

Reversed Cities

Preface by
Fernanda Pivano

How sweet seeing these cities I loved so much cancelled in the dreams of these reversed photos, where "reversed" means the way Francesco sees his films. I told him that maybe not everyone would understand what this means, and he emblematically answered that not everyone has to understand. Thus we became friends.

And yet, these photographs where not everyone understands everything, express imaginaries that we laymen recognize only through an almost surrealistic interpretation. Or better yet metaphysical, as Francesco points out to my great joy.

Seeing this mysterious image of Shinjuku, from the Tokyo we all fantasize about, brings to mind the the Temples of Tagata and Ogata: it makes you think about them as evidence to the contrary of the still poetic reality of baby-pink penises, of these wild-eyed youngsters who don't think about pink penises, or maybe too much, or else too little.

Or, seeing this incomprehensible photo portraying a Tokyo metro station makes you think about the American Subway stations, confusing not so much for the image's rarefaction as for the crowd's drama.

Or, seeing this picture of New York's Chinatown with its enormous Chinese sign is like erasing any American vaunting and extolling China's overpowering of America, which has already begun, waiting for the probable deluge of blood that would ensue if this supremacy were ever to affirm itself.

Or, seeing these Japanese ghosts, where the Japanese Girl of many fairy tales has her back covered by an *obi* like her mother, her grandmother, her great-grandmother and her great-great-grandmother before her, brings to mind the melancholy of these girls already devoured by the tertiary industry.

Or, seeing this photograph of Times Square with a wall that could belong to any city in the world is scary, because of America it's only possible to guess, luckily with some difficulty, the image of the "queen of the damned" justified by the caption alone: "All she wants is hell on earth". Who knows if this is the real message from the beauties of the movie firmament? Thanks to the "reversed photographs" one cannot forget another black and white image, as realistic as to be overwhelming, of a beautiful woman with jelly breasts and platinum hair who sang praise to the "angels of hell" where those angels were just gorgeous boys.

Or, seeing this image of the Village with this black house, reversed or otherwise, with little balconies where the dispossessed try to take a breath of fresh air in the summer and catch a ray of sun in the winter, makes one think about the social injustice of certain Californian hotels where people sun themselves in summer and winter on vast terraces scented by the wind of two Oceans.

Or, seeing one of these New York highways that take you who-knows-where all shaded in blue like a movie from the Thirties makes one think that it's still there that America makes you dream, makes you dream of velocity, makes you dream – as Kerouac said – of going, going, going where? It doesn't matter, just going.

Sweet America, maybe you are still this, with the licence of this reckless photographer who portray reversed cities.