

Proposal for a Paper at the Conference

The Making of the Humanities IV: Connecting Disciplines

The *Accademia della Virtù / Accademia Vitruviana* at Rome (c. 1537 – 1555):
The first international network of interdisciplinary research and its vast output

Summary

Since the Sienese humanist Claudio Tolomei published his letter to Agostino de' Landi from 1542 in 1547, the program for a series of 23 volumes about Vitruvius and Roman Antiquities described there has been cited and transcribed a few times, but never carefully read – and therefore, usually, misunderstood: First of all, it is commonly recognized as a *research* program – while Tolomei speaks of a *publishing* program of books (*libri*) that should *and could* be completed in only three years. Based on this first misconception, it has been thought that this program never reached any state of completion but remained a *torso*, consisting only of the *Annotationes* to Vitruvius by Guillaume Philandrier (1544) and two volumes of drawings in Coburg and Berlin identifiable as the preparations for one (or two) of the 23 volumes.

During the research for my dissertation on architectural drawings showing the last project by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger for Saint Peter's I realized that their codex at the Berlin Kunstbibliothek (Hdz 4151) may also have constituted a part of the *Accademia's* program. Together with another large collection at the *Abertina* in Vienna, identified (erroneously) by Egger already in 1903 as „copies“ of the Berlin group, and many other drawings at New York and London (and maybe more collections), these drawings by mostly French draftsmen seem to represent the largest surviving group showing detailed studies of antique architecture from the Renaissance ... if not: *at all*.

But while the connection between these incredibly detailed architectural studies to the *Accademia* is still based on a (short) chain of indications and (at the moment) still lacks a 'hard' proof in form, e.g., of a written document, there are many other sources that have been known to their modern disciplines since the 19th century but have never been brought into any relation to the *Accademia's* work, even though it could have been known that their authors belonged to this circle and have created their contributions at the same time in Rome ... This interdisciplinary group of philologists, architects, historians of epigraphic, numismatic and law (and some more disciplines) divided and organized its work in a strictly modern sense, following modern scientific criteria and leaving the most important sources on many antique remains that we have today.

In my paper I want to demonstrate that a reconstruction of the project could be done – and should so as soon as possible.

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