

## Foreword

by

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The Scientific Society Ludovico Quaroni was founded in Rome in 2010 as a tribute to Ludovico Quaroni, the Italian Master of Urban Architecture. Its purpose is “the study of the contemporary and historical city and architecture; the study of the design and theoretical works of the leading architects and scholars of architecture, the city and the territory”. To achieve these goals, the Scientific Society Ludovico Quaroni has founded the present electronic review, “L’architettura delle città – The Journal of the Scientific Society Ludovico Quaroni”. The title is a reminder of Ludovico Quaroni’s earliest book entitled *L’architettura delle città* (Ed. I. Sansaini, Rome 1939).

Ludovico Quaroni, a native Roman, was a master of Italian architecture during the second half of the twentieth century; his talent contributed to the education – in addition to the majority of the younger generations of architects in Italy – of Carlo Aymonino, Manfredo Tafuri and Antonino Terranova. He also constituted one of the fundamental references to the elaboration of Aldo Rossi’s theories on the city. An architect and urban planner, professor and author, Quaroni represents the most open and inclusive methodological and linguistic experimentalism and the most progressive identity of modern Italian architecture, founded on the close relationship between historic culture, social and contextual awareness, a scientific understanding of design and a passionate investigation of the future; courageous and unbridled. In adopting his name for the review presented today, the Scientific Society intends to return to the discussion of the Architecture of Cities at a time when methodologies, technologies, relationships between the scales of design, the formal and symbolic meanings and languages of the city, everything about which modern Western urban culture appeared certain, now appear overrun by the vertiginous nature of the most rapid and imposing urban expansion in human history, sweeping across both ancient and new continents. Within this unstoppable metamorphosis, even the value and significance of being a “citizen” becomes blurred,

forcing the admission that “the city has won, the city is dead”. Given this conjuncture, precisely the teachings of Ludovico Quaroni, which to some may resemble a feeble voice from a distant past, comes to our aid, together with those of all the great scholars of the city throughout history and the reality of its construction, in Italy and abroad. Together with them, we believe that the city is always a metamorphosis, by its very nature, and an endless challenge for everyone: its citizens, its administrators, its politicians, its intellectuals, its poets; and, finally, its architects. Above all for its architects. We are convinced that the city is about design, in other words, the representation of its own reality, whatever it may be, that is transformed into an idea that becomes reality through design. Everything will be different, everything is already different, with the exception of the faith in the idea of design, an organiser of functions and values, that which realises hopes, calms anxieties and comes to the aid of the infinite disillusionments the city throws at us even as it promises happiness.

Certainly, for some time it has been said that the city we watch grow out of control and whose historic identity is deformed before our very eyes under the pressure of transformations can no longer be conceived and evaluated using the parameters of architecture. As far back as the 1950s, Lévi Strauss suggested it be considered a landscape; yet this was a decisive way of inviting a *courageous and unbridled* dilation of the concept of the Architecture of Cities, and not of negating its existence or prematurely sanctioning its demise.

As the comprehension of a forest requires that the perceptive emotions generated by its great masses in the landscape must always accompany the evaluations made at the scale of the biological individuals of which it is composed, thus the comprehension, and hence the design of the city-forest of our present cannot be separated from the contemporary evaluation – the design and redesign – of the architecture of the individual constructions and infrastructures of which it is composed, in favour of the lives of those who inhabit them. Architecture and city, once again present in the ideas and proposals of the architect, closely linked by their reciprocal indispensability; this is the foundation of our discourse. For this reason, to those who, observing the impossibility of returning to the city of the past, insinuate that the city is truly

dead, and architecture with it, there is a temptation to respond, as during the inevitable passages marking the continuity of the most noble human events: “the city is dead; long live the city”.

The review will thus examine the city, architecture, the works of the masters and their ideas. It will do so with an intentional variety and with the geographic and historic latitude demanded by our contemporary era. This first inaugural volume – comprised of the first two issues of the review – is justly dedicated to the presentation and reconstruction of Ludovico Quaroni’s unbuilt works or those whose genesis is perhaps unfamiliar. The review offers original contributions to a better understanding of a master to whom we all owe a great deal.

This review has brought together an international group of architects and critics that do us honour. Together they form the Scientific Committee, an indispensable tool for evaluating the approach and quality of the review itself. I extend my thanks to them on behalf of the Scientific Society Ludovico Quaroni; their presence is a generous display of faith in our project and the most valuable stimulus to our labours.

This project wishes to involve the younger generations, for whom the review will propose, in the near future, themes of reflection and research. In adhering to them, through a rigorous scientific evaluation, it will be possible to offer a contribution to the debate we hold at heart.

The editorial programme is completed by a series of monographic publications: one is *L’architettura delle città* “Monograph Series”; one is the publications from the UNESCO Chair on “Sustainable Urban Quality and Urban Culture”, of which I have the honour of being the Chairholder and which I have promoted on behalf of the Sapienza University of Rome: *L’architettura delle città* “UNESCO Series”.

I would like to thank the Editorial board and encourage all of us to keep up the good work.

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