



Vitruvius on Architecture

Frank Granger

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VITRUVIUS ON ARCHITECTURE EDITED FROM THE HARLEIAN MANUSCRIPT 2767 AI
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY FRANK GRANGER, D. Lrr., AJLLB. A. PROFESSOR IN
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NOTTINGHAM IN TWO VOLUMES I CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
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TEMPLES . . . PLATE C. IONIC ORDER PLATE O. CORINTHIAN ORDER see Frontispiece PLATE
E. DORIC ORDER . . . at end PLATE F. MUSICAL SCALES . . . , PLATE O. THEATRE PLATE H.
PLAN OF STABIAN BATHS, POMPEII . vi PREFACE THIS edition has been based upon the oldest MS.
of Vitruvius, the Harleian 2767 of the British Museum, probably of the eighth century, and from the Saxon
scriptorium of Northumbria in which the Codex Amiatinus was written. The Latin closely resembles that of
the workshop and the street. In my translation I have sought to retain the vividness and accuracy of the
original, and have not sought a smoothness of rendering which would become a more polished style. The
reader, it is possible, may discern the genial figure of Vitruvius through his utterances. In a technical treatise
the risks of the translator are many. The help of Dr. House has rendered them less formidable, but he is not
responsible for the errors which have survived revision. The introduction has been limited to such con-
siderations as may enable the layman to enter into the mysteries of the craft, and the general reader to follow
the stages by which the successive accretions to the text have been removed. The section upon language
indicates some of the relations of Vitruvius to Old Latin generally. My examination of fourteen MSS. has
been rendered possible by the courtesy of the Directors of the MSS. Libraries at the British Museum, the
Vatican, the Escorial, the Bibliotheque Nationale vii PREFACE at Paris, the Bodleian, St. Johns College,
Oxford, and Eton College. A word of special thanks is due to his Excellency the Spanish Ambassador to
London, his Eminence the Cardinal Merry del Val and the Secretary of the British Embassy at Paris, for their
assistance. Mr. Paul Gray, M. A., of this College, has given me valuable help in preparing the MS. for the
press. FRANK GRANGER. UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NOTTINGHAM, September, 1929. viii
INTRODUCTION VITRUVIUS AND THE ARCHITECTURE OP THE WEST THE history of
architectural literature is taken by Vitruvius to begin with the theatre of Dionysus at Athens. 1 In earlier
times the spectators were accommodated upon wooden benches. According to one account, 2 in the year 500
B. C. or thereabouts, the scaffolding collapsed, and in consequence a beginning was made towards a
permanent stone structure. The elaborate stage settings of Aeschylus reached their culmination at the
performance of the Agamemnon and its associated plays in 458. According to Suidas, 3 the collapse of the
scaffolding, which occurred at a performance of one of Aeschylus dramas, led to the exile of the poet in
Sicily, where he died in 456. In that case the permanent con struction of the theatre would begin in the
Periclean age some time between 458 and 456...

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Kathleen Blackwood:

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