cento to be the remains of an imperial palace), she seems to prefer the philological key. In fact, she argues that the façade was probably a specific expression of rhetoric rather than a generic manifestation of rhetorical *magnificentia*. She discovers an architectural analogy in Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ Greek *De compositione nominum*, particularly in the three stories of the palace and the three styles of rhetoric (austere, polished, tempered). Now, these affinities might be less “strong” than the author believes—there is no direct proof that either the architect or his patron directly knew this source. George of Trebizond (present in Florence from 1440 to 1443) had made various architectural analogies in his *Rhetorica*, and it seems that these allusions were common. What matters more is the fact that Clarke does not really investigate the reasons for these analogies and their consequences. If rhetorics are paralleled with architectural structures (and vice versa), they are considered as images. The laws of visual appearance, the necessities of order and arrangement, and the cognitive powers of the visual thus also apply to the written and spoken word.

Nowhere in the book does Clarke refer to image or painting; the term “icon” does not figure. We know that Leon Battista Alberti, in the foreword to his treatise on painting “dedicated” to his fellow architect Filippo Brunelleschi, insisted on the major role of painting in exploring new means of construction under the primacy of antiquity. The art of painting—the murals of Masaccio or Fra Angelico, Andrea Mantegna or Piero della Francesca—provided architectural practice with indispensable details and veritable “blueprints.” Architecture of the early modern period therefore must be thought of mainly as an “image”; it should be confronted in terms of iconic criticism. Discussions on the orders from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century show how evident the purely “visual” character of architecture always was, particularly concerning the façade. “Inventing antiquity” in Renaissance Italy also meant trying to appear within a single perspectival scheme, turning the façade into a sort of “canvas,” a portrait, a historical account, and mainly, a structure that followed the laws of the visible. Even whole cities, as is the case with Florence, were transformed into a visual “setting.” These qualities of Renaissance architecture allow us to reconstruct not only buildings but also the entire anti-

ual Renaissance *Lebensgefühl* and the impact that the visual arts—the epistemic icon—had on the early modern period. In order to recapture “conscious design,” research should focus on the visual. As long as architectural history does not consider itself part of an integrative, aesthetic, art-historical debate and discourse, it will remain not only incomplete, but will not even keep up with the expectations and the ideals of its practitioners. Clarke’s book, despite its indubitable merits, therefore reads as an epilogue to an outmoded architectural history.

*Andreas Beyer*  
*University Basel*

---

David R. Coffin  
*Pirro Ligorio: The Renaissance Artist, Architect, and Antiquarian*  

It is remarkably fitting, and at the same time bittersweet, that David R. Coffin’s last book, published shortly after his death in October 2003, returns to the subject of his first full-length scholarly study, his dissertation for Princeton University on Pirro Ligorio and the Villa d’Este at Tivoli, completed close to fifty years before. After this work, Coffin went on to write classic studies for a field that was only beginning to emerge, the architecture of wealthy patrons’ private retreats and their garden settings. This area came into being in large part because Coffin carefully crafted the subject for years through loving labor in archives, libraries, and museums. After producing a monograph on Ligorio’s architecture and garden design for the Cardinal of Ferrara (like Ligorio, a cov-

eter of ancient remains) at the Villa d’Este, the scholar branched out to explore garden and villa design throughout England, France, and Italy.

The entirety of his last book, which proceeds roughly chronologically through Ligorio’s career, is suffused with an elegiac air. From the preface, where Coffin evokes the seminar he took with Erwin Panofsky that ineluctably shaped his idea of the Renaissance, and his early days at the American Academy in Rome with fellow founders of Renaissance architectural history in the United States, and continuing through the useful checklist of Ligorio’s figural and ornamental drawings, Coffin’s voice and scholarly preferences are distinct and, in good part, will not be found again. The text was written as always in mild-mannered prose, modestly eschewing any forceful argument or too-detailed analysis of a particular point and favoring the clear presentation of hard-won facts marching through each chapter.

The excellent production values, favoring a generous quantity of sharp, rich black-and-white photographs that achieve optimal visual force on heavy, coated paper, create a vivid contrast to the unfortunately gray, often fuzzy pictures of Coffin’s earlier *The English Garden: Meditation and Memorial* (Princeton, 1994). One can only hope this is not the last of the genre of the beautiful scholarly book, capacious-illustrated but not overly long.

Ligorio and his *Nachleben* have suffered, first from a paucity of biographical information—Giorgio Vasari excluded Ligorio from both the 1550 and 1568 editions of his canonical *Lives*—then from accusations of forgery in the designer’s life work, what was to have been a fifty-volume illustrated encyclopedia on antiquities. (The twenty-eight manuscript volumes remain mostly unpublished, though not unappreciated, as the diplomatic wrangling to acquire them by seventeenth-century figures such as Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin and Queen Christina of Sweden reveals. The queen finally gave up and had many of the volumes copied.) Indeed, everyone admits that Ligorio filled in the missing parts in
his drawings of cracked reliefs and coins, and guessed at inscriptions, but, as many twentieth-century authors have maintained (beginning with Erna Mandowsky and Charles Mitchell in their fundamental Pirro Ligorio’s Roman Antiquities [London, 1963]), his intention was to amplify imaginatively on the fragmentary past to make it whole again, not to deceive, a position Coffin takes as well (21).

Not unlike a Renaissance scholar seeking the previously unknown in dark places and patching the bits of evidence together, Coffin has provided Ligorio with a well-deserved if belated biography. In addition to an introduction and epilogue, it is divided into four epilogues devoted to sequential periods of his life, and circling around patronage: chapter one, Ligorio’s early years in Rome; chapter two, his employment as papal architect under three popes, from Paul IV in 1555 to Pius V in 1572; chapter three, the Villa d’Este, the commission Ligorio spent the most time on outside of Rome during those same decades; and chapter four, his elevation to esteemed court antiquarian for Alfonso II d’Este, duke of Ferrara, after papal commissions dried up in Rome. Coffin treated many of these subjects elsewhere earlier, but here he attempts to encompass the manifold facets of Ligorio’s life and widespread productivity within one volume.

The book demonstrates the advantage of the traditional monograph for narrating the complex career and production of an artist/architect/antiquarian whose life, owing to his copious interests and hoped-for identity as a uomo universale along the lines of Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Vasari (139), had been sliced unnaturally into disparate pieces in the scholarship. Unlike Anna Schreurs in her recent, densely packed 500-page Antikentum und Kunstanschauungen des neapolitanischen Malers, Architekten und Antiquars Pirro Ligorio (1513–1583) (Cologne, 2000), which contains an analysis of Ligorio’s art-theoretical attitudes and helpful transcriptions of many unpublished passages from the preserved versions of his encyclopedia, Coffin focuses first and foremost on Ligorio’s artistic and architectural production. Although Coffin was not able to consult Schreurs’s book, he studied and published scholarship on the manuscripts both in the publication under review and elsewhere. Thus, in his chronological array of documented works, including those no longer extant, of every genre, one gets a sense of real-life challenges to a well-born man with humanist aspirations but, possibly, little artistic training, trying to make a name for himself in Rome and, subsequently, Ferrara. The inexorable imperative of chronology and a healthy, up-to-date disregard for hierarchies mean that in the chapter on papal patronage we encounter, cheek by jowl, plans for a papal conclave building containing cardinals’ cells, a Vatican henhouse, an oratory, buttressing for the weakened Torre Borgia and Sistine Chapel repairs, and building and decoration of apartments in the Belvedere court. Though Coffin does not draw the conclusions for us, he provides material for a fascinating social history of a papal architect.

Coffin also submits Ligorio to other art-historical scrutiny. As in his past scholarship, he walks the reader through the iconography of the gardens and decoration, articulates themes, and evaluates the varying styles of Ligorio’s art, including drawings and architecture. He attributes differences in architectural styles—from the austere to the decorative—to a highly developed sense of decorum (66–67) and differences in pictorial styles to Ligorio’s wish to faithfully record Roman art (46–47). He and others have gone here before, but Coffin consistently asks these questions of a group of artifacts that other scholars have not heretofore treated together.

One question that remains is how, in these decades of religious upheaval and reform, were new devotional imperatives integrated into an understanding of the revival of antiquity and antiquarian activity? After all, Ligorio was working precisely at the time that the Council of Trent was forging principles of reform (1545–63), and for the very popes who, while humanistically educated, propelled this reform forward in a variety of ways. Given the author’s convictions about what defined the Renaissance, it is understandable that Coffin and other scholars should make a case for the rationale of rigid separation of realms, following principles of decorum: unalterably pagan antiquities or even those with lascivious content could be exhibited in private, secular quarters, but subjects demonstrating religious values needed to dominate public spaces. Many relate Pius V’s new austerity to Ligorio’s departure from Rome: complaining of their “pagan” content, the pope’s successor removed the ancient statues that the papal architect had earlier carefully assembled in the Belvedere court. This crackdown is seemingly affirmed by the words of the Spaniard Antonio Agustin, avid collector, classical scholar, and Counter-Reformation bishop who wrote in 1566 that he doubted the value of “excavating all these naked statues,” for although they may have had scientific value for scholars and artists, their “filthiness shocks transalpine visitors to Rome” (Mandowsky and Mitchell, Ligorio’s Roman Antiquities, 31).

But it is not clear that all antiquarians saw “pagan” content in statues decorating, say, the Belvedere court of Pius IV. During the High Renaissance, artists, humanists, and patrons viewed the reconstruction of ancient Rome and the rebuilding of the modern city as part of one large unified scheme of God-driven history, embodying a divinely sanctioned purpose: to inspire viewers to perform virtuous acts. And assuredly, those acts were not Enlightenment-style and pantheistic but Christian, leading to salvation. It is in this context that we can best understand Ligorio’s characterization of the teatro of the Belvedere court as a school for virtuosi, who were to learn from the antique examples he had placed there (Schreurs, Antikentum, 271, 334). In fact, when Ligorio achieved his greatest success in the papacy of Pius IV, the application of Christian understanding to ancient wisdom became explicit within the pope’s inner circle. The papal nephew Cardinal Carlo Borromeo had founded the Accademia delle Notti
Vaticane, modeled after literary academies, where prelates and laymen met and debated classical literature and attendant questions. Soon, in addition to studying the ancient literary legacy, the members began to transpose classical philosophical questions into unmistakably Christian terms.1

Aspects of antiquity posed problems for post-Tridentine institutional and devotional cultures in general, to be sure, but Ligorio’s career illustrates that there was no question, despite Pius V’s choler toward the idea of ancient remains sullying his space, that the study of antiquity would be abolished or relegated solely to private retreats or distant courts. Yet ancient art could not be read the same way as before, during the blissful syncretistic period of the High Renaissance. I think we might try to see Ligorio as contributing in some important ways to the wider Counter-Reformation project of reform, although one closer to Pius IV’s integrative ideals than Pius V’s former. Coffin allows us the freedom to dwell on all of these issues, and more, thanks to his generous last contribution to scholarship.

NICOLA COURTRIGHT
Amherst College

Note

Jean-Marcel Humbert and Clifford Price, editors
Imhotep Today: Egyptianizing Architecture

How have ancient Egyptian forms, motifs, and styles been used around the world? This book of fifteen essays examines what the authors call “Egyptianizing” architecture in Europe, America, and other, mainly English-speaking parts of the world. Here one learns of Egyptian cemeteries, factories, museums, cinemas, schools, shopping centers, bridges, gymnasiums, and private homes, as well as Egyptian-style interior features such as vestibules, elevators, and stairways—and much, much more. It is to the credit of the editors that they engage head-on the complex corpus of modern architectural Egyptomania in a much more open and freewheeling way than attempted in previous literature.1 At the same time, the publication exemplifies the inherent challenges of such an effort.

This volume is part of an important new series, driven by initiatives centered in the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London, to “move the study of Ancient Egypt into the mainstream” of critical practice throughout the humanities and social sciences. The series is devoted to a range of ancient and modern conceptions of Egypt: its wisdom, culture, and mystery; its significance for Africa; its role within modern Western consumerism; and related topics that go far beyond the conventional bounds of archaeological inquiry. The book is edited by Clifford Price, an expert in archaeological conservation, and Jean-Marcel Humbert, perhaps the past decade’s most involved and prolific student of Egyptian-inspired production, whose work provides a touchstone for the majority of the other authors.

While including such well-known examples of Egyptianizing architecture as William Bullock’s Egyptian Hall, the Napoleonic Fontaine du Fellah, the Egyptian Court at the Sydenham Crystal Palace, the Antwerp Zoo, and the Mount Auburn Cemetery gateway, the book also adds in-depth treatments of some lesser-studied monuments, such as the sphinxes, pylons, and related features of nineteenth-century St. Petersburg, ably discussed by Helen Whitehouse, and neo-Egyptian garden monuments in Florence, considered by Gloria Rosati. These are welcome and whet the appetite. Yet one wonders about Egyptianizing architecture elsewhere in eastern Europe, and in garden decoration in other parts of Italy. The latter is especially relevant here, given the contributors’ frequent acknowledgment of the formative role of the pyramid of Caius Cestius in Rome and the Egyptian designs of Giovanni Piranesi. The scope of the essays is wide: Margaret Marchiori Bakos surveys Egyptianizing motifs in art and architecture in Brazil, noting also that the tallest obelisk in South America is in Buenos Aires (231). Despite its considerable reach the volume does not convey the universality of Egyptianizing to the degree that Humbert has previously asserted.2 This is not to say that the editors would be successful only by accounting for all Egyptianizing monuments, but rather that they do not make clear what is included and what is left out.

Nonetheless, and perhaps inevitably, the publication is more successful at demonstrating the scope of the question than fully articulating the cultural dynamics involved. On the topic of what all this Egyptianism means, the essays vary greatly. The acute and admirably complete text by Richard Fazzini and Mary McKercher on Egyptianized architecture in America offers many possible motivations for various American Egyptian-style monuments, having to do with—among other things—the sagacity, agelessness, and sublimity attributed in modern times to ancient Egypt. Their piece shows how American interest in Egypt continued in various ways through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is thus meant as a corrective to the claim they attribute to Richard Carroll that the “Egyptian Revival” was limited to the first six decades of the nineteenth