Literature and Architecture in Early Modern England

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Published by Johns Hopkins University Press

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In the history of English architecture, John Evelyn is almost important. Howard Colvin includes him in the *Biographical Dictionary of English Architects* as “a virtuoso whose theoretical knowledge of architecture was probably as considerable as that of Roger North or Roger Pratt, but who (unlike them) appears rarely to have put it to practical use.” Viewed retrospectively, Evelyn’s contribution to Restoration building has generally paled beside the accomplishments of such professionals as North and Pratt, along with John Webb, Hugh May, and, most prominently, Christopher Wren. Following the Great Fire of 1666, Evelyn missed being the first to present plans for the rebuilding of London by only two days, by which time, he would write to Samuel Tuke, “Dr. Wren had got the start of me.” Aside from these plans, and the scattered observations of his journals, Evelyn’s only writing on the subject of architecture is not mainly original, consisting mostly of a very direct translation of Roland Fréart’s *Parallèle de l’architecture antique avec la moderne* (Paris, 1650). Reframed with new prefatory material and an appended essay by Evelyn himself and dedicated to England’s new monarch, King Charles II, the work was published in 1664 as *A Parallel of the Antient Architecture with the Modern*. In the history of English architectural taste, Evelyn’s emphases seem slightly askew; in particular, as Edward Chaney points out, Evelyn failed in both treatise and diary to recognize the prominence of Palladio, the most influential figure for both Inigo Jones, who flourished a generation before Evelyn, and for many who would come a generation after. Other scholars have commented on the incipient and rudimentary nature of Evelyn’s architectural knowledge. Li Shiqiao notes that Evelyn failed to make distinctions between classical and ba-
Evelyn and Histories of Restoration Architecture

roque styles that would appear important to later architectural historians and theorists; Alice T. Friedman characterizes him as being “overwhelm[ed]” in his attempts to “make sense” of classical and Renaissance architectural forms; and Kerry Downes points out that, when it comes to detailed architectural description, “words often failed Evelyn.”⁴⁴ John Bowle, as well, sees the significance of Evelyn’s *Parallel* as mainly preliminary, “prepar[ing] public opinion to give Wren a free hand when the chance came.”⁵⁵

This sense of Evelyn’s architectural knowledge, however, emerges largely from scholars’ tendency to consider only the novel aspects of his work. That is to say, Evelyn is most often viewed through the lens of future developments in English architectural history rather than in terms of previous architectural conventions and traditions in English architectural writing. The *Parallel* looks back as well as forward, and it evinces delicate negotiations between tradition and innovation, the weaving of older historical strands into a new kind of history. It also shows a keen sensitivity to the intensely political and historical nature of architectural history and aesthetics. In keeping with the central concerns of this book, I am here less interested in Evelyn’s contribution to English building—the application of his knowledge to “practical use”—than in his selection and re-framing of Fréart’s treatise, both of which reveal his understanding of English architectural literacy during this period. Fréart’s, and by extension Evelyn’s, interpretation and representation of architecture strike chords that earlier writers have made familiar to us, at the same time that both writers adapt architectural historiography to the peculiarities of their own historical moments.

As with so many of Evelyn’s writings, we might wish that Evelyn himself were a little more present in the pages of the *Parallel*, a little more visible behind the trappings of translation and panegyric. Nonetheless, Evelyn’s English publication of the *Parallel* reveals much about his perception of Restoration politics, architectural aesthetics, and the relationship between the two. In particular, the *Parallel* evinces unexpected continuities between pre- and post-Restoration views of architecture, even as it reflects on moments of political rupture and aesthetic novelty. Evelyn’s choice of material, along with his own supplementary matter, indicates that, even after the Restoration, historical and antiquarian modes of architectural interpretation had not become obsolete. As he attempted to introduce aesthetic standards that would have appeared new to many English readers and viewers, Evelyn recollected and relied on earlier assumptions about the relationship between architecture and history. As a result, we can read the *Parallel* as a work of English historiography as much as an innovative introduction of Continental architectural styles. In selecting and repackaging
a Continental architectural treatise for an English audience, Evelyn’s task both resembled and differed from that of the authors discussed in previous chapters. Like Camden, Wotton, Jonson, and Clifford, Evelyn saw architecture as a way of celebrating a powerful patron, but rather than exploiting a historical association among landowner, architecture, and local topography, Evelyn confronted and recorded a history of dislocation, fragmentation, and restoration. As John Miller notes, in 1660 Charles II “was a stranger to his kingdom, with little first-hand knowledge of its institutions, of his leading subjects and of the relative strengths of the political and religious groups which had fought it out since 1640.”6 Likewise, N. H. Keeble remarks that Charles was “not in the least implicated in recent history,” a detachment that one contemporary writer attempted to turn to a strength by speaking of “those great opportunities which he hath had, by his so long being abroad, of diving in to the great Councels of Forrein Princes and States.”7 In recollecting and representing the artifacts of a foreign Renaissance, Evelyn both told the story of a kingless past and celebrated the authority of a new English king. Evelyn’s selection and translation of the Parallel therefore, becomes remarkable as a complex positioning of Restoration architecture at the confluence of historical and aesthetic modes of literacy and perception.

Perhaps surprisingly, the structure of the Parallel corresponds less directly to Evelyn’s activities as a builder, which, as Colvin establishes, were limited, than it does to his activities as a virtuoso, or connoisseur and collector. Evelyn’s diaries frequently record the natural, aesthetic, and antique curiosities he amassed while traveling on the Continent. To take only a few examples, at Puzzolo in 1645 he purchased “divers Medailes & other curiosities, Antiquities &c of the Country people, who daily find such things amongst the very old ruines of those places,” and from Venice in 1646, he came away with “purchases of Books, Pictures, G<l>asses, Treacle, &c.”8 In 1667, he visited Arundel House, where he found the Arundel marbles “neglected, & scattred up & downe about the Gardens & other places” and persuaded Henry Howard to donate them to the University of Oxford where, after being “removed & piled together,” they would be rearranged and preserved in an orderly way.9 In 1689, he wrote to Samuel Pepys a long letter on the art of collecting medals, coins, prints, and books, with particular instructions that the integrity of the collection be protected (presumably following Pepys’s death) “from the sad dispersions many noble libraries and cabinets have suffered in these late times: one auction, I may call it diminution, of a day or two, having scattered what has been gathering many years.”10 And the diary is itself a collection, or rather a recollection, not only of personal experience, but of terms and descriptions drawn from the books and guides of earlier English
Evelyn and Histories of Restoration Architecture

This chapter, accordingly, examines the ways in which Evelyn enlisted the ideas of collection, fragmentation, and recollection in his interpretation of architecture, which was in turn enlisted in the service of his own reconstruction of English history and his own political panegyric. In viewing the Parallel as a calculated assemblage of the extant architectural artifacts of a fragmented past, we tread, in a new way, in the footsteps of John Leland and William Camden, traveling not the physical landscape of England but the uneven ground of English history nonetheless.

As its title suggests, Fréart’s Parallèle aligned ancient with modern examples, focusing on constructions of the five orders, or types of classical columns. Fréart gathers his evidence for classical building practice mainly from drawings of extant fragments of classical buildings, such as the Baths of Diocletian and the Theater of Marcellus at Rome. The treatise is a collection itself, anthologizing and comparing what Evelyn calls “the marrow and very substance of no less than ten judicious Authors” (a 4r–v). These include eight fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italians and two sixteenth-century Frenchmen. In the Parallèle, they are compared to each other as well as to antique examples, and Fréart reliably backs the ancients, holding them up as the standards to which all subsequent architects ought to aspire. Fréart’s collection is introduced by an epistle to his brothers, Paul and Jean Fréart, which consists largely of a tribute to his deceased patron, Sublet de Noyers, and a preface addressed to the reader. The treatise concludes with a brief glossary of terms. Evelyn’s translation retains Fréart’s front matter and is supplemented by two of his own dedications, one to the newly restored Charles II and another to Sir John Denham, who was at that time Surveyor of the King’s Works. Evelyn also appended an original essay “Account of Architects and Architecture,” which, in the 1664 edition, consists mainly of a lexicon of architectural terms. In 1707, another edition appeared with the same opening dedications. The “Account,” however, had been enlarged with a more extensive condemnation of Gothic architecture, and to this portion Evelyn added a dedication to Denham’s successor, Christopher Wren. In Fréart’s alignments of ancient and modern examples, Evelyn would also have seen a parallel between the French author and himself. The treatise itself was a collection, and Fréart was a collector. The treatise and its front matter showcase his activities as an acquirer of architectural artifacts, books, and drawings. Like Evelyn, and unlike most of the architect-authors the Parallèle abstracts and anthologizes, he was not a practicing architect. In its combination of antique and modern aesthetic artifacts, the book recalls the sort of collections Evelyn had seen and assembled while abroad. By appropriating and translating Fréart’s treatise, then, Evelyn presents...
himself as a recollector of both architectural books and historical fragments, not the physical fragments of buildings, exactly, but their representations.

More important to the concerns of this book, however, Evelyn became a collector and rearranger of both foreign and English modes of understanding architecture. To Evelyn, Fréart offered the opportunity to return to and redeploy earlier English traditions that saw architecture as a record of history and architectural writing as a way of recounting human stories. At the same time, however, the Parallel allowed Evelyn to renovate and adapt older traditions. The terms and standards of classical aesthetics, as Friedman has pointed out, would have been unfamiliar to most English viewers of this period. In the Parallel, as in the virtuoso’s collection, history and novelty are allowed to coexist as antiquity lends its authority to what appears curious or strange. Like the country house poems and county chorographies of previous decades, the Parallel is as much about history as it is about building, and as much about patrons as it is about architects. These traditions, however, appear in fragmented and modified form; no longer are they contingent upon topographical, historical, or institutional continuities, nor do they rely on architecture’s connection to the land. Instead, architecture is subjected to the historiography of the virtuoso, which allows for fracture, disintegration, renewal, and migration. And in the broadly construed timeline of classical exempla, Gothic barbarity, and Renaissance revival, Evelyn saw another correspondence between architectural and political history: a parallel to England’s recent progression from monarchy to interregnum to Restoration. As a result, talking about architecture became for Evelyn a way of representing his royal dedicatee, of seeing, in foreign aesthetic histories, the portrait of an English king.

Evelyn’s translation of the Parallèle is quite literal and direct. His additions and framing apparatus, however, mark it distinctly as a work of the English Restoration; and as it reconciles classicism with antiquarianism, or old and new models of architectural interpretation, the treatise, like the Restoration itself, looks back in order to look forward, or, as Evelyn would put it, repairs in order to build. In his dedication to Charles, Evelyn speaks of the king’s recent building works: “It would be no Paradox, but a Truth, to affirm, that Your Majesty has already Built and Repair’d more in three or four Years . . . than all Your Enemies have destroy’d in Twenty; nay then all Your Majesties Predecessors have advanc’d in an Hundred” (a 2 v). Evelyn borrows the phrase almost exactly from Fréart’s praise of his patron, changing the number of years to correspond with Charles’s political career, but the notion of “paradox” is his own introduction. Most obviously, it refers to the apparent improbability that more could be accomplished in four
years than in a hundred, but it also conveys something of the way both architectural and political history work in the treatise; it is a process of both innovation and renovation, in which the present is imagined through the recollection of a fragmented past.

Evelyn’s perception of architecture thus relies on a connection between political historiography and contemporary antiquarian practice. By the second half of the seventeenth century, both local history and curatorial strands of antiquarian thought had become ingrained and self-conscious enough to anticipate themselves; and, as Anne Clifford did at about the same time, Evelyn crafted his own brand of forward-looking antiquarianism. Fragmentation and incompleteness called out for the hand of a new collector, a new virtuoso to engage in the processes of extraction, recollection, and rearrangement. Alienated and disarticulated, antique and modern fragments offered themselves for enlistment in new historical narratives as they were managed, ordered, and repossessed. Through the arrangement and narration of architectural stories, the virtuoso becomes a curator of history; and for Evelyn, it was the very brokenness of that history that transformed it from a prospect of irretrievable loss to a renewable project of recollection.

In the Parallèle, it is impossible not to see architecture as being located in history. Illustrating aesthetics in a way that is distinctly diachronic, Fréart’s Parallèle implies a complicated sense of time. Architecture is framed chronologically and historically, and for Fréart, aesthetic progression is a backward-looking enterprise, in which the present only becomes accessible through the lens of the past. The book is divided up order by order, and each is illustrated through the depiction of ancient examples followed by a comparative assessment of their modern interpretations. In his discussion of the Doric order, for instance, the plates proceed from “A Particular remarkable in the Profile, drawn from the Theater of Marcellus” to “Another Profile taken from the fragments of the Dioclesian Bathes at Rome” to “Another very antient Profile after the Grand Maniere elevated in Perspective, and now extant at Albano near Rome” to “Palladio and Scamozzi upon the Dorique Order,” to Serlio and Vignola on the same subject, to Alberti and Viola, and finally to Bullant and de l’Orme. At last, Fréart returns to “A very antient Sepulchre to be seen near Terracina, at the side of the high way leading towards Naples” (16, 18, 20, 34). Ancient and modern are successively visible in the description of each order, as are multiple renderings and interpretations of the order’s proportions and ornament. Fréart thus differs from a writer such as Palladio, who, as a practicing architect, saw his task as constructive and synthetic rather than analytic. Palladio dedicated, by his account, “long hours of immense
effort, to organizing the remaining fragments of ancient buildings” so that the reader might learn by “measuring and observing whole buildings and all their details on a sheet of paper.” While Palladio sought to bring the artifacts of the past into a restored representation of their original contexts, Fréart often left them in pieces to bear physical evidence of the passage of time.

Fréart’s history of architecture, presented as a quarrel between the ancients and the moderns in which the ancients continually reemerge as superior ex-
amples, unfolds as a story of decline and aesthetic divagation. Modern practitioners of architecture have “wander’d” so far from the “Principles” of the ancients that “they are become degenerate, and scarce cognoscible to their very Authors”; ancient remnants are often used to illuminate the failings of the present (2–3). Fréart uses the sepulcher at Terracina at the end of his discussion of the Doric order, for instance, to alight with satisfaction on the topic of degeneration and
error: “I was extremely glad to encounter an example so express and convincing against the abuse of the Moderns, who have very inconsiderably introduc’d Bases to the Columns of this Order” (34). Moreover, the modern Italian writers are not arranged in chronological order, as one might expect in a history of architecture or of architectural writing, but are roughly ranked in descending degrees of excellence, with excellence being determined by their approximation of classical models. The first is Palladio (whose I Quattro Libri Fréart himself translated into French in 1651), “without any contest ... to whom we are oblig’d for a very rare Collection of antique Plans and Profiles of all sorts of Buildings” (22). Scamozzi shares the same page but follows at some distance in quality as “a much inferior workman,” while Serlio and Vignola “hold of the second Class” (22). He then proceeds to enumerate the relative strengths of other pairs, ending his list with Alberti (“the most Antient”) and his “Corrival” Viola (“the most Modern”), at which point the reader has descended from Palladio to a writer who, Fréart opines “is of the Categorie of those which the Italians call Cicaloni, eternal Talkers to no purpose” (23). Rather than adhering to the subject of architecture, Viola “amuses himself, poor man, in telling stories; so that in stead of a Book of Architecture, he has made (ere he was aware) a Book of Metamorphoses” (23). The Frenchmen de l’Orme and Bullant, whom Fréart explains he has separated out because French architects are so much less numerous in this collection, follow. By beginning the list with Palladio, “a Sectator of these great Masters of Antiquity” and, surprisingly, “even a Competitor with them, and emulous of their glory,” Fréart physically replicates the writers’ aesthetic closeness to classical models in the book (22). Palladio is not chronologically nearest to the ancients, but Fréart makes him nearer in another way, their “Sectator” literally as well as conceptually. In Fréart’s account, to survey modern architectural history is to be led through a process of decline. Modern architecture emerges as inherently flawed and belated, with the final return to antiquity (the sepulcher at Terracina) indicating not proximity to, but distance from the ideals of the past.

This impression of general decline, of a progressive falling away from the past, is overlaid on a pattern of renaissance and revival, in which the greatest Italian and French masters have partly recuperated classical forms from the obscurity of their own ruins. As ancient examples demonstrate the failings of the present, their recovery also speaks of their own revival and possible reconstruction, however partial and incomplete. The illustration of the sepulcher at Terracina, for instance, has been re-imagined through a draft of its “Vestigia and footsteps,” which are “yet extant,” and which have been “discovered and (as one may say) disinterre’d ... (for ’twas almost buried amongst the brambles of a wild and un-
cultivated place” by the mid sixteenth-century architect and draftsman Pirro Ligorio (34). Here, architecture has been imaginatively resurrected in modern times from the obscurity of “a wild and uncultivated place,” which, as we will see, Fréart imagined as representing a wild and uncultivated period in history. This word play on the etymological meaning of “vestiges,” (footprints) along with the imagery of loss and disinterment recalls Fréart’s epistle to the reader, where he claims that his “Canons and Rules” are drawn from “instances . . . among the Vestigia’s and footsteps of the most flourishing ages” (5). Here, as well, these “instances” speak simultaneously of a wild and uncultivated historical interlude: “so many ages of ignorance have pass’d over us, especially in the Arts of Architecture, and Painting, which the Warr, and frequent inundations of Barbarians had almost extinguish’d in the very Country of their Originals” (2). Yet the subsequent insistence on their recent recovery resists Fréart’s pervasive emphasis on their modern devolution. These arts, he says, “were in a manner new born again but a few years since, when those great Modern Masters, Michael Angelo, and Raphael, did as it were raise them from the Sepulchers of their antient ruins, under which, these poor sciences lay buri’d” (2).

For Fréart, as later for Evelyn, architectural history writes political history; and this double sense of time, of revival and decay, reflects Fréart’s assessment of his nation’s historical moment and of his own lamentable patronless state. Architectural history both generates and is generated by a history of political ruptures. In Fréart’s view, these ruptures had yet to be repaired. Fréart’s work promotes architecture’s monumental function, understanding it in terms both aesthetic and antiquarian, by claiming that it preserves the human stories of rulers, benefactors, and events. Trajan’s Column, for example, “one of the most superb remainders of the Roman magnificence . . . has more immortaliz’d the Emperour Trajan then all the Penns of Historians.” In this artifact, “[i]t was Architecture her self which was . . . the Historiograph . . . and who since it was to celebrate a Roman, chose none of the Greek Orders” (88).

Fréart’s treatise mimics the monumental function of architecture itself: it is presented as a memorial to a patron who had recently died, Fréart’s own cousin, Sublet de Noyers. In addition, shortly before his death, de Noyers had lost his political influence and retired from public life due to the death of Cardinal Richelieu in 1640. The dedicatory epistle of the Parallèle is largely a biography of de Noyers, which focuses especially on his public works and, as is appropriate to the subject of the treatise, extensively on his patronage of architecture. For instance, Fréart attributes to him the “conservation . . . and absolute restauration” of the Louvre and the Palace of Fountainebleau, which “but for him . . . had been . . . but
one vast ruine, a very Carkass of building, desolate, and uninhabitable” (A 3 r). In addition to being associated with other magnificent structures (“The Castles of S. Germaines and Versailles”) he is praised for his skill in military architecture: “All our Frontiers are full of his Works” (A 3 r). Even the church where he is buried is a visible byproduct of his character: “his body being transported to the Church of the Noviciat . . . which he had built in honour of St. Xavieris, and destin’d for his Sepulchre. This Church is look’d upon as the most regular piece of Architecture in Paris” (A 4 v). De Noyers’s political fall and death are equally legible in architectural terms:

But during all these mighty Projects, there happen’d a strange revolution which in less then six Moneths changed the whole face of the State, by the death of that superlative Minister the great Cardinal de Richelieu, the very Column and Ornament of Monarchy . . . by the Recess of Monseigneur de Noyers . . . We then presently beheld the work of the Louvre abandoned, the finishing of the great Gallery to cease; and generally all the Fortifications in France, without hopes of seeing the Work reassumed and taken in hand again of a long time. (A 4 r)

Fréart’s description of Richelieu as “the very Column and Ornament of Monarchy” mixes architectural and political terminology; the state is represented as an architectural construction, supported by the very structural element (the column) with which Fréart’s treatise is wholly concerned. Fréart thus generates both biography and political history through an assessment of France’s architecture, with the features of one both revealing and creating the features of the other.

For Fréart, the Renaissance both had and hadn’t already happened. Moments of both aesthetic and political recovery are wistfully distanced from the stagnation of the present moment, either remembered as part of an idealized history or projected into a conditional future. On the one hand, Fréart credits Raphael and Michelangelo with raising the arts “from the Sepulchers of their antient ruins” and claims, “We have had fresh experience of this under the Reign of Francis the first” (3). On the other hand, when Fréart was writing, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Francis I had all been dead for approximately a century. As we might expect, given Fréart’s emphasis on architecture as a product of patronage, revival might be achieved only through the agency of the present French aristocrats who were poor replacements for de Noyers and his contemporaries, at least in their appreciation of architecture and aesthetics. Could French “Grandees . . . devest themselves of . . . prejudice and disdain” towards the arts in general and architecture in particular, “there would be great hopes we should yet see them reflourish, and be born again as ’twere from New to Antique (3). It is characteristic of Fréart’s sense
of time that progress is a process of return and building a process of repairing what has been lost. Architecture can only move forward by moving back, in his view, and its history is created by being undone: “born again as ’twere from New to Antique.” The traces of antiquity are faint but legible, relinquished but partly recovered. Progress is a process of regression, and the future becomes accessible by treading exactly in the footsteps of the past.

In his own dedicatory material, and in his “Account of Architects and Architecture,” Evelyn adopts Fréart’s sense of an architectural history that plays out in contrapuntal strains of construction and decay, as well as the idea that architectural history is a means of recounting human and political history. Evelyn, however, reorients Fréart’s timeline; far from being cordoned off from Restoration England, the Renaissance is in the process of happening, and it is representative of the Restoration in multiple ways. To repair is also to build, as the dilapidated remnants of pre-interregnum England are rescued from the ruins of England’s own recent wild and uncultivated age. Many of the buildings Evelyn lists as examples of Charles’s works resemble the Renaissance examples of Fréart’s treatise in that they carry connotations of both newness and antiquity, emblemizing both the king’s commitment to progress and his connection to an ancestral and national past: “what Your Majesty has so magnificently design’d and carried on at that Your antient Honour of Green-wich . . . those Splendid Apartiments, and other useful Reformations for security and delight, about your Majesties Palace at White-Hall,” along with the “care, and preparation for Saint Paul’s, by the impiety and iniquity of the late confusions almost Dilapidated” (a 3 r).

Among these many achievements, however, remain corruptions and obscurities that have yet to be corrected, and, as at the sepulcher near Terracina, part of the work of the translation will be to demonstrate the failings of the present. Like Fréart, Evelyn projects the possibilities of a conditional future, but for him, it will be built upon a moment that has already begun. Moreover, Evelyn’s view of architectural progress is actually progressive, a rebirth from antique to new rather than new to antique: “You well know,” he writes in the dedication to Sir John Denham, “that all the mischiefs and absurdities in our modern Structures proceed chiefly from our busie and Gotic triflings in the Compositions of the Five Orders,” a fault that the treatise will make apparent: “from the noblest Remaines of Antiquity accurately Measur’d, and perspicuously Demonstrated, the Rules are lay’d down; and from a solid, judicious, and mature comparison of modern Examples, their Errours are detected” (*b v). Similarly, in the “Account,” Evelyn expresses a conservative view, introducing architecture as a “useful Art,” which, “having been first deriv’d to us from the Greeks, we should not without infinite
ingratitude either slight, or innovate those *Teares* which it has pleased them to impose upon the particular *Members* and *Ornaments* belonging to the several *Orders*” (115). This passage sounds like a return to Fréart, who claims in his epistle to the reader that he will not “broach *Novelties*” but rather “would (were it possible) ascend even to the very sourse of the *Orders* themselves” (2). Not surprisingly, for Fréart, renewal does not involve newness at all, and this ascension is underwritten by the fantasy—“were it possible”—of regressing in time. But as the “Account” goes on, Evelyn transforms the orders from the inaccessible origins of what will never be perfectly recovered to the accessible origins of what might be swiftly achieved. He calls for some “industrious Person” to “oblige the *Nation* with a through examination of what has already been written . . . and in what shall be found most benefi cial for our *Climat* . . . and advance upon the *Principles* already establish’d, and not so acquiesce in them as if there were a *Non Ultra* Engraven upon our *Columns* like those of *Hercules*, after which there remained no more to be discovered” (118–119). Fréart specifically disparages such excuses for change, dismissing as “vain and frivolous reasonings” the arguments that “*Art* is an infi nite thing, growing every day to more perfection, and suiting it self to the humor of the several *Ages*, and *Nations*” (2). For Evelyn, however, the orders are allowed to become what they never were before, not isolated relics that gesture to the wholeness of an idealized past, but the boundary where innovation will meet history. They point at once toward the classical world (the columns of Hercules) and to new, foreign worlds in which they will continue to arrive.

In appropriating these assumptions, Evelyn himself imports the foreign novelties of a recent French treatise, but he also recuperates and recollects earlier English approaches to architectural writing. There are, of course, significant differences between Evelyn and the earlier writers: for Leland and Camden, the urgency of attending to architecture was produced in part by the recognition that it might disappear, and neither of these writers idealized the ages of Romans or monasteries in the same way that Fréart longed for inaccessible ancients or the more recent tenure of Sublet de Noyers. Still, in its emphasis on the authority of architectural fragments as a means of reconstructing historical narrative, the *Parallèle* mirrors antiquarian interest in England’s architectural remains. A closer connection between the English writers and Fréart occurs in the idea that architectural history is a history of patronage—in the forms of expenditure and ownership—and that it records the stories of builders—in the sense of owners and patrons—at least as effectively as it preserves the traces of designers and architects. Just as items in a virtuoso’s collection might reconcile antiquity and novelty by placing old artifacts or fragments in new physical and functional
contexts, Evelyn’s translation reconciles history with newness, enlisting older modes of English architectural literacy in the service of promoting an aesthetic system that, despite its antiquity, would have appeared new to many English viewers. And because it relies on the connection between architectural and human history, Evelyn’s translation of the Parallèle becomes a piece of Restoration political historiography, reflecting the simultaneous process of building and repairing that underwrote the very notion that a Restoration was possible at all.

Like Renaissance aesthetic styles, the monarchy itself was both new and old in 1664, and Evelyn discerns in the progression from classical to Gothic to Renaissance aesthetic styles an analogy for England’s own recent architectural history, and, by extension and implication, its political history. The aesthetic time line put forward in Fréart’s treatise is thus resettled over a new set of architectural examples, which, in turn, are read as reflections of a new set of political conditions. England’s arts, Evelyn could reasonably claim, had, within his generation’s memory, suffered at the hands of England’s own barbarians, who are invoked several times in his dedication to the king and are distilled in his argument that Charles “Built and Repair’d more in three or four Years . . . than all Your Enemies have destroy’d in Twenty,” and that his “care” of St. Paul’s would correct the “impiety and iniquity of the late confusions” (a 2 v – a 3 r). Later, he commends the king for having “so prosperously guided this giddy Bark through such a Storm,” like “those glorious Hero’s of old, who first brought Men out of Wildernesses” (a 3 v, a 4 r). And yet, both political and architectural histories are also stories of return. It is to this “chas[ing]” of “Barbarity” that “Architecture . . . ows her renascency amongst Us . . . and to as many of those Illustrious Persons as by their large and magnificent Structures transcribe your Royal Example” (a 4 r). In the dedication to Sir John Denham, Evelyn similarly views architecture as a reflection of government, and he describes both as being in a period of renaissance and renewal. In the very process of emerging from a historical and cultural wilderness, London recalls ancient Rome: “They were not a foolish or impolitick People, who from the very Principles of humanitie, destin’d for the ease of their Subjects, so many spacious Waies, cool Fountains, shady Walks, refreshing Gardens, and places of publick Recreation, as well as stately Temples, and Courts of Justice, that Religion and the Laws might be published with the more pomp and veneration” (“b 2 r). This past-tense description of a vanished city is quickly re-oriented to point toward the present, as Evelyn collapses ancient Rome under contemporary London, reattributing the architectural and civic machinery of a past cultural moment to his own surroundings and his own royal dedicatee: “And if his Majesty . . . hath contributed to something of all this, it is that for which the
whole Nation becomes obliged; as the promoting of such publick and useful Works (and especially that of Building) a certain Indication of a prudent Government, of a flourishing and happy People” (*b 2 r–v).

This constant balance of return and progression, of loss and recuperation, directly reflects aspects of Restoration political thought. As George Southcombe and Grant Tapsell point out, early legislation conceived of the Restoration in ways that relied on both memory and a willingness to forget, a sense that the reign of Charles II was both completely contiguous with pre-interregnum history and rested on a correction of the traumatic political disruptions that had immediately preceded it. On the one hand, Southcombe and Tapsell write, “it was to be as if the civil war and interregnum had never happened”; on the other “minds were not wiped blank…. The past indelibly affected the present: the major political issues, the political languages used; and the political and religious decisions taken; all of these things bore the marks of the experiences that had preceded 1660.”

In 1660, the Act of Oblivion was passed, “to bury all Seedes of future Discordes and remembrance . . . as well in His [Charles II’s] owne Breast as in the Breasts of His Subjects one towards another.” In the same year however, an act was passed with the purpose of enshrining the king’s return—and, by extension, the memory of his absence—in public consciousness; it demanded that subjects celebrate “his Majestyes late most wonderfull glorious peaceable and joyfull Restauration to the actuall possession and exercise of his undoubted hereditary Soveraigne Regall Authority over them” annually in “some usuall Church Chappell or place where such publique thanksgivings and praises to Godes most Divine Majesty shall be rendered.” The proclamation figures the king’s return as a kind of political renaissance, because the celebration and thanksgivings are to take place on May 29 “the most memorable Birth day not onely of his Majesty both as a man and Prince but likewise as an actual King, and of this and other His Majesties Kingdomes all in a great measure new borne and raised from the dead.”

Like Evelyn himself, then, political language imagined the Restoration as a project of both building—a new order raised on the foundations of oblivion—and repairing—a project of remembering and re-assembling historical fragments to restore a government that could be described as being born and reborn, something constructed from the strategic and ordered recreation of public memory. In the Declaration at Breda, addressed by Charles to the House of Peers in 1660, the king represented himself as a “healer,” to use Keeble’s term: “If the generall Distraction and Confusion which is spread over the whole Kingdome, doth not awaken all men to a desire and longing, that those wounds which have so many yeers together been kept bleeding, may be bound up, all We can say will be to no
His choice of figure, a binder of open wounds, corresponds obliquely to the *Parallel’s* representation of architectural progress as a process of realignment, a redressing of historical ruptures and the reassembly of a broken body of work. But both architectural treatise and contemporary political language rely on a worrying of those wounds through their constant recourse to memories of brokenness, their emphases on temporal, political, or material fragmentation. We cannot help but feel that, for both Evelyn and Charles II, whatever the efficacy of healing a wound, there remained an important commemorative value in the scar.

On a more practical level, Fréart’s method of writing architectural history as a history of politics and patronage helped Evelyn to accomplish two goals. First, it allowed him to call for new patrons of the architectural styles Fréart’s treatise promoted. Second, it provided a solution to an older problem in the history of English architectural writing, that of the “foreign architect” (to use Marvell’s phrase), who interfered with the close identification among architecture, landowner, and land (see Chapter 2). Put simply, in a historiographic and descriptive tradition that proceeded primarily through the articulation of these relationships, there was no room for the role of the professional architect. Buildings were legible as historical and ancestral documents, not as statements of an architect’s technical or professional skill. This problem of the professional architect had equally confronted Henry Wotton when he wrote *The Elements of Architecture* forty years earlier (see Chapter 2). Wotton had negotiated the difficulty by conflating the figures of patron and architect, allowing the gentleman amateur to occupy the place of the practically and theoretically skilled professional. This maneuver seems to have served Wotton’s purposes by helping to secure the aristocratic patronage that would soon gain him the lucrative provostship of Eton College. To a certain extent, Evelyn took the same tack. When he referred to Charles as a “builder,” for instance, he was using conventional language that applied this term to the person who commissioned and paid for a building, rather than to the person who designed it or to those who actually built it.

Evelyn’s goals, however, were far broader than Wotton’s, and they forced the development of a different strategy, an elevation of the architectural profession that would somehow not impinge on the status of the patrons he hoped also to attract. In the front matter of the *Parallel* as well as in his later plans for the rebuilding of London, he displays an interest in civic improvement, urban planning, and public works of a sort that seems never to have crossed Wotton’s mind. As Surveyor of the King’s Works, Denham may have exemplified for Evelyn the gentleman amateur’s limitations in accomplishing such projects. According to Colvin,
Denham’s appointment to the office of Surveyor “can only be explained in terms of personal favour to a deserving Royalist” who “had given many proofs of his loyalty since the day in 1642 when, as sheriff of Surrey, he had rashly but gallantly attempted to hold Farnham Castle against Waller.” Nevertheless, Denham had been preferred over Jones’s assistant John Webb, “by far the most experienced architect then to be found in England.”

In 1661, Evelyn disagreed with Denham over the siting of the new royal palace at Greenwich and “came away, knowing Sir John to be a better Poet than Architect, though he had Mr. Webb (Inigo Jones’s Man) to assist him.” In his dedication to Denham, Evelyn does admire Denham’s work in paving “the ruggedness” of London’s “unequal Streets,” an act which, he rather desperately extrapolates, contributed to the “beauty of the Object, the ease of the Infirme, the preserving of both the Mother and the Babe; so many of the fair-Sex and their Off-spring having perish’d by mischances” (*b 2 r). However public spirited Denham might have been, Evelyn’s praises do not really seem to fit the subject matter of the treatise itself, so wide is the gap between the practical action of paving streets and the sophisticated appreciation of the aesthetic principles that Fréart’s assembled columns are intended to convey.

Undeniably, the kind of aesthetic innovations promoted in Evelyn’s “Account” were not derived from the work of civic minded amateurs such as Denham but from that of professional architects whose names were then—and are now—often known. Indeed, to readers of the earlier architectural literature discussed in this book—the Britannia, the country house poems, and The Elements of Architecture, for instance—one of the most striking features of both Evelyn’s diary and the Parallel is that they are studded with names, not only those of aristocratic owners or dedicatees, but of painters, sculptors, and architects. In the expanded 1707 edition of the “Account,” he mentions in particular “the Banqueting-House built at White-Hall by Inego Jones after the Antient manner; or . . . what his Majesties present Surveyor Sir Christopher Wren has lately advanc’d at St. Paul’s.” Fréart’s treatise provided a logical ground for the celebration of such important figures and works, because it illustrates the aesthetic and intellectual underpinnings of their art. Fréart extols the skill of architects in the front matter of the work, lamenting a general aristocratic “disdain” for the “Arts, and . . . those who apply themselves unto them” (3). Moreover, most of the authors he abstracts and catalogs were practicing architects.

Both Fréart and Evelyn, however, constantly walk the line between promoting the architectural profession and subverting its utility to the authority of aristocratic patrons. In part, Fréart accomplishes this by decrying modern abuses; it is not the nature of the architectural profession itself but the shortcomings of
its current practitioners which demote its status: “have we at this present any reason in the World to call those three by the name of Orders, viz. Dorique, Ionique, and Corinthian, which we daily behold so disfigur’d, and ill treated, by the Workmen of this age?” (3). In the “Account,” Evelyn takes a less derogatory approach, building a balance between architect and patron into the very definition of his terms. Wotton diverted the role of the architect toward the glorification of the patron by collapsing the terms of architect and patron, creating one less position in Vitruvius’s three-part hierarchy of patron, architect, and superintendent; and in his dedication to Charles, Evelyn uses the same strategy when he insists that Charles is himself a skilled “Builder,” who can not only “pertinently . . . discourse of the Art, but judiciously . . . contrive” (a 2 r, a 3 v). In the “Account,” by contrast, he splits the position of the architect into two roles that, he says, share equally in the creation of a building. One, the “Architectus Ingenio” or “Superintendent” is a practically and intellectually skilled professional who brings to the project both a “judicious head” and a “skilful hand,” and who is responsible for attending to the “three transcendencies” of building: strength, utility, and beauty (117). Evelyn borrows his account of the architect’s training (like his list of the “three transcendencies”) from Vitruvius, enumerating the same impressive list of accomplishments that ought to contribute to his education. The architect must be “docil and ingenious,” “literate,” “Skilful in designing and drawing,” as well as in geometry, optics, arithmetic, history, philosophy, medicine, law, and astrology (116). The architect, he insists, is no “commonly illiterate Mechanick . . . but the Person who Superintends and Presides over him with so many advantages” (117). Even in placing the architect at the nexus of the design and construction processes, however, Evelyn is careful not to obscure the patron’s role. To the figure of the Architectus Ingenio he adds the “Architectus Sumptuarius,” the person with “a full and overflowing Purse: Since he who bears this may justly also be styled a Builder, and that a master one too.” It is this architect for whom, if not by whom, a building is constructed, “indeed the primum mobile which both begins and consummates all designs of this nature,” and whom the finished building will emblemize (117). Despite Evelyn’s reversion to Latin, Architectus Sumptuarius is not one of Vitruvius’s terms. Vitruvius customarily refers to the patron as the lord or dominus, a word which does not, in itself, suggest the same sort of parallel between architect and patron as creators of a building.

In the “Account,” then, what begins as Evelyn’s discussion and definition of the professional architect once again returns to an emphasis on the role of the patron. Even rhetorically, the architect does not eclipse his employer; he is only a means. Just as histories of the country house were pared down by Camden and
the country house poets and strategically directed toward praise of the current landowner, Evelyn repeatedly drifts back toward stabilizing the authority of aristocratic “builders.” In the subsequent paragraph of the “Account,” for instance, he begins by suggesting that universities make room for architecture among the liberal arts, and he ends by explaining the benefits such educated professionals would offer the state, and the king as their patron. Evelyn imagines the king as an alternative form of superintendent, the employer and gatherer—even, perhaps, the collector—of artists and architects who will all, in their various media, “celebrate his Majesty by their works to posterity” (118). “[I]t is to be hoped,” he writes, “that when his Majesty [sic] shall perfect his Royal Palace of White-Hall . . . he will . . . destine some Apartments for the ease and encouragement of the ablest Workmen in this, as in all other useful, Princely, and Sumptuous Arts . . . Printers, Painters, Sculptors, Architects &c.” In this project of aesthetic recruitment, the king would align himself with great European patrons: “Francis the First, Henry the Fourth, Cosimo de Medices, the Dukes of Urbin,” and Cardinal Richelieu, as well as with Augustus himself (118). Evelyn thus presents a model of patronage that allows for the production, employment, and appreciation of educated professionals but which absorbs their significance into the eminence of the patron. In this list, as elsewhere in the treatise, it is the names of rulers, not of architects, that buildings preserve.

In a treatise dedicated to a recently exiled and newly restored monarch, however, the traditional connections between architecture and aristocracy, or between building and patronage, required modification and adaptation to a new set of circumstances. Earlier English perceptions of architecture were heavily influenced by the chorographic history or estate survey and tended to unite architecture with human history by attaching them to a single place. As Marjorie Swann points out, these ties were weakened by the second half of the seventeenth century; “the cultural understanding of the English countryside as a site of hereditary landholding had decisively eroded, giving way to a new landscape of possessive individualism constituted by objects and their owners.” In an early manifestation of this problem, in John Stow’s Survey of London, impressions of disorder and indeterminacy emerge as Stow confronts a post-Reformation cityscape where ownership, use, and financial control had, within Stow’s own memory, rapidly changed. But the problems of geographical and historical disorder and disconnection were even more pressing in a narrative constructed around Restoration history, and for a writer praising the new reign of a recently exiled monarch who, within nearly everyone’s memory, had been dispossessed of his own land. This disarticulation of land ownership and hereditary privilege
had only been exacerbated by the interregnum. As Gary S. de Krey writes, “Sorting out the proper ownership of lands that had been confiscated or sold under duress during the civil wars and the Interregnum was [a] . . . troublesome issue for the Convention and for thousands of landed and tenant families. . . . More land had changed hands than at any time since the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII.”

In Fréart’s Parallèle, as in Evelyn’s additions to the treatise, topography no longer provides continuous narrative threads among patron, land, and architecture; and if Evelyn was to preserve or recollect the connection between architecture and history, he had to account for the breakdown of traditional associations and for the foreignness of the king’s recent past. It is not coincidental, then, that the aesthetic styles the treatise promotes were themselves foreign. Softly trailing their classical histories behind them, they had been “transplant[ed],” as Fréart says “into a strange soile”: first into the new historical framework of the Renaissance, and then, at Evelyn’s hands, into the land of an English king. In the architectural forms of the Renaissance Evelyn discovered a parallel for his royal dedicatee. Both were supported by the authority of their lineage, but neither had entirely English roots.

In carrying Fréart’s connections among architecture, Renaissance aesthetic styles, and enlightened patronage into his own dedicatory epistles and applying them to English architectural and political matter, Evelyn again threads the new through the old, arriving at an understanding of English architecture that might be called both antiquarian and classical, or both historical and aesthetic. It depended, at once, on storytelling and visual design, on building and repairing, and on reassembling the fragments of architectural and political history into a new—and orderly—unity. In the 1707 expansion of the “Account,” Evelyn decried Gothic architecture as “Monkish” and “full of Fret and lamentable Imagry”; and in the dedication to Denham, he argued that England’s current architectural irregularities revealed human flaws: “It is from the asymmetrie of our Buildings, . . . want of decorum and proportion in our Houses, that the irregularity of our humors and affections may be shrewdly discern’d” (*b 1 v). Both observations rest on the assumption that architecture writes human history and character, but in the Parallel they are marshaled into the promotion of classical aesthetics, as reflected in the terms “decorum” “proportion,” and “irregularity.” It is this last move that turns what might have seemed a familiar antiquarian sensibility to a new end. But, in reading aesthetic qualities as the products of cultural history, in the first case, and of a nation’s human characteristics, in the second, Evelyn also exploits the antiquarian possibilities of classical aesthetics.

Evelyn borrowed this intermingling of human and aesthetic stories from Fré-
art’s own account of architectural history. The treatise’s illustrations reflect a similar interpenetration of classical aesthetics and the antiquarian fragment. Part Palladian treatise and part virtuoso’s cabinet, the Parallèle lays the process of construction over the representation of material fragmentation, and the effect is that the ideas and visual representation of order, decorum, and proportion are imperfectly accomplished through the reassembly of history’s broken pieces. Building is once again understood as the strategic reparation of disorder. For Fréart, architectural history was visually recorded as a collection of foreign fragments, disarticulated from their original places and historical moments by time in general and by periods of political decline and disruption in particular. They were, he wrote, “almost extinguish’d in the very Country of their Originals” by “the Warr, and frequent inundations of Barbarians” (2). Derived from the dim embers of these “almost extinguish’d” classical examples, Renaissance interpretations of the orders are, in Fréart’s view, anchored in antiquarian artifacts which point toward the absence of their own original sites. Fréart’s illustration headings describe many of his antique examples as having been “drawn” from or “taken” (tirés) from structures that were already themselves in pieces. Like the English “draw,” the French tirer carries both the senses of “to illustrate” and “to pull from.” A few of the illustrations, like the sepulcher near Terracina, are reconstructions of complete structures. More often, though, the pictures preserve a sense of brokenness and incompleteness. As an example of the Ionic order, “The Perspective Elevation of a Profile drawn from the Baths of Dioclesian at Rome” is shown; and although Fréart’s explication claims that the illustration is meant to “represent the Idea of an Order, and the effect which it produces being put in Work,” this “angle or coinage of a return of a Wall” has been abstracted and apparently broken off from any complete idea of the building it once helped to support (42–43). Illustrations are further broken and interrupted by the interposition of Fréart’s labels. The illustration of Trajan’s column provides a similar example, as the column itself, along with the history its bas-relief figures represent, is broken in the middle by Fréart’s identifier (93). Fréart doubtless broke up the columns for practical reasons, to enlarge the details and ornament of both capitals and bases. Nevertheless, this breakage, sometimes enhanced by the representation of cracks or slightly rough edges, also contributes to the sense of a history written through the realignment of fragments. Placed in the retrospectively arranged sequence of a newly recovered history and bounded by the neat edges of the boxes that frame them, the fragments are only partly reassembled to evoke a new “Idea” of what they had formerly been.

Fréart’s illustration of modern authors gives a similar sense of fragmentation
and imperfect realignment that pulls against the simultaneous effects of symmetry, order, measure, and visual integrity. Each ancient artifact is allotted its own plate, but this is not true for Fréart’s modern subjects. Instead, as visual accompaniments to his own comparative judgments, these illustrations literally measure one author’s work up against another, as columns are sliced down the middle and placed beside mismatched halves, creating an imperfect mirror
Columns are again broken in the middle and labels identifying their authors obtrude between capital and base. Ornamentation (or its absence) also differs from one side to another, as do the numbers that measure the proportion of each component. In some cases, the two halves appear nearly to complement each other, as with Palladio and Scamozzi on the Ionic, where “there is so great a resemblance ’twixt the mouldings and the measures of these two Profiles,
that the difference is hardly considerable” (44). In others, they are more grossly mismatched, as in the subsequent illustration of Serlio and Vignola on the same order, where “the inequality of these two Profiles is so wide, that ’tis almost impossible to approve of them both” (46). Fréart’s comparative illustrations thus do not make much sense if we attempt to imagine them as the structural elements of complete buildings. Nonetheless, these fragments of columns, neatly incised down the center, lined up against each other, measured, labeled, and framed, are arranged according to the aesthetic principles of symmetry, order, decorum, and proportion which they are meant, as a group, to teach. As a whole, then, the Parallèle assembles its sense of classical aesthetics from the wreckage of previous unities and presents the practice of building itself as a form of collective historiography. To design is to remember, as much as to plan, to select, excise, reorder, and reassess, the traces of other architects and other historical moments. The treatise’s aesthetic principles emerge from a species of antiquarian practice, from an understanding of architecture as judiciously constructed from the fragments of the past.

Like many of the collections Evelyn had viewed while abroad, and like those he himself assembled, Fréart’s treatise compiles, or at least illustrates, a diverse set of antique and modern objects: drawings, books, material fragments. In many ways, the treatise recalls Swann’s account of the seventeenth-century catalogue, a printed taxonomy of the items a collection contained. As much as the collection of material objects, the catalogue becomes a means of imagining the collector’s identity through a constellation of objects, histories, and people. Fréart’s treatise likewise commemorates his relationship to influential political figures and documents his own activities and judgments as a collector. These emerge in his epistle to his brothers, where he reports exercising “great diligence to get made, and collect together . . . the most excellent Antiquities, as well in Architecture as Sculpture; the chief pieces whereof were two huge Capitals, the one of a Column, and the other of an angular Pilaster from within the Rotunda,” along with “three-score and ten Bas-reliefs moulded from Trajans Column, and several other of particular Histories” (A 3 v). Evidence of his acquisitions is also shown, in the descriptions that accompany his illustrations. The Doric profile from the Baths of Diocletian, for instance, is said to have been selected from among “a good number of draughts which lye yet by me, all of them design’d in the same hand very neatly”; and later he wrote, “I have made a very curious and rare Collection of a certain Ornament which they call the Fret” (18, 110). The treatise is itself a collection of authors and examples, but it is also presented as a kind of catalogue, a direct product of the kind of collecting with which Evelyn would have been familiar.
The treatise foregrounds Fréart’s own judgment and aesthetic refinement and anticipates those of his ideal reader; it is in the context of his commentary and discriminating assessments, rather than in the context of three dimensional structures, that the split columns of his comparative illustrations make sense. It is Fréart’s arrangement that brings these mismatched halves into some kind of alignment. For instance, of Serlio and Vignola on the Ionic order, he says that, despite their “wide” differences, “there is . . . as little reason to condemn either one
or the other ... having each of them their principles sufficiently regular, together with their Authorities and Examples," which he proceeds to enumerate (46). In these commentaries, Fréart plays the role of the curator or scholar, providing what Susan Pearce has described as “a degree of explication” that is “fundamental to our enhanced understanding” of both collected objects and the narratives we associate with them. To explicate the objects in a collection is to engage in
“a rhetorical act of persuasion,” which helps viewers “to make some kind of sense” of their relationship to the object and to the past and present narratives it implies. For Fréart, the interpretation of a collection was indeed a dynamic process that occurred at the intersection of object, curator, and viewer. His idea of beauty was derived from antique examples, but he believed that it became evident only through the intervention of his explication, which was written to guide the “Masterly Eye” of the ideal observer: “For in these particulars our eyes do see no further than our understanding purges them, nor do their admirable beauties reveal themselves at once, nor to all the World in general; They will be curiously observed and discovered with industry” (91–92). In arranging and curating the authors and antique objects of his collection, then, Fréart projects ideas of both himself as connoisseur and collector and of the ideal reader, who will, through his guidance, be capable of understanding their worth.

To Evelyn the collector, one remarkable thing about Fréart’s treatise would have been that it made architecture collectible. Architecture was not, on the face of it, particularly susceptible to the kind of antiquarianism that focused on the acquisition, importation, and preservation of objects. As we see in the Britannia and A Survey of London, one of the most reliable qualities of architecture is its tendency to disappear over time. In 1697, Evelyn would implicitly address this problem for collectors in Numismata, claiming that one benefit of collecting coins and medals is that “[t]hey present us with the most magnificent and stately Buildings that ever stood upon the Face of the Earth” and “afford us the Prospect of . . . Triumphal Arches, Obelisks, Pyramids, Colossus’s, and other Royal and Magnificent Fabrics of venerable Antiquity, long since collapsed and buried in their own Ruines; but from out of which, by Reverses and Medals, have almost all the antient Orders and Ornaments of Architecture (well near lost or corrupted) been much revived, restored, and vindicated from Gothick Barbarity.” Here, Evelyn makes architecture available to the virtuoso by transposing it from buildings, which were never intended to circulate, to coins and medals, which were designed to do precisely that. Fréart’s treatise accomplishes the same: it makes architecture circulate. Through the representation and visual realignment of fragments and pieces, Fréart displaces and acquires what had seemed to be rooted in foreign or ancient soil. Of course, books are not buildings, and they did not literally make architecture circulate any more than coins or medals did. Yet, visually and rhetorically, the treatise suggests that buildings, as much as coins or more portable curious objects, might offer themselves to the virtuoso, who could construct with them a new orderliness from the disordered pieces of the past. In a collection, as Susan Stewart has written, “objects are natural-
ized into the landscape of the collection itself.” Architecture thus becomes an importable curiosity, transplanted from the soil into which it was physically anchored to the landscape of a new country and the alien prospect of foreign and modern eyes.

The *Parallel* thus allowed Evelyn and Fréart to enact a kind of self-presentation, as architecture revealed the designing and discriminating hand of the collector as much as that of the architect. But, as we have seen, in the *Parallel*, architecture also inscribed a history of politics and patronage which extended beyond the circumscribed “landscape” of the collection itself. I argue that the historiography of the virtuoso’s collection presented particular opportunities for a post-Restoration English writer. Maintaining the notion that architecture was legible as history, the collection was nonetheless a form of history that was enabled, rather than threatened, by fragmentation and disintegration, brokenness and migration. Significantly, Stewart’s description of the collection as an assemblage of objects in a new “landscape” resembles Jonathan Scott’s account of Restoration political ideologies: “Since the causes of the troubles, and the substance of the revolution lay . . . in ideas, it is not surprising that this reconstruction of the institutional fabric of the old order did not end them. Instead, it created a new context for them.” As Stewart notes, the objects in a collection maintain something of their own histories, while allowing for a newly calculated representation of the past: “The collection does not displace attention to the past; rather, the past is at the service of the collection.” A similar statement might be made of the monarchy; as Steven Zwicker writes, “the politics of the restored monarchy was harbinger of the new and remnant of the old.” Like the virtuoso’s collection, or Renaissance architecture itself, the Restoration was not exactly a reconstruction of the past, but it depended on the selective redeployment of the remnants thereof. And it was precisely the incompleteness of those remnants, their elegiac gestures toward what no longer existed, which required the hand of a new collector, a new connoisseur to place them in a new context and, through this process of acquisition and discretion, to use them to make sense of history. Lamenting the death of de Noyers, Fréart presents his treatise as an artifact damaged by the disruptions of both politics and mortality. His original and whole idea of the work does not survive, he says, “since I have been forc’d to alter, and even retrench divers particularities which were then very essential to my designe, but would now have been altogether useless and unseasonable” (A 4 v). In its insufficiency, though, the treatise offers itself up to reappropriation and requires the meaning that will be conferred by a new collector and a new context: “Receive then (my dear Brothers) this Fragment of a Book,
so much at least as remains of it,” in order to see “if there occur any thing which may prove yet considerable in such clear and discerning eyes as yours are, and that my designs seem worthy of any place amongst your other curiosities” (A 4 v). What had seemed irrelevant, lost, untimely, and “altogether useless and unseasonable” is made “worthy” by the discernment of a potential collector. It was this call, perhaps, that Evelyn himself took up when the Parallèle came to the notice of his “discerning eyes”; and he himself collected it, translating, transporting, and repackaging his acquisition for the benefit of a new patron in the person of a new king.

Despite the fact that the Parallel is mainly a translation, Evelyn’s reframing of Fréart’s elegy to antiquity does achieve an important shift from the original; Evelyn, much more than Fréart, looks forward as well as back. From this curatorial strand of historiography, Evelyn crafted his own brand of forward-looking antiquarianism, one that imagined both present and future through strategic recollection of the past. Notably, multiple critics have discerned a similar strategy in Evelyn’s 1666 plans for the rebuilding of London. Cynthia Wall, for instance, writes that “all of Evelyn’s plans . . . reveal a symbolic (and for that matter literal) underground sense of recovery and preservation . . . which in its own way testifies to Evelyn’s ambivalence about the powerful potential of the new space and the implications for shaping it.”

Sydney Perks likewise notes that “Evelyn worked to improve the City for traffic and at the same time to preserve the ancient sites and all that was of interest to an antiquarian.”

Evelyn, however, had chosen a treatise in which architecture, like the monarchy, was only imperfectly severed from its past. For both Evelyn and Fréart, a return to those origins was impossible; for Evelyn, it was not desirable either. Nevertheless, the reordering and rearticulation of the present—the “new series” and the “new context”—were paradoxically enabled by loss. In dedicating the 1707 “Account” to Wren, Evelyn would describe St. Paul’s Cathedral as the recuperation of a fragmented architectural and political history and would remember its “Dilapidations” even before the “Dreadful Conflagration” of 1666, “after it had been made a Stable of Horses, and a Den of Thieves.” For Evelyn, though, Wren’s works would achieve their greatest glory not at the moment they were completed—which in 1707 was still to come—but at the moment they might be remembered, appearing as shining remnants in some once-again-darkened world: “if the whole Art of Building were lost,” Evelyn wrote, “it might be Recover’d and found again in St. Paul’s, the Historical Pillar,
and those other Monuments of Your Happy Talent and extraordinary Genius.” As John Leland had done more than a century before and as Anne Clifford did, Evelyn imagined a path for the future observer of both architecture and history. By Evelyn’s time, however, the “vestigia,” or footsteps, had changed. Lifted from the ruins of a post-Reformation landscape and imprinted on the artifacts of a foreign antiquity, they nonetheless laid out a map for a new virtuoso, who, recollecting the fragments of a dilapidated history, would follow in the footsteps of Evelyn’s own most flourishing age.