under siege, nor (as its introduction suggests) about the transformation of baroque cities by their fortifications, but rather (as its illustrations show) about military urbanism in its various guises, seen through the distorting, idealizing lens of early modern print culture.

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Notes
2. Enrico Guidoni and Angela Marino, Storia dell'urbanistica: il Seicento (Rome: Laterza, 1979), and Enrico Guidoni and Angela Marino, Storia dell'urbanistica: il Cinquecento (Rome: Laterza, 1982).

Jean Guillaume et al.
Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau: “Un des plus grands architectes qui se soient jamais trouvés en France”

Creator of a unique anthology of the greatest buildings in sixteenth-century France, Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau (ca. 1520–1586) was an engraver extraordinaire, draftsman, and inventor of architectural and ornamental designs. His legacy includes numerous collections, ranging from ancient triumphal arches and Roman monuments to works on optics, perspective, practical and imaginary buildings, grotesques, and, above all, two volumes of engravings, Les plus excellents bastiments de France (1576–79). Considering this wide-ranging output, a question permeates the historical discourse on Du Cerceau’s practice: “Was Du Cerceau an architect?”

An exhibition at the Musée des Monuments Français accompanied the publication of this deluxe volume, which is directed by Jean Guillaume in collaboration with Peter Fuhring and the assistance of experts in French architecture studies. It is dedicated to David Thomson, whose ideas and discovery of drawings in the Bibliothèque Municipal, Lyon (Ms. 6246), served as inspiration for the participants.1

The book is divided into three parts, under the headings “Life and Work,” “From Copy to Invention,” and “Du Cerceau Creator.” It is followed by an appendix, which includes texts, title pages, dedications (Latin texts are accompanied by French translations), and notices to reader, commenting on all of Du Cerceau’s works.2 The tome concludes with a catalog of prints and drawings accompanied by complete scholarly apparatus. As part of the appendix, a chronological list of seventeen works begins with triumphal Exempla arcaum (1549) and ends with Livre des édifices antiques romaines (1584).

In part one, Jean Guillaume provides the opening essay to this first comprehensive study of Du Cerceau since the monograph by Heinrich von Geymüller in 1887.3 Considering the critical fortune of Du Cerceau, the time is ripe for this study. Twentieth-century scholars acknowledged Du Cerceau as a virtuoso draftsman and popularizer; some also viewed him as indicative of the decline in late sixteenth-century French architecture. In today’s preoccupation with the vernacular urban fabric and preservation, Du Cerceau may be regarded as a visionary who embraced the total environment as well as the individual building. Here, Guillaume surveys Du Cerceau’s oeuvre according to places of maximum production—Orleans (1546–after 1551), Paris (1551–after 1561) and Montargis (before 1564–85). Insights may be gleaned from the patrons to whom his works are dedicated, from royalty to protector during the Religious Wars. Problems of attribution abound, since most prints and book collections of drawings are unsigned; watermarks serve as identification and dating. Today, many of Geymüller’s attributions are unacceptable, while a number of new drawings and collections have been added to the original inventory. The question of atelier arises, given the different techniques used and the absence of preparatory sketches, detailed plans, and scale drawings.

Part two focuses on Du Cerceau’s multiple sources, above all, the work of Sebastiano Serlio and the art of Fontainebleau. In one essay, Hubertus Gunther considers the role of Serlio. He further notes that Du Cerceau’s originality is manifest in the drawings of triumphal arches, such as the “salmonique” order (whose invention is traditionally attributed to Villalpando in 1596).

A hitherto obscure figure emerges as Krista De Jonge introduces the “Pre-cursor,” a Netherlandish artist whose subjects ranged from goldsmith designs to architectural drawings. The taste of the Precursor for ancient inscriptions shows a synthesis of the antique language of the Low Countries. As De Jonge argues, Du Cerceau could have known northern Renaissance art in the goldsmith milieu of Paris.

Fuhring investigates Du Cerceau’s sojourns in Fontainebleau. His role there is uncertain; Henri Zerner reduces it to ornament in the Gallerie François I, citing the precision of rendering architecture with cross-hatched lines. Fontainebleau constituted a turning point in Du Cerceau’s oeuvre for it was there that he realized that editing and printmaking were the means to make multiples in a short time. In 1545, he obtained a privilege to protect his prints against rival copies. Sabine Frommel discusses the crucial meeting of Du Cerceau and Serlio at Fontainebleau, when in 1541 the latter became the king’s architect, bearing first-hand knowledge of Italian building.

Guillaume opens part three with an essay on “Ornament and Architecture.” Throughout, Du Cerceau’s interests are limited to decorative effects, not iconography. In the 1550s his involvement in architecture is piqued by Lescot’s Louvre façade of 1546. Here was an Italian façade executed in the French manner with high windows and skylights. There is freedom in the design of ornament without restraint—a marked comparison with the practicality of Delorme. Du Cerceau plays in many modes, as witness the use of bossages in the “Grotte des Pins” at Fontainebleau. Guillaume notes, Serlio’s inventions are deemed those of an architect; Du Cerceau’s of an ornamentalist. Thus Du Cerceau
becomes a canvas on which many interpretations are posited.

Estelle Leutrat, in her contribution, discusses *Vues d’optiques* (1551) as a poetics of space. Finely drawn views are rendered in perspective, with small figures adding picturesque details. Vast architectural settings compose the mise-en-scène for religious and mythological episodes. Light effects emerging from dark ambients lend an air of mystery to these prints. In ruins, the role of nature is reduced—no trees or vegetation disturb this purely mineral and timeless world.

In a perceptive essay, Monique Chatenet examines three ensembles of engravings from *Logis domestiques* (late 1540s), *Premier Livre d’architecture contenant les plans et dessaigns [sic] de cinquante bastiments tous differens* (1559), and *Livre d’architecture* (1582). She also includes the Mansfield album, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, and Lyon, Bibliothèque Municipale, five sheets of Paris monuments, and the Morgan and Vatican albums.

Part three also includes a 1988 article by David Thomson, “France’s Earliest Illustrated Architectural Pattern Book: Designs for living à la Française.” In this work, Thomson examines a compilation of engravings in the 1540s, Du Cerceau sought protection of copyright for these works in a petition to Francis I in 1545. Because no pattern book had been published in Europe at that time, this work was noted for its novelty. As Thompson illustrates, Chateaux A to F are hardly “Petites Habitations”; rather they are country houses for wealthy aristocrats, or “Grands demeures signeurials” (221). The most striking feature of the schemes is the ample amount of space for servants and service rooms with special functions.

Du Cerceau’s role as a disseminator of architectural styles is the topic of Claude Mignot’s essay. From the beginning of his career, Du Cerceau was fascinated by the motif of the triumphal bay façade of Lescaut’s Louvre. In an inventory Du Cerceau is cited as “pourtayer,” that is, someone who only made drawings, as compared to architects who worked on buildings. Mignot raises the question: Was Du Cerceau an architect or just a builder/engraver on paper and vellum or a mere copier? Thomson believes that only his son Baptiste was a true architect. Yet, it is undeniable that Du Cerceau was a master of architectural and related activity—cartography, typology, and ornament.

In a perceptive contribution to the volume, François Boudon explores Du Cerceau’s grand opus *Les plus excellents bastiments de France* (2 vols., 1576–79). She examines twenty-seven royal chateaux built between 1528 and 1571, and other landmarks of the kingdom. This unparalleled anthology is marked by the consistency and clarity of its organization with each building represented in plan, elevation, and perspective view. Architectural and topographical information and personal observations are assembled as a primer for historians and builders. The text includes measurements, construction details, materials employed, and topographical commentaries. Among the many modes of representation are speculative aerial views—e.g., Fontainebleau from its surroundings. Extraordinary images appear in the large-format drawings in the British Museum, such as the axonometric rendering of Montargis showing both the interior and exterior (with gardens and landscape).

Returning to Paris in his late years, Du Cerceau focuses on the renewal of French architecture and on imaginary edifices. Studying the royal chateaux, Du Cerceau contemplates the publicity that accrued to their glory, as in the new wing of the Louvre. Following Serlio, he produces two didactic works on perspective and the orders. He concludes with the restoration of Roman monuments and an inventory of architectural patrimony, “des sins a plaisir.”

Fuhring’s conclusion to the volume, with its multiple cross references, is truly Herculean. Beginning with a catalog of prints, each entry contains a description, commentary, and bibliography—and a catalog and summary of Du Cerceau collections, with notes on techniques, inscriptions, dimensions, bindings, provenance, and analysis, and, not least, clearly captioned illustrations. The abundance of archival material makes re-evaluation difficult.

This lavishly produced volume is marked by a degree of redundancy. Still, there are surprises, such as the introduction of the “Precursor” and the discovery of the Lyon manuscript. Future researchers will find a rich font of scholarly references here. We owe gratitude to the institutions responsible for the exhibition and weighty publication—the Musée des Monuments Français in Paris and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

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Notes
3. In an email correspondence of 26 Sept. 2011, Guillaume noted that since this book was published, an archival discovery by Guy-Michel Leproux, in *Documents d’histoire parisienne*, (Paris: École Pratique des Hautes Études, 2010), 11: 18, has revealed that Du Cerceau was around seventy-three years old in 1584, fixing his date of birth ca. 1511, nine or ten years earlier than had been thought. This discovery obliges the authors to correct certain aspects of their work: a part of the oeuvre dating from the years 1540–45 must be assigned to the previous decade; the medallion that depicts the artist at age forty must no longer be attributed to the end of his Parisian years but to the close of his sojourn in Orleans.

Robert Bork, William Clark, and Abby McGhee, editors

New Approaches to Medieval Architecture


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New Approaches to Medieval Architecture bears a somewhat misleading title, as the methodologies employed by the authors are not new in the broad sense of the term; most papers included in this collection—drawn from conference presentations