

18th Century: Archaeological discoveries and the emergence of historicism

Rediscovery of the Temple of Isis at Pompeii (1765)

Pietro Fabris

-During the 18th century, Rome was still the center of cultural interchange (throughout the most productive phases of neo-classicism) in its richness of the antique ruins.

-However, many new archaeological discoveries in different parts of Europe enabled architects to review the remains of classical architecture without visiting and staying extensively in Rome.

-These archaeological discoveries revealed the fragments of the Greek and Roman cultures.

-These fragments were now observable in an increasing number and range throughout the Mediterranean and the Near East.

-These discoveries led the antiquities of the Greek and Roman cultures to be perceived widely beyond Greece and Italy.

-There was an attitude of studying the antiquities with a renewed passion, because in one's own town was an excellent remains of the classical culture.

Emergence of Historicism

- Interestingly, the 18th century was also the period in which an awareness of the plurality of architectural styles was first felt.**
- There were not only the classical architecture.**
- Architects now saw other styles of architecture: Egyptian, Islamic, Gothic, and even Chinese.**

Chinese Pavillion

(after 1778)

Val d'oise

Cassan, France

Recueil, title page

survey of the history of architecture
according to function

(1800)

J.N.L. Durand (1760-1834)

Historicism

- This cultural atmosphere gave rise to a unique attitude of history, which was called historicism, a degraded notion of history.**
- Historicism is an attitude in which one sees history with the lens of multiple styles to select**
- History appears as the inventory of available styles in which there was no reason to consider one style superior to another.**
- Styles were catalogued.**
- Major buildings of various styles were put into compilation in the same scale and in a manner which did not address any context in which the building stood.**
- Buildings became now transferable from one part of the world to another.**

Neo-Classicism

a two-fold response to the cultural context

- 1. Renewed interest in the Greek and Roman culture because of the new archaeological discoveries**
- 2. Search for the true style and timeless value in the midst of the formation of historicism**

Neo-Classicism

-Another factor which contributed to the formation of Neo-Classicism was a cultural phenomenon called Grand Tour

*Dr. James Hay as
Bear-Leader, and One of His
Charges*
Pier Leone Ghezzi (1737)

Grand Tour

- Admiration of the Classical past: From the 17th century onwards, the tour was undertaken to admire the remains of the Classical past and to collect art and antiquities.**
- Seventeenth century travelers had been interested in the monuments of ancient Rome**
- But in the 18th century, travelers sought more passionately the sources of broader Classical culture whose glories they sought to recreate.**
- Italy was seen as a shrine to Classical antiquity.**
- Travelers saw Italy through a haze of Classical associations**
- They took pleasure in seeking sites and objects described in ancient literature and comparing them with present reality.**
- They journeyed, muttering the words of Cicero, Virgil, Horace, and they journeyed, thinking of the great journeys of Odysseus, Aeneas and Horace in their minds.**

Formation of Neo-classicism

- Archeological discoveries throughout different parts of Europe –**
- Search for true and timeless style in confrontation with historicism**
- Grand Tour**

-At the same time, each country had its own cultural context which deepened her Neo-Classicism.

-Distinctive architectural legacy of each country that led to Neo-Classicism

England

Inigo Jone's Palladian architecture in the 17th Century, Beneficiary of the Grand Tour

France

The Rococo style (1st half of the 18th century)

Return to noble simplicity (marc-Antoine Laugier's discourse of the primitive hut) (mid-18th century)

Germany

(The Bavarian Rococo church)

Johann Joachim Winckelmann's literature on Greek art and life

-His books became very popular and instilled longing for Greek culture.

Italy

Fascinating engravings by Giovanni Battista Piranesi depicting the Roman ruins

America

Thomas Jefferson's introduction of Palladian architecture

Queen's House, exterior elevation (1616-1635)

Greenwich, England

Inigo Jones

England

-As we studied last time, during the 17th century, classical architecture of Palladio was introduced to England by Inigo Jones. Jones' pupils succeeded his legacy throughout the coming centuries.

Andrea Palladio: Four Books of Architecture (I Quattro Libri dell' Architettura), 1570

Inigo Jones (1573-1652): during his visit to Italy in 1614, acquired 1601 edition of The Four Books of Architecture

The first English translation of *The Four Books of Architecture* published in 1715 by a Venetian architect, Giacomo Leoni. But, this translation was not faithful to Palladio's original engraving. He added baroque embellishment to them. This was quite problematic because for those who do not read Italian, plates were only the language of communication.

Richard Boyle (1695-1753): leader in Palladianism in the eighteenth century and indirect influence upon Palladian architecture in America

Issac Ware (d. 1766): translation of *The Four Books of Architecture* (1738), a faithful edition to the original

-Those who contributed to the development of the Palladian movement in British architecture during the 18th century were among the travelers of Grand Tours:

Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington and 4th earl of Cork

Thomas Coke, 1st earl of Leicester

Henry Herbert, 9th Earl of Pembroke

-other British architects in Grand Tour:

Robert Adam (1754-58) (met Giovanni Battista Piranesi in Rome)

James Wyatt

William Chambers

Mereworth Castle, exterior view (1723)

Colen Campbell

Author of *Vitruvius Britannicus*
(1715)

Kent, England

- Colen Campbell, the architect was also the author of *Vitruvius Britannicus*.
- Campbell was one of the architects who enhanced the Palladian style in England.
- He began his career as a lawyer, and came to architectural prominence through the publication of *Vitruvius Britannicus*.
- This work is a close imitation of Palladio's Rotonda.

Villa Rotunda (Villa Capra), exterior (begun 1565-1566)

Andrea Palladio

Vicenza, Italy

- Like Palladio's Rotonda, the Mereworth Castle has a pedimented portico on each of the four sides of the elevation.**
- It also imitates Palladio's Rotonda by adding an attic.**
- In the treatment of the dome, however, Campbell puts a dome more prominent than that of the Rotonda.**
- This was in fact also faithful to Palladio's villa architecture.**
- Palladio's original intention as to the dome of the Rotonda was to put a dome of prominence like that of the Pantheon.**

Chiswick House, exterior view and plan axonometric (1725)

Lord Burlington & William Kent

Middlesex, England

-Lord Burlington, the architect, is another central figure in the Palladian movement.

-He had a more intellectual approach to Palladian principles than others.

-He kept the main lines of the plan of the villa Rotonda.

-However, he adapted it by employing only one of the four sides of the elevation as the main access.

-He designed the main entrance with a portico. In other words, the temple front motif was adopted for only one of the four faces of the building

-Here again, there is a difference between Palladio's Rotonda and Chiswick House.

-In Palladio's Villa Rotonda, each entrance is directly accessed through a flight of steps.

-However, in the Chiswick House, the main entrance is accessed from the sides.

-In this way, the architect protected the raised floor of the portico from circulation and defined it as an observation platform.

Villa Rotunda (Villa Capra), detail drawings (begun 1565-1566)

Andrea Palladio

Vicenza, Italy

- **France**
- **Reaction against the curvilinear and sensuous forms of such Rococo designer as Germain Boffrand**
- ***Gout grec versus Gout Pompadour (Pompadour: a mistress of Louis XV)***

The Oval Salon
Hotel de Soubise
(1737-1740)

Germain Boffrand

Paris, France

The representative work of the Rococo

Rocaille façade
(mid 18th century)

Nantes, France

-The Rocaille motif was also adopted for the design of the elevations exposed to public views

*Marc Antoine Laugier, the primitive Hut, from Essai sur
l'architecture, 1753 (from its second edition 1755)*

-The attack on the Rococo was most effectively made by an architectural theoretician, Marc-Antoine Laugier (1713-1769)

-Laugier was a Jesuit priest.

-As a priest of a society defending Papacy in response to the criticism made by Protestant leaders, the pomposity of the Rococo was not acceptable.

-He wrote a book entitled *Essay on Architecture* (1753)

-In this book, he argued that architects should always have before them the primitive hut as the reminder of the origins of architecture.

-This assertion for radical simplicity and return to the origin was welcomed by those who were anxious to get rid of Baroque and Rococo ornament.

The origins of architecture according to Vitruvius (c. 90- c.20 BC) in Book II, Chapter 1, *The Ten Books on Architecture (De Architectura)*

-The source of the restoration of a dignified architecture was the cult of the primitive Vitruvius described in *Ten Books on Architecture*.

- Vitruvius wrote that a fire which naturally occurred brought people around it.**
- From this gathering, there emerged a language.**
- After that, there emerged a need to construct a shelter.**
- People looked around and found tree twigs.**
- They started to build a hut with these available materials.**

- The second edition of Laugier's *Essay on Architecture*, which was published in 1755, included an engraving.
- This engraving illustrated Laugier's argument so compellingly.
- This image has become one of the most celebrated images in modern architectural history.

Marc Antoine Laugier, the primitive Hut, from Essai sur l'architecture, 1753 (from its second edition 1755)

- Let's take a look at this image more carefully.**
- Architecture is personified as a female.**
- She directs the attention of a child—or a student of architecture—to her origin.**
- The architecture of the origin is represented in the form of a rustic hut fashioned from trees and branches.**
- The trees and branches are contrived to form a rude pediment.**
- This way, this image gave a natural origin to the classical architecture at a moment when architecture needed to be purified again.**
- The essential parts of the composition were the free-standing columns, the horizontal lintels, and the crude pediment.**
- The hut was unadorned, functional, and its construction was rational.**

- One interesting issue we need to think about is: why does an architect or theoretician like Laugier return to the origin of architecture?**
- Is this origin real?**
- Is this origin supported by archeological and scientific data?**
- If not, is this origin a faked one?**

-Probably, we can say that Laugier's story of origin is rather fictive, not fictitious

-What is the difference between fictive and fictitious?

-Fictive is about believability and plausibility, not about faking, deceiving and fabricating.

-By creating a story of believability, a cultural leader seeks to open a new horizon for culture.

-This inquiry into the origin takes place at any moment of history when there is uneasiness about the direction of the current culture

The Mint
(1768-1775)

Jacques-Denis Antoine

Paris, France

-It is a Masterpiece of a leading architect of Neo-classicism.

-His name is Jacques-Denis Antoine

-This is considered the most impressive French building of the 18th century.

-Its character is defined by a very long façade w/a projecting central colonnade over a rusticated arcade.

-A subtle variation of classical architecture was made in this building.

-In place of a pediment, a row of statues were placed in front of a low attic

-Following the spirit of Laugier, the bldg. showed very little decoration.

-Even such elements as window frames were much simplified, contributing to the rectangularity of the composition.

S. Philippe du Roule

(1774-1784)

J.F.T. Chalgrin

Paris, France

-This building is an exceptionally fine neo-Classical church.

-Ionic columns with flutes run along the nave and around the east end

-Nave is covered by a coffered barrel vault.

-The vault is carved out regularly at its bottom to provide clerestory windows.

-These windows give a vertical counterweight to the pervading horizontality

Neo-Classicism in Germany

-The formation of Neo-classicism in Germany is largely attributed to Johann Joachim Winckelmann's (1717-1768) popular literature on Greek art and life.

-His books

***Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* (Dresden, 1755, *Reflections on the painting and sculpture of the Greeks*, English translation, London, 1765)**

***Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (Dresden, 1764, *The history of ancient art*, English translation, London, 1849-72)**

Neo-Classicism in Germany

- Winckelmann retained deep knowledge of Classical authors.**
- He also retained Roman copies of Greek original works of art**
- He became a leading proponent of classical/Hellenic ideals**
- His writing style was poetic and highly persuasive, evoking the nobility of Hellenic life and achievements**
- Greek art and civilization were conveyed vividly to the contemporary mind.**
- Although Winckelmann's analyses were focused on sculpture and painting, and touched upon architecture only sporadically, it is undeniable that it was through Winckelmann's contribution that the architecture of Greek-revival came into being.**

Brandenburg Gate (1789-1793) C.G. Langhans

Berlin , Germany

-This gate is first of the great Doric ceremonial gateways in Germany.

-It is based on the Propylaea of the Acropolis, in Athens

Neo-Classicism in Italy

- In Italy, there also emerged renewed interest in its rich Roman heritage.**
- The most important figure was Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778)**
- Pirane's interests in archaeology: *Le antichità Romane* (1756), Four volumes**

engravings of
Giovanni Battista Piranesi

left: *Self-Portrait*

Church of the Gesu

-Piranesi was an Engraver, etcher, architect, archeologist, and theorist.

-He was a life-long crusader devoted to improving contemporary design through a formidable output of engraved images

-He did not design many buildings. (Few of his architectural designs were executed,) but, he had a seminal influence on European Neo-Classicism.

-His publications which included his beautiful etchings were circulated widely not only in Italy, but also in different parts of Europe

-He was also very social.

-He enjoyed personal contacts with architects, patrons and artists visiting to Rome.

-Among the British architects he met were William Chamber and Robert Adam

- His interest in Roman archaeology is best observed in his: *Le antichita Romane* (1756). (Four volumes)
- This publication earned him an international reputation
- The publication included over 250 plates with formidable quantity of data and precision for each plate and with a strong visual impact
- It was a series of ambitious archaeological folios with themes ranging from Rome's achievements in architectural composition and ornament to Roman engineering and urban planning

Details of the Second Order of the Theatre of Marcellus

Flavian Ampitheatre exterior view (Colosseum)

Interior view of the Colosseum

Pantheon

Interior view of the Pantheon

Arch of Constantine

Carcere Series

*Title Page: Imaginary Prisons of G.
Battista Piranesi*

(2nd state)

-From the perspective of contemporary architecture, Piranesi was also influential.

-His series of etchings entitled *Carcere* (or Underground Prison) were inspirational for many architects including Tadao Ando.

-The spatiality of *Cacere* was defined by:

a strong contrast with light and dark

a strong presence of canyons of light

a complex organization of overlaying layers, bridges and walkways

structural clarity between solid masonry and tensile members

-This was further combined with the mysticism of the underground world.

The Well, Carcere XIII (2nd state)

The Staircase with Trophies

Carcere VIII (2nd state)

The Drawbridge

Carcere VII (2nd state)

Prisoners on a Projecting Platform

Carcere X (2nd state)

Neo-Classicism in America

-Neo-Classicism came to America was through Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) who studied in England.

-Jefferson is one of the great founding fathers of the American nation

-He brought Leoni's translation of Palladio's *Four Books of Architecture* home.

-This book was the first architecture book he bought and it remained as something of a bible for him throughout his life.

-In fact, he once referred to the book as his cultural bible.

Monticello (begun 1767)

Thomas Jefferson

Virginia, United States

- He designed his own house Monticello, in the style of Palladian villa architecture with an English modification.**
- It sits on an isolated hill top.**
- It has pedimented portico looking downward the surrounding garden.**
- It has an attic, and a dome showing the influence of Burlington's translation of Palladio's villa architecture.**
- The central salon is also announced externally by the octagonal dome.**