Abstract

Giovanni Battista Montano (1534-1621), who was born in Milan and trained as a woodcarver, relocated permanently to Rome in the early 1570s where his interest in sculpting was replaced by intense study of the city’s antique monuments and ruins. Although Montano carried out several sculptural and architectural projects during his time in Rome, it is his surviving corpus of drawings that testifies to his passion of exploring ancient architecture through the medium of drawing. While Montano was not famous during his lifetime, a large body of his intriguing designs became celebrated and widely circulated after his death thanks to the 1624 publication of Montano’s designs by his loyal pupil, Giovanni Battista Soria. Montano’s lifelong work differs from virtually all of his predecessors and contemporaries in its “fantastical” and ornamental nature.

This thesis explores Montano’s artistic training as it relates to his later interest in imaginatively reconstructing antique buildings, along with his disregard for archaeological or historical accuracy. The subject matter upon which Montano focused is discussed, along with his objective in creating a large corpus of half-historical, half-invented drawings. His drawing techniques are explored with specific reference to the largest group of extant Montano drawings, today housed in Sir John Soane’s Museum, London, England, and also in reference to three original Montano drawings in the Centre Canadien d’Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal. Also explored is the legacy and impact of Montano’s drawings and the later publications of his designs on the works of Roman Baroque architects, specifically Borromini and Bernini. This thesis ultimately attempts to understand the impact of the intellectual and artistic environment surrounding Montano in late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Rome, his drawing
techniques, his choice of subject matter, and the reception that his unique works received from contemporary artists and intellectuals, along with those of the following generation.
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Most importantly I must thank my family, especially my mother and father, for their continuous support and encouragement during the last two years. I also must thank Michael for his constant patience, advice, and encouragement through every stage of writing this thesis.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Giovanni Battista Montano was born in Milan in 1534 and although little is known of his early life, his artistic apprenticeship in Lombardy in the early years of the second half of the sixteenth century would have trained him to a high standard of craftsmanship in carving stone and wood.¹ Although Montano’s artistic education would have prepared him for a career as a successful craftsman, his interests would shift later in life to include those of a model-maker, draughtsman, architect, and lecturer, among other professions.² Yet it was not Montano’s prowess in these many vocations that gained him fame. In 1624, three years after Montano’s death in 1621 at the age of eighty-seven, a large body of his unconventional drawings based on the antique ruins of Rome and its countryside were posthumously published in a book of engravings by his loyal pupil and admirer Giovanni Battista Soria (1581-1651).³ This publication, entitled Scielta di varij tempietti antichi, was composed of imaginary reconstructions of antique Roman temples and shrines and was one of five books of Montano material that would eventually be published during the seventeenth century in Rome (Figs.1 and 2).⁴ Not only did Soria’s publications preserve his master’s unique works, but they additionally allowed for the dissemination of Montano’s architectural concepts and style among the next generation of Roman architects. Montano’s relevance to Italian Baroque architecture lies not only in

² Ibid., p. 541.
³ For further information on Giovanni Battista Soria see Birgitta Ringbeck’s biography, Giovanni Battista Soria: Architekt Scipione Borgheses (Münster: Lit, 1989), pp. 9-16.
⁴ For a list of publications of Montano’s designs see Appendix A.
his significant influence on later architects, but also in his approach to architectural
drawing, his choice of subject matter, and his unconventional methods, which contributed
to the production of his equally unconventional designs. This thesis will explore the
effects of Montano’s early training on his later works, the influence of these works on the
Roman circle around him at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the
seventeenth century, Montano’s unique method of working, and the characteristics of his
exceptional collection of drawings which would later serve as Soria’s source for his
engravings.

An examination of Montano’s unique architectural designs and imaginative
reconstructions of Roman ruins serves to unveil Montano’s superior talent of drawing
part-historical and part-invented buildings. It is this ability to combine historical

Figure 1 Frontispiece of Scelta di varij tempietti antichi (1624).

Figure 2 Engraved Portrait of G.B. Montano from Scelta di varij tempietti antichi (1624).
architectural features with unconventional ideas that will be shown to have made Montano an important figure in the history of Italian art. His surviving drawings communicate the draughtsman’s unwavering interest in the intricacies, exceptions, and also the traditions of the architectural style preserved in Rome’s surviving monuments and ruins. The uniqueness of Montano’s corpus of designs, which had been recognized by his contemporaries, continued to be marvelled at by artists, architects, and antiquarians of the following centuries, one such individual being Sir John Soane, who wrote that Montano’s drawings (of which he acquired over three-hundred in 1818) were “full of rich fancy and elegant contrast” and helped to dispute the argument which claimed ancient architecture to be monotonous.⁵

While the majority of artists in Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had an interest in and admiration for the artistic and architectural achievements of antiquity, Montano’s interest and admiration went much further and dominated the majority of his artistic output during his career in Rome. He coupled his interest in ancient buildings with an uninhibited artistic freedom that he expressed in his drawings. This, along with his exceptional talents as a draughtsman, will be discussed together with Montano’s subject matter, his predecessors in the field of architectural publications, and ultimately the mark left on the world of Italian Baroque architecture by his artistic achievements.

⁵ Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 541.
Chapter 2
The Life of G.B. Montano: From Decorative Sculptor in Lombardy to Architectural Draughtsman in Rome

Despite having a successful career in Rome for over four decades (from sometime in the 1570s to 1621), the details of Giovanni Battista Montano’s youth and artistic training in Milan remain shrouded in mystery because neither works by Montano nor relevant documentation about him from this period survive. Fortunately, later documents from Montano’s time in Rome indicate he was trained as a woodcarver in Milan. The basic training he received likely conformed to the traditional training of decorative sculptors in Milan at this time, which can be better understood by examining contemporary sources that discuss the training and education of artists in this city. In the sixteenth century, artistic schools in Lombardy trained their apprentice sculptors and architects to a particularly high standard of craftsmanship in the carving of wood and stone. This training, and the decorative art that Montano produced, would become fundamental to the development of his taste as a sculptor and architect. The Lombard tradition of sculpture revolved around the use of rich figural decoration which was inspired by antique ornamental prototypes. Montano’s attraction to elaborately ornamented and antique inspired architectural designs in his later life was likely cultivated during the earliest years of his training in Milan. Montano’s teacher in these

3 Fairbairn, p. 542. Rudolf Wittkower, Gothic vs. Classic: Architectural Projects in Seventeenth Century Italy (New York: George Braziller, 1974), p. 21. The cathedral of Milan is one of the most sumptuously
formative years during the middle of the sixteenth century was Bernardo Radi da Cortona, a little known Lombard sculptor of Tuscan origin who specialized in engraved altars and tomb designs.\footnote{Joseph Connors, “G.B. Montano,” in the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects* (New York: Free Press, 1982), p. 227.}

Montano trained purely as a decorative sculptor in Milan, not as an architect. Admission into Milan’s architectural and engineering academy had high standards and a specific list of rules that governed admission into the trade.\footnote{John Varriano, *Italian Baroque and Rococo Architecture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 6.} This education involved a four year apprenticeship and each applicant was expected to be “an honourable person, born of good parents, who believed in God and regularly received the sacraments.”\footnote{Ibid.} The possible reasons why Montano never studied architecture per se in Milan range from his family’s standing or finances to a lack of interest in architecture at a young age. Regardless, the young Montano found his calling as a decorative sculptor and his talent would be praised decades later by Giovanni Baglione (1566-1643) in his 1642 publication of *Le Vite de’pittori scultori et architetti* in which he writes that Montano worked wood “like one who models in wax.”\footnote{Baglione, *Le Vite*, p. 111. “Era intagliatore di legname, & eccellente, e buono architetto; lavorana con la maggior facilità del mondo, e maneggiava il legno, come se susse stata cera, e faceva di figure bravamente, & erano molto gratiose; e nella vivacità di esse imitava Prospero Bresciano.” See Appendix B for Baglione’s complete account of Montano’s life.}

Montano’s training as a decorative sculptor benefited him later in his career as an architect and draughtsman, since during his youth in Milan (perhaps working on the city’s cathedral) he would have been surrounded by architects who would have constantly and elaborately ornamented churches in the world. Approximately three-thousand sculptures decorate the cathedral with two-thirds of these being on the building’s exterior. The cathedral workshop of Milan was in operation for almost a millennium.
been working out architectural problems, trying new methods, and creating new designs. Along with this casual observation, Montano’s training in sculpting would have provided him with a foundation in mathematics and perspective, knowledge which became beneficial to Montano later in his career as both branches of knowledge were absolutely vital to any architect. Many of Montano’s later works rely on this knowledge of geometry and explore perspective in great depth. In addition, the influence of his early training as a decorative sculptor is hinted at in many hundreds of his drawings where he explores over and over again variations of columns, Corinthian capitals and other forms of architectural embellishments.

After his arrival in Rome sometime in the 1570s, Montano spent the rest of his life studying the city’s ruins, but it is not known whether his interest in ancient architecture was present before he left Lombardy, or whether it was an intellectual pursuit that he began after his arrival in the eternal city. After many years there Montano’s knowledge of antique architecture became vast and impressive. This knowledge might have been acquired by the sculptor by working in an architect’s studio or by climbing up the ranks of the building trades, two paths commonly followed by many Baroque architects. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, both sculptors and painters often turned to architecture at an advanced age and would consequently achieve a higher social

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9 See Appendix C. Approximately one-thousand drawings by Montano survive today, with the largest group being the three-hundred and thirty-five sheets in Sir John Soane’s Museum in London, England. There are three Montano drawings in Canada at the Centre Canadien d’Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal.
10 Varriano, Italian Baroque and Rococo Architecture, p. 7.
standing. Beginning as far back as the thirteenth century, architects were often considered to be masters of several trades, which may have resulted from beginning in one trade and working one’s way up from labourer to master craftsman on a building project. Many of Rome’s greatest architects of this period, among them Domenico Fontana, Giacomo della Porta, and Carlo Maderno, became successful architects by following such an educational path. Even without a formal training an architect could become extremely successful in his practice, as in the case of Gian Lorenzo Bernini. In fact, many Baroque architects excelled in more than one skill since many trained as painters or sculptors in their youths before becoming practicing architects later in their careers.

While Montano’s interest in antique architecture may have been developing since his youth, it appears that his interest in Roman ruins, which would eventually come to replace his interest in sculpting, began to increase shortly after his arrival in Rome in the early 1570s. In Rome at this time there was a renewed interest in building, which

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11 Ackerman, “Architectural Practice,” p. 3. In fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy there was also a lack of a formal guild for architects. Antonio da Sangallo was the first architect of the Renaissance to rise to the position of architect after having spent much of his youth as an apprentice carpenter. Andrea Palladio also achieved the same success one generation later.


13 Ingrid D. Rowland, “Baroque,” in A Companion to the Classical Tradition, ed. Craig W. Kallendorf (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2007), p. 48. Bernini was a painter and sculptor before turning to architecture, Pietro da Cortona was a successful painter and architect, and Francesco Borromini was trained as a decorative sculptor before delving into architecture. For more information see Vaughan Hart, “‘Paper Palaces’ From Alberti to Scamozzi,” in Paper Palaces: The Rise of the Architectural Treatise, eds. Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 18. Up until the beginning of the sixteenth century the education of architects in Vitruvian subjects most often occurred in the painter’s studio. For example, both Sebastiano Serlio and Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola learned in this way the perspective that they would later use as architects. But by the mid-sixteenth century, the art of building and designing architecture was almost fully defined in print. As a result, the architect became less dependent on receiving training from painters.

14 Fairbairn, Italian Renaissance Drawings, p. 541.
continued to grow during the papacy of Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590). Giovanni Pietro Bellori writes in his *Life of Domenico Fontano* that many young men from Lombardy flocked to Rome in the sixteenth century in order to work at the city’s many important building sites. Bellori’s description of the young Fontana might be seen to relate to Montano’s youth, for Bellori writes that Fontana “having some rudiments of geometry… embarked on the rules of architecture, studying the works of Michelangelo and drawing the ancient and modern buildings in Rome.”

For artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the study of Rome’s monuments was seen as a vital part of any young artist’s training. Imitation had always been a vital element of architecture, but it was not until the early Renaissance that the virtues and methods of such imitation were explained. This was done first in the realm of literature. A well known passage from Leon Battista Alberti’s *De Re Aedificatoria* explores the applicability of literary ideas of imitation to architecture. In the first edition of this 1485 publication Alberti (1404-1474) writes,

> I would have him [the architect] take the same approach as one might toward the study of letters, where no one would be satisfied until he had read and examined every author, good and bad, who had written anything on the subject in which he was interested. Likewise, wherever there is a work that has received general approval, he should inspect it with great care, record it in drawing, note its numbers, and construct models and examples of it…..and should he find anything of which he

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approves, he should adopt it and copy it; yet anything that he considers can be greatly refined, he should use his artistry and imagination to correct and put right.17

Alberti encouraged the close study of architectural models combined with “appropriate modification” as the architect saw fit.18 It is likely that Montano would have been familiar with Alberti’s writings, and the passage mentioned above could apply to Montano’s reconstructions of Roman monuments. Alberti was one of the first architectural theorists to advocate in writing the imitation of important and well-chosen models from Italy’s surviving ruins while also discussing the difference between being a copyist and using architectural prototypes in a positive way.19 Rome was seen as the leading location for young artists to study ancient Roman architecture because the city’s ruins provided endless architectural possibilities.20 Montano, either intentionally or unintentionally, did just as Alberti suggested by studying the architectural features and elements that he admired and that he felt had value and using his artistry and creativity to refine or correct his chosen models. Montano’s works will be shown in the following chapter to be more interpretations than exact records of what the ancient Roman architects had achieved.

In the year 1490 the humanists Paolo Cortesi and Angelo Poliziano exchanged a number of letters concerning imitation in literature, but the ideas contained in these letters

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19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.
are relevant to the architectural practice occurring at the same time. In response to Cortesi’s belief that it was better for a poet or writer to imitate one single antique literary source like Cicero, Poliziano responded by saying that to imitate a single source is apish and stifles personal creativity. He states that it is far better to be stimulated by a number of worthy sources and models and to extract what is best from each to help the writer create a personal style. But Cortesi responded by saying that the imitation of a single source does not have to be slavish, but rather that a model, even if copied by numerous individuals, will be interpreted differently by each of the imitators. And while this particular argument was written in reference to literature, Cortesi ends his argument by saying that “In my opinion not only in eloquence, but in every art imitation is necessary.”

Alberti’s writings agree with an idea that was prevalent in the Renaissance and beyond, which was that it was possible for their contemporaries, whether authors, artists, or architects, to equal and even surpass the artistic achievements of the ancients. The idea, however, that a modern creation was capable of attaining the status of an ancient building or work of art was not universally accepted in Renaissance and Baroque Italy. Raffaele Maffei, a sixteenth-century humanist, echoed the common opinion that the ancient Romans had reached the apex of civilization, thereby implying that they had also reached the pinnacle of artistic achievement. Montano, who as will be seen was involved in learned circles, was likely aware of such theoretical discussions, but his

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22 Ibid. Paolo Cortesi as cited in Brothers.
23 Ibid., p.86.
24 Ibid.
greatest interest in the realm of art and architecture was studying, reworking, and appreciating Rome’s ancient architectural achievements.

Little is known about Montano’s activities and artistic endeavours in Rome during his earliest years in the city. In 1579 Montano is recorded as having been elected a member of the Virtuosi al Pantheon, a circle of learned artists that met to discuss ancient architecture and examine drawings. This society, which had been founded in 1543, was one of the first instances of the tendency among artists to form a group regardless of their individual guild classifications. The Virtuosi, who also collected money for endowing the daughters of poor members and was entitled to “beg off” one prisoner each year from the courts, included many of Rome’s most important artists and architects as members, among them Francesco Salviati, Federigo Zuccari, Scipione Pulzone, Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, Pirro Ligorio, and Vignola. Montano was in the company of some of Rome’s most learned and important artists who together had created an environment that was meant to stimulate and benefit artists both intellectually and artistically. This intellectual environment was likely one of the compounding factors that affected and encouraged Montano’s interest in the architecture of antiquity.

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25 Ian Campbell, *Ancient Roman Topography and Architecture*, 3 vols., vol.2 (London: Royal Collection Enterprises Limited, 2004), p. 30. Nicholas Pevsner, *Academies of Art: Past and Present* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), p. 56. The Virtuosi al Pantheon was known officially as the Congregazione di S. Giuseppe di Terra Santa alla Rotunda and operated much the same as medieval confraternities had. The confraternity had its own chapel in the Pantheon where they held services and housed their special burial vault. The organization had Capitoli, a protector, a Reggente, and two Aggiunti, which was similar to the internal organization of literary academies of the time. Pevsner suggests that the form of this organization makes it very similar to an academy, rather than just a society of learned men. But this group lacked any attempt to obtain official recognition and teaching was not a priority.

26 Pevsner, *Academies of Art*, p. 56. Artistic societies and academies brought together artists and architects with archaeologists, antiquarians, and humanists and allowed for discourse between these different disciplines. Such organizations flourished in cities where Antiquity had a visible presence, such as in Rome, where the architectural remains of the past were everywhere.
In Italy during the second half of the sixteenth century all artists, regardless of aesthetic preferences or membership in groups like the Virtuosi al Pantheon, shared a veneration for antiquity and its achievements. The study of ancient architecture was a way to understand and honour the achievements of ancient architects and craftsmen, but it was also essential for the successful practice of contemporary architecture. But being acquainted with other branches of knowledge was also seen as compulsory to being a successful architect. This idea was voiced, and probably not for the first time, by Vitruvius, an architectural theorist who lived between c.90 and c.20 BCE, whose texts were printed in numerous Italian and Latin editions by Montano’s day. During the Renaissance architecture became a liberal art perceived to be an activity of the intellect, much like geometry and mathematics, among other intellectual pursuits.

The importance of studying the architecture of Rome’s past was discussed by countless writers from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries and beyond. Giovanni Pietro Bellori’s *Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects*, published in 1672, discusses the disintegration of the great Roman architectural tradition following the collapse of the Roman Empire. Bellori writes

> Such a great ill we recognize, alas, in the fall of the Roman Empire, with which all the fine arts declined, and among them architecture more than any other: because those barbarian builders, despising Greek and Roman models….and the most beautiful monuments of antiquity, for many centuries spouted so many and such various bizarre fantasies of

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orders that they rendered architecture monstrous with the most hideous disorder. Bramante, Raphael, and Baldassare\textsuperscript{30}, Giulio Romano, and lastly Michelangelo laboured to restore it from its heroic ruins to its original idea and appearance, selecting the most elegant forms of ancient buildings.\textsuperscript{31}

The Virtuosi al Pantheon was a society committed to the study and appreciation of the architectural past that Bellori emphasizes as being superior to all others and therefore of the utmost importance.

Montano’s membership among the elite Virtuosi testifies to his reputation in Rome amongst his contemporaries while also insinuating that he was seen a knowledgeable man with exceptional artistic talent. Montano’s artistic contributions to the city before 1589 are unknown, but whatever small sculptural or even architectural works he was involved with or had completed by this time, they were unlikely to have been the reasons for his admission to this society. It is more than likely that Montano was permitted admission into the society based in part on his talent as a draughtsman and the merit of his unusual imaginary reconstructions.

Although Montano’s membership in this society is telling, it cannot prove without a doubt that Montano was already engrossed in the study of antique monuments at the time of his admission into the institution, or whether it was his experiences as a member of the group that ignited or encouraged his fascination with Roman ruins. Whether Montano was simply innately interested in the ruins of Rome or influenced by his educated and influential acquaintances in the Virtuosi, it is clear from Montano’s prolific

\textsuperscript{30} Meaning Baldassare Peruzzi, Sienese architect and painter, 1481-1536.

\textsuperscript{31} Bellori, \textit{Lives}, p. 62.
graphic output that he possessed a passion for studying ancient monuments and exploring their variety through the medium of drawing.

In 1593 Montano became one of the founder-members of the Accademia di San Luca. This association, which was the official organization of artists in Rome, was founded with the purpose of elevating the work of artists above that of craftsmen.\(^{32}\) The painters, sculptors and architects of Rome had been struggling to have their superiority over craftsmen recognized since the fifteenth century.\(^{33}\) Anthony Blunt writes that “the principal aim of the artists in their claim to be regarded as liberal was to disassociate themselves from the craftsmen, and in their discussions on the subject they make it their business to bring out all the intellectual elements of their art.”\(^{34}\) Eventually painters, sculptors and architects obtained their desired recognition as educated men who played an important role in Humanist society.\(^{35}\) In time these three arts would come to be accepted as liberal arts closely allied to each other and all fundamentally different from the manual crafts.\(^{36}\)

The Accademia di San Luca had rather humble beginnings, as is demonstrated by the fact that the first official general meeting took place outside the Roman church of Santa Martina in a shed.\(^{37}\) Regardless, it is fitting that Montano would be involved in the creation of such a group, since he himself began as a humble sculptor and rose to a profession that typically garnered more respect. Additionally, the new academy had the


\(^{34}\) Ibid., p. 49.

\(^{35}\) Ibid., p. 55.

\(^{36}\) Ibid.

goal of uniting artists from different guilds, much in the same way that the Virtuosi al Pantheon had done. The surviving records of the Academy’s rules from 1593 and 1596 make it clear that the primary aim of this academy was to be educational and, like the Virtuosi, many of Rome’s most renowned artists were members, including Federico Zuccari, Pietro da Cortona and, later in the seventeenth century, Gian Lorenzo Bernini.\(^{38}\) It was vital for artists to become members of the academy, which was Rome’s official organization of artists, because one had to be a member to receive commissions from the Sacri Palazzi Apostolici, which was the right arm of the Vatican that directed all redecoration and refurbishments of papal palaces and churches in Rome.\(^ {39}\) Montano’s invitations to join both the Virtuosi al Pantheon and the Accademia di San Luca show that he had attained considerable status in Rome’s artistic community.

Part of the technique and process of education at the Accademia di San Luca was to hold debates and lectures on the theory of art. Montano would therefore have profited from an atmosphere in which young artists could be trained, while the interests of the older member-artists were guarded – a perfect environment for the aging, yet still artistically active Montano.\(^{40}\) In this setting young artists would have been taught the arts in both practical and theoretical ways, as though they were scientific subjects.\(^ {41}\) The academy also encouraged the study of artistic theory, and theoretical debates were held each day to argue issues related to the *paragone*, the definition of *disegno*, and composition.\(^ {42}\) Being surrounded by intellectuals who discussed artistic ideas and issues,

\(^{38}\) Pevsner, *Academies of Art*, p. 61.


\(^{40}\) Blunt, *Artistic Theory*, p. 56.

\(^{41}\) Ibid.

\(^{42}\) Pevsner, *Academies of Art*, p. 60.
as well as the art of Rome’s past, Montano flourished as a draughtsman and expert on the architecture of antiquity. In Rome at this time an architect’s professional success often depended on his ability to make social contacts as much, if not more, than his talents as a designer. Montano’s membership in the Accademia would have allowed him to form important relationships that would lead to his success as an architectural instructor and draughtsman in Rome.\textsuperscript{43}

The formation of the Virtuosi and academies such as the Accademia di San Luca created an atmosphere in which architects could be trained in the way that Leon Battista Alberti had believed was essential. In the preface to his \textit{De Re Aedificatoria} Alberti writes,

\begin{quote}
Before I go any farther, I should explain exactly whom I mean by an architect; for it is no carpenter that I would have you compare to the greatest exponents of other disciplines: the carpenter is but an instrument in the hands of the architect. Him I consider the architect, who by sure and wonderful reason and method, knows both how to devise through his own mind and energy, and to realize by construction, whatever can be most beautifully fitted out for the noble needs of man, by the movement of weights and the joining and massing of bodies. To do this he must have an understanding and knowledge of all the highest and most noble disciplines. This then is the architect.\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

This passage applies to Montano’s early career, for he set aside practicing sculpture and architecture in order to concentrate on his study of ruins. This passage also confirms the

\textsuperscript{43}Varriano, \textit{Baroque and Rococo Architecture}, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{44}Alberti, \textit{Art of Building}, p. 3. See Alberti’s Prologue to the book.
idea that from the fifteenth century into the seventeenth century an architect was a highly respected member of the artistic community. Rising to the rank of architect would have been appealing to an artist like Montano, originally trained in the manual craft of decorative sculpting, at the very least because of the elevated status that the artist would gain as a result.

Although documents from the Accademia di San Luca record that Montano joined the academy as a painter, his first scheduled talk, in 1594, was to be on architecture. Examination of Montano’s surviving drawings and designs testify to the reasons for why Montano was considered an appropriate authority for lecturing on architecture. The drawings demonstrate Montano’s exceptional talents as a draughtsman as well as his thorough knowledge of ancient Roman architecture. Ambiguity persists, however, as to why Montano is referred to in the academy’s documents as a painter while no other documentation refers to him as such. The title of painter might simply be a mistake by a member of the academy, yet on the other hand, Montano’s astonishing talent as a draughtsman, particularly his skilled use of pen and ink combined with ink wash, might have been cause for him to be classified as a painter. It is unusual that Montano would not have been “labelled” or admitted as a sculptor, but perhaps by the time of his admission into the academy he had all but abandoned that profession to focus on his architectural drawings and imaginative reconstructions.

Montano’s invitation in 1594 to speak on architecture at the Accademia would have been a great honour to the Lombard who had begun his career as a decorative sculptor. At the time of his involvement with the academy, the professional training of

architects in Italy began to change in part due to the increasing number of architecture classes offered by the academy, as well as regular student competitions.\textsuperscript{46} The Accademia’s competitions became so popular in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that they eventually attracted architecture students from all over Italy and even abroad. The popularity of the academy’s architecture program might be seen to indicate that Montano was a successful teacher at the academy in its early days and was instrumental in paving the way for its future success.

By the time Montano began teaching at the Accademia he had been in Rome for almost twenty years and, since presumably he had been studying the city’s ruins throughout this period, he was likely already an authority on ancient Roman architecture. Not only do Montano’s Roman drawings indicate an interest in the styles and decorative features of ancient architecture, they also communicate an understanding of the complexities of Roman concrete construction techniques, which confirms that Montano had studied many of Rome’s ruins in person, not just through the architectural drawings, engravings and woodcuts of his predecessors.\textsuperscript{47} Much of this knowledge could only have been acquired through the direct examination of ancient monuments. Many architects before Montano’s time had studied these same structures, but often their concern was for

\begin{footnotes}
\item Varriano, \textit{Baroque and Rococo Architecture}, p. 7. There is very little known about early seventeenth century competitions held by the Academy, if in fact they existed in the same manner as in the later seventeenth century. The large number of competitions held in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries might imply that this tradition began around the time that Montano was involved in the Academy and grew in scale and importance over the following decades.
\item Connors, “G.B. Montano,” p. 227. One example of Montano’s studies of complex Roman buildings built of concrete is his drawing of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine in Rome. As with the majority of his imaginative reconstructions, Montano recreates the basilica as though it were in pristine condition despite the fact that by the sixteenth century the vaulting of the building was decaying and the building had become a quarry for modern building projects throughout the city. But despite the deterioration of the building, Montano accurately draws the complex vaulting of this building in his sectional view of the interior. Montano’s keen interest in understanding how this building was constructed is also shown in the ground plan where he indicates the location of a hidden spiral staircase, which likely would only have been noticed by the draughtsman through careful observation on the site of the basilica.
\end{footnotes}
the exterior appearance of the building rather than the interior layout of the building or
the methods by which the structure was built. As a teacher of and expert on ancient
architecture, Montano’s drawings would have served as ideal models of Roman
architecture for his students since they documented both the visible and invisible features
of the buildings.\(^{48}\) Montano’s habit of drawing a building with a groundplan, section, and
elevation would also have been integral to the students’ understanding of architecture,
and the unique sculptural details that he drew would only have served to inspire the
students to be creative with their own designs.

While Montano’s vast knowledge of all aspects of Roman architecture are evident
from his drawings, the question of how Montano became familiar with Roman ruins,
from their structural complexities to their most minute ornamentation, must be asked.
Although little documentation survives regarding Montano’s working method aside from
Soria’s exaggerated description in the preface to the 1624 publication of Montano’s
temple designs quoted below, his techniques and process can be understood through an
examination of his studies in the light of past precedents.

It seems only fitting that an artist who produced a collection of drawings unlike
any other previously compiled should work in an unorthodox and innovative way. Soria’s
interpretation of Montano’s methods is discussed in his preface to *Scelta di varij
tempietar antichi*. He writes,

\[
\text{Time and again he [Montano] went into the caverns and grottos to see}
\]

\[
\text{how the ancients made the foundations of their buildings, and then,}
\]

\(^{48}\) Campbell, *Ancient Roman Topography and Architecture*, p. 443. The visible details were the elevations
and decorative details, the invisible being the plans and sections. For architectural definitions see Appendix D.
with his exquisite genius, he showed the refinements of their elevations and sections, with the plans drawn in perspective, and with their ornamentation, as is seen in the present work, even when in those ancient buildings, because of the ruin and wear of time, it was no longer possible to see any elevations at all.  

It is fortunate that this “interpretation” of Montano’s methods was recorded by Soria, even if it may not accurately portray Montano’s working habits. The most intriguing and perhaps important comment made by Soria is how Montano would supplement the ruins he was reconstructing using his “esquisito ingegno” or “exquisite imagination”. Soria’s account of Montano’s working method portrays him as an artist-archaeologist, someone who trekked through the fields of Rome in order to record the tangible ruins that were already rapidly decaying by the sixteenth century. Soria makes it clear that Montano’s drawings include many details that were inventions of the draughtsman’s imagination, and he even goes so far as to imply that the most remarkable feature of the reconstructions is Montano’s imaginative details, not the fragmentary ruins that supposedly gave rise to those reconstructions.

Montano certainly did visit numerous ancient ruins with the purpose of studying them, but what is most interesting is that rather than recording the ruins (many of which were already decrepit and overgrown) exactly as he saw them, he used these ruins as, what might be called, a “skeleton” over which, using his imagination and knowledge of Roman architectural conventions, he reconstructed the buildings as he imagined them to


50 Soria, “Preface” to Scielta di varij tempietti antichi (Rome: 1624).
have looked in their pristine states. Yet it is not the exactness and historical accuracy of Montano’s design that is of most importance to the study of his corpus of works. What is of greater relevance is that Montano looked beyond the ruined state of these structures, which imbued the buildings with a characteristic “romantic” spirit (a spirit that was captured in the eighteenth century by the haunting architectural drawings and prints of Giovanni Battista Piranesi – see Fig.3) and tried to envision the structures as they might have been seen by the ancient Romans. This is what makes Montano’s drawings so interesting and unique. His goal was not to accurately draw the ruined monuments he saw in front of him in an archaeological sense, but rather to use them to explore the buildings’ architectural potential through drawings.

Figure 3 G.B. Piranesi, *View of the Arch of Titus, built for this Emperor after his death in memory of the destruction of Jerusalem*, engraving, 385 x 620 mm.
From the beginning of the Renaissance to Montano’s time, learned humanists saw Rome’s ancient ruins as tangible proof of the city’s former power and glory. The study of ruins not only displayed one’s interest in the particulars of ancient Roman architectural style, but, more importantly, it was a way of remembering the city’s past. The ruins of Rome were a main part of the city’s identification as a symbol of past greatness, and the ruins themselves represented the city’s history, both visibly and tangibly. Still, there had existed since before the time of the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century C.E. an awareness that buildings and works of art within Rome and other parts of the ancient world were crumbling. Part of the interest many humanists and architectural historians had in Rome’s ancient structures was a concern for preserving the remnants of the Empire’s past before they deteriorated beyond recognition.

In fifteenth century Italy, many Roman ruins were re-examined with the new eyes of humanism. Artists, architects, and learned men began to approach the ruins in a novel way by scrutinizing and examining the old remains in order to discover their nature, the building techniques used, and the rules followed by the buildings’ makers. The beginnings of this type of interest in antiquity can be traced back to Donatello (1386-1466) and Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446), Florentine artists who spent time together in Rome at the beginning of the fifteenth century investigating the archaeological and structural problems of the city’s ruins. These two artist-friends possessed an enthusiasm

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and appreciation for the new understanding of antiquity that was typical of humanist thought at the time - an enthusiasm and interest that was still alive in Montano in the seventeenth century. For many learned men, including Brunelleschi, Donatello, and Montano many years later, the ruins of Rome were not only pleasing in appearance, but they saw in them a tangible proof of the city’s ancient glory and the potential to inspire the creation of new buildings and monuments.54

This interest in the study of Rome’s ruins had grown so greatly by the beginning of the sixteenth century that even Raphael (1483-1520), one of the most important artists of the Renaissance, was working on a representation of ancient Rome in order to make an accurate record of the city’s extant ruins before they decayed beyond repair or were destroyed to make room for new building projects.55 In a letter co-written with the humanist Baldassare Castiglione (1478-1529) to Pope Leo X (r.1513-1521) Raphael describes the condition of Rome as “the corpse of this great, noble city, once queen of the world, so cruelly butchered.”56 Although Raphael’s ambitious plan of making an accurate record of the city’s buildings and monuments never materialized, it represents an interest of the widths and heights as far as they were able to ascertain [the latter] by estimation, and also the lengths, etc. In many places they had excavations made in order to see the junctures of the membering of the buildings and their type – whether square, polygonal, completely round, oval, or whatever.” Manetti also describes the two artists as being called “treasure hunters”. Filarete, Treatise on Architecture, trans. John R. Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 102. In Book VIII, fol.59r. Filarete writes that Brunelleschi not only studied the ancient architecture of Rome, but he incorporated what he had learned into his own architectural designs. Filarete writes “I bless the soul of Filippo di ser Brunellesco, a Florentine citizen, a famous and most worthy architect, a most subtle follower of Dedalus, who revived in our city of Florence the antique way of building.”

54 Weiss, Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity, p. 66.
55 Ibid., p. 95.
56 Raphael and Castiglione as cited in Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks, Palladio’s Rome (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 179. Raphael and Castiglione’s letter (which perhaps might also have been written with the help of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger) is today held in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich. See Appendix F for related quotations from the English translation of this letter. For further information on this letter see Francesco Di Teodoro, Rafaello, Baldassar Castiglione e la Lettera a Leone X (Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1994).
in ancient buildings similar to Montano’s later activities. In both of Raphael’s and Montano’s cases the best method of exploring and documenting the architecture of Rome’s past was through drawing in perspective.\(^{57}\)

Eventually Renaissance artists not only took interest in the artistic and architectural achievements of antiquity, but believed that it was essential, especially for an architect, to have a solid knowledge of Roman remains.\(^{58}\) The achievements of Renaissance architects like Brunelleschi, Bramante, and Raphael helped to further bring about a fundamental change in the appreciation of ancient architecture. Not only did these architects study and make drawings of Roman antiquities, but they also revived the style of classical Roman architecture in their own contemporary designs. The study of antique architecture was appealing to these artists, among others, because during the Renaissance, architectural practice became considered to be a work of art in its own right in part thanks to Renaissance architectural treatises (which will be discussed in the following chapter).\(^{59}\)

Montano followed in the footsteps of the Renaissance architects who made the study of antique architecture central to their practice, but what is of relevance to the discussion of Montano’s study of antiquity is the fact that his works differed greatly from the works of any other architect who simply filled sketchbooks with drawings after antique art and architecture.\(^{60}\) Montano was not interested in recording the state of the Roman ruins he studied, but rather he drew what he believed a pristine Roman monument to be – a building truly representative of the symbolic greatness that was still associated

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60 Ackerman and Carpenter, *Art and Archaeology*, p. 4.
with the Roman Empire in Montano’s time complete with complex ornamentation and
statuary.

Despite the enthusiasm of Brunelleschi, Donatello, Bramante, Raphael and
eventually Montano for Roman ruins, their destruction continued from the fifteenth to the
seventeenth century. Demolition of the ruins provided a ready source of stone for new
projects, and the land upon which the ruins had stood was needed for the new structures.
The Renaissance passion for building and town planning was a two-way street, since such
planning brought about the inevitable destruction of much of the old for the new.61 It is a
cruel irony that this time of great architectural achievement coincided with a time where
the demolition of architectural precedents was at its highest. Luckily, some ancient
buildings were restored and repaired during the fifteenth and sixteenth century, but most
buildings that had this fate were only saved from neglect because they were in use, one
such building being the Pantheon.62

It is highly unlikely that Montano carried out his own survey of all of the
buildings he drew, since a number of his drawings can be shown to have been
reproductions of other architects’ drawings and illustrations from architectural treatises.
Yet some of his reconstructions show that he followed an archaeological criterion used
by other sixteenth century architects even though his purpose in doing so was far from
archaeological. Montano’s “research” at the actual sites can be proven by looking at
specific drawings by the draughtsman. One example of particular importance is the
Columbarium of the *liberti* of Augustus, which is the earliest known representation of this

62 Ibid., p. 103.
building (Fig. 4). Since Montano would not have been able to reproduce this building based on earlier drawings or treatise illustrations, it reinforces the belief that in certain situations the only source Montano had at his disposal for his imaginary reconstructions was the ruin itself.

A second example which demonstrates that Montano drew from actual ruins are his multiple representations of the nymphaeum at the

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Figure 4 G.B. Montano, *Columbarium of the liberti of Augustus*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 272 x 192 mm, Soane Museum.

Figure 5 G.B. Montano, *Nymphaeum at Villa Gordianorum*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 251 x 191 mm, Soane Museum.

Figure 6 G.B. Montano, *Nymphaeum at Villa Gordianorum*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 273 x 195 mm, Soane Museum.

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63 Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, Cat. 1221. The *liberti* of Augustus were slaves who were freed by the Emperor Augustus. The Columbarium is a monument dedicated to these men on the Via Appia in Rome.
Villa Gordianorum, Tor de’ Schiavi. Montano drew the structure from a number of different views, which indicates that he had observed the building in person from all angles. In the first representation he drew only the central octagon which was only a fraction of the ruins on this site (Fig. 5). In the second depiction Montano incorporated all of the ruins on the site in order to virtually reconstruct a building that, although outlandish, is close in appearance and form to the actual ruins on the site (Fig. 6). This particular building seems to have fascinated Montano, which may explain why he chose to study it in person. He might have found the only way of satisfactory study was to examine the ruins in situ. When drawing other buildings that appealed to him less, perhaps he was content to use the drawings of other artists, or even antique coins, as his main source.

Along with the many lesser-known Roman monuments that Montano drew he also studied some of the city’s more famous monuments that remained in good condition or even in use in the sixteenth and seventeenth

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65 Ibid.
centuries. Among these more famous of Roman landmarks are the Temple of Venus and Rome, the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, and the Pantheon (Fig. 7, 8 and 9). These more famous buildings had certainly been drawn and sometimes published by Peruzzi, Serlio and Andrea Palladio, whose studies Montano used as valuable sources for his own later drawings.66 But there is no doubt that he would have seen these buildings in person within the city. The buildings that remained in good condition in the centre of the city would have been easy for Montano to visit since many were just as famous in Montano’s time as today, largely because of their symbolic role as representing Rome’s past.

Figure 8 G.B. Montano, *Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 215 x 216 mm, Soane Museum.

Figure 9 G.B. Montano, *Pantheon*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 230 x 201.5 mm, Soane Museum.

66 Hart and Hicks, *Palladio’s Rome*, p. ix. Palladio’s interest in Rome’s antiquities and topography was so great that he wrote two pocket-sized guides to the antiquities of Rome and the city’s churches. These books, published in 1554 became extremely popular and appealed to a different audience than his famous architectural treatise *Quattro Libri*, which was directed towards a more educated audience.
Even though it can be shown that Montano certainly did study particular Roman ruins in person, the high finish and quality of his drawings indicate that they were not done on site, but rather at a later time in Montano’s studio and were probably based on some sort of sketches, perhaps measured, carried out in the field. The vast majority of his surviving drawings of buildings were drawn with the careful use of rulers and other instruments, and Montano must have spent a great deal of time outlining his designs in graphite, then filling in with wash, and finally tracing over the outlines with pen and ink. Such detailed and laborious work would have been impossible to do on site. The exact form of Montano’s working drawings remains a mystery since only the finished versions survive. It is likely that the rough studies of the buildings were discarded once they were no longer needed.

In addition to the actual ruins that stood throughout Rome, Montano used ancient coins as a source for his reconstructions. He was certainly not the first to do so. Beginning in the early Renaissance there was an increased fascination with ancient Greek and Roman coins, not only because of the portraits on them, but also because of the buildings they recorded. Coins had been collected, admired, and imitated before the fifteenth century, but they suddenly became another source of information used by learned men who were trying to learn as much about the ancient world as possible. Coins and medals were no longer simply objects of beauty and value, but also a form of documentation of Rome’s architectural past and therefore collecting coins became a popular pursuit among the learned and wealthy.67

67 Weiss, Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity, p. 169.
Roman coins preserved one of the largest bodies of ancient architectural images because new commissions and the rebuilding of monuments were often celebrated with the minting of a coin. Compared to other antiquities such as statues, coins were much more plentiful, less expensive, were easily circulated, and could be found wherever there were humanists. The first collection of reproductions of ancient coins, entitled *Illustrium Imagines* by Andrea Fulvio, appeared in print in 1517 and allowed for those unable to own actual artefacts to study them. Suddenly the numismatic book could be circulated much as coins had been for centuries.\(^6^8\) Whether Montano used drawn reproductions of coins or the actual coins as sources for his reconstructions is unknown, but is not of critical importance. One particular reconstruction for which Montano used an antique coin as a source (or a copy of the image on the coin) is his drawing of the Temple of Mars Ultor, an ancient building in the Forum of Augustus of which little, if anything, survived by the sixteenth century (Fig.10).\(^6^9\) For this building it is evident that Montano did not use the actual ruins, for the version of the Temple of Mars Ultor that he drew corresponds with an earlier plan shown on a coin from the reign on Augustus around 18 or 19 BCE (Fig. 11). The final temple design was different from that on the earlier coin, but Montano would likely not have been aware of this fact and consequently believed the coin to have an accurate representation of the temple.

\(^6^8\) John Cunnally, *Images of the Illustrious: The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 5. Fulvio’s publication served to make the culture of classical antiquity more accessible to literate Europeans and would have benefited artists who might not have had the opportunity or means to study actual antique coins. Cunnally also discusses that it was a convention for Renaissance artists and humanists to identify, compare and contrast the architectural images on ancient coins with surviving colossal monuments. This may have been a practice used by Montano when drawing his imagined reconstructions. For further information on coin books in the sixteenth century see Cunnally Chapter 10, “Multorumque Monent Quae Tacuerint Libri: Coin Books and Emblem Books in the Sixteenth Century.”

\(^6^9\) Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, Cat.1124.
In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the expansion of architectural knowledge throughout Europe, and specifically in Italy, was furthered by the appearance of printed architectural books, and these were the footsteps in which Montano followed.\textsuperscript{70} Ancient ruins were no longer only the interest of learned humanists, and consequently practicing architects began to recast examples from antiquity for their contemporary needs.\textsuperscript{71} Architectural sketchbooks and treatises were passed between those interested in studying antique architectural precedents, and it is likely that Montano would have owned or at least had access to such illustrated books and manuscripts including the famed ones by the architects Leon Battista Alberti, Baldassare Peruzzi, Sebastiano Serlio, Andrea Palladio and Pirro Ligorio. The treatises

\textsuperscript{70} Rowe and Satkowski, \textit{Italian Architecture}, p. 128.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
by these architectural draughtsmen adapted the antique rules of architecture to suit modern building practices as well as modern needs.72

Even though the majority of Montano’s career seems to have been spent working on his collection of drawings, he was involved in a small number of architectural and sculptural projects. Although he never gained fame for these projects, the records of these works shed light upon his career as an architect and on his working methods. He was involved in projects such as the coffered ceiling of the oratory of the Arciconfraternità dei Convalescenti e Peregrini in Rome (1589-1591), an organ for San Giovanni in Laterano also in Rome (1597-1599), and planning the façade of San Giuseppe dei Falegnavi, which was the church of the Roman woodcarvers’ guild (c.1597). One of the most interesting commissions with which Montano was involved was the preparation of a wooden model of Giacomo della Porta’s design for the Medici funeral chapel (Cappella dei Principi).73

The events surrounding the creation of this model are preserved in a series of letters written between the Grand Duke Ferdinando I de’ Medici and Emilio dei Cavalieri, a Roman nobleman and musician who in 1588 was appointed to the position of Superintendent of all artistic activities at the court of Florence by the Duke.74 These letters between Cavalieri and the Duke were written between 1593 and 1602 and make numerous references to Montano’s talent as a model-maker. While many of the letters only refer to Montano in the context of his displeasure at not being paid for his work on time, one letter dated January 5, 1601 from Cavalieri to the Duke discusses Montano’s

impressive work on a previous commission for a model of a ciborium for the church of San Friano. Cavalieri writes:

I do believe the ciborium in San Friano was made for v.200. M. Giovanni Battista has made in San Lorenzo in Damaso a bigger one which cost v.150, but it does not have gold; and this is another matter. Antonio delle Susine was in Rome, and I was told that he has seen it, and that he has not seen anything more beautiful, since it is a model not of a chapel but of a temple, in the round, finished inside and outside, very large and extraordinary ... and was made by an excellent master.75

Cavalieri was not the only one of Montano’s contemporaries to write about his talents as a sculptor. As previously mentioned, Giovanni Baglione praised Montano in his description of the artist as a sculptor who knew how to work wood with all the fluidity and liveliness of wax.76 These accounts of Montano’s success as a sculptor and model-maker shed light on his success as an architectural draughtsman since his sculpting of models would have helped him to develop an understanding of spatial relations, which would eventually be integral to his success in drawing Roman ruins. Montano’s drawings show that he had a comprehensive understanding of how buildings were composed and the relations between the facade, interior, and groundplans. Perhaps his experience as a sculptor helped him to gain such knowledge, but it is also possible that it was the study of the ruins allowed Montano to understand the spatial relationships that he was able to translate into architectural models like that for the Medici Chapel.

76 Baglione, Le vite, p. 111.
What is most interesting about Cavalieri’s letter, aside from the fact that it emphasizes Montano’s exceptional talent as an artist, is the mention of the design of the ciborium as a temple. While Montano’s architectural drawings have most often been interpreted as fanciful and imaginary reconstructions of Roman monuments, this comment suggests that Montano might have been interested in reintroducing ancient architectural styles into late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Italian woodwork. Roman temples were obviously one of Montano’s great interests, as proven by his hundreds of drawings based on Roman temples, one such example being his drawing of the Temple of Portumnus near Ostia (Fig.12). This step from drawing Roman ruins to working on real architectural projects suggests that Montano had a desire to translate the ideas he explored in his hundreds of drawings into architectural designs. Perhaps then it can be said that these drawings were not just done for pure enjoyment or as records of Roman ruins, but rather as preparations for a rejuvenation of architecture based on Roman antique prototypes. Drawings have been described as the “embodiment of architectural ideas”, and if we assume that Montano’s drawings can be interpreted in this way,

Figure 12 G.B. Montano, Temple of Portumnus, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 244 x 171 mm, Soane Museum.
then his drawings are the first steps to his creation of actual, physical architecture in his unusual style.\textsuperscript{77} His drawings were not simply records of the architecture of the past, but rather they recorded ideas that would come to be used by future architects whose inspiration was found in Rome’s ruins. Today, in the absence of any letters or text written by Montano, it is these drawings that preserve Montano’s artistic ambitions while revealing his methods, artistic preferences, and ultimate purpose in creating his immense collection of architectural drawings.

Chapter 3

The Drawings, Techniques and Styles of G.B. Montano

The main body of Montano’s drawings, which are the primary source required to understand Montano’s drawing techniques and methods, survives in the collection of Sir John Soane’s Museum, in London, England. In his article entitled “Architectural Drawings and the Intent of the Architect”, James Smith-Pierce states that architectural drawings are of utmost importance to the study of architecture because they are “records” of the architect’s “mind and spirit”.¹ Montano’s surviving drawings are vital to deciphering the draughtsman’s purpose in creating his collection of designs and reconstructions. More than with other architects’, Montano’s drawings are fundamental because, rather than representing one stage in the process of designing a building, they were a final product meant to be appreciated solely as drawings, not as part of the process of designing and building a structure. These drawings fit the concept of creating art for art’s sake, and therefore they are the most valuable evidence for comprehending Montano’s artistic career.

No one knows for certain why Montano began to study and draw ancient Roman architecture. This endeavour may have been initiated by a simple interest in the ruins scattered throughout Rome or, as noted in the previous chapter, inspired by the works of earlier architects. Their architectural publications, in particular, became popular and widespread beginning in the early Renaissance and continued to be so in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

While his interest in Rome’s ruins and a desire to follow in the footsteps of men such as Vitruvius and Alberti may have motivated Montano to begin his ambitious drawing project, Montano’s intention in producing drawings was largely to sell them as a means of supplementing his income. The survival of multiple copies of the same designs indicate that during his career Montano sold individual drawings or groups of drawings to intellectuals interested in studying the architecture of Rome’s past. Consequently, Montano was able to pursue his greatest artistic interest and use the fruits of his labours as his main means of support, since he was by no means a prolific woodworker during his time in Rome. In addition to being able to sell the drawn reconstructions to his friends and among the intelligentsia, it is also possible that Montano was able to use them as educational examples during the period of his involvement in the Accademia di San Luca since his corpus of works encapsulated the many features and characteristics of ancient Roman buildings along with the artist’s own novel architectural ideas. Montano found a career that allowed him to study the architecture that was without a doubt so intriguing to him while also being able to use his

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2 Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 770. Different copies of the same building designs have been so far identified in the collections of the Soane Museum, London, Paris’ Bibliothèque Nationale and in the Stirling Maxwell Album. See Phillips (1990) Cat. 344b and 346.
artistic and creative abilities in his inventive reconstructions.

The notion that Montano made so many drawn reconstructions in order to sell them is further supported by his creation of multiple frontispiece designs if which one survives in the Soane Museum and another in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (Fig.13 and 14). These frontispiece designs, four in all, verify that long before his death Montano had decided to publish his designs as an engraved collection that could be distributed throughout Rome and abroad.\(^3\) But this does not mean that Montano did not sell his original drawings as groups as well. Such collections of original drawings would not have been difficult for Montano to sell in Rome during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century considering the quality of Montano’s work and the many wealthy and learned collectors with whom he was acquainted. His works would also have been in demand because they were the largest corpus of studies of antique buildings available on the market in Rome at the time.\(^4\)

Montano’s intention to publish his designs is supported by Soria’s preface to *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi*, which

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4 Ibid.
implies that Montano had undoubtedly planned to publish his designs before his death. Soria took the trouble to publish the drawings after his master’s death because, as he writes, “I have made the present selection of small temples for publication, because I was convinced that it would be a task worthy of much praise by men of talent to have here a view of the different ways in which the ancients planned a building; also because it seemed to me unjust that the work of such a man should remain buried.”\(^5\) Whether Montano intended to have his designs engraved and published or sold as original drawings singly or in groups, they were meant to be studied, admired, and used as educational tools. His works were distinct from other architectural drawings which served practical uses because they were works of art that existed mainly as “objects of virtù”, meaning they were objects of art valued as a curiosity, or what Anthony Blunt has called “luxury objects”\(^6\).

An interesting parallel can be drawn between Montano’s corpus of designs and a proposed plan for a collection of drawings of antique buildings by Montano’s friend, Guglielmo della Porta (1500-1577), who came from a prominent northern Italian family of masons, sculptors, and architects. Montano’s relationship with Guglielmo is documented in a 1609 transcript which records Montano’s evidence regarding a dispute between Guglielmo’s heirs. The fact that Montano was called upon to provide insight into

\(^{5}\) Preface to *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* as translated in Portoghesi, *Roma Barocca*, p. 44.

\(^{6}\) *The Oxford Dictionary of Art*, 1st ed., s.v. “object of virtù.” Blunt, *Artistic Theory*, p. 55. The Italian word virtù signified a taste for curios or art works, as well as an interest in and admiration for the Fine Arts. A virtuoso was originally a term used to describe one who was a collector of or specialist in art objects. It was not unusual for architects to be interested in the study of curiosities and they, like other artists, scientists, and humanists, collected unique items from nature and scientific instruments.
the family’s private dispute shows that Montano had a strong relationship with the della Porta family, even long after Guglielmo’s death in 1577.\textsuperscript{7}

The project which Guglielmo began planning in Rome in the 1560s and described in a letter to his friend Bartolomeo Ammanati around the same time has been related in scope to Montano’s later collection of drawings based on the antique. According to the letter written by Guglielmo to Ammanati, Guglielmo wished to survey all the ancient and modern architecture in Rome.\textsuperscript{8} In this letter he describes Rome as the “mistress of the arts” and he states that he will document Rome’s architecture “by drawing in a small format many of the churches and notable buildings in Rome, in Italy and abroad.”\textsuperscript{9} The aim of Guglielmo’s project was to use every source available to him, including the \textit{Forma Urbis Romae}, numismatic collections, literary and historical descriptions, and ruins themselves in order to make accurate records of Rome’s buildings, both ancient and modern.\textsuperscript{10} On the other hand, Montano’s drawings, which were also produced in small formats like those mentioned by Guglielmo, focused less on accurately recording the buildings of Rome’s past and present and more on using the surviving ruins, as well as drawings by other draughtsmen, as a foundation upon which Montano’s architectural creativity could take flight. It is insinuated in Guglielmo’s letter that his project would aim to record buildings in their current state. Montano’s work accomplished the exact opposite of this because his drawings relied on his imagination more than the physical

\textsuperscript{7} Fairbairn, \textit{Italian Renaissance Drawings}, p. 542.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., p. 543.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p. 544. Gugliemo della Porta as cited in Fairbairn.
\textsuperscript{10} The \textit{Forma Urbis Romae} was a marble relief map of Rome made between 203 and 211 C.E. commissioned by the Roman Emperor Septimius Severus. It was excavated in 1562 and kept in the Palazzo Farnese. Guglielmo worked for the Farnese family, and therefore it is possible that Montano, by means of his friendship with Guglielmo, might have had access to or visited the palace to see the antique map.
ruins. It is this creativity that makes Montano’s reconstructions of Roman ruins so unique and important, for he was not concerned with recording what had survived through to the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, but rather with drawing complete buildings with some level of truthful basis in Rome’s architectural past.

Although Guglielmo della Porta’s proposed project to record extant buildings in Rome, both ancient and modern, was never carried out, it helps shed light on the intended audience for Montano’s drawings. Guglielmo, again in his letter to Ammanati, writes that he wishes his drawings to be accessible to both “gentlemen and artisans”\[11\]. It is in no way unreasonable to believe that Montano had identified these same groups of men as the ideal audience for his works. The “gentlemen” that Guglielmo refers to would have been Rome’s learned intellectuals who would naturally be familiar with or educated in the history of architecture. Additionally, such drawings would have been popular amongst learned men because they would have recognized that such visual records would help to preserve Rome’s architectural achievements for future generations in case the buildings themselves did not survive.

Like Guglielmo della Porta, Montano might have believed that artisans would have had use for and an appreciation of his work in a more practical way than the “gentlemen” of Rome. Collections of designs made architectural prototypes accessible to practising architects, consequently influencing or inspiring their works. With Guglielmo’s project incomplete, Montano seems to have filled some of the void left by this unfinished project. Although it cannot be proven beyond doubt, the parallels and

differences between these two projects, one proposed and one completed, one quite
diffused and the other very focused, suggest that Montano’s corpus was inspired by the
proposed plan of his friend della Porta. Montano too may have hoped to achieve
Guglielmo’s goal of inspiring and instructing architects and artisans while at the same
time preserving Rome’s architectural history. But rather than simply recording what
survived in Rome for posterity, Montano’s drawings also encouraged architects to
creatively experiment with Roman architectural traditions in their own works.

Guglielmo della Porta was not the first artist of the Renaissance to embark on a
plan to make visual records of Rome’s ancient buildings. Beginning in the fifteenth
century, the expansion of architectural knowledge in Italy was furthered by a rise in
printed architectural books. Montano’s corpus, although different from any other
architectural publication, followed in the footsteps of these models.\textsuperscript{12} Among the
architectural drawings, sketchbooks, and publications that Montano would have studied
during his career are the works by Alberti, Peruzzi, Serlio, Palladio and Ligorio, all of
whom, in some form or another, followed the example set by the ancient architectural
theorist Vitruvius. Similarities between designs by these architects and Montano’s
designs suggest that he studied and admired these well known precedents and used them
as prototypes for his own drawings. The influence of these Renaissance treatises will be
shown to be evident in both the manner in which Montano presented buildings in his
reconstructions, as well as in certain designs that Montano reproduced from these books
in his corpus of drawings.

\textsuperscript{12} Rowe and Satkowski, \textit{Italian Architecture}, p. 128.
Joseph Connors writes that Montano drew heavily on the antiquarian tradition that had been developed by his architectural predecessors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Alberti, Peruzzi, Serlio, Palladio and Ligorio, amongst other architects, are credited with representing in the world of architectural drawing a “new professionalism”. Montano followed in their footsteps by proposing to publish designs for the purpose of making ideas available to a wider audience of artists and antiquarians. These architects and draughtsmen had access to new information regarding both ancient and contemporary architecture and their publications of illustrated architectural manuals and treatises helped to increase and solidify the importance of architectural drawing in the Renaissance. In fact, the increased importance of architectural drawings is demonstrated by the not accidental survival of countless drawings from the sixteenth century on. The value of architectural drawings began to be recognized by artists such as Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (1484-1546), who took the time to systematically identify the architectural projects illustrated on the sheets from his workshop since he knew they would be preserved and treasured by future artists and collectors. At this same time collectors of art began to acquire architects’ drawings for their intrinsic value as art objects and their importance as historical documents. Architects themselves also copied and collected the drawings of their predecessors to either use as resources for their own works or to preserve for posterity the works of those who trained them. For example, Peruzzi collected the drawings of his master Francesco di Giorgio, and in turn Serlio

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15 Ibid., p. 128.
16 Ibid., p. 129.
17 Campbell, *Ancient Roman Topography*, p. 31.
acquired drawings by Peruzzi. Each collection of drawings influenced the works of those who studied them, thereby showing the importance of this type of transferral of architectural imagery.

Montano used a wide variety of drawings, sketchbooks, and printed architectural books as primary sources for his drawings. The architectural treatises studied by Montano were often written by architects for the benefit of other architects. They were intended to be practical aids for the purpose of designing and building while also showing examples of ideal projects. Alberti’s first publication, *De Pictura*, exemplifies the idea that these publications were meant to be used by practicing artists, because, while this text was originally published in Latin, it was soon after translated into Italian by Alberti himself. This implies that although the treatise was originally written for a well-educated audience fluent in Latin, Alberti also wanted it to be accessible to practicing artists who knew only Italian.

The authors of these Renaissance architectural treatises often illustrated their texts with their own buildings as models to follow, yet many of these publications also included antique buildings as examples. Both Montano and his predecessors would certainly have shared a working knowledge of Vitruvius’ treatise *De Architectura*, which was written in the last half of the first century BCE and had originally been illustrated. This text, which was the only treatise devoted to architectural theory to survive from antiquity, was the basis on which any architect could build an adequate understanding of

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the principles and buildings of ancient Roman architecture.21 The writers of Renaissance architectural treatises, Alberti being the earliest, sought to emulate Vitruvius, and as a result this ancient book directly or indirectly played a part in determining the content of almost all Renaissance architectural books.22 In turn, the Renaissance architectural treatises encouraged a preference for all'antica architecture among architects and patrons who wished to emulate the grandeur of ancient Rome in their new buildings. These printed images became important sources for architects who could not visit the actual ancient Roman remains, but they were just as valuable to artists and architects who were fortunate enough to have access to the ruins, including Montano.

The first Renaissance treatise that followed the Vitruvian model was Leon Battista Alberti’s De Re Aedificatoria (On the Art of Building) written around 1452, which also happened to be the first architectural text to appear in print.23 This text, in which Alberti identifies himself with the theory and practice of the ancient Roman world, provided a thorough account of the principles of antique architecture but unfortunately the editio princeps did not include illustrations. Alberti succeeded in making sense of Vitruvius for his modern audience by incorporating ideas of other writers since antiquity.24 In this text Alberti elaborated on ideas concerning the nobility of the art of


22 Hart and Hicks, Paper Palaces, p. 2. Vitruvius’ text discusses the divisions of architecture, building materials, the origins of buildings, temples, the Orders, public buildings (including theatres, basilicas and jails), houses, building aqueducts, instruments for measuring time, and mechanics.

23 Alberti’s first publication was della Pittura, published in 1436.

architecture and its relation to the human body, ideas that were also of importance in Vitruvius’ writings.\textsuperscript{25} Alberti’s text was not published until 1485, but soon afterward it became an important resource for Renaissance architects. Montano would certainly have read Alberti’s text, considering it remained a vital resource for architects through to the sixteenth century. Of value to the study of Montano’s works are Alberti’s writings on the importance of architectural drawing. Alberti defines the difference between drawings by painters and drawings by architects when he writes,

> The difference between the drawings of the painter and those of the architect is this: the former takes pains to emphasize the relief of objects in paintings with shading and diminishing lines and angles; the architect rejects shading, but takes his projections from the groundplan and, without altering the lines and by maintaining the true angles, reveals the extent and shape of each elevation and side – he is one who desires his work to be judged not by deceptive appearances but according to certain calculated standards.\textsuperscript{26}

Alberti was one of the first men of the Renaissance to discuss the importance of drawing in the practice of architecture and he encouraged architects to investigate and explore the architecture of the past through the medium of drawing. Montano’s ideas are in line with the writings in Alberti’s treatise since Montano’s purpose in drawing was to record the vast variety in Roman antique architecture, not to draw to aid in the actual construction of buildings. Montano carried on an idea touched upon by Alberti, which is that the architecture of the past was worthy of study initiated simply by an interest in and

\textsuperscript{25} Hart and Hicks, \textit{Paper Palaces}, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{26} Alberti, \textit{Art of Building}, p. 34. See Alberti, Book II: 1.
appreciation of the architecture. But Montano was innovative, especially in the sense that he made his drawings works of art, meant to be appreciated for both their content and fine draughtsmanship.

The next Italian of the Renaissance to compile a collection of architectural drawings for the possible purpose of publication was Baldassare Peruzzi (1481-1536), a Sienese artist who went to Rome at the very beginning of the sixteenth century, became a successful architect and an authority on the city’s buildings. The earliest surviving drawings of antique buildings by Peruzzi date to the late 1520s, the same time during which he became involved in compiling material for an architectural treatise. During his career in Rome, Peruzzi accumulated material related to the Orders of architecture, perspective, and Rome’s ancient monuments, but he did not succeed at publishing his works before his untimely death. Although Peruzzi did not live to see his own works published, his impact on the history of the published architectural text is in large part due to his disciple Sebastiano Serlio, who reproduced some of Peruzzi’s designs in his own publication of architectural designs. Serlio’s book, therefore, was the vehicle by which Peruzzi’s ideas were disseminated throughout Europe and studied by men like Montano.

27 Rowe and Satkowski, Italian Architecture, pp. 136-139. Contemporary sources indicate that Peruzzi had plans to publish a book in which he would discuss ancient buildings, contemporary buildings, and even his own architectural designs. But no evidence has been found which clarifies how Peruzzi had planned to organize his illustrations and writings in his book. Only two buildings designed by Peruzzi were ever completed, one being the Palazzo Massimo in Rome, and the second being the Villa Farnesina, also in Rome. Rowe writes that Peruzzi’s “greatest ideas often remained on paper.”

28 William Bell Dinsmoor, “The Literary Remains of Sebastiano Serlio,” The Art Bulletin 24 (1942): 62. In Serlio’s earliest publication on the orders of architecture he explains his indebtedness to his deceased master. He writes “For all that you may find to be agreeable in this book, do not give the praise to me, but rather to my preceptor Baldessar Petruccio of Siena; he was not only very learned in this art both in theory and practice, but he was also very kind and generous, teaching to those whom he loved, and chiefly to me, so that all that I know, such as it is, I acknowledge as due to his kindness. And it is after his example that I intend to conduct myself toward those who may not disdain to learn from me.” Book IV, 1537, fol.3, as translated by Dinsmoor. Serlio made full use of Peruzzi’s surviving sketches and Vasari states that they were included in Serlio’s third and fourth books.
Serlio’s labours echo the efforts of G.B. Soria to publish Montano’s drawings, for had neither Serlio nor Soria published their masters’ works they likely would never have reached a wider audience.

Like Montano’s drawings, Peruzzi’s are small, elegant, and detailed (Fig.15, 16 and 17). Montano’s designs show the influence of Peruzzi in the geometrical nature of the plans based on triangles, hexagons, pentagons, and ovals, all of which derive from antique architecture as imagined by Peruzzi. Some of Peruzzi’s drawings, like his *Allegory of Mercury*, demonstrate the technique of representing detailed archaeological reconstructions as artistic works of art (Fig.18). Like Montano, Peruzzi was also

![Figure 15 Baldassare Peruzzi, S. Domenico, Siena, pen and ink, 190 x 436 mm, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.](image)

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29 Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 548. Most of Montano’s drawings are on sheets of paper that measure approximately 270 x 200 mm. Peruzzi’s drawings vary much more in size, but the majority of his architectural drawings are approximately 200 to 300 mm in length and 150 to 250 mm in width. There are, of course, some drawings that are much larger than this (800 x 600 mm), but the size of paper that Peruzzi seems to have used most often was similar in size to those later used by Montano.

30 Ibid.

31 Peruzzi’s drawing, now housed in the Louvre, Paris, is of a fantastical scene that may have been influenced by the theatre of the time. What is most intriguing about this drawing is its depiction of the antique world and its architecture. The ancient buildings and monuments included in the drawing are Bramante’s Tempietto, the Coliseum, the Arch of Constantine, the Tower of the Winds, and Trajan’s Column. This drawing relates to Montano’s works because along with drawing ruins that survived in Rome in the sixteenth century, Peruzzi reconstructs buildings that had since disappeared and introduces some buildings of his own invention.
interested in studying unconventional antique buildings, and was one of the first architects to show a true interest in Roman Imperial architecture, specifically Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli.\textsuperscript{32} Peruzzi’s drawings were available for study in the latter half of the sixteenth century in Rome, but unfortunately very little is known about the specific whereabouts of the drawings in the city after the architect’s death, and so it cannot yet be determined how or where Montano might have seen these drawings.\textsuperscript{33}

\textsuperscript{32} Rowe and Satkowski, \textit{Italian Architecture}, p. 145. Along with Imperial ruins, Peruzzi was also interested in Early Christian architecture.

\textsuperscript{33} Peruzzi’s son Salustio was in possession of his father’s drawings up until he left Rome in 1567. He must have sold some of the drawings before he left the city because Pirro Ligorio possessed at least one of Peruzzi’s drawings. Some of the drawings which remained in Rome would certainly have been available to some of the members of Montano’s learned circle of friends since they may have been kept in the Palazzo Farnese in Rome. The majority of Baldassare Peruzzi’s drawings (approximately five-hundred) are now in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy.
What was perhaps most appealing to Montano in Peruzzi’s work was that Peruzzi had made drawing absolutely central to his study of architecture.\textsuperscript{34} Lynda Fairbairn writes that Peruzzi “understood that the relationship between the text of Vitruvius and executed buildings could be analyzed only through the medium of drawings,” a belief that Montano also seems to have shared in his architectural studies.\textsuperscript{35} Peruzzi’s works were certainly not the only source of influence on Montano’s imaginary reconstructions, but they did supply him with the resources and a foundation required in order for his creativity to take flight. Montano’s drawings would also express exciting and novel

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure18.png}
\caption{Baldassare Peruzzi, \textit{The Allegory of Mercury}, 1530-32, pen and brown ink and wash, 155 x 332 mm, Louvre, Paris.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{34} Lotz, \textit{Studies in Italian Renaissance Architecture}, p. 153. Lotz writes that Peruzzi had a “disquieting, tense, and non-conformist style” that had developed in the 1530s and 1540s among the architectural followers of Raphael, Peruzzi being one, and Giulio Romano being another.

\textsuperscript{35} Fairbairn, \textit{Italian Renaissance Drawings}, p. 547. During his career Peruzzi strove to comprehend ancient architecture (as did many other humanists of the time), but he was also as interested in comprehending ancient works on literature, specifically Vitruvius.
architectural ideas, as Peruzzi had done in drawings such as *The Allegory of Mercury.*\(^{36}\) Peruzzi’s drawings would also have impacted on Montano because of their high quality and artistry, which was certainly in part due to Peruzzi’s training as a painter.

Sebastiano Serlio (1475-1555) is credited with developing the very first fully illustrated architectural treatise. His work, entitled *L’Architettura,* was published in its entirety in Rome in 1584 but had appeared in segments from 1537 onward and was the first architectural treatise written originally in Italian and printed with illustrations in the sixteenth century.\(^{37}\) Serlio’s publication was revolutionary not only because it was the first to explore problems encountered by modern, practising architects, but because it was written for these modern architects by one of their colleagues.\(^{38}\) Not only did Serlio include designs by his deceased master Peruzzi, but he also reproduced illustrations and projects by Bramante and Raphael, architects who had both been highly influenced by antique Roman architecture.\(^{39}\)

As a youth Serlio was trained as a painter, but it was under the guidance of Peruzzi that he began his studies of architecture and antiquity.\(^{40}\) He wrote seven books on

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\(^{39}\) Lotz, *Studies in Italian Renaissance Architecture,* p. 153. Serlio illustrated and discussed numerous contemporary buildings in his treatise, including St. Peter’s Basilica, the Villa Madama, and the Cortile del Belvedere.

\(^{40}\) Elizaberkth Gilmore Holt, *Literary Sources of Art History: An Anthology of Texts from Theophilus to Goethe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947), p. 220. M.N. Rosenfeld, *Sebastiano Serlio on Domestic Architecture,* p. 37. Serlio came to Rome around 1514 and worked in the Vatican workshop under some of the Renaissance’s most important figures, including Bramante, Raphael, and Peruzzi, who Serlio credited with having taught him the most about architecture. Serlio’s main concern throughout his career, during which he spent time in Venice, Verona, and France, was the publication of his architectural treatise.
architecture, five of which were published during his lifetime, which deal with the five Orders of architecture, antiquities, geometry, perspective, and temples in a systematic way (Fig.19). Serlio’s knowledge of architecture was unequalled in Rome during his career, and by publishing his books he was able to disseminate his architectural ideas.

Figure 19 Sebastiano Serlio, *Design of House for a King*, woodcut from Serlio’s *Libro Settimo*.

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Hart and Hicks, *Paper Palaces*, p. 12. Rowe and Satkowski, *Italian Architecture*, pp. 146-147. Serlio’s Fourth Book, which was on the Orders of architecture, was the first published followed by the Third Book on antiquities, the First Book on geometry, the Second Book on perspective, the Fifth Book on temples. The Sixth Book and Seventh Book were published posthumously.
The purpose of Serlio’s widely read work was to educate architects, and Serlio’s choice to write his text in Italian ensured that it could be used and understood by his contemporary practicing architects. In Book II he writes that “my whole intention is to teach those who do not know and who think it is worthwhile listening to what I say.”

After Serlio’s death his unpublished manuscripts were passed among architects. His treatise, however, which was filled with many woodcut illustrations meant to aid modern architects, was a forerunner to Andrea Palladio’s *Quattro Libri dell’Architettura* and would have set the stage for later illustrated publications like Montano’s. Serlio was the first architect to publish drawings and commentaries in order to both stimulate architectural development and record its evolution.

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*Figure 20 Sebastiano Serlio, *Groundplan*, drawing (Rosenfeld, plate XXXVI).*

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Considering the number of publications released by Serlio, as well as his unpublished manuscripts and drawings which were circulated amongst artists and architects, Montano would have at the very least been aware of Serlio’s treatises. Such well-known books would have been studied by those interested in architecture, and Serlio’s emphasis on studying the ancient Orders of architecture, temples, and geometry would certainly have appealed to Montano (Fig.20). Like Montano, Serlio was a man interested in all aspects of architecture who understood that each detail of an architectural design was vital and could be of importance. But where Montano chose to explore his architectural interests only through the medium of drawings, Serlio theorized about architecture in the text of his publications and relied on both word and image to convey his ideas regarding both modern and ancient architecture.

Andrea Palladio (1508-1580) was one of the most influential figures of Western architecture not only because of the buildings he designed, but because of the immense popularity and influence of his *Quattro Libri dell’Architettura* published in 1570. This architectural treatise was different from all earlier architectural publications, which had followed the example set by Vitruvius and which discussed architecture in relation to theoretical ideas. In contrast, Palladio’s treatise illustrated and discussed ancient Roman buildings along with his own designs and was meant to be didactic.\(^{43}\) Palladio’s book, written in the vernacular in order to reach as large an audience as possible, was unique and influential in that it was the illustrations that were the focus of his work rather than

\(^{43}\) Bruce Boucher, *Andrea Palladio: The Architect in His Time* (New York: Abbeville Publishers, 1998), p. 205. Palladio had planned to complete another two books on architecture but was unable to do so. Lotz, *Studies in Italian Renaissance Architecture*, p. 153. Unlike Serlio, whose treatise discussed and illustrated multiple contemporary buildings, Palladio, aside from his own building designs and ancient monuments, discussed only Bramante’s Tempietto, which was considered the most classical of all modern buildings in Rome at this time.
the text. Palladio’s book acted as a blueprint for later architectural publications that focused on images over theory, such as Soria’s publication of Montano’s works.

Like Montano, Palladio had a profound knowledge of the architecture of antiquity, was known to be an authority on ancient architecture, and studied ancient monuments and ruins with equal enthusiasm. During his career Palladio made expeditions to Verona, the Venetian dominions and Rome, of course, in order to study and measure Roman ruins. The final book of *Quattro Libri* focuses on reconstructed temples as a main theme and showcases Palladio’s interest in the architecture of antiquity and his belief that the study of ancient architecture could be beneficial when designing contemporary buildings. Both Palladio and Montano (although posthumously) succeeded in presenting the architectural achievements of the Romans to practicing architects through printed books. Their interests lay not only in recording the main forms of ancient monuments, but also in studying the ornamentation of such structures, without which these buildings would be considered to be incomplete. Palladio writes in *Quattro Libri* that he was moved by Rome’s “stupendous ruins” and that he found these structures to be “much worthier of study than I had first thought” because he saw that they represented “clear and powerful proof of the virtù and greatness of the Romans.”

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45 Boucher, *Andrea Palladio*, p. 225. It is in this practice that both Montano and Palladio differed from the work of Serlio who reproduced many vague ground plans and ornamental details of buildings. Not only were Montano and Palladio both concerned with understanding all aspects of ancient architecture (from ground plans to sculptural ornamentation), but they both drew their reconstructed buildings in an artistic way that had some basis in archaeology. Neither hesitated to correct ancient buildings in their drawings if the structure did not mesh with their idea of how it should look or be ornamented.
It is safe to assume that Montano would have studied, if not owned, a copy of Palladio’s influential *Quattro Libri*. Montano might even have been familiar with Palladio’s earlier pocket-sized guidebooks to Rome, one dedicated to the city’s antiquities and the other to churches. But it was *Quattro Libri* that made the greater impact on Montano because of its many illustrations (the guidebooks had none). What Montano would have found throughout *Quattro Libri* was the detailed analysis of the components of classical architecture, which would have struck a cord with Montano, whose drawings show the greatest interest in the minutest details of architecture and ornamentation (Fig. 21). Additionally, not only was Palladio concerned with depicting the elevations of building, but also groundplans and sections, a combination that is found in nearly all of Montano’s reconstructions of buildings. Certainly one of the strongest parallels between the works of Palladio

![Figure 21 Andrea Palladio, Design for Doric Entablature and Column, woodcut, Book I:27.](image)

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48 Palladio also explored the structural components of buildings that were not visible when observing a building from the exterior or even when standing inside of it. For example, in Book I, 62 and 63 Palladio illustrates the different types of staircases to be found in architecture. Such structural components would later be explored by Montano in his own drawings.
and Montano is that both artists made it central to their practice to combine the architecture of the past with modern architectural designs and ideas. It was this air of creativity coupled with tradition that made their publications, which were published fifty years apart, so influential amongst the architects who read and studied them.

Montano’s study of Palladio’s *Quattro Libri* is demonstrated by his copying of woodcut illustrations from the treatise. One interesting example of this is Montano’s drawn study of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine in Rome. *Quattro Libri* included a groundplan, elevation with half-section, and a cutaway which reveals the interior of the building along its length (Figs. 22 and 23). Montano’s groundplan of the

![Figure 22 Andrea Palladio, Groundplan of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, Rome, woodcut, Book IV:12.](image1)

![Figure 23 Andrea Palladio, Elevation of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, Rome, woodcut, Book IV:13.](image2)
building (Fig.24) seems to have been drawn using Palladio’s illustration as a model, because Montano’s drawing is similar from the outline of the building to the dotted lines that indicate the location of the groin vaults above the basilica’s floor.\textsuperscript{49} Where Montano’s designs typically deviate from their prototypes, and as is the case here, is in the ornamentation of his reconstructions. While Palladio’s woodcut shows mainly the essential structural components of the basilica, Montano pays special attention to adding decorative, albeit imaginative, elements to his version of this reconstruction. Montano had the ability to use both ruins and the illustrations of his predecessors as a foundation upon which he could “reconstruct” such buildings without losing his own fondness for sculptural ornamentation.

Palladio and his patron Daniele Barbaro visited Rome in 1554 and viewed some of the city’s ancient monuments in the company of Pirro Ligorio (1513/1514-1583),

\textsuperscript{49} Other buildings that were in \textit{Quattro Libri} and later drawn by Montano include the Temple of Venus and Rome, the Pantheon, the Temple of Fortuna Virilis in the Forum Boarium, the Temple of Vesta in the Forum Boarium, the Tomb of Romulus on the Via Appia, the Mausoleum of Augustus, the Mausoleum of Romulus and the Temple of Mars Ultor.

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another Italian architect who planned to publish an architectural treatise in the sixteenth century (to which he referred to at the time as an encyclopaedia of antiquities).\textsuperscript{50} Barbaro later recorded in his 1556 translated edition of \textit{Vitruvius}: “Regarding these antiquities the most diligent Messer Ligorio is as learned as anyone who can be found, to whom is owed infinite and immortal thanks for the study of which he has made and makes regarding antique objects for the benefit of the world.”\textsuperscript{51}

Ligorio had been the architect of the Vatican Palace and later was the successor to Michelangelo as head architect at St. Peter’s. He was also one of the leading antiquarians in Rome when Montano arrived in the city.\textsuperscript{52} It was during the 1540s that Ligorio began seriously collecting information on the antiquities of Rome and organizing this information for a publication. It is unknown whether Ligorio and Montano ever met, although both were active in the city at the same time. Interestingly, Ligorio had also been elected as a member of the Virtuosi al Pantheon in 1548, the same confraternity to which Montano would later be admitted, therefore making it possible that the two met through this society. In any case, Ligorio has been credited with reviving the “archaeologically oriented architectural style” of Raphael and Peruzzi.\textsuperscript{53} He first came to

\textsuperscript{50} David R. Coffin, \textit{Pirro Ligorio: The Renaissance Artist, Architect and Antiquarian} (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), p. 19. Ligorio’s “encyclopedia” was not published during his lifetime but survived in several manuscripts. Ligorio also wrote a treatise on the nobility of the arts.

\textsuperscript{51} Daniele Barbaro as cited and translated in Coffin, \textit{Pirro Ligorio}, p. 19. In Rome Palladio would have had the opportunity to study both Rome’s antique and modern buildings. In addition to meeting with Ligorio he also had met with surviving members of Bramante’s workshop who allowed him to study and copy certain drawings in their possession. Ligorio is also credited by Coffin with helping Palladio gain his mastery of draughtsmanship.

\textsuperscript{52} Ligorio’s career can be separated into two periods; the thirty-five years he spent working in Rome until 1569 and the fourteen years he subsequently spent as antiquary at the ducal court of Ferrara.

\textsuperscript{53} Coffin, \textit{Pirro Ligorio}, p. 12. In 1549 Ligorio was appointed to the position of personal archaeologist to Ippolito II, the Cardinal of Ferrara. Ippolito’s accounts record Liorgio as being an “antiquario” since at this time he was involved exclusively in archaeology in Rome. From this point on Ligorio was involved in more intellectual pursuits, rather than the manual work (such as painting) that he had been involved in.
Rome from Naples in 1534 where he began to study the antiquities of that city and to
compose two manuscript encyclopedias on classical antiquity. Later in his career it is
even recorded that Ligorio claimed to have learned perspective and drawing simply for
the purpose of recording antiquities.  

Ligorio’s drawings and designs would prove to be important sources for
Montano. Near the end of the 1560s before he left Rome for the D’Este court in Ferrara,
Ligorio sold the collection of his personal works, including his drawings of antique
Roman buildings, to Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Montano, through his acquaintances
in Rome, may have had the opportunity to study the drawings once they found their way
into the Cardinal’s collection, but this is speculation. Ligorio’s drawings of Roman tombs
show many of the same buildings that were later drawn by Montano, but, unlike
Montano, Ligorio included information regarding the epigraphic and literary sources of
the tombs, and his own accounts of the treatment of these structures in the second half of
the sixteenth century. Interestingly both men had been regarded as experts on antique
architecture and they had likely gained a vast amount of this knowledge by visiting and
studying the city’s ruins. Moreover, in 1549 Ligorio was appointed to the post of personal
archaeologist to the Cardinal of Ferrara. This proves that Ligorio went out into the field
to study ancient Roman structure first hand, in much the same way that Soria later

earlier. He concentrated on design, whether architectural or sculptural, along with the iconographic
programs for paintings.
54 Coffin, Pirro Ligorio, p. 16.
55 Fairbairn, Italian Renaissance Drawings, p. 549.
56 Ibid.
claimed Montano had done when working on compiling designs for his planned publication.\textsuperscript{57}

Along with the important texts mentioned above, Montano would likely have relied on numerous sketchbooks and drawings that had been preserved as both collector’s items and aids to the practicing architect. For example, at some point in time Montano probably had access to the sketchbooks of Giuliano da Sangallo because Montano’s drawings show that he adopted Sangallo’s method of drawing buildings in perspective and with plans and elevations that were cut-away or half-removed to reveal a view of the interior shown in section (Fig.25). The method of combining a plan, elevation and section on the same page and to the same scale stressed the relationship of the parts of the structure to the building as a whole.\textsuperscript{58} This coordinated scheme

\textbf{Figure 25 G.B. Montano, *Unidentified Tomb*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 269 x 193 mm, Soane Museum.}

\textsuperscript{57} Coffin, \textit{Pirro Ligorio}, p. 16. In 1552 the Venetian publisher Michele Tramezzino presented to the public a map of Rome engraved after one of Ligorio’s designs. Although this map was not a true archaeological representation of the city’s buildings, it does locate and reconstruct many of the city’s monuments. While this is not necessarily similar to any of Montano’s later work, it does indicate that Ligorio also explored Rome with the purpose of locating, studying, and ultimately reconstructing buildings that were falling into ruin and needed to be preserved somehow for posterity. Ligorio made two attempts at completing an encyclopaedia of antiquity in the 1540s, but these never came to fruition. Eventually Ligorio had a book on antiquities published in 1552 which included engraved versions of his drawn studies of antiquities.

\textsuperscript{58} Smith-Pierce, “Architectural Drawings,” p. 57.
was also common in the drawings of Serlio and it was his published treatise on architecture that helped to standardize them and spread their popularity.\textsuperscript{59}

Montano’s designs differed from most architectural drawings and the designs included in architectural treatises because the majority of images in the treatises and sketchbooks were meant to be seen as “technical” rather than “artistic” in nature. The principal purpose of such illustrations and engravings was to explore issues related to proportion, dimension, and decorum, not creativity or artistic ornamentation.\textsuperscript{60} Treatise illustrations were also often related to an actual building project, while Montano’s drawings, on the other hand, were for the most part not practical tools for the construction of buildings, but rather represented a greater concern for the “artistic aspect” of architectural drawing, especially in Montano’s almost compulsive addition of sculptural and ornamental details.

By the seventeenth century, when the Baroque style was growing in popularity in Italy, the relevance of Vitruvian literature decreased and architects of the period were consequently less concerned with using Vitruvius’ rules in the traditional way than with bending these rules to suit their own works.\textsuperscript{61} At this same time, because there were no new publications on architectural theory, printed literature on this topic during the first half of the seventeenth century was still reliant on the treatises of the previous century, which explains why the Renaissance texts discussed above had so much of an impact on Montano. In the early seventeenth century these influential publications continued to demystify antiquity for practicing architects while illustrating both antique and modern

\textsuperscript{59} Smith-Pierce, “Architectural Drawings,” p. 57.
\textsuperscript{60} Hart and Hicks, \textit{Paper Palaces}, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., p. 10.
architectural ideas. These published collections of designs were the author-architects’ way of expressing their architectural preferences not with words, but powerful images. The basic idea behind Montano’s project falls in line with this concept of proposing and exploring artistic ideas using images rather than language. Like the later Renaissance treatises that inspired his works, Montano’s corpus of reconstructions gave primacy to architectural illustrations. After all, a picture is believed to say a thousand words.

Having now looked at some of the published sources that may have influenced Montano, a study of his drawing techniques and methods helps define what is unique about Montano’s corpus of designs and imaginary reconstructions. A look into Montano’s methods of reconstructing ruins proves that his works aimed not only to record the architectural history of Rome’s past, but to present to practicing architects ancient buildings, their typical styles, and decorative features. By making this information accessible to other architects through drawings, the ideas that Montano presented were able to be adopted into the style of contemporary architecture in Rome in seventeenth century Italy.

The majority of Montano’s surviving drawings are highly finished, detailed drawings that resemble presentation drawings more than sketches. As mentioned previously, it is unlikely that any of the surviving drawings were made on site because of their highly polished quality. It is possible that the draughtsman made rough sketches on the sites, but unfortunately no such sketch survives. This idea that Montano worked on the extant drawings away from the ruins helps to explain the creative and

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fantastical elements of his imaginary reconstructions (Figs.26 and 27). By doing his final drawings away from the actual ruins, Montano could be creative in his reconstructions rather than putting onto paper exactly what he saw at the sites. The resulting drawings embody Montano’s desire to combine features of ancient architecture with modern creativity and innovation.

It is unlikely that Montano ever set out to conduct a complete survey of all surviving Roman monuments. His familiarity with the buildings was likely gained through casual observation complemented by the study of architectural treatises and Renaissance drawings. This mixing of sources might also have contributed to the resulting uniqueness of Montano’s corpus. Since Montano most likely did many, if not

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**Figure 26** G.B. Montano, *Unidentified Temple*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 272 x 194 mm, Soane Museum.

**Figure 27** G.B. Montano, *Unidentified Temple and entablature*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 295 x 198 mm, Soane Museum.
all of his drawing in his home or studio after having consulted multiple sources, then what were his creative processes, working method, and typical drawing techniques? The surviving drawings in Sir John Soane’s Museum, London, are the best sources for uncovering how Montano worked, not only because of the sheer number of drawings by the draughtsman preserved there, but because the individual drawings can be examined and compared in order to find similarities and consistencies that run throughout Montano’s entire oeuvre.

Almost all of Montano’s drawings were done using the same drawing mediums in combination: graphite, pen and brown ink, and brown ink wash applied with a brush. Montano made his drawings in at least two stages, the first being carefully done graphite underdrawing and the second being the tracing over these lines with pen and ink. In some cases the traces of graphite are simply outlines which Montano would then trace over in ink, but in other cases (one of which will be discussed later) Montano began his study by drawing a grid in graphite which he used to ensure that the building he was depicting was to scale and straight.

This underdrawing, which is visible in many of Montano’s drawings, is interesting because it demonstrates the draughtsman’s concern for getting the drawing “just right”. He likely only traced over the graphite using pen and ink once the underdrawing was to his satisfaction. This concern with perfection strengthens the idea that these drawings were probably not the first depictions of the buildings, but rather the final perfected representations based upon now-lost rough sketches. Such preliminary sketches of a building would have been rougher, less precise and done only in graphite. The use of pen and ink suited Montano as his preferred medium for his final drawings
because it was superior at making clear, distinct outlines for individual elements of
importance.\textsuperscript{63} Pen and ink was also capable of making the even lines that were necessary in precise architectural drawings. It is clear that Montano used such drawing instruments as rulers and compasses in both these stages of design to ensure that the buildings he was drawing were properly proportioned with straight lines and angles.

Montano’s drawing style is characterized by the ink wash he applied using a brush which created a sense of three-dimensionality in his drawn buildings. Architects of the High Renaissance had begun to use washes to emphasize the mass of individual forms. Montano most often used wash to depict shadows in the drawings, which gave the drawn buildings a volume that could not be easily achieved with pen and ink alone.\textsuperscript{64} Unfortunately Montano’s effective use of wash could not be translated into the engraved versions of the designs, and therefore the engraved buildings lack the sense of volume and mass achieved in the original drawings. One particular drawing that demonstrates Montano’s exquisite use of ink wash is Fairbairn Cat.1060 in the Soane collection, an unidentified building for which Montano relied heavily on the use of ink wash to generate a sense of the domed spaces in the section (Fig.28 and compare to engraving, Fig.29). The use of wash in the depiction of the building’s interior creates a sense of the interior spatial relationships, while the shaded areas on the elevation allow for the architectural details, like the engaged pilasters, to appear textured and three-dimensional. In any case, it is Montano’s juxtaposition of these different drawing mediums that make his works even more impressive, since the pen and ink is sharp, accurate, and precise, while the ink wash recreates effects of light and gives believable volume to the drawn building.

\textsuperscript{63} Smith Pierce, “Architectural Drawings,” p. 57.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid.
It is interesting to note that the versos of many of Montano’s drawings in the Soane collection have quickly-made sketches in Montano’s hand. These hastily done sketches are unlikely to have been preparatory sketches for the finished drawings on the other sides of the sheets, and in most of these cases sketches on the versos do not even relate to the buildings on the rectos of the sheets. The lack of correlation suggests that such sketches were made by Montano to visually record a fleeting artistic idea. For example, on the hitherto unreproduced verso of Fairbairn Cat.1034 (a drawing that includes the plan, elevation, and section of a rectangular unidentified tomb with very few decorative details) Montano sketched in graphite the profile and elevation of a female
herm supporting an entablature. This sketch is unrelated to the drawing on the recto and therefore suggests that at times Montano would simply “jot down” designs on the nearest sheet of paper before he forgot them. Although this sketch was quickly done in a rough manner, the details of the herm are perfectly readable and clear. This type of quick and simple sketch exemplifies Montano’s talent in drawings because only a few simple lines are required to convey the image of a much more complex object.

While some of the graphite sketches on the versos of Montano’s drawings are artistic details, others were made for practical reasons and are relevant to understanding Montano’s working technique. On the reverse of Cat.1028 (unpublished) Montano has made a number of “practice lines” with his ruler or another straight edged instrument before he began drawing lines of ink on the design on the recto. It is unclear whether Montano would have only made such marks on the backs of drawings that he did not intend on selling as individual drawings, or whether this would have been of any concern to him.

Another clue to uncovering Montano’s artistic process is his addition of countless imaginative decorative details to virtually every one of his drawings. This part of the creative process was in all probability time consuming, would have required a great amount of thought, and therefore would certainly not have been done at the site of a ruin, but rather in the artist’s workspace. While much of the decorative detail that Montano added to his drawings was not historically accurate and therefore done long after having examined the actual ruins, the addition of unique ornamentation likely expressed Montano’s artistic preference.

Some of Montano’s drawings, however, do show that he made careful observations of ornamentation and decorative features while at the site of specific ruins. For example, the engraving of the Tomb of Caecilia Metella in Montano’s *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* is much more archaeologically based than many of Montano’s other reconstructions (Fig.30). As opposed to depicting this tomb with an elevation, cross-section and plan, Montano instead shows an elevation of the building from a perspective

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**Figure 30** Tomb of Caecelia Metella in *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* (1624), engraving after G.B. Montano.
slightly below ground level and omits the plan. He does make a cut-away in the centre of the tomb reconstruction, but instead of showing the interior of the structure (like in the majority of his other cross-sections) the void is simply empty blackness. The absent plan is replaced with details of the tomb’s exterior sculptural decoration and its original inscription (which, when compared to Piranesi’s engraving of this same tomb, seems to have been copied incorrectly – either by Montano or by the engraver. Fig.31). This tomb, which was built in 20 BCE on the Appian Way, had an inscription that remained visible and legible during Montano’s lifetime, and much of the original sculptural decoration also remained intact. The details of the sculpture and inscription included in Montano’s

Figure 31 G.B. Piranesi, *Sepulchre of Caecilia Metella*, engraving, 450 x 635 mm.

reconstruction prove that for particular buildings he did indeed visit the ruins and copy details directly from the structure. The engravings after Montano show that in addition to the tomb inscription he paid special attention to the bucranes, garlands, and floral motifs.\footnote{See Appendix D for definition of bucrane.} While these features were clearly studied in person, Montano did take some artistic liberty in recording this ornamentation. When compared to other near-contemporary depictions and modern photographs of this tomb, Montano’s representation of the sculptures is not completely accurate and is missing certain details. These small changes to the sculptural details, or a lack of care in recording the specifics of the sculptures, fall into line with Montano’s working methods, for he truly was not concerned with drawing the ruins and their decorations exactly as they survived. His reconstructions, including the tomb of Caecilia Metella, show that he was attempting to capture the style or perceived essence of a particular kind of architecture, not the exact appearance of buildings. And while it is certainly possible that Montano made his drawing of this tomb after having observed the ruin, he might also have used earlier drawings of this same tomb that were in the Codex Coner, a Renaissance sketchbook filled with architectural drawings.\footnote{For a description and history of the Codex Coner see Appendix G.} If, in fact, these drawings were Montano’s main source for his drawing of the tomb it might account for his omission of a section and plan.\footnote{Brothers, “Architecture, Texts, and Imitation,” p. 88.}

The vast majority of drawings of buildings in Montano’s body of works follow a number of conventions that have been identified by Lynda Fairbairn in her catalogue of the Renaissance drawings in Sir John Soane’s Museum. The most familiar convention,
according to Fairbairn, is similar to a method recommended by Raphael when he was involved in a plan to construct a survey of the buildings and structures of ancient Rome. Raphael specified in his letter to Pope Leo X that the buildings of Rome were to be depicted in drawings with two sections and a perspectival view.\textsuperscript{70} Raphael seems to have understood that in order to study the ruins of ancient Rome, one needed a systematic approach that included the use of plan, elevation, and section.\textsuperscript{71} The approach that Montano took towards architectural drawing many years later was very similar to Raphael’s systematic approach. One of the reasons for depicting buildings from multiple viewpoints was that it made it easier for the viewer of the drawing to comprehend the structure as a whole, while also presenting the interrelationship between the building’s interior, exterior, and groundplan. Nevertheless, Montano’s one great omission in his corpus was that he never gave the measurements of the buildings he reconstructed using actual ruins, therefore making it impossible to judge their actual scale or test the accuracy of his drawings to tell if his drawings were to scale and done accurately.\textsuperscript{72} But, as remarked earlier, Montano probably saw his drawings as collectors’ items and works of art more than factually informative guides for the would-be architect.

Montano typically depicted buildings with a half-elevation juxtaposed with a perspectival half-section, below which he drew a simple groundplan (Fig.32).\textsuperscript{73} A number of the buildings that Montano drew using these particular conventions were still in good condition in the sixteenth century and therefore could have made the process of

\textsuperscript{70} Fairbairn, \textit{Italian Renaissance Drawings}, p. 548.
\textsuperscript{71} Rowe and Satkowski, \textit{Italian Architecture}, p. 129.
\textsuperscript{73} Fairbairn, \textit{Italian Renaissance Drawings}, p. 548.
reconstructing the interiors and groundplans much simpler.\textsuperscript{74} For example, Montano made highly detailed drawings of the Pantheon, which never fell into a ruined state (Fig.33). Evidently Montano was capable of drawing both fragmentary and well-preserved structures from multiple views. But on the other hand, some of the more ruined buildings reconstructed by Montano might have provided him with a view of certain exposed parts of the building, thereby making his reconstructions easier. Some designs

\textsuperscript{74} Allen and Oliver, \textit{Architectural Drawing}, p. 15. Some of the more ruined buildings reconstructed by Montano might have provided him with a view of certain exposed parts of the building, which could consequently have made such particular reconstructions easier.
show a concern for emphasizing the interior of the drawn building, such as the drawing of an unidentified tomb in the Soane collection which was subsequently engraved in *Scialta di varij tempietti antichi* (Fig.34). This particular design is primarily a cutaway interior of the building, which is shown lengthwise, rather than frontally. Only at the far right of the drawing is there a partial elevation, and it is only a small and insignificant portion of the building. Depicting buildings from a side view is consistent in Montano’s works and this view is typically reserved for buildings that are long and narrow, have fewer storeys, and have narrow entrance façades. One of the best examples that shows how at times Montano was only concerned with showing the interior features of a building and nothing of the exterior is the twenty-fifth engraving in *Scialta di varij tempietti antichi* (Fig.35).

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75 Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, Cat.1052.
In this imagined design Montano is playing with perspective and optical tricks by widening and heightening the interior of the building as it moves further from the entrance and so he chose to eliminate any elevation of the exterior of the building so that the unusual interior of the building could be shown in full.

On the other hand, there are designs in which the focus was clearly meant to be the elevation of the building rather than the interior. The engraving of an unidentified tomb (Fig.36) in *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* exemplifies Montano’s method of eliminating any view of the interior in the form of a section in order to show a full elevation curving back perspectivally to indicate the roundness. In addition to the elevation he includes a partial plan. The focus in this design is on the façade and, in particular, the uniqueness of each level of the building and its multiple free-standing sculptures. Since this building consists of circular layers, Montano appears to have chosen to emphasize the exterior and groundplan where this layering is most noticeable rather than showing a

Figure 36 Unidentified Temple in *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* (1624), engraving after G. B. Montano.
portion of the imagined interior of the building. Montano’s fascination with reconstructing and designing elevations make his works unique, since the majority of Renaissance architects’ drawings after antique ruins were almost always composed solely of plans and architectural details because, by this period, so few ancient elevations remained standing in Rome. Consequently, in most cases the elevations in Montano’s reconstructions were almost completely invented, as is testified by Soria’s comment in the preface to *Scielta* that the elevations and final details of the buildings were almost always products of Montano’s imagination.

While the collections of Montano drawings in Sir John Soane’s Museum, London, England and in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford represent the largest groups of existing Montano drawings, the Centre Canadien d’Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montréal is home to three of Montano’s original drawings. This is an important acquisition for the CCA since Montano drawings are rare. Acquired by the CCA in the mid and late 1970s, these three drawings, which are unquestionably by Montano as will be shown, are prime examples of the draughtsman’s techniques and style.

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76 Ackerman, “Architectural Practice,” p. 9.
77 Soria, “Preface” to *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi*.
78 These drawings are not included in Fairbairn’s list of the locations of all of Montano’s drawings and therefore are not discussed in her catalogue of Montano’s folios in Sir John Soane’s Museum in London, England (for information of the location of most known Montano drawings see Fairbairn Appendix 6). Fairbairn does, however, mention the anonymous sixteenth century architectural sketchbook owned by the CCA (DR 1982: 20), which she cites as having been a source for several of Montano’s drawings; Cat.1040 which depicts a tomb on the Via Appia (CCA, fol.57r), Cat.1146 of a Roman tomb (CCA fol.49r) and Cat. 1148 of an early Christian building (CCA fol.55r). This sketchbook is by an anonymous Italian architect active in Rome during the second quarter of the sixteenth century. It includes thirty-three folios of drawings on ancient buildings in Rome. The exact location or owner of this sketchbook during Montano’s time in Rome is unknown, so at the present time a direct connection between Montano and this sketchbook has not yet been made. For information on the CCA Roman sketchbook see Canadian Centre for Architecture: The First Five Years 1979-1984 (Montréal: The Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1988), p. 38.
The first drawing shows a temple in Montano’s typical manner, that is to say depicted with an elevation, section, and plan (Fig. 37).\(^{79}\) This design is similar to a type of

![Figure 37 G.B. Montano, Unidentified Temple; elevation, section and groundplan, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 272 x 184 mm, CCA, Montréal (DR 1978:0022)](image)

\(^{79}\) CCA Catalogue DR 1978:0022. Graphite, pen and brown ink, ink wash drawing with graphite \textit{pentimenti}. Brown wash applied with a brush.
reconstructed building seen throughout Montano’s oeuvre, but, like many of the draughtsman’s other drawings and engravings, it is difficult to say if this drawing was based on an actual extant ruin, whether it was partially based on a ruin or earlier drawing, or whether the design was a pure invention by Montano. Here Montano uses the same pen and brown ink and brown wash that is so typical of his drawings in the Soane museum. Graphite lines are visible to the naked eye, as well as some graphite *pentimenti* which show that during the first stages of drawing Montano often had to make multiple corrections and alterations. After all, being able to correct mistakes was the entire reason for using graphite in the first stages of drawing.

An interesting aspect of this drawing is that the building’s side façade (on the left of the drawing) appears slightly out of perspective. Montano would often show rectangular buildings from the side, which required a more complex use of perspective since the long side of the building diminishes in size along the length (Fig.38). The roof of the building and the ground...
level seem to move towards each other at too steep an angle in this drawing. This exaggerated length may have been done intentionally by Montano to emphasize the length of the building, but it is also possible that his perspective was simply inaccurate. This is not the only drawing in which he struggles to convincingly depict a building shown from an angle in perspective. One other such example of his struggle with accurate perspective and vanishing points is Fairbairn Cat.1058 (Fig.39). These difficulties in perspective might indicate that these drawings were done earlier in Montano’s career when he was less experienced in architectural drawing. Unfortunately

Figure 39 G.B. Montano, Unidentified Tomb, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 267 x 196 mm, Soane Museum.
there is virtually no way to date any of his drawings based on examining them, although it is remotely possible that future examination for watermarks could bring to light new information. In any case, the purpose of drawing a building on such a sharp angle (when many of his drawings are shown frontally in the elevation) may have been related to his desire to show as fully as possible the side façade of the structure, which may have been of more interest in this particular building since the front façade itself is very narrow and quite plain.80

80 There are many examples in Montano’s corpus of his eventual mastery of perspective, and one such example of a building shown on an angle with both the front and side façades being accurately drawn is Cat. 1045 (Fig.40). Here the side façade diminishes into the picture plane of the drawing in a realistic way. In this drawing Montano finds the perfect balance of showing as much of the building’s exterior as possible without compromising the accuracy of the perspective. It is also interesting to note that the groundplan of Cat.1045 is almost identical to that drawn by Montano in the CCA drawing (Fig.37). It is the exterior decoration of the two drawn elevations which differ most from each other. Rectangular buildings were not the only ones in which Montano struggled with accurate perspective. In the elevation of Cat. 1114 (Fig.41), an unidentified circular tomb, the base of the building, particularly the left side is incorrect, but in this case the problem seems to have been caused by the fact that Montano did not use a drawing instrument such as a compass to achieve the proper curve.
This CCA drawing is an excellent example of Montano’s typical drawing techniques. It has already been noted that Montano would use graphite to mark the outline of the design, then he would use an ink wash applied with a brush to shade his building, and finally he would outline the design in pen and ink. In some cases it appears that Montano did some tracing in pen and ink before using wash and then finished the drawing by retracing with pen and ink the outlines of the building and the most important decorative details. Montano used all three drawing mediums in this CCA drawing, but, interestingly, in addition to applying wash to generate a sense of volume he used his pen and ink to stipple some of the drawing’s surface. He used this stippling effect to colour in the interior wall that is exposed in the section view of the building. This particular technique, which was not used in many of Montano’s drawings, creates a textured look and differentiates the interior wall from the other portions of the building that are shaded with ink wash. Also visible in this drawing is Montano’s masterful use of ink wash, especially in the sectional view of the interior where he differentiates the different components of the interior with different densities of the wash. The fine and detailed use of pen and ink demonstrates Montano’s talents as a draughtsman, for many of the details are minute and obviously quickly done, yet they remain legible, delicate, and artistic. Montano would often only draw a few fine lines or “squiggles” to indicate a portion of ornamentation, and yet the resulting detail is always easily read and never sloppy despite the quickness with which the detail was added.

Although this particular depiction of a building is rather plain in comparison to some of Montano’s more complex designs, it was still drawn with many of the draughtsman’s hallmarks, including a three-level structure, the inclusion of the elaborate
ornamentation on the exterior of the building, and the addition of a larger-than-life free-standing sculpture in contrapposto placed atop the pinnacle of the roof, directly above the entrance. The ornamental details of this drawing are quite demure compared to many of his other designs, so perhaps the absence of Montano’s typical exaggerated ornamentation indicates that he was reconstructing a real building, not creating a design purely from his imagination. And yet this building is not completely traditional and has some unusual elements. For example, the front façade has unique niches on the middle level that break through and interrupt the entablature above this central level and the massive statue that crowns the building is placed atop a podium so as to further exaggerate its height.

The second drawing at the CCA is another excellent model of Montano’s typical working techniques, yet it also has some features that make it of greater interest than other drawings in terms of his oeuvre (Fig.42). It represents the groundplan and elevation view of a tomb, but unlike the CCA drawing mentioned above, it does not include a side view or an interior section view. Once again, as in the last drawing, the graphite underdrawing is clearly visible and gives insight into Montano’s process of creating his reconstructions. Examination of this drawing shows that Montano began by using graphite to mark two intersecting lines, one horizontal and one vertical, as to create a cross-like plane upon which his drawing could be made symmetrical about the centre and equally proportioned. The centre of this cross (which was clearly drawn with the help of a ruler) marks the very centre of the groundplan.

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81 CCA Catalogue DR 1978:0023. Medium pen and brown ink and brown wash over graphite underdrawing. Dimensions are 272 x 183 mm. This drawing has significant water damage. The CCA has identified this sheet as being close in subject matter to a number of plates included in Montano’s Raccolta de tempii et sepolcri, the fifth book in De Rossi’s 1684 publication of Montano’s five books.
Figure 42 G.B. Montano, *Unidentified Temple; elevation and groundplan*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 272 x 183 mm, CCA, Montréal (DR 1978:0023).
The workmanship in this drawing is also of the highest quality, seen especially in the use of wash which generates a sense of volume on the drum and dome of the building in particular. The use of fine pen detailing is visible in the two sculptural groups that sit atop the outer wings of the structure. These sculptural groups, each composed of a rearing horse next to a man, are typical of Montano’s dramatic ornamentation, but were still drawn quickly yet confidently. The drawn sculptural groups were likely inspired by the

Figure 43 G.B. Montano, *Detail of Unidentified Temple*, CCA, Montréal (DR 1978:0023).
Dioscuri, antique sculptures which were, and still are, located on Rome’s Quirinal Hill (Fig.44). The Dioscuri, two massive marble statues of rearing or prancing horses attended by two men, had been in position on the Quirinal Hill since ancient Roman days and they were among the very few pieces of large-scale Roman sculpture not to be destroyed or buried after the fall of the Empire. Montano would have no doubt been aware of such a famous piece of ancient Roman art and evidently admired these statues enough to include sculptural groups modelled after them in his drawing.

Another aspect typical of Montano’s works is his superposition of different building levels atop each other, which happens to be an ancient architectural convention. In this particular drawing the building has four distinct levels, the first being the rectangular base, then the plain masonry circular level below the

Figure 44 Monte Cavallo Fountain, Quirinal Hill, Rome.

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82 H.V. Morton, The Fountains of Rome (London: Michael Joseph, 1970), p. 135. These two statues were included in medieval guidebooks of Rome and on maps of the city. It was Pope Sixtus V (r.1585-1590) who made the Dioscuri part of a fountain on the Quirinal Hill (the fountain has been altered since Sixtus’ time). Perhaps it was this renewed attention being paid to the Dioscuri that inspired Montano to include similar sculptural groups in his reconstructions and imaginary designs. G.B. Piranesi would later make an engraving of his interpretation of the Monte Cavallo fountain on the Quirinal (Fig.45). His engraving bears similarities to Montano’s drawing of the sculpted horses in that both men seem to have been attracted to the dynamic pose, along with the fact that the Dioscuri were true antique Roman sculptures. But Piranesi exaggerates his drawing by increasing the size of the Dioscuri many times and by placing them on tall pedestals to emphasize their enormity.
drum, followed by a level enhanced with a row of engaged Corinthian columns, then a slightly smaller round level which has a freestanding statue lined up with each of the columns from the level below, and finally the smallest level, which is quite plain and topped with what appears to be an pinecone. This superposition confirms Montano’s interest in combining geometric shapes, since in this particular building he stacks circular shapes atop a rectangular base. One of the most interesting details of this particular drawing is the ring of free-standing sculptures that are perched along the top of the building’s main drum. These small sculptures appear as though they were sketched by

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83 Pinecones were a typical sculptural detail found atop Roman tombs.
Montano in a moment, and yet they were drawn with clarity, artistry, and possess a movement atypical of many drawn sculptures.

This particular drawing does not appear in engraved form in any of the publications of Montano’s designs, but it does have similarities to plate sixty-two in Soria’s 1624 *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* (Fig.46). It is not so much the elevations of the two buildings that are alike, but rather the groundplans. In both cases the groundplan

![Figure 46 Unidentified Temple in Scielta di varij tempietti antichi (1624), engraving after G.B. Montano.](image)
consists primarily of an outer rectangle which surrounds an interior base made up of circles. These two elevations show Montano’s interest in experimenting with geometric shaped and configurations in unconventional ways. Although the details of the elevations of these buildings are different in many senses, the overall impression and configuration of the building is similar in that both are composed of a square lower level upon which rises multiple round levels that taper upwards and are crowned with a sculptural ornament. The concentric rings that make up the upper levels of the two drawn buildings also have some sort of vertical component; in the CCA drawing the circular levels are rimmed with upright free-standing sculptures, while the engraving from *Scelta di vari etempietti antichi* has rows of columns around the circular level. One final similarity is the sculptures of the horsemen, inspired by the Dioscuri, found on the building’s outer corners. These observations show that in his oeuvre Montano would often explore similar design themes multiple times with some variation in each new version.

The third drawing in the CCA depicts the elevation and plan of a tabernacle (Fig.47).\(^{84}\) This drawing is unique amongst the three CCA drawings because it is the only one to have an inscription on it and this writing is consistent with Montano’s handwriting found on various other extant drawings. Aside from this writing, the simple groundplan that is drawn beneath the elevation is of greatest interest in this drawing.\(^{85}\) While the majority of Montano’s groundplans were painstakingly drawn using tools such as

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\(^{84}\) There appears to be a collector’s stamp on the drawing featuring an “A”, which could mean that this drawing was once in the Albani collection in Rome during the eighteenth century before being separated from the majority of the drawings from that collection that are now housed in Sir John Soane’s Museum, London, England.

\(^{85}\) CCA Catalogue DR1975:0018. This drawing was acquired from a source trusted by Phyllis Lambert, Mrs. Regina Slatkin. In May of 1986 John Harris attributed this drawing to Montano based on the drawing techniques used and the similarities between this sheet and the designs engraved in Montano’s posthumously published *Tabernacoli Diversi* of 1684, but this particular design is not included as an
engraving in the publication (but given the number of surviving drawings by Montano that were not included in publications, this is not unusual in his œuvre). There is an inscription on this sheet which reads “la mita de la p[unta] segniaca A”. This inscription refers to the middle line of the archway in the drawing.

Figure 47 G.B. Montano, *Tabernacle*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 178 x 140 mm, CCA, Montréal (DR 1975:0018).
compasses and straight edges to ensure that they were to scale and had straight lines and angles, the plan in this particular drawing was done freehand. The treatment of the groundplan is troublesome when attempting to attribute the drawing to Montano since there is no known parallel in his oeuvre. Montano’s groundplans are characterized by their meticulousness, which, consequently, makes this freehand groundplan uncharacteristic. The freehand groundplan is not enough to prove that the drawing is not by Montano, yet neither does it provide enough evidence to count the drawing as a true Montano original.\(^{86}\)

Aside from the groundplan, there are other features of this drawing that are unique which indicate that this drawing may indeed be an original Montano, but that it has been reworked by another artist. The central portion of the tabernacle elevation is typical of the artist’s style and subject matter, but added to the sides of the elevation are additional columns and ornamentation that are asymmetrical and do not agree with the style of the rest of the elevation (Fig.48). These columns are almost certainly later additions (not by Montano) because they are unaccounted for in the groundplan. The upper half of the elevation also seems to have been worked by a hand other than Montano’s because the use of pen and ink is much more thick and crude than is typical of Montano’s style (Fig.49). This thicker style can be seen in the cross that crowns the top of the tabernacle. There is also the heavy application of wash (especially on the caryatid in the right side of

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\(^{86}\) This CCA drawing is unique when compared to all of Montano’s imaginary reconstructions of buildings in the Soane Museum because none of these drawings has the groundplan drawn in freehand. Even though the CCA drawing may be unique in that respect, this fact does not eliminate it from Montano’s corpus because the handling of the drawing, the style, and subject matter all indicate that it is by Montano. In the case of the Soane drawings, if any element of the drawing is messy, it is most often the wash, not the pen and ink tracing, which in some examples seems to have been applied hastily and carelessly.
Figure 48 Detail of middle of Tabernacle, CCA, Montréal (DR1975:0018).

Figure 49 Detail of top of Tabernacle, CCA, Montréal (DR 1975:0018).

Figure 50 Detail of Tabernacle Frieze, CCA, Montréal (DR 1975:0018).
the upper level) which is much thicker and less precise than Montano’s typical work. But some of Montano’s artistic trademarks are present in this drawing, such as the sculpted cherub over the doorway, the fine pen detailing (especially visible in the central frieze scene, Fig. 50), and the precision with which the bases and plinths of the columns are drawn.

Characteristic of Montano’s style is his near compulsive addition of ornamental details to his reconstructions, most often in the form of free-standing sculptures, which has been shown to be present in the CCA drawings, along with almost all of his other designs. Montano’s taste for ornament was probably cultivated during his youth by the Lombard tradition of architecture which involved rich figural decoration based on antique ornamental prototypes. While Montano’s many sculptural additions may be seen as excessive, the use of architectural ornamentation was seen as extremely important. In his *De Re Aedificatoria* Leon Battista Alberti writes,

> Now graceful and pleasant appearance, so it is thought, derives from beauty and ornament alone, since there can be no one, however surly or slow, rough or boorish, who would not be attracted to what is most beautiful, seek the finest ornament at the expense of all else, be offended by what is unsightly, shun all that is inelegant or shabby, and

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87 The elevation and groundplan were drawn on two separate pieces of paper that have since seen glued together onto a larger sheet of paper that has unique gold stripes at the bottom. The cutting and pasting of the different components of the building helps to support the theory that the drawings were reworked by an artist after Montano who glued the sheets together and might be solely responsible for the unusual free hand groundplan.

feel that any shortcomings an object may have in its ornament will
detract equally from its grace and dignity.89

The statues that Montano added to his reconstructions bolster the belief that his sculptural
training in Lombardy helped cultivate a taste for a more elaborate and ornamental
architectural style. Having grown up with Milan’s cathedral being built right in front of
him, Montano would have been exposed to the highly decorative style typical of the late
medieval cathedral. The over one-thousand extant Montano drawings survive as
testaments to his fervour for decorative and ornamental embellishments to which he
devoted much of his career.

The free-standing statues that appear in virtually every one of Montano’s
reconstructions in Scielta di varij tempietti antichi are evidence of his preference for
elaborate and dramatic ornamentation, but they
may also represent what Montano believed to
be typical sculpture of the ancient Roman
period. Any number of designs from Scielta di
varij tempietti antichi could be used to
demonstrate Montano’s tendency to embellish
his drawings with elaborate ornamentation.
One of the best examples is Fairbairn Cat.1145
from the Soane collection, an unidentified
Roman tomb with three distinct levels

(Fig.51). On each of the first two levels Montano has placed four free-standing draped nudes, the main entrance has a nude above it in a niche, and atop the upper level of the building is another free-standing partially draped nude that is more than twice the size of the other figures. All the figures stand in elaborate contrapposto with their arms extended in balletic poses reminiscent of Roman and Greek sculptures, such as Praxiteles’ *Hermes with the Infant Dionysis* (Fig.52). Despite such similarities to certain ancient examples, Montano’s drawn sculptures are not necessarily representative of typical ancient Roman sculptures. In this respect his reconstructions deviated from a more conservative and archaeological approach to become more relaxed and creative.

While the last design represented Montano’s tendency to cover his buildings with multiple figures, some of the reconstructions have fewer statues, but these statues are in much more complex and elaborate poses. The first engraving included in the 1624 publication of *Scielta* has one of the book’s most elaborate and dramatic free-standing sculptures in the form of a Neptune-like figure perched atop the pediment of the building with a serpent-like creature entwined around his legs.

Figure 52 Praxiteles, *Hermes and the Infant Dionysis*, 4th century BCE, marble, Olympia Archaeological Museum, Olympia, Greece.
and his trident raised in the air (Fig.53). The size of this statue when related to the size of the building indicates that if this statue were to exist, it would be almost as tall as one of the building’s storeys.

Montano’s free-standing sculptures are interesting because although they are an ornamental feature of the building, they were not typical of the ornamental style that Montano was exposed to as a youth in Lombardy. Montano’s drawn sculptures are reminiscent of Hellenistic architecture, therefore suggesting that Montano not only
studied ancient architecture, but also antique sculpture. This particular “Neptune” might even be seen to have similarities to the *Laocoön*, which was in the papal collections in Rome after being unearthed in the early sixteenth century (Fig.54). The active, overly dramatic pose exemplified by the *Laocoön* would become typical of the sculpture of Baroque Rome in the first half of the seventeenth century, especially in the works of Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Considering this, it seems that Montano’s sculptural details might have had some influence on the work of early seventeenth century sculptors or at least endeared these sculptors to his works.

*Figure 54 Laocoön, 2nd century CE, marble, Vatican Museum, Vatican City.*
Ornamentation obviously fascinated Montano, as is shown not only by the sculptural details he added to his reconstructed temples, but also by hundreds of surviving drawings of ornamental details drawn by him. Drawings in both the Soane Museum and the Ashmolean Museum exemplify Montano’s ornamental style and his interest in experimenting with the decorative aspects of architecture. One particular sheet from the Ashmolean Museum is typical of Montano’s drawings of architectural details and the Orders. In this case he focuses on inventive designs for Corinthian capitals (Fig. 55). But Montano abandons the traditional acanthus leaf motif of the Corinthian Order and incorporates twisting putti, griffins, sphinxes, and chimera-like figures. Such capitals were typically not found in contemporary buildings, but nevertheless they show that Montano spent much time drawing simply for the sake of being creative with the Orders of architecture. Fairbairn Cat. 846 of four herms

Figure 55 G.B. Montano, *Studies of Capitals*, pen and ink, ink wash, 378 x 218 mm, Larger Talman Album, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

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90 Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 550. The Montano drawings that are now in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford at one time belonged to the architect John Talman (c.1726). These Montano drawings are part of the Larger Talman Album in the Ashmolean Museum.

91 Elaborate capitals that included human and animal forms existed in ancient Roman times. Examples survive in the Baths of Caracalla, which in Montano’s time was receiving attention from artists and being mined for building materials in conjunction with the construction of the new Saint Peter’s Basilica.
exemplifies Montano’s unorthodox style and seemingly endless creativity (Fig.56). On this one sheet he includes a multiple-headed herm, a nude figure in contrapposto, and even a satyr in the same pose. Such creative drawings also allow for his talent as a draughtsman to shine through as his shading truly creates a sculptural effect.

Figure 56 G.B. Montano, *Herms and Telamons*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 231 x 183.5 mm, Soane Museum, London.
Amongst the Montano drawings in the Soane collection are fifteen sheets on which are intricate and elaborate designs for friezes. Sculptural drawings such as these (Figs. 57, 58 and 59) may have interested Montano so much considering his early training as a decorative sculptor. These drawings are free from inhibition and show the artist’s

Figure 57 G.B. Montano, *Four Friezes*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 228 x 184 mm, Soane Museum, London.
ability to combine beauty with invention. Alberti declares in his De Re Aedificatoria that a building’s aesthetic appearance relies on two elements: Beauty and Ornament. He writes

I believe, that beauty is some inherent property, to be found suffused all through the body of that which may be called beautiful; whereas ornament, rather than being inherent, has the character of something attached or additional.

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Figure 58 G.B. Montano, *Friezes*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 235 x 194 mm, Soane Museum.

Figure 59 G.B. Montano, *Friezes*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 226 x 190 mm, Soane Museum.

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93 Ibid., p. 156. Book VI: 2.
Montano, perhaps influenced by Alberti’s writings, obviously saw sculptural ornamentation as a fundamental and indispensable component of successful architecture and therefore chose to explore it through drawing. His works concur with Alberti’s belief that ornamentation is not innate to a building, and because of this Montano had to create the ornamentation desired and apply it to the buildings himself. By doing this he created designs of enhanced beauty and an individual style of architectural drawing that was unique and entirely his own.94

It is obvious that the drawings that compose Montano’s œuvre are unique when compared to any other collection of Renaissance or Baroque architectural drawings. While in many sixteenth and seventeenth century architectural drawings the total effect of the drawing counted more than the details, Montano was able to balance depicting grand buildings in multiple views with his ability to include exquisite details. His drawings can be appreciated as unified depictions, or the individual features that make up his drawings can be admired separately. It is this attention to detail coupled with an ability to represent separate components of a building as a unified whole that make Montano’s drawings remarkable. Since Montano’s designs were circulated throughout Rome as both drawings and engravings, it was inevitable that works of such creativity and high quality would influence the artists and architects who studied the designs.

What Montano’s drawings communicate is his intense interest in understanding the architectural styles and characteristics of ancient Roman architecture. His drawings show that he spent endless hours meticulously making them, remaking them, and pondering the features of ancient architecture. The inspiration for this passion for

94 For further information on the different publications of Montano’s designs see Appendix A.
drawing will likely never be known, but his efforts were not in vain since his drawings would come to have an immense influence on some of the most important architects of seventeenth century Rome. These Baroque architects, who will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis, took inspiration from the inventive freedom of Montano’s drawings. Their designs subsequently immortalized Montano’s architectural ideas.
Chapter 4
Montano’s Legacy during the Seventeenth Century

Montano’s works were created for the purpose of being educational aids for architecture students, as well as “objects of virtù” to be appreciated by learned men, artists, and architects of Rome. His architectural drawings were unique because they were neither designs that were intended to be built nor accurate reconstructions of the buildings, but rather the foundation upon which Montano explored creative and inventive architectural concepts. Although Montano intended to publish his drawings as a collection of engravings (as is proven by his creation of multiple frontispieces), his pupil Soria must be credited with preserving his master’s corpus through engravings. They would become admired throughout Rome after Montano’s death and inspired Roman architects of the seventeenth century far beyond what might have been expected of such modest publications.

Anthony Blunt writes that within Montano’s corpus of reconstructions and invented designs is found in “embryo” a number of fundamental Baroque types of buildings.1 Among the features of Montano’s works that would become common in Baroque architecture are the juxtaposition of concave and convex forms and the use of curved forms, circular enclosures, and false perspective. The importance of these architectural concepts must not be overlooked because they are ideas that had not been developed by other practising architects in Montano’s time. However, for some critics, these innovative elements make Montano’s reconstructions unfaithful to the original

buildings of Roman antiquity upon which they are based. But, as has been previously discussed, Anthony Blunt has noted that Montano, who was clearly an expert in Rome’s antique architecture, must have thought that the ideas he proposed and worked out in his drawings were at least justified by Roman examples he had studied. But, in terms of the influence of Montano’s drawings on the later generation of Roman architects, this concern matters little, since Montano’s creativity promoted the practice of combining tradition and imagination among young artists. Montano’s example encouraged these younger architects to be more free and creative in their own designs, a feat which would perhaps not have been feasible before the proliferation of Montano’s reconstructions.

Before Montano’s effect on Baroque architects can be examined, the events that led to the dissemination of his works must be discussed. While no documents exist which plainly spell out the relationship between Montano and Soria, the latter’s preface to Scielta states that Montano was his mentor, meaning that he was not necessarily Montano’s official pupil. They may have first come into contact while working on the church of S. Giuseppe dei Falegnami, for which Montano had designed a façade in 1597 and Soria had later worked during the final stages of completion. Moreover, both men were members of the Accademia di San Luca and therefore may have first met through this society of artists.

Soria became known as one of the finest architectural woodcarvers in Rome in the early seventeenth century, following in the footsteps of his mentor Montano. In 1615 he

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3 Ibid.
4 Ringbeck, Giovanni Battista Soria, p. 9. Ringbeck writes that Soria worked in Montano’s woodcarving shop, hence Soria referred to Montano as his master and mentor throughout his life. No documentation survives to prove without doubt Ringbeck’s assumption.
was given the honour of being placed in charge of the woodcarving at St. Peter’s Basilica, the most important religious building project in Rome at this time. Soria was responsible for making a model of the twisted columns for Bernini’s baldacchino for St. Peter’s in 1625, as well as the model of the lantern for the basilica’s proposed façade.\(^5\) It is likely that Montano and Soria knew each other for almost thirty years before Montano’s death and that their relationship may have been strengthened by the fact that both men were architects originally trained as woodcarvers who shared an unusually strong interest in antiquity, architecture, and also wooden model-making.\(^6\)

Soria’s preface to the 1624 publication of *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* suggests that Montano’s intention to publish his drawings was thwarted by his sudden death in 1621, even though by that time Montano was a very elderly man.\(^7\) A 1611 signed graphite portrait of Montano by his then neighbour the artist Francesco Villamena (Fig.60) may have been done in preparation for creating a frontispiece that

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\(^6\) For further information regarding architectural model-making see Henry A. Millon, “Models in Renaissance Architecture,” in *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture* eds. Henry A. Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (Milan: Bompiani, 1994): 19-73. Model-making was an essential part of architectural design since it allowed both architect and patron the opportunity to consider designs in a three-dimensional way prior to the construction of an actual building.

\(^7\) Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 551.
would have the portrait of the author in the final publication of Montano’s designs.

Whether this was the true purpose behind the creation of this graphite portrait, the engraved frontispiece of the 1624 edition of Scieletta included Montano’s portrait based on Villamena’s drawing (Fig.2).\(^8\) Soria, an avid collector of paintings, coins, statuettes, cameos, and last but not least, drawings, was certainly the first person to publish a collection of Montano’s works.\(^9\) Soria, naturally, dedicated this first 1624 publication to his frequent employer Cardinal Scipione Borghese, one of Rome’s most important art patrons of the seventeenth century (Fig.61).\(^10\)

It is not known whether Montano asked Soria to publish his works if not completed before his death or whether Soria did so assuming that it was what his master would have wanted. Soria obviously intended the publication to preserve Montano’s works for posterity, and his dedication to the task of eventually publishing five complete books of Montano’s drawings demonstrates Soria’s admiration for his master’s artistic achievements. What is interesting about Soria’s publication of Montano’s designs is that Soria’s own architectural designs are conservative and do not show the influence of

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\(^8\) Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 551. This drawn portrait of Montano is signed and dated Hieronimj David sculpit 1521. The inscription of the frame around the portrait is “IOANNES BAPTISTA MONTANA MEDIOLANENSIS SCULPTOR LIGNARIUS AETATIS LXXXVII. OBIIT ROMAE AN.O 1621.” A cartouche below this reads “VIRTUTE VIXIT/MEMORIA VIVIT/GLORIA VIVET.”

\(^9\) Ringbeck, *Giovanni Battista Soria*, pp. 11-12. In Rome Soria began working for Cardinal Scipione Borghese in 1614 as a joiner and was involved in several important projects of the time, including the Capella Paolina in Santa Maria Maggiore (1614-15), the Palazzo Borghese (1615-22), and the Palazzo della Famiglia Borghese (1625-26). Soria was also involved in the work at St. Peter’s Basilica. Up until 1620 Soria’s work was all in the field of decorative sculpting, but after 1620 he became involved in architectural designs projects, including the façade of Santa Maria della Vittoria (Fig.62) and San Gregorio Magno (Fig.63), both in Rome. Portoghesi, *Roma Barocca*, p. 286. Portoghesi writes that Soria’s known works display a “substantial indifference to the really new and creative contributions made during the years that coincide with his own career.” Throughout his life Soria amassed a large collection of drawings, cameos, statuettes, coins, and mathematical and scientific instruments. He was also an amateur lens grinder who made telescopes.

\(^10\) See Appendix E for Soria’s preface to the 1624 publication of *Scieletta di varij tempietti antichi*, which accompanied the engraving of Soria’s portrait in the publication and see also Fig.64.
Montano’s style, whereas others like Francesco Borromini adopted many of the ideas proposed in Montano’s complex and fantastical reconstructions of antiquity. Soria’s architecture consistently maintained conservative and simplistic forms and ornamentation more typical of Rome’s late sixteenth century buildings, such as those of Carlo
And while Soria clearly produced his architectural designs in a more traditional style than that embodied in Montano’s drawings, Soria’s publication was done out of a desire to preserve Montano’s works for the future and out of Soria’s admiration for Montano’s talent as a draughtsman.

Soria’s 1624 publication of *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* consists of sixty-six plates of *tempietti* or temples based on what Lynda Fairbairn describes as Montano’s “most extravagant reconstructions”. Unfortunately, all of the designs were published without the inclusion of inscriptions that might have helped locate the ruins represented, but this might also have been done to maintain consistency since a number of the designs

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11 For Soria’s works and style, see Ringbeck, *Giovanni Battista Soria*, pp. 35-98 and pp. 120-138.
were pure inventions and, obviously, without a site. The title plate includes Cardinal Borghese’s coat of arms supported by putti within a tabernacle frame, and the following page includes the engraved version of Villamena’s portrait of Montano (Fig.2). Villamena is recorded as having been an exceptionally talented engraver and so it is a shame that he was not responsible for engraving Montano’s reconstructions since the unknown engraver was not talented. It is known that Hieronimous David engraved the portraits of Montano and Soria (Fig.64) because he signed both portraits near the bottom. But since no other plate in Scielta di varij tempietti antichi is signed by David, it is assumed that another anonymous engraver was entrusted with the important task of engraving Montano’s designs. This assumption is based on the lack of any signature on the engravings of Montano’s buildings, which fail to translate the details and shading of Montano’s original drawings.

Figure 64 Preface with Portrait of G.B. Soria from Scielta di varij tempietti antichi (1624).

12 Fairbairn, Italian Renaissance Drawings, p. 551. De Rossi’s re-publication of Scielta di varij tempietti antichi in 1684 did include inscriptions but unfortunately these captions all listed incorrect locations. In De Rossi’s 1691 reprint, these inscriptions had been corrected.
The publication of Montano’s drawings filled a void in Rome’s history of published architectural texts. Between the publication of Sebastiano Serlio’s *Architettura e prospettiva* in 1566 and Borromini’s *Opus Architectonicum* in 1725, no treatise was printed in Italy that had any great influence on the world of Italian architecture.\(^\text{13}\) Although Montano’s work is not by definition a “treatise” on architecture, it would have appealed to the same audience who read architectural treatises and was also capable of serving the same purpose of educating and stimulating the reader.\(^\text{14}\) But rather than focusing on concepts related to the theory of architecture and the classical tradition, Montano’s works communicate and promote creativity, experimentation, and innovation.

Even though in his 1624 preface Soria writes that the drawings are “in his possession and given to him by the author”, the inventory of Soria’s belongings done following his death does not list any Montano drawings.\(^\text{15}\) Since it is known that the drawings eventually became part of Cassiano dal Pozzo’s collection, they must have been sold off before Soria’s death in 1651, but historians have only been able to speculate as to Soria’s reasons for the sale. The fact that the engravings were made from drawings that are now in several different collections lends weight to the idea that all of the drawings were originally in one collection.\(^\text{16}\)

The survival of Montano’s drawings can in part be accredited to Cassiano dal Pozzo (1588-1657), a Roman antiquarian-connoisseur and art patron. Dal Pozzo played

\(\text{\textsuperscript{13}}\) Varriano, *Baroque and Rococo Architecture*, p. 8.

\(\text{\textsuperscript{14}}\) Ibid. This gap in publications of learned treatises corresponds to a lack of intellectual discourse in the Accademia di San Luca, which finally was broken in the 1630s when Pietro da Cortona and Andrea Sacchi began holding debates on painting. Even though the Accademia di San Luca would have been the logical place for carrying out artistic discourses, it seems that the focus of the academy between its foundation and the 1630s was placed on creative practice rather than formulating architectural theory.

\(\text{\textsuperscript{15}}\) Soria as cited in Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 552.

\(\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\) Ibid.
an important role in Rome as one of few men to truly realize the value of artists’ sketchbooks.\textsuperscript{17} He began assembling his collection and library around 1620 and had a special interest in different artists’ interpretations of antiquity. Cassiano specifically sought out drawings of antique subjects, whether ruins or sculptures, so long as the drawings were accurate and complete.\textsuperscript{18} Cassiano also had a preference for drawings of buildings and “objects of virtù” in their current, unrestored states. Montano’s drawings were far from accurate archaeological representations, and therefore one must ask what attracted Cassiano to Montano’s drawings. As a collector of works of art Cassiano must have seen the value and artistry of Montano’s drawings or he would not have bothered to acquire them. Cassiano was a knowledgeable collector of drawings and he, if anyone, would have recognized the impressive draughtsmanship and unique character of Montano’s works.\textsuperscript{19}

Once the drawings were acquired by Cassiano they would have been housed in his library on the first floor of the dal Pozzo palace at number six Via dei Chiavari in Rome.\textsuperscript{20} Cassiano’s collection was sold in 1702 to Pope Clement XI Albani (1700-1721) for a sum of 4,000 scudi and later passed to Clement XI’s nephew, Cardinal Alessandro


\textsuperscript{18} John Osborne and Amanda Claridge, \textit{Early Christian and Medieval Antiquities} (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), pp. 9 and 33. Cassiano dal Pozzo was admired the most in his time for his interest in learning about natural history and antiquities and it was he himself who named his project of collecting drawings, prints, antiques, and natural specimens as his \textit{Museo Cartaceo}. Claridge writes that the modern presumption regarding Cassiano’s collection is that the drawings were collected to mainly serve as documents for the study of what they represented rather than for who had drawn them. But regardless of this fact, artistic quality was likely also of great importance to Cassiano.

\textsuperscript{19} Fairbairn, \textit{Italian Renaissance Drawings}, p. 552.

\textsuperscript{20} The dal Pozzo palace is traditionally attributed to Baldassare Peruzzi. It is therefore an interesting side note that Montano’s drawings ended up housed in a structure designed by an architect whose work he apparently admired greatly.
Albani, in 1714. While the collection was owned by Alessandro Albani it was studied between 1755 and 1757 by the Englishman Robert Adam (1728-1792), who later acquired three volumes of Montano’s drawings when arrangements were being made to have the Albani collection of drawings transferred to England’s Royal Collection with Robert and his brother, James (1732-1794), acting as middlemen in the transaction. During this transfer the Adams also acquired the Codex Coner which, along with Montano’s folios, was later sold to Sir John Soane at a Christie’s auction of the Adam family collection in May 1818.

Turning to Montano’s influence on the architects of the Roman Baroque, it was inevitable that Montano’s works would have an impact on Rome’s younger generation of architects, considering that the drawings were originally made to instruct architects and encourage them to experiment with the architectural style in the manner of the ancient Romans. The ideas presented in the works were both stimulating and, what Lynda Fairbairn calls, “absorbable”. Anthony Blunt has also suggested that although today it is thought that much of Montano’s corpus is imaginary, in the seventeenth century his drawings were taken at face value and regarded as reliable reconstructions of antique buildings. Nevertheless, this unique oeuvre stimulated the minds of Roman artists and


22 John Fleming, *Robert Adam and his Circle in Edinburgh and Rome* (London: John Murray, 1962), pp. 296-298. Robert Adam wrote on May 8, 1761 regarding the Albani collection of drawings (which included the dal Pozzo drawings) that “After turning over a prodigious number of folios we were all three [Adam, Clerisseau and Zucchi] of the opinion that the reputation of this collection was really well founded and that its extent was immense, containing nearly, betwixt drawings and prints, 200 volumes in folio.”


24 Ibid., p. 553.

architects such as Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) and, most importantly, Francesco Borromini (1599-1667).

Paolo Portoghesi eloquently writes in his monograph of Francesco Borromini that Montano’s work was “destined to furnish material for meditation and debate to the whole first generation of Baroque architects.”\textsuperscript{26} Montano’s drawings and reconstructions can be shown to have impacted the work of the young Francesco Borromini more than any other architect of the seventeenth century. Soria’s first edition of Montano’s \textit{Scielta di varij tempietti antichi} was published and released in 1624, which coincided with Borromini’s crucial cultural and architectural development in Rome.\textsuperscript{27}

Borromini had a similar artistic training to that of Montano.\textsuperscript{28} Like Montano, Borromini was from Lombardy, trained as a decorative sculptor in Milan and was exposed to the ancient architectural prototypes, the Lombard style of elaborate sculptural ornamentation, and the artistic and architectural uses of geometry. Joseph Connors suggests that knowledge of geometry may have been part of the “intellectual baggage” that Borromini brought with him from the workshop of the cathedral in Milan.\textsuperscript{29} The same might be said of Montano. He and Borromini were not the only successful architects who began their careers as sculptors. Brunelleschi, Bramante, Michelangelo, Jacopo Sansovino, and Bernini all followed this same path, which indicates that something these artists learned as young sculptors later benefited them when they began

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{26} Paolo Portoghesi, \textit{Borromini} (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{28} For further information regarding Borromini’s youth, training, and early career in Rome see Manuela Kahn-Rossi and Marco Francioli, eds. \textit{Il Giovane Borromini: Dagli Esordi a San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane} (Milan: Skira, 1999).
\end{itemize}
their architectural careers. Many Baroque artists excelled in more than one skill, including Bernini, who was a painter, sculptor and architect; Pietro da Cortona, who was a painter and architect; and Borromini, who was both a sculptor and architect. All artists of the Renaissance and Baroque were encouraged to study the art and architecture of the ancients, and perhaps the study of such monuments gave these men a foundation upon which their own architectural creativity would later develop regardless of the medium they were trained in as youths.

Like Montano, Borromini showed an intense interest in ancient architecture even from an early age. In the later half of the seventeenth century the writer Filippo Baldinucci recorded that by 1619 Borromini, who was still living in Milan, had become so interested in everything having to do with design and drawing and that he desired to go to Rome to study the city’s antique monuments.30 A friend of Borromini’s, Fioravante Martinelli, who composed a guidebook to Rome, writes that Borromini regarded and admired the ancients as architectural authorities even though his own architectural style was vastly different.31 Once he had arrived in Rome in 1619 Borromini attended a number of archaeological excavations in Rome, and drawings in his hand of Roman ruins survive today. Additionally, the seventeenth-century writers Filippo Baldinucci and Giovanni Battista Passeri state that while working as a stonemason at St. Peter’s, Borromini spent his lunch and dinner breaks in solitude making detailed drawings of the

31 Blunt, Borromini, p. 27.
classical features of the church, a story that can be confirmed by Borromini’s surviving drawings of the architectural Orders used in the basilica.\textsuperscript{32}

Montano had the capacity to explore and investigate problems in Roman architecture that would later be of great interest to Borromini. He, like Montano, was interested in elaborate ornamentation and the use of geometry, and both men preferred the monuments of late antiquity to more classical structures.\textsuperscript{33} They were attracted to the style of Augustan, Flavian and later Imperial architecture, which were characterized by elaborate ornamentation, curved forms, and the use of undulating surfaces.\textsuperscript{34} This style relied on traditional classical conventions, but moved in a new direction of movement and sculptural richness present at, for example, Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli. Circumstantial and stylistic evidence suggests Borromini was drawn to Montano’s designs (as well as Augustan, Flavian, and later Imperial architecture) because all exemplified less traditional uses of the classical tradition and therefore appealed to Borromini’s preference for unconventional and innovative designs.

The influence of Imperial architecture can be seen in many of Borromini’s buildings, but especially in San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, often referred to as San Carlino, which he designed early in his independent career in 1634. Both the façade and interior of this structure make use of undulating walls which create a sense of movement

\textsuperscript{32} Wittkower, \textit{Studies in the Italian Baroque}, p. 158. Dr. Pierre du Prey has described Borromini as a “solitary genius”.

\textsuperscript{33} Varriano, \textit{Baroque and Rococo Architecture}, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{34} Blunt, \textit{Borromini}, p. 37. Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli, a late Imperial project, was admired by Borromini. The Codex Coner also had many drawings of elaborately carved Augustan and Flavian capitals and bases and Borromini could have had access to this book when it was in Cassiano dal Pozzo’s Paper Museum. For further information on the authorship and dating of the Codex Coner see Bates Lowry, “Review: James S. Ackerman’s \textit{The Cortile del Belvedere (Studi e documenti per la storia del Palazzo apostolico Vaticano, Volume III)},” \textit{The Art Bulletin} 39 (1957): 159-168.
despite the fact that the building is constructed of masonry, a feat which testifies to Borromini’s talent as an architect. Consistent throughout San Carlino is a fluidity of movement, rhythmic sequences, and a perceived instability (Fig.65).  

35 An exceptional

Figure 65 Francesco Borromini, S. Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, Rome, 1634-37.

35 Varriano, Baroque and Rococo Architecture, p. 48.
example of these elements is the balustrade around the church’s cloister where Borromini abandoned the traditional baluster form symmetrical about their middle point and replaced it with balusters based on a triangular plan with slightly concave arcs rather than circles. He then placed the balusters alternately so that one bulge comes at the top and the next at the bottom thereby producing an effect of kinetic movement rather than one of stability (Fig.66).36

Borromini’s style, unfortunately, was not always fully appreciated during his lifetime as is shown by the comment in Filippo Titi’s famous 1674 guidebook to Rome which proclaimed Borromini’s work to be “bizzarra”.37 In a marginal note to Baglione’s

36 Blunt, Borromini, p. 70.
37 Filippo Titi, Descrizione delle piture, sculture, e architerture esposte al pubblico in Roma (Rome: Multigrafica, 1978), pp. 152 and 211-212. Titi writes that Borromini’s design for the Church of S. Ivo alla Sapienza is “bizzarra” and “vaga”. While Titi might have felt that Borromini’s design was strange and bizarre, he does acknowledge the church is beautiful, since that is what the term “vaga” meant in Titi’s
Le Vite De’Pittori Scultori et Architetti Giovanni Pietro Bellori describes Borromini’s San Carlino as “brutto e deforme, gotico, ignorantissimo e curruttore dell’architettura, infamia del nostro secolo.” One might suppose that if Montano had lived to see Borromini’s buildings he would have found them appealing and innovative, not bizarre and shameful. For Borromini, Montano’s designs constructed an image of antiquity that meshed with the taste for the novel style of Baroque architecture that was being formed in Rome during the early seventeenth century.

While the influence of Montano’s designs on the young Borromini has been recognized in art historical literature for many years, it has proven more difficult to establish with any certainty how or where Borromini first came into contact with Montano’s designs. The simplest explanation is to assume that Borromini had access to, or even owned, at least one of the engraved copies of Montano’s works that became extremely popular in Rome between 1624 and 1684. But there is evidence that shows that Borromini studied Montano’s original drawings, not just the engraved versions. For example, the elaborate fluting used by Borromini on his fireplace of the Sala di Ricreazione at the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri is an almost exact copy of the fluting of the central column in Montano’s drawing of three different fluting patterns (Figs. 67 and 68). What is so significant about the possibility that Borromini quoted from Montano’s drawing in his own work is that this particular drawing by Montano was neither engraved

38 Bellori, Lives, p. 51. This statement translates as “ugly and deformed, barbarous, most ignorant and a corrupter of architecture, infamy in our age.”
Figure 67 G.B. Montano, *Three Columns* (top half of drawing), graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 218.5 x 187 mm, Soane Museum.

Figure 68 Francesco Borromini, Detail of Fluting, Fireplace of the *Sala di Ricreazione*, Oratory of St. Philip Neri, Rome, begun 1637.
nor published in the seventeenth century. The conclusion that could be drawn is that at some point in time Borromini observed and studied Montano’s original drawings.

The most common presumption is that Borromini first studied Montano’s drawings after they found their way into Cassiano dal Pozzo’s collections sometime in the 1630s. It is unknown if Borromini was a friend of Cassiano dal Pozzo, but even if they were not acquaintances it is believed that Borromini could have gained access to the collections through his other personal connections in Rome. The problem which arises from this assumption is that the date of dal Pozzo’s acquisition of Montano’s drawings from Soria is unknown. Comprehending this situation is therefore made more problematic because it is possible that dal Pozzo did not acquire Montano’s drawings until closer to the middle of the seventeenth century, and yet Borromini’s work begins to show the influence of Montano’s designs at an earlier date than this. Nevertheless,

39 Blunt, *Borromini*, p. 41. It is the central column in Montano’s drawing that Blunt identifies as having inspired Borromini’s work in the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri. The fluting in Montano’s design was unique and new and therefore to see such similar fluting in Borromini’s design has caused scholars like Anthony Blunt to see this as more than a coincidence. It remains, however, difficult to prove that Borromini saw Montano’s original drawings, let alone Soria’s engraved books. The inventory of Borromini’s possessions taken after his death fails to mention any of Soria’s publications, although not all of the hundreds of books owned by Borromini were named individually. Along with these books, Borromini had also acquired nearly one-hundred and fifty paintings, stucco busts of Michelangelo and Seneca, and ancient medals, among other objects. Joseph Connors, “Virtuoso Architecture in Cassiano’s Rome,” in *Cassiano dal Pozzo’s Paper Museum*, Vol. II (Milan: Olivetti, 1992), p. 24. Connors describes the objects of art, nature, and science that Borromini collected during his lifetime as the “paraphernalia of a successful architect”.

40 Osborne, *Early Christian and Medieval Antiquities*, p. 9. Cassiano dal Pozzo’s Paper Museum was accessible to artists, antiquarians and scientists, but no records survive that prove that Borromini definitely visited the collection and looked at Montano’s drawings. Connors, “Virtuoso Architecture,” p. 26. Several surviving drawings by Borromini (now in the Kunstbibliothek, Berlin) are indeed copies after drawings in the Codex Coner, which proves that at some point in time Borromini was permitted access to dal Pozzo’s drawing collection, but whether Borromini studied any other works owned by dal Pozzo cannot at this time be proven inarguably. In 1625 Borromini was put in charge of the removal of the bronze beams of the porch of the Pantheon in Rome and Connors writes that Cassiano dal Pozzo was fascinated by these particular relics and that this might have been a subject that would have garnered conversations between the young architect and the art connoisseur.

41 Blunt, *Borromini*, p. 41.
research into Borromini’s early activities in Rome helps bring to light the circumstances in which he may have had access to Montano’s drawings as early as 1625.

The connection between Borromini and Montano’s original drawings is made clearer by studying the activities of Borromini and Soria in Rome during the 1620s. Borromini had arrived in Rome in 1619 and secured a position working on the most important building project in Rome at the time, Saint Peter’s Basilica. During his early years in Rome he worked under the chief architect at Saint Peter’s, Carlo Maderno, to whom he was distantly related. It was not long before Borromini was entrusted with designing some of the innumerable architectural features of the basilica and soon after he was recognized as one of the best draughtsmen in Rome. As Maderno aged and his hands became crippled with gout, he relied more on Borromini’s skills as a draughtsman capable of producing innovative architectural designs and solutions. Eventually Borromini, who became Maderno’s favourite assistant, was placed in charge of overseeing all designs and planning that came from the aging architect’s office.42

It was at this time that Borromini first came into contact with another young artist gaining recognition in Rome at the time, Gian Lorenzo Bernini. In 1624 Bernini was commissioned by Pope Urban VIII to complete the crossing of Saint Peter’s and to design the Baldacchino. Since Maderno was still the head architect of Saint Peter’s at the time, Bernini and Borromini had to collaborate on this important feature of the new basilica. The design of the Baldacchino has traditionally been attributed to Bernini, while Borromini’s contribution to the project has been largely overlooked despite Heinrich Thelen’s publication of Borromini’s drawings for the Baldacchino, which are preserved

in the Albertina Museum, Vienna. By the 1620s Bernini was recognized as one of Italy’s
greatest sculptors, yet he had no training or experience as an architect and consequently
relied on Borromini’s technical skills and experience to help carry out his commissions at
Saint Peter’s.\[43\]

As part of the design process of the Baldacchino, Bernini hired a sculptor in 1625
to make wooden models of the proposed twisted columns, complete with their capitals
and bases, which would be the supports, as well as major decorative elements, of the
Baldacchino. The sculptor entrusted with the job of making these important wooden
models happened to be Montano’s very own pupil, Giovanni Battista Soria. It should be
recalled that in his preface to *Scielta di vari tempietti antichi*, Soria writes that at the
time of the first edition in 1624 the Montano drawings were in his possession.\[44\]

At the time of the commission to make the Baldacchino model *Scielta di vari tempietti antichi* had been recently published by Soria. The surviving drawings of the
everaldacchino designs, almost all exclusively in Borromini’s hand, might be taken to
show that through communication with the sculptor Soria, Borromini would have
indirectly known about Montano’s drawings. If it is true that Soria and Borromini became
acquainted while working on the Baldacchino project, then it could very well have been
possible that Soria provided the young Borromini access to Montano’s original drawings.
Perhaps Soria detected both Borromini’s talent as a draughtsman and his interest in

\[43\] Blunt, *Borromini*, p. 21. See also Heinrich Thelen, *Die Handzeichnungen* (Graz: Akademische Druck
und Verlagsanstalt, 1967).

\[44\] Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 668. Soria also executed the models for Bernini’s bell towers
for Saint Peter’s Basilica during the reign of Urban VIII.
antique architecture and wished to show the young architect the outstanding drawings by his deceased master.45

The suggestion that Soria himself provided Borromini with the opportunity to study Montano’s drawings has never before been considered. While it is possible that Borromini might have seen the engraved version of *Scelta di varij tempietti antichi* before ever meeting Soria, it may have been the opportunity of studying Montano’s original drawings that made the greatest impact on Borromini. The quality of Montano’s drawings is far superior to the engraved versions of his designs since they showcase Montano’s talent as a draughtsman through the precision of his drawings, the masterful use of an ink wash to generate three-dimensionality, and the delicate use of pen and ink to trace the finest and most minute of details.

What was perhaps of greatest interest to Borromini in Montano’s designs (whether the original drawings or the engraved versions) was the focus on the exceptions to the rules of ancient Roman architecture (sometimes called in Italian *bizzarie*, a term of approbation).46 Montano had educated himself on the architectural and decorative principles that had guided earlier architects, and then he changed it all around in his drawings. He experimented with new forms of columns (Fig.69), replaced more traditional forms of stucco decoration (like egg and dart) with cherub heads, and

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45 The final design for the Baldacchino, in which Borromini clearly played a large part, included twisted columns known as Solomonic columns because the Order was used in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. It is interesting to note that Montano drew different variations of the Solomonic column in his drawings (see Fig.69 for one example). Therefore it might also be possible that the idea to include such a design feature on the Baldacchino came from observation of Montano’s drawings by Borromini, and perhaps even Bernini. Figure 70 shows Bernini’s 1624 plan for the Baldacchino and interestingly, the columns appear smooth with no texture. This was done one year before Soria became involved with the project. Figure 71 is Borromini’s drawing of a textured column, much like those drawn by Montano, and this drawing happens to date to 1625, the same time Soria began working on the Baldacchino model. But depictions of Solomonic columns were not unknown at this time. For example, they had been included in paintings by Raphael, Giorgio Vasari and Paolo Veronese.

Figure 69 G.B. Montano, *Solomonic Columns*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 308 x 216 mm, Larger Talman Album, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Figure 70 Domenico Castelli (att.), *The Crossing and Apse of St. Peter’s with Bernini’s Early Design for the Baldacchino*, drawing, ca. 1624, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

Figure 71 Francesco Borromini, *Model for the third section and capital of Solomonic Column*, drawing ca. 1625, Royal Collection, Windsor Castle, England.
experimented with geometric shapes. Borromini continued with these same practices, but experimented even more in creating more dynamic curved designs. Montano’s studies revealed the variety of appearance and meaning in Roman buildings and therefore helped to destroy the idea that the ancient Roman architecture was monotonous and predictable. Borromini would later latch onto this idea in his own work, for he always seemed to be looking for new interpretations of traditional conventions. In fact, many of Borromini’s own buildings show his close study of Montano’s inventive reconstructions. For example, Borromini played with the traditional volutes of Ionic columns and created capitals with inverted volutes, a simple yet creative concept earlier experimented with by Montano in his drawings. While Borromini was no doubt inspired by Montano’s designs, he never slavishly copied them.

One of the ideas explored in Montano’s drawings that had a large impact on Borromini was his exploration of the perspective contraction of space, which Montano used in his groundplans shaped like trapezoids (Fig.72, 73 and 74). This method of taking advantage of the effect of perspective diminution is found in no
fewer than four of Montano’s designs. In three of these plans Montano uses two converging rows of columns to accentuate the desired perspective effect. This is a technique that was later used by Borromini at the Palazzo Spada in Rome, built between 1652 and 1653, where he created a perspective colonnade (Fig. 75). In reality the corridor of this palazzo, which connects two courtyards, is only nine meters long, but Borromini designed the corridor with slanting walls, floors, and vaulting which resulted in the corridor appearing to the naked eye to be four times the actual length. 47 Montano’s designs were never intended for actual construction; therefore, the drawings represent how he played with unusual ideas in his drawings as a way of being creative. Borromini’s

47 Varriano, Baroque and Rococo Architecture, p. 65.
unusual corridor serves no function except to be appreciated as a witty *trompe d’oeil* and shows that creative architecture does not have to serve any other function but to be intriguing and stimulating to its viewers.

Borromini’s design for the Palazzo Spada is important because it almost certainly proves that Borromini examined Montano’s designs and shows that Borromini was not
afraid to be innovative and creative in designing secular, private architecture. To commission an imaginative and novel church was not rare at this point in the seventeenth century, yet it was rare to find a domestic building which pushed aside the traditional conventions in favour of a more innovative and creative design. Borromini’s use of perspective at the Palazzo Spada shows that Borromini was a “risk taker” in design terms, and one might speculate that Montano not only provided Borromini with specific concepts, but even his main inspiration in certain cases, such as the Palazzo Spada.48 This is one of Borromini’s most charming designs and is successful not only because it is so different from the impression of the other imposing Baroque buildings being constructed in Rome at this time, but because it is unique and understated; it also allows for an intellectual appreciation of an architect’s work. Without Montano’s reconstruction, Borromini might never have designed this impressive and clever corridor, which is today one of his best loved works.

Borromini also experimented with some of Montano’s design ideas in his religious commissions. One of the most important commissions Borromini received during his career was to design the church of Sant’Ivo alla Sapienza in Rome in 1642. Sant’Ivo, which was the official chapel of the University of Rome, was a prestigious commission and his design is seen as the high point of his career. But in relation to the influence of Montano’s works on the design of this building it is the groundplan and the dome of the church that are of utmost importance.

48 Most of Borromini’s other secular commissions were collaborative projects that left him little room for self-expression, and therefore the Palazzo Spada shows that Montano’s work inspired Borromini to ignore the conventions of private architecture and experiment in an innovative and creative way.
The groundplan of Sant’ Ivo was derived by using geometric manipulations that Borromini often used in his works. His ingenuity at Sant’ Ivo can first be seen in the drawings of the plan in which Borromini overlapped two equilateral triangles to create a six-pointed star as well as the outline of a hexagon in the centre of the space (Fig.76). He then used arcs or circles to cut off the tips of three of the bays and rounded the tips of the remaining three. The resulting groundplan was unique looking, but it has been noted that it bears resemblance to a design by Montano that was in the Soria collection, later acquired by Cassiano dal Pozzo (Fig.77). The similarities between the two designs are unmistakable since both are composed of three rounded bays alternating with three

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Figure 76 Francesco Borromini, *Detail of Groundplan for S. Ivo*, graphite, 698 x 476 mm (entire drawing), Rome, Archivio di Stato (vol. 198, c. 122).

Figure 77 G.B. Montano, *Unidentified Building*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 274 x 189 mm, Soane Museum.

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angular bays. Montano’s drawing was also based on the overlapping of two equilateral triangles, but Borromini adapted this formation to make each of six bays more relative in terms of shape and size.

It has been suggested that both Montano’s and Borromini’s plans derive from a sketch by Baldassare Peruzzi (Fig.78). While Peruzzi’s drawing was conceivably the inspiration for Montano’s, there is no reason to discount the idea that Borromini got his ideas for Sant’ Ivo from Montano’s drawings. This hypothesis might be solidified by looking at another of Montano’s drawings that had an impact on Borromini’s design of Sant’ Ivo: Montano’s drawing of an invented temple-like structure similar to Borromini’s lantern of Sant’ Ivo and therefore deemed the inspiration behind this element of Borromini’s church (cf. Figs.79 and 80). The lower walls of Borromini’s lantern correspond in all essential details to the plan shown in Montano’s drawing. What is also interesting is that the Montano drawing

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that inspired Borromini’s lantern was in the same collection as the Montano drawing that perhaps inspired the groundplan of the church. In fact, these two drawings have always remained grouped together in the same collection, along with all the other drawings now in the Soane collection. If one feature of the church was based on a Montano drawing from this main body of drawings, then it suddenly seems plausible that the groundplan was also a result of flipping through and studying the collection. Borromini’s lantern might also have been inspired by Montano’s drawing of a hanging oil lamp, which has the same unique shape used by Borromini (Fig.81).\footnote{Fairbairn, \textit{Italian Renaissance Drawings}, Cat. 1019.}

The groundplan and lantern of Borromini’s Sant’ Ivo make it highly probable that the architect examined Montano’s drawings and adapted two of his plans to suit his
church. Sant’ Ivo is considered to be one of Borromini’s most successful designs, yet it was his talent at interpreting the unique ideas proposed in Montano’s drawings that was a main factor in the success of this unique church design. Borromini obviously was able to absorb the complex geometries and ornamentation of Montano’s drawings and convert elements of the unorthodox plans into the context of contemporary architecture.53

Montano has also been credited with influencing the work of Gian Lorenzo Bernini, who is considered to be one of the most important artists and architects of the Italian Baroque. Bernini’s Sant’ Andrea al Quirinale in Rome, begun in 1658, is considered to be Bernini’s architectural masterpiece.54 Bernini’s original idea for this

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church was to make it in the shape of a pentagon that would have five altars (one in each corner) since the Jesuit religious order commissioning the church had specified the requirement of multiple altars. It is believed that Bernini’s idea for this groundplan was derived from Montano’s drawings of an unidentified Roman tomb (Fig. 82) which was housed by this date in the dal Pozzo collection (to which Bernini may have had access). This design was also engraved by Soria in his 1624 edition of *Scelta di varij tempietti antichi* and in Ferrante’s 1638 edition of *Raccolta*, meaning that Bernini could have seen this plan in one of these well-known publications. The first plan for S. Andrea produced
By Bernini and his workshop is too similar to Montano’s design to be a coincidence (Fig.83). Five-sided groundplans were unusual at the time when Montano was making his drawing and if they were employed by an architect it was usually for a military structure.55

The architectural convention of setting a domed building against a semicircular enclosure, as is found in Bernini’s plan for Santa Maria dell’Assunta at Ariccia (Figs.85 and 86), is also found in Montano’s designs and may have been where such a design

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55 Fairbairn, *Italian Renaissance Drawings*, p. 674. Serlio drew a similar plan to Montano’s that was printed in his Book V, fol. 5r. Serlio describes this plan as being of his own invention (Fig.84). Montano altered Serlio’s plan by replacing the square portico with a two-apsed vestibule. Montano also places ten columns in the central chamber, while Serlio had only eight, which were placed in four niches. Montano also deepen Serlio’s four niches to make them into rectangular chapels. Montano’s design possesses a more symmetrical and open feeling.
concept originated (Fig.87). Montano’s perspective drawings (mentioned above in relation to Borromini’s Palazzo Spada) have also been suggested as possible sources for Bernini’s Scala Regia in the Vatican, which employs similar trompe l’oeil effects in order to create a stairway that appears as grand and impressive as possible (Fig.88). While Borromini seems to have identified with Montano’s most unusual and creative decorative details along with his innovative style, Bernini’s interest in Montano is more based on specific concepts introduced by the draughtsman. Bernini adapted concepts explored in Montano’s works, while Borromini identified with the elaborate, unconventional, and antique-inspired designs and incorporated their essence into his Baroque architectural designs.

Figure 88 Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Scala Regia, 1663-66, Vatican Palace, Vatican City.

56 Fairbairn, Italian Renaissance Drawings, pp. 656-7.
58 Joseph Connors, “Virgilio Spada’s Defense of Borromini,” The Burlington Magazine 131 (1989): 87. Bernini was critical of Borromini’s style and designs, yet he did acknowledge Borromini to be one of the greatest architects of their time. Bernini stated that Borromini “voleva dentro una cosa cavare un’altra, e nell’altra l’altra senza finire mai” which in translation reads that he was never satisfied and wanted to hollow out one thing inside another and that inside another infinitely. This statement seems to be Bernini’s way of criticizing Borromini’s interest in playing with geometrical shapes in his designs.
Montano’s unconventional view of antiquity appealed to many of the architects of the Roman Baroque. Montano’s drawings possessed many of the features that would come to be seen as characteristic of Roman Baroque architecture, which in the seventeenth century was at times misunderstood and seen as garish and unclassical. Borromini was one architect in particular who was singled out for designing architecture that was not in line with the typical styles of the ancient Romans and his work was not always appreciated by his contemporaries. Borromini’s innovative work, which was certainly influenced by Montano’s unique and decorative designs, was appreciated not for being novel, but for having roots in the classical tradition. Cammy Brothers writes that by the Baroque period “the adoration of all things ancient had clouded men’s judgment, making them incapable of recognizing the achievements of their contemporaries.”

Montano never seems to have garnered such dislike from his contemporaries, but the eccentricity of his designs seems to have been what appealed to those buying and admiring his drawings. Unfortunately for Borromini, innovation in design was not as widely accepted when incorporated into actual buildings as opposed to drawings.

The preference for architecture that was more conservatively based on antique precedents was expounded by the writer Giovanni Pietro Bellori. In his Lives of the Modern Painters, Sculptors and Architects, published in 1672, Bellori discusses the importance of using ancient Roman architecture as the most perfect model for modern architecture since he believed that this style was the pinnacle of architectural achievement. In reference to the architecture of the early years of the second half of the seventeenth century Bellori writes,

But today these highly erudite men [referring to Bramante, Raphael, Peruzzi, Giulio Romano, and Michelangelo], instead of receiving thanks, are ungratefully reviled, together with the ancients, as if the former had copied from the latter without laudable genius and without invention. Consequently, each individual makes up in his head a new idea and phantom of architecture in his own manner and displays it on façades and in the public square: these men are certainly devoid of every science in the domain of the architect, whose appellation they falsely bear. And so they fabricate nonsense of angles, broken elements, and distortions of lines, deforming buildings and the very cities and monuments; they break up bases, capitals, and columns with fakery of stuccoes, fragments, and disproportions; and yet Vitruvius condemns such novelties and offers us the best examples.\textsuperscript{60}

This comment implicitly refers to Francesco Borromini, yet it does reveal an interesting contradiction in Bellori’s argument. As previously mentioned, Borromini was interested in and inspired by Rome’s antique monuments, and it was this that led him to become intrigued by the style of ancient architecture presented in Montano’s books. Montano’s drawings were based on his knowledge of ancient architecture and his studies of ruins throughout the city and countryside. Therefore, Montano did use the architecture of antiquity as a model for his own work, as architectural theorists like Alberti suggest, and Borromini might have believed Montano to have incorporated historically accurate

\textsuperscript{60} Bellori, \textit{Lives}, p. 62.
features in his drawings. Yet it is the creativity and experimentation that Montano and Borromini applied to traditional classical architectural conventions that seem to have been so offensive to Bellori, especially in Borromini’s buildings. Although Montano’s drawings have been shown to have encouraged Borromini’s personal experimentation, the younger architect never slavishly copied ideas that Montano explored, but rather borrowed the essence of certain ideas drawn by the draughtsman, such as his freedom from constraint and use of geometry. After all, Borromini himself is recorded as having said, “I would never have given myself up to that profession with the idea of being merely a copyist.”

Just because Montano’s drawings were not typical of designs based on antique buildings, it does not mean that his drawings of Rome’s antique buildings were not meant to venerate the symbolic city as many other reconstructions were meant to do. As is made clear by comments such as those from Bellori quoted above, ancient Rome was often viewed in a symbolic manner during the Baroque period. In the arts, along with Humanism generally, a great admiration for classical antiquity had been present since the beginning of the Renaissance. Leonard Barkan writes that “Rome is almost purely a symbol. With the exception of a very brief period, the history of Rome is a history of the idea of a city that used to be.”

The idea that Rome’s most glorious days had passed centuries before was a belief shared by many Romans in Montano’s time. Barkan writes that “just as the power

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61 On the other hand, Borromini surely realized that many of Montano’s imaginary reconstructions were too fantastic to have ever been built. This, however, did not stop Borromini from admiring Montano’s drawings and borrowing features that he wished to incorporate into his own building designs.


64 Barkan, *Unearthing the Past*, p. 20.
recedes from Rome, so the graven images of that power become increasingly pure symbols.⁶⁵ For Montano’s architectural predecessors, the ancient Romans and their architecture were of great importance, especially for Alberti, whose idea of the ideal town is almost entirely made up of elements taken from antiquity.⁶⁶ Although Alberti acknowledged that classical architecture reached its first maturity in Greece, he believed that it reached its final perfection in Rome.⁶⁷ His books encouraged architects to use ancient structures as conceptual models – points of departure for new creations - but never to imitate them blindly. And, more interestingly, he advises architects to always attempt to introduce into their designs something entirely of their own invention.⁶⁸ In this statement lies one of the clearest interpretations of Montano’s works, for he obviously studied the ruins of Rome as much as any of his contemporaries, but he was always creative and added features of his own invention.

It is the free inspiration which abounds in Montano’s work that made it appealing and fascinating to those who studied his designs and imaginative reconstructions, and herein lies one of the key factors that ultimately contributed to the success of the collections of engravings after Montano’s drawings. Paolo Portoghesi was one of the first scholars to recognize Montano’s impact on the unfolding of Italian Baroque architecture. He eloquently writes as follows:

Montano, with modest means and without philological scruples, seems to have deliberately aimed at constructing an image of antiquity made to order for the particular taste then being formed: a fictitious tradition.

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⁶⁵ Barkan, Unearthing the Past, p. 22.
⁶⁶ Blunt, Borromini, p. 12.
⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 12.
⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 13.
that the founders of the Baroque considered providential for the justification of their research, and that in certain cases was a real stimulus to it.\textsuperscript{69}

Montano’s greatest impact on the development of Italian architecture came years after his death, proving that without his ambition to publish his works as engravings or Soria’s dedication to publishing his former master’s works, Montano’s inventive, creative, and influential corpus might never have had the impact it did on the development of Italian Baroque architecture. Montano’s work encouraged the architects of the Baroque who studied it to look for imaginative solutions in their own designs and to experiment with unconventional ideas. Out of this frame of mind would emerge some of the most exceptional and innovative designs in the history of architecture.

\textsuperscript{69} Portoghesi, \textit{Roma Barocca}, p. 44.
Conclusion

Giovanni Battista Montano’s graphic corpus of architectural inventions, decorative fantasies, and imaginative reconstructions of ruins are his most important legacy to the history of art. Scholars have acknowledged that Montano’s three principle interests clearly lay in cataloguing ancient Rome’s exceptional buildings, in reconstructing Roman ruins imaginatively (though often inaccurately), and, finally, in designing temples, tombs and ornamentation that were purely the product of his creative imagination.1 His success as an architectural draughtsman was shaped by his artistic training as a young man in Lombardy, where he was likely exposed to the processes of architectural design, along with decorative sculpting. Like so many of the great sculptor-architects of the Italian Renaissance and Baroque periods, Montano’s education occurred initially in the school room of a cathedral-under-construction, in his case Milan’s duomo, where sculpture, painting and architecture were inextricable parts of the artistic whole. This exposure provided him with a foundation upon which to build his subsequent contributions to sculpture and, more importantly, architecture.2

Montano’s experience in Milan was not, however, the only one to have an impact on the development of his artistic career. In large part Montano’s success as an unconventional architectural draughtsman was due to his participation in Rome’s artistic

1 Portoghesi, Borromini, p. 6.
2 John Ruskin, Lectures on Architecture and Painting (New York: Smith, Elder, 1854), p. 61. In 1854 John Ruskin, in reference to the beneficial relationship between the different Fine Arts, stated “No person who is not a great sculptor or painter can be an architect. If he is not a sculptor or painter, he can only be a builder.” There is no doubt that Montano’s training as a decorative sculptor at the Milan cathedral influenced his later interest in architectural ornamentation while also benefiting his talents in sculpting, draughtsmanship, and architectural design.
and antiquarian community in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The Virtuosi al Pantheon and the Accademia di San Luca provided artistic outlets in which Montano’s designs and imaginative reconstructions would have been appreciated by intellectuals as interested in Rome’s architectural past as Montano himself. From the encouragement received within these intellectual circles likely came Montano’s idea of publishing his works in order to reach a greater audience of artists and antiquarians. The popularity of Montano’s drawings as objects of virtù during his lifetime and the posthumous publications of his designs demonstrate that Montano’s works were certainly admired and appreciated in his own day and thereafter as the products of an extraordinary artist.

Long before it became popular, Montano explored centralized yet complex groundplans, the use of convex and concave curving walls, the unification of sculptural decoration with architecture, the use of false perspective, and an interest in using the complexities of geometry to generate novel and unique spatial designs. All of these characteristics eventually became typical of the Roman Baroque style of architecture. These same concepts may now seem common components of architectural design, but they were not before Montano’s time, and their proliferation in Italian Baroque architecture may have been in large part due to the influence of his surviving drawings and the publications of his designs. Although Montano’s works have been described as fantastical and unrealistic, architects of the two following generations recognized the potential of the ideas explored in his drawings and incorporated them seamlessly into their own works.
For Montano, drawing antique buildings was both an end in itself and a process through which his own architectural inventiveness could take flight. The fact that Montano seems never to have made constructing his invented designs a priority only serves to clarify that it was the drawing of buildings that was his main interest. In addition to preparing plans for construction, drawings provide the artist with pure freedom of expression. They act as an outlet through which the most unrealistic of architectural designs can be created, studied, and admired simply as interesting and innovative creations. Exploring architectural ideas through drawings without any intention of construction eliminates practical concerns that might otherwise stifle or discourage even the most creative of architects’ visions.

The large number of surviving drawings by Montano indicates how prolific a draughtsman the one-time decorative sculptor had become in the course of his eighty-seven years. His drawings of temples, tombs, sarcophagi, friezes, columns, and capitals (often all in multiple variants) testify to his seemingly endless talent for architectural and decorative inventiveness. Fortunately Montano’s contributions to architectural draughtsmanship and creativity have been preserved for posterity thanks to the efforts of the early publishers of his works, to the avid collectors of his original drawings, and lastly to scholars of art history who have acknowledged Montano’s artistic creativity, dedication to the study of architecture, and talent. It was his contemporary, G.B. Soria, who first accurately described the essence of his former master in the preface to his 1624 edition of *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi*. Soria wrote that the one thing that made Montano’s work spectacular, innovative, important, even unique, was his “exquisite imagination”.

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Bibliography


Appendix A
Seventeenth Century Editions of Montano’s Designs


Ferrante’s two books were composed of designs by Montano that had not been included in Soria’s earlier publications. De Rossi’s publications incorporated the engravings included in both Soria’s and Ferrante’s publications. The only Montano drawing of an imaginary reconstructed building from the Soane collection that was included in engraved form in publications by all three publishers is Cat. 1163, the design that is believed to have influenced Bernini’s design for Sant’ Andrea al Quirinale in Rome. Considering that this particular design would have been found in any of these
three publications, the specific source or publication used by Bernini is difficult to determine.

The CCA in Montreal owns two of the publications listed above. The earliest is Soria’s 1625 *Diversi ornamenti capricciosi per depositi o altari*; the second is De Rossi’s *Li cinque libri di architettura di Gio. Battista Montani Milanese* of 1691. I was able to consult these two books at the CCA and found them useful in understanding how Montano’s exceptional drawing quality (his fine pen and ink detailing and use of wash to create dimension) did not easily translate into the engravings. Some of the designs in these books were based upon drawings in Sir John Soane’s Museum (which I also had the opportunity to study firsthand) and by comparing the original drawings to the engravings in the book I observed that the anonymous engraver did at times employ artistic freedom, never for the groundplans or the layout of the façades, but for the decorative and sculptural details that adorn the imagined buildings.

A full comparison of all Montano publications would clarify which plates were duplicated in the different publications, how the reproductions of the same designs might have differed among the editions, and whether the quality of engravings in the different editions might show the work of multiple engravers, some of whom may have been more successful at capturing the essence of Montano’s drawings in engraved form.
Appendix B
“Vita di Gio. Battista Milanese, Scultore di legno” in Giovanni Baglione’s *Le vite de’ pittori, scultori et architetti* (1642)

The following passage has been copied from Baglione’s publication and includes all abbreviations, symbols and punctuation found in the original text.

Sono stati alcuni Tedeschi, che in nocciole di frutta hanno intagliato con tanta patientia, e con si gran sottigliezza, che hanno dato fuori opere lodatissime. Ben’egli è vero, che il loro disegno cede di perfettione all’Italiano, il quale ottimamente le figure di legno conduce, e con morbidi panni le veste, e con si bello andar di pieghe le copre, che ne stupiscono i riguardanti; come altresì gli altri lavori di legname si bene formati, che non può desiderar più l’arte, nè la pulitezza, o la perfettione altro richiede.


Fece per Papa Clemente viii. in s. Giovanni Laterano quell bellissimo Organo, che sta sopra la porta, e tiene tutta la facciata, e suo
fu il disegno, l’intaglio, e l’architettura; & è il più bell’Organo, che sia stato fabricato a’tempi nostri, con ogni esquisita maestria condotto, & estremamente da tutti lodato.

Dentro la Madonna di Loreto di Roma, al foro Traiano, sù la porta laterale v’è di suo quell’Organo da lui gratiosamente lavorato con suo intaglio, & architettura con quelle figurine benissimo scolpite; e d’incontro sopra l’altra porta v’è quel vago choretto con figure, e puttini con ogni sottigliezza, e pulitezza egregiamente fatti; opera del suo ingegno.


Era di buon tempo, e di piacevole conversazione, e la fatica molto poco gli piaceva. E ne’ suoi anni maturi presse moglie giovane, il che non so se susse bene. Ultimamente mori qui in Roma vecchio, e poco comodo.

Ha lasciato dopo di se molte belle fatiche di disegno d’architettura, che poi sono state poste in luce da Gio. Battista Soria, il quale su suo allievo, come altressi Vincenzo della Greca, amendve Architettori Romani.¹

¹ Giovanni Baglione, Le vite de’ pittori scultori et architetti (Velletri: Arnaldo Forne Editore, 1924), pp. 111-112.
Appendix C
Montano Drawings in Sir John Soane’s Museum

Sir John Soane’s Museum in London, England, has 335 Montano drawings bound in three separate folios. Soria’s 1624 publication of *Scielta di vari tempietti antichi* includes engravings of thirty-three of the drawings in the Soane Museum. The following drawings from the Soane Museums are found in this 1624 publication:

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<td>1179</td>
<td>Unidentified Building, De Rossi 1684.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1183</td>
<td>Unidentified Roman Building, De Rossi 1684.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1185</td>
<td>Unidentified Building, De Rossi 1684.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the Montano drawings from the Soane Museum that were included in Soria’s 1624 publication of *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi* were also included in De Rossi’s 1684 publication of five collections of Montano’s designs in engraved form. Ferrante’s 1638 publication duplicates only one of the engravings from Soria’s 1624 publication, and that is Cat. 1163 (which is also included in De Rossi). The original drawings from which engravings were made for all three publications that are not part of the Soane folios can be found in various European collections, including Paris’ *Bibliothèque Nationale* and Oxford’s Ashmolean Museum. A number of the engravings cannot be traced to an extant drawing by Montano.
Appendix D
Glossary of Architectural Terms

Bucrane – Motif based on the horned skull of an ox, frequently used to decorate the metopes of a Roman Doric frieze.

Elevation – The external faces of a building; also a drawing made in projection on a vertical plane to show any one face of a building. An elevation comes very close to depicting what the physical eye sees resulting in an image of the building as it could only be seen, theoretically, from an indefinite distance.

Graphite – A naturally occurring, steel-gray to black, crystalline form of carbon; graphite is used in pencils and paints.

Orthogonal View/Projection – A view of a building seen from a purely frontal point of view without distortion for ease of exact copying if required. In regard to Montano, he was more interested in generating a three-dimensional effect than in accuracy.

Pentimenti - The presence or emergence of earlier images, forms, or strokes that have been changed and painted over. In drawings they are often done in graphite or lead.

Perspective - A construction of lines connecting points in space (major elements are the picture plane, the vanishing points on the horizon, the ground line and the station point that simulates the position in space of the viewer’s eye).

Plan – An imaginary slice taken horizontally through a building that reveals the arrangement of solids and voids.

Recto - The front side of a leaf of paper, on the opposite side of the verso.

Section – A slice taken vertically through a building to reveal the distribution of solids and voids. While the elevation depicts what can be seen by simply observing the building, the section and plan are important because they draw attention to the spatial relationships that are enclosed within the building and therefore can only be seen in our mind’s eye.

Verso – A left-hand page of a book or the reverse side of a leaf, as opposed to the recto; the back of a coin or medal, sometimes also called the reverse (as opposed to the obverse).
Appendix E
Preface to *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi*

Soria’s preface to the 1624 publication of *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi*, which accompanied the engraving of Soria’s own portrait (Fig. 59), is as follows (with all original punctuation and abbreviations left in and respecting the printers’ convention of using a letter *u* in place of a *v*):

Gio: Bat[tis]a a Milanese gia intagliatore, e scultor di legname d’eccellenza tale che á tempi nostri (per/tanti suoi varij capricci, et inventioni) non ha hauuto uguale, andó cavando in diversi parti dall’Antiche fabrique/molti disegni de quali ne fece alcuni libri di sua mano per darli alla publica stampa, ritrovandoli hora ap/presso di me, hauuti dal medemo Auttore che preuenuto dalla morte cio non pote eseguire: ne ho fatta/la presenta scelta di varij Tempietti per darli in luce, si perche mi son persuaso dover esser opera degna/di gran lode apresso l’huomini virtuosi, e da poterne cavare grandissimo giovamento, scorgendosici/li diversi modi che usauano nel plantar le fabriche l’Antichi, e che in vederle e considerarle sarano per ap/rir la mente di ciascuno non solo alle piante, quanto all’alzate, et adornamenti dentro, e fuora delle fa/briche, si anco perche mi pareva ingiusto che havessero da star sepolte le fatighe d’un tanto huomo, che per/fare le presenti opere non solo ando piu e piu volte nelle caverne, e grotte per veder il modo che teneva/no li Antichi per fondar i suoi edifitij, ma di
più con il suo esquisito ingegno gli dava li suoi finimenti/dell’ azate et
spaccati, con le piante disegnate in prospettiva con suoi adornamenti,
come nella presente/opera si vede, ancorche in dette antichità per le
rovine, e corso di tempo non potessero scorgersici alzate si sor/ri
alcuna. Ma non vi sia á maraviglia, ne stimate l’Auttor defettuoso se
non ha messo á ciascuna/figura le sue misure havendo egli cio fatto con
maestria si per non confonderle dovendo esser ridutte in/tanto poco loco
dove rendono vaghezza nel rimirarle; come anco perché stimava alle
persone intel/ligenti e della professione dover esser bastante per
prendere, senza che ui fossero poste, og/ni frutto. Accettate dunque
questa mia scelta con allegro volto che prenderó occasione in bre/ve
piacendo al S.r Iddio farui palese vn altro libro di capricci
d’adornamenti e depositi bellissimi/disegnati dal medesimo Auttore. Et
in tanto viuete felici.
Appendix F
Letter by Raphael and Castiglione to Pope Leo X

The following passages are from Vaughan Hart and Peter Hicks’ *Palladio’s Rome* in which they translate in full a letter from c.1519 written by Raphael and Baldassare Castiglione to Pope Leo X.

Most Holy Father, there are many who, on bringing their feeble judgement to bear on what is written concerning the great achievements of the Romans – the feats of arms, the city of Rome and the wondrous skill shown in the opulence, ornamentation and grandeur of their buildings – have come to the conclusion that these achievements are more likely to be fables than fact. I, however, have always seen – and still do see – things differently. Because, bearing in mind the divine quality of the ancients’ intellects, as revealed in the remains still to be seen among the ruins of Rome, I do not find it unreasonable to believe that much of what we consider impossible seemed, for them, exceedingly simple. With this in mind, I have been so taken up with these antiquities – not only in making every effort to consider them in great detail and measure them carefully but also in assiduously reading the best authors and comparing the built works with the writings of those authors – I think they have managed to acquire a certain understanding of the way of ancient architecture. This is something that
gives me, simultaneously, enormous pleasure – from the intellectual appreciation of such an excellent matter – and extreme pain – at the sight of what you could almost call the corpse of this great, noble city, once queen of the world, so cruelly butchered.¹

… it would appear that time, envious of the glory of mortals and yet not fully confident of its own strength alone, worked in concert with fate and the wicked, infidel barbarians who, in addition to time’s gouging file and poisonous bite, brought the fierce onslaught of fire and steel. Thus those celebrated buildings that would today have been in the full flower of their beauty were burnt and destroyed by the evil wrath and pitiless violence of criminal men – or should I say beasts – although the destruction is not entire, for the framework survives almost intact, but without the ornaments; you could almost describe this as the bones of a body without the flesh.²

… how many of these Pontiffs, I say again, allowed ancient temples, statues, arches and other buildings – the glory of their founders – to fall prey to ruin and spoliation? How many of them allowed the excavation of the foundations simply to get at some pozzolano, such that in very short time those buildings collapsed? What quantity of mortar was made from the statues and other ornaments of the ancients? I would go so far as to sat that this entirely new Rome that can be seen

¹ Raphael and Castiglione as translated by Hart and Hicks in Palladio’s Rome (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 179.
² Ibid., pp. 179-180.
today – grand, beautiful and marvellously ornamented with palaces, churches and other buildings though it may be – is built using the mortar made from ancient marbles.³

… I record that Your Holiness commanded me to make a drawing of ancient Rome – at least as far as can be understood from that which can be seen today – with those buildings that are sufficiently well preserved such that they can be drawn out exactly as they were, without error, using true principles, and making those members that are entirely ruined and have completely disappeared correspond with those that are still standing and can be seen.⁴

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³ Raphael and Castiglione as translated by Hart and Hicks in Palladio’s Rome., p. 180.
⁴ Ibid., p. 181.
Appendix G

The Codex Coner

The Codex Coner is generally described as a collection of drawings which are copies of originals from Bramante’s circle. The style of perspectival representation of buildings and architectural features in the Codex Coner is characteristic of architectural drawing from the beginning of the sixteenth century and is found in the drawings of Bramante and Giuliano da Sangallo. Many of the building plans included in the Coner drawings are related to projects in Rome that date from 1515 to 1520. James Ackerman states that the Codex Coner likely dates before the 1530s since if it were created later than 1520 it would include drawings of architectural projects that date from the 1520s.¹ The inclusion of plans related to Roman buildings such as the Cancelleria, San Biagio and the early Saint Peter’s is thought to indicate that the author of the Coner was working during the time period approximately ten years after the death of Bramante.

Unfortunately the Codex Coner was broken up and more than one-fifth of the original drawings are now missing. Today the Codex Coner consists of one-hundred and four folio sheets of mounted drawings held together in one parchment-bound volume. All of the drawings are on uniform sized sheets of paper, but double-sized drawings have been folded and have holes made from binding. Each drawing has a number on its upper right-hand corner which refers to some previous order of pagination. It is believed that the drawings were removed from two sketchbooks, one in which they had been numbered from one to one hundred and the second in which they were numbered from one to at

least thirty-four. The drawings in the Codex Coner, which are not all by the same hand, were carefully arranged by subject. The themes by which the drawings are organized are plans of buildings, elevations and sections, and lastly architectural details which are subdivided into cornices, capitals and bases.

The Codex eventually found its way into the hands of Cassiano dal Pozzo, its first known owner, but the year of his acquisition of the volume is unknown. It was when the Codex was in dal Pozzo’s possession that it was studied and copied by Francesco Borromini. It was when the drawings were in the possession of the Albani family that they were bound in their present state. The Englishman James Adam and his brother Robert acquired the Codex Coner in 1762 when securing much of the dal Pozzo collection of drawings for King George III. In 1818 the Codex was purchased at the Adam sale by Sir John Soane, in whose museum the Codex remains.

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4 Ibid., p. 156.
Appendix H
Additional Drawings by Montano

These additional images have been included because they demonstrate the variety of subjects which Montano studied in his drawings. Although this thesis has focused on the drawings and designs that were included in *Scielta di varij tempietti antichi*, a full understanding of Montano’s artistic achievements is not possible without looking at the other subjects which he studied with equal dedication and inventiveness.

Figure 89 G.B. Montano, *Obelisks*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 276 x 196 mm, Soane Museum.
Figure 90 G.B. Montano, *Cornices and Entablatures*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 242 x 182 mm, Soane Museum
Figure 91 G.B. Montano, *Coffering*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 236 x 200 mm, Soane Museum
Figure 92 G.B. Montano, *Ionic Colonnade*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 326 x 212.5 mm, Soane Museum.
Figure 93 G.B. Montano, *Ionic Columns and Capitals*, graphite, pen and ink, ink wash, 250.5 x 189 mm, Soane Museum.