

Matteo Burioni. *Die Renaissance der Architekten: Profession und Souveränität des Baukünstlers in Giorgio Vasaris Viten.*

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Die Renaissance der Architekten is a valuable contribution to the rich scholarship on the two editions of Giorgio Vasari's *Vite*: the 1550 *Torrentiniana* and the 1568 *Giuntina*. While most intratextual studies focus on Vasari's narratival choices, Matteo Burioni examines developments in the cultural milieu of late Cinquecento Florence that affected Vasari's revisions. He suggests that changes in the discussions of architects in *Giuntina* are related to debates about the definitions of *disegno* and the profession of architect, as well as to an elevation of the architect's social status. The subtitle's two rubrics — *Profession* and *Souveränität* — reflect these phenomena.

The former component is the more compelling and persuasive, as Burioni unearths new material and mines familiar texts for critical overlooked details. The so-called *Vite* has two different titles: *Le vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori, e scultori* (1550) and *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori* (1568). In *Giuntina*, the profession of architect has slipped from first to third, and its moniker has changed. To contextualize this shift, Burioni turns to documents on the creation of the Accademia del Disegno (1563), including Vincenzo Borghini's *Selva di notizie* (1564). While others have investigated Borghini's suggestions for Vasari's revisions, Burioni focuses on Borghini's role in the Accademia debates as *Luogotenente* (vice-president).

The crux of Burioni's complicated analysis is that the Accademia needed to define *disegno* and each artistic profession clearly, in relation to the institution. To find a common definition with painting and sculpture, the engineering and technical elements of architectural *disegno* were set aside, and an emphasis on *disegno* as ornament arose. Likewise, the "types" of architects were reduced from the seven variations Burioni counts in the *Vite* — including engineer and stonemason — to a single iteration: artist-architect. Documents also reveal the fear

that any craft-based definition of architect would have dangerous side effects: weavers might seek membership as painters! The concomitant elevated social status of the architect (*Souveränität*), of which Michelangelo is paradigmatic, enables the nobler definition and the terminological shift. *Architetti* connotes training and ability in the trade, while *architettori* speaks to professional mastery, including the ability to judge others. This terminology appears in the finalized Accademia statutes, *Selva di notizie*, *Giuntina*, and elsewhere, as does the new word order; Burioni further suggests the shift to third place is linked to the suppression of engineering and technical identities, among other issues.

Some of this ground has been explored already, notably by Alina Payne, but Burioni contributes a critical microanalysis grounded in documentation. He concludes with case studies of the *Vite* of six architects: Alberti, Brunelleschi, Bramante, Giulio Romano, Antonio da Sangallo, and Michelangelo. One might wish for a more systematic exploration of the issues outlined in the preceding chapters, but the information revealed is, for the most part, absorbing and significant. Most satisfying is the discussion of Giulio's complicated fate; here Burioni goes deepest into educated speculation, not stopping at documentation and exposition. In contrast, the Alberti section cries out for greater scrutiny of his rubric of Cinquecento *Souveränität* against the belief that Vasari's negative assessment is linked to Alberti's noble status.

Burioni's provocative text gives rise to many questions, a comment equally complimentary and critical. In *Giuntina* Vasari retains the term *architetto* in the text and portrait captions: how does this choice complicate a reading of the new title? How was the *Vita* of Francesco di Giorgio, whom Vasari deems heir to Brunelleschi, reworked? What effect did the *disegno* debates have on Vasari's treatment of all the treatise writers? My only deep quibble is with Burioni's downplaying of Vasari's role in the creation of the Accademia, making him appear almost passive. That said, reading Burioni's analyses alongside scholarship on Vasari's narrational motivations, especially Anne-Marie Sankovitch's "Anachronism and Simulation in Renaissance Architectural Theory" (*Res* [2006]), provides for a much fuller and fascinating picture of the exterior and interior forces in play. The power of Burioni's book lies in his ability not just to unearth the documents, events, and people involved, but also to bring to life the mechanisms and interconnections, as is evidenced by his repeated use of *Vorstellungen* from the introduction onward: with its primary definition of *ideas* and a secondary connotation of *performances*, its resonances reflect and enhance the book's emphasis on the dynamic, multifaceted processes at work.

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