

EXOTICISM, NEOCLASSICISM, AND SICILY**

Pamela M. Bryan*

«Les différentes Colonies Greques, qui successivement abondèrent dans la Sicilie, donnèrent leurs moeurs, leurs langues & leurs usages aux autres nations plus anciennement... Les sciences & la philosophie ne surent pas seules cultivées en Sicilie, & nous ne pouvons douter que les arts ne l'aient été également par ses anciens habitants, puisque' indépendamment de la beauté des médailles sicilienes, qui sont en très-grand nombre & toutes du meilleur style, ce qui existe encore de ses temples & de ses edifices, suffit pour prouver que l'architecture, entre autres, y sut portée à un grand degre de perfection: il paroît même que s'il y sut dans la Grèce proprement dite, des monuments plus riches & d'une plus grande elegance, il n'y en sut jamais que l'on ait pu comparer, pour la grandeur & les proportions colossales, à ceux qui ont été construits dans différentes villes de la Sicilie, celles qu'à Selinunte, Segeste & Agrigente»¹.

With this declaration of reverence to Greek antiquity, Dominique Vivant-Denon prefaced Abbé Jean-Claude Richard de Saint Non's five volume *Voyage Pittoresque ou description des Royaumes de Naples et de Sicilie*, published between 1781-1786. During approximately the same period, from 1782-1787, Jean Pierre Louis Laurent Hoüel embarked to Sicily, to travel, narrate and illustrate his four volume, *Voyage Pittoresque des isles de Sicile, de Malte et de Lipari*. These folio volumes were published in Paris, overflowing with illustrations and replete with narratives of the archaeological and classical architectural "wonders" in the distant island of Sicily. [fig. 1] Within these monumental volumes, Hoüel's folios measure approximately 494x326mm (19 x 12in) and St. Non's folios measure approximately 520x340mm (20x13in) the ideas of exoticism and classicism co-existed. Few historians have analyzed the impact of exoticism on archaeological *vedutismo* which reshaped the classical tradition of architectural treatise writing and graphic illustration—broadly alluding to it as "romantic classicism"². To what degree the greek temples in Sicily described in the *voyage pittoresque* folios influenced architecture in 18th century Europe is debatable. Formerly, art historians

such as Hanno-Walter Kruft stated that «the extensive travel literature on Sicily in the eighteenth century yields little as far as Greek antiquities are concerned»³. Yet, these lavishly illustrated folio albums of Abbé Saint Non, narrated by Dominique-Vivant Denon and illustrated by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Jean-Louis Després, Claude-Louis Châtelet and Jean-Augustin Renard, and the folio albums written and illustrated entirely by Hoüel, were published by the hundreds to critical acclaim for the cultural elites of Europe⁴. Each folio set new standards for topographical travel journals. They combine a celebration of the culturally and geographically remote area of Sicily with a nostalgic curiosity of historical particulars⁵. Specifically, the Enlightenment attempt to revive an understanding of the simplicity of nature and the antique by returning to original sources of primitivism spawned the exploration for greek ruins⁶. As a heroic archetypal figure, the primitive man encompassed the myth of the "uncontaminated"⁷. Vitruvius described the origins of architecture in the guise of the rustic hut, but it would be Abbé Marc-Antoine Laugier who proposed that the primitive hut be taken as the model of excellence in architecture in his *Essai sur l'architecture* published anonymously in 1753⁸. The greek temples found in Sicily at Selinunte, Segesta and Agrigento put into



Fig. 1. "Carte de la Sicile" (da J. Hoüel, *Voyage Pittoresque des... cit., I*, Paris 1782-1787, plate II).

practice the theory of the natural virtues of post and lintel construction -natural because of its origin in the primitive wooden hut in which the columns that carry straight entablatures support everything. The primitive hut looks forward to the temples of Selinunte, Segesta and Agrigento where in the 5th century B.C. balance and uniformity were maintained. Subtle variations in detail and delicate adjustments of proportion evolve specifically with the introduction of the doric column. As a subject, Sicily is the clear marker of the convergences of classicism and exoticism prompting new archaeological and architectural discourse in Europe. Some intrepid travelers ventured into Greece, but the ruins there were still largely inaccessible. Sicily, Pompeii, and Paestum were the places with significant classical greek architecture open to Europeans. Perhaps, because of its remoteness and its greek classical ruins, Sicily was both familiar and strange. If exoticism acts as a representation of one culture specifically for the consumption by another culture, then it is possible for classicism and exoticism to co-exist. Throughout history, such linkages occurred when the British exploited the exotic appeal of India, or Modigliani and Picasso combined the primitive African face with the classical nude body, or when the greeks assimilated the egyptian and the phoenician element in their sculpture and architecture. Exoticism represents a primitive, strangeness and remoteness that regions such as Greece, Egypt, China and Sicily held for the germans, scandinavians, british and french during the time of the Grand Tour in the eighteenth century. Rich in a history of classical ruins, diverse in customs and manners, sublime in natural wonders, Sicily was part of the resurgence to claim the cultural patrimony of classicism. Dilettantes, architects and artists began to study original antique buildings anew in areas such as Pompeii, Paestum and Agrigento while continuing to derive their inspiration from Renaissance and Baroque exemplars such as Alberti, Serlio, Vignola, Palladio, Pozzo, and the Bibiena.

During this time, changes in the purpose and orientation of publication types as well as the development of a new hybrid publication led to a new artistic order-neoclassicism. Fundamentally, the ongoing interest in antiquity among architects, historians and philosophers was and is to assign meaning. During the Enlightenment, this innovative hybrid publication type affixed new meaning to architecture via the long

traditions of three literary genres: the treatise on architecture, the travel journal and the archaeological recording⁹. Hoüel and St. Non's folios introduced a new genre of architectural, archaeological and typographical illustrations which are complementary to a narrative and descriptive text in their travels through Naples and Sicily. Inspired by works such as Giovanni Battista Piranesi's engravings in *Della Magnificenza ed Architettura de' Romani* (1761) and J.J. Winckelmann's archaeological discourse on Greek architecture in *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Mahlerey und Bildhauer-Kunst* (1755), St. Non and Hoüel's works contributed to the raging debates in intellectual circles of the superiority of Greek art and architecture over Roman art and architecture¹⁰. Julian David Le Roy's *Les Ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce* (1758) published in France and James Stuart and Nicholas Revett's *The Antiquities of Athens* (1762) published in England had outraged Piranesi. Yet, Stuart and Revett's accounts of monuments and travels in Greece prompted enthusiastic accolades that would influence both Hoüel and St. Non. The massive folios of Hoüel and St. Non reveal and exaggerate the grandeur of specific monuments in roman and greek architecture, the natural wonders of mount Etna and the social customs in Sicily that intrigued the french authors. The tough, rugged, masculine, qualities of the doric columns at Paestum, Agrigento, Selinunte and Segesta embodied the philosophy that architecture, like mankind, was superior in its pure and original stage of primitive simplicity¹¹. More than antiquarian travel books, Hoüel's and St. Non's works move toward an appreciation of the sublime in both the natural and archaeological realms of Sicily. They are indicative of a broader interest in the scientific nature of geometries, clearly expressed and obtained through experience and observation by the frenchmen, to draw a synthesis of primitive and antique themes in a foreign environment¹².

Was there a relationship between the re-emergence of the doric order in neo-classical architecture and the *voyage pittoresque* folios of Hoüel and St. Non? The influence of the *voyage pittoresque* on architecture during the last half of the eighteenth century has been debated by art historians questioning a direct link between the Greek ruins in Sicily and the architecture in France, England and Italy. The work of french scholar and enthusiast of the doric, Léon Dufourny (1754-1818), who was a pupil of Leroy and M. J. Peyre,

represented a powerful example. Dufourny was an architect whose design of the doric order demonstrated a convergence of the architectural treatise and the archaeological recording into *vedute*. Dufourny reflected the fresh and vital impact of the greek revival on current design immediately following the publication of Hoüel and St. Non's *voyage pittoresque* books. An analysis of the inception of the doric order as part of the greek temples observed and described by Jean Hoüel, Dominique Vivant Denon and Léon Dufourny can yield valuable information that provide a direct linkage between the temples of Segesta, Agrigento and Selinunte and buildings such as Dufourny's *Orto Botanico* in Palermo, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's Besançon Theater [fig. 2] and John Soane's Dulwich Art Gallery.

Dufourny is a prime example of an architect during the time of the Enlightenment who injected the matter that he found in the nature of botany, geology and archaeology into his designs. A contradictory appeal of mixing non-classical exotic plant ornamentation in the metope with the classical elements of the abacus and entasis of the capital of the doric order were examples of variants invented by Dufourny. Intermittently, between the triglyphs, Dufourny designed bouquets of flowers, sprigs of wheat and indigenous fruit artistically reconstructed from the island. Additionally, unlike the slender, elegant doric column utilized by Palladio and Vignola, Dufourny encompassed the squat, baseless columns with oval shaped designed moldings around the base of the column and the neck of the capital.

In the same manner as Hoüel and Vivant-Denon, Dufourny, travelled for ten months around Sicily to survey and study the island's greek antiquities. He returned to Palermo on July 8, 1789, and was commissioned to construct the *Orto Botanico* which he accepted «to seize the opportunity to put into practice the studies that I had carried out of the antiquities of Sicily»¹³. As Pietro Burzotta stated in his article, *Dall'Orto Botanico al giardino del Mondo: le opere di Leon Dufourny in Sicilia*, Dufourny's architecture «creates a syntax of form that has objective validity, enabling it to be controlled and communicated at every stage of the construction process, taking the doric temple without a base as a hypostatic reference model»¹⁴. Within the gymnasium, calidarium and tepidarium of the *Orto Botanico* built in Palermo in 1789, the measurements of the three buildings, their formal and figu-

rative elements as well as decorative motifs were multiples or submultiples of a module. The module was constructed from collections of classical antiquity and renaissance models, and from the repertory of botanical and scientific classification he studied while in Sicily. Burzotta states, «each element possesses a formal autonomy justified at times by the sense of history, at others by the value of science... (Dufourny) resolved to retrieve the formal elements that had retained their original purity, and at the same time, to verify all the others that had gradually been corrupted, taking the models of greek architecture as a term of comparison»¹⁵. Documented evidence in Dufourny's *Diario* stated that Dufourny and Hoüel met and that he followed Hoüel's and St. Non's descriptions in their *voyage pittoresque* of the botanical elements in the nature and customs of various villages in Sicily. Their contemporaneous travels in Sicily, however, were not so much indicative of the influence of greek antiquity over Dufourny's design and technique as an example of the sphere of formal references represented by the culture and sensibility towards nature and architecture that Hoüel and St. Non's *voyage pittoresque* travelers had on architects as men of the Enlightenment¹⁶. The symmetry reflected a visual arrangement at the *Orto Botanico* that would be reflected in architecture in England and France not only as the vitruvian concept of proportion related to the human body, but as a consensus of inquiries into nature.

Architects, such as Léon Dufourny analyzed the doric column, from the base to the cornice, at the temple of Segesta and the temple of Juno and the temple of Concord at Agrigento and compared what he saw with the ancients and the moderns. It is this "produc-

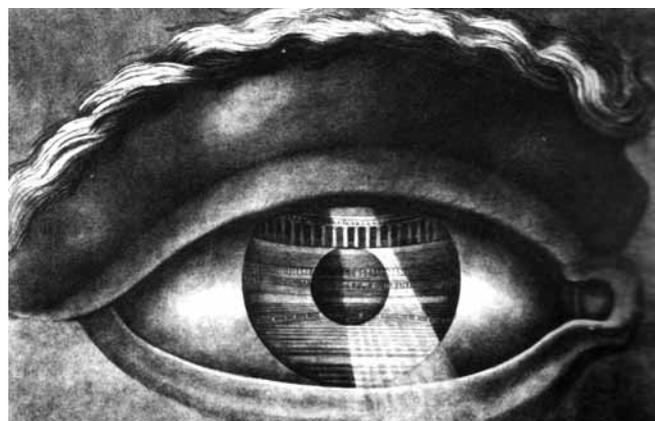


Fig. 2. C.N. Ledoux, "Coup d'oeil du Théâtre de Besançon" (da E. Kaufmann, *Tre architetti rivoluzionari*. Boullée, Ledoux, Lequeu, Milano 1976).

tion of meaning” rather than the “formation of the norms” that Dufourny will address in his *Scritti sull’Orto Botanico di Palermo* and what will ultimately influence the choice of his design for the *Orto Botanico*¹⁷. «L’ordine che decora l’edificio: esso è dorico perché questo è lo stile che conviene di più alla destinazione dell’ edificio. Si è cercato di trattarlo nel gusto del dorico dei greci...»¹⁸

The exoticism of the island of Sicily with its classic greek temples represented at the *Orto Botanico* resulted from Dufourny’s travels in Sicily and his direct contact with Houël and St. Non and his readings of *voyage pittoresque*. The building, which originally served as both a school and museum, was designed by Dufourny to be an eclectic, scientific temple. He worked cognizant of the tradition of Vitruvius, Palladio and Vignola, however, the undercutting of the stylobate and other details including the rustication, are taken directly from the greek temples in Sicily such as the temple of Segesta. He wrote in his notebooks: «Lo stilobate occupa in altezza la quinta parte dell’ordine, come a Segesta, ed è suddiviso in tre gradoni di due palmi ciascuno che, con il loro graduale rientrare danno molta forza al piede dell’edificio. Questa soluzione imita tutti i templi dorici di Sicilia e di Grecia che poggiano su simili gradoni»¹⁹.

His objective was to revive the language of the past, in accordance with Palladio’s specifications. For Dufourny, Palladio’s proportions and linguistic forms in architecture seemed to represent perfection.

However, he did not use the examples of the doric columns at Agrigento or Segesta for their tectonic value or for the syntax of the elements, for these guidelines he followed *l’Academie Royale de l’architecture* in Paris. Dufourny could not accept the chronology of the doric temples in Sicily, the temples of Paestum or those of Athens, for he believed they were all on the same timeless level. His classic and linguistic variables of forms were taken from the different temples such as the temple of Cora and the theater of Marcellus. Principles were integrated from previous groups of doric monuments to verify the precision of details. This was a transgression that was in complete conflict with the historicism of greek revival that extracted deep historical knowledge of the monument cycle or the presumed linguistic canon. There was not an actual greek revival but a transgression of classical forms²⁰.

Dufourny, like other architects of the second half of

the 18th century, observed the antique monuments with disenchanted eyes. They based their decisions on the rules of the Renaissance architectural treatises, however, they were open to recognizing the variability of the forms of details using an unedited version of syntactic formulation. This ability to be objective with frieze and not merely ideological did not correspond to an automatic will to acknowledge the classical language of architecture nor was it a renunciation of this language in the planning stage. Instead, there lay a progressive march of the modern historicism to reach the stage here where the recognition of the exoticism in the classical antique did not disown the tradition of the present. Dufourny was not blinded by the pretense of the antique evidence that he experienced in Sicily. In his opinion, every time the original greek was inferior in proportional delicacy or for purity of components to the treatise rules, he did not hesitate to reject it as faulty. For example, confronting the agonizing problem of the triglyph angular, Dufourny refused the solutions of the ancient greeks for those of renaissance architects such as Sansovino. The termination of the grooves on the stylobate of the temple of Concord were not acceptable to Dufourny and he was not afraid to alter the antique and modern classicism, inserting a base of invention, gathered from figurative suggestions left under the columns of the temple of Segesta. The proportion of the orders had not been changed from the sicilian temples or those at Paestum which Dufourny recognized as his “model” but were refined visibly to what he believed were “perfect proportionality”²¹.

In *Scritti sull’Orto Botanico di Palermo*, as he corrected ancient proportions according to renaissance treatises, so he adjusted renaissance treatises to the antique examples. The height of the order was revised to the antiques without taking into consideration the excessive renaissance slenderness. The metopes were made square as in the example of the greek and roman temples, the sloping of the walls according to the columns were based on the ancients and embraced by the rule of negotiation based on the recommendation of François Blondel. Thus, Dufourny was not willing to renounce the wisdom of “I Moderni” which attributed centuries of revisions of the classicism of the Renaissance to his time. By doing so, he would be renouncing an immense knowledge of formulation, of experimentalism, of refinings, of the extraordinary inspection of space. Dufourny’s renderings of the

doric column at Agrigento, Segesta, and Selinunte created for the *Orto Botanico* reflected the geometric illustrations drawn by Renard and engraved by Berthault for St. Non, yet lines were liberal, *chiaroscuro* was utilized and natural botanical elements began to be seen in the metope. The cubical mass of the *Orto Botanico*, with fluted pilasters contrasting with a rusticated wall was very modern [fig. 3]. The pilasters emphasized its massiveness. The cornice was very large and archaic and seemed to be part of the wall instead of a termination. The stylobate extended all the way around the building. The *Orto Botanico* was not a temple for it had no colonnade and no pediment. The entrance steps rise between sphinxes and lead to a pair of archaeologically based sicilian doric columns. An implication to renounce the immense didactic formulation of rules confronted the observer and instead a desire to experiment with an affinity for extraordinary spatial invention and syntactic complex creations resulted. Dufourny did not allow himself to be an architect of the revolution as Etienne-Louis Boulée and Claude-Nicolas Ledoux did, but the first of a new era. In describing the *Orto Botanico* -and indeed in designing it- Dufourny articulated it frontally, and proceeded from the base up. He followed Vitruvius, Vignola, and Palladio. Seen frontally then, the main zones of the building incorporate the base, the range of columns, the beams with their roof structure of the greek temples seen, observed and drawn in Sicily in the *voyage pittoresque*.

Base

The base of the order at the *Orto Botanico* was decorated with grooves and ornaments. The order transgressed in individual elements from those articulated in *De Architectura* and *De re aedificatoria*, and acquired syntactic form in the purpose and construction of the project. Hoüel and St. Non's folios had contributed to the debate over the very foundations of architecture by singling out the doric without a base as a more archaic and purer model to imitate. Hoüel scrutinized the archaic doric order at the temple of Concord at Agrigento: «Son ordre d'architecture est le dorique grec des premiers temps. La proportion des colonnes est d'environ quatre diamètres & demi pour la hauteur jusqu'à dessous du chapiteau: le diamètre est de quatre pieds deux pouces au bas de la colonne; elle a dix-huit pieds huit pouces de hauteur, sans y comprendre le chapiteau, qui vingt pouces sur cinq pieds

quatre pouces de largeur»²².

The repertory of formal elements of architecture had been identified for reference in the narrative of Hoüel and Denon, so architects such as Dufourny began to establish relationships in Sicily between architecture and history, architecture and nature, architecture and science and later architecture and myth.

Dufourny wrote of the measurement of the doric column at the *Orto Botanico* in reference to Segesta and Agrigento in his *Scritti*: «Un ordine di 4 diametri, come nella maggior parte dei templi di Selinunte e di Pestum, o anche di 5 diametri, come nei templi della Concordia e di Giunone a Girgenti, avrebbe prodotto paraste di estrema pesantezza, non mi avrebbe consentito l'altezza necessaria per i due piani di cui avevo bisogno e non mi avrebbero permesso di dare all'insieme un'altezza proporzionata alla sua larghezza. Di conseguenza, l'altezza dell'ordine è stata fissata a 6 diametri di 5 palmi ciascuno che comporta un'altezza totale di 30 palmi. Fissata questa regola, l'ordine risultata inferiore di un diametro al dorico di Vignola e dei moderni. Dei 6 diametri, 1 è impiegato per la base ed il capitello, 5 per il fusto della colonna. La prima idea era stata quella di fare un ordine privo di base, così come è stato sempre fatto dagli antichi nell'ordine dorico, ma il brutto effetto che avrebbe potuto produrre l'estrema lunghezza del fusto, resa ancora più sensibile dalla sua grande rastremazione, mi ha spinto ad inserire una base, o meglio uno zoccolo, la cui idea mi è stata suggerita da certi blocchi di pietra, restati fortuitamente sotto le colonne del tempio di Segesta, che



Fig. 3. Unidentified Italian 18th century architect. Botanical School in Palermo, elevation; w/m: J. Whatman, 1807 (Sir John Soane's Museum, London).

non mi sembrarono di cattivo effetto»²³.

The temples at Agrigento, Segesta, and Selinunte represented the first state of evolution of the doric order of about four to four and one-half diameters of the base. Another example at Paestum demonstrated that the doric column was four and one-fourth in diameter²⁴. The second state was exemplified at the temple of Minerva in the acropolis of Athens where the columns were more than five and one-half diameter and the entablature was two diameters. The temple of Augustus at Athens may be chosen for the third state. In this structure, the columns were six diameters with the entablature being two and two-sevenths. Within these examples, the transitions from heavy to light were extremely gradual and show by what slow and certain steps the ancients proceeded²⁵.

Between the surface and the stylobate and the bottom of the column shaft at the *Orto Botanico*, no molding or visible bedding intervened. Dufourny had followed the example of the temple of Concord.

«Ho esitato nello stesso tempo a far terminare le scanalature a vivo sul pavimento, soluzione che mi era sembrata poco felice nel tempio della Concordia a Girgenti»²⁶.

Column

For the fluting of the columns for the *Orto Botanico*, Dufourny remained consistent with the temple of Juno and the temple of Concord at Agrigento. «Le scanalature sono 20, così come hanno costantemente praticato gli antichi ed i moderni per l'ordine dorico»²⁷. At the temple of Juno and the temple of Concord at Agrigento, there was the same upward tapering of columns utilizing 20 concave flutes. There was the same form in the capitals with a round echinus and a square abacus above, and the same entablature with a plain architrave below and a frieze above decorated with triglyphs and metopes and the whole crowned with a cornice which in most cases would have the same mouldings. The greeks perfected their doric by separating the necking by three little annulets. The columns emphasized by Vivant Denon convey the predominant thinking of the greeks on the island of Sicily. «Le reste de l'edifice etoit construit en briques de la plus grande forms; nous ne favons cependant si elles egalent celles dont parle Vitruvius qui avoient cinq palmes en tout sens, ou un pied et un quart romain telles que les Grecs avoient coutume d'en employer dans leurs Monumens publics»²⁸.

Entablature: architrave, fregio and cornice

In Dufourny's view, the entablature, characterized by its frieze that formed an alteration of triglyphs and metopes, represented the building. «Le metope sono ornate da bassorilievi rappresentanti piante con i loro fiori e frutti, scelta che è analoga alla destinazione dell'edificio. La superficie di fondo delle metope corrisponde esattamente al filo della faccia dell'architrave. In quanto alla faccia dei triglifi, essa è in oggetto al filo dell'architrave e corrisponde esattamente al listillo che corona le gocce, costituente in realtà la parte inferiore del triglifo incastrato nell'architrave, come ha dimostrato Piranesi; per il resto gli antichi hanno molto variato su questo tema, poiché:

- nel tempio della Concordia, in quelli di Paestum, di Minerva e di Teseo, la faccia del triglifo è a piombo su quella dell'architrave ed il listillo delle gocce risulta di conseguenza in avanti;

- nel tempio di Segesta, la faccia del triglifo avanza sull'architrave ma non corrisponde affatto al listillo delle gocce;

- infine, nel tempio di Augusto ad Atene, nel teatro di Marcello e negli ordini di Palladio, di Vignola e di altri moderni, la faccia del triglifo è a piombo del listello delle gocce ed il filo del fregio è a piombo di quello dell'architrave, come ho praticato io, ottenendo così che l'oggetto della piattabanda che corona l'architrave non fosse tanto grande e non riducesse prospetticamente l'altezza della metope»²⁹.

Above the horizontal cornice was embellished on its underside a series of mutules, pendant plaques, each centered above a triglyph or metope. The mutules of the entablature for the doric order differed from Vitruvius to Alberti yet similarities existed between the temple of Segesta and Vitruvius. In book IV of Vitruvius' *De Architectura*, he writes: «And thus in Greek construction no one ever puts dentils under a mutule, because there simply cannot be common rafters beneath major rafters. Therefore, what in reality ought to be put above the rafters and purlins -even in imitation- it were to be put underneath, it would falsify the whole structural principle of the building. And so the ancient builders never approved, nor even so much as executed mutules or dentils on eaves, but only plain cornices, because neither chief rafters nor minor rafters are placed along a raking façade. Neither can they simply project outward; they must be placed on a slant to face the rain gutters»³⁰.

Dufourny followed the instruction of Vitruvius by sta-

ting in his *Scritti*: «Le superfici inferiori dei mutuli e del gocciolatoio erano inclinate nei templi greci, dal momento ch'essi erano coperti da tetti a due spioventi di cui il cornicione rappresenta la continuazione; qui si sono fatti in piano perché la copertura è supposta orizzontale ed a terrazzo. Negli esempi antichi i gocciolatoi sono in genere molto pesanti, come nei templi di Segesta, della Concordia e di Minerva, in cui essi sono alti un quarto del fregio, mentre nel quarto tempio di Selinunte ed a Pestum, monumenti che hanno d'altronde lo stesso carattere, essi sono alti un terzo. A causa dell'accrescimento dato al mutulo, mi è stato necessario fare il gocciolatoio meno forte; esso ha giusto un nono del fregio ed il suo soffitto è orizzontale, come è già stato detto»³¹.

The temple of Segesta

The influence of Piranesi and Leroy can be seen in the following illustrations by Houël, and Deprés and Châtelet and can be applied to the architecture of Dufourny and Sir John Soane, for it suited all of their goals of providing many types of information such as the decay of ruins, the looming monumentality of natural botanical and geological wonders and the powerful play of light and shadow on the stout and rugged doric columns in one design. Piranesi's drawings had influenced the travel images of Houël, Châtelet and Deprés altering their conceptions and views of the classic greek temple. Their drawings were large and colorful, rich in the play of light over the complex surfaces. The captions were surrounded by books, medallions, birds and vegetation. Piranesi first drew the main outlines in chalk, then liberally added brown and red wash for shading and some details. Piranesi's wildly imaginative and brilliantly



Fig. 4. "Vue du Temple de Ségeste en Sicilie", (by J.C.R. de St. Non, Voyage Pittoresque ou..., cit., IV, Paris 1781-1786, plate 66).

justified reconstructions of ancient roman and greek buildings suggested a kind of Ovidian metamorphosis of the majestic Italian landscape, its topography and architectural renderings. Piranesi's graphic production, which considered as a whole, constituted the artistic rendering of passionate architecture and archaeology, ushered the path for the folios of Houël and St. Non. As in Piranesi's archaeological publications, Houël and St. Non paradoxically combine precise measurements with the unmeasurable.

While Châtelet's *Vue du Temple de Ségeste en Sicilie* [fig. 4], offered to readers the cultural landscape of Sicily, Deprés' *Vue Interieure du Temple de Ségeste*, signify the influence of Piranesi. [fig. 5] The temple of Segesta sat high on a hill approximately 311 meters above sea level. Built between 430 and 420 BC, the temple has neither a roof nor a cella. Because of the unfluted columns, the uncarved steps of the stairs and the incomplete crowning of the columns' capitals, archaeologists believed the temple was never actually completed. The classic architrave, frieze, cornice with the pediment was in tact on the façade of the temple and the doric column had a smooth shaft that appeared slender and elegant. The temple symbolized the city's desire for a leading role on the Sicilian political scene. In Renard's *Plan Géométral du Temple de Ségeste*, the temple displayed the harmonic proportions of exastilo periptero as seen at the temple of Concord. The peristyle was formed with 36 doric columns, 14 columns on the longer sides and 6 on the shorter. Built of gold tint limestone the doric columns were formed with 11 tambours, 9.3 meters high with a diameter of 1.95 meters at the bottom and 1.56 meters at the top. Displaying a shallow echinus, the space between the columns is 2.40 meters wide and the height of the



Fig. 5. "Vue Interieure du Temple de Ségeste", (by J.C.R. de St. Non, Voyage Pittoresque ou..., cit., IV, Paris 1781-1786, plate 68).

architrave is 1.44 meters, the same height as the cornice. Triglyphs and metopes appear only around the outside. Hoüel's plate, *Colonnes géométrales du Temple de Ségeste*, [fig. 6] illustrated his description, «Cela me paroît d'autant plus vraisemblable, que les colonnes de ces deux Temples ont des bases à peu près pareilles. Celle-ci est singulière, en ce qu'elle a un refend B, qui la creuse tout autour, & qui semble la mettre en l'air: il donne au moins beaucoup de légèreté à la colonne, sur-tout étant accompagné par les quatres petites tables de relief qui remplissent les angles du socle de cette colonne. Voyez CC le plan de ces socles. Ses chapiteaux ne sont pas moins intéressans par leur singularité. Voyez le rétrécissement D de la partie supérieure de la colonne qui répond à la profondeur du resend de la base, en présentant l'idée d'une colonne sine de proportion, mais enveloppée d'une écorce qui lui donne de la consistance. Les angles renforcés du tailloir de ce chapiteau sont les seuls exemples que je connoisse de cette espèce d'ornement»³². Upon observing the temple Concord, Vivant-Denon compared it to the temple of Segesta: «La seule difference que l'on apperçoit entre ces deux Monuments, c'est que le Temple de Segeste n'ayant point été vraisemblablement terminé ni consacré, comme nous l'avons observe en en saisant la description, il est resté absolument nud & ouvert en-dedans, sans que l'on puisse apercevoir le moindre vestige d'aucune construction intérieure, au lieu que celui-ci nous indique, par la position des murs qui entouraient le Sanctuaire, & celle des Colonnes qui en décoroient l'entrée, quelle étoit la distribution presque généralement adoptée chez les Anciens dans la forme & la construction de leurs Temples»³³.

Architectural implications from the travel literature of the 18th century had greater consequences than previously analyzed. These consequences were not always presented in formal and well-reasoned treatises. The *voyage pittoresque* of St. Non and Hoüel provide novel speculations, but they also summarized succinctly aesthetic proclivities of the time in which they were published. They were indicative of the interest in reality characteristic of the Enlightenment and of a time of unprecedented travel. The driving force behind this development was a scientific interest in nature and a longing for sublime and unspoilt scenery. The legacy of the doric order in architecture in the 19th century reflects this desire to incorporate the original doric order, taken directly from nature as it was by

the greeks in Sicily, in order to create a sense of the sublime in the city. Dufourny's *Orto Botanico* manifests this evolvment in architecture based on his direct observations of doric temples in Sicily. Additionally, Ledoux's auditorium and stage at the Besançon theatre augments the monumentality of the original doric order seen at Segesta, Agrigento and Selinunte. Just as Ledoux's innovations influenced French architecture, so did the designs of John Soane for British architecture. Travelling to France and Italy, Soane observed the work of Ledoux, Piranesi and the greek temples of Sicily. The Dulwich Art Gallery reflects Soane's classical taste with the original doric order encompassing character and expression. Previously, the interest in greek architecture has been focused on Greece, particularly Athens, Dorian and Ionia, due to the monumental writings of Stuart and Revett and LeRoy. However, the *voyage pittoresque* folios of Jean Hoüel and Abbé St. Non alerted architects to the primitive and purest state of Greek architecture. By studying the exotic nature that surrounded these classical temples, the variations of the doric order that became a part of Italian, British and French architecture in the 18th and 19th century can be better understood. Thus, the paucity of attention surrounding travel literature to Sicily in contemporary scho-

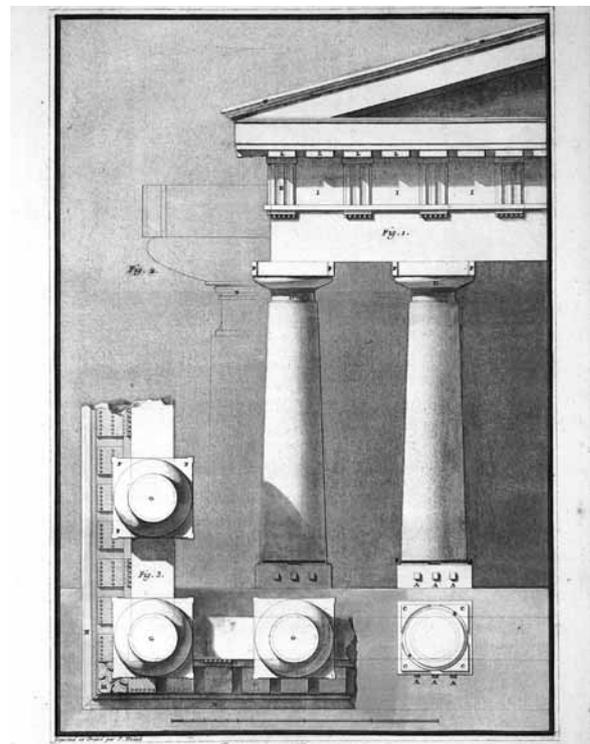


Fig. 6. "Colonnes géométrales du Temple de Ségeste", (by J. Hoüel, *Voyage Pittoresque des...*, cit., I, Paris 1782-1787, plate IV).

larship can decrease and the island can begin to be recognized and distinguished as an original site of the

beginnings of western classical architecture.

* Preservation Resource Center, New Orleans.

** To the memory of my professor, Richard Tuttle.

¹ J.C.R. DE SAINT NON, *Voyage Pittoresque ou description des Royaumes de Naples et de Sicilie*, voll. 5, Paris 1781-1786, p. xj. Passage is written by Dominique Vivant Denon for St. Non. The different greek colonies that have in succession abounded in Sicily, have given their morals, their languages and their customs to other nations formerly. The sciences and philosophy are not only cultivated in Sicily and we have no doubt that the arts were equally had by the ancient habitants, seeing independantly the beauty of the sicilian medals, that are very large in number and all of a better style, that exists still in the temples and the buildings, sufficient to prove that the architecture, among other things, carries a great deal of perfection: it even appears that there was in Greece itself richer and more elegant monuments. But no monument could be compared, for their grandeur and gigantic proportions, to those built in Sicily in such locations as Selinunte, Segesta and Agrigento.

² W.F. KALNEIN, M. LEVEY, *Art and Architecture of the Eighteenth Century in France*, translated by J.R. Foster, Baltimore 1972, p. 344. The parallel phenomenon in architecture that was reflected in the literature of Jean-Jacques Rousseau that combined a romantic notion of nature with a romantic attitude to history. People began to travel and discover past civilizations and no longer distinguish these different civilizations from their own.

³ H.W. KRUFF, *A History of Architectural Theory*, New York 1994, p. 215.

⁴ J.C.R. DE SAINT NON, *Voyage Pittoresque...*, cit., IV, p. 29.

⁵ S.F. EISENMAN, *Triangulating Racism*, in «The Art Bulletin», 55, December 1996, pp. 604-605. Eisenman defines exoticism as a «celebration of the culturally or geographically remote combined with a willful ignorance of historical particulars».

⁶ H. HONOUR, *Neo-Classicism*, New York 1979, p. 13. Honour defines neo-classicism as «the style of the late 18th century, of the culminating, revolutionary phase in that great outburst of human inquiry known as the Enlightenment». Joseph Rykwert (*First Moderns*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1983), states neo-classical as associated with «revolution, objectivity, enlightenment, equality. The words classic and classical suggest authority, discrimination, even snobbery-class distinction». Ivi, p. 1.

⁷ J. RYKWERT, *On Adam's House in Paradise: the Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural Theory*, New York 1972, p. 16. Rykwert explains the myth of the hero-inventors who are not rough, clumsy beginners, but famous and brilliant workman. Le Corbusier states «Great architecture is at the very origins of humanity and it is the immediate product of human instinct». LE CORBUSIER, *Vers une architecture*, Paris 1923, p. 55.

⁸ R. MIDDLETON, D. WATKIN, *Neo-classical and 19th Century Architecture*, New York 1977, p. 21.

⁹ D. WIEBENSON, *An Introduction to French Architecture*, in *The Mark J. Millard Architectural Collection: French Books: 16th through 19th Centuries*, catalogue by D. Wiebenson, bibliographie descriptions by C. Baines, Washington 1993, p. xx. Dora Wiebenson presents the context of architectural and archaeological publications by reviewing the chronology of treatises and manuals written before and during the Enlightenment.

¹⁰ J.D. LE ROY, *The Ruins of the Beautiful Monuments of Greece*, introduction by R. Middleton, Los Angeles 2004, pp. 3-25.

¹¹ P. FUSSELL JR., *Patrick Brydson: The Eighteenth-Century Traveler as Representative Man*, in «Bulletin of the New York Public Library», June 1962, p. 350. Throughout the 18th century, the travel book was one of the primary genres, almost every writer of consequence worked in the form.

¹² R.P. MACCUBIN, *Exoticism and the Culture of Exploration*, Durham 2003, p. 230. Also, M. TAFURI, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*, translated by P. D'Acierno and R. Connely, Cambridge 1987, p. 29. Tafuri points out that the irreplaceable role of the imagination as an instrument of scientific progress, as a source of hypotheses not otherwise formuable had been repeatedly recognized with the debates of the Enlightenment movement.

¹³ L. DUFOURNY, ms., Bibliothèque Nationale Paris, *Cabinet des Estampes*, II, p. 38, in L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700 nell'opera di Léon Dufourny: L'Orto Botanico di Palermo*, Siracusa 1996.

¹⁴ P. BURZOTTA, *Dall'Orto Botanico al giardino del mondo: le opere di Leon Dufourny in Sicilia*, in «Lotus», 52, 1986, p. 117.

¹⁵ Ivi, p. 117.

¹⁶ L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700...*, cit., p. 58 nota 19.

¹⁷ M. TAFURI, *Interpreting the Renaissance: Princes, Cities, Architects*, Cambridge, Massachusetts 2006, p. 3. Tafuri suggested that the variations to the orders found in architectural treatises are better understood by analyzing their "production of meaning" rather than the "formation of norms".

¹⁸ L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700...*, cit., p. 164. The order that decorates this edifice is doric because this is the style that conveys the best of the destination of the edifice. One seeks the treatment of it in the taste of the greek doric.

¹⁹ Ivi, p. 163. The stylobate occupied in height the fifth part of the order, like at Segesta, by subdividing in three degrees of two hands so for everyone for their gradual return it gave great strength at the foot of the building. This solution imitates all the temples of Sicily and of Greece that leaned on similar gradulations.

²⁰ Ivi, p. 52.

²¹ Ibidem.

²² J. HOÜEL, *Voyage Pittoresque des isles de Sicile, de Malte et de Lipari*, Paris 1782-1787, p. 24. It's order of architecture is the greek doric from the earliest times. The proportions of the columns are about four and a half diameters for the height up to below the capital; the diameter is four feet two thumbs to the base of the column. It is eighteen feet eight thumbs in height, not including the capital, which is twenty thumbs by five feet wide.

²³ L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700...*, cit., p. 164. A order of four diameters. Like in the largest part of the temple of Selinunte and of Paestum, or also of 5 diameters, like in the temple of Concord and Juno at Agrigento produced a look of extreme peasantry, nor does it consent to the height necessary for two floors of which have need and does not permit me to give together a proportional height to the width. Consequently, the height of the order was arranged at 6 diameters and five palms that computed for everyone a total height of 30 palms. Arranged from this rule, the order results in a smaller diameter from the diameter of the doric of Vignola and that of the moderns. From 6 diameters, it is employed for the base and the capital, 5 for the trunk of the column.

²⁴ D. WATKIN, *Sir John Soane: Enlightenment Thought and Royal Academy Lectures*, Cambridge 1996, p. 504. Remarks are from the second lecture at the Royal Academy by John Soane. The measurements of Agrigento and Segesta were taken from illustrations by Renard in the *voyage pittoresque* of St. Non.

²⁵ D. Watkin, *Sir John Soane...*, cit., p. 505.

²⁶ L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700...*, cit., p. 164.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ J.C.R. DE SAINT NON, *Voyage Pittoresque...*, cit., IV, p. 35. The remainder of the building was constructed in bricks of the grandest forms; we do not favor them unless they are equal to those spoken about by Vitruvius who had five palms in every sense or a roman foot and a quarter so much that the greeks customarily employed in their public monuments.

²⁹ L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700...*, cit., p. 166. The metope was ornated with a bas-relief representing plants with their flowers or fruit, a choice that is analogous with the destination of the building. The surface of the background of the metope corresponds exactly with the profile of the face of the architrave. The distance of the face of the triglyph is equal to the profile of the architrave and corresponds exactly to the corona of the drop, which constitutes in part to the lower part of the triglyph that fits into the architrave like that demonstrated by Piranesi, for the rest of the antiques have many varieties at this time since: in the temple of Concord, in that of Paestum of Minerva and of Teseo, the face of the triglyph is big on that of the architrave and the line of the drop results consequently, in the temple of Segesta, the face of the triglyph advances along the architrave but does not correspond effectively to the line of the drop, finally, in the temple of Augusta at Athens and the theater of Marcellus, in the order of Palladio, of Vignola and other moderns, the face of the triglyph is sealed by the line of the drop and the profile of the frieze is open to that of the architrave, like I practiced, obtaining a projection of a straightarch that the corona of the architrave not becoming to large nor reducing the prospective height of the metope.

³⁰ P. VITRUVIUS, *Ten Books of Architecture*, edited by I. D. Rowland and T. N. Howe, Cambridge 1999, p. 57.

³¹ L. DUFOUR, G. PAGNANO, *La Sicilia del '700...*, cit., p. 167. The lower surfaces of the mutules and dripstone (rafters) were bowed or inclined in the greek temples because they were covered by domed roofs whose molding represented the continuation, here they are made flat because the covering is sustained horizontal by a balcony. In the old examples, the weather moldings (rafters) in general are very heavy, as in the temple of Segesta, of Concord and Minerva, in which they are high (or tall) a quarter of the frieze, while in the fourth temple of Selinunte and at Paestum, monuments that on the other hand have the same character, are higher (taller) by a third. The cause of this was from the mutule, but it is necessary to have the dripstones (or rafters) less strong; therefore, it is fair for a ninth of the freize and its soffit to be horizontal, like I have already said.

³² J. HOÜEL, *Voyage Pittoresque...*, cit., I, p. 8. It appears to me as much that most likely the columns of these two temples have bases that are less close parallels. Here they are singular, in that of B. which has a hollow ring all around which seems to put it in the air: it gives much less heaviness to the column, especially accompanied by four little tables of relief that fill out the angles of the plinth of this column. Look at the plan of these plinths. The capitals are no less interesting because of their singularity. Look at the shrinkage of the higher part of the column that responds to the profound effects of the base, it presents the idea of a column without proportion, but enveloped by a bark that gives to it consistency. The reinforced angles that tailor this capital are the only examples I know of this type of ornament.

³³ J.C.R. DE SAINT NON, *Voyage Pittoresque...*, cit., IV, p. 211. The only difference one can perceive between these two monuments, is that the temple of Segesta, having in all likelihood not been finished or consecrated, as we observed in gathering the description, has absolutely remained nude and open, without power to display the remainder of remnants of construction of the interior, instead we indicate here however, the position of the seas that surround the sanctuary and these columns that decorate the entrance, they have the distribution generally adopted at the house of the ancients in the form and construction of their temples.