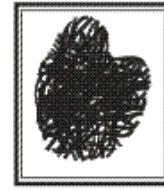


THE SERIES: FROM THE FROG'S PERSPECTIVE



BIBLIOTHECA PERSPECTIVAE

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Abstract. One of the institutions that systematically gathers and analyses elements of European geometric heritage is Museo Galileo in Florence. During the digitalization of their library there were 400 titles analyzed as theme projects. One of them is really important to people who specialize in geometry, especially the “Bibliotheca Perspectivae” project. The article is a short review of this project.

Keywords: Museum Galileo, “Bibliotheca Perspectivae”, Filippo Camerota, perspective treatises

1 Introduction

The Institute and Museum of the History of Science in Florence - “Museo Galileo” made a Project “Bibliotheca Perspectivae” (further BP) donated by the Italian Ministry of Education, Higher Schooling and Research and by the Faculty of Philosophy at Florence University.

The project aims to give researchers a possibility to access unique exhibits connected with the development of perspective. The materials prepared during BP project are available at www.imss.fi.it/biblio/ebperspe.html.

The project was prepared and is guided by Filippo Camerota. He is the assistant manager of the museum and the head of the museum collection. He has done research into the problems connected with perspective of Renaissance and with measuring techniques for years. He is the author of many publications connected with development and topography in 15th and 16th century. They are not only appreciated because of the substantial value, but also because of the fact, that they include many valuable, unknown materials coming from the rich collection of Florence Museum.

One of interesting thesis of the project is treating research into the history of perspective development as an independent scientific field, even though this research was

only an addition to historiography in art history and supplement of research into history of science. The history of perspective is understood by the author of the project as:

- a part of development in addition to historiography in art history and supplement of research in history of science
- graphical presentation of space and elements connected with it. It still has not been fully researched, though it's an essential element of critical research connected with development of modern science and art of modern age.

Independence of research of perspective development makes it necessary for researchers to reach for genuine sources, complete versions of books and treatises on perspective and representative amount of these titles. This is why one of the most important elements of the project is the digitalization of representative Perspective Library. There is a plan, to make 50 titles of the times between 15th and 18th century available.

The archives of the library were gathered in four parts, three of which were divided into subsections.

2 BP Sections and chosen titles description

In the first section, entitled „Works”, there are 34 digitalized versions of literature titles (table 1 of this article). One of them is a digitalization based directly on the manuscripts, others are scans of copies and prints.

One of the most interesting objects of the library is the first edition of a treatise by Andea Pozzo (1642-1709) *Perspectiva pictorum...* [6] written in 1693. This treatise, very popular in Poland, is mostly known from its later editions, where the original graphics made after Pozzo's drawings were replaced by some other, smaller illustrations, made by independent illustrators. Depreciation of complex Pozzo's led to many mistakes, results of which we can see for example in illusionistic murals presenting “domes according to Pozzo”. In digital libraries in Poland [7], Germany and Spain we are able to see Pozzo's treatise, but after makeovers. This is why, to truly recognize the value of the original, we shall reach to BP.

The library hosts materials, that are unknown in Poland and in most cases Polish literature on perspective does not refer to them. An interesting group of objects are English titles. According to the author, one of the most interesting titles is John Joshuy Kirby's (1716-1774) *Dr. Brook Taylor's method of perspective made easy...* [5], published in 1754. The author was a painter and also an architect, a popular leader of Artistic Society of London. The advantage of the book is the clarity of texts and illustrations and visible division between topics connected with theory (vol. 1) and these describing practice (vol. 2). The author is describing solutions from other books, but he also includes his own illustrations. They are often simplified to underline the rules or are completing elements, which were absent in the original and made understanding of the whole much harder. An example of such an activity can be one of the illustrations in the chapter on creating horizontal perspective. By describing Pozzo's method Kirby simplifies the illustration of Italian Jesuit and adds missing markings important to perspective construction.

It is also worth studying Guidobaldo Dal Monte's (1545-1607) *Perspectivae libri sex* [3]. The book is said to be the first one that includes mathematical analysis of perspective. Many drawings are very valuable, most of all shadow constructions.

Table 1: Catalogue „Bibliotheca Perspectivae” (authors’ names in alphabetical order)

No	SURNAME, firstname of author	Title	Year of publication / elaboration
1.	ACCOLTI, Pietro	<i>Lo inganno de gl'occhi : prospettiua ...</i>	1625
2.	AGUILÓN, François de	<i>Opticorum libri sex, philosophia ...</i>	1613
3.	ALBERTI, Leon Battista	<i>De pictura incipit prologus ...</i>	1436
4.	BASSI, Martino	<i>Dispareri in material ...</i>	1572
5.	BARBARO, Daniele	<i>La pratica della prospettiva di ...</i>	1569
6.	CARDI, Ludovico	<i>Prospettiva pratica di ... (manuscript)</i>	1610
7.	CAUS, Salomon de	<i>La perspective avec la raison des ...</i>	1612
8.	COUSIN, Jean	<i>Livre de perspective</i>	1560
9.	DAL MONTE, Guidobaldo	<i>Perspectivae libri sex</i>	1600
10.	DU BREUIL, Jean	<i>La perspective pratique nécessaire ...</i>	1642
11.	DÜRER, Albrecht	<i>De symmetria partium in rectis ...</i>	1532
12.	DÜRER, Albrecht	<i>Underweysung der Messung, mit dem ...</i>	1538
13.	GALLI BIBIENA, Ferdinando	<i>L'architettura civile preparata su la ...</i>	1711
14.	GAURICO, Pomponio	<i>De sculptura</i>	1504
15.	JACQUIER, François	<i>Elementi di prospettiva secondo ...</i>	1755
16.	JAMNITZER, Wenze	<i>Perspectiva corporum regularium: Das...</i>	1568
17.	KIRBY, John Joshua	<i>Dr. Brook Taylor's method of ...</i>	1754
18.	LAMBERT, Johann Heinrich	<i>La perspective affranchie de l'embaras</i>	1759
19.	LENCKER, Hans	<i>Perspectiva literaria: das ist ein ...</i>	1567
20.	LEONARDO DA VINCI	<i>Trattato della pittura</i>	1651
21.	LOMAZZO, Giovanni Paolo	<i>Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura...</i>	1585
22.	MAROLOIS, Samuel	<i>Opera mathematica, ou Oeuvres ...</i>	1614
23.	MAROLOIS, Samuel	<i>Opera mathematica, ou Oeuvres ...</i>	1662
24.	NICERON, Jean François	<i>La perspective curieuse, ou, Magie ...</i>	1638
25.	PECKHAM, John	<i>Prospectiva communis d. Joha[n]nis ...</i>	1482
26.	PELERIN, Jean	<i>De artifi[cia]li p[er]spec[ti]va</i>	1505
27.	POZZO, Andrea	<i>Perspectiva pictorum et architectorum ...</i>	1693
28.	REVESE BRUTO, Ottavio	<i>Archisesto per formar con ...</i>	1627
29.	RYFF, Walther Hermann	<i>Der Architectür fürnembsten ...</i>	1558
30.	SABBATINI, Nicola	<i>Pratica di fabricar scene, e machine ...</i>	1638
31.	SCHEINER, Christoph	<i>Pantographice, seu ars</i>	1631
32.	SERLIO, Sebastiano	<i>Il primo libro [-quinto] d'architettura ...</i>	1551
33.	SIRIGATTI, Lorenzo	<i>La pratica di prospettiua</i>	1596
34.	VIGNOLA	<i>Le due regole della prospettiua prattica</i>	1682

The second chapter is “Didactical Laboratory”. It includes movies, slideshows and animations, that aim to present methods of constructing perspectives. The Laboratory concentrates on:

- acknowledgment of methods,
- acknowledgment of tool usage,
- showing historical contexts important for these methods and publications connected with them
- popularization of knowledge about people connected with development of methods described in perspective treatises.

The method focuses on including the viewer in the experiment and is important for understanding the rules of constructing the perspectives and using tools invented for that purpose.

In the third chapter entitled “Iconography” we find division into subchapters on symbols and allegories, anamorphs, architecture and stage design, geometrical objects, human body, basics of optics and geometry, shadows and colors. The researcher makes it possible to get directly to required topics, in particular the titles that can be found in the library.

Finally, in the fourth chapter we can find information on analyses of renaissance perspective research on the Internet. For people interested in good analyses the most important will be, according to the author, links to two research groups of Kim Henry Veltman, a well-known authority.

3 Conclusions

Systematic research of extensive materials and information available on the Internet requires specific knowledge including information management and takes a lot of time. Projects such as BP gathering lots of sources and scientific analyses representative for perspective research, that are truly valuable. Access to these sources gives possibility to:

- enrich your knowledge,
- verify many stereotypes,
- acknowledge critical analyzes,
- give answers to many questions stated in scientific works.

Using the BP’s archives the author proved, that inspiration for masterpieces of Cracow’s masonry guild from 16th-19th century ([8], [9]) was probably an illustration from a treatise by Daniele Barbaro (1514-1570) entitled *La pratica della prospettiva...* [2/ s. 153].

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- most of which are engrav'd by the author ... , Ipswich: W. Craighton, 1754; [w:] Museo Galileo: Bibliotheca Perspectivae (dostęp: czerwiec 2010).
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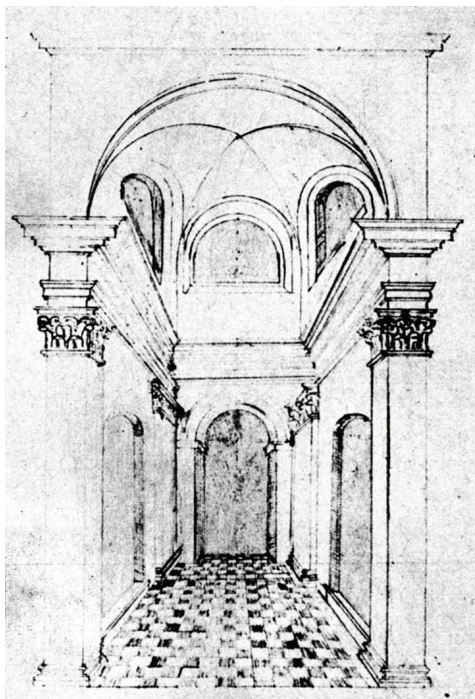


Figure 1: Cracovian masterpiece⁵ by Jakub Solari, 1683 r. [8/fig. 26/p. 68]



Figure 2: View of groin vault from *La pratica della perspettiva...* Daniele Barbaro, 1569 edition [2/p. 153]

BIBLIOTHECA PERSPECTIVAE

Jedną z instytucji, która systematycznie gromadzi i opracowuje elementy europejskiego dziedzictwa geometrycznego jest Muzeum Galileusza we Florencji. W ramach digitalizacji zbiorów Muzeum opracowano 400 pozycji literaturowych oraz przygotowano na ich bazie projekty tematyczne. Jednym z nich jest ważny dla osób zajmujących się geometrią a przede wszystkim perspektywą projekt „Bibliotheca Perspectivae”. Artykuł stanowi krótką recenzję tego projektu.

⁵ A candidate for the master of bricklaying and stonemasonry, following the statute approved by king Sigismund III Vasa in 1618, during his exam had to draw a view of groin vault in front of the elders of the guild [8/p. 47].