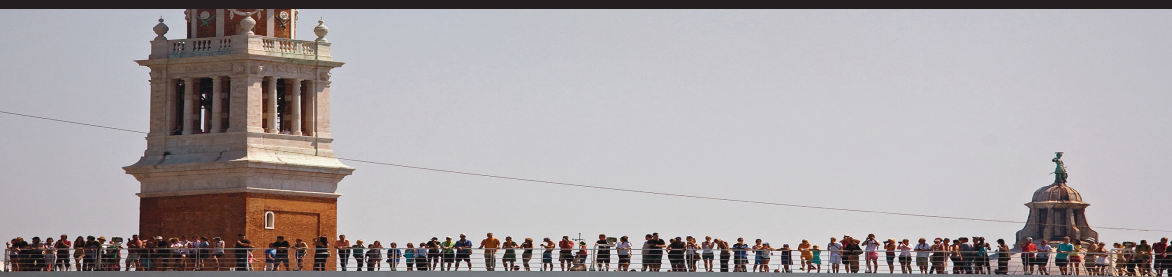


Collana di architettura
nuova serie

PICTURING CITIES

The Photobook as Urban Narrative

edited by
Davide Deriu and Angelo Maggi



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Architettura contemporanea
FrancoAngeli 

Cover image: *Venice cruise in the waters near St.Marks's Square* [detail],
photo by Leonio Berto - mignon, 2016.

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VENICE'S TIME WARP: THE VISUAL METAMORPHOSIS OF A FLOATING CITY

Angelo Maggi

Venice has always occupied a place in popular imagination as an extraordinary visual narrative. Since photographic images first featured on the printed page, 'La Serenissima' has been the subject of numerous photobooks, spanning from the earliest attempts to reproduce the city's architectural beauty on the part of nineteenth-century French publishers such as Noël Marie Paymal Lerebours (1807–1873), up until the most recent dedications to its urban spirit, masterfully captured by such contemporary photographers as Giuseppe 'Bepi' Bruno (1926–1999),¹ Leonio Ber- to (1963–2019),² David Hamilton (1933–2016),³ Laurent Dequick (b.1961),⁴ Leonard Freed (1929–2006),⁵ Mark Edward Smith (b.1942),⁶ Andrea Pancino (b.1965),⁷ Luca Campigotto (b.1962)⁸ and many others.

One can approach a photobook as a novel or a visual essay which narrates the metamorphosis of the lagoon-locked city. In selecting images from reportage and various series produced across the years, we see the recurrence of a number of themes, addressed by photographers who share the same passion but deal with their subjects differently. Their photographs become the words of a narrative, divided into episodes: a photographic library that explores social and spatial transformations, new forms of settlement, the city's multidimensional character and the sometimes contradictory relationships that exist in its different social, political and economic dimensions.

We understand the fundamental importance of photography for the cultural and architectural representation of the city, both as an identification tool and as a geographic and informational visual reference. Yet it is worth underlining how the photographic image also informs and inspires the way in which a place is experienced. With the first technical discoveries that allowed us to mechanically fix images on photosensitive materials, static subjects (architecture, initially) became both the testing ground and the only objects that photography could effectively capture due to the long length of time for which the subject needed to remain completely still. During this early period, therefore, the way of reading a city through this new medium developed in the wake of pictorial and engraving traditions, in all their various meanings.

In Venice, the way of capturing the urban subject most favoured by the great nineteenth-century ateliers can best be understood in light of the perspective vision of the Renaissance and the tradition of eighteenth-century picturesque views. 'Portraits' of the city are often linked to the protection of architectural heritage and the study of art on the one hand, and to the touristic image market on the other,

in a work of cataloguing the territory and its monuments that would long influence peoples' perceptions of Venice. Photographers of the calibre of Carlo Naya (1816–1882), Carlo Ponti (1823–1893) and Domenico Bresolin (1813–1900), to name just a few, were among those who presented images of Venice in photographic albums. These were not only souvenirs, they also became the model for numerous twentieth-century photobooks which we will turn to shortly.

We owe the first real attempt to narrate Venice in the photographic publishing industry to Ferdinando Ongania (1842–1911): a talented artist and a great entrepreneur. In addition to his extraordinary visual contribution – comprising a monumental illustration of the whole of St. Mark's Basilica⁹ – Ongania embraced the idea of undertaking a commercial project, *Calli e canali in Venezia*, followed by *Calli, canali e isole della Laguna*, which involved him in the production of one hundred heliotype prints, published and distributed between 1890 and 1897.

Ongania's work does not, however, constitute a photobook in the true sense of the word, as the volume consists of a collection of images accompanied by a very short introductory test by Pompeo Molmenti (1852–1928). As the historian Alberto Prandi (1948–2016) explained in a conference at the Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere e Arti, this collection 'borrows substantially from the tradition of the great engraved volumes, albeit in a slightly evolved way' towards what would become 'the context into which photobooks would eventually fit [...] composed almost exclusively from images, or in which the image is critical. Because images can now perform the narrative function, just as text once could'.¹⁰

The dawn of the twentieth century saw a substantial shift in the tradition of great photographic albums. Venice emerges, via periodical magazines like those published by the Touring Club Italiano, illustrated elegantly in composite photography accompanied by short captions. Touring Club Italiano was founded to reveal 'Italy to the Italians', and perhaps 'Venice to the Venetians': a motto that implied 'not only the knowledge of this still barely-known setting and landscape, but the formation of a public opinion capable of supporting a new sense of patriotic pride directly linked to an attachment to the national territory'.¹¹ Its publications are still not photobooks in the modern sense of the word. However, they certainly capture a moment of transition in which revelatory urban reportage provided a medium through which to see the city, even while sitting comfortably in front of the fireplace at home.

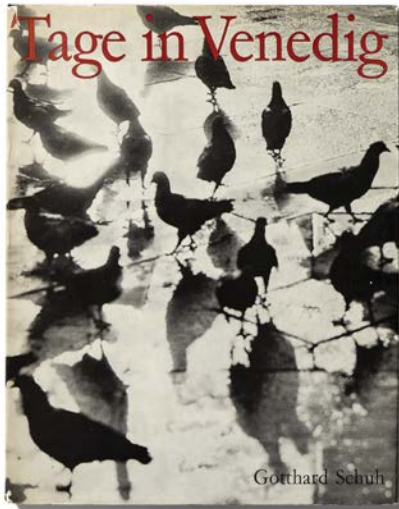
The first real photography book dedicated to Venice, in which the photographer appears as the author on the front cover, is *Venedig mit der Leica* by Rudolf Pestalozzi (1881–1963), published by the Munich publishing house Bruckmann in 1933. Pestalozzi was a Swiss photographer who arrived in Venice in the 1930s, armed with a device that allowed him to visually chronicle the urban space in sequence, and in quick succession. The Leica camera was a revolution in the mass market of portable cameras, and it ushered in a new critical method through which the photographer could perform the role of an even more analytical, argumentative and therefore authoritative observer. It was almost natural that this photographic project should evolve into an editorial programme. By storytelling through images,

Pestalozzi offers novel visual testimony of Venice. In particular, his oblique or lowered orientation as an elementary but effective means of obtaining guided tension becomes characteristic of his photographic interpretation of the city. Beyond its elegant page layout design, *Venedig mit der Leica* is, first and foremost, an exploration of Venice that renders its topography in detail. Pestalozzi's already modern manner shunned the often superficial curiosity of the Grand Tour to emphasise instead the cognitive and informative faculties of photography.

Photobooks endowed their readers with a better understanding of the city. Photographs, unlike the written word, are not only able to reveal things in a credible way: they also develop a new interactive experience which engages the urban space in all its dimensions. Literary-inspired images of Venice featured little in printed publications during the Second World War. Yet as soon as the war had ended, practising photographers and writers from various disciplinary fields exchanged a range of new approaches to creating numerous Venetian photobooks. As the photographer and historian Italo Zannier (b.1932) declared: 'The fascination with photography, especially as an artistic language, was increasingly fermenting in the city, especially among the young people who were caught up in the exciting events of the new neo-realist cinema'.¹²

During these halcyon years, Venice's photographic representation progressively transformed from an element of pure, simple spectacular attraction, taking on a variety of functions and uses across genres of photographic publishing thanks to the rapid development of printing techniques. Differences between the various tendencies and schools of thought found fertile ground – and became a diverse topic of discussion – among photobook enthusiasts and in the pages of specialist magazines. Particularly profound in marking Venice's new role in the publishing world was an expansive collection of photographs titled *Immagini di Venezia*, published in 1953 by the local photographer Ferruccio Leiss (1890–1968).

The task of coordinating Leiss's magnificent photobook was taken up by the editor Daria Guarnati (1891–1965) with the help of Milanese architect Gio Ponti (1891–1979), who organised the sequence of its 95 images (Fig. 9.1b). Its two short introductions were entrusted to the poet Jean Cocteau (1889–1963) and painter Filippo de Pisis (1896–1956), who were the respective authors of *L'autre face de Venise, ou Venise la gaie* and *Venezia, o la consolazione della pietra*. Both writers highlight the sheer weight of Venice's luminosity: 'A light both glorious and pitiful, cheerful and funerary' in a city described as a 'palace of dreams, a happy land that rises towards the heavens'.¹³ The sunlight that glorifies the city's shared spaces and architecture is the same 'silver light of Venice' that feeds Leiss's photographs to 'draw' doors, stairs, porticos and wells. For the photographer, the capriciousness of the water on which the whole city stands is one of the fundamental elements for shooting his images. Nocturnal photographs with artificial lighting and Venetian atmospheres often feature fog. The rhythm of the photobook seems to follow the slow glide of the boats. Indeed it falls to the photographer himself, at the end of the book, to suggest that letting oneself be transported into an environmental (rather than documentary) dimension is how the reader should approach his images.



FIGS. 9.1a / 9.1b - Gotthard Schuh, *Tage in Venedig* (1965) on the left and Ferruccio Leiss, *Immagini di Venezia* (1953) on the right

Photography, more than any other medium, lends itself best to establishing and portraying those aspects of Venice that pass by unobserved and underappreciated. In other viewings, the movement of water, while not the primary theme, constitutes an important accessory to complete the composition, provide the tone and render the environmental character. The reader will have instinctively understood the preeminence of the true photographer over his documentary [...] Indeed, the documentary illustrates – or, rather, reproduces – the subject with mechanical coldness, which can be useful to the scholar or to the amateur who is already familiar with Venice. Thus they see it again, in all its details, setting the scene in their mind’s eye through memory and imagination. Yet whoever is not possessed of such personal abilities, or whoever is entirely or partially unaware of Venice’s charm, can extract nothing from a simple, banal documentary. But through the clear, expressive images of real photography, they can experience the same sensations as the photographer feels about his environment.¹⁴

Leiss’s eloquent observation of poetic documentation evokes the expressive research of another photographer, Fulvio Roiter (1926–2018), whose masterly visual lucidity earned him distinction in Venice during the early 1950s. For Roiter, Venice is a place of lyric realism. He was among the first to systematically approach photographic investigation as both poetic expression and visual narration with a strong documentary impact. Without the excessive self-indulgence of amateur photographers, and with a well-defined editorial programme, such as his reportage on Venice, Roiter produced *Venice à fleur d’eau* (1954), which was printed by Europe’s most prestigious publishing house of the day, *Gilde du Livre* in Lausanne (Fig. 9.2b). This memorable photobook brought Roiter to prominence, and he became among the first Italian photographers to break into the international circuit

of photographic publishing, Giuseppe Turrone (b.1930), the foremost authority on Italian photography during those years, underlines that: '*Venice à fleur d'eau* was a photobook of considerable importance. Published one year after Vittorini and Croceni's *Conversazioni in Sicilia*, and one year before Strand's *Un paese*, it constitutes a clear demonstration of the wonderful essence of good lyric documentary photography when entrusted to an instinctive temperament like that of Roiter. Venice is not seen with the spirit of Monti, but lives with real sweetness and mysterious languor in the vision of a young man guided by a fervid and intense imagination',¹⁵

More than any other photographer of the twentieth century, it was Roiter who contributed most to spreading the myth of Venice around the world, portraying it as a picture-perfect city and tapping into a rich vein of publishing that remained inexhaustible for years. His photobook *Essere Venezia* (Edizioni Magnus, Udine 1978) was an unsurpassed global bestseller with print runs of a million copies, in every language. Between continuous departures from – and returns to – the city, the true scope of his photographic projects was to freeze Venice's beauty in time: its canals, tides and carnival; its palaces and people. What interested him was composing books, publishing and thoroughly telling the story of an idea and a place.

Another significant author of a photography book about Venice was the Swiss photographer Gotthard Schuh (1897–1969). From the mid 1930s, Schuh spent much time in the city with his Leica camera. But it would not be until almost 30 years later, when he was already succumbing to illness, that he decided to complete his book *Tage in Venedig*, which was published in 1965 with texts by the journalist Helbing Hanno (1930–2005).¹⁶ Something that emerges from the volume is Schuh's energetic sociological commitment as a photojournalist, which tends towards the emblematic rather than the descriptive. The photographs, taken in a documentary style, narrate a Venice that is simultaneously demythologised and charged with the powerful allure of its history. Running through the book is a whole strand of research into photography translated into a typographic image in all its various forms. One can make out fragments of canals and surfaces according to a rigidly geometric structure and lit in dramatic *chiaroscuro*. The photobook dust jacket is an essential creative image of Venice experimenting with pigeons at St. Mark's Square in the style of the *Subjektive Fotografie* of the late 1940s. The true subject of this photograph is not movement, but the location of pure energy and the shape of motion's underlying dynamic, which Schuh believed to be an essential property of reality. Covers like this, whose effects exceed what visual imagery alone can express and what can properly reside in the mind's eye, are like visual fields of abstract space in which conceptual play is as important as visible fact or pictorial structure (Fig. 9.1a).

The year that Schuh's book was published was the same in which *Venis des Saisons*, the debut photobook by the adopted Venetian photographer Gianni Berengo Gardin (b.1930), first came into print, published by Guilde du Livre (Fig. 9.2a). Five years previously, in 1960, Berengo Gardin had worked for Bruno Zevi (1918–2000), taking architectural shots for an exhibition and catalogue dedicated to the Ferrarese architect Biagio Rossetti (1447–1516). Although this was a commissioned work dedicated to Ferrara's Renaissance architecture, the numerous photographs



FIGS. 9.2a / 9.2b - Gianni Berengo Gardin, *Venis des Saisons* (1965) on the left and Fulvio Roiter, *Venice à fleur d'eau* (1954) on the right

never took the shape of a photobook in which the photographer had autonomy in selecting the images. We see the same with the photographs for the volume *Le Case Fondaco sul Canal Grande* (1961) where Berengo Gardin's entire visual apparatus becomes just a vehicle for the study of Venetian civil architecture from the ninth to thirteenth century. The volume features texts by Giorgia Scattolin, but we can say that these works, together with other minor commissions, led the photographer to mature his own language for interpreting the city in his editorial masterpiece. 'Unpredictable and torturous' was how photography historian Peter Galassi (b.1951) defined the journey linked to the inception of *Venis des Saisons*¹⁷. 'Everything was as envisaged and imagined' writes Mario Soldati (1906–1999) in the introduction to the volume that was to proclaim the success that had marked the photographer's career, with 10,000 copies bound for subscribers of *Guilde du Livre* and some printed copies by Éditions Clairfontaine destined for general sale. Berengo Gardin's publication presents an image of Venice in which the protagonists begin to be no longer the monuments nor the city in its own form but perhaps the people, with a truly surprising synchronicity. According to Zannier, *Venis des Saisons* is 'a book made up of diachronic photographs, thereby summarising a long enterprise, with which the author attains definitive international recognition. Upon a second reading of the images, the volume appears extremely transgressive in its traditional iconography and is by far the most actively engaged photobook about Venice. Its circulation around Italy was, however, limited, despite a later splendid edition by Massimo Baldini in 1981, but the volume was published in France, Germany



FIG. 9.3 - Leonio Berto, *Venice cruise in the waters near St.Marks's Square*, mignon, 2016.

and Switzerland'.¹⁸ *Venis des Saisons* evocatively summarises Berengo Gardin's style while echoing and paying homage to the grandmasters of photobooks from the twentieth century, including Édouard Boubat (1923–1999), Izis Bidermanas (1911–1980), Brassai (1899–1984), Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908–2004) and William Klein (1926–2022).

Over the last fifty years, Berengo Gardin has, on average, published four or five books each year, reaching a remarkable total of more than 200 photobooks. Galassi suggests that no comparable figures exist in Italy, among the world of photography from the second half of the twentieth century, whose photographic work is so deeply rooted in photobooks or who have produced them in such numbers.¹⁹ *Venezia e la sua laguna* (1964), *Immagine di Venezia* (1970), *Tempo veneziano* (1974), *Venezia: Una storia d'amore* (1981), which was designed by Massimo Vignelli (1931–2014) with a series of diptychs that the photographer himself describes as extraordinary, *Giardini segreti a Venezia* (1988), *Le isole della Laguna di Venezia, Un universo inesplorato* (1988), *Gianni Berengo Gardin: Gli anni di Venezia* (1994), *Veneziani* (2002), *Venezia* (2006), *Caffè Florian* (2013), *Venezia e le Grandi Navi* (2015), are the eleven photobooks that Berengo Gardin dedicated to Venice in the wake of *Venis des Saisons'* success. His latest printed volume, published by Contrasto, caused a stir for the photographer's denunciation of the imposing presence of large cruise ships, which would pass along the canal of Venice's Giudecca in the pre-Covid era, obscuring the urban scenery and upsetting the city's fragile and precarious equilibrium. The architect Vittorio Gregotti (1927–2020), who writes the preface of this

photobook, calls them 'the huge maritime condos of modern cruise ships, with their menacing extraneousness, an almost extraterrestrial presence, dwarfing Venice's historic centre and the noble presence of its history'.²⁰

The photographic medium furnishes both the images and the instruments to enlarge, reduce, manipulate, cut out and combine photographs with other graphic elements, including text. In journals, these instruments cause the independent voice of photographers to dissipate in what Peter Galassi defines as the 'collective racket' of mass communication.²¹ Books, by contrast, provide a space to shelter from that racket – a semi-autonomous reality in which the photographer and a restricted number of collaborators can carry out their creative experiments. This is certainly the case of the colossal volume *Invito a Venezia*, published by Ugo Mursia in 1962.

The photographer that accompanies the reader with his 125 monochrome and 35 colour photographs is Ugo Mulas (1928–1973). He explores the city in a completely unprecedented manner, creating a hybrid visual narrative of the city and its art *tout court*. Venice is photographed through its surfaces, as is evident from the cover image: St. Mark's basin and its gondolas together with the outline of the Palladian church of San Giorgio in Isola which is filtered through the architectural detail of the Palazzo Ducale's loggia. Starting out in what we might define as a neorealistic territory, with a peculiar vivid colour image occupying the cover and a tarry black and white tone within the text, Mulas assumes the identity of a conceptual artist. Venice is portrayed within its own spaces. Mulas does not depart substantially from a penetrating exploration of the city, entering its monuments with atmospheric photographs which are interspersed with alluring details from works of art. Fundamentally, Mulas's itinerary blends the wealth of urban gazes with the fine magnificence of Venetian sculpture and painting, extending an irresistible invitation to intimately uncover the city.

The photographer Franco Fontana (b.1933) also took on Venice's sublime landscape in a series entitled *Presenze Veneziane*.²² In 1980, he produced a volume for the Milanese editor Maurizio Rossi in which colour was no longer taken as objective fact but was blended into an energetic *chiaroscuro*, hitherto unheard of in this kind of photography and photobook. As far as colour photography manuals are concerned, Fontana's is the definitive transcript, dictating that only soft light should be considered, without contrasts that exceed the relationship between light and dark. Fontana captures chromatic differences as if they were black and white, obtaining a kind of watercolour image that is at once delicate and controlled. As Achille Bonito Oliva (b.1939) has observed: '*Presenze Veneziane* has the qualities of a tale told through images which, rather than indulge in cliché, seeks an approach that oscillates between documentation and abstraction. Fontana's photographic textuality is constructed in such a way that Venice appears to have been traversed by a net area's use of colour and the transmutation of its water'.²³ Building on the themes of the water's transmutation and Venice's fluctuating surfaces, we cannot but reflect on Lord Snowdon's contribution of a bilingual volume in landscape format *Una Immagine a Venezia / A View of Venice* (1972) designed by Germano Facetti (1926–2006) and published by Olivetti. Lord Snowdon, Antony Charles Robert



FIG. 9.4 - Lord Snowdon, *Una Immagine di Venezia / A View of Venice* (1972) design Germano Facetti and published by Olivetti

Armstrong-Jones (1930–2017), never completed his course on architecture, and at 21 took up photography as a career, setting up a studio of his own in London. He later became the photographer for *The Sunday Times*, *Vogue*, and *The Telegraph Magazine*. His Venice photobook is a profusely illustrated volume featuring full-colour photographs of Venice and its denizens (Fig. 9.4). It is an attractively produced book and an important social document, and was originally given as a corporate gift in very small quantities.

The beautiful photographs that make up the present volume have caught some of the aspects of Venice — a city with a unique geographical setting, rich in visible testimony to a glorious past, abounding in the heritage of great eras in the history of art, yet devoid of present purpose so that, with the civilised and gentle patience of its inhabitants, its mode of daily life is utterly different from that of any other city and any other place. All Venice becomes a ghetto, a vast convent: a closed circle, that is, where life goes on in its own special way, with its own rules. Snowdon's photographs capture this special life of small, everyday occurrences set against a background of great monuments, or against that type of Venetian architecture which is called 'lesser' because, to be really critical, it is not in itself monumental, but which is essential to Venice and indeed *is* Venice, since Venice is not only a city of many monuments or whole quarters that are monumental, but is a single monument in its entirety.²⁴

Photography is almost always assigned the task of visualising the appearance of Venice in order to fix its image before it undergoes change. The photobooks that have featured up to this point not only play a role as instruments of information, they are also read as a conditioning element of the cultural system insofar as our very idea of Venice undergoes systematic transformation precisely through these photobooks. Thus, for all these photographers who worked to see their efforts in print, the preferred medium of the photobook reaches a wider audience, and it becomes the principal form of their individual communication.

Venice serves as the scene of a decisive evolution in the history of its photobooks. In 1982, the need was felt to transform photography into a narrative act ac-

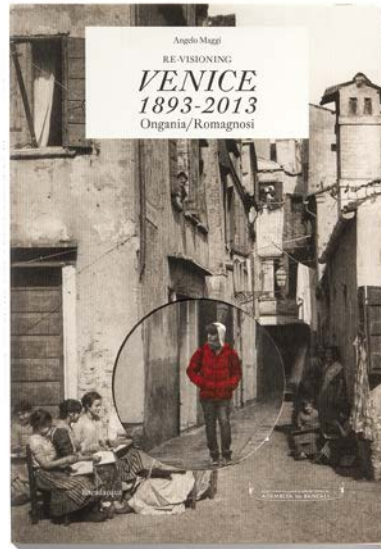


FIG. 9.5 - Angelo Maggi, *Re-Visioning Venice 1893-2013 Ongania/Romagnosi* (2013), design Giorgio Camuffo, cover first edition on the left and cover second edition on the right

According to a reading that entails contemplating the city, revealing its changing contours and commenting on its urban development. This leads us to the town planner Edoardo Salzano (1930–2019) who was given charge of drafting Venice’s urban development plan from 1981 to 1985. His idea inspired a photographic campaign to produce a 1:500 scale colour plan of Venice’s historic centre. This static precursor to Google Earth’s online mapping was never intended to be usable for an audience of readers (or rather of photobook readers). It would fall to the Venetian publishing house Marsilio to draw up an editorial project, with an intersection of Jacopo de’ Barbari’s sixteenth-century bird’s-eye view and the evolutionary interpretation of cartography through its publication of the *Atlanti* series, starting from the aerial photograph of the city itself. Atlases are made to imagine worlds, dream of horizons or perceive an unknown elsewhere. *Atlante di Venezia* (Atlas of Venice, 1982) was the first of a long and successful series which glorified this scientific approach and the supremacy of aerial photography. This photobook (if we can call it that) has drawn interest not only among academics, architects and town planners but also citizens, travellers and visitors as a tool that provides an immediate reading of the constructed city. It encompasses built up areas as well as relational spaces; monuments as well as minor buildings; public spaces, canals and hidden, remote places: reconstructing a unitary, completed image of the city. Visually absorbing a city, observing it from on high and discovering its most recondite corners evokes a special pleasure, a sense of subtle intoxication imbued by the unveiling of its most intimate

and unknown secrets that only the immediacy of the image can offer. This is all the more accentuated in the case of Venice, a special place *par excellence* whose foundation is immersed in mythical history. *Atlante di Venezia* therefore becomes simultaneously a photograph open to interpretation and an instrument of technical knowledge, as well as a faithful reflection of an often secret reality, well hidden from casual inquiry. It preserves Venice's urban form and dimensions in scale, just like a traditional map. Yet it does not do so to the exclusion of dynamic subjects and fleeting flashes of real life.

We devote our final thought to the reprographic survey of Ongania's *Calli e canali in Venezia* by the contemporary photographer Giampaolo Romagnosi (b.1966), published as a photobook entitled *Re-Visioning Venice 1893–2013*. Romagnosi recovers the sense of time by means of facing pairs of images. The two editions of the volume present an obsessive search for the exact camera angle with which Ongania immortalised Venice (Fig. 9.5). The project takes place in the physical space, just as Ongania's had. However Romagnosi's journey through time in search of the points of view of the Venetian places favoured by the nineteenth-century photographer was much more demanding and interesting. Throughout the course of his work, Romagnosi became stylistically more audacious; during his search for missing places he decided to entrust recognition to two large format cameras: a Lupa Fantuz 10x12 (65 and 47 mm) and a Hasselblad 503 (80 and 40 mm). Each place was photographed two to five times in the different formats. His commendable work finds confirmation in the pages of an extraordinary book designed by Giorgio Camuffo Lab for Lineadacqua editions. As the photographer of the modern images points out: 'all shots of St Mark's Square, the Doge's Palace and the Grand Canal were omitted by choice'. The most stereotypical views for a 're-photographic survey' are certainly also the least attractive from a communicative point of view. So Romagnosi concentrated his search on the scenes most difficult to identify, leaving a map of the 191 camera angles shown in *Calli e canali in Venezia*. We read about the absence of one unidentified pictures, but history can alter and erase places. Even the most adamant of photographers cannot dig up the image of a *vera da pozzo* (well head) or a square that has been swept away by time. All that remains, as Romagnosi himself points out, is to identify the *genius loci* of cities like a 'diachronic flâneur, in the style of Walter Benjamin, capable of studying the past in the present, of reconstructing and safeguarding the memory linked to places'.²⁵

The informative value of *Re-Visioning Venice 1893–2013* evokes all the examples by Pestalozzi, Leiss, Roiter, Berengo Gardin, Fontana and Lord Snowdon introduced and analysed above. The sequences of photos dialectically linked to one another, page after page, bring out both the permanence and the changes of the lagoon city which would pass by unobserved and underappreciated were it not for the visual documentation of those who made Venice their subject.

NOTES

- 1 Giuseppe Bruno, text by Alvisè Zorzi, *Venezia e un popolo della laguna* (Milan: Longanesi, 1978); Giuseppe Bruno, text by Fernand Braudel, *Il respiro di Venezia* (Verona: Cierre edizioni, 1987).
- 2 Leonio Berto, text by Angelo Maggi, *Venice, Any Colour You Like* (Verona: Mignon Le Rondini, EBS, 2013).
- 3 David Hamilton, text by Peter Lauritzen, *Venise* (Paris: Vilo, 1989).
- 4 Laurent Dequick, *Grand Canal* (Vanves: Éditions du Chêne, 2019).
- 5 Leonard Freed and Claudio Corrivetti, *Venice/Venezia* (Rome: Postcart edizioni, 2006).
- 6 Mark Smith with Umberto Franzoi, *Canal Grande* (Venice: Arsenale editrice, 1993).
- 7 Andrea Pancino, text by Leonardo Driusso, *Venezia: il silenzio della bellezza. 59 foto per 59 giorni / Venice: the silence of beauty. 59 shots for 59 days* (Crocetta del Montello/Treviso: Antiga edizioni, 2020).
- 8 Luca Campigotto, text by Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia Storie d'acqua* (Milan: Silvana editoriale, Cinisello Balsamo, 2019). See also by the same photographer *Venice exposed* (Rome: Contrasto, London: Thames & Hudson, and Paris: La Martinière, 2006); *Venetia Obscura* (Rome: Peliti Associati, Paris: Marval, and Stockport: Dewi Lewis, 1995).
- 9 See Maria da Villa Urbani and Irene Favaretto, eds., *Ferdinando Ongania: La Basilica di San Marco 1881–1893*, exhibition catalogue (Venice, 16 July–27 November 2011), (Venice: Marsilio, 2011).
- 10 We refer to Alberto Prandi's speech entitled 'L'immagine di Venezia nell'editoria fotografica negli anni '30-'60' at the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, given on 17 April 2013, during the exhibition *L'ultima Venezia: Fotografie di Gotthard Schuh* at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6UmaM7sk54>.
- 11 Fabio Mangone, 'Together and Alongside Public Institutions: An Avant-Garde for Landscape and Architecture, 1904–1921' in G. Belli, F. Mangone and R. Sessa, eds., *L'Italia del Touring Club, 1894–2019*, special edition n. 1/2021 of *Storia dell'Urbanistica* (Palermo: Caracol, 2021), 20. See also Chapter 11 in this volume, footnote 25.
- 12 Italo Zannier, 'Ansie di realismo e ricerca di un linguaggio' in Italo Zannier, ed., *Fotografia a Venezia nel dopoguerra da Ferruccio Leiss al Circolo 'La Gondola'* (Florence: Alinari-Craf, 2005), 5.
- 13 Ferruccio Leiss, *Immagini di Venezia* (Milan: Edizioni Daria Guarnati, 1953), 14.
- 14 Ivi, 121.
- 15 Giuseppe Turrone, *Nuova Fotografia Italiana* (Milan: Schwarz Editore, 1959), 50.
- 16 See Gotthard Schuh, *Tage in Venedig* (Zurich: Ex Libris, 1965).
- 17 Peter Galassi, 'I libri di Gianni Berengo Gardin', in Bruno Carbone, ed., *Gianni Berengo Gardin il libro dei libri*, (Rome: Contrasto, 2014), 10.
- 18 Giovanni Chiamonte, R. Martinez and Italo Zannier, *Gianni Berengo Gardin fotografo 1953–1988* (Udine: Arté, 1988), 51.
- 19 See the essay by Peter Galassi, 'I libri di Gianni Berengo Gardin', in Carbone, 7–13.
- 20 Gianni Berengo Gardin, *Venezia e le Grandi Navi* (Rome: Edizioni Contrasto, 2015), 71.
- 21 Galassi, 'I libri di Gianni Berengo Gardin', in Carbone, 9.
- 22 Franco Fontana, *Presenze Veneziane* (Modena: Maurizio Rossi Editore, 1980).
- 23 Italo Zannier, *Sublime fotografia. Il Veneto* (Venice: Corbo e Fiore editori, 1992), 23.
- 24 From the introduction by Bruno Visentini in Lord Snowdon and Derek Hart, *Una Immagine a Venezia / A View of Venice* (Zurich: Conzett & Huber, 1972), 10.
- 25 Angelo Maggi, *Re-Visioning Venice 1893-2013 Ongania/Romagnosi* (Venice: Lineadacqua edizioni, 2013), 18.

What is a photobook? And how can we assess its historical and cultural relevance for the representation of cities? The terms 'photographic book' and 'picture book' refer to various illustrated publications, with or without text, in which photographic images play a key role. Often resulting from the collaboration between photographers, editors and graphic designers, they are intended to build visual narratives on specific places or subjects. Throughout its history, this versatile form of publication has allowed photographers to depict urban environments in widely different ways. Although the photobook has been integral to the construction of urban narratives since the early-twentieth century, its significance for the experience and perception of cities has so far been rarely investigated. *Picturing Cities* addresses this gap by mapping the shifting nature and function of photobooks onto the history of urban representation. This collection of essays from Europe and the Americas illustrates a broad range of aesthetic attitudes as well as analytical approaches to Western cities expressed through photobooks. The anthology, stemming from a conference session chaired by the editors, focuses on the photobook as a form of urban narrative: a tool that has been deployed to read, analyse and interpret cities through curated sequences of images, often in conjunction with literary or critical texts. It opens up a multidisciplinary field of research with the potential to expand into further geographical and cultural areas.

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