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Course

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Textbook: Lotz, Wolfgang, and Deborah Howard. *Architecture in Italy, 1500-1600*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995. Print.

Early renaissance architecture in Italy

### The classic revival

Gothic architecture abandonment in Italy occurred and in its place classic models were occasioned. This was obviously not a local revolution. Evidently, the revolution was because of a reflective and universal intellectual faction, with roots traced to the middle ages. All these were manifested in Italy because the conditions were extremely propitious. The spread was rapid in Europe with similar conditions witnessed in other countries, which seems to be prepared to embrace the concept. Classic Roman architecture has never lost Italian taste influence. Gothic art, which is already experiencing a decline in the West, was never embraced in Italy; rather, a borrowed garb with clothing architectural conceptions preferred to Gothic. The antique monuments that abounded on each hand seemed present in artist models and Florentines that were associated with the early fifteenth century. This unique civilization represented a human culture, which was ideal. The situation resulted to churches losing their hold on culture as well as the increased penetration of the new culture in private luxury as well as public display.

## Early Beginnings

The 13th century saw the Niccolo Pisano pulpits found in Sienna together with Pisa reveal the fact the master's direct recourse associated with antique monuments for motivation. There was frequent appearance of classic forms in the fourteenth century as evident in the followers of frescoes of Giotto and Gothic buildings architectural details. This was evident in Florence, which was considered Italy artistic capital. There had never been a community permeated with love for beauty and endowed with the ability to recognize it since Pericles days.



Niccolo Pisano pulpits

## Periods

Four classic styles emanated from Renaissance. The first one involved the early renaissance (1420–90). It was characterized by freedom of attractive detail, recommended by Roman prototypes. The composition entailed great variety and authenticity. The second one was high renaissance (1490–1550). This period saw classic details being copied with rising fidelity as evident in orders appearing in approximately all compositions. At the same time, the decoration

seemed to lack grace and autonomy. The third style was Baroco (1550–1600), which was a classic formality period, exemplified by the usage of colossal orders, scanty direction, and engaged columns. The last one was Later Baroque that was marked by invention of poverty as portrayed in their composition. The predominate factor was vulgar sham and decoration display. Broken pediments characterized the style with vast scrolls, florid stuccowork in addition to complete ignorance of architectural propriety considered universal.



Early renaissance (1420–90)

High renaissance (1490–1550)



Baroco (1550–1600)



### **Later Baroque balconies**



### **Florence early renaissance**

The year 1417 saw a public competition conducted for the completion of Florence Cathedral. This entailed a dome to be constructed over the huge octagon, which was 143 feet in relation to diameter. A sculptor called *Filippo Brunelleschi* and an architect (1377–1446), together with Donatello began their journey to Rome with an aim of studying of ancient art masterworks. Their demonstrations of weaknesses in all the proposed solutions buy the competitors permitted them undertake the huge task. The plan had an octagonal dome found in

two shells liked by other eight major in addition to sixteen minor ribs crowned at the top by a lantern. The original conception went beyond the Moslem art and emerged as a peripheral feature. It terminated light forms while the upward lantern movement carried out between 1420 and 1464. Even with no wise Roman forms imitation, it remained classic in spirit, vastness, and line simplicity. All these were made possible by Brunelleschi Roman design study as well as construction. The Renaissance architect occupied themselves mostly with form rather than construction, and hardly ever experienced constructive challenges. The new architecture started with the gigantic cathedral dome in Florence with culmination of an astonishing St. Peter church in Rome. It was mainly a palaces and villas architecture decorative display façades. Constructive challenges were reduced to lowest terms with constructive framework concealed and not highlighted by the decorative design apparel. The early Renaissance masterpieces were buildings of small dimensions like gates, fountains chapels, and tombs.

Cathedral dome in Florence



## **Other Churches**

Brunelleschi's unique models were constructed in Pazzi Chapel found in Sta. A charming Greek design called Croce Cross covered a dome at an intersection, and paved way for vestibule with an opulently decorated vault. This was evident from the two grand churches such as S. Lorenzo and S. Spirito. The two of them were reproduced to measure the Pisa Cathedral plan and had three aisled transepts in addition to nave with a dome crossing over. On the other hand, the side aisles had domical vaults coverings with the centre aisles having plaster ceilings and flat wooden. The column details, arches, as well as moldings were imitations of Roman models with the result being something new. Deliberately, Brunelleschi revived Byzantine, which is different from Roman conceptions in relation to planning or structural design associated with domical church. At the same time, the attire, which he dressed them, seemed Roman in detail. Another dominant design of grand beauty associated with Old Sacristy was S. Lorenzo.

### **San Lorenzo church**



### **Courtyards; arcades**

The palaces were constructed around interior courts. Its walls were inclined on columnar style arcades evident in P. Riccardi. The arcades origin might be found in arcaded cloisters linked to churches, which were medieval monastic and suggest classic models. An example of such a scenario was of St. Paul and St. John Lateran in Rome. It is evident that Brunelleschi not only come up with columnar arcades to a number of cloisters, but also applied them efficiently as exterior elements in Loggia, S. Paolo, and Ospedale degli Innocenti in Florenc. This was in addition to the courts found within the palace. The main drawback in the light arcades remained their incapability to endure vaulting thrust over the space, which was behind them, and the subsequent recourse of iron tie-rods while using vaults. Conversely, the Italians, nevertheless, cared less about the disfigurement.

#### Lateran Basilica in Rome



#### Minor Works

The new style details developed quite rapidly in solely decorative works evident in monumental buildings. Altars, pulpits, mural monuments, ciboria and tabernacles, afforded a range genius distinguished artists. Among the celebrated artists were Lucca *della Robbia*, Mino *da Fiesole* and *Benedetto da Majano*. The possession of a wonderful invention fertility multiplied their works in unexpected numbers as well as variety not only in northern Italy but in Rome as well as Naples. The most celebrated examples of were a pulpit located in Sta. Others included terra-cotta fountain was located within the sacristy by Croce, Novella done by Della

Robbians, Marsupini tomb found in Sta. The works of these characters were instrumental in making Renaissance to emerge in a fresh setting as the case in Naples, Lucca, Senna, and Pisa.



Pulpit of St Andrew