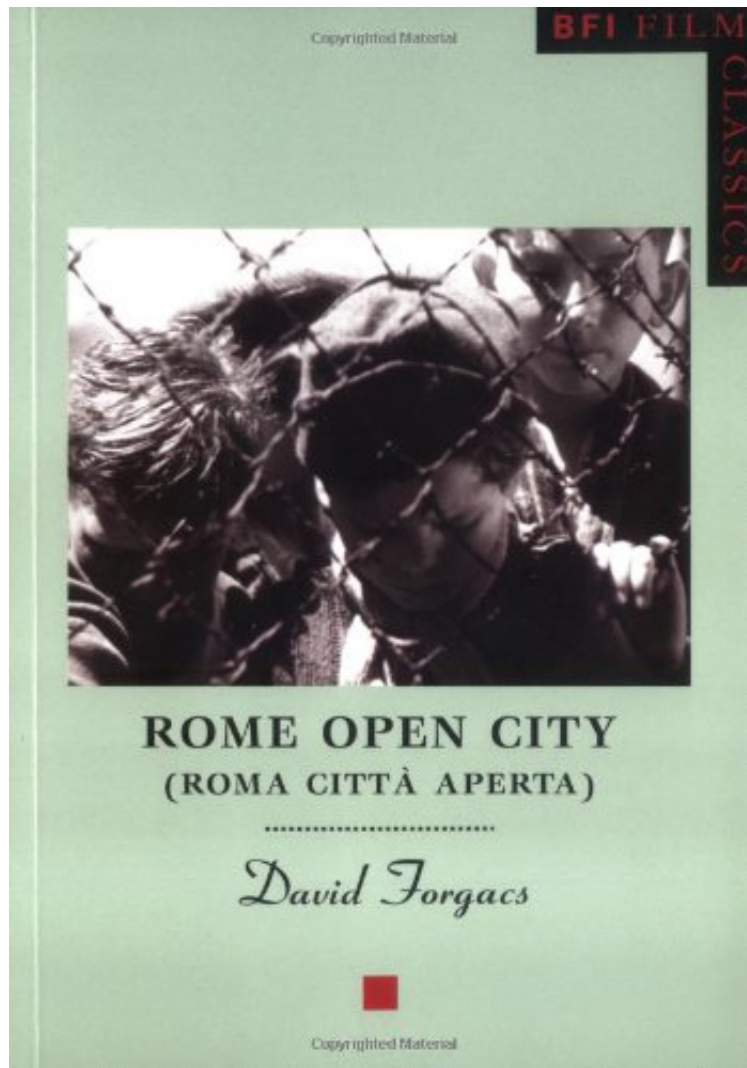


[Mobile ebook] Rome Open City: Roma citta aperta (BFI Film Classics)

Rome Open City: Roma citta aperta (BFI Film Classics)

David Forgacs

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David Forgacs : Rome Open City: Roma citta aperta (BFI Film Classics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rome Open City: Roma citta aperta (BFI Film Classics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. One of the better BFI classics.By M. ParlamentoIt's been awhile since I read/taught this book (in a Film History course some 10 yrs ago); however, I remember it offering a very smart contextualized reading of the film, especially w/regard to the sources (newspaper stories), production history (shooting in occupied Rome) and reception (how the film resonated with Italian and international audiences). And, yes, what was superb was the demythologizing of the film through such contextualization. It's an excellent book for the classroom situation, much better than some of the other BFI classics in terms of offering a wide-lens on a film.7 of 7

people found the following review helpful. The best kind of revisionist film criticism. By Darragh O'Donoghue David Forgacs' monograph on 'Rome Open City' is as thorough an examination of a major cinematic milestone as you could hope for. Roberto Rossellini's breakthrough film, the story of Resistance activity during the German Occupation of Rome 1943-44, was conceived, made and released in the immediate aftermath of the Liberation, and was exultantly acclaimed as a new kind of cinema, where documentary-style authenticity (largely non-professional cast, basis in recent history, real locations etc.) were seen as an answer to the lies of Fascist film in particular, and the illusions of commercial cinema in general, heralding the Golden Age of Neo-Realism. Forgacs takes as his starting point Italo Calvino's remark that neo-realist works about the resistance were not 'direct representations of events in reality' but 'textual elaborations of already represented events'. Although the major stories depicted in the film - the street murder of a pregnant woman, the torture of a communist resister, the execution of a dissident priest - were based on real events, they had already been mythologised in oral accounts, newspaper articles, diaries, paintings, sculptures etc., which representations Rossellini synthesised in his film. More damagingly, the myth of Resistance offered in 'Rome Open City', which Forgacs suggests was necessary to displace collective guilt and anger as well as provide Romans with a narrative of unity and memory, evades or distorts the more troubling aspects of the Occupation - the natives' 20-year complicity with the Fascist regime; the collaboration of the Fascist police and their network of spies with the brutalities of the Germans; the silences and compromises of the Church. The deportations of the Jews, for instance, are not even mentioned. The 'patriotic myth' was also a way for Rossellini to atone for his own Fascist past, having directed three features for the army. This is not to suggest that Forgacs simply demolishes the film, which was immensely influential and is still the director's most accessible work. After all, Rossellini himself later disowned the more manipulative and melodramatic aspects of his work, which were incompatible with his more austere and viewer-challenging later films. By offering a detailed historical and cultural context; by recreating the conditions of the film's conception, production and contemporary reception; and by analysing the film's techniques and themes (most brilliantly in his discussion of urban space, the different uses made of it by occupiers and resisters), as well as the 'polluted' (Rossellini's own phrase) ideology that informs the pretensions to objectivity (in particular the demonising of 'bad' sexuality), Forgacs replaces the monolithically 'important' and 'truthful' film of legend with something much more complex, contradictory and intellectually satisfying.

This study examines "Rome Open City" and its place in Roberto Rossellini's career. The film is based on events that took place in Nazi occupied Italy 1944, one year before the film was made. The author argues that the film has value as a commemorative piece and as a documentary record.

Language Notes
Text: English (translation) Original Language: Italian
From the Back Cover
Otto Preminger said the history of the cinema was divided into two eras: one before and one after "Rome Open City," Made in 1945, the film is based on events that took place in Rome just one year before, during the Nazi occupation and the resistance. It made a huge impact on its release, launched the international reputation of its director, Roberto Rossellini, and came to be seen as the founding work of Italian neorealism. In this original study, David Forgacs re-examines the film and its place in Rossellini's career. He reconstructs its production history, its relationship to the events that inspired it and the time in which it was made. He argues that the film has great value as a commemoration and a documentary record even as it rhetorically reshapes events, people and places into patriotic myth.
About the Author
David Forgacs is Professor of Italian at University College of London.