

Emperor Ferdinand I and the Antique: the Antique as Innovation

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This paper proposes an approach to the study of the attitude towards antiquarian studies and the use of the antique example in the patronage of art at the court of Emperor Ferdinand I.

KEYWORDS:

Ferdinand I; antiquarianism; diffusion of innovations; Renaissance architecture; patronage

FERDINAND'S INTEREST IN THE ANTIQUE

This paper presents what is very much work in progress: it is a by-product of my research for the book on the career of Jacopo Strada (Mantua 1516 — Vienna 1588), antiquary and architect of the Emperors Ferdinand I, Maximilian II and Rudolf II, which will come out as my belated dissertation at Leiden in September of this year.¹ In my book I take for granted that Ferdinand I, after having visited Strada's studio in Nuremberg, had a reason to respond positively when, early in 1558, Strada petitioned him for a post at court in a beautiful phrase: "Hora se la Maestà Vostra li piace di acetarmi nel numero de li suoi virtuosi, del canto mio farò ogni debito per farmi honore," that is: "So if it would please Your Majesty to accept me among his learned men, I on my side will do everything I can to merit the honour."²

But I do not really know what that reason may have been. Strada had presented himself as an expert in ancient numismatics: if Ferdinand invited him to come to Vienna, it may be assumed that he felt a need for Strada's competence as antiquary. But, when in 1560 Strada was formally accorded a fixed and salaried position, it was as an architect assigned to Ferdinand's building projects in Vienna, rather than as Imperial antiquary, even though he was apparently allowed to use that title. Of course, a connection existed between antiquarian studies and Italian High-Renaissance art and architecture: think of Raphael, Giulio Romano, Pirro Ligorio and Palladio. But was that connection as obvious in Vienna and Prague in 1558?

1 Dirk J. JANSEN, *Urbanissime Strada: Jacopo Strada and Cultural Patronage at the Imperial Court*, dissertation, Leiden University, Maastricht 2015 (forthcoming September 2015); a trade edition is in course of preparation. For reasons of space I have here omitted most bibliographical references: much factual information can now be found in Wilfried SEIPEL (ed.), *Kaiser Ferdinand I. 1503–1564. Das Werden der Habsburgermonarchie*, exhibition catalogue, Wien 2003 and in Herbert KARNER (ed.), *Die Wiener Hofburg 1521–1705. Baugeschichte, Funktion und Etablierung als Kaiserresidenz* (Denkschriften der philosophisch-historischen Klasse 444), Wien 2014.

2 Jacopo Strada to Ferdinand I, King of the Romans; Nuremberg, February 12, 1558; Österreichische Nationalbibliothek [hereinafter ÖNB], Vienna, Cod. 5770, fol. 1^v.



It is certain that Ferdinand was interested in the Antique and himself commissioned works of art inspired by the antique example from an early age: instances have been conveniently summarised in Friedrich Poleross' article *Romanitas in der Habsburgischen Repräsentation von Karl V. bis Maximilian II.* of 2006. Symbolic of this interest is the fact that Ferdinand was portrayed in the guise of a Roman Emperor when he was hardly twenty, in a limestone bust dating from ca 1524, which was later incorporated in an entrance portal of the castle of Staré Hradý near Libáň in Bohemia [Fig. 1]. Early examples of the use of the antique manner in commissions of Ferdinand I are the portal of the *Zeughaus* or arsenal in Wiener Neustadt, which is dated 1524 [Fig. 2], and the tomb of Count Nicholas Salm, the defender of Vienna against the Turks in 1529, which Ferdinand commissioned from Loy Hering shortly after count Salm's death in 1530 [Fig. 3].³

The sophisticated design of a plaque commemorating the construction a public fountain in an external wall of the Hofburg dated 1536 marks a step forward in the reception of the visual language of the Italian High Renaissance [Fig. 4].⁴ An even greater degree of sophistication is evident in the exquisite door and window frames and relief plaques decorating the earlier, lower part of the Summer Palace, which Ferdinand had constructed in the gardens of the Prague Castle for his wife, Queen Anne Jagiello (1503–1547) [Fig. 5]. These date from the early 1540s and in view of their high quality have sometimes been thought to have been imported from Italy. The door surround is of special interest: it derives from a classical overdoor reputedly found at the Forum of Spoleto and illustrated in Serlio's *Quarto Libro*, first published in 1537 [Fig. 6].⁵ By 1553, when the Schweizertor, the new entrance gate to the inner courtyard of the Hofburg complex was completed, there was at least one architect active in Vienna who was capable of designing architecture with correct Vitruvian proportions and detailing [Fig. 7].⁶

Finally, it is tempting to see the four heavily rusticated pilasters or buttresses at the entrance to the *Burgkapelle* in the Schweizerhof as relics of an abortive attempt to realise an Italianate facade for the refurbished south-west wing. These "Contrafortes"

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- 3 Friedrich POLLEROS, "Romanitas" in der habsburgischen Repräsentation von Karl V. bis Maximilian II., in: Richard Bösel — Grete Klingenstein — Alexander Koller (edd.), *Kaiserhof — Papsthof* (16.–18. Jahrhundert), Publikationen des Historischen Instituts beim Österreichischen Kulturforum in Rom 12, 2006, pp. 207–224. See also W. SEIPEL, *Kaiser Ferdinand I.*, pp. 375–376, Cat. No. IV. and p. 530, Cat. No. X.12; Renate HOLZSCHUH-HOFER, *Die Hofburg und ihre Ikonologie im 16. Jahrhundert*, in: H. Karner (ed.), *Die Wiener Hofburg*, pp. 530–548.
 - 4 Though technically this plaque was a commission from the Vienna City Council, it completed a public fountain in the Hofburg complex initiated and funded by Ferdinand I, so its placement and design must have been coordinated with Ferdinand's architects and can be assumed to reflect Ferdinand's tastes and preferences; cf. EADEM, *Galerie, Kunstkammergebäude und Ballhaus, 1521–1619*, in: H. Karner (ed.), *Die Wiener Hofburg*, pp. 198–213, especially pp. 206–208.
 - 5 Jan BAŽANT, *Pražský Belvédér a severská renesance* [Prague Belvedere and the Northern Renaissance], Praha 2006, p. 47.
 - 6 The design is generally attributed to Pietro Ferrabosco; Renate HOLZSCHUH-HOFER, *Die Alte Burg (Schweizerhof) 1521–1619*, in: H. Karner (ed.), *Die Wiener Hofburg*, pp. 80–142, esp. pp. 111–122.



seem to be intended to carry a blind arcade, constituting the rustic story of a facade in the manner of Florentine or Roman palace architecture [Fig. 8]. A similar solution had been proposed a few years earlier in Sebastiano Serlio's project for the *Salle de Bal* in Fontainebleau [Fig. 9]. The design for the Schweizerhof was provided by the Italian Francesco da Pozzo, but it incited spirited resistance both from local civil servants and from Pozzo's German colleagues: the piers were considered unfinished and took up too much space; the first floor windows were unsightly and the whole thing looked more like a prison than an Imperial residence. I think the critics' lack of understanding is clear from their abhorrence of the "unfinished" stone of the piers, that is, its "rustic" quality. This standard element of Italianate classical architecture was quite outside of their frame of reference, though not outside of that of Ferdinand himself, who after further consultation decided for Pozzo's project. The little that remains, however, suggests that it never progressed beyond the initial stage.⁷

It is important that Ferdinand was not the only patron indulging a taste for a style of architecture partly based on the Antique example. The new approach was pioneered also by a few highly educated, very rich officials who were all close collaborators of the ruler, and who all, because of their origin, their studies, or both, had a more cosmopolitan outlook than their contemporaries. One well-known example is Ferdinand's Chancellor Bernardo Clesio, Prince-Bishop of Trent, who in 1528 added a new residential block, the Magno Palazzo, to his residence, the Castello del Buonconsiglio at Trent, and had it decorated in the new manner by Romanino and Dosso Dossi. Another example is Gabriel Salamanca-Ortenburg, Ferdinand's Spanish treasurer and chancellor, who built a splendid Renaissance castle at Spittal an der Drau in Carinthia from 1533 onwards. Perhaps most interesting in Bohemia was Florian Griespek von Griespach, secretary to the Bohemian Kammer, the financial authority of the Kingdom, who had built two large country houses in the new manner, Kaceřov, begun around 1540 [Fig. 10], and Nelahozeves, from 1553 onward.⁸ By that time Ferdinand's two eldest sons, Archdukes Maximilian (II) and Ferdinand II (of Tyrol), became active as patrons, showing their preference for the new manner in the two hunting lodges they commissioned at Vienna and Prague, respectively, the so-called Grünes Lusthaus in the Prater near Vienna, and the star-shaped hunting-lodge Hvězda on the White Mountain near Prague.⁹

7 What remains suggests that it was intended to finish at least the south-west-facade of the courtyard in this manner, but contrary to Ferdinand's decision this never happened, possibly because of the huge expense involved; cf. D. J. JANSEN, *Urbanissime Strada*, pp. 252–253; R. HOLZSCHUH-HOFER, *Die Alte Burg*, pp. 104–107.

8 Bernardo Cles e l'arte del Rinascimento nel Trentino, exhibition catalogue, Milano 1985; Renate WAGNER-RIEGER — Ingeborg MITSCH, *Das Schloß zu Spittal an der Drau in Kärnten*, Wien 1962; Erich HUBALA, *Die Schloßbauten des Florian Griespek in Katzerow und Mühlhausen*, in: Ferdinand Seibt (ed.), *Renaissance in Böhmen: Geschichte, Wissenschaft, Architektur, Plastik, Malerei, Kunsthandwerk*, München 1985, pp. 63–105.

9 On Hvězda: Ivan P. MUCHKA — Ivo PURŠ — Sylva DOBALOVÁ — Jaroslava HAUSENBLOSOVÁ, *Hvězda: Arcivévoda Ferdinand Tyrolský a jeho letohrádek v evropském kontextu* [Hvězda: Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol and his Summer House in the European Context], Praha 2014; on the *Grünes Lusthaus*, see below.

THE ANTIQUE AS INNOVATION

This pattern seems to repeat that of the introduction of the new style of architecture in the territories ruled over by Ferdinand I's brother, Emperor Charles V, in the Netherlands, and by his brother-in-law, Francis I of France, in that Kingdom. Both in the Netherlands and in France the own initiatives of the sovereign were complemented and sometimes even preceded by initiatives taken by a limited group of wealthy, highly educated and cosmopolitan members of their entourage: in France, for instance, the patrons of Sebastiano Serlio and Philibert de l'Orme, in the Southern Netherlands the patrons of Jacques du Broeucq, including the Regent, Mary of Hungary, and Cardinal Granvelle; in the Northern Netherlands by noblemen such as Hendrik III of Nassau-Breda, the patron of Tommaso Vincidor, and Maximiliaan van Egmond, Count of Buren and IJsselstein, the patron of Alessandro Pasqualini. This parallel is no mere coincidence: to me it seems to imply that patronage of works of art "all'antica" — at the time paradoxically an avant-garde style — was considered a status symbol at least by a small group of high-ranking cosmopolitan noblemen and magnates all over Europe. But that is no explanation — on the contrary, it merely begs the question of how and why this style in particular acquired this exclusive appeal. I do not intend to answer such a fundamental and vexed question within this paper, but I want to suggest a way of approaching it.

Basically, this is a question of the process of transmission of information and of ideas and — because it is a phenomenon within the visual arts — also of the transmission of the visual idiom of a new artistic style. This is a process which can be reconstructed to some extent by an inventory of the appearance of individual instances, noting when and where they appear and by whom and for whom they are instigated, and an analysis of the sources of information available at the time and place of appearance — be they physical, such as books and prints — or human — such as a wandering scholar or artist. But that does not necessarily help us to understand the process proper. In particular, it does not provide any information about a patron's private considerations for his decisions, which are seldom recorded and perhaps not always consciously formulated. Such questions of taste can perhaps never be answered conclusively in individual cases, yet in my work on Strada I encountered a research tradition which can help us to come closer to understanding the functioning of the process. This is the paradigm of the diffusion of innovations as formulated in the classic study of that name by Everett Rogers, first published in 1962 and now in its fifth updated edition.¹⁰ This book proposed a model for the process of introduction and adoption of innovations into a given culture or society, which has since been corroborated by thousands of case studies in many different fields. Though it has hardly been used in cultural history, this robust empirical basis presents an argument that Rogers' theory, or at least some of its elements, could be useful also to understand historical events, when sufficient relevant evidence is available.

The model predicts that a given innovation introduced into a social or cultural system by an internal innovator or an external change agent will be at first adopted



10 Everett ROGERS, *Diffusion of Innovations*, New York — London — Toronto — Sydney 2003.



by a small group of relatively affluent, educated, intelligent and open-minded or “cosmopolite” individuals. Such a group generally includes a number of “opinion leaders” who are highly respected and trusted insiders of the given social system: Only when these have adopted the system and have shared their knowledge and experience with their peers will the innovation be more generally accepted. The graph plotting the ratio of such acceptance always will take the form of an S-curve, in which the steepness of the curve is determined by the speed with which an innovation proposed by an innovator is accepted by the early adopters, the early majority, the late majority, and the laggards [Fig. 11]. The empirical evidence supporting the diffusion of innovation theory suggests that if the introduction of classical forms in architecture and the arts can be considered as an innovation, their acceptance would follow the same pattern — and thus it is not surprising that the pattern would be similar in various countries. It might be worthwhile to plot the instances of the adoption of classical forms in Ferdinand’s territories in such a graph. I suspect that the contemporaries of Ferdinand mentioned above rank among the innovators and the early adopters of the *all’antica* style, and that general acceptance by the late majority was not realised before the end of the 16th century.

Should the diffusion paradigm be applicable in this field, this means that some of its corollaries also should be taken into consideration. One of the most relevant findings is that knowledge of and about an innovation — such as is provided by the mass media or, in our case, by prints or a copy of Serlio’s treatise — by itself is rarely sufficient for its eventual adoption. Decisions to adopt are mostly taken only after information is exchanged and experience is shared with other members of the social system, the opinion leaders just mentioned, preferably those sharing a similar position, outlook and interests with the potential adopter. Moreover, an innovation is sometimes avidly discussed in a group of innovators and early adopters who have privileged access to information, as well as sufficient incentive and opportunity for mutual consultation: Rogers refers to “an invisible college”.¹¹ This term is particularly apt in our case: It can be assumed that Ferdinand I and his associates sharing this interest, such as Cardinal Clesio and Florian Griespek, occasionally discussed their projects with one another, but such consultation would often have been informal. Considered part of the *honestum otium*, a form of recreation commensurate with their status and responsibilities, it would rarely have been recorded.

Such an invisible college already existed in Rome, where a rather informal club of Roman noblemen, clerics employed in the Vatican or in Cardinals’ households, and artists, spent part of their leisure hours in the study of Antiquity. This group was not quite invisible: it included some prominent personalities and it even had put its programme on paper.¹² This combined the study of Antiquity, and, in particular,

11 *Ibid.*, chapter 2: “A History of Diffusion research”, pp. 39–43, 46–48 and 56–64; chapter 8: “Diffusion Networks”, pp. 300–364. The term “invisible college” is not new — it was used already in the 17th century for the informal collaboration between groups of scholars and scientists.

12 Pier Nicola PAGLIARA, *Vitruvio da testo a canone*, in: Salvatore Settis (ed.), *Memoria dell’antico nell’arte italiana*, 1: *L’uso dei classici*, Torino 1984, pp. 3–85; Margaret DALY DAVIS,



its material remains, such as coins, inscriptions, works of art and the remains of ancient architecture, with the study of the architectural treatise of Vitruvius, an indispensable source to identify, interpret and ideally reconstitute the ruined monuments of the City. But this Vitruvian Academy was not only interested in Vitruvius' text as a source to answer archaeological questions, but also in its function as an authoritative manual for current practice. Just as orators and writers based their practice on Cicero, and physicians on Galen, so architects based their designs on Vitruvius' prescriptions. In this invisible college various disciplines worked together: the textual scholars could not reconstruct and emend Vitruvius' notoriously obscure text and the antiquaries could not identify and reconstruct ancient monuments without the technical input, the measurements and the drawings provided by the building professionals; whereas the architects needed the scholars to explain or even translate Vitruvius' precepts in current, comprehensible language. Thus the fruit of the invisible college's cooperation included not only some scholarly antiquarian works, but also many contemporary buildings, such as Vignola's Villa Giulia, the Casino of Pope Pius IV in the gardens of the Vatican and elements of the Villa d'Este in Tivoli, both designed by Pirro Ligorio, an active member of the circle.

A SIMILAR PATTERN AT THE IMPERIAL COURT?

What we see in Rome, the study of antiquity coupled to an ambition to build in the antique manner, can be considered as a complex or, as Rogers calls it, a "cluster" of related innovations. I think it likely — and future research may bring instances to light — that through the intensive contact with the Papal court on political and confessional matters, Ferdinand I and his entourage were well aware of the activities of the group in Rome.¹³ Moreover, there are many indications that similar interests existed at Ferdinand's court already in the 1540s. Thus it may have been no mere courtesy that in 1542 Pieter Coecke van Aelst dedicated his German edition of Serlio's *Fourth Book* to Ferdinand I. In his preface he relates how, after having seen Coecke's Dutch and French translations, Ferdinand's court painter Jacob Seisenegger had advised him strongly to produce a German edition, and to dedicate this to Ferdinand I, who "above all German princes not only loved all arts, but also had the best understanding of architecture".¹⁴ In addition to the wealthy patrons

Zum Codex Coburgensis: Frühe Archäologie und Humanismus im Kreis des Marcello Cervini, in: Richard Harprath — Henning Wrede (edd.), *Antikenzeichnung und Antikenstudium in Renaissance und Frühbarock, Akten des internationalen Symposiums, 8–10 September 1986 in Coburg, Mainz 1989*, pp. 185–199; Bernd KULAWIK, *Wissenschaftliche Begriffsbildung im Kreis der Accademia della Virtù in Rom um 1550*, *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 38, 2015, No. 2, pp. 140–152.

- ¹³ One link is Strada's patron Hans Jakob Fugger, an associate of Ferdinand I and his sons who, both through Strada and independently, was in contact with members of the Roman circle.
- ¹⁴ Dedication to Ferdinand I in Coecke's edition of Jacob Rechlinger's (Rehlinger) German translation of the Sebastiano SERLIO, *Fourth Book, Die gemaynen Reglen von der Architectur*



already mentioned, in Ferdinand's immediate entourage we find other instances of interest in this cluster of innovations, sufficient to think that the embryo of an invisible college similar to that in Rome may have existed at court. From about 1540 onward Ferdinand protected and encouraged the historical and antiquarian studies of the physician and historian Wolfgang Lazius, a very learned and productive researcher and author of many historical and antiquarian works. These included numismatics, in particular a description of Ferdinand's collection, and epigraphy, in particular a description of some inscriptions found in Vienna and in the possession of Lazius' uncle, Hermes Schallautzer, Ferdinand's *Bausuperintendent* in Vienna.¹⁵ So here antiquarianism and the practice of architecture already touch. Among Ferdinand's other architects at least one, Bonifaz Wohlmuth, an intellectual owning a library of which we still have the catalogue, possessed up-to date knowledge of the most recent developments and was perfectly able to apply this expertise, as his works make abundantly clear.

A little later Archduke Maximilian based the layout of his hunting lodge and pleasure garden in the Prater explicitly on Antique models, be it primarily on those described in classical literature rather than on visual evidence, as is evident from the beautiful illuminated manuscript, with illustrations by Bonifaz Wohlmuth, which was made to celebrate its completion.¹⁶ After discussing some general antique sources on gardening, its author, the humanist Georg Tanner, concentrates on the *quincunx*, a geometric figuration of five points arranged as on a die or a playing card. This system was used in Antiquity and was considered particularly favourable for the planting of trees in an orchard. Tanner relates how this concept had been already discussed more than a decade earlier by the local erudites Sebastian Huetstocker and Joannes Ludovicus Brassicanus, a discussion which had also involved a text by the French diplomat Lazare de Baïf. Subsequently the *quincunx* had been put in practice by various local noblemen, such as Marcus Beck von Leopoldsdorf. When Huetstocker told Maximilian II about this "most delightful system of planting", it pleased the King so much that he decided to have his whole garden laid out according to this scheme [Fig. 12]. Since he made the drawings for Tanner's manuscript, it is likely that it was Wohlmuth who translated the concept into practicable designs for the layout. Thus it

uber die funf Manieren der Gebeu, Antwerpen 1542, fol. Aii^r; cf. Krista DE JONGE, *L'édition de la traduction allemande du livre IV par Jacob Rehlinger chez Pieter Coecke van Aelst à Anvers en 1542 [1543]*, in: Sylvie Deswarte-Rosa (ed.), Sebastiano Serlio à Lyon: Architecture et imprimerie, I: Le Traité d'architecture de Sebastiano Serlio: Une grande entreprise éditoriale au XVI^e siècle, Roanne 2004, pp. 278–279.

¹⁵ *Exempla aliquot S. Vetustatis Rom. in saxis quibusdam, opera nobilis viri, D. Hermetis Schallautzeri [...], hinc Viennae erutis, unâ cum interpretatione Wolfgangi Lazii [...]*, Vienna 1560; it is discussed in Renate VON BUSCH, *Studien zu deutschen Antikensammlungen des 16. Jahrhunderts*, dissertation, University of Tübingen, Tübingen 1973, pp. 19–21.

¹⁶ Georg TANNER, *Brevis et dilucida Domini Do. Maximiliani [...] Viennae ad Danubii ripas et diaetae seu amoenarii ad Puteum Cervinum, et horti, et inprimis veteris quincuncis descriptio*, Vienna 1557, ÖNB, Cod. 8085; digital version accessible at <http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AL00156041> [retrieved 23. 8. 2015].



is one of Roger's invisible colleges, introducing an antique concept as an innovation that becomes visible in the pages of Tanner's manuscript.¹⁷

Though at least in this case a competent architect appears to have been involved, for the rest this particular invisible college consisted completely of humanist scholars and lawyers, concentrating on the written sources of Antiquity, rather than on visual evidence. The fiasco of the design for the courtyard of the Hofburg cited above shows that in the mid-1550s comprehension of the rules of classical architecture and the competence to apply these were still quite rare in Austria. Assuming that Ferdinand was eager to introduce or at least promote this cluster of innovations — the study of the material relics of Antiquity, and the application of a new style in architecture and the arts based on the use of the Antique — his decision to attract Jacopo Strada to his court seems eminently reasonable.¹⁸ Strada was a well-known expert on antiquities, in particular coins, who had first-hand experience of antiquarian study in Italy, in Germany, where he had been living since 1544, and in France, where in 1553 he had published his numismatic treatise.¹⁹ As a result of his travels he was personally acquainted with members of the informal Vitruvian academy in Rome and with many other students of Antiquity elsewhere. Moreover, he was very knowledgeable about architecture both ancient and modern: he had grown up in Mantua and had been taught by Giulio Romano, whose Palazzo del Te is one of the key monuments demonstrating the application of the Antique example to contemporary architecture. Later Strada travelled extensively in Italy, getting to know both the ancient monuments and the most recent new projects at first hand, and he was often personally acquainted with the architects and sometimes even with the patrons of many of them. He also had travelled in parts of France and Germany and perhaps beyond. In Lyon he had met and worked with the foremost architectural theorist of his time, Sebastiano Serlio, whose unpublished books he was preparing for the press. When he returned in Rome in the 1550s he made measured drawings of ancient monuments, which presupposes a considerable competence in architectural draughtsmanship. Most important, he had acquired large quantities of detailed visual documentation both of ancient works of art and architecture and of designs for contemporary art and architecture. Strada created his collection, a veritable “paper museum”, partly by the wholesale purchase of Serlio's drawings and of all the drawings left by Giulio Romano and Perino del Vaga (which included much material they had inherited from their master, Raphael), and partly by commissioning sets of documentary drawings of very high quality, such as the relief frieze of the Column of Trajan or the decoration of Raphael's Loggia in the Vatican. Because of his expertise and his *Musaeum* — for so he called his collection — Strada would have been considered a valuable addition to Ferdinand's hypothetical invisible college.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, fol. 16^r.v.

¹⁸ On Strada's career and his *Musaeum*, see Dirk Jacob JANSEN, *Jacopo Strada*, in: *The Dictionary of Art*, 29, London 1996, pp. 737–740 (with earlier bibliography); and IDEM, *Urbanissime Strada*.

¹⁹ *Epitome Thesauri Antiquitatum, hoc est, IMPP. Rom. Orientalium et Occidentalium Iconum, ex antiquis Numismatibus quam fidelissime deliniatarum*, Lyon 1553; it was simultaneously printed in a French translation.



APPROACH TO THE ANTIQUE AT COURT: TWO EXAMPLES

If Ferdinand hoped that Strada's presence would enliven the debate on Antiquity and its use for contemporary purposes in this invisible college, he certainly got what he bargained for. When meeting with the Emperor in Nuremberg, Strada had criticized a sample Wolfgang Lazius' planned catalogue of Ferdinand's own coin collection, which was to be illustrated by the engraver, or "Antiquitätenabconterfetter", Hans Sebald Lautensack [Fig. 13]. Obviously Lazius was not happy with Strada's comments and responded in kind.²⁰ The case demonstrates the simultaneous existence of two different approaches to the study of the Antique. Strada's comment I find revealing: "Even if a medal is somewhat defective, it does not for that reason lose the perfection of its design. They [Lazius and his engraver, AN] look at nothing but the out-side contours, showing the damage to the rim; so that whoever looks at it will conclude that His Majesty has the most unsightly ["goffe", AN] medals in the world."²¹

This can be best shown by comparing Lazius's and Lautensack's careful reproduction of the actual objects in Ferdinand's collection, for instance a coin showing a small tetrastyle temple [Fig. 14], with Strada's own ideal reconstitution of a coin with a similar reverse of a Temple of Vesta [Fig. 15]. Whereas Lautensack showed the coins as they were, with irregular or damaged rims, and more or less in their actual size, Strada's splendid drawings have roughly five to ten times the diameter of the coin on which they are based. This means that his images can show details which would be hardly visible, if present at all, in his model, such as a coin of Augustus showing a triple triumphal arch [Fig. 16–17].²² Therefore, his architectural reverses should be considered as reconstructions of the monument depicted, rather than reproductions of the actual coins.

This is borne out by Strada's own structured, systematic descriptions of the coins he studied. In his printed numismatic treatise only one or at most two of these are included for each Emperor, but two complete sets, describing close to ten thousand coins, have been preserved in two virtually identical manuscripts in Vienna and Prague.²³ These were conceived as the textual complement of the corpus of numismatic drawings Strada had produced for his first important patron, Hans Jakob Fugger, and which had been acquired with Fugger's library by Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria. The Duke had not been interested in acquiring the textual volumes from

²⁰ The question is discussed in R. VON BUSCH, *Antikensammlungen*, pp. 199–201.

²¹ Jacopo Strada to Martín de Guzmán, Nuremberg, February 21, 1558: "Ancor che una medaglia sia alquanta frusta, imperò non perde la perfetion del disegno. Loro non osserva altro che li dintorni di fora, con farle guaste: et chi le vedrà farà giuditio che Sua Maestà habbia le più goffe medaglie che sia al mondo." Vienna, ÖNB, Cod. 5770, fol. 6^r–8^v.

²² Jacopo STRADA, *Magnum ac novum opus, continens descriptionem vitae, imaginum, numismatum omnium tam Orientalium quam Occidentalium Imperatorum [...] usque ad Carolum V. Imperatorem*, Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. Chart-A-2175, 1–14 and 16–30, Vol. 4, fol. 89^r.

²³ IDEM, A. A. A. *Numismatwn Antiquorum ΔΙΑΣΚΕΝΗΝ* [...], copies in Universitätsbibliothek, Vienna, Ms. III, 160898, 1–11; National Library of the Czech republic [Národní knihovna České republiky], Prague, MS VII A 1, a–l.



Strada, which is the reason why Strada's coin-drawings have never been studied in conjunction with his coin descriptions.²⁴ A description such as that of a coin of Augustus depicting a Temple of Mars, from another of Strada numismatic albums, shows that he based such reconstructions not only on the coin, but also on written sources describing the monument it depicted [Fig. 18–19].²⁵

Strada's raw material was accessible to Ferdinand I and his courtiers. His son, Emperor Maximilian II, commissioned a similar six-volume set of drawings for his own library. This indicates that Strada's specific expertise and the material in his collection were valued at the Imperial court. Strada's drawings and descriptions of ancient monuments as depicted on coins, such as the Temple of Janus Quadrifrons [Fig. 20], provided the subject matter for the discussion about Antiquity and about the new style in architecture and the arts in Ferdinand's entourage.²⁶ Therefore, Strada's presence became a factor in the adoption of the new style; in Roger's terms, he was an "innovator", or rather, an "external agent of change". The material from Serlio's *Nachlass* and the documentation of the key monuments of the High Renaissance in Rome and elsewhere which Strada possessed probably were the most influential, but also his numismatic drawings provided ideas, inspirations and motifs which could be used by architects and decorative artists.

That this actually happened is suggested by the design of a triumphal arch for a ceremonial entry during an as yet unspecified festival at Ferdinand's or Maximilian's court, found among Strada's costume designs for such festivals in the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna [Fig. 21].²⁷ This design is inspired by Strada's own reconstructions of triumphal arches as depicted on Roman Imperial coins [cf. Fig. 18]. It is a good instance of the application of antiquarian expertise to a contemporary work of art. That such use of Antiquity was Ferdinand's conscious purpose and that he appointed Strada with that purpose in view, cannot as yet be determined with certainty. But this hypothesis is corroborated by Strada's activities in Vienna, which included both antiquarian study and the practice of architectural design. This included his own house, an object lesson in correct Vitruvian architecture in the Roman manner he learned from Raphael and Giulio Romano. It is also corroborated by the existence

24 Another reason is that Strada's drawings were looted from the Munich *Kunstammer* in 1632, the *Magnum ac Novum Opus*, ending up in Gotha, while the *Imagines Regum, Consulum [...] ab urbe condita usque ad C. Iul. Caesarem [...]*, four volumes of Republican coinage, were acquired by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (British Library, Arundel Mss. 65, 1–4. Volker Heenes, Martin Mulsow and the present author are preparing a project to enter the digitised texts and images in the *Census of Antique Works of Art Known in the Renaissance*, and to study and analyse Strada's numismatic corpus in the wider context of antiquarian studies in the 16th century.

25 Jacopo STRADA, *Series Romanorum ac Graecorum Imperatorum I*, Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. Chart. A 1243a, fol. IV^v (text) and p. 29; cf. Dirk Jacob JANSEN, Antonio Agustín and Jacopo Strada, in: M. H. Crawford (ed.), Antonio Agustín between Renaissance and Counter-Reform, Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts 24, London 1993, pp. 21–245.

26 J. STRADA, *Magnum ac novum Opus*, fol. 237^r.

27 ÖNB, Vienna, *Handschriftensammlung*, Cod. min. 21,3, fol. 323/40.



of what has been loosely described as the “Hofakademie” of Ferdinand’s successor, Emperor Maximilian II, whose members were scholars and artists and intellectual, cosmopolitan courtiers, some of whom commissioned mansions in the new manner.²⁸

I am confident that future research will uncover further evidence for the continuity between Ferdinand’s “invisible college” and his son’s “Hofakademie”.

²⁸ A good example is Reichart Strein von Schwarzenau; cf. D. J. JANSEN, *Urbanissime Strada*, ch. 10, pp. 398–422; ch. 16.6: “Strada’s influence: an agent of change”, discusses Strada’s role within this circle in greater detail and in the terms of the paradigm of the diffusion of innovations.



FIG. 1: Anonymous sculptor, Ferdinand I as Roman Emperor, ca 1520–1525. From: W. SEIPEL (ed.), *Kaiser Ferdinand I.*, p. 180.



FIG. 2: The portal of the Zeughaus or Arsenal in Wiener Neustadt, dated 1524 (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wiener_Neustadt#/media/File:WrNeustadt_Zeughaus_Portal.jpg, © Wolfgang Glock).



FIG. 3: Loy Hering, tomb of Count Niklas Salm, after 1530; Vienna, Votivkirche (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tombeau_Comte_Niklas_Salm.jpg?uselang=cs, © Yelkrokoyade).



FIG. 4: Anonymous sculptor, plaque commemorating the installation of a public well by Ferdinand I, Vienna, Hofburg (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:CoA_of_later_Ferdinand_I_Holy_Roman_Emperor_as_King_of_the_Romans_1536_Hofburg_Wien_Austria.jpg?uselang=cs).



FIG. 5: Overdoor of the entrance portal of the Summer Palace in the gardens of Prague Castle, ca 1540–1545 (© Dirk Jacob Jansen).

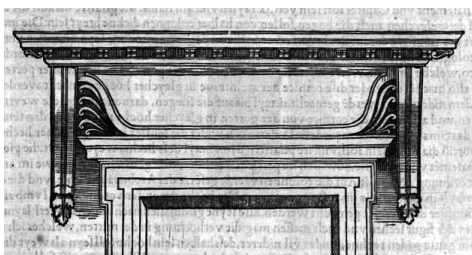


FIG. 6: Corinthian overdoor reputedly found at the Forum of Spoleto, as illustrated in Sebastiano Serlio's *Quarto Libro*, first published 1537. From: Sebastiano SERLIO, *Die gemaynen Reglen von der Architectur [...] mit den Exemplen der Antiquitäten*, Antwerpen 1542, fol. 50^r.

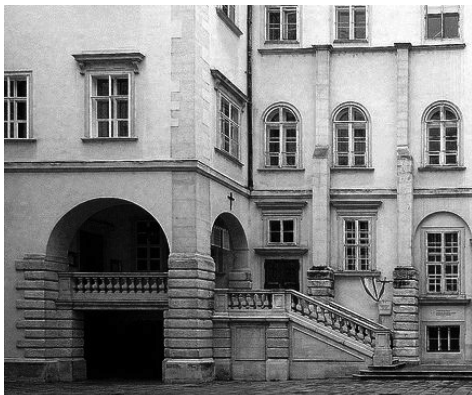


FIG. 8: Piers in the south-west corner of the Schweizerhof, 1549–1552; Vienna, Hofburg (© Dirk Jacob Jansen).



FIG. 7: Attributed to Pietro Ferrabosco, portal of the entrance to the Schweizerhof, Vienna, Hofburg (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Hofburg?uselang=cs#/media/File:Schweizertor_Hofburg_Vienna_June_2006_545.jpg, © Gryffindor).

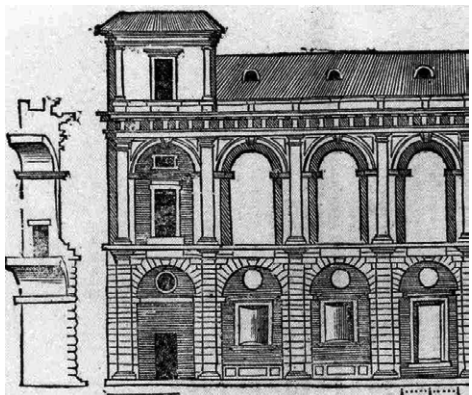


FIG. 9: Sebastiano Serlio, design for the *Salle de Bal* at Fontainebleau, as illustrated in his *Settimo libro*. Image from: Sebastiano SERLIO, *Il settimo libro dell' architettura*, Frankfurt am Main 1575, p. 97.



FIG. 10: Courtyard facade of Kaceřov Castle, Bohemia https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kacerov_arkady.jpg, © Jik Jik)

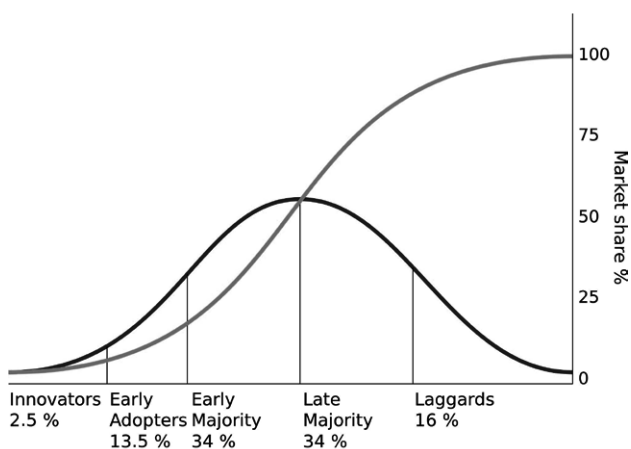


FIG. 11: Graph showing the adoption of a new idea or technology by successive groups of consumers (dark curve), leading to an eventual saturation point (light curve) (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Diffusion_of_ideas.svg).

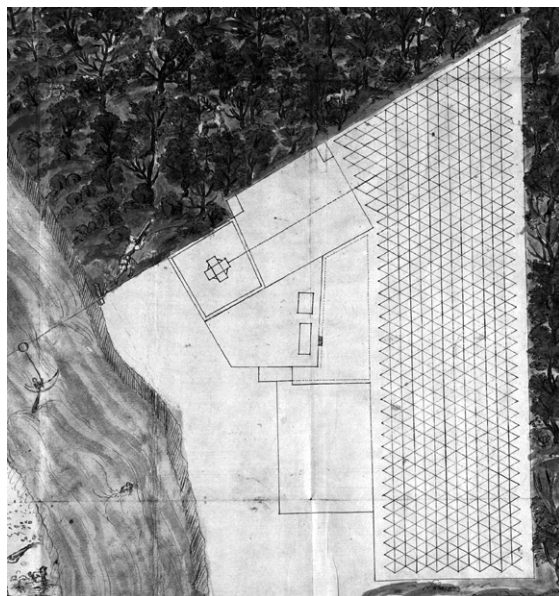


FIG. 12: Bonifaz Wohlmuth, plan of Archduke Maximilian II's "Grünes Lusthaus" in the Prater, Vienna. From: Georg TANNER, *Brevis [...] descriptio*, Vienna 1557, ÖNB, Cod. 8085.



FIG. 13: Hans Sebald Lautensack, a selection of coins from the Imperial collection, engraving. Image from: Wolfgang LAZIUS, *Commentariorum vetustorum numismatum [...] specimen exile [...]*, Vienna 1558, ÖNB, Vienna.



FIG. 14: Hans Sebald Lautensack, coin reverse showing a tetrastyle temple; detail from Fig. 13.

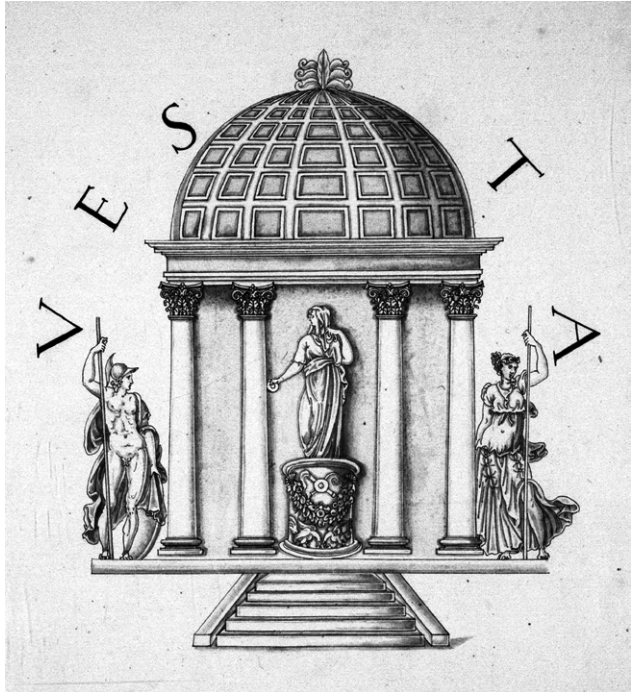


FIG. 15: Jacopo Strada, drawing of a coin reverse showing a Temple of Vesta. From: Jacopo STRADA, *Magnum ac Novum Opus [...]*, Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. Chart A 2175, Vol. 11, fol. 13^r.

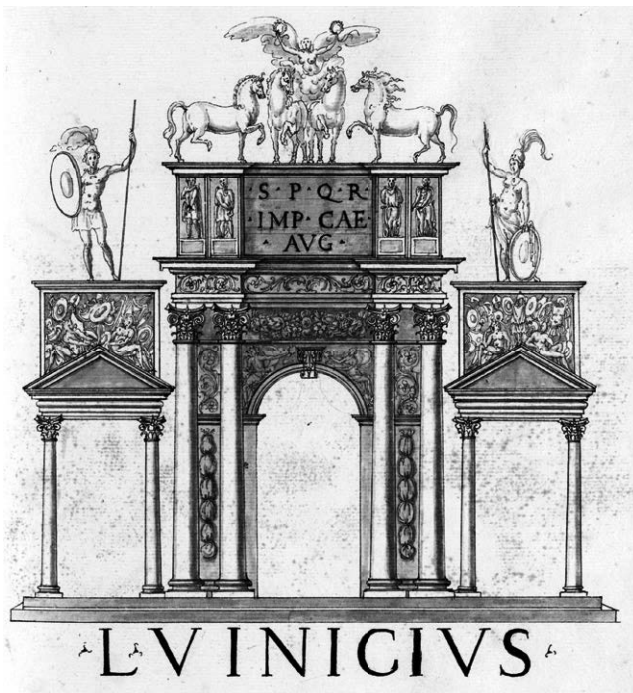


FIG. 16: Jacopo Strada, drawing of a coin reverse showing a triple triumphal arch. From: Jacopo STRADA, *Magnum ac Novum Opus [...]*, Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. Chart A 2175, Vol. 4, fol. 89^r.

FIG. 17: Reverse of a silver denarius of Augustus, showing a triple triumphal arch (© Edgar L. Owen Ltd.).

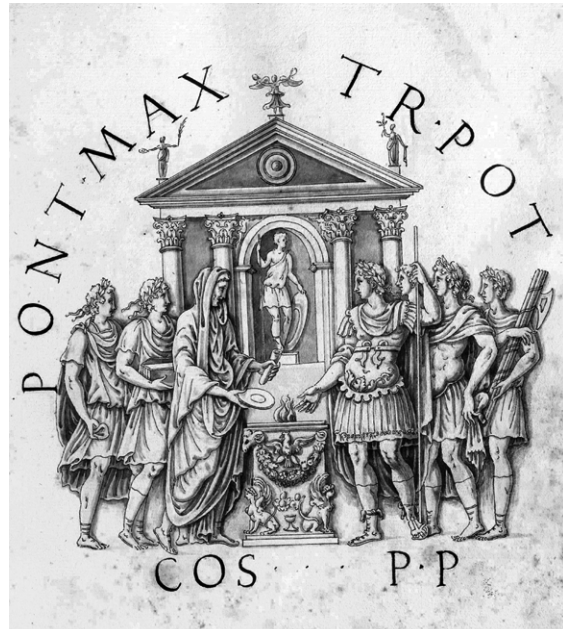


FIG. 18, FIG. 19: Jacopo Strada, description and drawing of a coin reverse showing a Temple of Mars. From: Jacopo STRADA, *Series Romanorum ac Graecorum Imperatorum*, Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. Chart. A 1243, fol. IV^r (text) and p. 29 (image).

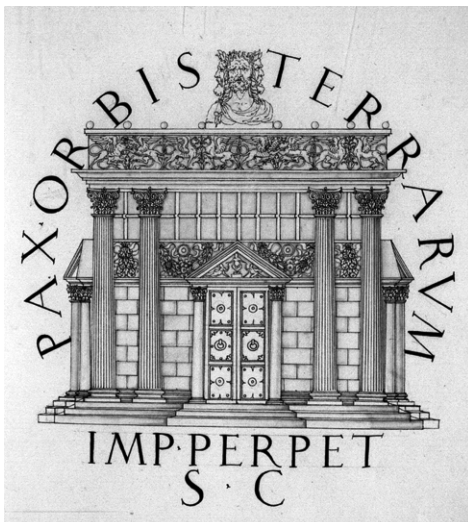


FIG. 20: Jacopo Strada, drawing of a coin reverse showing a Temple of Janus Quadrifrons. From: Jacopo STRADA, *Magnum ac Novum Opus* [...], Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Ms. Chart A 2175, Vol. 4, fol. 237^r.

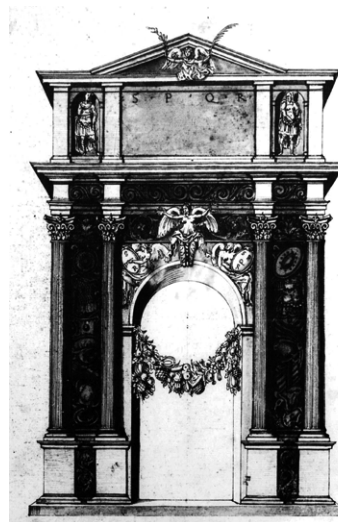


FIG. 21: Jacopo Strada, design for a triumphal arch for a festive entry. From: a miscellaneous volumes of drawings from Strada's workshop, ÖNB, Vienna, Handschriftensammlung, Cod. min. 21.3, fol. 323/40.

**RÉSUMÉ:**

Emperor Ferdinand I's appointment of the antiquary Jacopo Strada as an architect is examined in the light of Ferdinand's long-standing interest in the Antique, exemplified by various works he commissioned over the years. He shared this interest with several high ranking, wealthy and intellectual members of his entourage. In view of a parallel development at the courts of Charles V in the Netherlands and Francis I in France, it is argued that the introduction of antiquarian study and the adoption of the antique example in contemporary commissions in the field of art and architecture can be considered a "cluster of innovations", in the terms of the innovation theory formulated in Everett Rogers' classic study *The Diffusion of Innovations* (1962). Then it is possible to define this informal group of "innovators" and "early adopters", introducing what is really an avant-garde style among their peers, as an "invisible college". Empiric studies based on Rogers' paradigm show such a group to be an essential feature of the wider dissemination of innovative ideas and techniques. A further parallel is drawn with the self-styled Vitruvian academy at the Papal court, a similar group of patrons, scholars and artists, whose collaboration not only stimulated antiquarian research, but also influenced the design of several architectural commissions in Rome. Assuming contacts between Ferdinand's court and this group, it is suggested that Strada's appointment shows Ferdinand's intent to stimulate this complex of innovations at his court. The altercation between Strada and the Imperial historiographer Wolfgang Lazius over a planned catalogue of the Imperial coin collection shows the existence of two diverse approaches to the antique example, which is illustrated by some of Strada's numismatic drawings. The presence of Strada and his huge collection of documentation are a symptom that Ferdinand's "invisible college" continued to function under his successor, Maximilian II.

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