



Figure 9. Fréart de Chambray, invention of the Corinthian capital From *Parallèle de l'architecture antique avec la moderne*, 1650.

Creativity and *bricolage* in architectural literature of the Renaissance

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1. Collecting/assembling

Peintures, sculptures, inscriptions, quelquefois aussi des raretés et des curiosités naturelles, sans même parler des reliques: avant l'établissement des musées, tout cela était donné à voir dans les églises et les bâtiments officiels. Par ailleurs, les unes et les autres, ainsi que les palais des particuliers mettaient devant les yeux, sur leurs façades décorées, les fresques, les bustes, les statues.¹

Much attention has been paid recently to the importance that the fragment held for Renaissance culture.² The passion for collecting that lies at the origin of the museum and that Pomian describes here is perhaps its most tangible document, for the antiquities, book, and specimen collections of the period are testimonies of the deeply felt need to assemble, or better still, reassemble a lost or dimly perceived whole from its available fragments. Of course, such practice had repercussions upon the culture as a whole, for it shaped conceptions of art, texts, and nature. Processing the fragment inside another context meant developing ordering criteria, a theoretical space that addressed it, and naturally a vocabulary. Indeed, it precipitated them into being.³

However, if the fragment shaped the *forma mentis* of the Renaissance in so many areas, how did its ubiquitous presence affect architecture? For in hinting at still one other category of "collections," Krzysztof Pomian identifies a context where the fragment reigned supreme: the building upon which real and counterfeit

spolia were layered. Like the humanist and the collector, the architect also faced a world of parts that came together without an immediately graspable logic and therefore laid pressure on its reassemblage. The issue was certainly dramatized by the ruinous state of ancient buildings and the consequent need to re-member and reassemble the artifacts scattered upon the archaeological site. Sculpture, low reliefs, and columns—ancient, presumed ancient, and new—mortared into facades made up these architectural "collections" (fig. 1).⁴ In fact, it would seem that incorporating such chance remnants into new buildings occurred so frequently that writers like Sebastiano Serlio and Vincenzo Scamozzi felt the need to devote whole chapters (almost a whole book in Serlio's case) to this procedure.⁵ Yet these real (and occasionally make-believe) *spolia* were only one type of fragment collected, for the standard architectural features themselves (columns, cornices, entablatures, pediments, and aedicula) constituted a form of *spolia*. Laden with references, copied from ancient fragments and recomposed into seamless assemblages, they displayed an intellectual *parti*—the appropriation of antiquity.

Some such reassemblages made direct references to their origins and so were more narratively conceived; others were more subtle. Yet an educated viewer appreciated both. At the larger scale, the arrangement of pediments, historiated friezes, keystones, balustrades, layers of columns, pilasters, and frames on facades functioned as so many quotations of ancient temples, *thermae*, palaces, and villas. At the level of details, the agglomeration of profiles into an architectural member—of astragals, crown moulds, *cyma reversa* and *recta*, volutes, modillions, brackets into a cornice or an

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1. Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectionneurs, amateurs et curieux* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), p. 81.

2. On this and metaphors of disinterment applied to the recovery of ancient texts, see especially Thomas Green, *The Light of Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); id., "Resurrecting Rome: The Double Task of the Humanist Imagination," in *Rome in the Renaissance. The City and the Myth*, ed. P. A. Ramsey (Binghamton, New York: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), pp. 41–54; Leonard Barkan, *Transuming Passion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

3. For example, see Marc Baratin and Christian Jacob, eds., *Le pouvoir des bibliothèques* (Paris: A. Michel, 1996); Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

4. For a striking example, see Patricia Fortini Brown, *Venice and Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

5. Serlio's Book VII covers much of this ground. Even in Book IV Serlio attends to such a case: "Possibil cosa sarà, come ho detto altre volte, che un Architetto heverà gran copia di colonne di tal sottigliezza, che volendo egli fare una compositione d'uno edificio per commodo & per bisogno di chi vorrà spendere & ornare detto edificio; queste tai colonne non saranno al proposito di cotal fabrica, se l'industria, & l'arte dell'Architetto non sarà tale, che di tal cose ci si sappia servire." Serlio, *Tutte l'opere d'architettura* (Venice, 1619), Book IV, 178r.



Figure 1 Villa Medici, Rome, detail of garden facade. Photo: Alina Payne.

entablature—displayed the architect’s juggling act with the virtually infinite possibilities the ruins offered. Palladio’s Villa Trissino as the Temple of Fortuna Premigenia (fig. 2) communicated its message as readily as Vignola’s Composite Order (fig. 3) that was pieced together from well-known ancient examples. In each case, stock items (readily supplied by the archaeological *chantier*) became novel by their incorporation into ever different wholes. And though assembling facades had much to do with the client, his status and ambitions, and submitted to a fine political text and theory of magnificence, at the level of artistic activity (rather than societal message) it involved nevertheless a process of assemblage with formal rules all its own.⁶

If the archaeological site invited a collecting and reassembling mentality, the triumphal arches and the

illustrated treatises reinforced it. As solitary intact entities in a sea of fragmentation, the former were themselves collections of fragments, essentially plain walls upon which the visual *spolia* of victory had been metaphorically hung. And, as Serlio testifies (“potrà ancora ad uso di trionfo, & di festa, con bella finitione attacar festoni di frande, di frutti, & di fiori, scudi & trofei, & altre cose simili colorite”), they promoted a conception of the facade as an agglomeration of parts and became the *abaci* for Renaissance wall decoration *all’antica*⁷ (fig. 4). The illustrated treatise performed much the same function. Its images—splicing, layering, juxtaposing, seriating, cropping, slicing, reducing, enlarging, reconstructing what was fragmented and fragmenting what was whole—were not only a paper collection of monuments, but they literally mimicked the act of making architecture and raised into the reader’s consciousness the nature of its tools. In this, architecture was certainly unique amongst the visual

6. John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988); Manfredo Tafuri “*Renovatio urbis.*” *Venezia nell’età di Andrea Critti (1523–1538)* (Rome: Officina Edizioni, 1984).

7. Serlio (see note 5), Book IV, 191v.

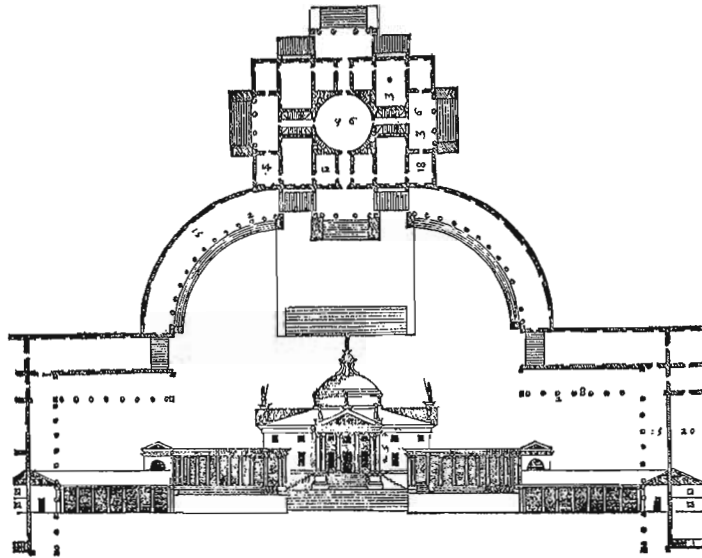


Figure 2 Andrea Palladio, Villa Trissino at Meledo. From *Quattro Libri*, 1570. Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

arts, for in the end, the image—made up as it was of details, plans, sections, and elevations at different scales, from different viewing angles and agglomerated on one sheet with an eye to *mise-en-page* rather than building logic—was as much an aesthetic object as any facade or any single architectural feature, and if it did not respond to the same demands, at least it shows a similar process of composition from a thesaurus of parts (fig. 5).

Given how much architectural experience was shaped by the fragment, it is perhaps appropriate to ask whether architects and critics reflected on its impact upon their design process, that is, to ask whether its use led to a degree of self-consciousness on their part. Did the opportunity for invention that assembling fragments entailed generate a discussion on the peculiar nature of architectural creativity? And if so, along what linguistic parameters did it evolve and how did it interact with the corresponding artistic and literary debates of the period?

2. Available models

Of course Vitruvius was for Renaissance architects—and must be for us—a departure point to answer such a question. His piece-by-piece, segment-by-segment presentation of the orders (*genera* to him) and their larger ensemble, the temple front, reinforced the

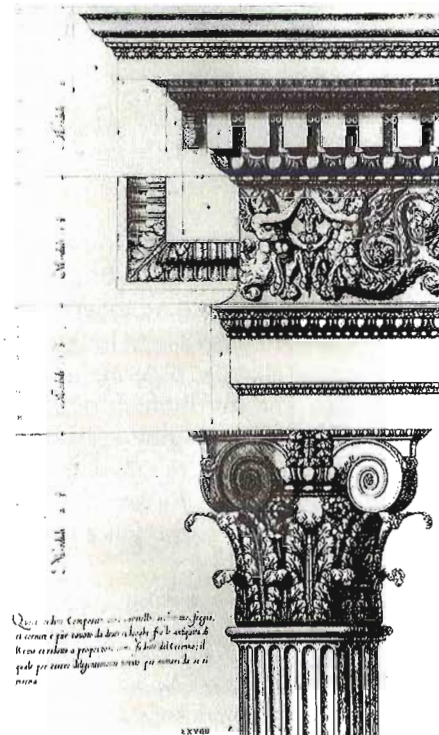


Figure 3 Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola, detail of the Composite Order from *Regola delli cinque ordini*, 1562. Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.



Figure 4 Arch of Constantine, Rome, detail Photo: Alina Payne.

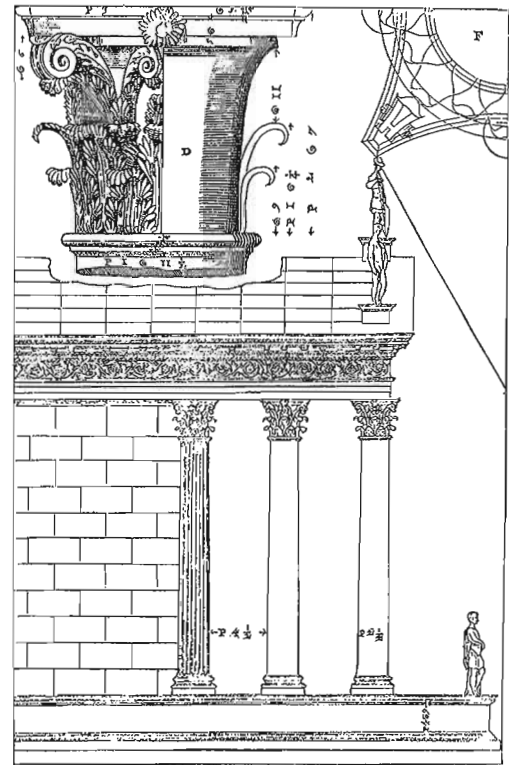


Figure 5 Andrea Palladio, Temple at Pola. From *Quattro Libri*, 1570. Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

conception of architecture as an art of assemblages.⁸ However, assembling parts and assembling fragments is not one and the same thing, and moreover, even when Vitruvius spoke of the architect's activity rather than the features of the building—of the ordering (*ordinatio*), arranging (*dispositio*), and distributing (*distributio*) of parts—composition as such was not an issue for him, and a discussion of the architect's creative act did not turn up anywhere on his pages.⁹ If anything, he discouraged it both with his warning not to mix the

8. See for example Vitruvius's description of the Ionic canon, which, though focused on the proportional derivation of one member from the one preceding it, nonetheless promotes the notion of a piece-by-piece architectural build-up. *De architectura. On Architecture*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. F. Granger, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, and Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), III, 4.

9. Although Vitruvius mentions *inventio* in Book I, 2, 2 ("inventio autem est quaestionum obscurarum explicatio . . ."), his architect is allowed only very small adjustments to accommodate the

orders amongst themselves and with his condemnation of second-style Pompeian painting:

But these which were imitations based upon reality are now disdained by the improper taste of the present. On the stucco are monsters rather than definite representations taken from definite things. Instead of columns there rise up stalks; instead of gables, striped panels with curled leaves and volutes. Candelabra uphold pictured shrines and above the summits of these, clusters of thin stalks rise from their roots in tendrils with little figures seated upon them at random. Again, slender stalks with heads of men and of animals attached to half the body.¹⁰

building to the vagaries of the site or the fallible human eyesight. See *De arch.* III, 5, 9.

10. *De arch.* I, 2, 6 and VII, 5.3–4. Elsewhere (IV, 1, 12) Vitruvius mentions that other capitals have been used with the proportions of the Corinthian, Ionic, and Doric orders, but he does not expand on this, nor does this passage have the same imperative tone and visibility as his prescriptive ones.

It is true, in this passage Vitruvius was addressing painting; still, the object of his ridicule was the (mis)representation of a building, and so he brought the story of the heterogeneous assemblage within the sphere of architectural issues. Moreover, imported into a treatise on architecture, the *topos* of the monster so vividly described by Horace in the *Ars poetica* received a home amongst architects.¹¹

This back-handed reference to the dangers attending excessive artistic latitude framed as assembling gone wild was one of the very few bridges Vitruvius threw to the figural arts and as such a potential site for exchange between them. Indeed, the grotesque attracted much attention in discussions on creativity—its sources, its vehicles, and its boundaries—in the artistic literature of the Renaissance and became the locus where important categories of theory and criticism were raised, developed, and honed.¹² To be sure, Horace's metaphor was just that, a metaphor that gave a visual dimension to his concern with the unity and coherence of the poem/tragedy. But in the figural arts it could be applied literally, and as the interest in the ancient *grottesche* grew, so did interest in the theoretical implications of Horace's dictum. Evidently, the figural arts, depending as they did on imitation of nature, entertained a charged relationship with the grotesque, the chimaera, and *ghiribizzi* (so Vasari), that is, with an assemblage of heterogeneous elements that individually were derived from nature yet as a composition defied the real and the plausible. The result was a set of oppositions—between real and imagined, truth and lie, nature and *fantasia*, wakefulness and dream, health and sickness, convention and the idiosyncrasies of

personal style—that allowed the landscape of the creativity discussion to settle into a binary pattern.

If the grotesque precipitated awareness of issues of creativity, it did so as an extreme case, a flamboyant one even. But it was by no means the only type of assemblage that precipitated debate and controversy. At the other end of the spectrum, the assemblage of an ideal body from beautiful parts culled from many models and contained in the story of Zeuxis and the Crotonian maidens dealt with the issue of the seamless assemblage, whose parts cease to refer to their origins and surrender completely to the new whole. Also, unlike the metaphor of the grotesque, it focused more on the act of making and offered a more obvious context for its discussion. Stories of bees, silkworms, spiders—all manner of productive insects—at times joined, at others merely intersected, what remained the paradigmatic metaphor for artistic process in the figural arts.¹³ Of course, the principal difference between the two clusters of stories—Horace's monster and Zeuxis's maiden—is that in one case the assemblage is formed from mixed parts while in the other they all belong to the same kind. One fails (or delights, depending on the point of view) because it is both heterogeneous and coherent at one and the same time; the other succeeds because what was an arm or a torso will remain thus in the new whole, and the process of artistic manufacturing is withdrawn from view. Still, the lines were not too rigidly drawn between them. After all, as Leonard Barkan has shown, the Zeuxis story is not innocent of heterogeneous innuendo itself, for the artist was willing to use male models in the absence of virgins (withheld by the locals of Croton on grounds of modesty) in devising his image of the goddess.¹⁴ And we are also never told how far on the road toward the monster Horace's artist or poet might go ("this license we poets

11. "If a painter chose to join a human head to the neck of a horse, and to spread feathers of many a hue over limbs picked up now here now there, so that what at the top is a lovely woman ends below in a black and ugly fish, could you, my friends, if favoured with a private view, refrain from laughing? Believe me, dear Pisos, quite like such pictures would be a book, whose idle fancies shall be shaped like a sick man's dreams, so that neither head nor foot can be assigned to a single shape. 'Painters and poets,' you say, 'have always had an equal right in hazarding anything.' We know it: it is licence we poets claim and in our turn we grant the like; but not so far that savage should meet with tame, or serpents couple with birds, lambs with tigers." Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 1–13.

12. Milton Kirchman, *Mannerism and Imagination: A Re-examination of Sixteenth Century Italian Aesthetic* (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1979); David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981); id., "Michelangelo on Architecture," *Art Bulletin* 54 (1972):146–157.

13. The literature on the story and its role in Renaissance culture is vast. See especially Erwin Panofsky, *Idea. A Concept in Art Theory* (1924) (New York and London: Harper and Row, Icon Editions, 1968); Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut pictura poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1967). For intersections with literary theory, see August Buck, ed., *Die Dichtungslehre der Romania aus der Zeit der Renaissance und Barock* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1972); Green (see note 2); G. W. Pigman III, "Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance," *Renaissance Quarterly* 33 (1980):1–32.

14. Leonard Barkan, "The Heritage of Zeuxis. Painting, Rhetoric, and History," in *Antiquity and Its Interpreters*, ed. A. Payne, A. Kuttner, and R. Smick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

claim and grant the like"), that is, if mixtures of heterogeneous parts are negotiable at all or not. In fact, the issue of the assemblage and its twin, the mixture, remained tantalizingly open

If Horace warned against the dangers inherent in the process of assemblage—of what after all were not fragments—and so highlighted its negative side, the notion of the *mistura* was not always proscribed as a strategy for achieving novelty and displaying invention. Indeed, between Horace's monster and Zeuxis's seamless mixture, the *stile misto* offered a third possibility of handling the artifact. And as early as Dante, the tension between existing models and their imitation, between the ancient *auctores* and their modern counterparts, is resolved by way of the *mistura* of genres: for him, the comedy is such a mixture and the only avenue open for invention in the present.¹⁵ The strategy as such had ample support from the classical corpus of rhetoric and poetics: Cicero, for example, had promoted it at some length in the *Orator* and made the Zeuxis story most prominently available in his version (*De inventione*). Although the two occurred in different texts, for a culture so programmatically focused on Cicero, one locus easily recalled another.¹⁶ Of course, in rhetoric the external conditions of the speech (place, time, audience, etc.) are paramount when it comes to choices of styles and means, and therefore they are not nearly as internally driven by the work itself as Zeuxis's image of Hera. Thus there is a fundamental difference between Cicero's advice to the orator and the Zeuxis story as it applies to the painter: one fashions his ideal from the expectations of an audience and the needs of

the case at hand; the other seeks to achieve an absolute ideal that exceeds nature. But there are evident similarities too (the seamlessness of the mixture being one of them) that allowed such passages to be transported by Renaissance scholars to buttress whatever position the author wished to embrace. Indeed, themselves fragments of theory, these vignettes fueled the engine of a culture that lived off their topical retrieval and insertion into the most varied (and sometimes unlikely) contexts.¹⁷ In fact, more often than not they performed the function of deferring close analysis, for though much of the discussion on creativity was objectified into a discourse, much also remained unspoken. This was especially true of anxieties caused by the tension between imitation and invention inherent to any process of appropriation. Concealed in governing images and metaphors that occurred with great frequency, these anxieties evaded direct confrontation.¹⁸

The discourse on architecture was no different in this respect except that, if anything, metaphors on the subject of creativity, its vehicles, and its consequences seem even fewer and farther between. Of course, much was dealt with as part of the discussions (not to say bickering) on archaeological reconstruction, but it was tied to a preset path. In this model, text and ruins were compared, but the text (Vitruvius) had greater authority and constituted the theoretical lens through which the latter were evaluated. That such should be the case is perhaps not surprising in a humanism-focused world where the written word was invariably privileged and where the goals and techniques of textual exegesis were appropriated as a matter of course. Correspondingly, the manner of the discussion was focused on right versus wrong in the assemblage itself, that is, it problematized the artifact, not the artistic process. Not unlike their humanist peers who drew up grammars for the *volgare*

15. Claudia Villa, "Dante lettore di Orazio," in *Dante e la "Bella Scuola" della poesia*, ed. A. Iannucci (Ravenna: Longo, 1993), p. 97. For a defense of Dante's mixture of styles issued from the Accademia Fiorentina milieu, see especially Carlo Lenzoni, *In difesa della lingua fiorentina et di Dante* (Florence: Torrentino, 1556); for an account of the debates on language that also centered on Dante, see especially Bruno Migliorini, "La questione della lingua," in *Questioni e correnti di storia letteraria*, ed. U. Bosco, vol. 1 (Milan: Carlo Marzorati, 1949), pp. 1–76.

16. "Now the man who controls and combines these three varied styles (*genera dicendi*) needs rare judgement and great endowment; for he will decide what is needed at what point, and will be able to speak in any way which the case requires. . . . It is certainly obvious that totally different styles must be used, not only in the different parts of the speech, but also that whole speeches must be now in one style, now in another." Cicero, *Orator*, ed. and trans. H. M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library (London: William Heinemann, and Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), xx.70.

17. For a tangible manifestation of this phenomenon, see Ann Blair, "Bibliothèques portables. les recueils de lieux communs dans la Renaissance tardive," in *Le pouvoir des bibliothèques*, ed. M. Baratin and C. Jacob (Paris: A. Michel, 1996), pp. 84–106; on the citationist mentality of the Renaissance, see Mario Carpo, *Alberti, Raffaello, Serlio e Camillo* (Geneva: Droz, 1993).

18. On the Renaissance in general, see Leonard Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Green (see note 2); for a discussion of this topic as it concerns architecture, see Alina Payne "Mescolare, composti and Monsters in Italian Architectural Theory of the Renaissance," in *Disarmonia, brutezza e bizzarria nel Rinascimento*, ed. L. S. Tarugi (Florence: Franco Cesati, 1998).

to promote its use over Latin, architects attended to rules over process.¹⁹ Thus when Pietro Cataneo thunders at his “ignorant” colleagues for not being able “to discern good from evil” and for “causing infinite errors,” his attention is drawn by the “nuova architettura” and its departure from Vitruvius;²⁰ similarly, when Giambattista da Sangallo attacks Michelangelo’s cornice for the Palazzo Farnese for being “barbarous,” his eye is trained on what it looks like, not on the strategy involved in its making.²¹

Such an emphasis promoted the image of the architect as cool and collected, even detached, assessing the logic of the assemblage based on a set of verifiable rules, somehow above artistic intuition and the extrarational impulses of unleashed genius. It is therefore not surprising to see that at the end of the Renaissance text-chain, Scamozzi sees the architect as much closer to the philosopher and scientist than to the

artist.²² Or that in one of his later books, Serlio should feel the need to apologize for letting himself go and indulging in the pure pleasure of assembling forms into apparently infinite variations.²³ Caught between the dual natures of architecture—on the one hand, as objective and fact-based as a science, on the other, as driven by creativity and whimsy as any art—both authors placed the center of gravity on the former.

It is symptomatic of this state of affairs that the topic of personal style—a rich terrain tilled exhaustively in the other arts—never makes it as an issue in architecture. Vasari, otherwise so quick to note the relationship between personality and formal devices and so concerned with artistic identity, has nothing to offer on this score. *Maniere* are the orders, and where the personal comes in is left out of the discussion.²⁴ Only once in the introduction to his *Vite* does he indicate that personal style applies to architecture as well, yet he does not develop the thought here or elsewhere beyond signaling the cleavage between the hand that cuts the stone and the hand that designs the profile.²⁵ If anything, Vasari’s lives of architects are amongst his shortest, quite often a mere catalogue of works where he does not go farther than generic praise. Even Bramante, the initiator of the *terza età* according to Vasari, claims little space, and his work, cursory critical evaluation.²⁶ Apparently,

cose, ch’egli propone, in publico ò in privato.” Vincenzo Scamozzi, *Idea dell’architettura universale*, I (Venice, 1615), p. 43.

23. “Hora che io ho sfogato la bizaria nelle cose miste . . .” Serlio (see note 5), *Libro Extraordinario*, f. 18r. Onians has connected this passage with “architectural madness (*furor architetonico*)” (see note 6), p. 280; for a reading of this passage as describing less an aberration and more generally the need to invent deeply felt by his entire culture, see Alina Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance. Architectural Invention, Ornament and Literary Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), chap. 6.

24. “Ma perche molti non sanno conoscere le differenze che sono da ordine a ordine, ragioneremo distintamente nel capitolo che segue di ciascuna maniera o modo più brevemente che noi potremo.” Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de’ piu eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a’ tempi nostri. Nell’edizione per i tipi di Lorenzo Torrentino Firenze 1550*, ed. L. Bellosi and A. Rossi (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1986) p. 31.

25. “Percioche quando sono disegnati [gli ordini] da mano che abbia giudizio con bella maniera mostrano l’eccellenza dell’artefice e l’animo dell’autor della fabrica.” *Ibid.*, p. 41.

26. Amongst the few passages where Vasari offers critical insight is his description of Bramante’s Doric (“Si vede . . . in tutta l’opera dorica di fuori stranamente bellissima, di quanta terribilità fosse l’animo di Bramante”) and of his contribution (“ . . . ancora bellezza e difficoltà accrebbe grandissima all’arte, la quale per lui imbellita oggi veggiamo”). *Ibid.*, pp. 573, 577.

19. On the impact of the language debates on architectural discourse, see Alina Payne, “Architectural Theories of *Imitatio* and the Literary Debates on Language and Style,” in *Architecture and Language*, ed. G. Clarke and P. Crossley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

20. “Non mancano nondimeno degl’ignoranti assai che . . . non discernendo il buono dal cattivo . . . mettono dipoi tai modani da lor cavati confusamente in opera, ne causano infiniti errori. . . . Si trovano alcuni altri che facendo l’intelligente dell’architettura, ordinando e componendo di lor propria autorità nuovi modani, vanno deviando dagli scritti di Vetrivio e buone proporzioni antiche. . . . E ciò sia detto a confusione dei temerari e indotti, che . . . formano nuova architettura, e così incorgano in grandissimi errori.” Pietro Cataneo, “L’architettura,” in *Trattati*, ed. E. Bassi and M. W. Casotti (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1985), p. 348.

21. “Non è qualità nessuna perché l’opera è facta dalla buona memoria secondo le regole di Vectruvio et questa cornice è facta più presto al modo barbaro c’altrimenti; . . . perché le spetie delle cornice sono tre: doriche, joniche e corinthie. Questa vostra non è né doric, né jonica, né corinthja, è facta bastarta a volontà che tocca alli huominij . . . è tanta grave che la minaccia tirare a terra quella faccia, è maggiore la cornice che la faccia.” As transcribed in Pier Nicola Pagliara, “Alcune minute autografe di G. Battista da Sangallo. Parti della traduzione di Vitruvio e la lettera a Paolo III contro il cornicione michelangiolesco di Palazzo Farnese,” *Architettura archivi. Fonti e storia* 1 (1982):33–34

22. “Laonde si vede che l’Architetto non si confà in parte alcuna con cotali professori: mà si potrebbe più tosto paragonare al Mathematico, & al Filosofo naturale quanto alla speculatione, & alle forme, e quanto poi all’universale dell’altre parti all’Oratore essendo, che l’uno, e l’altro convengono havere cognitione di tutte le forme, e nature delle cose, il che conferma Quintiliano . . . e si come l’Oratore usa molta arte per acquistar la gratia de gli ascoltanti: così all’Architetto fa dibisogno far questo per via del merito, per acquistar la gratia con quelli ch’egli tratta: accioche le siano credute quelle

like his peers, Vasari was trapped by a discourse with set, not to say rigid, Vitruvian parameters. What had not been an issue for *De architectura* took a long time to be articulated.²⁷

Of course, the archaeological debates did not exhaust the discussion pertaining to creativity, or more precisely to its products. Architecture, too, had a corpus of anecdotes (provided by Vitruvius) that like the stories of bees and silkworms acted as so many instances of potted theory. Indeed, with their vignettes on the origins of the orders, of the temple, and of construction, architects seemed essentially self-sufficient and in no apparent need to reach out for the metaphors of others.²⁸ This is not to say that the grotesque did not turn up in architectural discourse, for it was a staple architectural feature too, even characteristically so according to Vincenzo Danti.²⁹ Serlio, Alessi, Buontalenti, and particularly Michelangelo produced some overtly eccentric forms³⁰ (figs. 6–7) Nor did these forms go unnoticed. But even when critics—Cataneo, Palladio, and Ligorio amongst them—attacked their “monstruosity,” it was from the perspective of the finished piece, not from that of the act of making.³¹ Almost without exception, the process slid into the background.

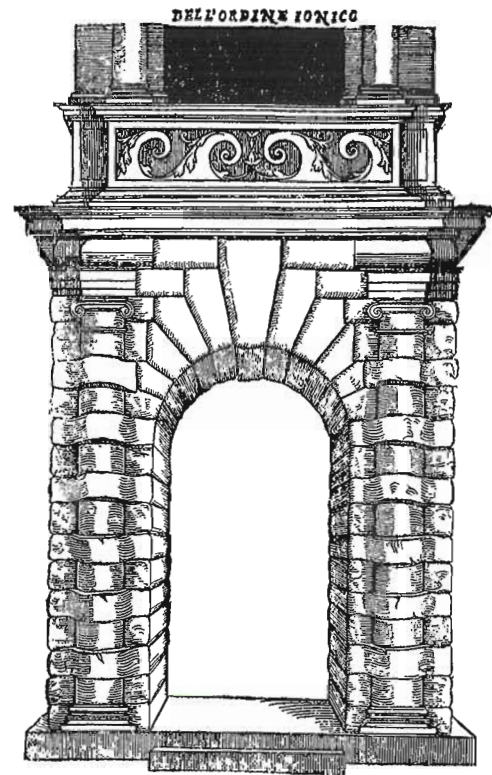


Figure 6. Sebastiano Serlio, rustic Doric portal. From *Libro Estraordinario*, 1551. Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.

27. The step to regard ornament, more specifically the orders, as being idiosyncratic to each architect was taken by the next generations who in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries invented the *parallele* format for the illustrated treatise. See, for example, Julien Mauclerc, *Traité de l'architecture . . . ou il est adioustè les diverses mesures & proportions de ces fameux Architectes, Scamozzi, Palladio [sic] & Vignole* (Paris: Pierre Daret, 1600); for a later Italian example, see Alessandro Pompei, *Li cinque ordini di architettur civile di Michele Sanmicheli non giu veduti i luce; ora publicati, ed esposti con quelli di Vitruvio e d'altri cinque* (Verona: Jacopo Valarisi, 1734–1735).

28. *De arch.* II, 1, 1–7; IV, 1; IV, 2

29. “Le quali chimere intendo io che sieno come un genere sotto cui si comprendono tutti le specie di grottesche, di fogliami, d’ornamenti di tutte le fabbriche che la architettura compone. . . . Ma e da sapere che questo s’è fatto modo d’imitare, se bene è stato messo in uso da altre arti, nondimeno niuna mai ha recato tanto utilità, vaghezza et ornamento al mondo in generale et agli huomini privatamente, quanto le cose che nascono dall’architettura . . .” Vincenzo Danti, “Il Primo libro del trattato delle perfette proporzioni” (1567), in *Scritti d’arte del Cinquecento*, ed. Paola Barocchi (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1979), p. 1766.

30. On the monster metaphor in sixteenth-century architectural treatises, see Payne (see note 18).

31. The discussion of the rules governing the architectural composition makes up a substantial slice of Renaissance literary activity. For an in-depth analysis, see Payne (see note 23).

But the hybrid was not the only nor the primary type of assemblage in architecture, nor yet its only manner of obtaining novelty. And the “Zeuxian” type of assemblage, the seamless mixture of parts, that claimed the attention of the architect far more regularly than the occasional eccentricity promises more fertile ground for our investigation. Yet, interestingly enough, as a metaphor it finds little or insignificant use. Gherardo Spini, a literary man with strong artistic interests and hence well acquainted with the story in all its versions and formats, finds only a very naive application for it. For him, the wooden trabeation system that lay at the origin of the Doric temple front (so Vitruvius) had not been copied from just any wooden structure erected by an indifferent carpenter but from the most beautiful example, crafted by an artist;³² like Zeuxis, he argues,

32. “Et per questo l’Architetto non imita ogni palco fatto dall’Artefice di travi storte et inordinate, né ogni sua proportione; ma



Figure 7 Bernardo Buontalenti, detail of Facade, Sta. Trinità, Florence. Photo: Alina Payne.

the architect went through a process of selection. Of course, the difference is that whereas Zeuxis, like a surgeon, carves up the human body that nature had produced whole and therefore corrects its shortcomings according to some higher criteria that set him above it, Spini's architect merely copies an already assembled artifact. In his *Regola* (1562), Vignola dismisses the story outright. When he comes to describe the process whereby he designed his orders, he states: "Thus, I have made this selection not like Zeuxis of the Crotonian maidens, but according to my own judgment, from all the orders, deriving them simply from those of the

l'imita quale un perito maestro fato l'havrebbe . . . come fece Apelle, che volendo fare una figura che rappresentasse Venere . . . non imitò il corpo d'una sola Donna." Gherardo Spini, "I tre primi libri sopra l'istituzioni intorno agl'ornamenti," ed. C. Acidini, in *Il disegno interrotto*, ed. Franco Borsi et al. (Florence: Gonnelli, 1980), p. 71 [Degli'ornamenti dell'architettura di Gherardo Spini, Mss. cod. cart. It., IV, 38 Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice]

ancients all together"³³ On the face of it, Zeuxis's procedure should apply to architecture as well—any proposed canon of the orders—Serlio's, Vignola's, Palladio's—is made up of parts culled here and there, from one ruin or another, to produce the "ideal" whole.³⁴ Moreover, given the procedure, these canons do not coincide from architect to architect, and as such belong to their authors' individual conception of architectural beauty much like a female nude differs from Raphael to Michelangelo. Yet, so Vignola suggests, artists' and architects' respective procedures are fundamentally different: the architect's object is not a superior ideal that transcends, indeed corrects, nature; instead it is based on personal fancy ("mio giudizio"), a level of independent choice to be sure, though one without the epistemological claims that painters placed upon theirs. Nevertheless, despite the negative frame, it is clear that Vignola perceives a kinship between the seamless architectural mixture and Zeuxis's female form (or he wouldn't mention it) and, more importantly even, that he places it in the realm of the fragment. For the issue comes up when he describes his criteria in devising—or assembling—"his" orders from the scattered remains of antiquity.

Vignola may not use it, but stingy though Vitruvius had been on the issue of creative artistic production, he had nevertheless bequeathed one powerful *topos* that rolled assemblage, fragment, and invention into one: the story of Callimachus, the begetter of the Corinthian order. The story—acknowledged faithfully in every treatise thereafter—is well known. Callimachus encounters an arresting sight: the tomb-marker of a young girl in the shape of a woven reed basket containing her possessions and covered by a stone tablet. Accidentally placed at the root of an acanthus plant, in time the tomb-marker becomes entangled in its

33. "A talche, non come Zeusi delle vergini fra Crotoniati ma come ha portato il mio giudizio ho fatta questa scelta de tutti gli ordini, cavendogli puramente dagli antichi tutti insieme." Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola, "La regola delli cinque ordini," in *Trattati*, Pietro Cataneo and Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola, ed. E. Bassi and M. W. Casotti (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1985), p. 516.

34. For example, Palladio states outright in the introduction to Book I of the *Quattro libri* that his aim (and procedure) had been to "bring to light the designs of those ancient buildings I have collected with so much danger to myself, and to present that which in them seems to me most worthy, as well as those rules I observe in building." Andrea Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura*, ed. L. Magagnato and P. Marini (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1980), p. 9.

young tendrils and shoots. Charmed by the imbrication of nature and artifact, design and accident, life and death, Callimachus translates it into carved stone; the Corinthian capital is the result. Subsequently combined with either Doric or Ionic entablature details, it yields a new *genera* of columns.

Of the many layers that make up this story, a particularly interesting one for our question is that it describes, indeed encodes, the process of architectural invention. Callimachus, an artist, essentially metamorphoses an *objet trouvé* into a canonic member of architectural ornament.³⁵ His invention lies in the fact that he realizes this potential for metamorphosis, for otherwise he literally copies from nature. Indeed, the process is pictorial and mimetic to a degree. To be sure, there is a narrative thread at work too, for the various parts refer to the maiden, her untimely death, her personality surviving in the assembled objects, and the hope (or promise) of eternal life through the cycle of nature. But none of this directs the manner in which the parts come together, for the artist leaves them as found. Even though he does not assemble it himself, most important of all is that Callimachus's *objet trouvé* is made up of heterogeneous pieces, a (chance) composition of discrete parts: a basket, the girl's possessions, a stone slab, the acanthus leaves. The artist's magic touch, his artifice, consists in erasing these references and producing "un tutto nuovo."

The turn of phrase belongs to Francesco di Giorgio, who not only illustrates the story—the only one to do so before Fréart de Chambray—but who also seems to have given some thought to the artistic act that Vitruvius presents in this narrative mode (figs. 8–9). Even more interestingly, he compares Callimachus and *mutatis mutandis*, the architect, to the poet: his creative act is similar to that of "sculptors and painters who, developing a *cosa naturale* as is always permitted to painters and poets, form an artificial one that is more ornamented."³⁶ With this back-handed reference to

Horace's injunction against excessive artistic license, he essentially draws Callimachus's capital within the orbit of the famous monster metaphor. Though not "a woman with a fish tail" or "a mixture of tame and wild," it apparently belongs to the class of mixtures. And for Francesco, this is where the artifice of architectural production lies.

Francesco's is perhaps the most incisive and resonant reading of the story, as later writers do not seem to seize the opportunities it offers.³⁷ Nevertheless, if not clustered around a story and objectified as a topic, reflection on the process of invention specific to architecture and the nature of the architect's creativity can be extracted from its traces in the emerging vocabulary of architectural criticism, from the ebb and flow of words, their rise and fall in the linguistic consciousness of the period.

3. Assemblage, *mescolanza*, and *disegno*

Critical though he may have been of his contemporaries' experiments with noncanonic ornament, Cataneo nevertheless names the process that lies at the root of their inventions: *ordinando* and *componendo da sé*. And like Vignola, he places it in the domain of the fragment, for the passage is part of his presentation of the correct path (according to him) through the archaeological maze. Of course, the terms and with them the awareness of architecture as a combinatory activity do not occur here for the first time. For Serlio, almost 30 years earlier, Francesco's *tutto nuovo* had almost uniquely depended on a juggling act with the fragments bequeathed by antiquity. The process of culling forms from those littering the open spaces of Rome that Vignola refers to but erases from view with the seamless assemblage of his orders is literally illustrated in Serlio's books—"accioche lo Architetto possa fare elettion di quel che più aggrada in questo ordine Dorico."³⁸ In fact, nowhere in his *Terzo libro*

35. On ancient myths of metamorphosis through petrification, see P. Forbes Irving, *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 139–148.

36. "A caso passando uno giorno Calimaco da Corinzio, secondo che testifica Vitruvio, apresso un orto . . . la quale considerando Calimaco—come avviene che li scultori o pittori ampliando una cosa naturale, come a loro et a li poeti sempre e licito, formano una artificiale piu ornata—considero tutto quello cesto insieme con le reflexe e ritorte frondi possere essere similitudine d'uno ornato capitello." *Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Trattati di architettura ingegneria e arte militare*, ed. C.

Maltese and L. D. Maltese (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1967), vol. 2, pp. 379–380. On Francesco di Giorgio's illustration of the Callimachus story, see also Joseph Rykwert, "On an (Egyptian?) Misreading of Francesco di Giorgio's," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 1 (1981):78–83.

37. For example, Serlio skips the story on account of its great currency: "La derivation del capitel Corinthio fu da una vergine Corinthia, nè altrimenti mi affaticherò di narrare la sua origine: perche Vitruvio la descrive nel quarto libro al primo capitolo" (see note 5), Book IV, p. 169r.

38. *Ibid.*, Book IV, 141v, r

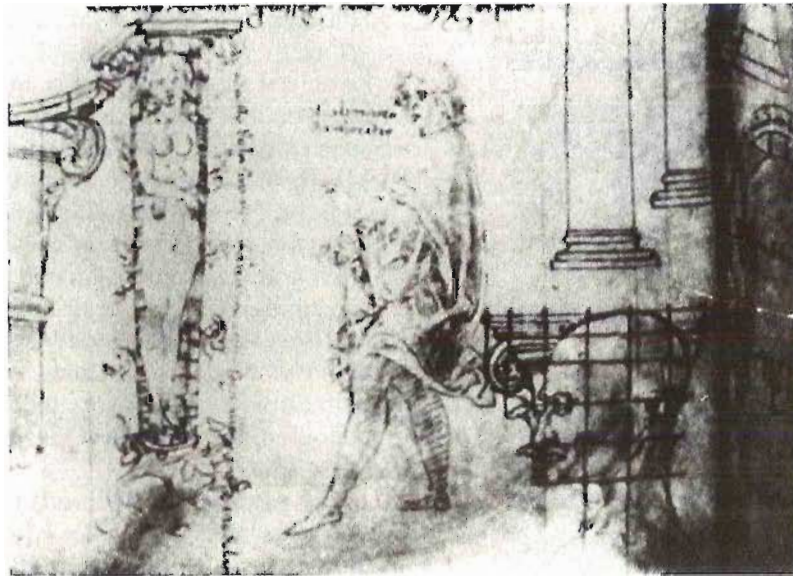


Figure 8. Francesco di Giorgio, Codice Ashburnham 361, fol. 14v, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence.

(1537) does he propose a definitive shape for any combination of forms, be it entablature or palace facade: interchangeable, in a state of flux, cut out of their contexts and brought together within the improbable geography of the page, they consecrate the cut-and-paste process of creative assemblage through the medium of the book (figs. 10–11). The visual and verbal overlap and the language that accompanies these images is both nuanced and crisp. Novelty—and for Serlio inventing new forms is essential (“l’Architetto dee esser copioso d’inventione per satisfare a se & ad altri”, “bella cosa è nell’Architetto l’esser abbondante d’invenzioni”)—arises from *mescolare* and *comporre* and is manifested as the *mescolanza*, *composito*, and *composto* or even the *mostro*.³⁹ Clearly, this vocabulary indicates that he attends both to the seamless assemblage and to the grotesque, that is, to the assemblage that depends upon a resistance to meltdown.

For Serlio, the seamless mixture tends to be located in individual details. Indeed, his dismembered sections of cornices, entablatures, pedestals, and so on, floating independently on the page, convey the notion of available choices and the process of recombining them. True enough, the selection is not entirely dependent on the architect’s genius, for it is controlled

by an overarching narrative about patron and commission. Delicacy and sophistication are associated with refined and intellectual pursuits, larger and heavier forms, with rusticity, war, defense, and so on.⁴⁰ At one end of this spectrum lie finely carved profiles, at the other, rusticated forms. The operation that produces these assemblages is a form of *bricolage*, for it is typically based on adding (*aggiungere*) and inserting plain and carved profiles to break down surfaces unrelieved by detail. But despite the fairly rigid chart of forms and corresponding meanings that Serlio draws up, it nevertheless involves the *arbitrio dell’architetto* and *licentia*.⁴¹ Ultimately, the guiding principle for such mixtures is that the resulting forms “paiano nati con tal spetie.”⁴² And it is in assessing this deeper coherence that the architect displays the true artistry involved in the mix-and-match strategy that the archaeological site invites.

In addition to locating creativity in the process of assembling parts, Serlio gives it an iconic image and more importantly an iconic name: the Composite capital. This form, unnamed by Vitruvius and variously known before as Italic, Roman, Latin, even Atticurgo,

39. *Ibid.*, 135r, 130r.

40. Onians (see note 6) has been seminal on this issue.

41. Serlio (see note 5), Book IV, 141v, 142r.

42. *Ibid.*, Book IV, 128v.

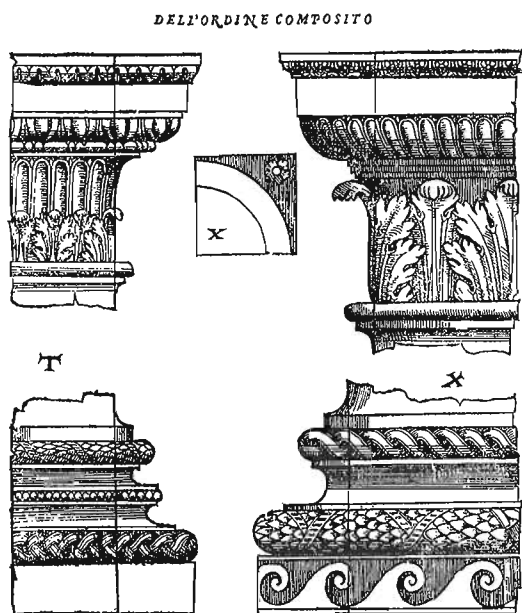


Figure 10. Sebastiano Serlio, details of the Composite Order From *Libro quarto*, 1537.

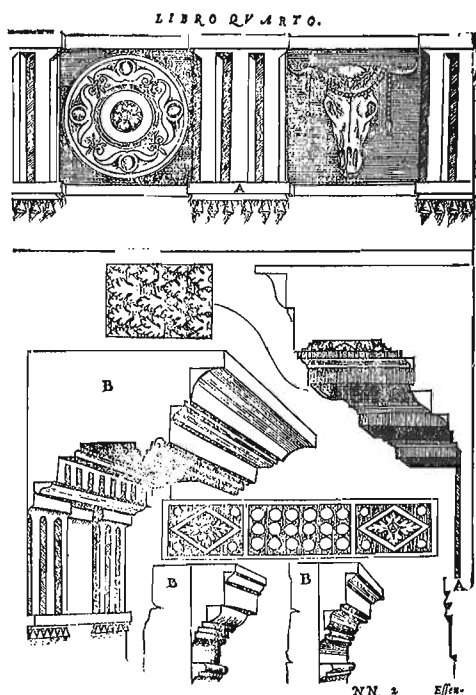


Figure 11 Sebastiano Serlio, details of the Doric Order. From *Libro quarto*, 1537

embodies his notion of creativity as assemblage.⁴³ Although its making is based on “far una mescolanza,” he calls it *composito*, that is, his language does not focus on the order’s formal characteristics (the variety of *sources* whence it is culled) but fixes attention on the *activity* that begets it (*comporre*). It is thus perhaps not surprising to see that Callimachus’s story loses its importance in his text: unlike the Corinthian capital lifted from its accidental paradigm, the Composite has no stable origin, author, or format and is characterized precisely by its open-endedness. As such, it involves the architect in a far more active role in its making, which it both displays and consecrates lexically. For Serlio’s definition of architectural invention, the Composite is better suited.

The mixture displayed *qua* mixture is reserved by Serlio for larger ensembles where recognizable parts of the orders—a Doric or Corinthian column—are combined with rustic keystones and massive pediments. The transition between them is not smooth. In fact, Serlio seeks to highlight their clash: finished and nonfinished surfaces alternate and produce a “zebra” or intermittent effect. The assemblage is a difficult one, and the implication of the fragment persistent, especially in the gates where the unfinished, rough-hewn blocks give them a quasi-ruinous flavor (“una mescolanza . . . parte opera di natura, parte opera di artefice . . . la quale mistura, per mio avviso, è molto grata all’occhio”)⁴⁴ (fig. 12). Although he spends much time describing the logic behind this *mistura* or grotesque, the activity that begets it does not slide into the background. If anything, it is additionally reinforced, for assembling parts is not only the process whereby the architect designs, it is also transferred unto the viewer. Serlio recommends that the broken pediments and cartouches be thought of as complete and whole and thus invites the viewer to share in a game of composition and fragmentation where the image of the artifact oscillates between the two.⁴⁵

43 “Una quasi quinta maniera delle dette semplici mescolata”; “secondo il bisogno dee spesse volte ancora delle predette semplicità far una mescolanza.” *Ibid.*, Book IV, 183r. For a history of the Composite capital see Yves Pawels, “Les origines de l’ordre composite,” *Annali di architettura* 1 (1989):29–46.

44. Serlio (see note 5), Book IV, 133v.

45. “Tal volta ho rotto un Frontispicio per collocarvi una riquadratura, o una arme. Ho fasciate di molte colonne, pilastrate, & supercilij rompendo alcuna volta de gli Fregi, & de’ Triglifi, & de’ fogliami. Le quai tutte cose levate via, & aggiunte delle Cornici, dove

How does Serlio define architectural creativity? Clearly, for him it resides in assembling or *bricolage*. And even if he spends much time on the logic of the assemblage itself, on the laws governing his composite forms, their very nature displays a working process. The vocabulary he develops to describe it is as rich as it is nuanced. Yet in using his terms he is far from consistent, for he does not distinguish between *mescolare* and *comporre*, that is, between the two assemblage strategies illustrated by Horace and Zeuxis respectively. In his text, *mescolare* denotes combinations of heterogeneous forms such as the Composite capital or the grotesque gates; but it also overlaps with *comporre* as does the *mescolanza* with the *composto*, and both lie at the root of *cose licentiose* and *monstruose*.⁴⁶ Perhaps this fluid relationship between the two groups of terms indicates not so much a lack of attention as a genuine equivalence perceived between them: faced with fragments, the architect inevitably mixes and composes at one and the same time. Serlio does not spend much time in theorizing upon this issue, if he is aware of it at all. Still, with image and text he throws the architectural collage into the spotlight as he makes the *mescolanza* the basis of a nuanced architectural iconography. Even if the process is not closely defined, it is displayed as content.

Serlio's design strategy, language, and images were certainly seminal. But they may not have been entirely original. To be sure, much originated from his exposure to antiquarians and humanists in Bologna prior to his departure for Rome, that is, from a literary milieu where the *stile misto* and its theoretical underpinnings were only too well known.⁴⁷ But even more may be ascribed

sono rotte, & finite quelle colonne che sono imperfette, le opere rimaranno intiere, & nella sua prima forma." Ibid., *Libro Estraordinario*, f. 1r. On Serlio's more bizarre *composti* from his *Libro Estraordinario* as a warning rather than an example of good architecture, see Mario Carpo, "The Architectural Principles of Temperate Classicism: Merchant Dwellings in Sebastiano Serlio's Sixth Book," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 22 (1992):135–151. However, this type of composition is already present in Serlio's Book IV (1537), and so, as far as the design strategy is concerned, is one that he not only condones but openly endorses.

46. "Opera Composita e più licentiosa di altre" Serlio (see note 5), Book IV, 185v; "forma monstruosa, o mescolata" Ibid., 167r and 192r.

47. On the Bologna early humanist milieu and its interaction with Vitruvian studies, see Margaret Daly Davis, "Jacopo Vignola, Alessandro Manzoni und die Villa Isolani in Minerbio: zu den frühen Antikenstudien von Vignola," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts Florenz*, pp. 287–328. For Serlio's connections into these Bolognese circles, see Anna Maria Matteucci, "Per una preistoria di

LIBRO QUARTO.

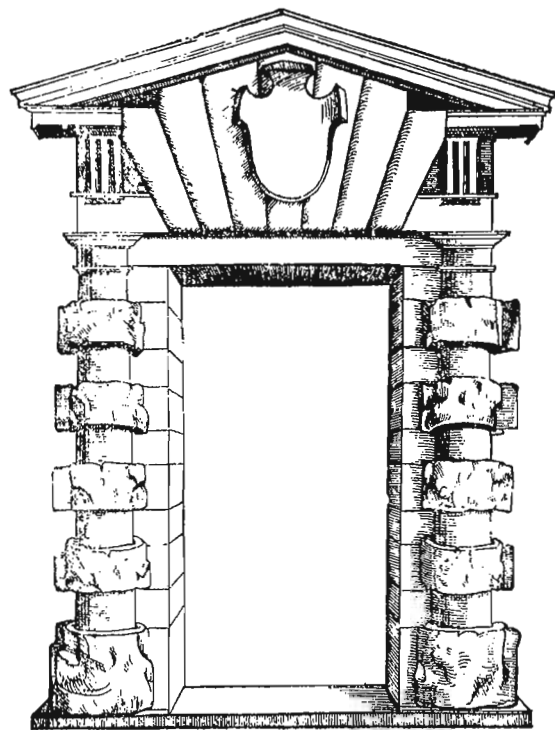


Figure 12 Sebastiano Serlio, rustic Doric portal. From *Libro quarto*, 1537.

to his entry into the Peruzzi *bottega*, replete with echoes from Bramante and Raphael. No written records are left from Bramante, but it is clear that Raphael envisaged the *mescolanza* as an essential architectural *parti*; he says as much in his *memoriale* to Leo X. "Many more edifices will be found composed (*composti*) of more *maniere*, as from the Ionic and Corinthian, Doric and Corinthian, Tuscan and Doric, according to what seemed best to the artist so the appropriate buildings would correspond (*concordar*) to their purpose (*intentione*), especially in temples."⁴⁸ The *edifici*

Sebastiano Serlio," in *Sebastiano Serlio*, ed. C. Thoenes (Vicenza and Milan: Electa, 1989), pp. 19–29.

48. "Et troverannosi ancora molti edificii composti di più maniere, come da ionica et corintha, dorica et corintha, toscana et dorica, secondo che più parse meglio a l'artefice per concordar li edificii apropiati alla loro intentione, et maxime nelli templi." Ingrid Rowland, "Raphael, Colocci and the Orders," *Art Bulletin* 76, no. 1 (March 1994):103

composti rings close to Serlio's open-ended Composite, for the context of the passage—a survey of the orders contained in the *memoriale*—suggests that Raphael is referring neither to multistoried buildings such as the Colosseum (especially since he specifically mentions temples) nor to the use of several orders within the same building (as he did at St. Peter's), but speaks of the many ornamental hybrids that were so noticeable amongst the ruins.⁴⁹ More interesting, it is contained in a document devoted to an analysis of the fragment, that is, to devising a strategy for reassembling Rome in its erstwhile splendor, in drawings and in fact. And his discussion of mixed *maniere* describes his reaction to what he finds and what he ultimately converts into a design method, just as the simultaneous perception of layers of building—plan, section, elevation—that only ruins can afford may have sparked his proposal for the orthographic set of drawings. Indeed, Scamozzi's much later analogy between ruined buildings, architectural representation, and anatomical dissection may well be an echo of its origins.⁵⁰

It is difficult to pick up a clear linguistic thread leading from here to Serlio, for Peruzzi's lost treatise is an essential yet absent link. Cellini fills in the gap somewhat, for he describes how “il detto Baldassare aveva fatta una scelta, secondo il suo buon giudizio, sì come eccellente pittore.”⁵¹ Judging by his built work, this was probably not a case of displayed *mescolanza* but one of seamless assemblage: in looking for the most beautiful ancient *maniera*, Peruzzi (like Vignola) had surveyed all the *belle maniere* available and produced his own. We are no better informed on Serlio's contemporaries. Antonio Labacco, for instance, describes the temple of Antoninus and Faustina as being

“d'ordine mescolato” though not “deformed”, indeed, he adds, it is “gratissimo ai riguardanti per esser variato da l'altri ordini.”⁵² Still, though his *ordine mescolato* recalls Serlio's *mescolare*, he has little to say about the activity as such. The Accademia della Virtù's aborted project to establish a stable core to the architectural vocabulary inherited from Vitruvius does not offer much help either. Nevertheless, Tolomei's notion to develop a thesaurus of forms culled from live and textual sources, while typical of the exegetical activity of the group and clearly of one family with the contemporary interest in drawing up *vocabolarii*, shows that architectural detail was invested with the same potential mobility as words.⁵³

The next significant model for a discussion of architectural creativity is not available until 1550, when Vasari attempted to sketch a panorama of all the arts in his *Vite*. His debt to Serlio is evident throughout. Most strikingly, his own emphasis on *licentia* as a characteristic aesthetic device of mature Renaissance art (the *terza età*) picks up a theme that had been prominent only in Serlio's work until then.⁵⁴ Similarly, when he turns to architecture, he associates the orders with the same personality types (Doric with *armigeri*, Ionic with *persona fra tenero e robusto*, and so on). He too names the Composite order *ordine composto* and goes as far as to reuse Serlio's very words—*licenzia* and *mostri* prominent amongst them—when he identifies the features that caused Vitruvius's silence on its score.⁵⁵ The term *composto* has as strong an iconic presence here as it had in the *Quarto libro*. Indeed, in the very next sentence Vasari justifies inventions and *componendo da sé* as a legitimate practice for his contemporaries on the basis of the *exemplum* furnished by the Composite order: “If the Greeks and the Romans formed those first four orders and reduced them to a general form and

49. On Raphael's innovative design approach, see especially Christoph Frommel, “Raffaello e gli ordini architettonici,” in *L'Emploi des ordres dans l'architecture de la Renaissance*, ed. J. Guillaume (Paris: Picard, 1992), pp. 119–136.

50. “Il profilo dell'edificio ben proportionato, è come una anatomia del Corpo humano. Si come in questo si veggono le congiunture de gli ossi, i ligamenti de'nervi, & l'intersecationi delle vene, col coprimento delle molitie; così in quello si vedono i passamenti [trimming] delle colonne, & delle mura, gl'incatenamenti con gli cornici, i contestamenti [interweaving] di quelle cose, che le fanno ornamento, ultimamente le cortecchie [shell, surface], quali coprono le parti interiori” Vincenzo Scamozzi, *Discorsi sopra l'antichità di Roma di Vincenzo Scamozzi architetto vicentino* (Venice, 1582), p. 15 [caption to the image of the ruined Colosseum that looks like a section].

51. Benvenuto Cellini, *Opere*, ed. B. Maier (Milan: Rizzoli, 1968), pp. 817–818.

52. Antonio Labacco, *Libro appartenente all'architettura* (Rome, 1552), f. 17r.

53. The programme of the academy was outlined by Tolomei in a letter to Count Agostino Landi. The letter is dated January 13, 1542. It was published in 1547 in a volume of Tolomei's collected letters and was therefore available as a document to his contemporaries. Claudio Tolomei, *Delle lettere di M. Claudio Tolomei libri sette* (Venice: G. Giolito di Ferrara, 1547), f. 81–85.

54. For a discussion of the discourse on license, see Payne (see note 23), chap. 1; on Vasari's unacknowledged debt to Serlio, see Patricia Rubin, *Giorgio Vasari* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 169.

55. “Tenendo per troppo licenziosi coloro che, pigliando di tutt'e quattro quegli ordini, ne facessero corpi che gli rappresentassero più tosto mostri che uomini.” Vasari (see note 24), p. 34.

rule, it is possible that there have been others till now who in using the Composite order and *componendo da sé* have made things that bring far more *grazia* than those ancient ones.⁵⁶ Clearly, it is in *componendo da sé* that *terza età* architects will achieve the *licentia* that allows them to surpass the ancients and demonstrate their own skill; and it is this facility to combine, recombine, and invent forms that displays progress. That this passage was as important as it was short is demonstrated by Cataneo, whose later criticism of “*componendo da sé*” and of those who claim their right to invent with the quip that “Vitruvius had been a man just like them” is only a thinly veiled thrust at Vasari. Moreover, it shows the prominence his definition of architectural creativity had acquired in the intervening years.⁵⁷

Perhaps not surprisingly, Vasari develops the idea at its fullest in his life of Michelangelo, the paradigm of the *terza età* artistic personality. Thus of all Michelangelo’s architectural activities, he focuses on the details of the Medici chapel that he describes as *ornamento composito* and repeatedly as *novità*.⁵⁸ Clearly, *composito* refers to his earlier definition of *componendo da sé*, but beyond this Vasari has little to say about the process, except that Michelangelo “*fecce assai diverso*.” In 1568 the passage is a little amplified, as it stresses that all manner of details had been “*tutte trovate da lui e fatte variatamente d’al uso degli antichi*”⁵⁹ Still more can be gleaned from his attack on Michelangelo’s inferior imitators, who “*senza disegno*” have made forms “*quasi a caso*” without “*decoro, arte e ordine nessuno*,” the result is “*cose mostruose, e peggio che le tedesche*.”⁶⁰ The lexical emphasis this time is on a noun, *disegno*, not on the verb *comporre*, and as such the activity remains a shadow behind its product. Unlike Serlio, Vasari removes from view the process of architectural invention. The magic—

even mystery—of artistic creativity is privileged, and architectural as much as artistic creativity remains a matter of wonder, as opaque to the viewer’s gaze as to the critic’s gaze.

Thereafter, the two approaches—one exalting *mescolare* and the *composto*, the other more generally *disegno*—continue a parallel existence in the artistic literature. According to Daniele Barbaro, “*la bella mescolanza diletta*,” and one can sense Cicero and the whole ancient corpus on the mixture of styles behind this statement as he embarks on a lengthy analogy between architecture and rhetoric based on the architect’s freedom of *componere*.⁶¹ On the other hand, following in Vasari’s footsteps, Vincenzo Danti, more concerned with a *paragone* between the visual arts, gives *disegno*—their meeting point—center stage. The *tutto nuovo* is caused by a personified *disegno* that “*puo fare nuovi composti*,” and, in thus producing both heterogeneous and seamless assemblages, architecture leads the way. Implicitly then, he too retains the reference to *bricolage* even if he does not distinguish between *grottesche* and the architectural *composto*, and even if the parts destined for these *composti* are not collected fragments from elsewhere but the offspring of *disegno* and the trace of infinite *fantasia*.⁶²

61 “Quelli superstitiosi, che non vogliono preterire alcuni precetti dell’Architettura temendo che ella sia tanto povera, che sempre formi le cose ad uno istesso modo, né sanno, che la ragione, è universale, ma l’applicarla è cosa d’ingenuoso, e risvegliato Architetto, et che la bella mescolanza diletta, et le cose, che sono tutte ad un modo vengono in fastidio . . .” Daniele Barbaro, *Vitruvius. De architectura* (Vinegia: F. Marcolini, 1556). See also “Dalle parole di Vitru. il prudente Architetto puo trarre belli documenti circa il Decoro, & gli adornamenti, che convengono alle fabbriche de nostri tempi. . . . Ma non si deve credere, che solamente habbiano ad essere tre maniere di opere, perche Vitru. ne habbia tre sole numerate. Percioche egli stesso nel quatro libro al settimo cap. vi aggiunge la Toscana, & dice anche che vi sono altre maniere, & i moderni ne fanno, & la ragione lo richiede, per fare differenza da i nostri santi alli Dei falsi de gli antichi, & è in potere d’uno circonspetto & prudente Architetto di componere con ragione di misure molte altre maniere, servando il Decoro, & non servendo a suoi capricci. Ma le tre sopradette maniere sono le piu nominate.” Daniele Barbaro, *Vitruvius. De architectura* (Venice, 1567), p. 31. For Barbaro’s rejection of Serlio despite similarities in their conception of the *mescolanza*, see Tafuri (see note 6), Introduction.

62 “Il [disegno] puo fare novi composti e cose che quasi parranno tal volta dall’arte stessa ritrovate: come sono le chimere sotto le quali si veggino tutte le cose in modo fatte che, quanto al tutto di loro, non sono imitate dalla natura, ma sè bene composte parte di questa, parte di quella cosa naturale, facendo un tutto nuovo per sé stesso. Le quali chimere intendo io che sieno come un genere sotto cui si comprendono tutti le specie di grottesche, di fogliami, d’ornamenti di

56. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

57. Cataneo (see note 20), p. 348.

58. “Vi fece dentro uno ornamento composito, nel più vario e più nuovo modo che per tempo alcuno gli antichi et i moderni maestri abbino potuto operare; perché nella novità di sí belle cornici, capitegli e base, porte, tabernacoli e sepolture, fece assai diverso da quello che di misura, ordine e regola facevano gli uomini secondo il comune uso e secondo Vitruvio e le antichità, per non volere a quello agiungere. La quale licenzia ha dato grande animo a quelli che [h]anno veduto il far suo di mettersi a imitarlo, e nuove fantasie si sono vedute poi all[*a*] grottesc[*a*] più tosto che a ragione o regola, a’loro ornamenti.” Vasari (see note 24), p. 901.

59. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori* (1568), ed. G. Milanesi (Florence: Sansoni, 1906), p. 136.

60. *Ibid.*

Until Scamozzi, few architects turn to the issue again. For example, in his *Quattro libri*, Palladio describes architecture (personified) as “imitatrice della natura” but has little to say about the process of design itself. The bulk of his comments, contained in the chapter on abuses (Book I), focus on the various ornamental devices and the logic behind their assemblage rather than on the creative act itself.⁶³ What discussion there is seems to come from outside: from Gherardo Spini, a literary man, who tries to compress all architectural activity into an act of *imitatio* from which free invention is virtually excluded;⁶⁴ from Giampaolo Lomazzo and Federico Zuccaro, who are both painters and therefore more determined to see commonalities between the acts of creativity across the arts rather than their peculiarities. Thus Lomazzo argues that the license to invent new architectural forms should be granted only to those—“divine in composing such things (divi nel comporre tali cose)” —who have been taught painting and sculpture, because only they can produce miraculously what comes into their minds.⁶⁵ As was the case for Vasari and Danti, for Lomazzo too this “divine” and “miraculous” procreation of forms that are “capricciose, beautiful, and ordered” defies precise definition, the closest he comes to one is to say that the artist’s hand arrests on paper “sua idea di fare.”⁶⁶ Thus

tutte le fabbriche che la architettura compone. . . . Ma e da sapere che questo sì fatto modo d’imitare, se bene è stato messo in uso da altre arti, nondimeno niuna mai ha recato tanto utilità, vaghezza et ornamento al mondo in generale et agli huomini privatamente, quanto le cose che nascono dall’architettura. . . .” Danti (see note 29), p. 1766. Clearly, Danti is referring not only to architectural grotesques but also to all manner of ornament that architects invent. Seminal on architectural doodling as vehicle for *fantasia* is Summers, *Michelangelo* (see note 12), p. 162.

63. Andrea Palladio, *I quattro libri dell’architettura*, ed. L. Magagnato and P. Marini (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1980), p. 67.

64. On Spini’s theory of architectural *imitatio*, see Alina Payne, “*Utopia architectura*,” in *Antiquity and Its Interpreters*, ed. A. Payne, A. Kuttner, and R. Smick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

65. “Si che questa [grilo del arte] è lode propria d’essi pittori, & scultori principalmente, & doppo di certi altri ancora che da principio ellevati nella pittura, overo scultura, & poi armati benissimo del disegno, si danno all’architettura. . . . i quali anch’eligno miracolosamente mettono in opera ciò che gli viene in mente, come si vede da l’opera loro diverse frà se, ma tutte capricciose, belle & ordinate, qual più qual meno à proposito. E questi sono quelli à quali è concessa la facultà di variar gli ordini & comporre ciò che vogliono.” Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, *Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scultura et architettura* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1968), p. 410 [facsimile, Milan, 1584].

66. “Et questa non è opera senon di periti designatori e che hanno pronte le mani à delineare e mostrare in figura quanto concepiscono nella sua idea di fare.” *Ibid.*

idea and *disegno* take up the foreground, though he too notes the essential place of *comporre* for architecture. The procedure behind Lomazzo’s *disegno* and Serlio’s *composto* may be the same, but the verbal emphasis and therefore the focus of attention is different. A decade later (1594), for Zuccaro all differences between types of artistic production have been erased: the *idea* and its physical manifestation as *disegno* unite all three arts.⁶⁷ Not only are we far from fragments, assemblages, and kits of parts, we are even far from nature: for Zuccaro, *disegno* is “quasi un altro Nume, un’altra Natura producente, in cui vivano le cose artificiali,” and the impulse behind it is elusive.⁶⁸

Perhaps the next architect to be really concerned with the sources and nature of architectural creativity is Scamozzi. In his own *Idea dell’architettura universale*, he takes on the leveling that different types of artistic creativity had experienced at the hands of the most recent authors.⁶⁹ His object is to distinguish amongst them, and in so doing, he voices the predicament of the architect:

And as for painters and sculptors and many other worthy artists, well versed in *disegno*, it is easy to find many and various forms: because they almost always imitate either nature or art, and so have before their eyes forms as if prepared: so, by contrast the architect investigates forms differently from the others: inasmuch as he cannot use either the natural or the artificial [forms]; but keeps on seeking with his intellect, and finding, a third type of form, between these and those; which can serve *perpetuità*, *uso* and are accompanied by much grace and beauty.⁷⁰

67. “Se così adunque deve essere l’Architetto, disse il Sig. Principe, per essere di tutte armi coperto, si come Vitruvio vuole, conviene però essere prima Pittore, per haver disegno buono; Scultore, per ordinare più solidamente, e vivamente i corpi, e le forme, e versato nelli buoni ordini, e regole d’Architettura, per disporli à i luoghi loro con gratia, e decoro; e queste li daranno il giuditio, e la pratica vera, è ordinare, e comandare, e così sarà compito, & intiero Architetto à poter dar giuditio, & intendere tutte le cose compitamente, che da altri arti si fanno.” Romano Alberti, “Origine e progresso dell’Accademia del Disegno di Roma,” in *Scritti d’arte di Federico Zuccaro*, ed. Detlef Heikamp (Florence: Leo Olschki, 1961), pp. 36–48.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

69. See Payne (see note 23), chap. 9.

70. “E si come a’ Pittori, & agli Scultori, e parimente à molti altri degni artefici, che versano nel Disegno è molto facile à ritrovare molte, e varie forme: posciache essi imitano quasi sempre o la natura, overo l’Arte ove hanno dinanzi à gli occhi quasi del continuo le forme come preparate: così per lo contrario l’Architetto vada ogn’hora investigando le forme molto diversamente da tutti gli altri: In tanto che non può servirsi propriamente, nè delle naturali, ne meno delle

Locked between the *forme naturale* of the painter and the *forme matematiche* of the exact sciences, the architect's forms demand much reflection and analysis and thus a controlled activity reminiscent of the scientist's. The *disegno* of the Vasari/Lomazzo/Zuccaro tradition, complete with its implications of genius, is not the road to architectural inventions. Scamozzi's architect is far from producing "miraculously"; instead, his inventions, like nature's, require long gestation, much time spent in the study-laboratory seeking the *ragione delle cose*.⁷¹ Although he agrees that *disegno* is an essential tool, for him the forms produced by *disegno* are not all of the same class, and with some difficulty and occasional confusion, he tries to distinguish those that are artificial (mathematical forms) from those that are natural (belonging to the mimetic arts) and those that owe to nature but do not really imitate any one particular thing (architectural forms).⁷² In this definition, assembling parts is still a leading concern for Scamozzi, and his subtle dissection of compound forms such as cornices and entablatures with remarks on every profile's contribution to the reading of the whole displays this act of attention⁷³ (fig. 13). Yet, although his warning against *corpi stropiati* recalls Horace, and his efforts to understand the assemblage principles of nature recall Zeuxis's efforts to improve upon it, neither is a model for him; nor are the Corinthian or the Composite iconic images for architectural creativity. Even the fragments of the archaeological site have receded from attention as he, unlike his predecessors, forgoes the

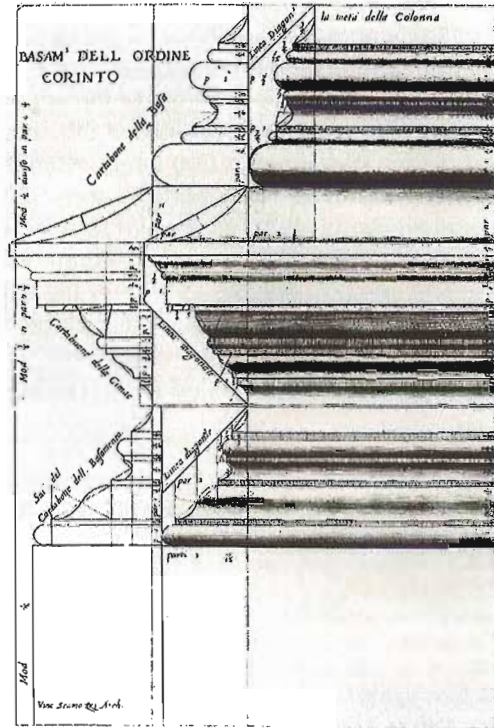


Figure 13 Vincenzo Scamozzi, profile of cornice. From *L'idea dell'architettura universale*, 1615

artificiali; mà v'è ricercando col suo intelletto, & ritrovando un terzo genere di forme tra queste e quelle; le quali possano servire alla perpetuità, & all'uso, accompagnate con molta gratia, e bellezza." Scamozzi (see note 22), I, p. 41.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

72. "Secondo lo Scamozzi niuno fu buono Architetto se prima non s'esercitò in qualche arte di disegno, nè alcuno sarà mai raro se non sarà letterato, perito nel disegno, Mathematico, & Prospettivo: senza le altre parti che le attribuisce Vitruvio." Serlio (see note 5), Index.

73. The *sacome* are "il vero ritratto della medesima opera [ordine], forma particolare delle parti, e delle membra." Scamozzi (see note 22), II, p. 140. Time and again he stresses the importance of the "luogo proprio" in the assemblage of ornament, especially the *precedenza* and *sussequenza* of members, that is, their stacking order "Et essendo, come dice Vitruvio, che ogn' una d'esse [sacome] imitaráno qualche cosa nello edificio, però cercaremo di dimostrare con qualche evidente ragione il proprio luogo loro, e la precedenza che deono tenere tra essi, e poi la proportion delle loro altezze, e le particolari forme, che doveranno havere, tutte cose importanti." *Ibid.*, II, p. 51.

customary chapter on ancient architecture.⁷⁴ For him the center of gravity has shifted to the intellectual model of the logically constructed building that conforms to the laws of nature.⁷⁵ Buildings are organisms; they do

74. Scamozzi does produce a volume on antiquities, but his contribution is a very learned text, not the images themselves, which had been obtained from Pittoni by the publisher. Although his treatise was meant to have more parts, as it stands and as Scamozzi saw it through the printing press (thereby indicating that the work can stand on its own), it does not include a chapter on ancient models. For a discussion of the publication of the antiquities volume, see Loredana Olivato's introduction in *Discorsi sopra l'antichità di Roma di Vincenzo Scamozzi architetto vicentino* (Milan: Il Polifilo, 1991; facs. ed. of Venice: Francesco Ziletti, 1582).

75. The columns are "molto oppresse & aggravate dal peso," the pedestals "fiacchi, deboli, con membri meschini," the architraves "sodi . . . per poter reggere la gravezza del peso," and the entasis is described as "pare con molta gratia, che i fusti s'ingrossino alquanto nel mezzo: quasi a simiglianza de'corpi animati quando sono da'

not merely imitate their appearance. Trees, minerals, and plants are Scamozzi's models, and the species unity displayed in nature is the aim of architectural form.⁷⁶

It would seem that as the pressure of the encounter with antiquity abates toward the close of the century, the accumulation of fragments into larger assemblages is less conspicuous as an issue, and the perspective on architectural creativity shifts. *Mescolare* as *bricolage* falls from attention. For those seeking a commonality across the arts, *disegno* and the *idea* carry the day over the *composto*. Even Scamozzi, much though he wishes to reaffirm the unique aspects of architectural production, turns elsewhere to find them. His concern

is no longer with assemblage as a creative activity but as a near-scientific one.⁷⁷ Constantly attentive to the appropriate and eloquent representation of the act of construction, his ornament comes together to describe a carefully engineered mechanism of nature.

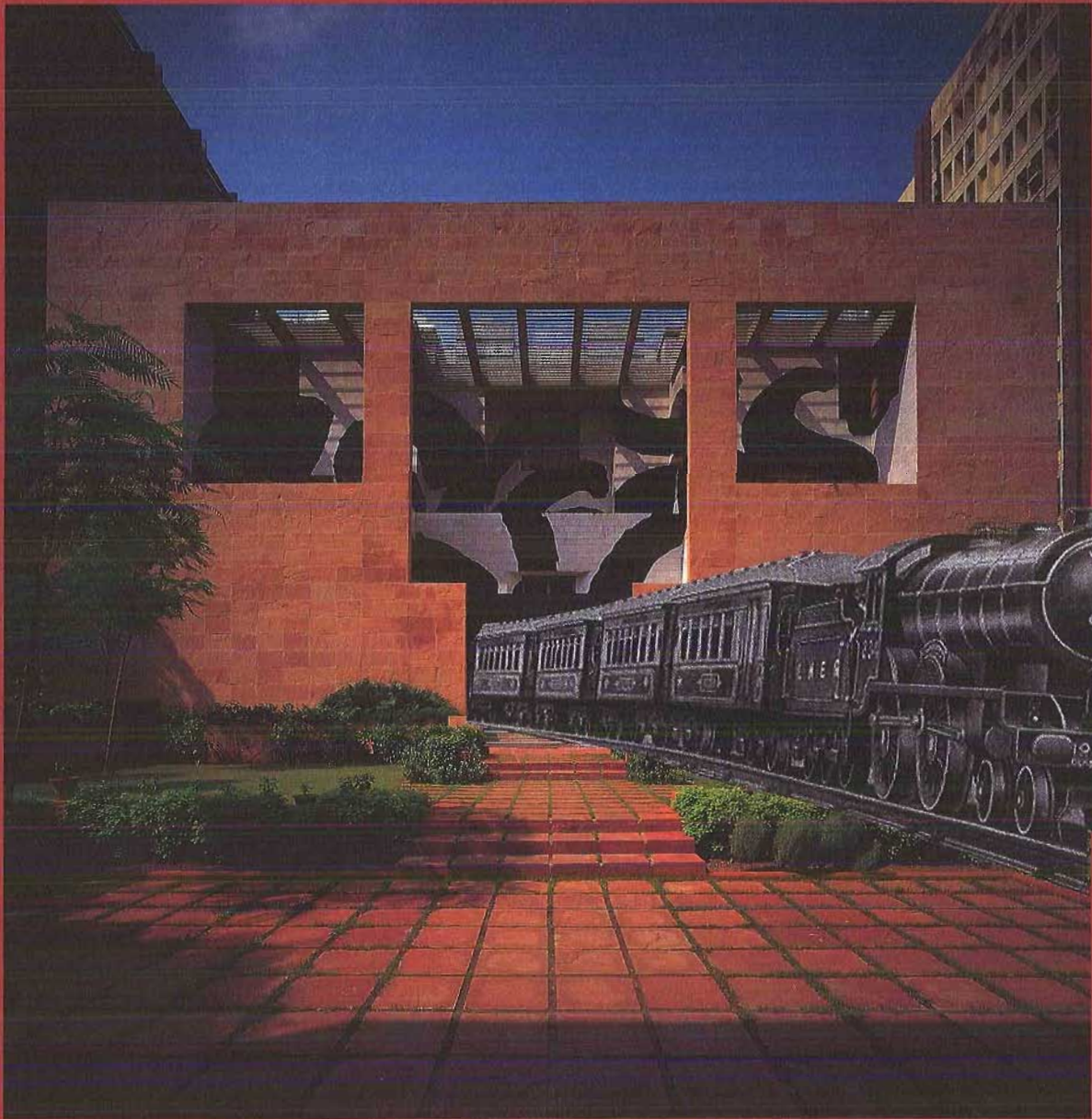
soprastanti pesi aggravati." Scamozzi (see note 22), II, pp. 5, 8, 23, 142. "E perche a sostenere i gravi pesi delle mura si puntella in forma di piramide, e parimente vediamo che la Natura fa gli Antri, e gli Specchi ne' monti più larghi a' piedi, che di sopra: e finalmente l'huomo, & ogni altro animale ha sempre maggior larghezza tra' piedi, e più ristretto fra le coscie; essendo che a questo modo, e gli uni, e gli altri si rendono molto più forti à loro stessi, & anco più gagliardi a soportar i pesi; oltre, che si dimostrano molto più grati alla vista nostra. Ibid., p. 33(45). For an analysis of Scamozzi's singular imbrication of natural history principles with tectonics, see Payne (see note 23), chap. 9.

76. "Perciò nel disporre i precetti de gli Ordini, osserveremo così nel tutto de' loro corpi, come anco nelle loro parti, e membra, che dall'uno all'altro vadino di grado, in grado incominciando dalla sodezza dell'Ordine Toscano, e passando ne gli altri, fino, che si pervenghi alla delicatezza, e leggiadria del Corinto; imitando in questo la Natura. La quale, tanto ne' corpi animati, quanto anco nelle piante, mantiene sempre di grado in grado la propria specie, nè mai tramutata in uno istante la forma ò il numero, overo il sito, o di materia le parti essenziali; perche allhora sarebbe del tutto cosa violenta; mà insensibilmente v'alterando alcune particelle tra' quelle; lequali à poco, à poco riducono le altre, e più robuste, e più forti, & alle volte, e più morbidi, e più delicate: e finalmente molto più leggiadre, e belle da vedere; il che indubitamente debbiamo far anco noi ne gli Ordini dell'Architettura." Scamozzi (see note 22), II, p. 31. Scamozzi's injunction to avoid "*cosa violenta*" echoes Varchi's (Aristotelian) *lezzione* on nature "*La Natura non fa mai cosa alcuna violentemente, ma sempre a poco a poco, e perchè ella intenda l'unità, la quale e perfettissima . . .*" Benedetto Varchi, *Opere*, vol. 1 (Milan: Niccolo Bettoni, 1834), p. 144. "*Non impropriamente gli ordini si possono paragonare alla natura de gli alberi; perche si come essi, vanno precedendo l'uno all'altro, di sveltezza, e leggiadria, ne' tronchi, o fusti, e ne' rami, e nelle foglie; così parimente gli ordini in tutte le loro parti, di grado in grado deono andar crescendo, e nobilitando, l'un più dell'altro.*" Scamozzi (see note 22), II, p. 3. See also Ibid., II, p. 31. Scamozzi thus expands Vitruvius's nature analogy to absorb all aspects of the orders and their ornaments, not only the treatment of the shaft. *De architectura*, V, 1 3.

77 That the collecting mentality that affected architects shifted is also confirmed by their collections of fragments, drawings, instruments, coins, and other *mirabilia* that, in scope and size, sometimes amounted to small museums or curiosity cabinets not unlike those of the dilettante naturalist or scientist of the seventeenth century. On this issue, see Joseph Connors, "Virtuoso Architecture in Cassiano's Rome," in *Cassiano Dal Pozzo's Paper Museum*, vol. 2, *Quaderni Puteani* 3 (London, 1992), pp. 23–40.

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