



**n.s. 65, 2016**

Daniele Bigi

*Hispellum - Imago urbis. Considerazioni su Porta Venere e sulle altre porte urbiche della cinta romana di Spello*

*Abstract*

The striking city walls of Spello have ensured that the forma urbis of this Roman colony has remained unchanged over time. The fortification, which dates back to the early imperial period and has largely been preserved to this day, has seen a number of different attempts to interpret and hypothetically reconstruct its gateways since the sixteenth century. The first of these was Sebastiano Serlio who included the monumental Porta Venere entrance in his Third Book of Architecture.

Following a specific historical investigation into Roman facies in the city and surrounding area, which cross-referenced ancient sources with local archaeological documents, this text proposed an analysis of the main entrances to the walled city by direct surveying. The unique character of the entire fortified structure was brought to light through comparison of the entrances among themselves and with similar fortified structures and city gateways in Umbria and Italy of more or less the same age.

Thanks to a metrological analysis of the transposition of metric measurements into Roman feet, the conclusion was that the Venere gateway was “sacred” in nature, justified by the presence of the extra-urban temple located opposite.

Marisa Tabarrini

*Il complesso di Santa Maria dei Sette Dolori. Il monumento borrominiano e il suo contesto*

*Abstract*

The essay examines the complex events of the block where the Roman Santa Maria dei Sette Dolori monastery in Trastevere stands, from its development which dates back to a private emphyteutic apportionment under the reign of Pope Sixtus V to its slow transformation into a nunnery complex under the initiative of Duchess Camilla Virginia Savelli from 1641 onwards. Over a period of almost twenty years, the noblewoman appropriated all the property on the block, it either being donated by Marquis Giulio Cesare Pandini or acquired from his heirs under the iuris congrui law of Gregory XIII, and progressively transformed the property into a nunnery. The acquisition, completed in 1658, was preceded by the ex-novo construction of a monumental wing and church designed by Borromini (from 1642).

**Quaderni dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Architettura**

Rivista semestrale del Dipartimento di Storia, Disegno e Restauro dell'Architettura, Sapienza Università di Roma  
ISSN: 0485-4152; Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Roma n. 131/87 del 6/3/1987

Direttore: Prof. Arch. Alessandro Viscogliosi

Sede: Piazza Borghese, 9 - 00186 Roma

Redazione: [quaderni.dsdra@uniroma1.it](mailto:quaderni.dsdra@uniroma1.it)

Sito web: [https://web.uniroma1.it/dsdra/dipartimento\\_/pubblicazioni/quaderni-storia-architettura](https://web.uniroma1.it/dsdra/dipartimento_/pubblicazioni/quaderni-storia-architettura)



The architect had to draw up his plans around a context that had been entirely constructed but was still largely undefined. The essay reconstructs the urban context, the consistency of the pre-existing elements incorporated into the monastery as well as the architectural origins of Borromini's plans. The architect from Ticino, indulging his client, developed the church plan and its relationship to the nun's residence by strictly conforming to Carlo Borromeo's *Instructiones* for nunneries.

Giuseppe Dardanello

*«Di tal regolato gusto che agguagliato avesse il nobile Romano antico». Filippo Juvarra e la facciata per la Citroniera della Venaria Reale*

*Abstract*

The planning and construction of the Venaria Reale citroneria and stables complex and its front wing (1720-1729) were, for Filippo Juvarra, an occasion to contend with the notion of 'majestic' architecture in the name of aspirations for a "measured taste that equalled that of the ancient Roman noble".

The impressive outsized construction and the shift in the building's meaning ensured by the magnificence of its architecture provoked an immediate reaction in the form of accusations from the construction work, forced to work on a "construction project more appropriate to a magnificent temple, than a stables and citroneria". The sequential reconstruction of the planning process on the basis of the architect's 'thoughts' reveals how, by inventing a facade without the imposition of tradition, Juvarra managed to develop an eloquent expression of his idea of a modern 'romanitas', starting with the generatrix figure on the triumphal arch. Construction was a complex process that involved reflecting on the organisation of the space, the symbolic function of the facade and the expectations of the eye when faced with architecture conceived as a scenographic background to be viewed from the gardens and reviewing images of traditional models. Juvarra was further stimulated by problems arising from the unexpected emergence of the eaves. In the end, through this process and in a spectacular palimpsest of references, Juvarra created an unprecedented image of a triumphal arch, a grandiose modern interpretation in the style of the "ancient Roman noble".

Rita Binaghi

*Bernardo Vittone «allievo di Matematica» e la didattica dell'architettura nella settecentesca Università degli Studi di Torino*

*Abstract*

The Piedmont architect Bernardo Antonio Vittone is a complex personality who is not looked upon kindly by historiography. For many years, certain entirely unfounded 'facts' about his life were accepted as truth. One of these maintains that his training was divided between a period of study at the Accademia di San Luca in Rome and first-hand experience on a construction site under the tutelage of his uncle, architect Giovanni Giacomo Plantery. A printed booklet, recently unearthed by the present author, proves to the contrary that he attended a course in mathematics at university in Turin. Other than demanding a full critical revision of Vittone's life, this fact leads to new questions about how the University of Turin functioned in the eighteenth century and the training of "Engineers/Architects" in Piedmont. At the time that Vittone attended the university, the mathematics chair was held by Abate Olivetano Ercole Corazzi from Bologna, who taught both at the University and the Institute of Science.



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He was the author of the booklet about a practical architecture exercise held at the end of the academic year and it is from that booklet that we learn of the presence of Bernardo Antonio among the students, the importance of Ferdinando Galli Bibiena for young future architects in Piedmont and finally details of the practical exercise, which took place in an active construction site.

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