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2016

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Carlo Fontana and the Origins of the Architectural Monograph

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Art History

by

Juliann Rose Walker

June 2016

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Acknowledgements

I would first like to start by thanking my committee members. Thank you to my advisor, Kristoffer Neville, who has worked with me for almost four years now as both an undergrad and graduate student; this project was possible because of you. To Jeanette Kohl, who was integral in helping me to outline and finish my first chapter, which made the rest of my thesis writing much easier in comparison. Your constructive comments were instrumental to the clarity and depth of my research, so thank you. And thank you to Conrad Rudolph, for your stern, yet fair, critiques of my writing, which were an invaluable reminder that you can never proofread enough.

A special thank you to Malcolm Baker, who offered so much of his time and energy to me in my undergraduate career, and for being a valuable and vast resource of knowledge on early modern European artwork as I researched possible thesis topics. And the warmest of thanks to Alesha Jeanette, who has always left her door open for me to come and talk about anything that was on my mind.

I would also like to thank Leigh Gleason at the California Museum of Photography, for giving me the opportunity to intern in collections. Not only was this a wonderful educational experience, it inadvertently navigated me towards the topic of my thesis, through cataloguing photographs of Rome, and for this I am eternally grateful. As well, I would like to thank Catherine Hess, who so graciously gave me a summer internship, which provided me with an excuse to spend the summer writing at the beautiful Huntington Botanical Gardens. I would also like to thank the Getty Research

Institute and its amazingly helpful staff in special collections, who answered any and all of my questions while I researched Carlo Fontana's publications.

I would be remised if I did not extend the warmest of thanks to my cohort for being there for me through all of the trials and achievements I have faced in my two years of knowing you. This experience has been so wonderful, and it is because of you all, so thank you.

And last, but never least, I have to thank my closest friends and family. To my family members who have shown so much excitement and pride in the hard work I have put in to get here, thank you. To Wesley Alvey, who has been my best friend and my confidant, always believing in my abilities and pushing me to be better. Thank you for listening to my ideas and for always offering sound advice and support. To my mom, Diane, for always answering the phone when I needed to vent, it was more helpful than you will ever know. A special thanks to my sisters, Valaray and Sara, who have listened to my concerns, fears, and excitement throughout this process, offering encouragement and comfort, no matter how repetitive (re: annoying) I may have been. And most importantly, to my dad, Edward. I don't know if there are words in existence to describe how much your endless love and support have meant to me. Your daily observations always reminded me that I am capable and driven, which kept me going on even the most strenuous of days, and your continuous interest and curiosity about my work always made me feel proud of what I was doing. This is for you.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1 – <i>L'Anfiteatro Flavio</i>	18
Figures 1.1 – 1.12	37
Chapter 2 – <i>Sopra il Monte Citorio situato nel Campo Martio</i>	49
Figures 2.1 – 2.4	66
Chapter 3 – <i>Il Tempio Vaticano</i>	70
Figures 3.3 – 3.10	86
Conclusion	96

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Cover of *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto e Delineato*, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.2: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Title Page, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.3: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 5, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.4: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 6, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.5: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 19, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.6: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 19, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.7: Domenico Francheshino after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 20, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.8: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 22, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.9: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 23, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.10: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 23, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

Figure 1.11: Giovanni Battista Falda, Fontana Celebre D'Aqua Acetosa, 1719, Etching

Figure 1.12: Guiseppe Vasi, Palazzo di Caprarola, 1746, drawing

Figure 2.1: Carlo Fontana, The cover of *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio*, 1708, Vellum, The Getty Research Institute

Figure 2.2: Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Prospective design for the Montecitorio found in *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio*, 1694 and 1708, Print, The Getty Research institute

Figure 2.3: Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Outline of the Ancient Citatorio, 1694 and 1708, Print, The Getty Research Institute

Figure 2.4: Francesco Borromini, *The Roman Oratory*, 17th Century, Rome, Italy

Figure 3.1 – Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Constantine’s Basilica (Old Saint Peter’s), *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.2 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, New Saint Peter’s, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.3 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.4 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.5 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.6 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.7 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Fontana’s oval concept for the Piazza of Saint Peter’s against Bernini’s rounder design, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.8 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Bell Towers, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.9 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Bell Tower, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

Figure 3.10 - Portrait of Carlo Fontana, Frontispiece for *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 2003

Introduction to Carlo Fontana and the Origins of the Architectural Monograph

The Roman landscape has been consistently rediscovered and reshaped since its earliest metropolis which began around 750 B.C.E, with the first Roman emperor's reign beginning much later, after 100 B.C.E.¹ From this point forward, the construction, destruction, excavations, and rebuilding of the city has been ever evolving, a process which wasn't exceptionally documented until a much later point in Roman history, around the late medieval, early Renaissance period. It is here we see a growing interest in the documentation and publishing of works centered around urbanistic issues such as: the ancient history of Rome, its leaders, monuments, and religious cultivation. However, it was in the late renaissance that we begin to see a much larger emphasis placed specifically on the architectural monuments left behind from the once-great Roman Empire, which was prompted by the discovery of an ancient text by an author now known as Vitruvius. Writers such as Sebastiano Serlio, Leon Battista Alberti, and Andrea Palladio reinterpreted Vitruvius' writing and began documenting their own understanding of the rules with which one was to utilize for construction, by studying the various monumental works built in Rome. From this was born an even more refined interpretation of the architectural publication. Architects and scholars such as Hendrick de Keyser and Giovanni Pietro Bellori began emphasizing the historical importance of structures, rather than approaching the multi-faceted perspective which had been previously seen. It is not until the late Baroque that this style of architectural writing is

¹ Paul W. Jacobs II and Diane Atnally Conlin, *Campus Martius: The Field of Mars in the Life of Ancient Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1.

solidified in the historical tradition of architectural writing, when the engineer and architect Carlo Fontana, produced his publications. Editions of his extensive documentations on the history, present state, and reconstruction of conceptions for several of Rome's most important historical monuments and sites, can now be accessed at the Getty Research Institute. It is here that *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*, *Il Sopra Montecitorio*, and *Il Tempio Vaticano* expose a largely unexplored genre in the historical tradition of architectural writing with the architectural monograph.

Fontana's involvement with monumental commissions such as St. Peter's and the Colosseum, his unique, scenographic approach to prints, and his relationship to artists such as Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Francesco Borromini, Mattia de Rossi, and Domenico Fontana, all offered a unique perspective to the architectural monograph not previously seen with the writers such de Keyser and Bellori. The lack of information from the large gaps in the scholarship on the architectural monograph are only enhanced by the limited information available on one of the most important contributors to the genre, Fontana himself. Ultimately, this leads to three main issues: what is an architectural monograph, how do Fontana's publications embody this, and lastly, why did Fontana create these publications in the format of an architectural monograph? These are the fundamental questions which have yet to be explored.

However, it is important that we look at the architect before attempting to understand his literature. Relatively little is known about the engineer, architect, and publisher named Carlo Fontana. Having moved to Rome at the age of twelve, there is not much to be said about those first years of his life. We do know that shortly after coming

to Rome, he began studying under Giovanni Maria Bolino, an independent master mason.²³ From this point, the young Fontana maintained a consistent trajectory in his architectural and engineering education by working beneath Pietro da Cortona and Gian Lorenzo Bernini. Both *capomaestri* may have inspired Fontana to transition from his role as engineer and architect, focused on the more technical aspects of building, in particular an early form of hydraulic engineering, to publisher-architect, by focusing on the more aesthetic aspect of architecture and the ability to publish his unique scenographic conceptions.⁴ Specifically, this is seen in a growing trend in what would become known as the architectural monograph in the 20th century. It is important that we define what exactly an architectural monograph is, and how it differs from other architectural publications of this period, before we begin looking at Carlo Fontana's publications.

Publications centered around a single structure, existed before Fontana's own works. However, these were writers who focused their content on one building also focused their interest in one or two particular aspects of the edifice, rather than channeling the more multi-faceted approach taken by Fontana. Let me be clear, I am not stating that he was the originator of this style of publication, rather an integral figure. What differentiates Fontana's achievements in the architectural monograph genre is that he utilized the history, finances, measurements, and even alternative plans for construction made by other architects. By exploring these issues, Fontana managed to

² Hellmut Hager, "Carlo Fontana: Pupil, Partner, Principal, Preceptor," *National Gallery of Art, Symposium Paper XXII: The Artist's Workshop*, 38 (1993): 122–55.

³ Jorg Martin Merz Merz, *Pietro Da Cortona and Roman Baroque Architecture* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, n.d.), 281.

⁴ Hager, "Carlo Fontana: Pupil, Partner, Principal, Preceptor," 124.

better grasp his conceptualization of current or future states of works at the Colosseum, Montecitorio, and St. Peter's in the Vatican. Other architectural publications utilized several different structures, in an effort to embody specific methods for building. Contingent on the author, the reader may or may not get contextual information about the architecture depending on necessity. What was most important and at the forefront of these texts were the rules which one was to follow in recreating the style and order of works inspired by antiquity, i.e. – these told you how to build rather than exploring that which had been built. These should be distinguished from the architectural monograph as a treatise.

Though the architectural treatise was a popular form of publication in the early modern era, and the scholarship on these treatises is vast, there has yet to be a focused study that relates the rise in popularity of the architectural monograph during the late Baroque era. As we will see, events in and around Rome helped to prompt this popularity growth for local authors and printmakers, though Carlo Fontana has consistently shown that he was autonomous in his logic and practices for the publications he created. He took a more unique approach in his writings than his contemporaries, who could maintain a more popular and commercial disposition. To understand Fontana's role, we need to look at the scholarship surrounding his life.

Various authors have published detailed overviews of the architect's works, but it is Hellmut Hager who has been the most successful in documenting Carlo Fontana's life. Hager has written several articles on various aspects of Fontana's work, and one article that is the most relevant approximation to a monograph, besides a book written by

Eduard Coudenhove-Erthal. His "Pupil, Partner, Principle, Preceptor" has long been a defining resource for any current scholarship on the architect's life and work. The article details the events of Fontana's professional life, beginning with and focusing most particularly on the years he began working beneath Giovanni Maria Bolino, who would be his first master, to his time spent in Pietro da Cortona's workshop, and then on to his time spent as a draftsman for Gian Lorenzo Bernini. This is where Fontana's evolution from the great masters' pupil to his becoming more-or-less an equal takes place. By his expanding on and enhancing their ideas and creations while working on his own unique concepts. Slowly, Fontana finds himself heading his own workshop and eventually becomes *architetto di merito* in 1667. Shortly after this, Fontana gradually became known for his publications that advertised his archeological techniques, advanced renderings and "adaptation of ancient motifs and their utilization in a persuasive demonstration of the insuperability of the Christian faith."⁵ The rest of this article focuses on these publications but does not describe them in detail. Rather, Hager focuses on the publications as a tool, not of reimagining Rome, but of publicly showcasing his abilities and concepts in a way that the architect would have wanted others to follow, very much inspired by the role that earlier treatises had on the architect. After his death, what could have been a thriving architectural community gradually began to decline, leaving him as one of the last great masters of the Italian Baroque;⁶ this view has been disputed by

⁵ Ibid., 143.

⁶ For a comprehensive background on the architect and his works, refer not only to "Carlo Fontana: Pupil, Partner, Principal, Preceptor," but to "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," and *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle*. All three texts offer information about the

scholars such as John Pinto and Elizabeth Kieven, who believe the architectural achievements of Rome were vibrant well into the 18th century.⁷

Late in the 17th century, Carlo Fontana received a prospective commission which would call for him to restore and modify the Colosseum for a more contemporary purpose. In an article on the "Ecclesia Triumphans" for the Colosseum, Hager outlines how the concept for a temple within the Colosseum arose, while also arguing that Fontana's publication was not merely "art historical speculation," but rather that it was too practical and involved of a project. Therefore, the project must have been something that Fontana believed would be executed. The assignment was given to Fontana sometime between 1676 and 1679, acknowledged in 1700, and most definitely completed (in publication form) by 1707. By charting the history of this project and Fontana's publication, Hager details important information about the papacy's involvement in the commission for a rebuilt Colosseum under Sixtus V and Innocent XI, why the project was ultimately never completed, and design issues and comparisons between Fontana and other artists, namely Bernini. One of the more important aspects of this article is its focus on the design for the temple, the Colosseum, and the detailed proportions that were only completed after Fontana had reserved the time to excavate parts of the Colosseum so that he could measure the ruin properly. According to Hager, these facts make it most

architect's early beginnings as an engineer and to his transition into his interest in antiquity, printing and publications.

⁷ John A. Pinto, *Speaking Ruins* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2012). (I am currently waiting for the Kieven publication from the library to cite as well.)

apparent that this was to be a completed project. Ultimately, he believed it was never realized due to financial issues and the death of Fontana.⁸

Hager and Allan Braham also wrote on specific aspects of the architect's life in their catalogue of *The Drawings at Windsor Castle*. The introduction is a much briefer compilation of the events of Fontana's life, which are better detailed in Hager's "Pupil, Partner, Principal, Preceptor" article, though this introduction gives a more detailed run down of Fontana's commissions for churches, such as Santa Maria dei Miracoli and Cappella Cybo. But it was in his role solving engineering problems that "played a considerable role in his later life." The stress of economic conditions weighed heavily on the completion of new works and so Fontana found himself spending much of his time redecorating chapels. The author transitions into the many publications made by the architect and states that, under Pope Innocent XII's reign, Fontana had an illustrious career. He does not, however, go into detail on Fontana's publications. Rather, he touches on their existence and central content with out any further exploration as to why they were created in the manner they were, and the importance of their role in the historical tradition of writing about architecture.⁹ Although this was not the central purpose for this publication, Hager falls short in his description and understanding of this particular aspect of Fontana's career, in a way that he does not when he is talking about his architectural achievements.

⁸ Hellmut Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," *The Warburg Institute* 36 (1973): 319–37.

⁹ Allan Braham, *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle* (London: Zwemmer, 1977).

Hager has also written several introductory essays for both *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* and *Il Tempio Vaticano*. By prefacing these works, Hager manages to help contextualize the work which the reader is about to experience. We do not get a visual analysis of the prints within, but rather Hager offers more biographical information on Fontana during the period of writing these publications. Although this information is useful, we again see that Hager is not exploring the larger implications of the importance of Fontana's architectural monographs in relation to architectural literature over all. It suffices to say that for Hager, Fontana's publications act as bridge between two other aspects in Fontana's career which seem to be more at the forefront, his role as an architect, and his role as a teacher. This leaves little room for a singular look at the importance of Fontana's publications on their own in Hager's writings. Despite this, all of Hager's writings combined create the most extensive bibliography by one scholar, which can roughly be organized to create a monograph-like look at Fontana's life and works, albeit an unfinished one.

Eduard Coudenhove-Erthal is the only other scholar who has written as extensively on Carlo Fontana as Hager, in his 1930 publication entitled, *Carlo Fontana und die Architektur des römischen Spätbarocks*. The book, though comprehensive on Carlo Fontana's architectural achievements, was less extensive when talking about the architect's publications. The four pages that are dedicated to Fontana's writings focus not on the works themselves but the intention with which they were created. Coudenhove-Erthal argues that Fontana created each publication for his personal agenda, in the hopes that he would be considered for high-ranking positions, such as *capomaestro* after

Bernini at the rebuilding of St. Peter's and lead architect at the academy. These initial statements were the basis from which my arguments stem, and also correlated to other scholars who believed Fontana's motives were somewhat selfish as well.¹⁰ Coudenhove-Erthal only reiterates the lack of emphasis that has been placed on the importance of Fontana's publications. But with no explanation as to why such little emphasis was placed on Fontana's writings, there is no way for the reader to grasp that Fontana's works would have been integral in any way, which is problematic to the larger understanding of Fontana's illustrious career.

Other scholars, such as Rudolph Wittkower and Paolo Portoghesi, mention Fontana briefly in their various publications on the Baroque. However, this usually occurs because of his relation to other artists of the period, such as Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Francesco Borromini, Carlo Rainaldi, and Pietro Da Cortona. These scholars have focused on Fontana as a supporting figure to other architects, but none the less have given some valuable insight into the kinds of working relationships Fontana fostered in Rome. We can see this in Wittkower's *Art & Architecture In Italy, 1600 - 1750* where the author focuses on the three periods of the Baroque, beginning, high, and late and the artists who functioned as the most famous figures. Concerning Fontana, we see the architect under the late baroque category as part of the chapter that focuses on Rome. Wittkower stresses Fontana's pivotal role as one of the last great baroque architects, but not before demeaning his position by stating that he was in no way as relevant as Filippo Juvarra,

¹⁰ Eduard Coudenhove-Erthal, *Carlo Fontana und die Architektur des römischen Spätbarocks* (Wien: A. Schroll, 1930).

whom he expands on in a different section of the book. For Wittkower, Fontana's works, although following in the great master's footsteps, come close to greatness but inevitably fall short. Fontana's creations epitomize the late baroque but are refined, classical and deemed at times boring. They are what was expected, and in Wittkower's opinion, Fontana does not seem to mind this. However, in Fontana's publications, we find an incredibly inventive mind full of fertile concepts of renovation that are in no way boring. The reality may be that he was eager to oblige his patrons, though he was not as versatile in his abilities and concepts as artists who preceded him, which ultimately had a negative effect on which structures he would be able to complete - a symptom that his publications did not suffer from. Wittkower, in all of his power to water down Fontana's position within the Baroque as a great architect, inevitably makes a compelling case for how important Fontana actually was by placing the bulk of the architecture during this period under Fontana's creative mind and skilled hands, with many students who would follow in his footsteps.¹¹

In *The Rome of Borromini: Architecture as Language*, Portoghesi argues that Rome, by the time of the Baroque, had become "all show," which is something the author reinforces, quoting Diderot (who is quoting an unknown source), stating, "the seven hills, once the adornment of the city, now serve as her tomb." Alternately, Portoghesi states that this was a transformative period for artists who were coming to terms with reality or

¹¹ Rudolph Wittkower, *Art & Architecture In Italy, 1600 - 1750* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1965).

looking to alter it, out of the renaissance and into a new era of reimagining the classical.¹² This ultimately is what Wittkower stresses in his writings as well, that Fontana was returning or furthermore beginning this period of neo-classical interests. These kinds of publications have outlined how exactly Fontana related to his contemporaries; by this I mean that they have helped me to understand the progression of his engineering and architectural studies, the subsequent accomplishments from these studies, and concurrent achievements of his colleagues. However, they do not mention Fontana's publications, but rather focus on his completed structures. This leaves their argument on Fontana's role in the baroque flawed as they are not accounting for all, or at least a central part, of his achievements.

Although the research on Fontana's books is lacking, the study of the history of architectural writing, its origins, rise in popularity, and evolution has been written on extensively. Mario Carpo's *Architecture in the Age of Printing* has been an almost canonical text for my studies on the history of the printed book and has been integral to a better understanding of the various origins of the architectural monographs. In this text, Carpo outlines, not chronologically, but rather thematically the salient issues with the advent of architecture seen in publications.¹³ This thematic methodology was necessary in helping to understand exactly where and how Fontana fit into the history of architectural writing. However, it was John Pinto's *Speaking Ruins* which gave clarity to

¹² Paolo Portoghesi, *The Rome of Borromini: Architecture as Language*, trans. Barbara La Penta (New York: George Braziller Inc., 1968).

¹³ Mario Carpo, *Architecture in the Age of Printing: Orality, Writing, Typography, and Printed Images in the History of Architectural Theory*, trans. Sarah Benson (Cambridge, London: The MIT Press, 2001).

a broader historical overview of treatises and technical publications in Italy during the early modern period, with one chapter focusing solely on Fontana. In this section, Pinto focuses on Fontana's contributions to the "growing confidence in the empirical basis for history,"¹⁴ by his (as well as other architect's) use of accurate measurements and drawings taken from the actual site of Roman ruins. Fontana's three publications, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, *Discorso Sopra l'antico Monte Citatoria situato nel Campo Marzio*, and *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*, were superior examples of the late-seicento architect's role in the excavation of works as well as the commissions for new conceptions for them. Pinto states, "Fontana's aim is not exclusively topographical, for there is also a design agenda."¹⁵ In each of the three texts that Fontana published, the architect spent time at the ruin that he was reimagining, excavating unexposed parts, and taking the most accurate and painstaking notes and measurements, which he would then use to create detailed renderings of its current state as well as theatrical renderings to showcase a scaled perspective. "He also goes beyond the mere documentation of the building's form to illuminate aspects of its function as well," which included incorporating detailed figures such as gladiators and peasants showcasing the scale of the redesigned monuments.¹⁶ This empirical perspective of Fontana's publications helped to shape my understanding not only of his methodology, but of the importance he placed on these details of antiquity. Although Pinto does not focus on much else in relation to Fontana's

¹⁴ Pinto, *Speaking Ruins*, 21.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Pinto, *Speaking Ruins*.

publications, he is one of the only scholars to actually place an emphasis on Fontana's literary achievements.

Although Pinto was beginning to work towards pulling in Fontana's writings to better understand his use of prints and his excavation of ancient Roman monuments, there are still many facets of his publications which have gone unnoticed. We can see that earlier publications were centered around providing as much information as possible (about the various facets of the structures, but more importantly by utilizing many kinds of structures) into one text because it was nearly impossible for commoners to have access to these reading materials, which made this method most convenient. But when we study the monograph of later interest, we see that publications became more easily accessible and therefore authors were more diverse than previously seen. But who were the figures buying Fontana's writings? We can speculate that certain adventures such as the Grand Tour were responsible for this, as visiting tourists' interest in the monuments they had seen, may have wanted some kind of relic to take with them. We know this because various copies of Fontana's prints and writings have been preserved in other locations outside of Italy, primarily in England, where many tourists arrived from during this period.¹⁷ Also, we know Fontana was an active instructor at the Academy and that he was interested in taking his students to visit actual Roman monuments. We also know that Fontana maintained interests in obtaining certain roles that granted him the title of *capomeastro*. This may indicate that these works were published in the hopes that his

¹⁷ Hellmut Hager and Allan Braham, *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle*, vol. XVIII, Studies In Architecture (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd., 1977).

contemporaries would access his works, and understand more clearly what he was capable of but had not yet accomplished in the structures he had completed. These three possibilities may have served as an integral point of interest to him; there is no certain evidence as to why Fontana would have published his writings, versus creating a kind of contextualized blueprint, which would have solely been of interest to those commissioning the reconstruction of these edifices. As this was not the case, we can deduce that Fontana was interested in a larger audience.

This contextualization of his constructions was itself a very important aspect to Fontana. The significance he placed on the relationship between modernity and antiquity was so extensive that it required an understanding of what had preceded his writings. Fontana was continuing in a vast historical tradition of architectural literature. Formerly, this tradition took place under the guise of two purposes: showing how to accurately create different structures and ornamentations, and wanting to recreate works of antiquity. Fontana's works act as a natural progression from this point. He attempts to show how the works were originally created, how they are presently maintained and how we can move forward, both in restoring the work, but also in recreating it. Let us first look at several works which partook in this historical tradition, to better understand the the practice with which Fontana was continuing.

Arguably the first-ever author of an architectural text was Vitruvius.¹⁸ His perspective is unique, in that his writings are coming from the ancient Roman period,

¹⁸ Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, ed. Ingrid Rowland and Thomas Noble Howe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

which gives him a closer approximation to the actual details for creating ancient like structures. He outlines the rules for how ancient Roman monuments are to be completed, both stylistically and structurally. He does so in a manner that also outlines why his methods are the correct way for creating. However, coming from a different and more contemporary understanding of Vitruvius' writings were three distinct architects and published authors: Leon Battista Alberti, Sebastiano Serlio, and Andrea Palladio. For treatise on architecture that may have inspired Fontana's reconstructions and his interest in maintaining the architectural rules of antiquity, I referenced texts such as Palladio's *The Four Books on Architecture* and Sebastiano Serlio's *Sette Libri dell'Architettura*. These texts focus on the rules of antiquity, which play an integral role for Fontana in his publications. Both works, take a more contemporary stance that has been slightly edited from Vitruvius' time, but still echo the same sentiments about the importance of following a detailed set of rules, to create a well-defined structure.¹⁹ Fontana would have been familiar with these books and used them as the foundation for the work that he created. Leon Battista Alberti's *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, would have been an essential publication to Fontana as well. However, Alberti may have more closely related to Fontana's engineering side, as Alberti's more mathematical understanding of architecture differed slightly from what was being done by Palladio and Serlio. It is because of these architectural treatises that the issue of modernity needed to be addressed. Treatises focusing on contemporary structures such as the Montecitorio, or the

¹⁹ Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books on Architecture* (MIT Press, 2002); Peter Hicks and Vaughan Hart, *Sebastiano Serlio on Architecture*, vol. I, II vols. (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1996).

contemporary reconstruction of old works, were not prevalent in the way their ancient counterparts were, leaving a gap in the literature where Fontana was able to find his voice.

However, scholarship has yet to concern itself with the relationship between both monographs on modern architecture and their relation to treatises focusing on the rules of ancient architecture. Carlo Fontana is the perfect architect and author to utilize for such an investigation. His works are paradoxical in their interest of reconceiving of the ancient and adhering strictly to ancient guidelines, but in envisaging these works in such a way that they are completely modern conceptions of the ancient rules. This is important to the field because we need a more comprehensive understanding of the origins of the architectural monograph which began in the early modern period. After the Medieval era and the decline in manuscript publications due to the advent of the printing press, mass production of publications became increasingly easy. This leads to a rise in varieties of publications, their production, and distribution. Incentives for creating publications grew, therefore leaving us with many artists, architects, theorists, etc, who began publishing more rapidly than previously seen. Yet the material exploring this drastic change has not been addressed in relation to its effects on architectural literature.

More specifically, we do not have a comprehensive understanding of Carlo Fontana's publications either. Although Hager wrote extensively on him, little is to be said of the books that had such a central role in the rise of the architectural monograph.

Aside from Hager's²⁰ introductory essays to the republished versions of Fontana's treatise, there is nothing that expands on them in relation to their larger roles being relevant to the origins of the architectural monograph. This is where my salient interest is: expanding on Fontana's publications and relating them more specifically to the larger picture of architectural monographs being created around the late Baroque era. Beginning in 1694, with *Il Tempio Vaticano*, and the first edition of *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio*, to the revised and expanded version in 1708 of the Montecitorio text, to the posthumously published *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* in 1725, we see three unique yet consistent contexts for understanding what exactly an architectural monograph is. Also, by looking at these publications, we may be able to cast the architect, engineer, and publisher in a new light in his role as one of the originators of the architectural monograph genre.

²⁰ Arnaldo Bruschi, "Le 'Regole' Praticate Dagli Antichia Dai Moderni," in *Il Tempio Vaticano* (Milano: Mondadori Electi spa, 2003), LXXX – XCIV. As well as others such as Arnaldo Bruschi, who wrote essays for *Il Tempio Vaticano*.

Chapter One - *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand. / When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall. / And when Rome falls - the World."

The Venerable Bede

Carlo Fontana began writing *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto e Delineato* during the late Seicento. The monograph, accompanied by prints engraved by Domenico Franceschino after drawings made by Fontana, is a large folio, (but small in comparison to *Il Tempio Vaticano*) that consists of five books, each broken into smaller chapters. The cover, adorned with a floral pattern but no title, is not suggestive of the treatise hidden within. (Figure 1.1) Though once opened, the browning title page and faded pressed ink shows the architectural monograph's age. (Figure 1.2)

What can be found within are the detailed plans for the reconstruction of the Colosseum along with proposals for a new temple dedicated to the Christians sacrificed in the festivities that took place in the arena during the early centuries after its completion. Fontana's goal was to outline a project that would have been completed, while also creating a publication documenting his ideas. The concept of distributing a monograph based solely on one modern structure was a relatively new development, which begs the question, who was the audience for this work? The creation of a treatise such as this succeeded publications such as Giovanni Battista Falda's, though it preceded the highly popular *Magnificenze*, created by Giuseppe Vasi. Both were works were highly different than what Fontana was doing, but none-the-less highlight the existence of the "common" audience, interested in learning more about Roman history and its

landscape. Both artists produced their work for the greater public's consumption. Is it safe to infer that although *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* was part of a relatively new genre of monograph, it too was created for the public? Or was this the unintentional side effect of creating the book for the benefit of Pope Clement XI? If it was in fact created with the greater public's interest in mind, this points to Fontana's interest in inserting himself into what could now be called popular culture by situating himself in relation to a monument such as the Colosseum.

Furthermore, the publication of the Flavian Amphitheater with the project for an erection of a church was published posthumously in 1725.²¹ We can speculate as to why the text was not published until the architect's passing, one main reason being that the project had lost its funding and the intention for publications may have been lost without this support, which we will explore further in this chapter. However, the Colosseum monograph was already listed among Fontana's theoretical writings in 1696, so we can assume that it must have been more or less completed by then. We do know that it was completed by 1707²² because of a statement found in a note to the forward of one edition of *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*, as well as the first plate which reads, "Pianta Terrena delle residuali Parti che si trovano in piedi dell'Anfiteatro Flavio l'anno 1708."²³ But why was it published when it was, nearly ten years after Fontana's death? Before we answer these

²¹ Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," 319.

²² Ibid., 331.

²³ Carlo Fontana, *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto E Delineato Dal Cavaliere* (Rome, Italy, M. DCC XXV), pl. I. (Ibid., 332.)

questions it is essential that we understand what Fontana researched before completing his monograph.

Plans for the new use of the Flavian Amphitheater began as far back as 1517, as the confraternity of the Gonfalone, who financed their plays held at the Colosseum through indulgences, decided that despite Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses against taking indulgences, they would continue the plays (although they grew immensely in their expense), and would also move forward with plans for the construction of a chapel. In 1519, the "readapting" of the arena began to take place while the chapel consisted of houses and buildings that had previously been acquired by the confraternity.²⁴ Increasing expenditure financially ruined the confraternity and they were forced to cease any production of plays or other festivities. The Sack of Rome in 1527 brought the confraternity temporarily to a close.²⁵ It was not until 1622 that the decision to repair the dilapidated chapel was finalized. Renamed Santa Maria della Pietà, the revision of this church enhanced the Colosseum as the site for martyrdom, which only grew with papal interest. It was Pope Clement X who placed plaques at the amphitheater celebrating the purging of pagan "impure superstition by the blood of the martyrs." He was the first pope to place official interest in the conception of a temple there.²⁶

After Benedetto Odescalchi was elected Pope Innocent XI, Cardinal Francesco Barberini transmitted the commission of a proposal for a church in the Colosseum, which

²⁴ Barbara Wisch and Nerida Newbigin, "A Towering O: The Colosseum as Theater," in *Acting on Faith: The Confraternity of the Gonfalone in Renaissance Rome* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2013), 297.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 298.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 301.

he most likely received from Pope Clement X. The contract dates between September 21, 1676 with the election of the pope and before 1679, around Barberini's death. It was then that Bernini received the offer for the commission.²⁷ After he declined, it went to his successor, Carlo Fontana. This transmission took place before the election of Pope Clement XI, though it was officially carried out after his election.²⁸ Pope Clement XI also elected Fontana to be his official architect. Considering that the popes primary motives for commissioning artworks involved urban architecture and monuments, primarily those of pagan and Christian relation, it is not surprising that Fontana held influence over such official papal projects.²⁹ However, it should be noted that once Fontana had word from Pope Innocent XI that the commission belonged to him, his plans began, though with no certainty they would continue to interest Clement.³⁰

One may speculate on the reasons why Bernini had been uninterested in this project. Though Hager suggests a mere disagreement on Bernini's part concerning the necessity for a reconstruction of the monument was necessary, this argument is somewhat

²⁷ Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," 322.

²⁸ It states, that not only was there a dedication to Clement by the architect, but that the drawings by Fontana found at the John Soane Musuem are embellished with the Pope's emblem, signifying him as the commissioner. (Hellmut Hager, "Introduzione," in *L'anfiteatro Flavio: Edizione Anastatica Del Manoscritto Nel Museo Di Roma* (Roma: Gangemi/Roma, n.d.), IX.)

²⁹ Christopher M. S. Johns, *Papal Art and Cultural Politics: Rome in the Age of Clement XI* (New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 29. In his research Johns has found evidence that Clement XI's commissions essentially fell under these two categories.

³⁰ Fontana may have been eager to start such a large commission, considering that the more he produced, the less likely it was that Clement would scrap the project which had begun under Innocent XI, a common issue with papal commissions. Ibid.

faulty. If one is to consider the amount of restoration that took place with New St. Peter's under Bernini's lead, then it seems the artist would have been prepared for the challenge of reconstructing the Colosseum. Let us return to the events we are certain did take place: Fontana officially continued with this commission after the election of Pope Clement XI.³¹ Impressed by the Colosseum's grandeur, the architect felt troubled that there had never been a complete treatise written on the monument.³² Fontana stated:

E più superiormente, la santa Fede Cattolica trionfante: tanto più, che la maggior Parte dei Profani Edificii Antichi, dedicati à falsi Numi, furono da Sommi Pontefici, e dai primitivi Christiani, convertiti e tramutati in Onore del nostro Dio, ed à Gloria de' più rinomati Eroi della Fede; e ciò in specie accadde all' antico e famoso Pantheon, al Tempio della Minerva, à quello di Faustina, à quel di Romulo, à quel di Marte, all'Erario Publico, e finalmente per Lasciarne tant' altri al celebre Tempio di Saturno.³³

This was reason enough for Fontana to take on the commission; as his reputation grew, so did his interest in monumental constructions. It is clear from what he writes that he believed he was capable and worthy of such an important undertaking.

However, for a comprehensive understanding of what Fontana was working with and how exactly his designs would affect the colossal monument, it is important to understand the theater's history. In 80 AD, the Emperor Vespasian's son, Titus, dedicated the Amphitheater of the Flavians. To celebrate the completion, approximately 50,000 people - the maximum capacity of the theater - gathered daily for a 100-day festival. This

³¹ Ibid.

³² Carlo Fontana, *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto e Delineato* (Nell Haia: Appresso I. Vaillant, 1725), 2.

³³ Ibid., 160.

included the popular gladiator games, elaborate staging of executions through the use of Greek dramas, and wild beast shows.³⁴

The amphitheater was unlike anything built before it. This monumental structure, the biggest theater ever built in Rome, measured 188 meters by 156 meters, which is roughly double, even triple the size of the theaters that preceded it. Aside from its proportions, the placement of this monumental structure was far removed from early amphitheater locations. It is no coincidence that this theater, which exists as one of the largest ever seen at the time of its inauguration, was built as a central monument in the city. This made access to the stadium convenient for the 50,000 plus occupants attending events.

The initial construction was no easy engineering feat. The description Fontana references came from recording what was left of the foundation, as well as relying on numismatics. Coins of the period were important visual media to document the intricate details of the facade of the arena, that can no longer be deciphered from what still exists today. However, it is hard to say whether such details were already destroyed during Fontana's time. Although Fontana does make an effort to show the crumbling state of the structure, the more intricate details escape his renderings. Katherine Welch details the elaborate aspects of what comprised the Colosseum, in the complexities of the foundation, staircases, trenches, and eighty archways which lined the three stories and

³⁴ Katherine E. Welch, "The Colosseum: Canonization of the Amphitheatre Building Type," in *The Roman Amphitheatre: From Its Origins to the Colosseum* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 131 and 145.

acted as entrance points on the ground floor.³⁵ We see from Welch's description the sophistication and level of detail with which the Colosseum was constructed. This was precisely the kind of detail that Fontana would have felt necessary to detail for the most accurate representation of the theater.

By Fontana's lifetime, the Colosseum had gradually given in to decay due to the passage of time and lack of use, (Figure 1.3) with the last restoration of the arena taking place during the reign of Theodoric. Bouts of inactivity wore down the theater. Natural events increased the disrepair of the monument, such as earthquakes which had taken place over the centuries adding to the fracturing structure. One may hypothesize that the most destructive aspect to the structure was the removal of the parts of the Colosseum to be used in other construction. Starting primarily in the Renaissance, this practice continued into the 18th century with many of the contemporary works being constructed out of older ruins from the Colosseum.³⁶ Rather than importing materials from elsewhere, it was less time consuming and more cost-effective to rework the found material lying around unused. Natural decay is something that Roman monuments are familiar with and many have succumbed to, but the intensifying destruction of the Colosseum due to the reuse of its foundational structure became an increasing worry; not only was it furthering the damage to the theater, it was dismantling it. Had this practice continued, there may be little left of the Colosseum to study.

³⁵ Ibid., 134–135.

³⁶ Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," 321.

Through this destruction, events were still taking place at the Colosseum. Fontana himself had been in charge of a bullfight that took place at the theater in 1671. However, over a period of time, projects for secular buildings and attempts at irreligious entertainment had taken place at the amphitheater. One major spectacle that took place at the Colosseum until 1539, was the consistent theatrical and ritual activities enacted by the confraternity of the Gonfalone.³⁷ These events may have affected Fontana's conception for the idea of a temple dedicated to Christian martyrdom, as we have previously seen.

The Monograph and its Prints

In preparing his designs for the Colosseum, the meticulous architect spent large amounts of money and time to excavate the remaining parts of the structure left unexposed by the debris that had accumulated. Many historians have disputed the intention of Fontana's treatise, stating it was merely an art-historical speculation. Hager believes it is precisely Fontana's practical considerations which support the idea that he intended for the structure to be completed in real life.³⁸ In this manner, Fontana would be able to make the most accurate of measurements to ensure his designs were in fact viable towards actualization.

This level of detail is readily apparent when viewing the prints of the Colosseum. For example, if we take a look at figure 1.4, we not only see the true-to-life deterioration

³⁷ Barbara Wisch, "The Colosseum as a Site for Sacred Theater: A Pre-History of Carlo Fontana's Project," in *An Architectural Progress in the Renaissance and Baroque: Sojourns In and Out of Italy*, ed. Henry A. Millon and Susan Scott Munshower, vol. 1 (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, n.d.), 95. (I will be adding a footnote on who the Gonfalone were, once I have received the text (also by Wisch) on their origins.)

³⁸ Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the "Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," 319.

of the Colosseum's edifice, we see what appears to be a natural growth which consumes the exposed layers of the façade. Furthermore, the intricacy of the etching juxtaposed against Fontana's outlines for the new conception of the Colosseum add a dimension to the print that, although not unique to Fontana, adds to the viewers understanding of Fontana's ideas. This is further understood as we look at figure 1.9, with Fontana's conception for the temple dedicated to the martyrs. Once again the level of detail that is expended to showcase Fontana's conception falls in line with previous other architectural publications, but this does not detract from this prints fine features. No stone is left unturned as Fontana details the structure as a whole as well as the meticulous ornamentation of the cupola. What is most striking about this print however, is our viewing of it from an outdoor perspective. Fontana achieves this by strategically placing the shade in a naturalistic manner to mimic the effect of the rising or setting sunlight on the structure. This reinforces it's placement as a building within a much larger, open, structure, uninhibited by shade.

However, it is in figures 1.5 and 1.6 that we see Fontana's most unique capabilities in printing. As previously stated, scenographic prints of this manner were pioneered by Fontana. We have not previously seen this level of intricacy in the details pertaining to the structure or most importantly in the staging of historical figures placed throughout the interior of the theater to showcase the size, scale, and context of the theater. Fontana has chosen to dedicate several prints to model the method he has chosen for writing. It is in these prints that we see his understanding of the theater's role in antiquity, which is easily accessed by the viewer who quite simply understands that we

are looking at gladiators and spectators. It gives it the contextual emphasis that is so important to Fontana, while showcasing the monument in its greatest state, a state which Fontana is insuring the viewer the Colosseum will return back to. This leads us to the written portion of Fontana's publication, where he outlines what he has skillfully showcased in his prints.

The five books that comprise the monograph start with the description of the present state of the Colosseum. In this first book are six chapters which focus on the residual parts of the structure, breaking each chapter up by first, second, and third floors, to the exterior and interior of the Colosseum, and lastly an interesting emphasis on the juxtaposition between the profile view of the amphitheater as it stands in comparison to how it would have looked in its original state. (Figure 1.4) Fontana, after writing a brief explanation, (never a full page as in his other publications as we will see, but rather a lengthy paragraph confined to one page, two at the most) expertly weaves the prints of the structure between the chapters, so the reader engages with his renderings of the residual parts while reading more specifically about them. He preferences each set of images with an index to guide the reader through what they are looking at specifically. This is important because it leads the viewer to believe that the prints are the central focus of the publication and that the text are there to supplement the viewer's understanding of the images. It is at this point that Fontana's uses his life-like representations of the current state of the edifice which have previously mentioned, showcasing the structure and overgrowth of plant life due to the Colosseum's disrepair and disuse, as can be seen in figure 1.4. These specific details are indicative of Fontana's

attention to detail and his desire to represent the Colosseum completely for the reader's clarification.

More descriptive of the particular parts of the amphitheater, is book two, where we see an emphasis placed exclusively on its original construction. This book, due to the rich details and history of the Colosseum is far more extensive than the first book in this series. Fontana takes painstaking efforts to showcase each particular detail of each of the levels of the amphitheater, with a chapter that focuses on the harnessing and tenting used in the original construction during performances and to keep from flooding the interior, which technically we now know was not the actual case for tenting the Colosseum, but this showcases the *Baroque* understanding of the different facets of the structure. He also reconstructs the exterior which details the roman decoration on the first level of the facade, which consisted of the substitution of Tuscan order over the Doric columns, with the rest of the levels consisting of a more Greek understanding of the orders. The decorations for the front of the Colosseum were unusual and never before seen in any previous theater facades. It was decorated with shields, a triumphal arch, Greek architectural orders and filled with statues of Greek subject matter, mixed with both Roman and Greek style.³⁹ However, the most unique aspect of the chapter is something not previously seen in other architectural publications, and that is his scenographic print showcasing figures in relation to the Colosseum to give the reader an exact scale of the edifice. (Figures 1.5 and 1.6) Of my studies in architectural publications preceding and during the Baroque, this kind of scale and imagery was not used in structural depictions

³⁹ Welch, "The Colosseum: Canonization of the Amphitheatre Building Type," 141.

and was quite unusual though intriguing. Fontana took advantage of this and utilized his historical understanding to represent figures that would have occupied the spaces previously, Roman soldiers, gladiators, and audience members alike, each depicted in their own fashion.

However, in books three and four we begin to see Fontana's inspiration for the reimagining of the amphitheater as he writes about both the secular and the sacred history of the monument. These chapters are rather devoid of any imagery as well, unlike the rest of the books in this series. Book three addresses foundational matters that arose due to various factors. Theaters were initially placed on the outskirts of Rome, though the Colosseum found its home as a central monument within the Roman city. This change in site occurred for several reasons; the earth of the urban landscape of Rome was perfect for retaining the weight of such a structure due to the compact clay upon which it sat, a weight which was only further heightened by the common issue of flooding in the theater, a problem that could be easily solved with Rome's drainage system, which it was already equipped with.⁴⁰

Alternatively, book four refrains from this more logical understanding of the Colosseum's placement in Rome, to a more sacred study of the structure, which appears to be of primary importance to Fontana because it details who the martyred saints were and how they died in fourteen chapters. Each chapter is dedicated to a different saint or incident having occurred in the arena. However, we once again are looking at a primarily *Baroque* understanding of the Colosseum's use, as we now know that saints were not in

⁴⁰ Ibid., 132.

fact martyred here, but that the Colosseum was a dedicated space to remember the saints' deaths. Even under this misunderstanding, it is cunning organization, detailing the traumatic events that took place, before presenting the reader with the optimistic dedication of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' temple. This structure would immortalize the sacrifice of the Christians who had died in the monument, and solidify Fontana's treatise as one of the more unique instances of any of his publications, by creating something that was not already in existence, as opposed to both of the other publications to be addressed.

Though the entire treatise is incredibly substantial and integral to the late-baroque era of architectural publications, there is one particular aspect that should be of utmost importance. In arguing that the publication of contemporary structures was relevant, we should focus on the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' temple, the most contemporary aspect of an otherwise antiquity-based reconstruction. Book five is the final book and completes Fontana's journey through the history and present state of the Colosseum, by describing his conception for the church to be placed within the structure dedicated to those saints who had been martyred in the space. As we can see, the temple, to be fitted at the main entrance (the most eastern entrance) of the Colosseum, would be one of the first sites the viewer would encounter after walking into the structure. (Figure 1.7) In this print, we see that Fontana has designed a profile view of the arena with the full design of the temple in the center. On one side he shows the "Volte in pendenza, che sostenevano i Gradi," while on the other side he depicts a much higher wall to protect the attendees from the afternoon sun. Beneath this, the architect has given a floor plan of the placement of the temple in relation to the rest of the amphitheater. We can see his positioning of a fountain

at the westernmost entrance of the arena.⁴¹ However, in figure 1.8 we can see more clearly his plan for the interior the temple. First, there is the outer wall of arcades that advance to the temple, and within this row there are thicker structures which are the actual walls. The numbers ascribed to each of the cut-outs describe the interior structures, such as, the confessionals, and vestibules for priests in preparation for mass.⁴²

Continuing on, Fontana shows the complete design for the facade of the temple in figure 1.9. Based similarly on the concept for the dome of St. Peter's Basilica, the rotunda is comprised of three levels. On page 169 and plate 23, the architect depicts the ornamental factors of the temple. The first level is made up of archways adorned with ionic columns leading to the main entrance of the temple. It is on the second level that we can see where Fontana planned to place Pope Clement XI's emblem, centered directly over the main entrance. The most notable figure is the symbol of the triumphant catholic faith that sits atop the dome, surrounded by the four evangelists.⁴³ Lastly, Fontana has conceived of a prospective interior shown in a cut-away profile in plate 24. (Figure 1.10) What differentiates this print from the others we have seen is that it shows the altar with the baldachino consisting of four angels, with chapels on either side.

Fontana's design is evidence of the influence that Bernini held over him. The architect takes from Bernini's conception of parts of St. Peter's Basilica such as the baldachino. Utilizing the popular design that Bernini conceived of for St. Peter's would have been a smart move for Fontana, if he were in fact attempting to publish his treatise

⁴¹ Fontana, *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto e Delineato*, 163.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 167.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 169.

for a wider, more public audience. This can be better explored by looking at the works of Fontana's peers.

Although Fontana had endeavored to great lengths to render the Colosseum's measurements as accurately as possible, extending time and money and valuable man-hours, the commission was never seen through. The explanations for this are mere speculation, as mine will be, but there is some evidence to bring forth. The commission itself, as we have stated, was handed down from Cardinal Francesco Barberini to Pope Innocent XI and then down the line to Pope Clement XI. It is easy to assume that along with this transmission the desire for such a grand commission had lost its steam and henceforth any exerted efforts that may have existed previously to see this construction through withered. Furthermore, the economy of the Papal State had declined, which was only worsened by the advent of the Turkish War as well as the Spanish War, where the financial burden was expended and thus left Fontana without the means to complete his monumental construction.⁴⁴ With no financing from Protestant Europe, France, England, or northern Europe, to supplement the financial blow taken by Italy, there were almost no means with which to support supplementary projects. These factors alone are enough to assume that what Fontana envisioned was not feasible for the papacy any longer. If we are to go one step further, commissions for other structures were taking place so the desire to have numerous smaller works created at a lesser cost may have been more appealing than one monumental project which may not have been able to withstand the

⁴⁴ Hager, "Carlo Fontana's Project for a Church in the Honour of the 'Ecclesia Triumphans' in the Colosseum, Rome," 335–336.

completion of such an extensive reconstruction. However, Fontana managed to complete the publication by 1707, with full text and images of his concepts, though it would not be published until after his death, in 1725.

City and Monument Prints as Popular Commodity

Giovanni Battista Falda was a contemporary of Fontana's who has been highly regarded for his topographical prints of Rome during the late Seicento. In these works, Joseph Connors states, "Falda makes it seem as though he had flown over the city many times, and simultaneously studied every single street and building from the ground. He shows a transit with a magnetic compass to make us think that he measured the city."⁴⁵ After Falda arrived in Rome at a young age to study with Bernini, he participated in an almost identical group of *capomaestri* as Fontana. Initially he began working in Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi's workshop. It was Giacomo who sent Falda to study beneath Borromini and Cortona, and possibly Bernini as well, which is quite similar to Fontana's early beginnings.⁴⁶

Though Falda's primary interests lie in recreating the entirety of Rome, he was considered the best at what he did. Alternatively, Fontana was primarily interested in singular places or monuments, as we can see from his publications. However, both of these artists offer an interesting case study into how exactly prints of Rome during this

⁴⁵ Joseph Connors, "Giovanni Battista Falda and Lievin Cruyl: Rivalry between Printmakers and Publishers in the Mapping of Rome," *In Pianta Di Roma Dal Rinascimento ai Catasti*, n.d., 8, accessed September 30, 2015.

⁴⁶ Joseph Connors, "Giovanni Battista Falda and Lievin Cruyl: Rivalry between Printmakers and Publishers in the Mapping of Rome," *In Pianta Di Roma Dal Rinascimento Ai Catasti*, n.d., 2, accessed September 30, 2015.

period functioned. Falda is a primary example of how the documentation of Roman sites were received positively during the late Seicento, and shows that there was in fact a market, not only for prints of antiquity, but of contemporary Rome. (Figure 1.11)

Giuseppe Vasi was another printmaker whose works succeeded both Falda and Fontana's, and whose interest in Roman landmarks most closely relates to Fontana's visions. Vasi rose to popularity by focusing his prints on highly detailed reproductions of Roman contemporary architecture and ancient monuments. As John Pinto states:

It was during the eighteenth century that papal Rome received its definitive form. The vast majority of Vasi's prints depict the modern city; antiquities and ruins are not privileged, as they are in the work of his contemporary Piranesi, while the institutions, churches and private and public places that collectively molded the social and religious life of papal Rome predominate. Vasi's lens is inclusive and integrates architectural monuments into the urban fabric of the city, rather than isolating them from it.⁴⁷

Vasi's work is emblematic of the interest in more contemporaneous documentation of Rome. This concentration had gradually been built by his predecessors such as Falda and Fontana, who turned their interest from strictly antique works to more recent documentations, whether monumental or topographical. We can see in Vasi's popularity the influence that someone such as Fontana may have had, when looking at the pen-work styled, straightforward prints of urban Rome. These prints were widely purchased by participants of the Grand Tour. This again reinforces that during and after Fontana's time the need or demand for prints such as these was present and even possibly increasing with certain events. (Figure 1.12)

⁴⁷ John A. Pinto, "Giuseppe Vasi as Interpreter of the Eighteenth-Century Architecture of Rome," in *Giuseppe Vasi's Rome: Lasting Impressions from the Age of the Grand Tour* (Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon Press, 2010), 53.

The increasing popularity of publications and prints in general with city views of Rome and its monuments, hint at the possibility of Fontana's interest in partaking not only in creating publication for those involved in the commission for rebuilding the Colosseum, but a book which had the potential to be utilized to entertain different readers, bringing Fontana a wider audience. So far as we know, the work was not published, that we know of, in any other language, which suggests that its primary function was to serve a strictly Italian readership. However, this does not rule out the possibility that Fontana may have been interested in reissuing the work at a later date for a more public audience, had the Colosseum been rebuilt. As we will see later, he was familiar with publishing works in other languages for a wider audience, with his 1694 publication entitled, *Il Tempio Vaticano*. The work was technically finished in 1707, making it possible that Fontana had the intention of publishing it long before the 1725 date when it was actually released. However, due to the death of his son (which will be discussed in the following chapter) and Fontana's own subsequent death, this was impossible. It is for these reasons that we do not know whether *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* would have had a larger impact on a more public audience had it been published earlier.

Along with the ever-present interest in the Colosseum and its history, there is evidence of an audience for publications having to do with contemporary architectural publications. We see this in the popularity of Falda's publications. Although the original intent for *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* was to produce a work that would be appropriate for presentation to the pope, there is no doubt that Fontana knew the value of interest placed in this ancient Roman monument. What made it all the more intriguing was the

introduction of a completely new use for the arena; one that would venerate the martyred saints of Christianity, and allow for a plausible and practical use of an otherwise degenerating structure. Stylistically inspired by the construction at St. Peter's furthers the interest that the layman would have had in a monograph detailing such an extensive reconstruction. The historical background of the arena and the extensive papal interest in the structure only fosters this argument. However, as we will see in the following chapters, Fontana alters his approach to publishing about the more contemporary works already under construction quite differently than we have seen here, offering yet another unique perspective of the architectural monograph genre.



Figure 1.1: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Cover of *L'Anfiteatro Flavio Descritto e Delineato*, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

L'ANFITEATRO
FLAVIO
DESCRITTO
E
DELINEATO
DAL CAVALIERE
CARLO FONTANA.



NELL' HAIA,
Appresso ISACO VAILLANT,
M. DCC. XXV.

Figure 1.2: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Title Page, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

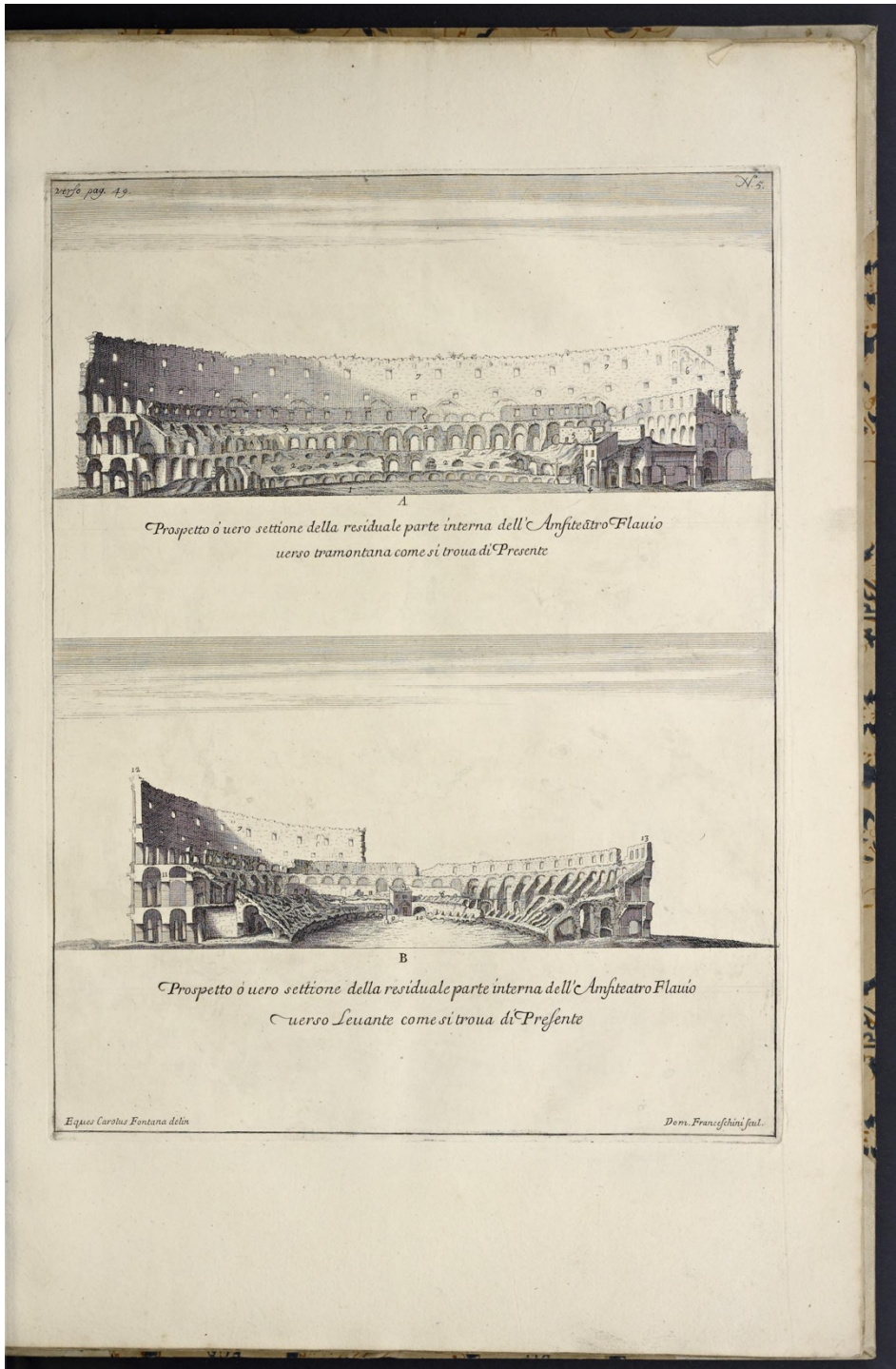


Figure 1.3: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 5, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute



Figure 1.5: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 19, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute



Figure 1.6: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 19, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

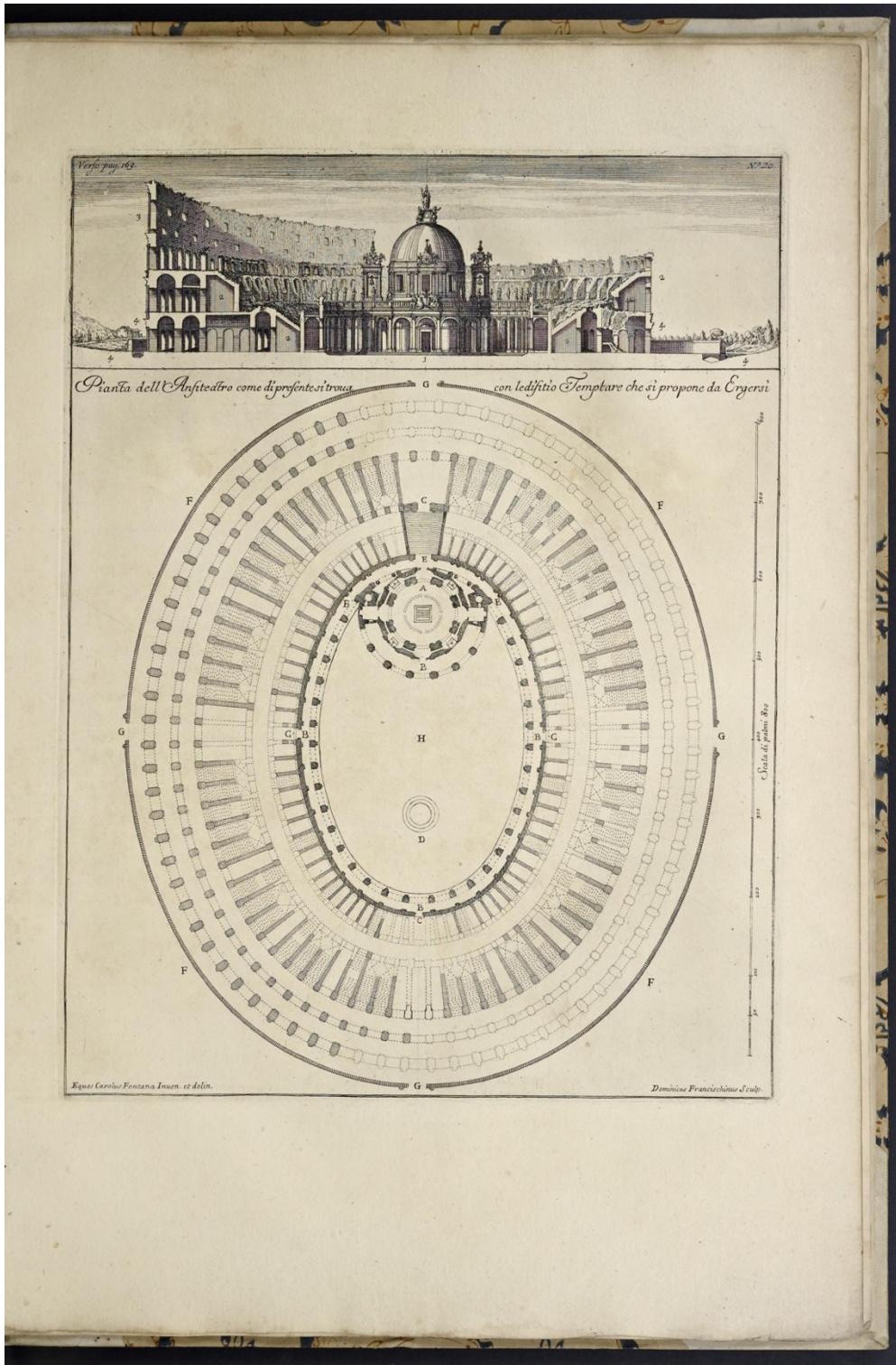


Figure 1.7: Domenico Francheshino after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 20, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

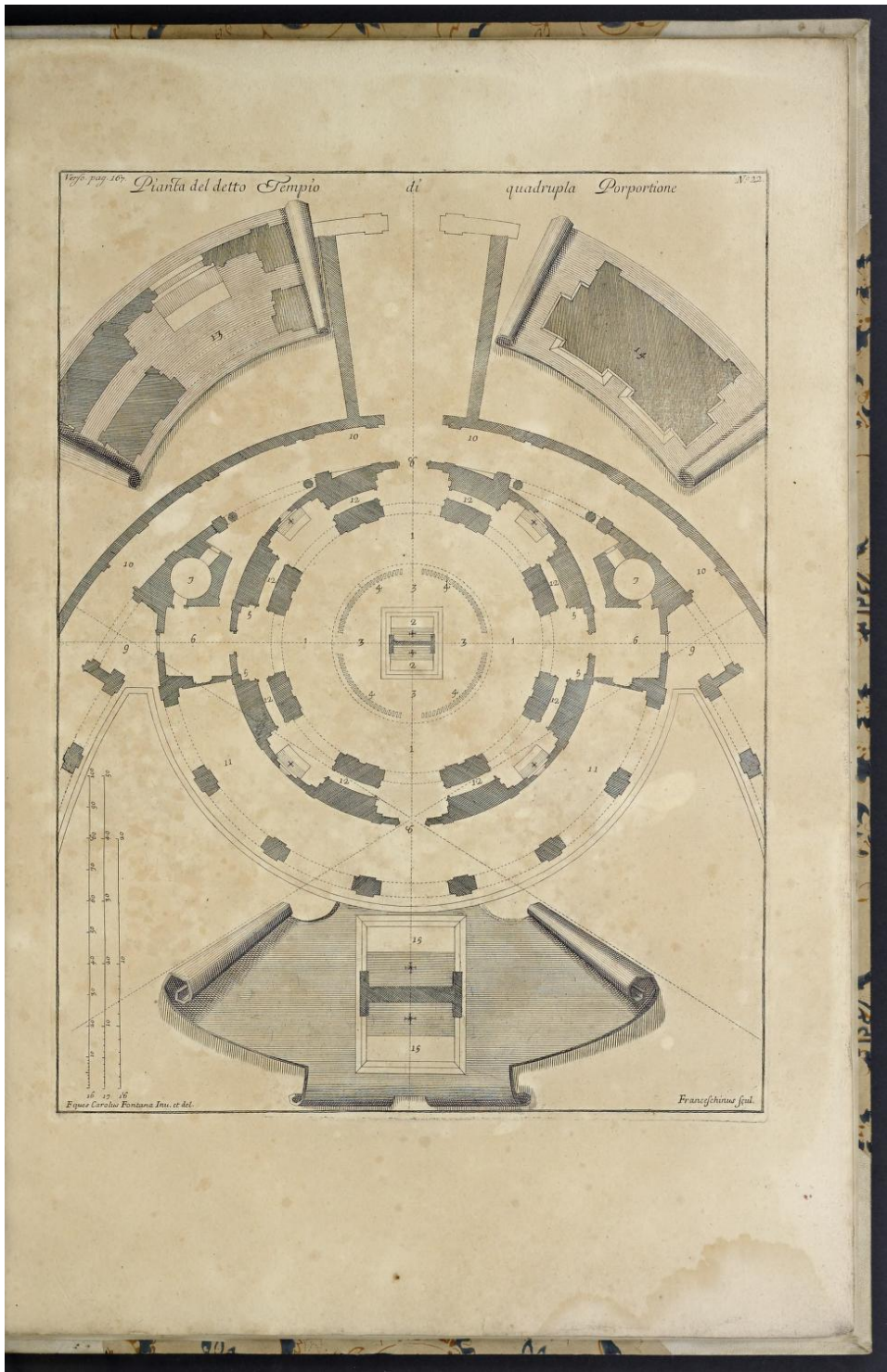


Figure 1.8: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 22, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute



Figure 1.9: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 23, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute

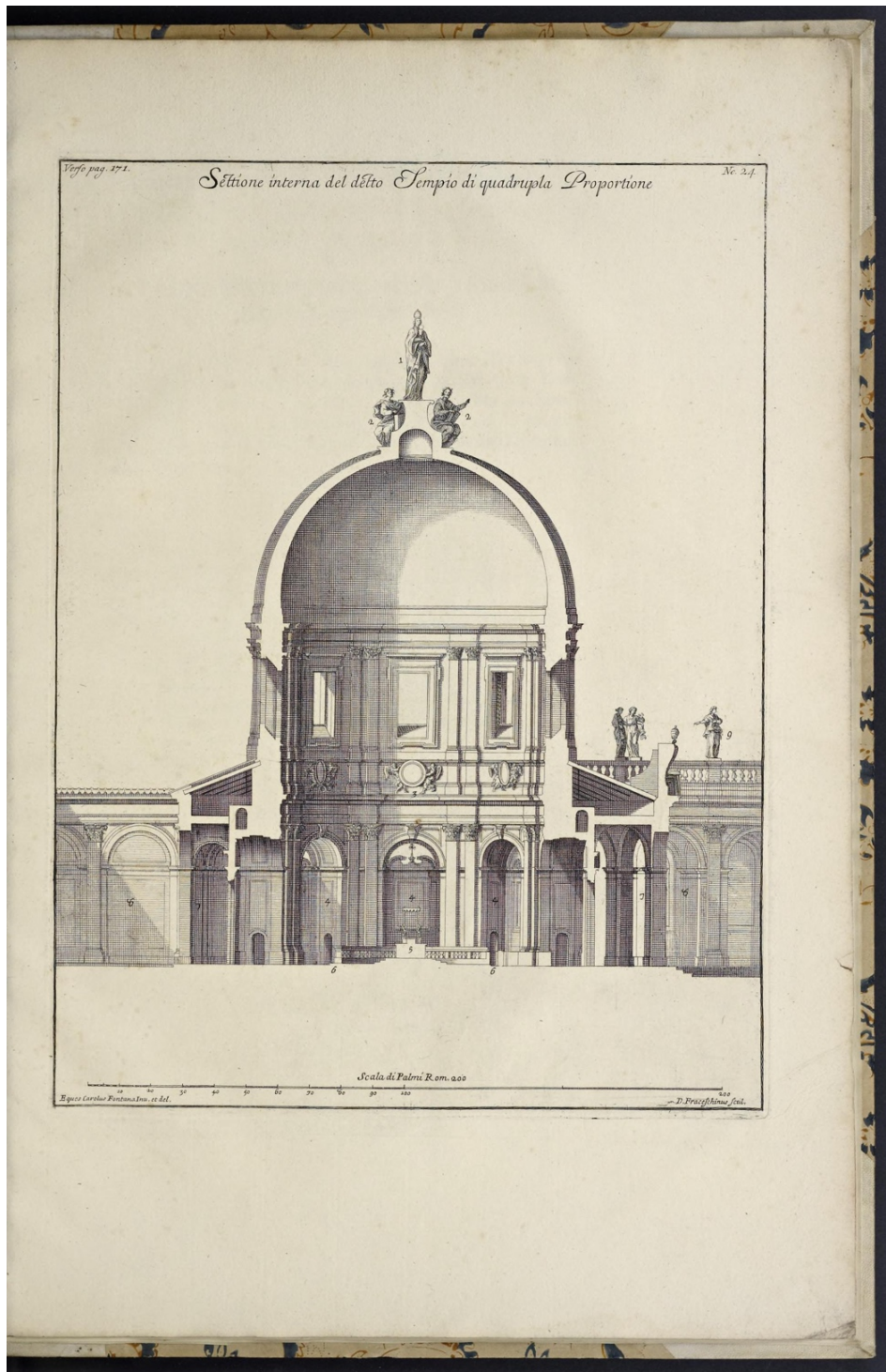


Figure 1.10: Domenico Francheshini after drawings by Carlo Fontana, Plate 23, 1696-1707, Roma, from the archive of the Getty Research Institute



FONTANA CELEBRE D'ACQUA ACETOSA.

fuori la Porta del Popolo, à destra, sù la riva del Teuere. Architeto del Cau. Gio. Lorenzo Bernini, l'acqua è acida, e minerale, e si beue per effere salutare à molti mali.

G. B. Falda del. et inc.

G. Jac. Rossi le stampa in Roma alla pace co. P. del. S. P.

Figure 1.11: Giovanni Battista Falda, Fontana Celebre D'Aqua Acetosa, 1719, Etching

Chapter 2 - *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio*

Plans for Palazzo Montecitorio began in 1653, when Prince Nicolò Ludovisi, who was married to the niece of Pope Innocent X, commissioned a palace in Campo Martio. This occurred after having bought the building sites on Montecitorio in April of that year.⁴⁸ The prince requested Gian Lorenzo Bernini, though he knew that Pope Innocent X was not as fond of the artist and architect as he was of Francesco Borromini. Paolo Portoghesi suggests that the Pope disliked Bernini so intensely that he had Bernini's bell tower at St. Peter's torn down. However, the prince was not fazed by this complication. In one anecdote, the prince supposedly devised a plan for Bernini to build a model of the potential palace, which would then be placed in the main hall of their home where Pope Innocent would stumble upon the concept without knowing that it belonged to Bernini. The pope was so taken with the model, he declared that Bernini must design the new palace.⁴⁹ Thus Ludovisi signed all contracts for the construction of the palace a month after buying the land.⁵⁰ The architect designed a polyptych scheme, which had appeared in two of Borromini's projects for Innocent X. As Paolo Portoghesi states, "If this

⁴⁸ Dorothy Metzger Habel, *"When All of Rome Was under Construction": The Building Process in Baroque Rome* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), 29.

⁴⁹ Paolo Portoghesi and Renata Cristina Mazzantini, *Palazzo Montecitorio: il palazzo barocco* (Electa, 2009), 9. It should be noted that Prince Ludovisi was not the only one who desired a palace. Pope Innocent X wanted another Pamphili palace as well, one that would rival the existing palaces dedicated to the Farnese, Borghese, and Barberini families. However, Pope Innocent X and Prince Ludovisi would pass before the completion of the building. It is also important that this story shows up in other forms as well, as a sort of trope for how artists won favor for papal commissions when the artist is not in favor with the Pope.

⁵⁰ Habel, *"When All of Rome Was under Construction": The Building Process in Baroque Rome*, 29.

hypothesis of an approach to Borromini's aesthetic can help us understand Bernini's decisions in 1650's, it is clear that in his return to favor he was indebted to his rival for no more than a number of pointers, which he modified substantially by his power of synthesis and absorbed into a different artistic vision."⁵¹

Although Bernini can be credited for the main contributions to the facade of the Palazzo Montecitorio, he never saw the commission through. Rather, forty years after he stepped away from the unfinished project, Carlo Fontana reinvigorated Bernini's design while simultaneously adding his own perspective and finalizing the completion of this regal palace. "Of his works as an architect, Montecitorio - the felicitous completion of a project that was not his own - is definitely the most successful."⁵² However, it is important that even in today's studies of the Montecitorio, it is primarily attributed to Bernini, not Carlo Fontana. This is most likely due to Bernini's early contributions, which Fontana's designs are founded on.

Portoghesi states that Bernini repurposed a design that was of utmost interest to him for both the Montecitorio, as well as the Louvre, which was rejected. Fontana used the existing facade, which arose from the design that Bernini had created, but made several embellishments, most notably the addition of the bell tower over the entrance to the curia.⁵³ Along with the completion of the structure, the courtyard and surrounding area may also be attributed to Fontana as well as his son, Francesco Fontana, with the

⁵¹ Portoghesi and Mazzantini, *Palazzo Montecitorio*, 15.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 15.

erection of the Column of Antoninus. This would be the only work completed by the architect with a matching publication describing his work, in a monograph format.

Housed in the Getty's special collection are two different versions of Fontana's architectural monograph, *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio*, detailing the history and construction of the Montecitorio. The first one, published in 1694, was the original basis for my research, and is a briefer recollection of the history of Campo Martio with an overview, or what could be better described as an introduction to his prospective design interest for the Montecitorio. The much larger edition, published 14 years later in 1708, is more comprehensive. This edition is separated into two books. The first book of this edition is structurally and contextually similar to the smaller version, the only major difference being the substitution of a new chapter which replaces the earlier edition's chapter seven on the "Qualita di figura del nuovo Edificio, e parti attenti." However, with the republication of this monograph came the addition of a second book. This book is more precise about the construction Fontana undertook, his personal stories of rumors and obstacles he overcame during the building process, and his son's involvement in moving the Column of Antoninus.

Though the earlier edition was the initial one used for this research, the comprehensiveness of the 1708 edition in detailing the processes which Fontana employed, has given me more insight due to the fact that Fontana expanded on the process undertaken for completing the curia, replacing the outline of the original addition. For this reason, the later edition will be referenced for the remainder of this chapter, unless otherwise stated. The existence of this later edition is important because it may

signify that there was a consumer demand for the republication of the 1694 edition, allowing Fontana the opportunity not only to rewrite his initial book, but to publish a second book as part of the 1708 edition which would enable him to express his concerns and contributions to the erection of the Montecitorio. However, it could be argued that these events supplement a better understanding of the process which was undertaken by Fontana while the Montecitorio was under construction, they appear more so to muddle and distract from the architect's writing on the more specific aspects of his design contributions to the structure.

Before we look at the architect's writings, it is important to notice the differences in the prints utilized in this publication than as seen in *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*. The prints used in the expanded edition of *Sopra Il Montecitorio* were created from the same master plates as seen in the 1694 edition. We know this because there is no discernible difference in either set of the prints, and both sets were created by the Italian print master, Alessandro Specchi, who signed the images with the Latin spelling of his name, Alexander Speculus. However, both publications which I have accessed at the Getty, are printed in Italian, without Latin translations. Because of Specchi's use of the Latin spelling of his name, this may hint that there are additional editions in Latin, which would mean that this publication was possibly circulated to a wider audience. As of now, there is no further evidence of this. It is important to note that Specchi is credited with having very lively and theatrical prints, with interesting or unusual perspectives. These qualities have been attributed to Fontana's renditions of architecture as well, as he is credited with being a crucial figure in the advent of "scenographic" images, which allow

prints to seem more active while simultaneously showing scale and giving contextual information about the kind of figures found in the establishments depicted, as we have previously seen in chapter one. For this reason, it is plausible that Specchi's prints are created after Fontana's own drawings. This has not been stated in any of the research but we do know that Specchi was also Fontana's printer for *Il Tempio Vaticano*, and those prints were indeed after Fontana's drawings and are very similar stylistically, which makes it credible that they fostered the same relationship for both texts.

There are not nearly as many images accompanying this text as we have previously seen with *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*, which detracts from Fontana's writings. Without the weaving of prints throughout his writings to enhance the reader's understanding, the material becomes dense and less accessible to the common viewer. However, Fontana capitalizes on the lack of prints by condensing his depictions down to one page, with captions clearly outlining the function of each object depicted, as seen in figure 2.3 where he gives the viewer a general understanding of the Roman city's landscape of monuments during antiquity. Clear, and concise, the viewer is able to easily navigate the outline and make sense of the Montecitorio's placement within the larger landscape. But it is figure 2.2 which stands out, as once again we are seeing a version of Fontana's scenographic print, but with surrounding landscape depicted. It is important that Fontana transitions from primarily rural depictions of the structure as seen with the Colosseum to a more city-like style, showcasing how central the Campo Martio hill is in the center of the city. You can clearly see neighboring buildings and the vast piazza of the structure, still devoid of any columns or column bases. Although Fontana does not

utilize as many prints for this publication, he manages to incorporate a lot of contextual information into the few he does have, which still functions in giving the reader some guidance, though not as much as previously seen.

However, it is the writing in *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio* that takes up the majority of this large book comprised of seventy-eight pages. It is bound in vellum, with the title placed on the spine in ink, leaving the front and back cover devoid of any design or writing. (Figure 2.1) Because of the material in which it is incased, the book appears unassuming, bland even, by comparison to its highly ornamented counterparts, *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* and *Il Tempio Vaticano*. The two books on the Montecitorio are in the unusual position of being the only publications based on an actual structure completed by Fontana. The monograph acts as an interesting juxtaposition to Fontana's more hypothetical publications. This is what makes the Montecitorio publication so interesting, though unassuming compared to the architect's other books. It perfectly combines the prints, appreciation for antiquity, and the prospective concepts for building that his other works embody, but with the physical contributions to compare them to. (Figure 2.2) Because of this, we see an authentic representation of Fontana's capabilities, not just through his writings and prints, but through the actual erection of a work that he has completed. We will cover this more later, after we have discussed the contents of his Montecitorio publication. However, it is important to keep this in mind because it is a distinguishing mark against Fontana's other publications, which may offer some insight into how the creation of the structure differs than the architects more hypothetical texts.

Fontana begins the Montecitorio monograph with the first book, *Dell'antico Monte Citorio Situato nel Campo Marzio, e d'altre cose erudite ad Esso attinenti*. This is comprised of an introduction to "Beatissimo Padre," or Pope Clement XI, followed by six chapters. The primary context for the first book is its focus on Campo Martio's history as the "Field of Mars." The first chapter references claims that the Montecitorio had previously been planned to be placed at the Campo Martio, where the curia was to be completed.⁵⁴ However, Fontana doubts what he refers to as, "these baseless claims." He cites the fact that there were no actual written references to this building, and that although the land may have been prepared, as though some building process would begin, this may actually have to do with the land's relation to the Tiber river which flows through Rome, and is situated to the West of Campo Martio.⁵⁵ For Romans, the Tiber River has long been acknowledged as both a "source and receptacle of divine power." It is how Romulus and Remus arrived to their namesake city, and how the sacred grains of Tarquinius Superbus disembarked to form the Tiber Island.⁵⁶ Also, the Via Flaminia, an important stretch of road that was most prominently used by only those of the highest

⁵⁴ Carlo Fontana, *Discorso del cavalier Carlo Fontana sopra il Monte Citorio situato nel Campo Martio, ed altre cose ad esso appartenenti, con disegni tanto degl' antichi, quanto de' moderni edificii della nuova Curia* (Rome, Italy: In Roma, Nella stamperia di Gio Francesco Buagni, 1708), 1, <https://archive.org/stream/discorsosopralan00font#page/10/mode/thumb>.

⁵⁵ Carlo Fontana, *Discorso del cavalier Carlo Fontana sopra il Monte Citorio situato nel Campo Martio, ed altre cose ad esso appartenenti, con disegni tanto degl' antichi, quanto de' moderni edificii della nuova Curia* (Rome, Italy: In Roma, Nella stamperia di Gio Francesco Buagni, 1708), 1, <https://archive.org/stream/discorsosopralan00font#page/10/mode/thumb>.

⁵⁶ Paul W. Jacobs II and Diane Atnally Conlin, *Campus Martius: The Field of Mars in the Life of Ancient Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 112.

authority, resides to the east of the campus. Due to Campo Martio's proximity to this road, it was a pivotal point along funerary processions taking place on the Flaminia. The ideal placement of the campus between these two important Roman sites makes the concept of prospective building options before the Montecitorio a possibility.⁵⁷ However, any such structures were never realized, though, as we will see, the land was utilized regularly for other activities.

In the following chapter, Fontana briefly recreates the history and uses for the Campo Martio, which has a long and significant place in Rome. As the title of this chapter suggests, the campus was originally titled "Campo Tiberino," due to its proximity to the Tiber River. Though it is later changed to Campo Martio, which Fontana states was inspired by the Temple of Mars. Before the placement of the Montecitorio, the campus was utilized for many events: holiday celebrations, horse races, and casual equestrian riding were some of the more popular events held at Campo Martio.⁵⁸

Although the history and use of the Campo Martio is important, equally imperative are the figures who utilized the space and surrounding area as well. This is where the third and fourth chapters play a pivotal role. Fontana outlines how figures from ancient Rome, such as Augustus, utilized the Citatorio to care for the less fortunate, the criminal, and to deal with necessary political proceedings. It is here he states that issues of voting, citizenship, and assemblies were dealt with as well.⁵⁹ (Figure 2.3) This is

⁵⁷ Fontana, *Discorso del cavalier Carlo Fontana sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio, ed altre cose ad esso appartenenti, con disegni tanto degl' antichi, quanto de' moderni edifici della nuova Curia*, 1708, 2.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 4,7.

important, because, as we will see, this is one of the fundamental reasons the Palazzo Ludovisi was integrated into a Roman Curia.

It is at this point that the 1694 and 1708 editions deviate from each other. The fourth chapter in the 1694 publication goes on to talk about the Equirie and Citatorio Column. However, the 1708 publication is simply titled, "Circa il Comizii." These final chapters close out Fontana's understanding of the history of the ground which the Montecitorio was built upon, solidifying his perspective that the Campo Martio is most worthy of this palace as well as for the placement of the Column of Antoninus. If we take a second to reflect here, we can see that Fontana has utilized his interest in the antiquity to portray a vivid depiction of the importance and history of the campus, but also to introduce the reader to the Column of Antoninus which plays a central role in his second book. Fontana's extensive attention to detail on the history of the land is unlike other architectural monographs of this period which explores the construction of contemporary works, as we will see later in this chapter.

This is where Fontana transitions to his second book, *Di ciò ch'è occorso nell' Alzamento del nuovo Edificio della Curia Romana situato nel Campo Marzio*. This half of the publication is much larger than the first half, consisting of fourteen chapters. It is from this point on that Fontana focuses on the contemporary aspects of the building process taking place at Montecitorio. This text, more so than the first book, or any of Fontana's other publications, expresses the architect's personal investment into the construction of the curia, which was fraught with emotional drama from Fontana's perspective. Because of this, I will focus my attention on several key chapters which

stress the actual construction of the site and not the, as Fontana refers to them, "rumori," and "insidie tramate," working against his progress. Though it could be argued that these events supplement a better understanding of the process undertaken by Fontana while the Montecitorio was under construction, they appear more so to muddle and distract from the architect's writing on the specific aspects of his design contributions to the structure.

However, it is important to understand that Fontana has been regarded as having exaggerated his role in the completion of the curia (essentially arousing more tension than may have otherwise occurred) by Hellmut Hager, who has written that there is evidence of documentation stating that certain ideas and plans had been previously laid out by Mattia de' Rossi while working beneath Bernini on the project. Reluctant to associate the project with de' Rossi, as he was a worthy rival of Fontana, he omitted much of the planning that had taken place after Bernini departed from the project but before he was brought on.⁶⁰

To begin, Fontana expresses interest in the completion of a Roman Curia, which he believed would be of great benefit to the people. "Romans viewed the Campus Martius as both sacred and economically valuable real estate; disease and flooding could be mitigated or, in the very least, accommodated by all manner of construction projects. The historical, religious, and practical importance of the northern plain ensured that the Field of Mars would not be left undeveloped."⁶¹ The great importance of who the curia was to serve was not lost on the architect, and as I have previously stated, Fontana

⁶⁰ Hager and Braham, *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle*, XVIII:113.

⁶¹ Jacobs II and Conlin, *Campus Martius: The Field of Mars in the Life of Ancient Rome*, 2014, 115–116.

believed no other ground was worthy of such an important structure than the Campo Martio. However, in chapter two he reiterates what I have previously stated in the Colosseum chapter, that without the proper funding, completion of the curia was nearly impossible. The papal state was under financial stress due to the Turkish and Spanish Wars, making the commission for works, particularly architecture, an incredibly strenuous task. The project was abandoned but reinstated after the election of Pope Innocent XII in the year of 1694, the same year as Fontana's early edition of the Montecitorio publication which studied the placement of the curia at Campo Martio, with an introduction to his prospective design interests.⁶²

However, in the third chapter, “Delle Turbolenze, e Oppositioni poi sopite, e superate,” Fontana outlines the resurgence of interest in the completion of the curia with the understanding of how extensive the building process would be. Bernini had not been able to complete the structure entirely so it was left unfinished. Though not unusual during this period, this meant that Fontana was forced to take into consideration what had already been completed before he could design the rest of the structure. This meant adding on to the actual edifice as well as designing the facade, bell tower, and courtyard. Many plans were drawn, built, and written before the actual construction could be taken over. This is one reason we have the earlier 1694 edition of the history of Campo Martio. Not only was it in Fontana's nature to grasp the antiquity of the lands he worked on but it would show the full range of his understanding for the land, its history and how he should

⁶² Fontana, *Discorso del cavalier Carlo Fontana sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio, ed altre cose ad esso appartenenti, con disegni tanto degl' antichi, quanto de' moderni edificii della nuova Curia*, 1708, 15–18.

evolve from there. Because of the need for a curia as Fontana states, it was integral that he express his knowledge of the work that needed to be undertaken.

The following chapters detail the seemingly dramatic events which Fontana believed he endured during the building process. This is unusual as he traditionally writes in a very linear manner, from past, present, to future. But here he makes a concerted effort to detour from the resurgence in planning the curia, to write about his struggles, possibly as a mode for gaining sympathy from the reader before he digresses to chapter eleven where he describes his finalized plans for the remainder of the Montecitorio, where he states:

Certo è che se si fosse edificato secondo gl'ideati, Disegni, sarebbe rirscita, molto più capace nelle sue Comodità domestiche, cioè Scale, Ingressi, Cortili, Fontane, Pozzi, & altre cose necessarie, e fuori della frequenza publica, Rimesse ne Fondachi terreni, con ingressi publici, e privati.⁶³

This is a rather dramatic maneuver and lends itself as evidence to Hager's claims that Fontana is indeed exaggerating in this publication about his role in the completion of the Curia. However, there is no research that would suggest exactly why. A personal vendetta? Mere frustration at a building process that was less than steady? We don't know, but it is important because it is not a common part of the architectural monograph in a traditional manner.

Despite the enormous struggle endured by Fontana and others in the process of completing the Montecitorio, the architect showed a particular generosity in the completion of the building, which he expresses in chapter nine. With a redesigned plan

⁶³ Ibid., 32.

and remuneration, the completion of the building finally became a reality, though it is in chapter ten that the reader has a better understanding of why he feels it is necessary to offer reimbursement so that the curia may be completed, when he speaks of his desire to help the poor, which he believes the curia will benefit.

It is the last three chapters that focus on the removal and erection of the base of the Column of Antoninus in the courtyard of the Montecitorio. This was an extensive project which involved Fontana's son, Francesco Fontana, who oversaw the procedure along with his father. These chapters are supplemented by the perspective of Francesco Posterla who also oversaw the excavation and erection of the Column in the courtyard of the curia. Due to his old age, which Fontana places at 66, in the year of 1703, he felt it was necessary to hire his son to help him in with the placement of the giant marble column.⁶⁴ Before we proceed, it is important to distinguish between the base of the Column of Antoninus, which Francesco and Carlo Fontana were responsible for unearthing and relocating, and the column which was also considered to be that of Antoninus Pius, but was later discovered to be the Column of Marcus Aurelius. The Column of Marcus Aurelius was restored by the engineer and relative of Carlo Fontana's, Domenico Fontana, nearly a hundred years earlier. During this period, it was mistakenly attributed to Antoninus because of the destruction of the description plate, and was also placed in the piazza of the Montecitorio. However, Francesco and Carlo Fontana are only

⁶⁴ Ibid., 34. Note 1: From what I have researched there is very little to be said of the figure. Francesco Posterla, and why his description of Fontana and his son's movement of the Column of Antoninus would be important.

responsible for the base of the *actual* Column of Antoninus, which is now used as the base for the Obelisk of Montecitorio.

During this period, excavations were still taking place to unearth the last treasures of ancient Rome. However, it was not unusual for one to accidentally happen upon one of the many monuments buried over time, as was the case with the Column of Antoninus. The removal of soil from one place to another would often occur during building, if the laying of the foundation was to be precise. Fontana talks at great length about soil, rubble, and remnants in these last chapters because they are important in the discovery, removal, and re-placement of the Column of Antoninus. With the help of his son, Fontana managed to facilitate the placement of the column in the curia's courtyard. With bystanders observing, Fontana states it took nearly two hours to lower the parts of the column into their final position.⁶⁵ These chapters are possibly most extensive for two reasons: the removal of a monument of antiquity to be placed at the completion of the curia was a prideful accomplishment for the architect (which we also see in *Il Tempio Vaticano* with the Vatican obelisk), but also because Francesco died in 1708. Fontana, devastated by his son's early passing, which most likely occurred before this second edition is published, endeavors commemorate his son's life, by stressing Francesco's role in moving the column.

Borromini and the Oratory Monograph

One artist working several years earlier than Fontana in the 1600's was Francesco Borromini. I have previously referenced him because it is believed that Pope Innocent X

⁶⁵ Ibid., 35.

was familiar with and appreciated Borromini's work. Although his Prince Ludovisi was interested in Bernini's depiction of a Ludovisi Palace, it was Borromini's artistic perspective that ultimately inspired Bernini's representation making it favorable to Pope Innocent X. During this period, Borromini began work on the Roman Oratory, which he published in a book in 1725, entitled, *Opus Architectonicum*. Much like Fontana, Borromini, who worked with Virgilio Spada on this project, focused his publication on one specific building, which was completed in 1643, although his monograph was not published until much later. In his publication we see, much like Fontana, the past and present combined to create a thorough understanding of what Borromini was working from and how and why he designed the oratory as he had. He does not separate the past but rather integrates the oratory's history in relation to his new concepts; whereas Fontana's publication takes more linear perspective without integrating the past and present very often. Every loggia, room, and stair is accounted for. Borromini does not fixate on inconveniences endured during construction the way Fontana does. However, he does detail his relationship with Virgilio Spada and how the project came to be his own, each necessary aspects of the construction, which the reader should be aware of.⁶⁶ (Figure 2.4)

In their likeness and difference, Fontana and Borromini's publications represent two different approaches to the architectural monograph. This is important because it shows us, the reader, that there is no strict formula from which the author of such a text

⁶⁶ Kerry Downes, ed., *Borromini's Book: The "Full Relation of the Building" of the Roman Oratory by Francesco Borromini and Virgilio Spada of the Oratory* (Oblong Creative Ltd, 2010).

was to work from, yet both are of the same category. Although Fontana does not accentuate the details of the total design of the Montecitorio as Borromini does of the Oratory, we do see that his attention to the antiquity is unmatched even by Borromini.

What separates *Sopra Il Montecitorio* from Fontana's other writings is that this publication was based on a structure that was actually completed as Borromini's book was. This may help to explain why there is also a later edition from his initial 1694 publication, which preceded the completion of the curia. With the finished structure, a widely known building due to its placement at the "Field of Mars," and because of its practical use, it is plausible that there was more consumer interest in a work such as this because of the desire for understanding how it had come to be. Also, Bernini was the initial architect responsible for the structure, which wasn't completed during his life and ultimately the building process was halted which may have added to the intrigue of the monographs readership, who may have wanted to better understand the events which had been taking place before completion.

This differs from the architect's other publications discussed, because *L'Anfiteatro Flavio* has shown itself to be, although intriguing and incredibly unique, a hypothetical text. Aside from the plausible readership of tourists, other architects interested in Fontana's ideas, and those who could finance the completion of such a monumental undertaking, the desire for mass publication and alternate editions seems unnecessary. With *Il Tempio Vaticano*, as we will see in the following chapter, the high-profile nature of the construction taking place acts easily as an advertisement for the architect's interest in redesigning aspects of the basilica, as well as general interest in the confrontational

aspect of Fontana's redesigning his very own maestro's concepts.

Now one may wonder, what exactly is so important about the Montecitorio construction that would designate it as being worthy of publication over any number of the architect's other achievements? Hager states that this was "the most ambitious task undertaken by Fontana in Rome in the 1690's."⁶⁷ This reason alone may hint at why none of his numerous other building projects were published. Also, the history of the land, relation to the Ludovisi's, and the fact that the building became a curia, were all very important aspects of this building process which may have led Fontana to believe that being related to such a construction, and publishing on it, would reflect positively on him. We have seen, and will see, that with Fontana's two other publications, he wanted to alter or build on to what he believed were monumental works. That desire to reside along the great architects is not only evident but proven by the exaggerations found in this publication. A pattern which will be continued with his work on *Il Tempio Vaticano*.

⁶⁷ Hager and Braham, *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle*, XVIII:112.

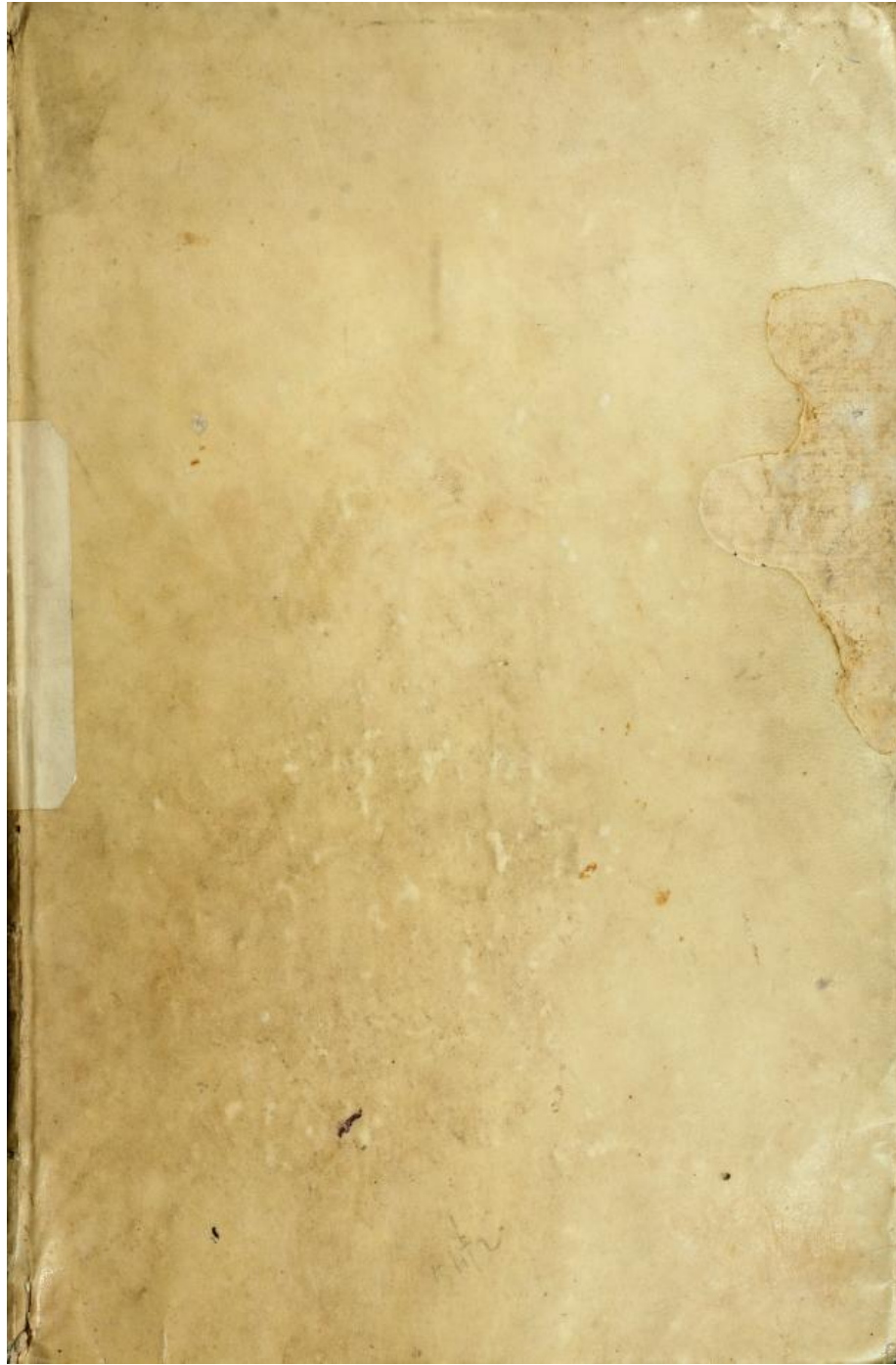


Figure 2.1: Carlo Fontana, The cover of *Sopra il Monte Citatorio situato nel Campo Martio*, 1708, Vellum, The Getty Research Institute

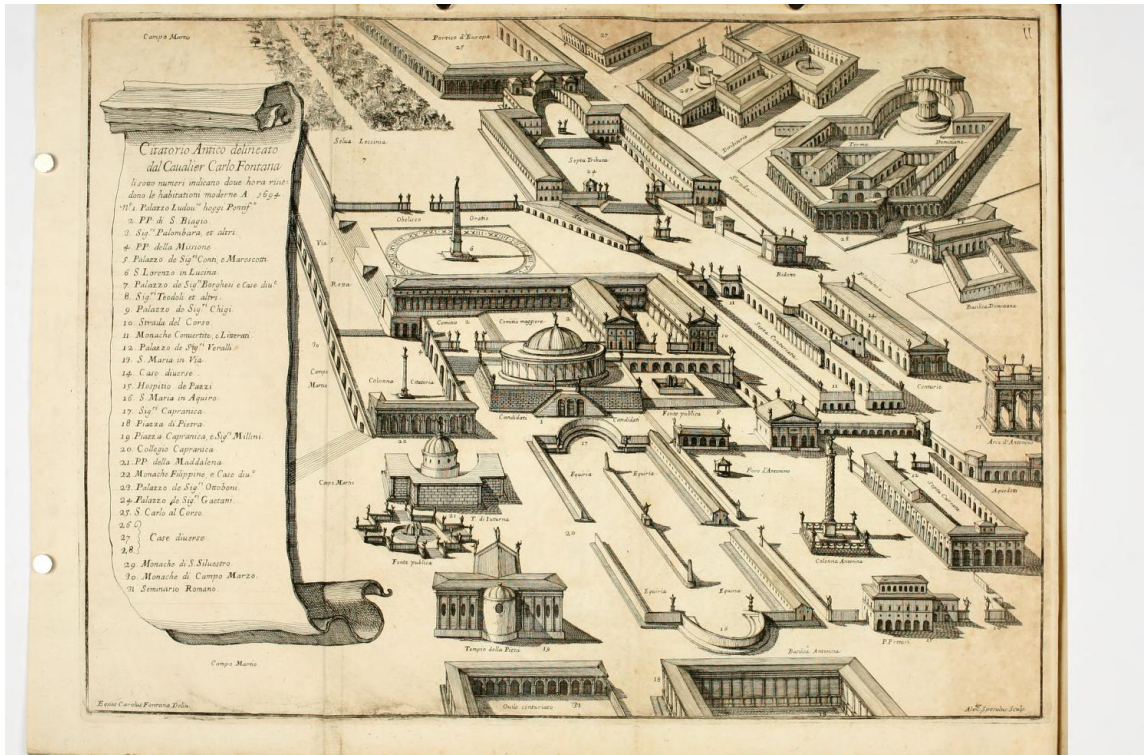


Figure 2.3: Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Outline of the Ancient Citatorio, 1694 and 1708, Print, The Getty Research Institute



Figure 2.4: Francesco Borromini, *The Roman Oratory*, 17th Century, Rome, Italy

Chapter 3 - *Il Tempio Vaticano*

Il Tempio Vaticano is by far the the most ambitious publication created by Carlo Fontana with the intention of being dispersed to a larger audience as it is printed in both Italian and Latin. Published in 1694, the same year as his first edition of the Montecitorio monograph, it is comprised of seven books, over five hundred and fifty-five pages long. There are several unusual aspects to this monograph that make it dissimilar to Fontana's other publications, including a complete index, bibliography, and a register. This is most likely due to the extensive nature of the project and the amount of research undertaken by Fontana at St. Peter's Basilica and the rules in which many of the artists and architect abided by, i.e. he cites Vitruvius. Once again we see Alessandro Specchi returning to his role as printmaker, creating prints after Fontana's drawings for this publication as was previously seen in the Montecitorio publication. Due to the extensive nature and importance of this publication and information regarding St. Peter's, in 2003 it was reissued in hardback with eighteen essays by contemporary scholars added to the forward. Because of this addition to the newest edition, I will be referencing both the 1694 edition found at the Getty Research Institute for the primary information found within the monograph, as well as the 2003 edition with the many enlightening essays which have supplemented my understanding of the publication.

Before we understand what Fontana's monograph on St. Peter's Basilica consists of, it is important to understand how and why this publication was created. Hager and Braham suggest that Mattia de Rossi, *capomaestro* of St. Peter's after Gian Lorenzo Bernini, was requested by Pope Innocent XI to create a record of the building process,

but it was found to be insufficient. However, this effort may have given Fontana the idea for his own publication, because he felt that he could better account for the finances and processes.⁶⁸ However, Hellmut Hager states that Fontana was requested by Pope Innocent XI to create a text which would, "informe il pubblico circa l' stato vero' della chiesa e fornire notizie sulla storia basilica, sia antica che moderna."⁶⁹ This is true, as Fontana wrote in the first chapter of the first book that Innocent had heard rumors questioning the structural capabilities of the cupola of the Vatican, and was anxious to know the truth,

“L' impulso, e l' inuito a scrivere, e delineare la presente Opera si hebbe dalla santa memoria d' Innocenzo per hauer' egli intese le finistre, e varie voci, precorse nella Citta di Roma l' anno 1680, che fossero scoperti alcuni esserti, o segni, da' quali si potesse temere la rovina cella Cuppola Vaticana, supponendo che fossero originati da alcune operazioni, seguite nel Pontificato d' Urbano Ottauo, cagionate dal Cavaliere Bernino Architetto.”⁷⁰

It is viable that both served as the initial and primary inspirations for the monograph.⁷¹

However, there is also a third reason for why Fontana was so eager to create a publication for the Pope. Hager, Eduard Coudenhove-Ertal, and Fontana state the reasoning for this was that the architect was eager to showcase his abilities after being passed over for the position of *capomaestro* at St. Peter's. These three issues culminated in what could best be described as Fontana's most extensive and expansive published work ever.⁷²

⁶⁸ Ibid., XVIII:35.

⁶⁹ Hellmut Hager, “Carlo Fontana E Il ‘Tempio Vaticano,’” in *Il Tempio Vaticano* (Milano: Mondadori Electi spa, 2003), XXXIV.

⁷⁰ Carlo Fontana, *Il Tempio Vaticano e sua origine: con gl'edifitii più cospicui, antichi e moderni, fatti dentro e fuori di esso* (Rome, Italy: In Roma, Nella stamparia di Gio Francesco Buagni, 1694), 1, https://archive.org/details/gri_33125008467413.

⁷¹ Arnaldo Bruschi, “Le ‘Regole’ Praticate Dagli Antichia Dai Moderni,” in *Il Tempio Vaticano* (Milano: Mondadori Electi spa, 2003), 20.

⁷² Hager and Braham, *Carlo Fontana: The Drawings at Windsor Castle*. (Note: So much so that even Pope Innocent XI believed that Fontana's estimation and configuration for

It is important to understand why Fontana's self-advertising was the primary reasoning for creating this publication, because it stems from his desire to showcase his own talents and abilities in relation to other great masters, which for the architect was the highest honor. Fontana was placing himself as a centrally important figure, not only in the process of rebuilding St. Peter's but in a much larger picture, coming from Domenico Fontana's lineage. *Il Tempio Vaticano* exercises this belief in several aspects: its retort against the great Bernini's designs which lacked a degree of precision as previously found in both his Montecitorio and Colosseum publication, Fontana's relation to Domenico Fontana, who moved the obelisk in St. Peter's square which the book details extensively, and most unexpectedly in Fontana's frontispiece. I will expand on these issues further, but first, let us look at what *Il Tempio Vaticano* is comprised of.

This publication consists of an enormous amount of prints that are expertly weaved throughout the text, giving an optimal amount of context to what Fontana has written. Not only do we see Fontana's scenographic prints, but landscape prints, blueprints, and reconstructions of Domenico Fontana's prints in the moving of the Vatican Obelisk. Let us first look at figure 3.7, Fontana's blueprint for the refiguring of St. Peter's square into a more oval shape. This is one of Fontana's more popular prints, as it clearly outlines Bernini's conception for the piazza, more so than Fontana's own concepts. In this image we also see the plan for the temple as well, which is drastic in

the budget expended to rebuild Saint Peter's could be used as a weapon for those against the Catholic religion.⁷² Although this was not Fontana's intention, it exemplifies the lengths to which the architect endeavored to create the most detailed possible publication. Carlo Fontana's monograph entitled, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, is at once a compilation of the entirety of the building process undertaken, and a retort against it.)

comparison to the piazza, allowing the figure to see how extensive and massive the actual structure of St. Peter's is. This is further expressed in image 3.2, where we see the conception for the façade of St. Peter's. Here there are no figures to give context or added scale, there is not even a surrounding cityscape. Rather, Fontana focuses his energy in the details of the actual edifice, documenting every detail of the elevation of and ornamentation of St. Peter's. The level of detail expressed is magnified in figure 3.8, with the reproduction of the bell tower and all of its extensive details.

However, where Fontana expends most of his time, is in the reproduction of his ancestor's involvement with the moving of the Vatican Obelisk. We will talk more about this later, but it is important to notice that Fontana takes great pride in the level of detail expended to reproduce the actual events which took place. Figures 3.3-6, we can see not only the practical engineer efforts exerted to move this monumental object, but for both context and scale Fontana depicts the figures involved in the very literally, back-breaking work of lifting the obelisk. In four highly detailed prints, the viewer experiences the technical difficulties with which Domenico faced in this project, with a final print that clearly and quite proudly showcases this integral structure in the piazza of St. Peter's. Although Fontana was related to the engineer responsible for this undertaking, it is easy to understand why Fontana would have been so impressed with this feat. A project of this magnitude was overwhelmingly difficult, and Fontana rightfully focuses his energy on depicting this as transparently as he can, which gives an added dramatic effect to the viewer's experience when reading about the process.

These prints showcase quite clearly what Fontana was capable of, but it is his writings, which offer a more personal and insightful understanding of the construction of new St. Peter's. Fontana begins this monograph with the first book, which is split into two parts. The purpose for splitting the first book into two separate sections with their own individual chapters may be due to the content. Both parts grapple with issues of antiquity but in two very different contexts, as we will see. The first half is comprised of six chapters, and is focused very similarly to *L'Anfiteatro Flavio*, on the architect's detailed assessment of measurements of both old and new St. Peter's. However, part two is purely historical. This is a return to the same interest in antiquity that we have previously seen in both of Fontana's other publications. In this section, Fontana spends eighteen chapters describing the previous use of the basilica, the Circus of Nero, the Tomb dedicated to Romulus, and the triumphant road, bridge, and gate as well. The purpose of this section is not only to outline St. Peter's antiquity, but in a more logistical sense, it portrays the use of the Vatican after the fall of Rome and before the new construction. As he states, the architect and author believed that in doing so, this would undo any confusion on the part of the reader by essentially outlining the importance of the Vatican Temple to the Papal State and why they would have begun plans for reconstruction.⁷³

The prints in this first book focus on the geometrical aspects of the cutaway profile of the old St. Peter's/Constantine's Basilica (figure 3.1) where one can see how

⁷³ Fontana, *Il Tempio Vaticano e sua origine: con gl'edifitii più cospicui, antichi e moderni, fatti dentro e fuori di esso*, 17.

drastically the modern temple (figure 3.2) has shifted from the original design. The reasoning for this varies, though it has much to do with the many patrons, architects, and artists involved in the rebuilding of the current basilica many times over, as we will see later in this chapter. However, the initial plan for the new St. Peter's, commissioned by Pope Nicholas V and designed by Bernardo Rossellino, and was quite similar to the basilica in existence. This was never actually completed, with the only real accomplishment of Nicholas V's steps toward a new church being the destruction of stall and shops found on the atrium steps and the beginnings of a new choir which were "essential for clergy."⁷⁴

However, it is in the second book of his monograph that Fontana turns his focus specifically to aspects of the history of Constantine's Basilica as well as to its destruction that initially began with Nicholas V. This ultimately allows Fontana to digress into addressing Pope Innocent XI's concerns for the structure of the roof. Fontana outlines the appropriate method with which the removal of the ancient basilica's roof could and should be used in the construction of the new basilica. This is where exactly the pope's worries stemmed from, as it did not seem to be a conceivable task. In his monograph on the history of St. Peter's, James Lees-Milne states that St. Peter's "was at the end of the fifteenth century still a congeries of piecemeal structures making no concession to their surroundings, and scarcely deserving the name of architecture."⁷⁵

⁷⁴ James Lees-Milne, *Saint Peter's: The Story of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome* (Hamish Hamilton, 1967), 125–127.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 131.

Domenico Fontana and the Vatican Obelisk

Much like his Montecitorio publication, Fontana dedicates a great deal of time in his monograph to the moving and erection of another monument, what is now known as the Vatican Obelisk. Book three, “Del Trasporto dell'Obelisco vaticano, e sua Erezione,” is one of the longest books in the series, much like the chapters in the Montecitorio publication on the column are the longest. It was Domenico Fontana, a late ancestor of Carlo Fontana’s, who over a hundred years earlier in 1585, was responsible for moving the obelisk to the center of St. Peter's square. Figures three through five showcase the process which was undertaken by Domenico Fontana in moving the monument.

Fontana follows the format of his monographs in outlining this chapter, with the focus being placed on the history and present state of the Obelisk. He begins by outlining the history of the monument in its original Egyptian state, to its transfer to Alexandria and then from there to the Circus of Nero.⁷⁶ Much of the emphasis is also placed on Domenico Fontana’s role in the moving of the Obelisk, an issue which we will explore later in this chapter. However, one of the more well-known aspects of this publication are the architect's concerns over the piazza of St. Peter's. Possibly the most notable characteristic of Fontana's entire career is his counter-proposal of Bernini's design for the Piazza of the Vatican Temple. As illustrated in figure seven, the reader can see that in book four, Fontana creates a design in the shape of an oval rather than the model of outstretched arms that Bernini utilized. By comparison, Fontana's model does appear that

⁷⁶ Rosamond Mckitterick et al., *Old Saint Peter's, Rome* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), 282.

it would accommodate a wider audience than Bernini's by elongating the plaza, while still maintaining the placement of the obelisks and fountains to be found in the center of the piazza. Fontana's reasoning for this is clear:

“La Linea del diametro maggiore essendo parallela alla Facciata del Tempio, e impropria, secondo le buone regole, questa disposizione; mentre dovrebbe la predetta linea essere corrispondente a quella del mezzo del Tempio, cioè essere situati i Portici lungo, e formare la vera sicura Elise, colla quale dovrebbero quasi essere congiunti al Tempio, come e stato praticato dal' antichi Romani ne' loro Teatri.”⁷⁷

Adhering to the ancients rules, we can see that he was attempting to revise Bernini's plan because he did not believe it followed the order in which such a Piazza should. However, this does not mean that Fontana does not approve of Bernini's draft. As Tod Marder states, “In short, while he praises sincerely the project of Bernini, he also shows a lack of adherence to the consolidated rules, thereby offering both the skeptics and the enthusiasts more data to support their arguments. In doing so, Fontana stands as a valid but not obsequious, successor of Bernini.”⁷⁸

Fontana uses “the rules” he begins outlining in book four to transition into book five where rules are of utmost importance to the architect. This book is the longest of any of Fontana's publications, extending thirty-six chapters. The amount written on the adherence to the ancient rules allows for a better understanding of why so many scholars approach this subject in the reissued 2003 edition, which we will come back to. Books four and five seem to merge Fontana's desire to break from the early baroque, which

⁷⁷ Fontana, *Il Tempio Vaticano e sua origine : con gl'edifitii più cospicui, antichi e moderni, fatti dentro e fuori di esso*, 183.

⁷⁸ Tod A. Marder, “Delli Portici, E Piazze Avanti Il Tempio Vaticano,” in *Il Tempio Vaticano* (Milano: Mondadori Electi spa, 2003), CCVI.

embodied a more fluid and ornamented style, and return to the rules of the ancients which he believes Bernini had drifted from impractically and without necessity. This is why we once again see Fontana use Bernini as a counter foil for the appropriate utilization of the ancient rules, by describing the destruction of the bell tower created by Bernini, which was deemed unstable because of Bernini's lack of adherence to said rules. In January of 1637, construction on Bernini's designs for the bell towers began, costing somewhere around 65,000 scudi.⁷⁹ At its unveiling in the year of 1641, it was a "dramatic failure," an opinion which persisted through the end of the decade after a competition was created for a new design for the towers.⁸⁰ (Figure 3.8) Fontana found himself among the many who believed the bell towers to be a complete failure, this was due in part because of Bernini's dramatized conception, which focused more on ornamentation than on the actual structural aspects of the towers. (Figure 3.9)

It is in the fifth book the focus is placed on Fontana's interest in maintaining the rules; this issue is integral to several of the contemporary essays found in the forward of the 2003 edition of *Il Tempio Vaticano*. Some scholars, such as Arnaldo Bruschi, Hager, and Tod Marder, position themselves within a particular aspect of this monograph, in transcribing Fontana's understanding and use of the ancient rules of building. Fontana's biggest retort against the construction of Saint Peter's is the lack of adherence to rules by the architects involved. This book focuses on the way the rules of the ancients are navigated by the contemporary architects involved in the reconstruction of St. Peter's.

⁷⁹ Sarah McPhee, *Bernini and the Bell Towers: Architecture and Politics at the Vatican* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2002), 50.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

Fontana's strict adherence to the rules in this publication may stem not only from the fact that this undertaking needed to be worthy of eternal importance in the holy city through proper building techniques, but that due to the large amount of money being expended on behalf of construction, regarding the ancient rules was a certainty that could not be neglected.⁸¹

As we have seen in Fontana's previous publications, issues of finances are at the forefront of construction. The Vatican Temple is no different, especially considering that it is one of the most monumental undertakings of the late Renaissance and Baroque period. As I stated earlier, this was Fontana's initial inspiration for the undertaking of such a publication. Not only would he be able to outline the financial aspect of the building process, but this too would give him a way to undercut Mattia de Rossi, who had been elected *capomaestro* of St. Peter's over Fontana, although the two had worked under Bernini simultaneously. As Coudenhove-Ertal states, this may be attributed to, the idea that Fontana was attempting to be more progressive in the hopes that he would be chosen, after Bernini, for the role of head architect of Saint Peter's. Moreover, we know that Fontana was also applying to be the lead architectural maestro of the academy, which he eventually succeeded in attaining. The shortness and the little (little by comparison to the other aspects of building) amount of attention given to this chapter, only supplements

⁸¹ Hager, "Carlo Fontana E Il 'Tempio Vaticano.'" It stands to reasons that if in fact Fontana is retorting against Bernini's inventive concepts for St. Peter's, he may also have found trouble in Michelangelo's designs as well. However, this is not an issue which Fontana deals with in his publications. I would have to argue that Fontana would have been more in line with Antonio da Sangallo the Younger's model for St. Peter's which was ultimately replaced by Michelangelo's more iconoclastic conception for how the basilica should look, which did not adhere to the ancient rules.

the fact that although Fontana endeavored to create a text which more clearly outlined the financial aspect of the building process, he put far less emphasis on this and more so on the actual building process taken place by other architects, particularly Bernini.

Possibly the most unlikely part of this monograph, which alters our understanding of the concept "monograph," is the last book, book seven, which focuses on various other temples in Italy. Comprised of eight chapters, the first four focus on the Pantheon, while the last three chapters are concerned with the Temple of Jupiter, Temple of Peace, and the Dome of Santa Maria in Florence. Although this aspect may seem to deviate from the original idea we have of the structure of a monograph, I would have to argue that Fontana's reasoning for adding such a chapter is to supplement the reader's understanding of how and why the building of St. Peter's was such an important and monumental undertaking. Not to deviate from the issue at hand, but rather to clarify the extraordinary lengths being taken to preserve the most holy of structures in all of Italy. It should be noted that Fontana intertwines St. Peter into his understanding of these other temples, to keep the contextual emphasis on the Vatican Temple consistent.⁸²

This is where Fontana ends *Il Tempio Vaticano*, on a note which very much resembles that which he is trying to achieve for himself. By finishing the monograph in a way that fittingly relates St. Peter with other monumental structures to show the importance of such a construction, Fontana places himself in relation to this impactful and important reconstruction that involves great masters such as Bernini and Domenico

⁸² Fontana, *Il Tempio Vaticano e sua origine : con gl'edifitii più cospicui, antichi e moderni, fatti dentro e fuori di esso*, 474–475.

Fontana. It is a suitable conclusion and one that seems more purposefully to serve Fontana's own agenda rather than that of simply aligning St. Peter's Basilica among the great works of Italy.

Fontana continues this method in his frontispiece, where we can see how closely he wishes to relate himself not only to the importance of the reconstruction of St. Peter's but also to his ancestor, Domenico Fontana. (Figure 3.10) Centered directly beneath his portrait one can see the very obelisk that Fontana focuses so intently on in *Il Tempio Vaticano*, although he had no real part in the process of moving it. As well we can see on either side of the Obelisk are single fountains, also found in St. Peter's Square, which reinforces his relationship to conception of the piazza of St. Peter's. However, these fountains serve a dual purpose, as Fontana means fountain in Italian. By placing one on each side, Fontana hints at the relationship between Domenico, himself, and St. Peter's Obelisk.

Aside from Domenico Fontana's involvement, the obelisk represents a very important part of history as well, one that Fontana would have liked to be associated with due to his strong emphasis on the importance of antiquity. The obelisk has often been referred to as "Saint Peter's Needle" due to several factors (its proximity to the basilica and because it is believed that Peter was martyred in the Vatican circus). However, the obelisk was initially associated with Caesar, which afforded it a certain level of significance. Because of this, as early as 1447, it is documented that the obelisk was to be a part of the construction of the new basilica. "In the *Mirabilia*, the obelisk is referred to as the 'memoria Caesaris, id est agulia,' and the passage then goes on to report that his

cremated remains were contained in the large bronze sphere set at the top: 'where his ashes rest splendidly in their sarcophagus.' The etymology and meaning of 'agulia' a term also repeated in other sources, is far from certain, but it is possibly a corruption of 'acus Iulia' (in other words, Julius's Needle)."⁸³ This was later disputed after the sphere was removed before the obelisk was placed at Saint Peter's, and a resident of the papal court inspected its inside finding no human remains. It has even been said that Bramante, while working on the reconstruction of the basilica, advised Pope Julius II, that the church should be rotated to face what was believed to be Caesar's tomb, although it was ultimately easier to move the obelisk. This belief of Julius's ashes being housed in the dome, was held by many and even mentioned in Andrea Palladio's *Antichita di Roma*.⁸⁴

(Figure 3.6)

Fontana's depictions of the moving process and placement of the Obelisk in St. Peter's square are his own renderings and reimagining's of Domenico Fontana's procedure. No doubt Fontana would have been familiar with his ancestor's prints, which most likely were his source of inspiration in drawing up his own version of the events that had taken place. But why would he not have used the prints previously in existence? Most likely the plates from which the prints were pressed from were lost. However, this may also be due to Fontana's using *Il Tempio Vaticano* as a platform for his own self-representation. By recreating the images rather than reusing Domenico's, Fontana continues to situate himself as a contemporary of his family member which aligns him

⁸³ Mckitterick et al., *Old Saint Peter's, Rome*, 283.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 282–284.

with not only his own accomplishments but Domenico's accomplishments.

It is also important to note that recent studies have shown Fontana's measurements of the St. Peter's Square to be inaccurate from the measurements taken by Bernini at the time of designing the Piazza. But more than this, Fontana's renderings of the styles of the columns and works found there are inaccurate as well. Where the columns are designed in a Roman manner, Fontana translates them in a Tuscan manner. T. Kaori Kitao states that this is due to Fontana's lack of attention to detail, and that he was being quite careless. It could be argued that this only supplements the argument that Fontana was completely working against Bernini's designs and reimagining the works as he thought fit, not actually attempting to recreate what Bernini had designed. Furthermore, the inaccuracy of the measurements indicates two things: the first being that Fontana knew his renderings would never be actualized, making the exact measurements somewhat unnecessary (although unimpressive in his lack of detail here). Secondly, that Fontana was most interested in, particularly in the piazza chapter of *Il Tempio Vaticano*, to showcase once again his strengths in understanding the stylistic aspect of the ancient rules and being able to repurpose them in a contemporary manner.⁸⁵

This characteristic is important, because, as we have seen, the rise of the monograph extends from the ritual of the treatise. The treatise is the complete outline of building practices of the ancient city, stemming from the ancient text by Vitruvius to the Renaissance publication of Sebastiano Serlio and others. The resurgence of antiquity in

⁸⁵ T. Kaori Kitao, "Carlo Fontana Had No Part in Bernini's Planning for the Square of Saint Peter's," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 36, no. 2 (1977): 85–93.

building practices began with the discovery of Vitruvius' text, leading to subsequent authors wishing to outline their own concepts for the importance of maintaining particular building practices.

The "good rules" - theoretical and practical more often - dictated by Fontana relate, ultimately, to architecture in its globality and will involve all aspects, not always separable from each other. In some cases, they are checked directly on ancient monuments (such as the Pantheon). Other times are derived from written instructions, but also to the general principles (Especially Vitruvius and Alberti), both with respect to problems, types or particular rules. Still others, finally, have their origins in the practice of design (rules of "ornaments", orders, domes) and experiences for building (rules of the slope of roofs, stairs etc).⁸⁶

The process of rebuilding the basilica was a long and arduous one. Fontana does an excellent job of piecing together how the structure's importance in its original form influenced so intensely this difficult process of not only tearing down but rebuilding in a manner worthy of its history. This is why his adherence to the rules was so relevant then, and still acts as an interesting study today in understanding architectural publications.

This monograph is arguably the most extensive book created in the origins of the genre. The subject matter, relevance, Latin and Italian translation, and effortless marketability (St. Peter's was a project most anyone with an education would have been familiar with during this era) may be the central most important contribution to the rise of the architectural monograph genre. *Il Tempio Vaticano* is an integral part in understanding not only the building process of St. Peter's but it clearly showcases all of the best aspects of what this kind of publication is known for, by utilizing an in depth

⁸⁶ Bruschi, "Le 'Regole' Praticate Dagli Antichia Dai Moderni," 2003.

knowledge of the history and material at hand, the processes being undertaken and how they can be improved, but also how all of this matters in a much larger context in relation to other major Roman monuments. Although there is no shortage of written works on the reconstruction of the Vatican Temple, because every architect, artist, scudi, plan, patron, and corner of St. Peter's has been accounted for, Fontana's monograph inherently stands at the foreground of all understanding of St. Peter's construction due his proximity to its construction and first-hand accounts.

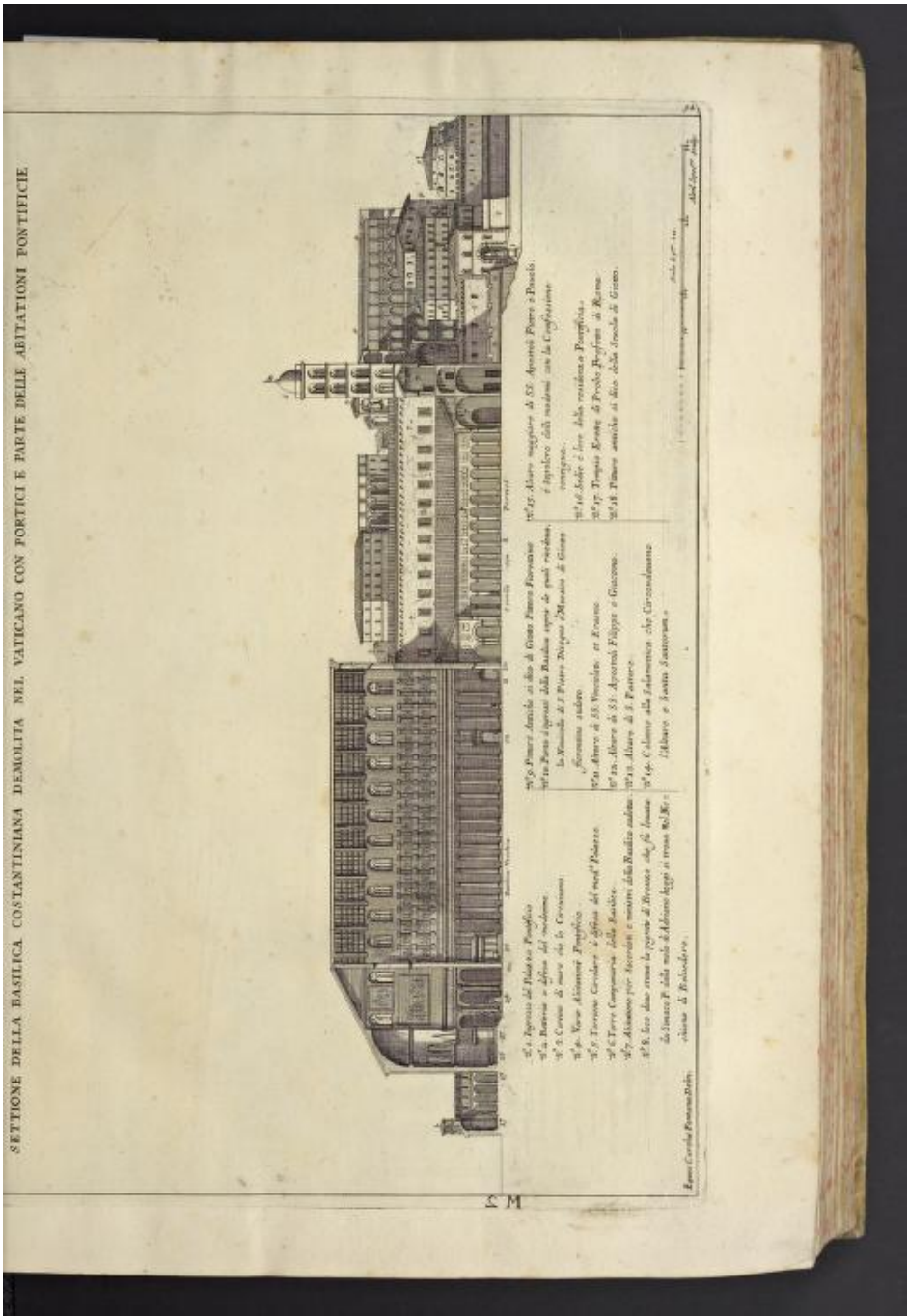


Figure 3.1 – Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Constantine’s Basilica (Old Saint Peter’s), *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

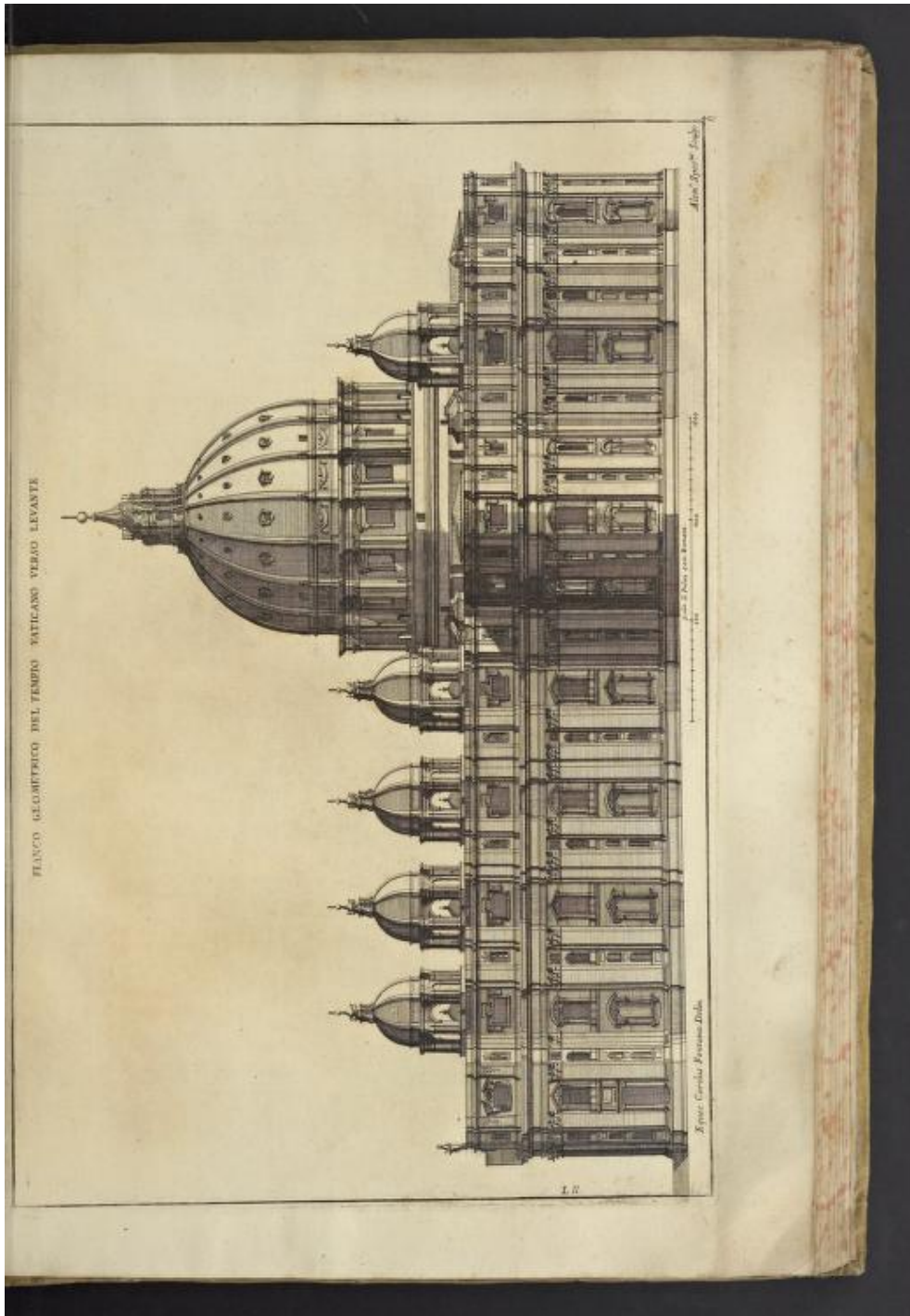


Figure 3.2 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, New Saint Peter's, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print



Figure 3.3 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

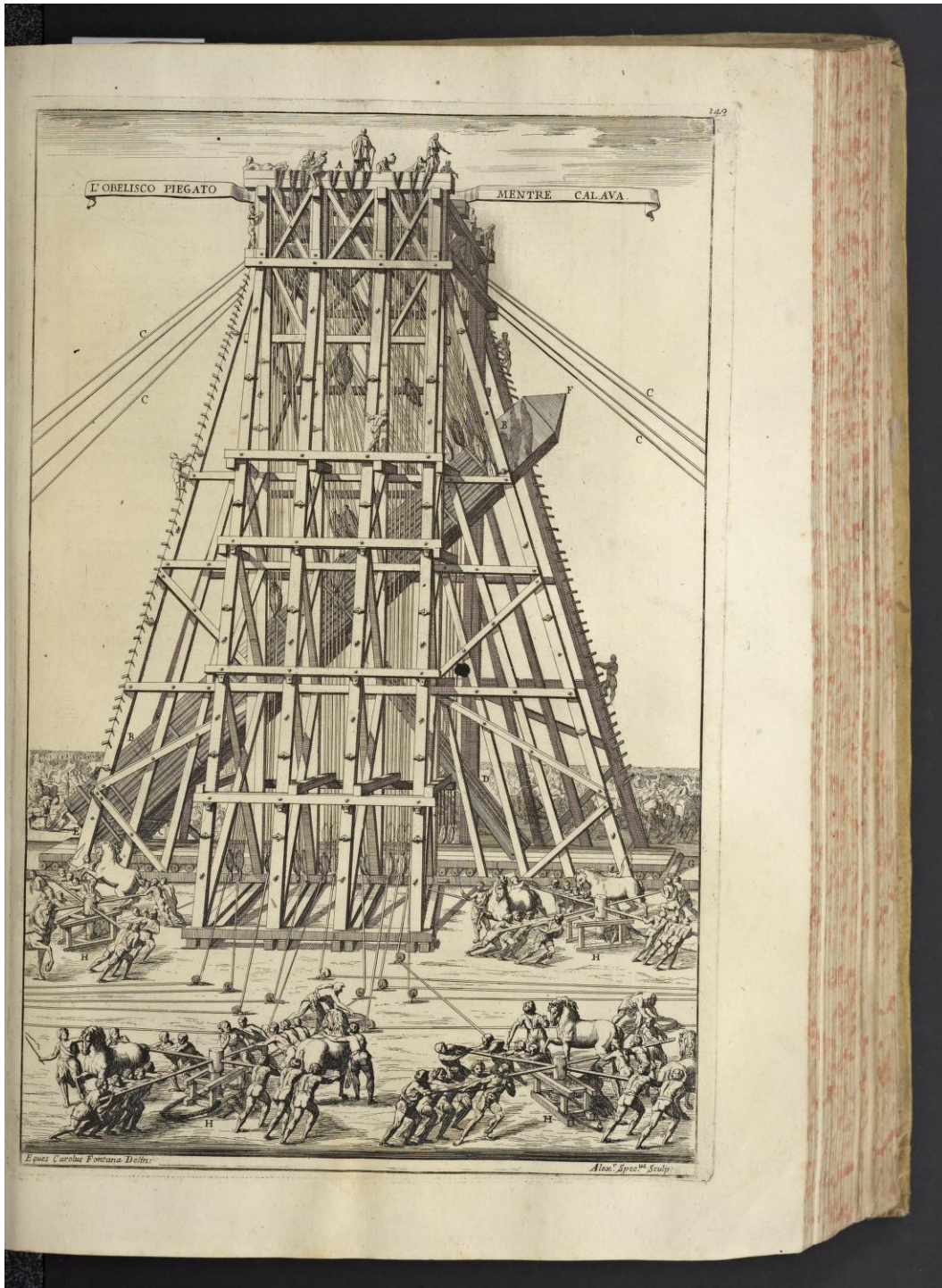


Figure 3.4 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

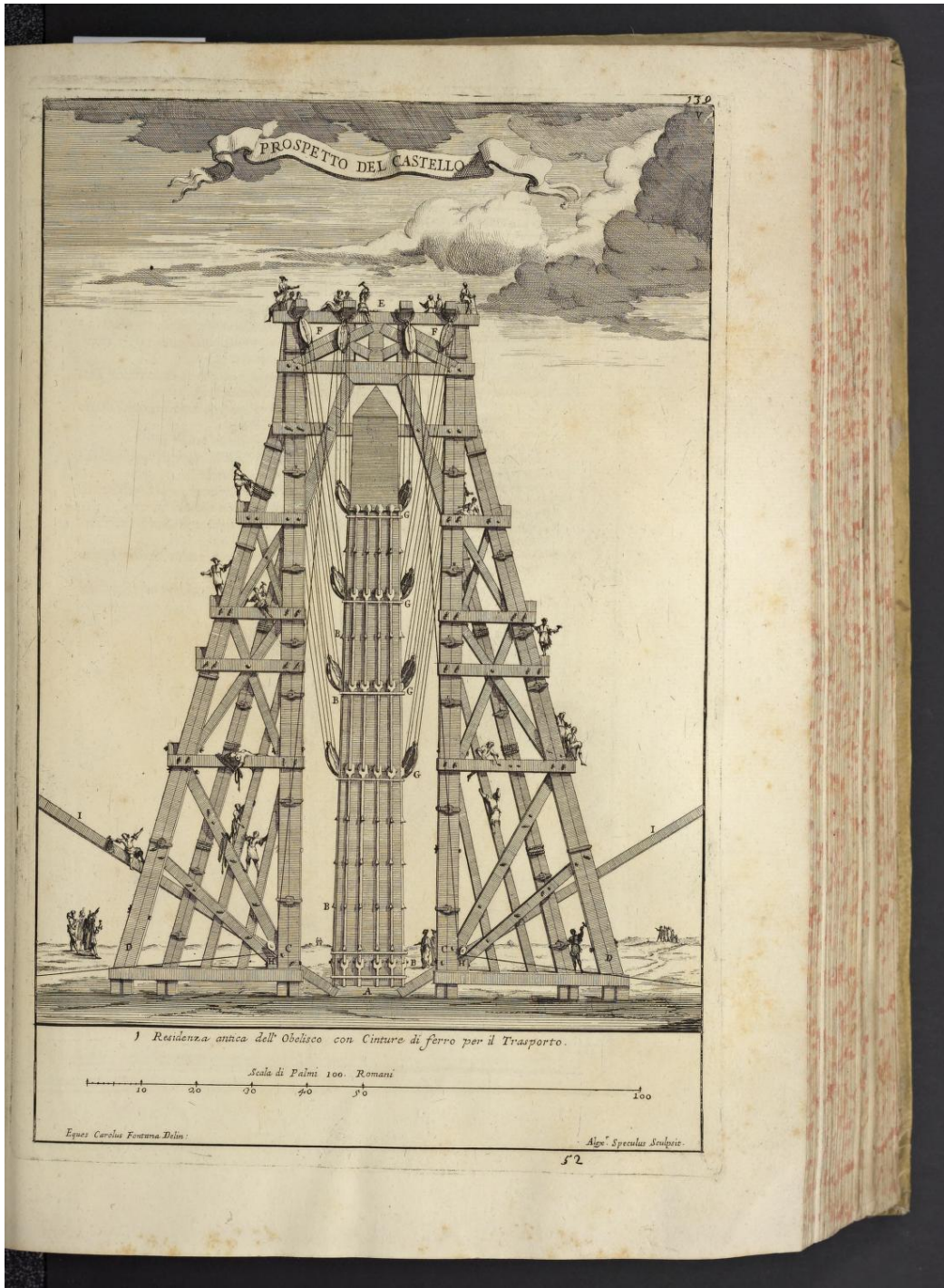


Figure 3.5 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print



Figure 3.6 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Vatican Obelisk, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print

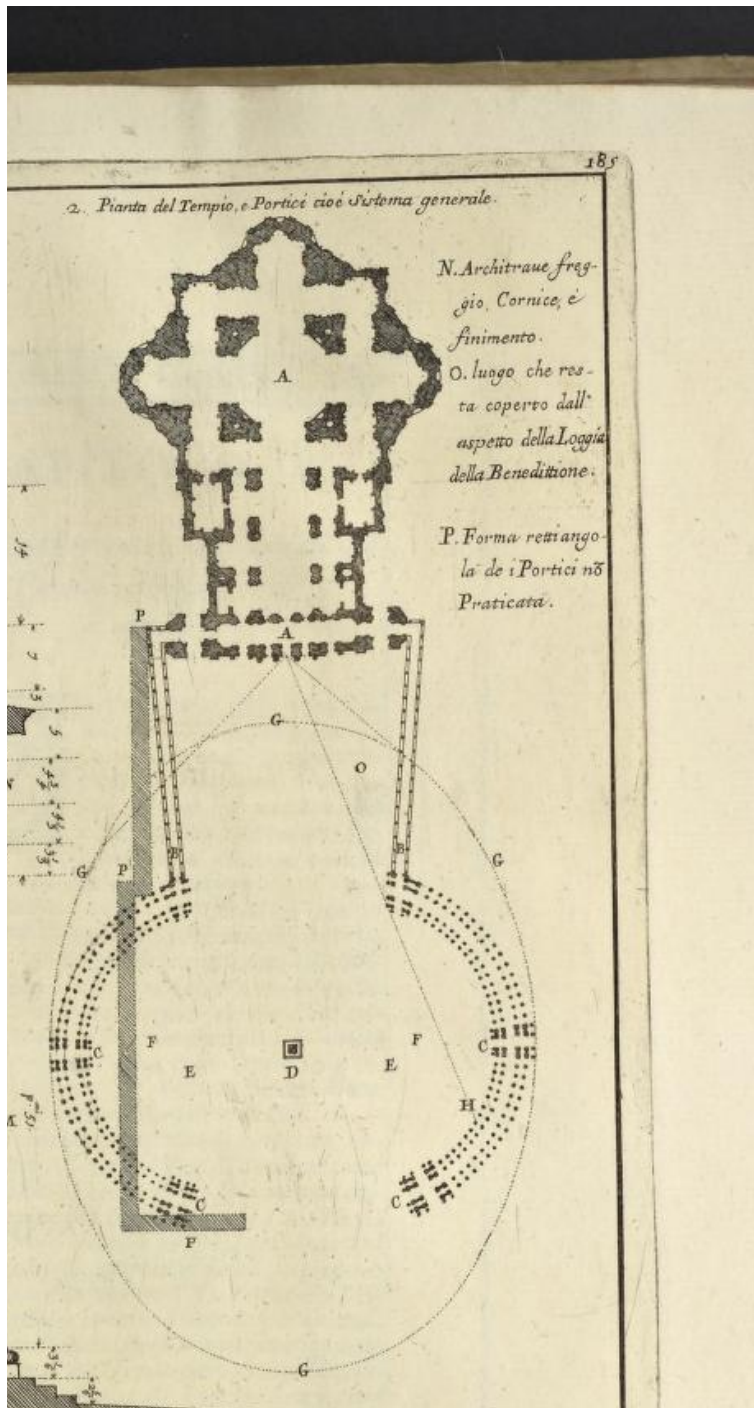


Figure 3.7 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, Fontana's oval concept for the Piazza of Saint Peter's against Bernini's rounder design, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print



Figure 3.8 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Bell Towers, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print



Figure 3.9 - Alessandro Specchi after Carlo Fontana, The Bell Tower, *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 1694, Print



Figure 3.10 - Portrait of Carlo Fontana, Frontispiece for *Il Tempio Vaticano*, 2003

Conclusion

What we can glean from these three publications by Carlo Fontana is not only an interest in the antiquity but an overwhelming desire to incorporate the ancient rules into contemporary building practices, bridging the gap between the old and the new. Fontana's unification of ancient Rome into his own renderings of early modern structures served a strategic purpose; renewed interest in antiquity from the greater populace made Fontana's antiquated perspective an intriguing one, drawing in viewers that otherwise may have been less interested in his writing and prints. Ultimately it served a dual purpose, to both draw in and maintain attention from his audience and future audiences alike, while aiding in the origins of a new style of publication, the architectural monograph.

Fontana was neither interested in merely reproducing images or blueprints of his designs, nor simply writing about his conceptions. It was the twofold process of replicating the works through image while simultaneously outlining the deeper importance of the structure that really solidified Fontana's methodology for architectural writing. From what we know, the concept of an architectural monograph was never a purposeful one, as there is no evidence proving otherwise, and Fontana by no means was the sole creator of such a genre, but rather he was an integral initiator of this kind of publication - an unexpected manifestation, because of his desire to thoroughly illustrate through text and image his monumental conceptions.

Although endless scholarship can be found on the history of the treatise and the figures involved, the treatise writers of the Renaissance, Serlio, Alberti, and Palladio,

were essential figures in our understanding of the early modern addition to the historical tradition of architectural writing. But they were only beginning to touch the surface of the full capabilities of architectural writing. With the architectural monograph we see a refined understanding of the importance of singular structures. Aside from the works of writers such as Hendrick de Keyser and Giovanni Pietro Bellori - whose works served a different purpose than Fontana's, but are exemplary of other dimensions of the genre - there was little for Fontana to have based the model of his publications after, which is important because it showcases his own innovative mind. Although Fontana's publications were not the first of their kind, his works were a formidable asset to an otherwise underestimated field. One which we still do not have a comprehensive understanding of.

Unfortunately, the period following Fontana's publications only further exacerbate the gap in this genre's scholarship, as no reference is made to the architect as having been influential to the continuing historical tradition of architectural writing. There is no evidence to state that even someone such as Guiseppe Vasi would have been aware of Fontana's work, let alone successive writers. What we can assume from the publications circulation, is that there were viewers of this work who were intrigued by and took hold of Fontana's ideas, bringing his books to places such as the Netherlands and England, for others to encounter this newest addition to the architectural writing family. Because of this, we can only assume that the architect has managed to filter through in more contemporary works.

In her publication on the Italian treatise during the Renaissance, Alina Payne acknowledges the anxiety which architectural writers faced in their understanding and reconceiving of the ancient monuments:

This practice of invention was not unproblematic. Indeed, it was fraught with a deep anxiety about right and wrong that surfaced with increasing frequency in these texts. In architecture, more (and earlier) than in other visual arts, this anxiety received a name, *licentia*, and with it a verbal reference point around which discussion could cluster. The essential problem condensed in this one term was an increasing self-consciousness of the consequences of cultural appropriation: how could the drive toward individual expression (or freedom) be reconciled with the commitment to *imitation* (or convention)?⁸⁷

Fontana was not without this anxiety his predecessors had faced. He, more so than they had because of the novel nature of the genre, carried the burden of manifesting the old and the new in harmony through his publications. We have wondered at points - “but why a *monograph*?” – perhaps now we better understand that for Fontana, this was the only way he could do the tradition of architectural writing in Italy any justice. Not just for Domenico or Francesco Fontana, or for Serlio, Alberti, and Palladio, but for Vitruvius and ancient Rome as a whole, and for future generations who would utilize the vast history of architectural writing and Fontana’s works to outline building rules and possible conceptions for renovating and rebuilding structures. Although the architectural monograph genre was not one in which Fontana intended to facilitate, the legacy of this accomplishment is certainly one that he would have been proud of.

⁸⁷ Alina A. Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance: Architectural Invention, Ornament and Literary Culture*, Reissue edition (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 4.

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