



2.1 Michelangelo, *Bruges Madonna*. Marble, 1503–1504. Bruges, Church of Onze Lieve Vrouwe.

*Italian Sculptors and Sculpture Outside of Italy  
(Chiefly in Central Europe): Problems of Approach,  
Possibilities of Reception*

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By the late sixteenth century Latinate culture as first introduced in the form of Italian humanism provided a model for grammatical instruction and rhetorical practice from Manila to Minsk.<sup>2</sup> By the same time works of the visual arts possessing a definite Italianate character had also expanded throughout the globe. The iconography of humanism, as evinced by author portraits and frontispieces, was spread in books by authors as widely disparate as the Mexican-born Diego Valadés and the Belorussian Francisk Skarina.<sup>3</sup> In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries works comparable in form to those in the peninsula could be found in churches scattered from Macao or Goa (which contain paintings of the sixteenth century) to the highlands of the Andean region in South America, where Bernardo Bitti, a native of Camerino, was active in an area extending from Quito to Sucre during the later sixteenth century, and where the Fleming known as Pedro de Gante designed the Franciscan Church in Quito, which possesses a facade that recalls a triumphal arch.<sup>4</sup>

This essay deals with some of the best known and most striking instances of the spread of Renaissance (and later) visual forms, Italian sculptors and sculpture outside of Italy.<sup>5</sup> From antiquity Italy supplied a source of fine marble. The skill and training of Italians as stonemasons and bronzecasters were also appreciated elsewhere. Thus Italian sculptors and their products were long in broad demand, especially from the fifteenth century. Yet familiar as the topic may be, this seemingly straightforward case of the expansion of the Italianate still remains to be integrated into a comprehensive picture of what the Renaissance and its consequences might mean outside Italy, as indeed do so many other examples of related phenomena.

For the possible historical significance of many such works, especially those found outside of Europe, is hardly acknowledged in Anglo-American art history. Studies of the history of European art in the early modern period also continue largely to ignore two thirds of the continent, where many major monuments are contained, namely the area east of the Rhine, particularly after about 1530, as they also ignore the area east of the Oder, in almost any period. Very few American art historians study the Iberian peninsula, especially before the so-called Golden Age of seventeenth-century Spain, for that matter. Despite the existence of objects located or made outside Italy that can be considered

within the terms of standard definitions of the Renaissance, there is little attention given to what they might reveal about the broader applicability of the idea of the Renaissance, what they might perhaps even imply for a reconsideration of the meaning of the conception, and finally what they might indicate more generally about cultural exchange and interchange.

With all the concerns that are voiced for a more comprehensive art history, and the extensive debate they have provoked, newer trends in Anglo-Saxon art history hardly appear to have affected the discussion of these issues. Instead, many of the older paradigms and canons that had also determined the geographical boundaries and national concerns of the discipline of art history as it was "traditionally" practiced still stay in force.<sup>6</sup> If the term "Renaissance" is used to indicate something more than merely the time period of the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, then little has changed in scholarship on the early modern period.

Whatever the ideal of the "Renaissance" may mean in regard to Italy, when applied to the visual arts elsewhere, the term is still usually taken to signify, even celebrate, something described as quite distinct from that in Italy. Both scholarship and teaching on the so-called Northern Renaissance, which effectively still stands in the United States for the Renaissance outside Italy, concentrate almost exclusively on Netherlandish painting in manuscript and on panel from Van Eyck to Brueghel, with attention also being given to German paintings and prints, and some sculpture too, of the era of the Old German masters around Dürer. This point of view is found both in standard textbooks, and in supposedly newer approaches.<sup>7</sup>

There is, however, nothing new in the emphasis on Netherlandish painting up to Brueghel and German artists of the *Dürerzeit*. The consideration of "Renaissance" art outside of Italy has demonstrably often involved a different set of assumptions than that which has governed the study of Italian "Renaissance" art. From at least the early nineteenth century, when art history became an academic discipline in Germany, art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the north has been understood as something different and distinctive from that in Italy. The "Renaissance" has been used largely either to define a chronological period, as it often still is, or else to designate art of a quality comparable to that of the Italian masters, but distinct from them.

This idea is found in literature c. 1800, as Wackenroder and Tieck's *Herzensgiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbrüders* suggests. It was developed by art historians in the formative years of the *Gründerzeit* of the mid-nineteenth century, and passed on by important figures in the field such as Heinrich Wölfflin and Georg Dehio. The idea of a national German Renaissance was even used for purposes of political propaganda, both during the 1914–18 war and the years of National Socialism. The notion of a distinctive Northern Renaissance, largely unrelated to and even contrasting with that in Italy, continues to recur in much recent writing, especially in English, where the local or native element is privileged, and the cosmopolitan, Italianate is downplayed or ignored.<sup>8</sup>

The result has been that like many related topics, the subject of Italian sculptors and sculpture outside of Italy not only remains to be integrated into the history of the Renaissance, but also even to be adequately conceptualized. In response, this paper will endeavor to strive towards this process of integration and conceptualization. It will offer a critical review of prior treatments of the topic, and suggest some alternatives to them.

Earlier essays have a further interest in that they imply a view of the general course of the history of European art during the early modern period. The literature to date thus reflects the general development of historiography of the Renaissance. A critique therefore has further relevance to a collection of essays that is devoted to a reconceptualization of the Renaissance.

Broadly speaking, it would seem that the tendencies that have dominated the interpretation of Italian sculpture and sculptors outside of Italy may be described as monographic, nationalistic, stylistic, and anthropological. First, a traditional monographic approach could easily ignore the problem of synthesis. One way of treating the presence of Italian sculpture or the work of Italian sculptors outside Italy was simply to regard such phenomena as examples of an artist's oeuvre. In this kind of account, as it has been evinced in historiography since Giorgio Vasari, a work of sculpture is seen as the product of an individual master. From the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, writers on art also considered sculpture a product of genius. Sculpture might accordingly be regarded as the mark of biographical incident. In the approach that results, the historical scheme may thus consist of the linkage of a chain of works by individual masters, that are conjoined by bonds of personal association, or perhaps, as also described by Vasari, by progress towards the achievement of some artistic goal. Other, later, treatments of Italian sculptors, for instance a history of sculptors in Poland, often take over this model even when they do not follow Vasari in other regards.<sup>9</sup>

A related perspective, namely that from the peninsula, may however open up a different view. From this perspective, works by major Italian sculptors found outside Italy appear as scattered pieces of evidence of Italian genius. This view is anticipated by the way sculpture is handled in Vasari's account of the pieces by Verrocchio that Lorenzo de' Medici sent Matthias Corvinus in the fifteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Yet many subsequent accounts – of such works as the marble Virgin and Child by Michelangelo (Figure 2.1) that, as Vasari also mentions, was acquired by a Bruges merchant in the early sixteenth century, or the bust of the king and the other projects that Bernini carried out for Louis XIV of France in the seventeenth century, or the works made by Roman sculptors for Mafra in Portugal in the eighteenth century – often do not differ substantially. In many studies of Italian art, such objects may be regarded as important documents of their artists' oeuvres. Nevertheless, they remain distinctive examples of individual genius, further isolated in that they are often unconnected to the milieus in which they were subsequently, or are now, found.

One merit of the most comprehensive series of studies directed to the work of Italians outside Italy was that it overcame this sense of individual isolation. This series treated the *opera* of Italian artists, including sculptors, as examples not of individual genius, but of the genius of the nation or, it may be said, the race. The series thus appeared under the title *L'opera del genio italiano all'estero*. The products of this genius were to be found throughout the ages and throughout Europe, as presented in books devoted to *il genio italiano* in Spain, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Russia, and other countries. In their emphasis upon the comprehensive, collective picture of the national genius of the Italians, these books do not, however, display much concern for local context elsewhere.

The collective approach taken in the series *L'opera del genio italiano all'estero* derives ultimately rather from the Romantic view of cultural products as expressions of the *Geist*

or genius of peoples or *Völker*, that is to be traced to authors such as Herder. In nineteenth-century histories of what is now most often called culture (*Kulturgeschichte*), the view of history as an expression of a *Volk* was also spread by Hegelian thinking about art as a form of *Volkgeist*.<sup>11</sup> These ideas were also familiar in Italy (through Benedetto Croce, among others), and it is significant that the series dedicated to *il genio italiano* was published under the imprimatur of ministries of the Italian government, at first of the Mussolini epoch. Some of the earlier volumes in the series bear dates measured in the reckoning of the Fascist era, when some of these ideas were given a fateful twist.<sup>12</sup> Under Mussolini, the idea of Italian genius bringing art and civilization to Europe was one theme of fascist propaganda, that, remarkably enough, was in a way still being promoted as this series was continued into the 1960s.<sup>13</sup>

A spirit not so dissimilar in its chauvinism has often led to widespread neglect of Italianate phenomena outside Italy, and nationalistic presuppositions have also been woven into other approaches. This tone of cultural nationalism has, however, fortunately been alien to much Italian historiography related to the topic, even when the clamor of *campanilismo* still seems to resound in volumes devoted to the impact of individual regions, such as those on the art and artists of the Lombard lakes,<sup>14</sup> and when nationalistic presuppositions have also been woven into other approaches to these questions. It is precisely the international or transnational aspect of artistic contacts that such chauvinistic or culturally nationalistic approaches ignore. Yet as significant as Italian sculpture and sculptors may be outside of Italy, it is also true that what could similarly be called *il genio estero* had a significant presence in Italy. To mention just sculpture in one site, in addition to a host of other rather minor talents from beyond the Alps, such major figures as Giovanni Dalmata in the fifteenth century, Giambologna in the sixteenth, François Duquesnoy in the seventeenth or, at the end of that century and the beginning of next, Pierre Legros, along with a flock of other French academicians, were all active in Rome. All these artists, along with whom we should remember the presence in Rome of other important northern painters such as Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Poussin and Peter Paul Rubens, give evidence that the process of artistic exchange was not one-sided, that there was not merely one source of artistic genius in European art.

Moreover, an alternative model has long existed, that developed alongside the attention given to the formulation and evolution of concepts of stylistic periodization in art history. This approach treats Italian artists and art outside of Italy in relation to the general course of development of artistic styles. In this perspective, the activity of Italian sculpture and sculptors, and also of painters and architects, belongs to a continuing history of styles, which Italians convey to the north. In this way Italian artists are regarded not merely as translating works of individual or national genius, but as contributing to the evolution of style epochs outside of Italy. As in Italy, these are seen to progress from the Renaissance, to Mannerism, to the Baroque, to neo-Classicism.

It may even be said that this account has directed so many previous discussions that it has almost become a standard line, at least for older generations of scholars. Jan Białostocki articulated a position that has been adopted by many other art historians, whose opinion he may thus be said to represent. In numerous papers Białostocki regarded the Renaissance as "a system of forms, qualities, artistic functions and themes which dominated art and architecture, decoration and design, and which we call the Renais-

sance style."<sup>15</sup> Białostocki treated this (and other styles) as, on the one hand, the product of individual Italian artists and, on the other, an indigenous response to them. And so when Białostocki says that the Renaissance came first to the north in eastern Europe, he means quite literally that Italian sculptors and masons of the Quattrocento came first to places like Hungary.<sup>16</sup> In this view Italian forms, including sculpture, were then taken up by local courts, used for particular purposes and functions, and then spread more widely by the local artists and craftsmen who responded to them.

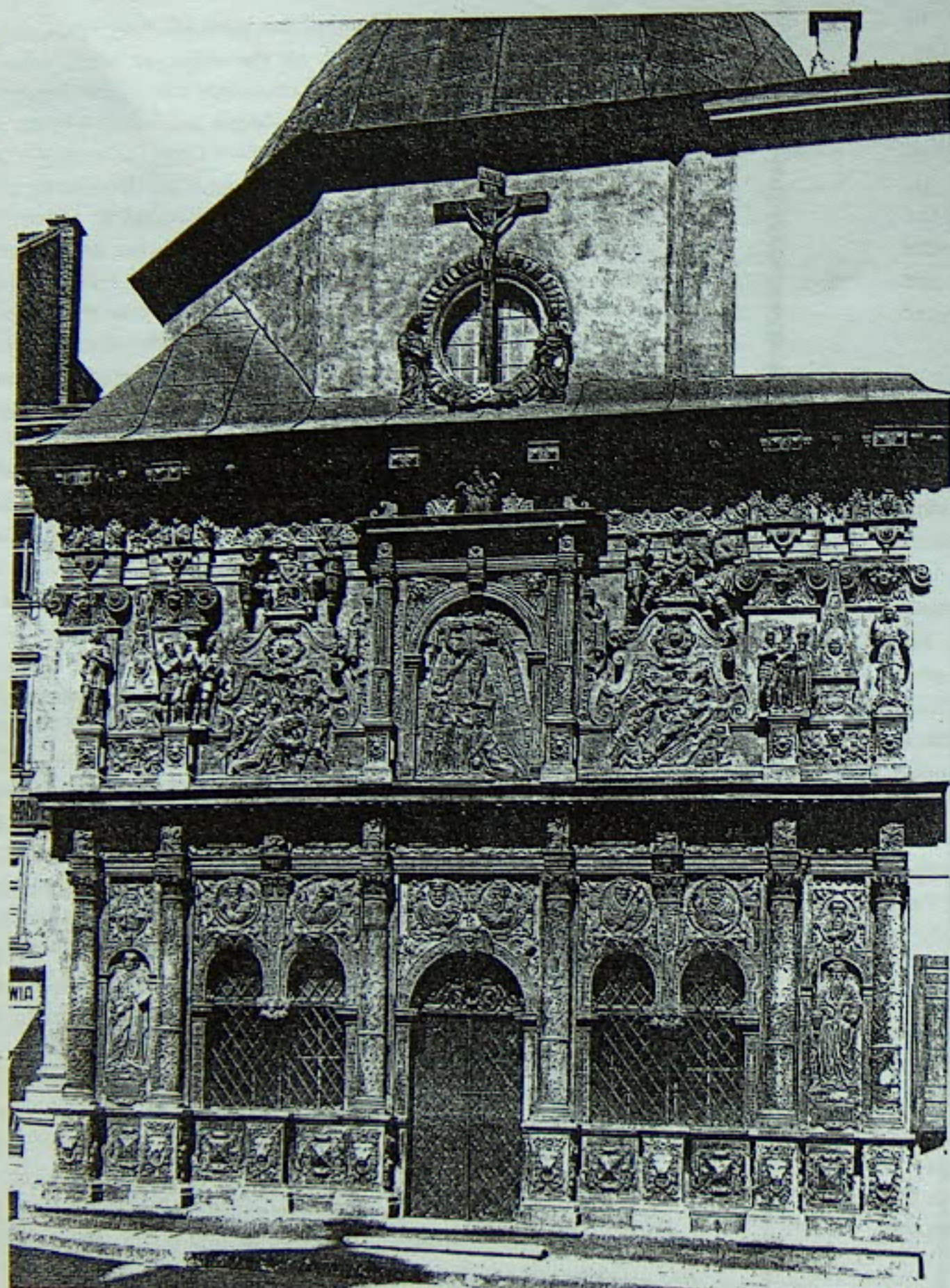
Although it has many virtues, this approach has also created numerous problems, not the least of which is implicated in the very terms employed: the use of stylistic terms to describe unrelated phenomena in regions other than that for which they were created has produced several difficulties. Thus many of the problems that the Florentine-Roman model has entailed for studies of art and culture of the quattrocento and cinquecento elsewhere in Italy itself seem to have been compounded when these conceptions have been applied to art outside Italy.<sup>17</sup> In the first instance, forms related to style epochs such as the Renaissance and Mannerism that are not regarded as contemporaneous in Italy may appear simultaneously in the north. Even where terms might seem to be suitable, a comparison of Italian with northern examples may also indicate the apparently belated or supposedly incorrect nature of stylistic manifestations in the north, thus slanting the interpretation. Moreover, when analyzed further, a term such as Mannerism in any event seems to have limited applicability to phenomena outside of Italy.<sup>18</sup>

Even when Italians made works *in situ* outside Italy, it was only exceptionally, at least in Central Europe, that the Italian artists who came north worked in modes similar to the forms of the Renaissance, or Mannerism, as they have been defined according to the Florentine or Roman paradigm. Many artists came from other regions in Italy, such as the Lombard lakes. The works they produced are different from those of Tuscan classicism, and its successors, and may accordingly seem mannered in contrast, although the legitimacy of this description in this context is questionable.<sup>19</sup>

In answer to some of these conceptual difficulties Białostocki reformulated another heuristic notion: the local stylistic variant. He opposed his understanding of the conception of Mannerism and other international models to the national styles he otherwise also tried to define. Echoing earlier Polish and Czech art historians, Białostocki identified a supposedly more local style, which he distinguished from Mannerism, with which it might be confused. He called this the vernacular. In this he followed the manner of the *Motivenkunde* of historians such as Władysław Husarski in Poland and Antonín Bašánek in Bohemia, in identifying various motifs as pertaining to the vernacular.<sup>20</sup>

Although the examples of the vernacular that have hitherto been adduced are drawn largely from the realm of architecture, it might nevertheless seem that the more general characteristics used to describe the vernacular pertain particularly well to sculpture. In Białostocki's words these are a lack of interest in space composition, an enthusiasm for ornament, and lack of functional thinking – disruption of links between form and content that take on a picturesque or fantastic character of their own.<sup>21</sup> But these features are also not to be identified with any characteristic *genius loci* of eastern Europe, as Białostocki would have it. Similarities have also been declared to be distinctly German or Italian. In any event, atticas resembling so-called Polish parapets are found independently of the presence of Polish artisans in Hungary (i.e., Slovakia), Austria, and Germany;

→  
Białostocki's work



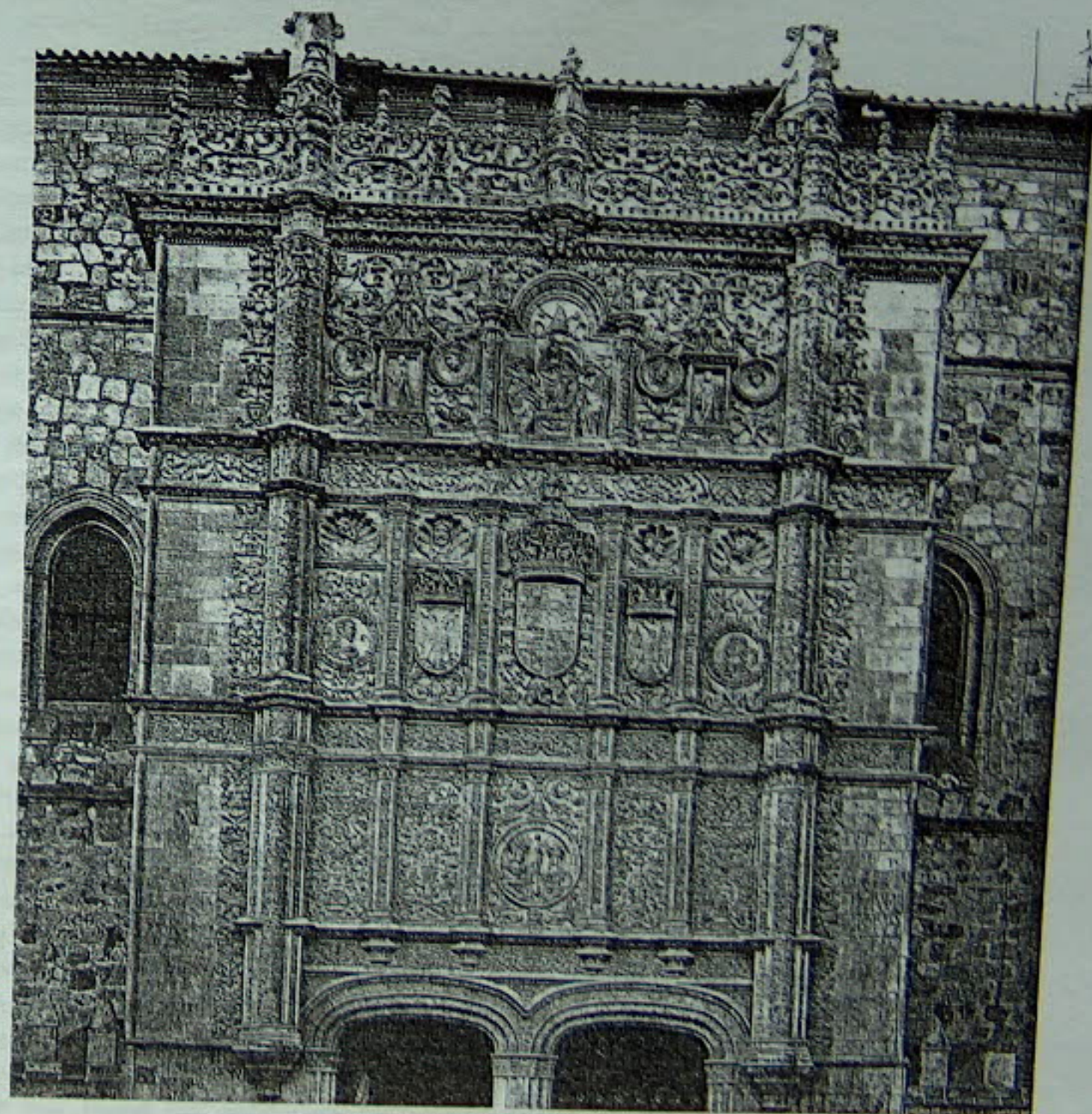
2.2 (above) Boim Family Chapel. Lwów (L'viv). 1609–1615. (Photo: The Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences.)

2.3 (opposite page) Main facade on the Calle de Liberos, Salamanca University. C.1520 (Photo: Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, courtesy of Art Resource.)

## ITALIAN SCULPTORS AND SCULPTURE OUTSIDE OF ITALY

graffiti and gables that are said to mark an indigenous Bohemian Renaissance are likewise found frequently in Germany and Austria. Furthermore, in the same time period that Białostocki finds them in eastern Europe, a similar decorative inventiveness, and a tendency towards the planiform, are found for example in Spanish and Spanish American sculpture.<sup>22</sup> The comparison of the Boim Chapel in Lwów (L'viv, Lemberg; Figure 2.2) with the portal to Salamanca University (Figure 2.3) may be telling in this regard, but many works in Latin America, such as the facade of the church at Tepoztlán (Figure 2.4), also suggest similar deviations from the classic norm.

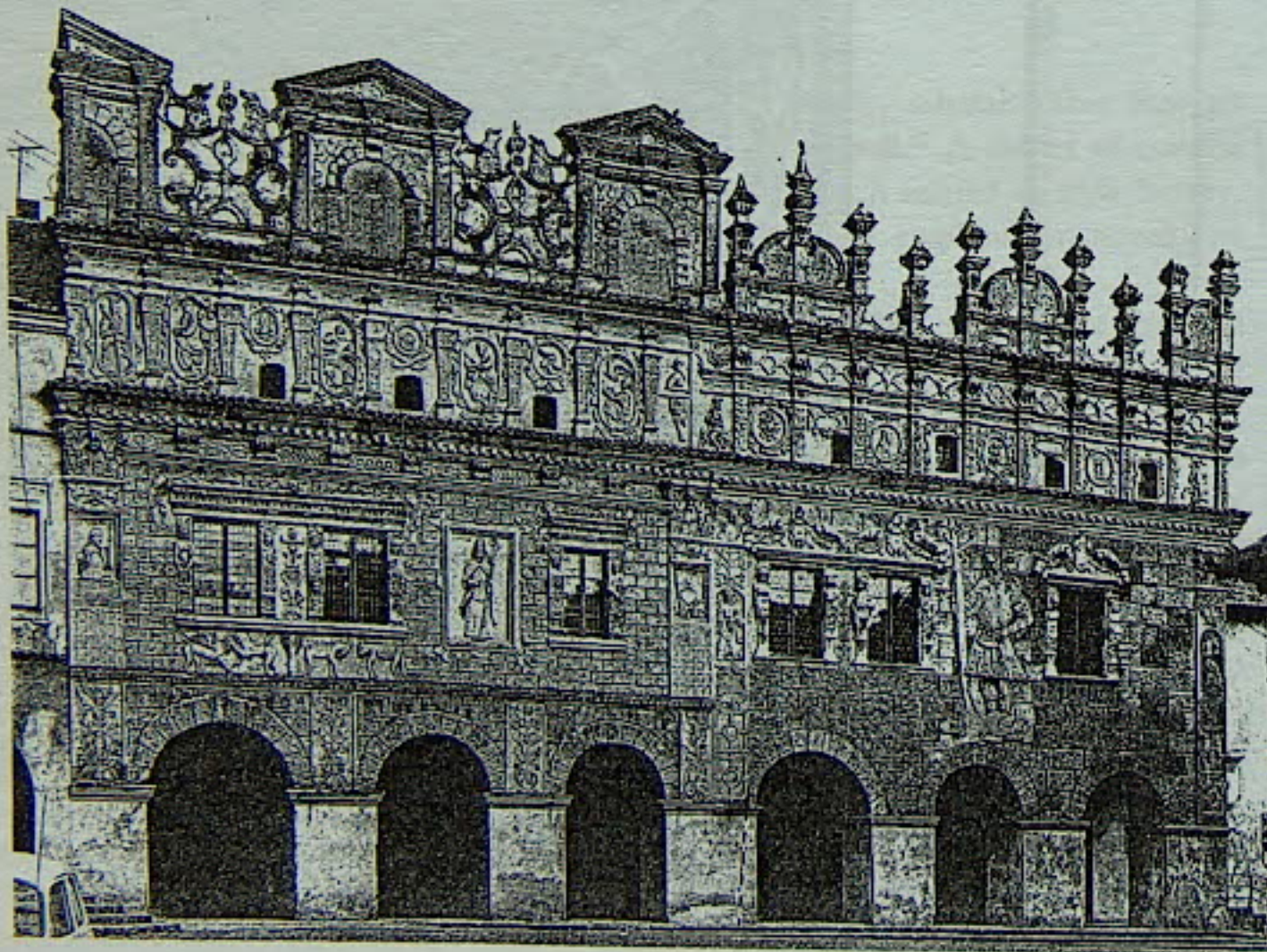
The treatment of a particular material for sculptural details, namely stucco has also been seen as the sign of vernacular style. But there is nothing particularly localized about the use of this medium, either. Thus one needs to treat with caution, if not skepticism,



2.4 (right) Dominican Church, Tepotzlán, Mexico. Completed 1588. (Photo: Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas)



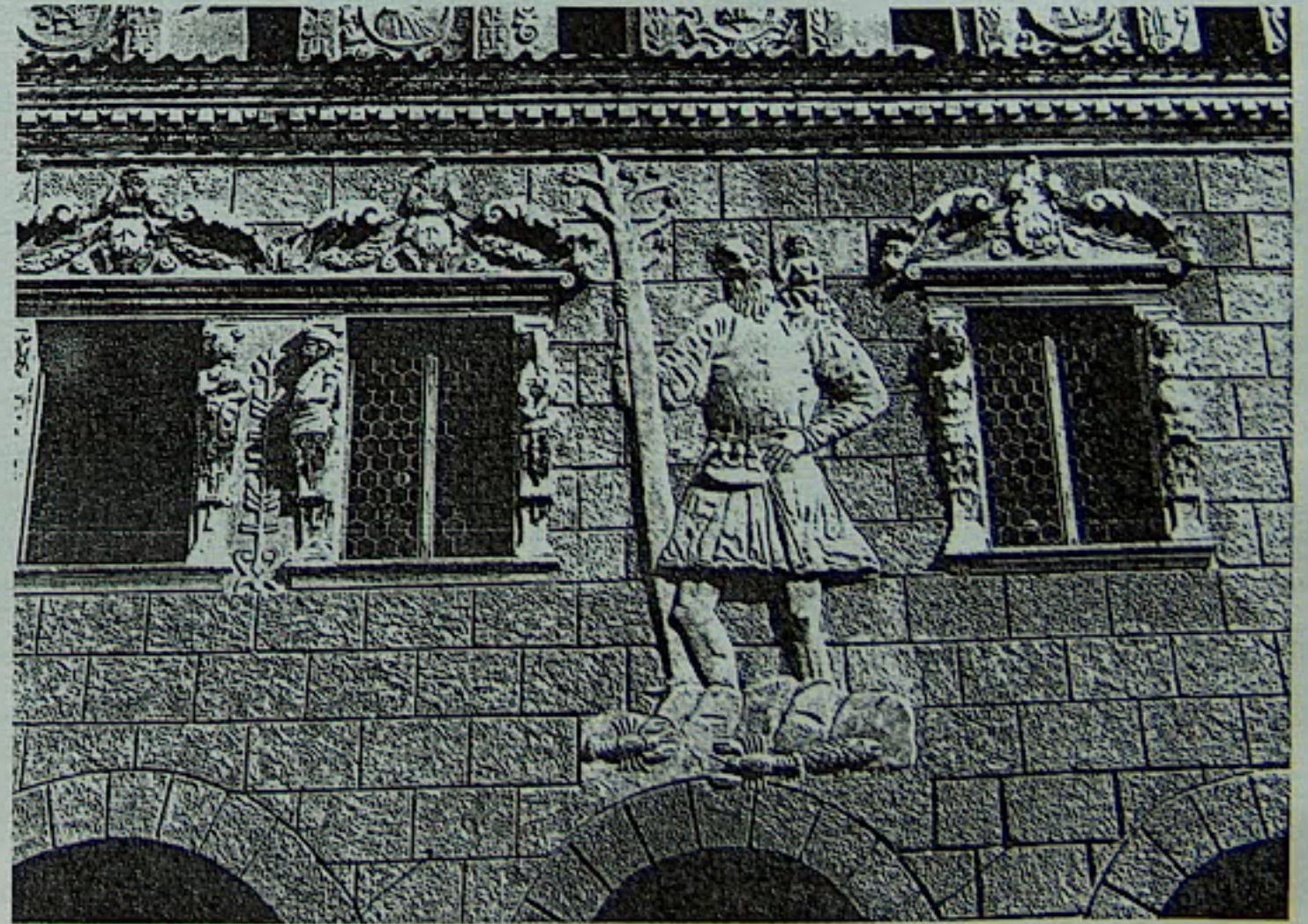
2.5 (below) Houses of Mikiolaj and Krzysztof Przybyła Family. Kazimierz Dolny 1615. (Photo: The Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences.)



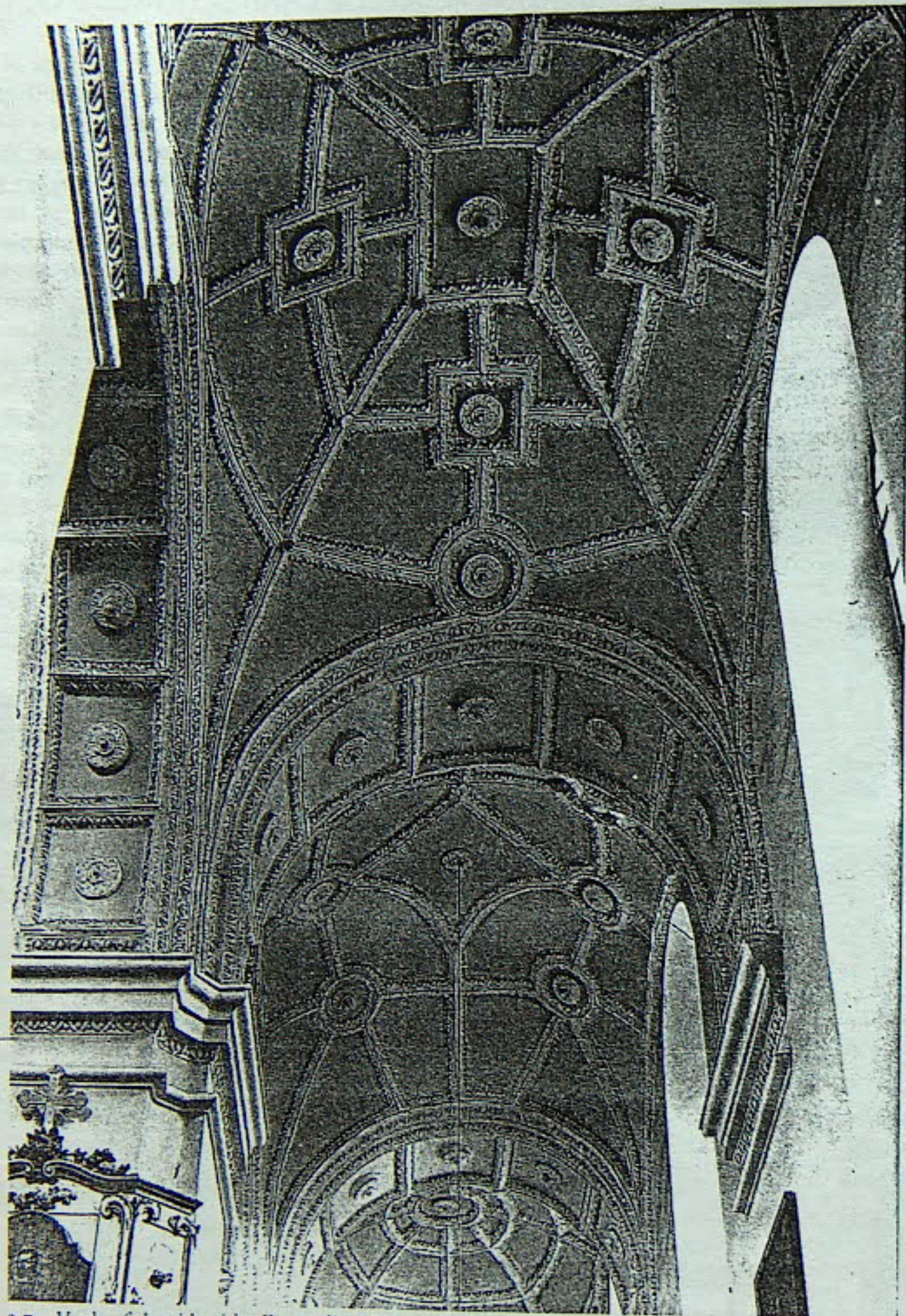
arguments advanced by Białostocki to the effect that the use of stucco, which is said to characterize the sculptors and masons of the Lublin school (Figure 2.7), or the flattened forms in plasterwork seen at Kazimierz Dolny (Figures 2.5 and 2.6), are vernacular.<sup>23</sup> Similar flattened plasterwork forms are found in interiors in other northern realms, including Bohemia and England, where, as in Poland, they are ultimately to be traced to Italian origins. The plasterwork figural decoration on the exterior of Nonsuch castle would probably not have been so dissimilar to Polish examples.<sup>24</sup>

This search for a vernacular therefore seems to have produced exceedingly elusive results. Motifs that have been identified as vernacular in eastern Europe have also been declared at various times to be distinctly German, or Italian. Certainly none of these motifs is unique to the specific regions in which they are supposedly originally located. There is also no way of situating their origins in any one place in Central Europe.

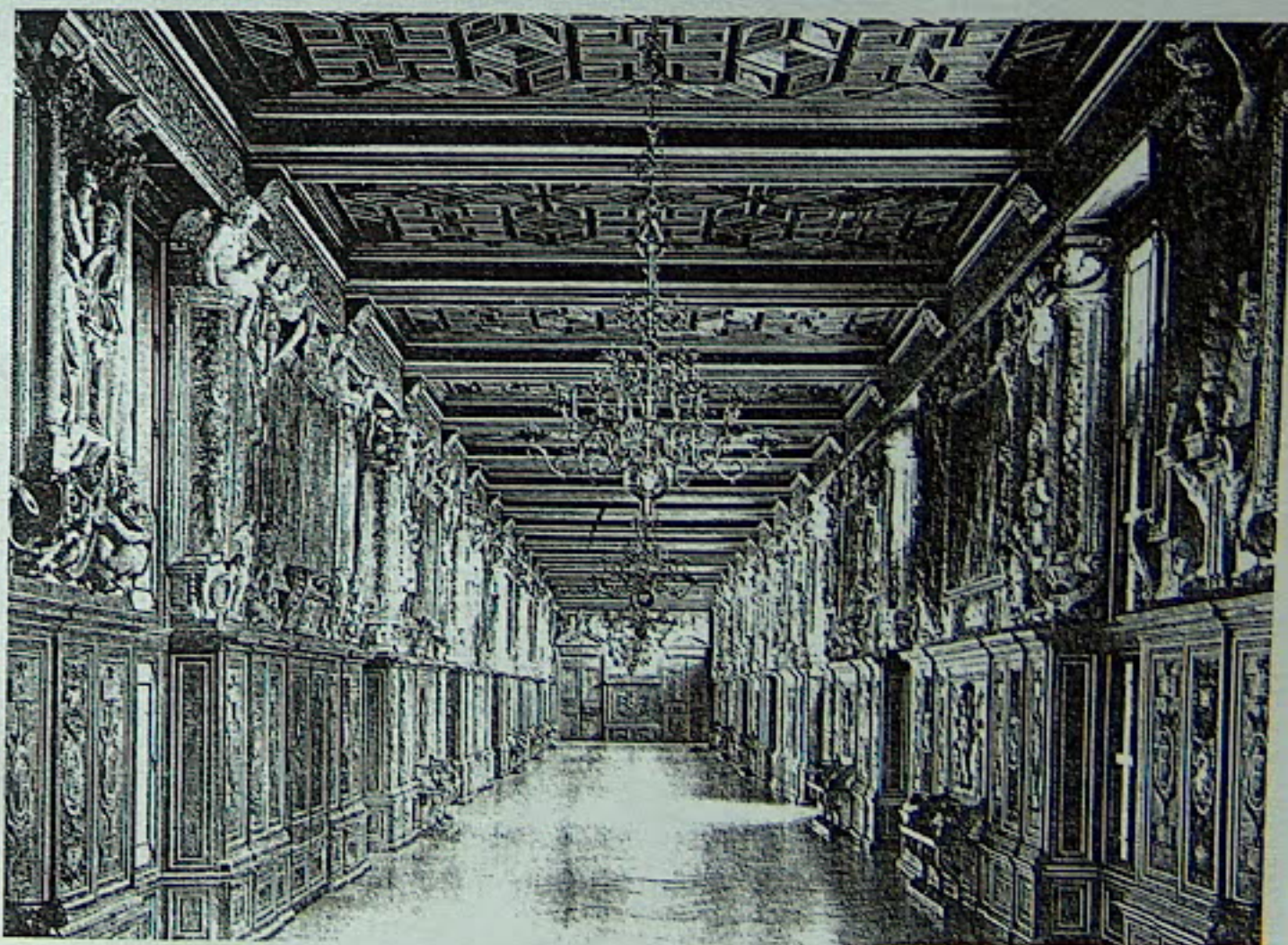
It is quite telling that Italians may in fact have been responsible for the origins of many of the forms that are regarded as vernacular. Architectural motifs that have been associated with the eastern European vernaculars such as stepped gables, parapet-like atticas, along with their constituent forms, come from northern Italy. One can point to the Venetian or northern Italian source of merlon cresting, the Paduan origins of the Kraków Cloth Hall, long attributed of course to Italians, and the north Italian origins of sgraffito decoration. In sculpture, the use of stucco also derives from Italy (the Lublin masters actually came from the Lombard lakes), and it was spread to France by Italians at



2.6 Facade detail, house of Krzysztof Przybyła Kazimierz Dolny, 1615. (Photo: The Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences.)



2.7 Vault of the side aisle, Bernardine Church, Lublin. 1603-1607. (Photo: The Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences.)



2.8 Galerie of François I, view from the Vestibule of Honor, Fontainebleau. 1528. (Photo: Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, courtesy of Art Resource.)

Fontainebleau (Figure 2.8) and thereafter by emulation to England: stucco was indeed many countries an Italian speciality.<sup>25</sup> In another paper, Białostocki raised the possibility that what he elsewhere called the vernacular might be a local redaction of a more general stylistic form.<sup>26</sup> Rather than considering the phenomena adduced by evidence for a distinctive kind of vernacular, it might indeed be better to call them examples of the dialects of an international language, comparable to variants such as types of American English.

It is worth dwelling on the problem of the conceptualization of the vernacular in distinction to the international Italianate, because this way of treating supposedly local artistic forms illuminates the difficulties that art history has in extracting itself from a discussion which is still ultimately grounded – better, troubled – by nationalist premises. This problem is presented by the conception of *il genio italiano*, and it also has many other manifestations in the historiography of Central European art. This sort of approach has indeed so dominated the discussion to date that it has impeded the formulation of many coherent alternatives, as well as developing other insights, such as Białostocki's own idea of artistic dialect.

Nevertheless, another model of diffusion, that is anchored more firmly in anthropology, already exists (although it does not seem to have been inspired by other, more recent, trends in Anglo-Saxon art history). This diffusionist model has been frequently



2.9 Giovanni Dalmata.  
Fragment of an altarpiece from  
Diósgyőr. Stone, c.1490.  
Budapest, Hungarian National  
Gallery. (Photo: museum.)

employed in discussions of the Renaissance outside of Italy by scholars other than art historians, and it has begun to be utilized in art history as well.<sup>27</sup> A model of cultural diffusion helps to bolster the insights gained from an approach related to style history, without introducing problems stemming from a possible over-emphasis on novelty or uniqueness, such as is often implied by style history.

In this diffusionist approach questions of influence and interaction – not those of original genius or invention, or those posed by a national problematic – are at stake. The model of cultural diffusion, derived from the anthropological conception of acculturation, makes it possible to deal with issues of cultural influence and intersection, without regarding Italian culture as superior, and hence in reaction needing to lay stress on local identities or national characteristics.

There remains, however, a further problem in utilizing the idea of influence, namely that of underestimating the other side of the question, reception. A model of influence that is related to acculturation still largely suggests an image of a passive recipient, to which influence flows. If, however, a model of diffusion is really meant to suggest a coherent cultural process, without at least an equal emphasis upon the recipient, it may nevertheless be misleading. As Peter Burke has remarked specifically in relation to the question of the “reception” or “diffusion” of the Renaissance abroad, it may seem that “while the Italians were active, creative, and innovatory . . . the rest of Europe was passive . . . a borrower eternally in debt to Italy.”<sup>28</sup> Yet both the activity of northern artists in Italy, and the continuation of indigenous traditions, show that this was obviously not the case.

The picture of circulation is certainly more complicated than a simple image would allow of traffic in one direction, from Italy north. Careers of artists who came from abroad to work in Rome, and elsewhere in Italy, and then passed on (or back) to Central Europe, either to remain there or else to stay for only a limited time, evoke a more complex picture than that suggested by the notion of Italy as a source, even if it be desired to retain this notion for limited cases. Giovanni Dalmata provides a good example. As his name implies, Dalmata, properly Duknovich, came from Trogir (Trau) in the present area of Dalmatia, Croatia. After working for the pope and other patrons in Rome, he moved on to the court of Matthias Corvinus in Hungary, where he executed the Madonna of Diósgyőr (Figure 2.9).<sup>29</sup> There are many other examples of the same phenomenon, of which the work of Pietro Francavilla or Adriaen de Vries towards 1600 are familiar.

It is time to consider other approaches. We might try to examine the other side of the coin, to see what the active aspects of reception were that led to the way in which Italian sculptors and sculpture were treated outside Italy. In this connection Burke has proposed that a model like that of literary reception (as used by some scholars of literature) is much more helpful.<sup>30</sup> Not only should we look, as Burke says, at the presence of individual Italians abroad, and find out where they went, at what time, and even, as in Białostocki's account, for what purposes, but how they were received. Ultimately there thus may be involved a more subtle process, as Burke suggests, of creative misinterpretation (one might also say reinterpretation). In the example considered here, Italian sculpture may thus be seen to have been assimilated, absorbed, reworked, domesticated, and transformed.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, other anthropological models than that of acculturation are available for adaptation in art history. These include that proposed by Marshall Sahlins.<sup>32</sup> Sahlins presents examples illustrating how cultures interact, mutually misinterpret each other, and selectively adapt elements from each other in a historical manner. The use of such a model might lead to a more comprehensive conceptualization of the relation of the history of European art to broader considerations of European culture.

To stay with the particular subject of Italian sculpture and sculptors outside Italy: one might thus rather wish to investigate what conditions or factors (to use this rather inadequate, but perhaps still necessary, term) there were that either facilitated, and thus created possibilities for, Italian sculpture and sculptors, or made problems (to use the word in another context) for them. In this sort of investigation a foundation is offered by the information and insights gained from other scholarly or interpretive approaches. Stylistic developments and individual accomplishments may consequently also be set in relation to issues of taste and fashion, theoretical motivations, education, and other bases for familiarity with Italian culture. Conversely other issues, including conditions of employment, of generic and technical limitation, of religious inhibition, and even of competition not only from alternatives in the kind of forms and practitioners of sculpture, but also from other mediators of Italianate forms, might be considered as “factors” that might impede reception of Italian sculpture and sculptors.

Białostocki himself suggested that the Renaissance came to eastern Europe as a royal fancy, and the role of taste or fashion can be emphasized, even more than in his account, in the adaptation of newer forms of art, and their spread.<sup>33</sup> Following Jerzy Łóziński and

Helena and Stefan Kozakiewicz, among other scholars, Białostocki suggested for instance how such a taste for the Italianate, in sculpture as in other media, began at the Polish court and spread throughout the country.<sup>34</sup> But Poland is not unique in this pattern. Jolán Balogh and Gyöngy Tórk have suggested that a similar pattern can be established for sculpture in Hungary.<sup>35</sup> It may also be argued (to contradict Białostocki, who regards the Habsburgs with their multinational empire as alien to the local tradition, while he deals with the Jagellonians whose dynasty was ultimately Lithuanian) that the Habsburgs as well as the Jagellonians set similar patterns, for architecture and sculpture, not only for the Austrian lands, but also for Bohemia. In Germany, too, the courts set the tone for patronage of Italians and the Italianate, as Frederick the Wise of Saxony's commissions for sculpture to Adriano Fiorentino, as well as his patronage of Jacopo de' Barbari, suggest. In all these instances a court center created a fashion that raised expectations for other rulers to follow if they wished to be *au courant*.

In fact, one of the best examples indicating how the adaptation of Italianate forms in architecture and sculpture followed the demands of fashion is suggested by a self-promoting letter that the Lübeck Town Council (*Rat*) received from the *steenhouwer* Paul van Hofe in 1548. In it van Hofe announces his presence in the city "in order to make some buildings in the antique manner, which antiques one now considers as the highest art, but of which art one finds nothing in the city."<sup>36</sup> In Lübeck, as in much of the Baltic region, a Netherlander might stand for an Italian, but the letter also demonstrates the appeal of fashion in the adaptation of the antique style, of which Italian artists and artisans were the purveyors *par excellence*.

Indeed the *stile all'Italiana* might often serve as a stand-in for those who desired something done in the "antique" style, the *stile all'antica* or *alla Romana*.<sup>37</sup> Here especially Italians or Italian-made sculpture often assuaged a desire for the ancient. This is evinced in the area of collecting as well as that of patronage for, as we have known since Erwin Panofsky's essay on Dürer and the antique, often the classical was seen through the veil of the Italian.<sup>38</sup>

A treatise on how a *Kunstammer* should be formed that Gabriel Kaltemarkt drew up in 1587 is noteworthy here. Kaltemarkt gives first place to works of sculpture, and esteems antique statuary as the most desirable of all collectors' items. Among contemporary sculptors, however, he places Italians first. Significantly, Kaltemarkt also mentions how copies can be made of ancient works, or casts taken from them.<sup>39</sup> In this realm Italian sculpture again assumes a preeminent position. Kaltemarkt almost seems to suggest that in this regard Florence equals if not surpasses Rome, since it is from Florentine workshops that good copies can be obtained. In any event, this may be why from the time of Filarete's copy of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius (Figure 2.10), which also belonged to the *Kunstammer* in Dresden where it is still to be found, copies of ancient works of art by Italians found their way into northern collections.<sup>40</sup> This practice continued in later centuries, as is evinced by the copies made by Giovanni Susini, Massimiliano Soldani Benzi, and other sculptors who made bronzes after ancient works for the Prince of Liechtenstein.<sup>41</sup>

A taste for the antique can of course be related to several aspects of Renaissance culture, a huge and complicated subject to be sure. Even the revisionist critique of humanist education provided by Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine would allow for the



2.10 Antonio Averlino, called Filarete. Marcus Aurelius on horseback. Bronze, 1465. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen. (Photo: museum.)

impact of humanist education, founded on ancient sources, on the formation of ethical notions, at least from the late fifteenth century,<sup>42</sup> and it is striking how many future patrons of Italian sculptors were actually educated by humanists. To mention but a few, in Poland these include notably kings Jan Olbracht and Sigismund Stary, who were tutored by Filippo Buonacorsi, and Piotr Tomicki, bishop of Kraków, who studied in Bologna with Filippo Beroaldo, among many other figures. In Hungary, outside of prelates who were actually Italian, the most noteworthy figure in this regard is Tomas Bákocz, the patron of the Bákocz Chapel, to whom Filippo Beroaldo dedicated his commentary on Apuleius.<sup>43</sup> In Germany Elector Augustus of Saxony was educated by the Vitruvian translator Rivius; later Habsburgs such as Rudolf II received a thorough humanist education, but the examples could be multiplied. Hence a newer motivation was articulated for the patronage of sculpture from the fifteenth century on. Among other notions revived or encouraged by humanist thought was the ideal of magnificence, which affected many endeavors. In his *Ten Books on Architecture* (7:16), L. B. Alberti indicates how this conception might apply to statuary:

But, unless I am mistaken, the greatest ornament of all is the statue. It may serve as ornament in sacred and profane buildings, public and private, and makes a wonderful memorial to man or deed.<sup>44</sup>

Certainly contemporary humanist critics related patronage in Central Europe to themes including the ethic of magnificence. Politian's remarks on Matthias Corvinus are note-



worthy here: "You also build the most magnificent palace by far, and adorn your court [forum] with statues of every kind, either bronze or marble."<sup>45</sup> This text indicates that one leading humanist's assessment of a ruler's realization of the ideal of magnificence could thus not be merely a theoretical *desideratum*, but a critical tool used to refer to a patron's actual use of sculpture.

Patrons did not need to learn from humanists how conspicuous consumption might be a sign of status or, as is now said, might help to constitute charisma. Nevertheless, humanist doctrine may have helped direct expenditure towards sculpture and thus may have affected patronage both in an ecclesiastical and in a secular setting. This suggests a more precise connection, and thus provides a better way of understanding the relevance of humanism to the reception of Italianate style than more general statements by scholars like Białostocki to the effect that the history of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century humanism in Central Europe provides a background to the arrival of Italianate forms there. It may even be that the inculcation of doctrines led to a predilection for Italianate works. In other words, as humanist ideas percolated north, so did a need, or taste, for Italian sculpture.

On the other hand, the adoption of stylistic notions that we associate with the humanist ideal of eloquence would also have played an important role in the assimilation of classicizing art. According to principles of rhetorical (and also poetic) decorum, forms were matched appropriately with the content they were meant to express, and with the audience to which they were directed. In this instance noble, magnificent forms that were endowed with the charisma of antiquity would have been appropriate for important monuments of sculpture.<sup>46</sup>

Education and humanist theory were of course not the only conduits for the spread of Italianate cultural ideals. Travel was another stimulus. This is such a familiar topic that it can be passed over briefly; one need but recall Frederick the Wise's journeys through Italy, or Maximilian I Habsburg's Italian campaigns. One of the clearest examples of the impact of travel, though not necessarily on sculpture, involves the Bavarian Duke Ludwig X who, after visiting Mantua, had a place resembling it (to his mind) built in Landshut.

Other elements than taste and fashion, or humanist ideals and education, contributed to the change in taste and fashion. The role of Italians in bronzecasting and in carving marble is obviously pertinent. Italian manufacture of terracotta sculpture is also worth mentioning.<sup>47</sup> But despite Italian pre-eminence in these fields, none of these was exclusively an Italian preserve. On the other hand, stucco was for a large part of the early modern period definitely an Italian specialty. The predominance of Italian sculptors in this medium throughout the region and throughout the era is well known if, as remarked above, sometimes forgotten in historical accounts that over-emphasize indigenous work in other media. In the eyes of one sixteenth-century artist, stucco was, however, distinctly an Italian gift to Central Europe. Aberlin Tretsch, the designer of the Stuttgart *Schloss*, wrote in 1561 that "handwork in stucco is among us a new craft, that Italians brought into the land around 1540."<sup>48</sup> Certainly Italian stucco in the Star Villa near Prague, or in Güstrow in Mecklenburg (Figure 2.11), or in the so-called *Italienisches Bau* in the Landshut residence built for Ludwig X would bear this observation out.<sup>49</sup>

In contrast, it is useful to consider what conditions or elements might have impeded

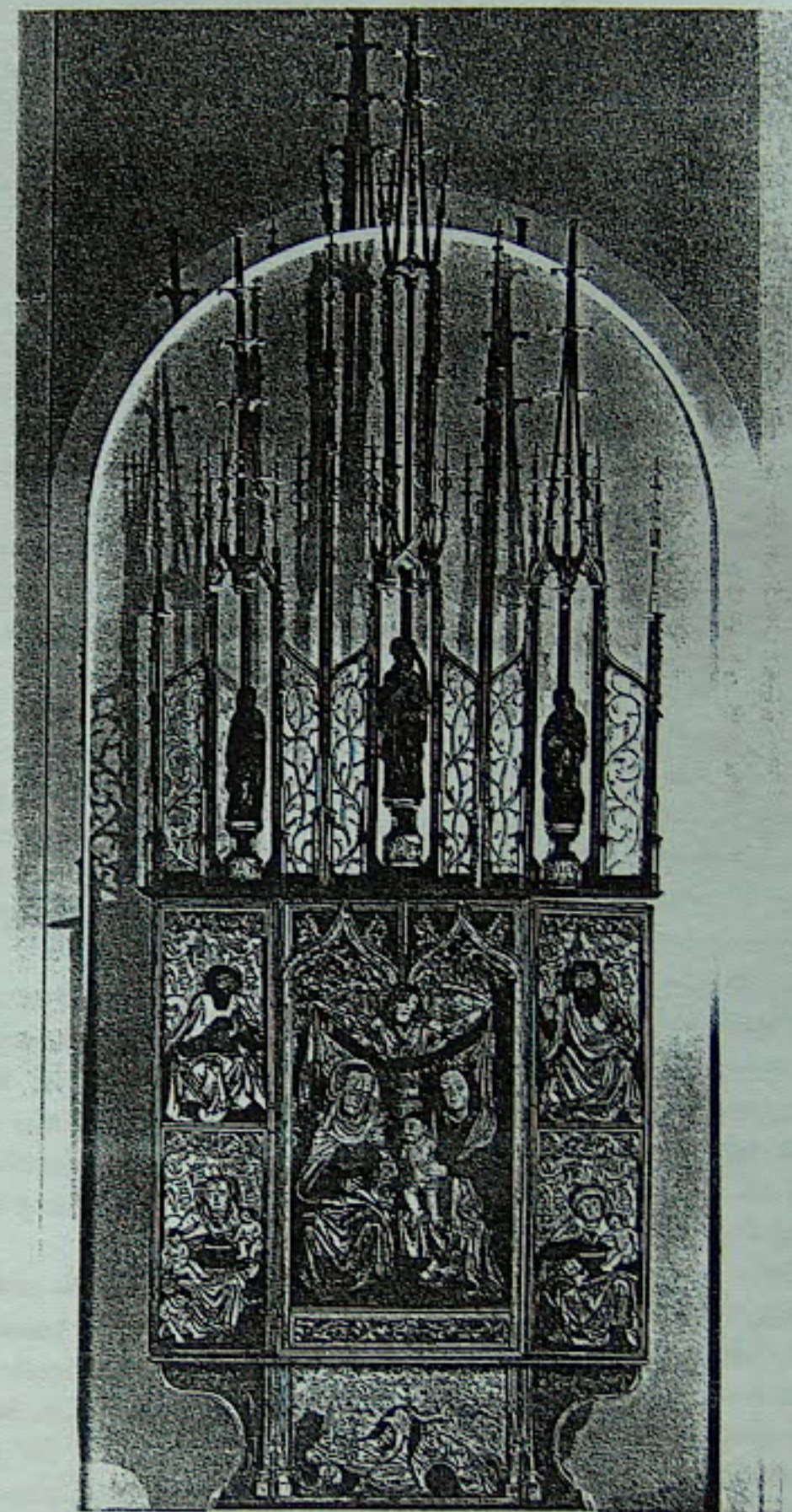
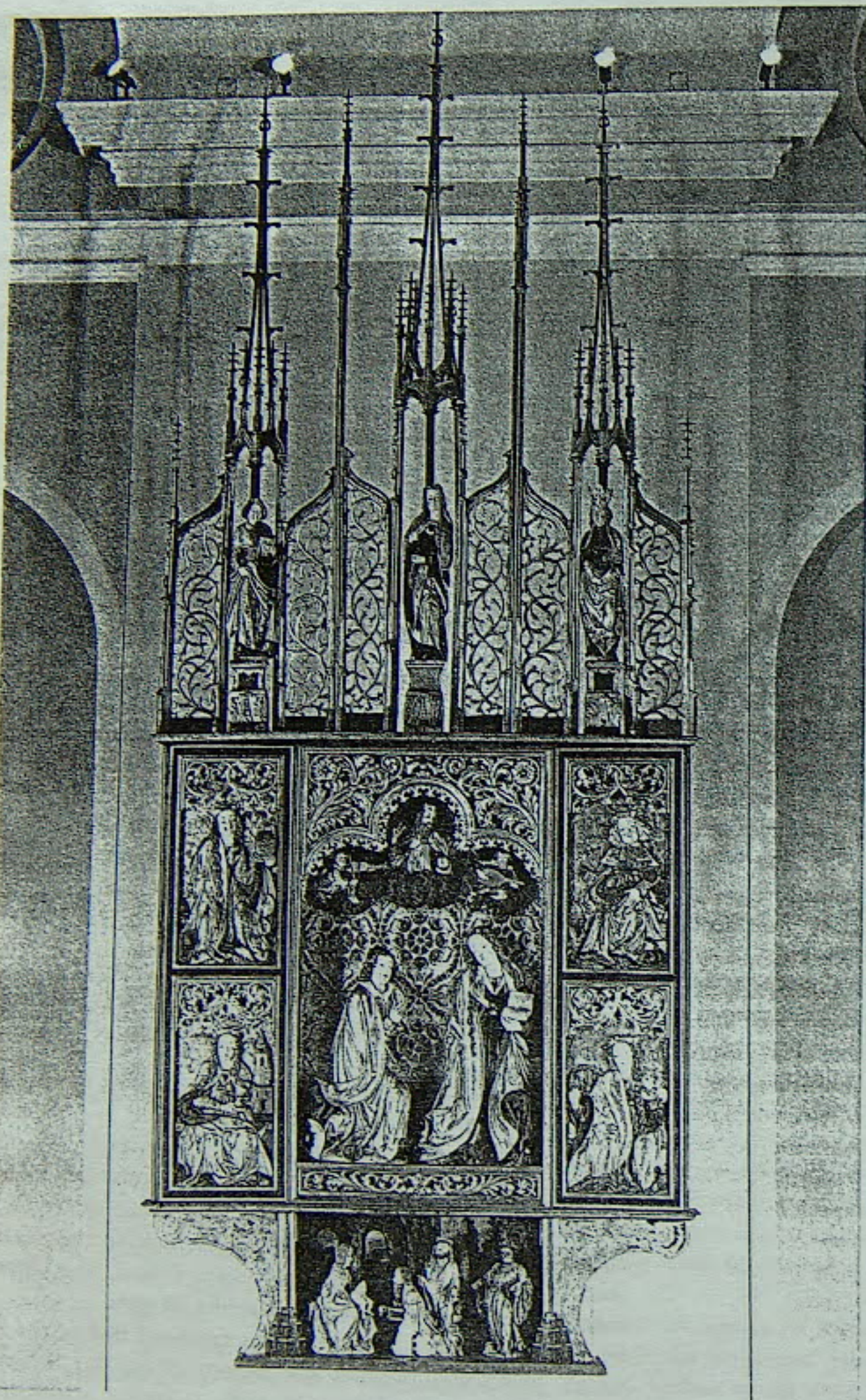


2.11 Doorway (detail), entry of church, Sabinov (Kisszeben), Slovakia. Stone. (Photo: Institute for Art History, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovak Republic.)

the adaptation of Italian sculpture or the employment of Italian sculptors. Białostocki has remarked on how the adoption of Italian Renaissance solutions was very selective, limited primarily to tomb sculpture of the variety set in niches.<sup>50</sup> By selectivity, Białostocki means that, in comparison, other Italian Renaissance forms, such as *intarsie* or free-standing tombs, did not find their way to Poland. But the question is a broader one.

The broader issue of taste may work in a way which suggests why, conversely, Italian forms and sculpture could also have lost some of their popularity. When, for instance, in the late seventeenth and especially in the eighteenth century a taste for things French replaced that for the Italianate, French sculptors began to assume the places that Italians had once occupied. But this does not entirely explain why from the beginning patrons or clients were more sensitive to Italians' endeavors in some areas, such as tomb sculpture or architectural ornament, than in others.

While in general Italians may have worked in the north in a variety of sculptural media including marble, stucco, or occasionally bronze, even though Donatello also worked in wood there was no continuing major tradition in limewood or oak in Italy to rival the thriving use of these media in the north in the late fifteenth century. In the north the local tradition of working in wood also remained a lively alternative well through the eighteenth century for altarpieces, pulpits, baptismal fonts, and even epitaphs. In certain areas of central Europe, including Silesia, Poland, and Upper Hungary (Slovakia), there may even have existed division of media, of sorts, in which some works were executed by Italians in stone, whereas retables remained tied to the local tradition of working in wood. This is seen in places like Sabinov in Slovakia, where Italians did the doorway in stone (Figure 2.12) while presumably Germanic sculptors worked on the altarpieces



2.12 (opposite page) Master of the Altars of St. Anne (follower of Parol z Levoča). Annunciation Altarpiece from Sabinov (Kisszeben). Polychromed wood, c.1515-1520. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery. (Photo: museum.)

2.13 (left) Master of the Altars of St. Anne (follower of Parol z Levoča). St. Anne Altarpiece from Sabinov (Kisszeben). Polychromed wood, c.1510-1515. Budapest, Hungarian National Gallery. (Photo: museum.)

(Figures 2.13 and 2.14). The same phenomenon may be encountered through the eighteenth century elsewhere.<sup>51</sup>

There is also a social dimension to the question of artistic reception. Opportunities to obtain permanent positions as court sculptors were infrequent. Thus Italians, who might be called to work on individual projects, often in effect had to take on employment *ad hoc*. Furthermore, workshop and guild restrictions would have otherwise inhibited

foreigners from settling in many cities or towns. In many places the qualifications needed to become a master would have included the demand that one be a citizen, and the qualifications for citizenship may have depended on property ownership or local birth, or even religion in Protestant regions, thus excluding Catholic Italians. As is well known, itineracy was therefore a feature of the career of many Italian sculptors. It is relatively rare that a continuing presence might be established in one place for long. The result was that there often existed extreme limitations to the lasting local impact of Italians.<sup>52</sup>

Religious beliefs also could have presented impediments. Religious differences *per se* seem in general to have been less of an issue. Thus in Protestant northern Germany and Scandinavia, Italian stuccoists were employed, as they were in orthodox Russia. Yet in Russia other sorts of controls could have been placed on the activity of sculptors. The prohibition against making graven images was interpreted in such a manner that opportunities for making statues were seriously reduced.<sup>53</sup> Thus in Russia until the late seventeenth century Italians served more often as masons or architects than as sculptors.

In the end, it may even be their very success that also restricted chances for Italians. Masons and sculptors who were drawn to Italy to be trained by Italian masters may in many instances have created competition for them. As van Hofe's letter suggests, many Netherlanders often took up in places where Italians did not reach. This is suggested by the pupils of Giambologna, Netherlanders or Germans who had been trained by him in Italy. Moreover, indigenous traditions were often created to challenge Italian hegemony in some fields. And so by the early seventeenth century south German and Tyrolean stucco decoration was thriving in or not far from areas where Italians had earlier been involved in similar projects.

As these last remarks indicate, this essay can at best be considered merely a sketch suggesting where further investigations may be pursued. Nevertheless, a good place to start reframing a more comprehensive view of the Renaissance is with the examination of Italian art and artists outside of Italy.

## "Vision Itself Has Its History": "Race," Nation, and Renaissance Art History

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CLAIRE FARAGO

In the last two decades, the nineteenth-century epistemological foundations of art history have been the subject of great debate. Despite some fundamental disagreements over the nature of visual images, there is a general consensus on two major issues.<sup>1</sup> First, most art historians now regard as problematic the assumption that all images are at base naturalistic: in fact, almost everyone recommends severing the link between images and nature that has historically been postulated by resemblance theories of representation. Secondly, it has been widely claimed that an adequate theory of representation must take into account the culturally specific circumstances in which visual images function. Yet current theoretical discussions stop short of specifying how we are to define these circumstances. What would be involved in drawing out the implications of our theorizing? How might we establish a relativistic epistemological foundation for art history that adequately defines what "culturally specific circumstances" actually means?

With these issues in mind, the following essay explores the possibility of reconstruing our disciplinary paradigm based on national culture so that it focuses on cultural exchange instead. The history of our discipline has been written as a modernist enterprise. Most narrative accounts have been concerned with the formal features of theory at the expense of the cultural circumstances out of which accounts of artistic change emerged. An examination of *these* cultural circumstances reveals that some of our predecessors were challenged by problems similar to the ones we face today – to revise resemblance theories of representation, to incorporate a multicultural framework, to overcome the Eurocentrisms of our inherited academic practices.

Moreover, the normative status of Italian art established within the discipline by Burckhardt, Michelet, Ruskin, and others played a catalytical role over several generations of art historical revisionist writing. If we treat the writings of our founding fathers as documents of cultural history, rather than purely theoretical contributions, we discover that nineteenth-century theories about the nature of artistic development on the collective or "cultural" level emerged in connection with widespread debates about the evolution of civilization. First, Social Darwinist theories of cultural evolutionism provided the leading paradigm. When Social Darwinism *per se* was no longer the issue, German National Socialism made new demands on art historians and other European