

Roma 1968. The Capital according to Ludovico Quaroni. In black and white.

Humble, imperfect, monumental, yet eternal, the capital told by the photographs of the great architect is an explosion of civilization that is intertwined with the contradictions of the city.

There is a Milanese publishing house, [Humboldt Books](#), which with a dry, clean and synthetic style offers texts by important authors who have marked the history of photography. One among many, Gabriele Basilico. But then on Amazon comes out among the thousand suggestions this that collects the photographs that Ludovico Quaroni in 1968 took around Rome. Photographs with a light tone but with a very current cut, almost aggressive. After the orange cover, and after the introduction of the writer Francesco Pecoraro, a pupil of Quaroni, **suddenly on a white frame The black and white of the Baroque coexists with the shacks where Pasolini walks and, leaving Piazza del Popolo, Quaroni's goal tells a sunny Sunday morning at the Olympic Village where a group of boys chases a ball on a pozzolan football field.** It is Rome that is inexorably leaving behind the explosion of the civilization of consumption, the economic boom but still keeps alive the traces of a city that still shows the echo of the films of Vittorio De Sica or Roberto Rossellini.

The fingers frantically leaf through the pages of this journey through the streets of the Capital, to "grasp the southern mixture of instances and perhaps of different cultures, in their centuries-old ability to tamper with dirty erode with non-carelessness the Beautiful and the Ancient as we know them in Rome". Here then are "the fountains of the squares and the banks of the Tiber, the Rinascente by Franco Albini and Castel Sant'Angelo, the EUR and the Vatican, up to the market in Piazza Vittorio and the Appia Antica. Stratifications of civilizations that intertwine, and in the midst the people of Rome apparently indifferent to the passing of the centuries. The architect's eye gives life to an unpublished and surprising book that can also be considered – this is the red thread – an act of love towards the city that gave birth to him".

For Ludovico Quaroni "Rome is above all an atmosphere, a light, a climate: a heavy air, full of arrogance and sloth, clear as it is necessary to mature to the psychological detail a form or an action that rationally lead to a particular, Roman satisfaction of the spirit and the senses, diffused air of a pink powder that the details of forms and actions confuses in a unity that has blood of history, mud and gold".

"In many shots you can feel the arrow of time", writes Pecoraro, "in what you see it is already clearly written how the contradiction that Quaroni's eye intentionally catches will be resolved - such as the temporary barracks along the railway line near the Tiburtina station and immediately beyond, in the background, the finished clear towers of Mario Ridolfi (of which Quaroni himself did not know whether to remain admired or not, given the minimal vernacular elements they contain) - and almost pleasing with the confirmation, inherent in the image, of their own porous conception of the city in general and of Rome in particular". And if the Capital is an idea, its images are visions. Visions of love, we could say, of an inhabitant for his city.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Italian, English Brossure, 112 pages, booklet in flap, 17 x 21 cm 2021 ISBN
9788899385873

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