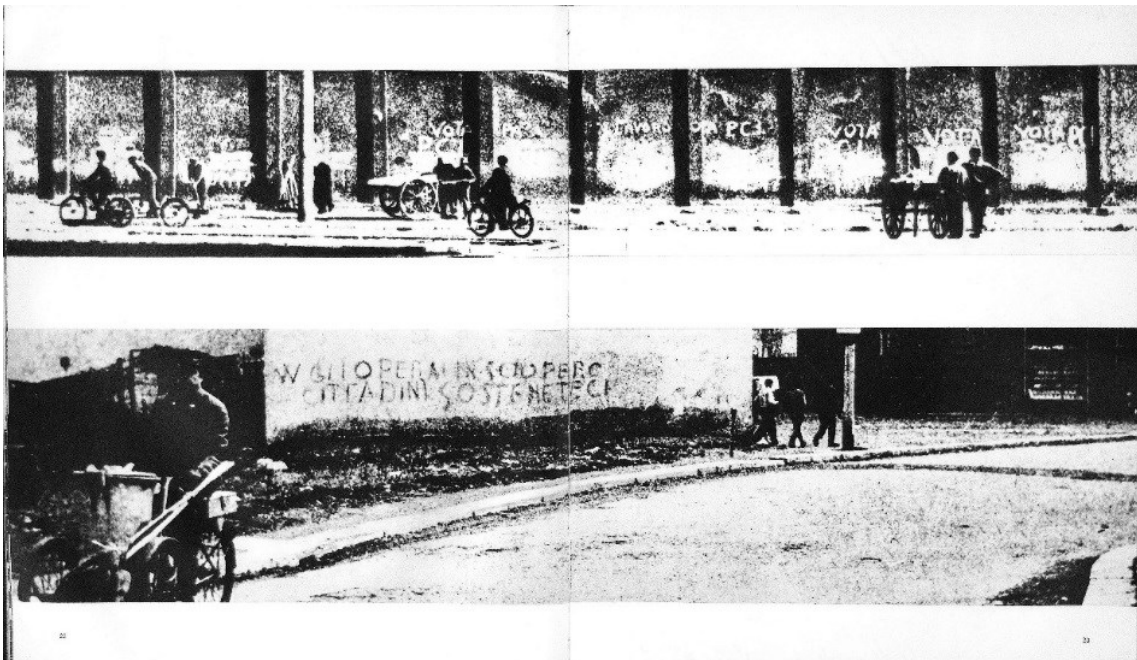


Figure 17 — *Milano*: skyscraper shadow over aerial view of the city center. Double page reproduced from the photobook (Orsi & Pirelli, 1965: 10).

covered by political-writings that mark the perimeter of the city as a zone of the social marginalization, the author nevertheless intends for a firm suspension of judgment: as stated by Carrieri himself, he did not care much about what was happening, he «was looking for more. For [him] Milan was only the theater, the scene where [he] would carry out [his] research» (Colombo, 1977) (Figures 15-16).

The iconography of Milan from the mid-1950's to the late 1960's confirmed a city characterized by its unstoppable tendency to grow: the skyscraper becomes a symbolic part of the dynamism that has instilled the city in the years of economic boom. *Milano*, as portrayed by Giulia Pirelli and Carlo Orsi in 1965<sup>4</sup>, does not contradict this scenario: their city is dominated by vertical lines that characterized the suburban growth, as well as the buildings of financial power in the center of Milan, whose shadows fall onto the city road network (Figure 17).

Meanwhile, the periphery is gradually assimilated by the city that perpetually grows as an organism. Plaques, posters and street signs place the city in the lexicon



Figures 15 and 16 — *Milano, Italia*: views on the urban periphery as as a zone of the social marginalization. Double pages reproduced from the photobook (Carrieri, 1959: 22-23, 78-79).

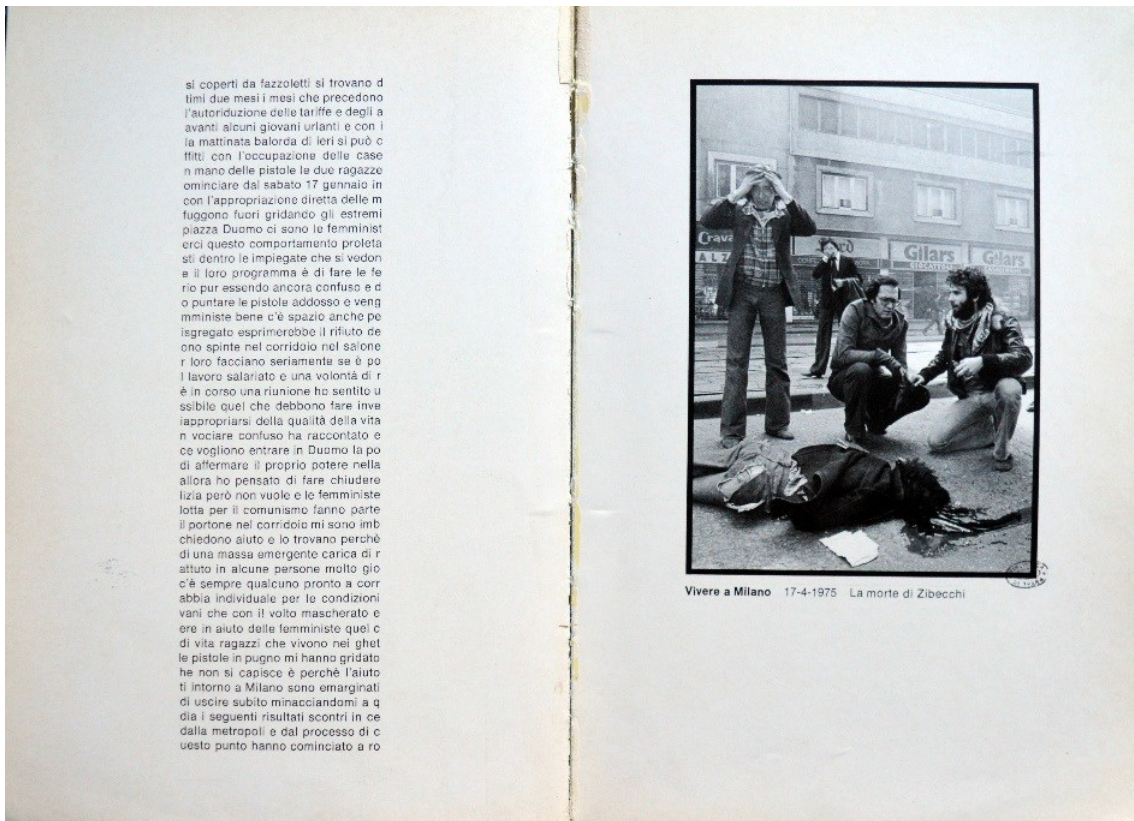
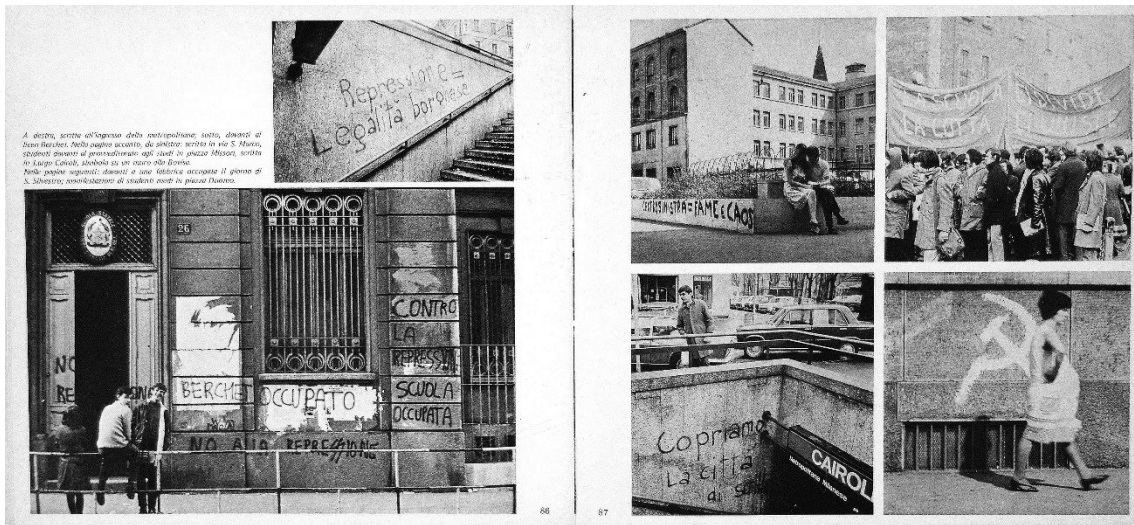


Figures 18 and 19 — *Milano*: merchants selling their wares to passers-by (above); consumer-based world of supermarkets and department stores (below). Double pages reproduced from the photobook (Orsi & Pirelli, 1965: 10).

of modernization of the time, while images of daily reality are shown for the last time in photos of artists at the bar or of antiquarian merchants selling their wares to passers-by, in a local economy that resists becoming part of a more consumer-based world of supermarkets and department stores, that will shortly dominate society (Figures 18-19).

Only three images point to a social disorder that, from that time forward, would have occurred in the major Italian cities, when workers, students and women would turn urban streets into a theater of struggle and protest. The "collective consciousness" that Cesare Colombo had already spoken of, in 1959, finally becomes the political conscience, so much so that the same depiction of the city replaced the usual iconography of skyscrapers, advertising signs, and cars for images that would document the determination of a crowd united by well-defined ideologies against the exploitation of factory workers, the conquest of capital culture, and the violence of the state and its collusion with fascism. So, Milan, the largest industrial center, becomes the main scenario for photobooks such as *Cinque anni a Milano* by Uliano Lucas, or *Vivere a Milano* by Aldo Bonasia<sup>5</sup>, both published by smaller and independent publishers such as the Musolini in Turin and Csapp in Milan, in 1973 and 1976, respectively.

The city of Milan that emerged in the photos of the 1970's is a city that continues to offer itself strong dichotomous terms in which the usual contrast between center and periphery gives way to that of a social fabric ideologically divided between entrepreneurs and workers, governors and the governed, men in uniform and students, neo-fascists and exponents of the extra-parliamentary left. In this sense, the guiding thread of the iconography of the city becomes the slogans, the letters on the walls, the posters (Lucas, 1973: 209) (Figures 20-21). The 15 photos presented in *Vivere a Milano* were taken for the presentation of 15 posters, coherent as suggested by Antonello Frongia, with one of the most popular practices during the 1970's experienced by artistic militants (Frongia, 2013: 131). Thus, the



Figures 20 and 21 — *Cinque anni a Milano* (above), double page reproduced from (Lucas, 1973: 86-87); *Vivere a Milano* (below), double page reproduced from (Bonasia, 1976: 4).





Figure 22 — *Mondo cocktail. 61 fotografie a Milano*. Double page reproduced from the photobook (Cerati, 1974: 54-55).

city identifies itself in the manifesto that becomes the very structure with which a photographic narrative on the city is undertaken.

In 1974, Carla Cerati's *Mondo cocktail. 61 fotografie a Milano* ends the attention given to social urban dynamics: in her very small and slim pocket-sized photobook, Cerati presented a photographic work dedicated to the intellectual and bourgeoisie society that crowded the fashion cocktail parties. Her portraits were shot in close-up and so densely that the image itself became claustrophobic and deformed (Figure 22).

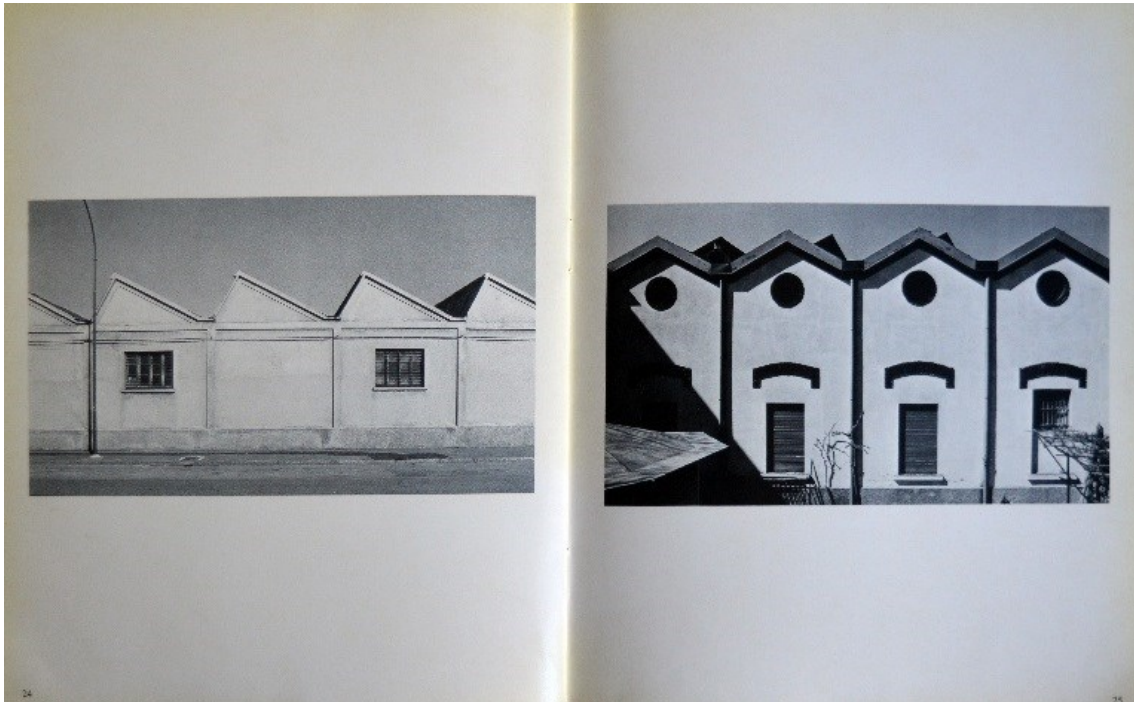
By the end of 1970's, the attention to urban social dynamics turns its gaze, once again, towards the margins of the city, where the rupture between man and the environment of a globalized society grew faster and became more apparent. The human being is still central in Virgilio Carnisio and Nino Lumbau's *Milano periferia*, published in 1977, which, albeit drawing an exclusive attention to the periphery of the city, it still references the humanist current of the previous decades: the photos of Virgilio Carnisio and Nino Lumbau are, in fact, seen as a last tribute to

a reality that, though lazy and shabby in its new buildings, its streets, its unpaved sidewalks and its modular façades, still remain permeated by its own poetry made of simplicity and human relationships (Figure 23).

Leonardo Leonardi's opening text explicitly distinguishes the old periphery, described by the author in neo-realistic terms, and the new periphery which is instead «denial of yesterday's»: characterized by dissonance, casualty and informality, the periphery of Milan «do[es] not differentiate any more from those of Turin and of many other industrial towns spread all over the world» (Carnisio & Lumbau, 1977). «The human dimension has been put into a crisis or excluded» so greatly that the community of people, until that moment seen as one of the peculiar characters of the city of Milan, gives up its place to the individual nestled in its «defected apartheid made up with television sets and lifts in minimum spaces» (*Ibidem*). It is, therefore, no surprise that, in 1978, Gabriele Basilico published an investigation about the Milan area in *Milano ambiente urbano*, which shows the industrial zone of the city completely free from workmen. The factories are viewed in frontal images, according to the lesson of American documentary photography, «in a mid-way between cataloging and archeology» (Basilico, 1978: 18), where the human figure does not appear (Figure 24). To preserve what seemed destined to vanish in a suddenly mutated panorama, the urban reality documented by Basilico excluded any type of reference to the city as a vital organism, in favor of the idea of landscape as something of inorganic and fragmentary, thereby, making sense of its inclusion in archiving and cataloging processes. We are in the midst of iconographic reflux with which the social reportage is definitely in crisis:

«the end, the destruction of the town not so much as the utopia of a monocentric organism, [...] as the end of a possession, the impossibility I do not say of inhabiting it, but of seeing it, of accepting it, of running across it though amid the forest of the direction arrows, even of administering it, so much it has grown without a rational control, so much it evolves spreading like an oil-stain, hyper-self-building and at the same time self-destroying» (Carnisio, Lumbau, 1977).

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Figures 23 and 24 — *Milano periferia* (above), double page reproduced from (Carnisio & Lumbau, 1977: 16-17); *Milano ambiente urbano* (below), double page reproduced from (Basilico, 1978: 24-25).

## NOTES

- 1 The volume, small in size (26x21 cm), was edited both in Italy and in France by Daria Guarnati. It presented the introductory text of Jean Cocteau and Filippo De Pisis (in Italian version only) while the sequence of images was designed by Gio Ponti. See also Dolzani, 2005.
- 2 For a precise editorial directive, this volume contains, besides a text by Roiter and a historical introduction by Dominique Aury, quotes from various authors juxtaposed or even overlaid with the images. The *Guilde du livre* published in fact volumes that were attentive to a precise taste of elegance, in a subtle balance between art and popularity, for an audience that would not accept an overly transgressive style. See Morello (2010: 92-94).
- 3 The book (22x17cm) presents in the first a long historical text by Filippo Sacchi, while De Biasi's photographs are in the second part of the book, without any illustrative function in relation to the text.
- 4 The photobook is large in size (40x30): it therefore provides a particular type of fruition closer to that for an art catalogue.
- 5 This photobook is not only limited in size but also slim: its political content claimed in fact easy manageability.

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