

ORNAMENT IN ARCHITECTURE

A Brief Introduction

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Classical Architecture Workshop

UNDERSTANDING ORNAMENT

What: Definition

Why: Purpose

When: Categories

Where: Placement

How: Application

“Do not neglect small things, for that is where perfection is found; and perfection is no small thing.”

- Michelangelo



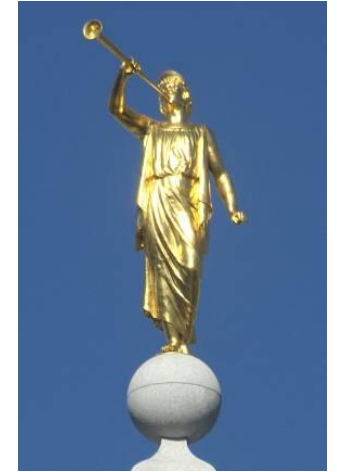
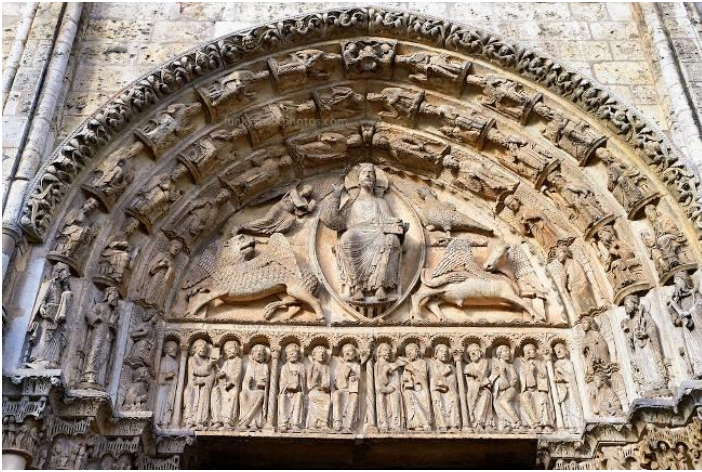
ōrnāre

1. to confer honor or grace
2. to dress
3. to equip
4. to decorate, furnish,
adorn, garnish, trim,
embellish
5. to beautify



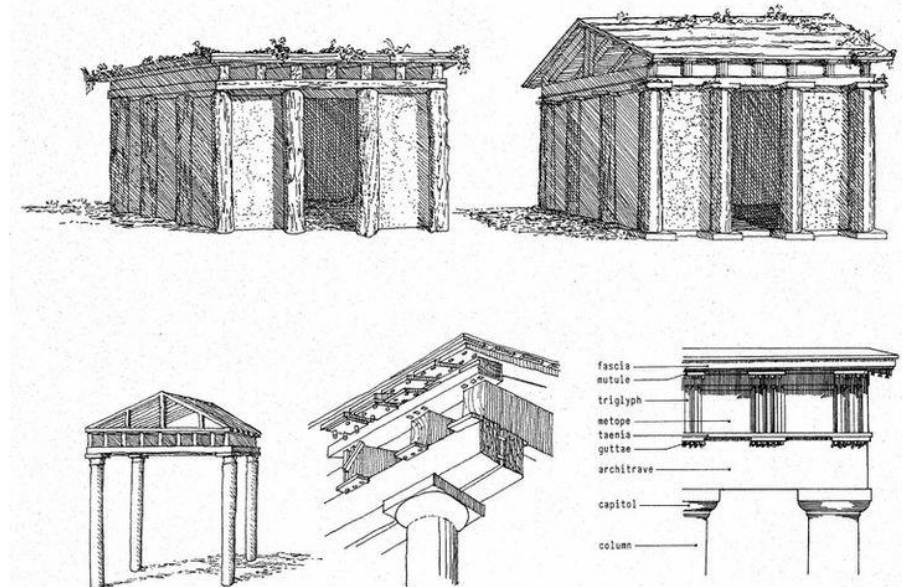
ORNAMENT

“is an enrichment of a building in order to reveal a building’s use or purpose.”



DECORATION “is an enrichment of architecture that adds beauty by making the structural systems at work more legible...it is a *poetic* expression of structure”

[Denis R. McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2009), 91, 101, 107]

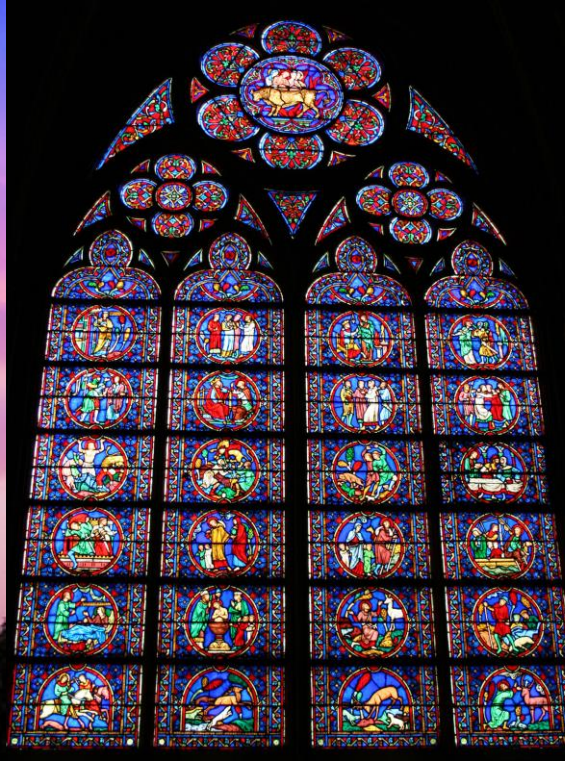
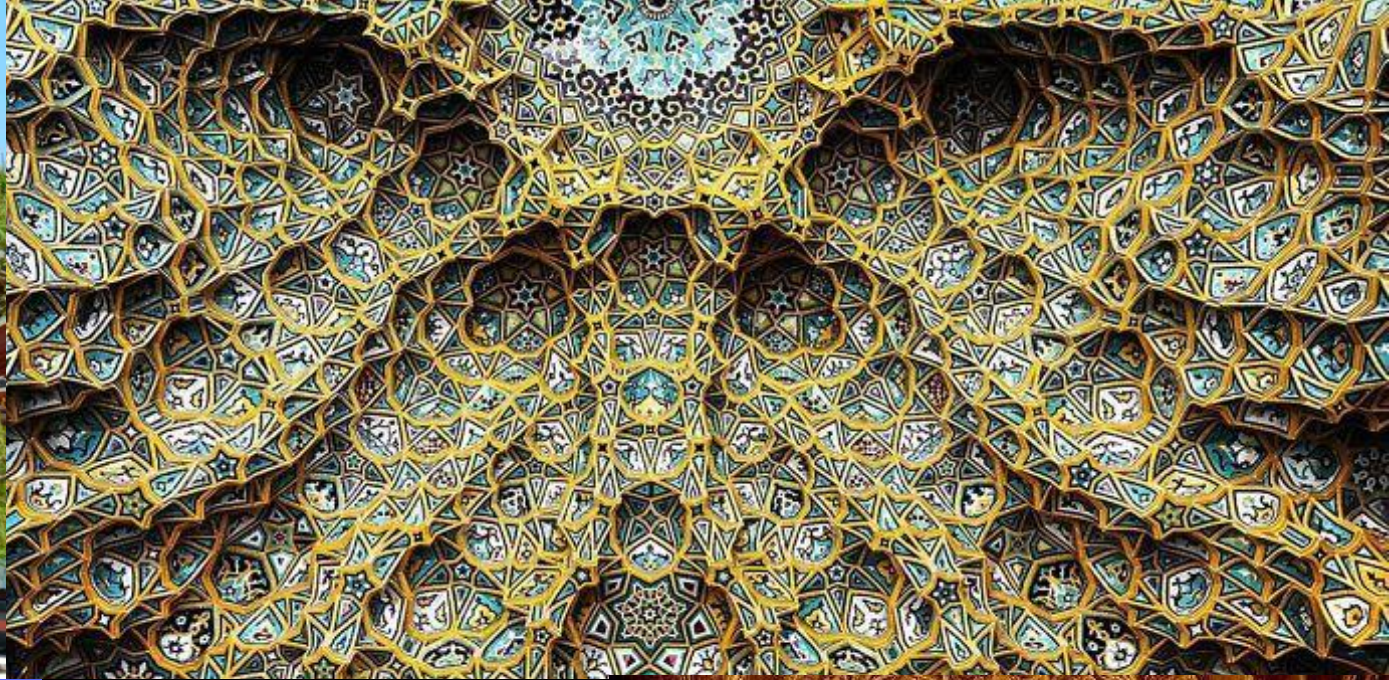


WHY ORNAMENT?

“It is generally allowed, that the pleasure and delight which we feel on the view of any building, arise from nothing else but **beauty and ornament...**

- Leon Battista Alberti, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, bk VI, ch II, p.112-113





CLASSIFICATION OF ORNAMENT



SYMBOLIC
(ALLEGORICAL)

MNOMONIC
(MEMORY DEVICE/
PATTERN)

AESTHETIC
(DÉCOR)



“...the language of ornament, like the languages of speech and music, **must be nourished by active procedures of renewal and education.** There is simply not enough time within each successive generation of designers and artisans to reinvent the complex grammar and visual eloquence that are manifest in the most outstanding projects from the past.”

- Kent C. Bloomer, *The Nature of Ornament: Rhythm and Metamorphosis in Architecture*, p.205

CATEGORIES OF ORNAMENT

HUMAN

ANIMAL

BOTANICAL

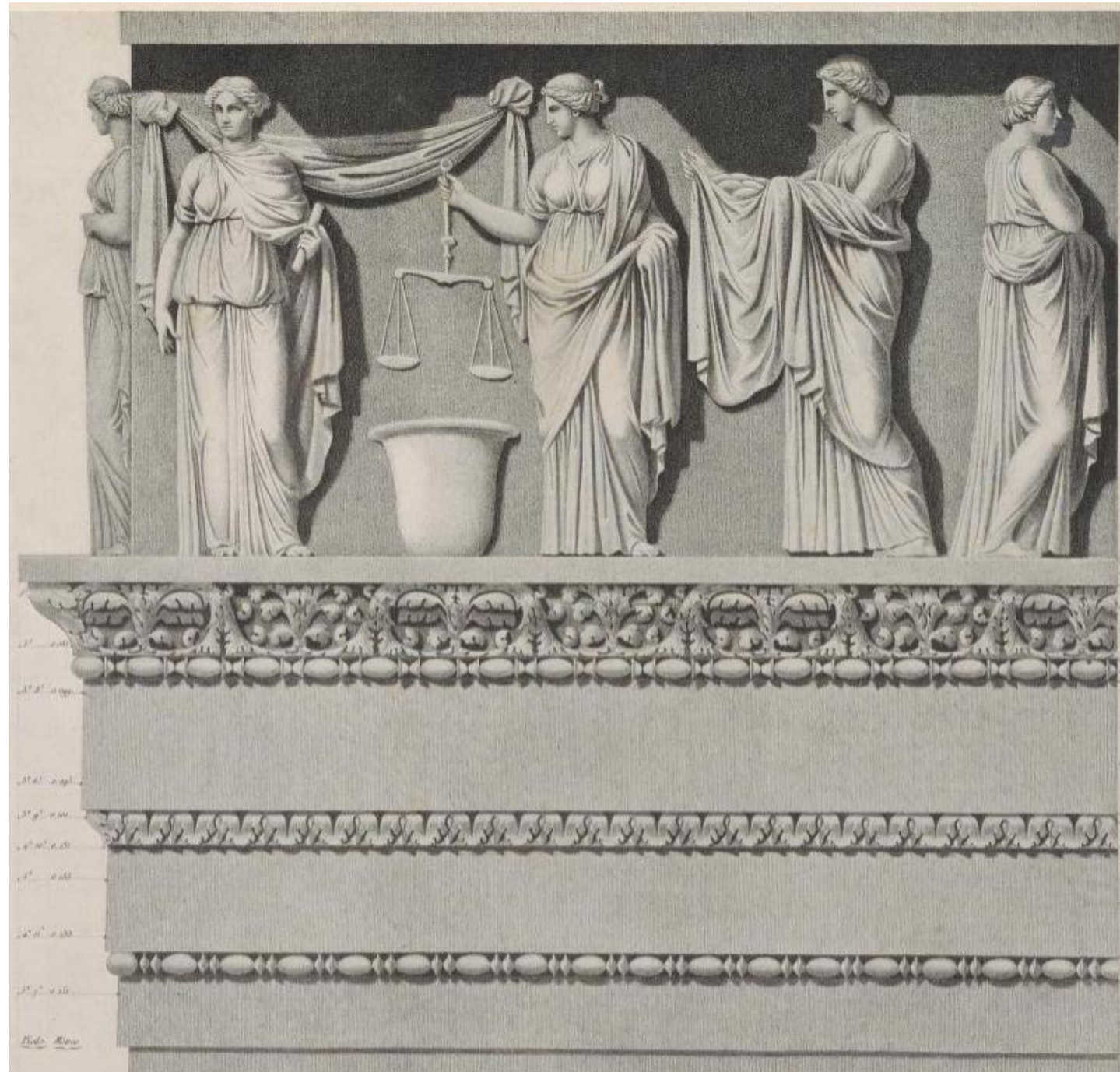
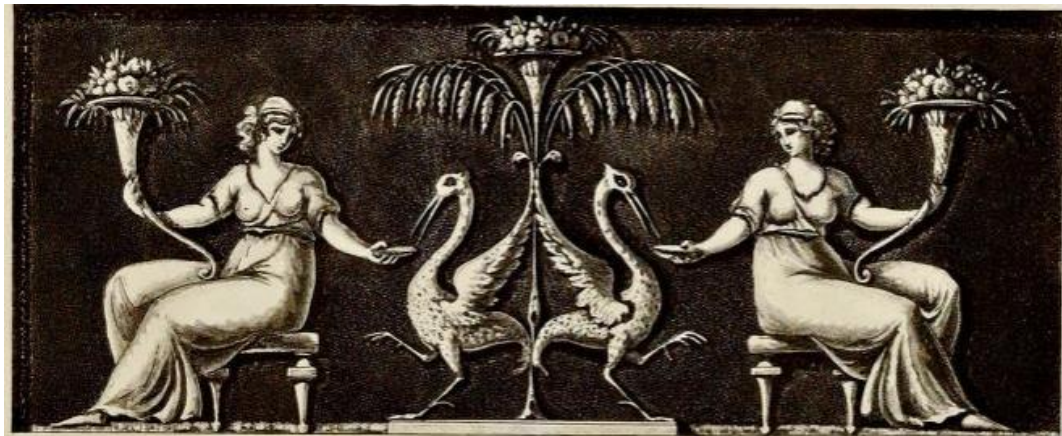
MANMADE

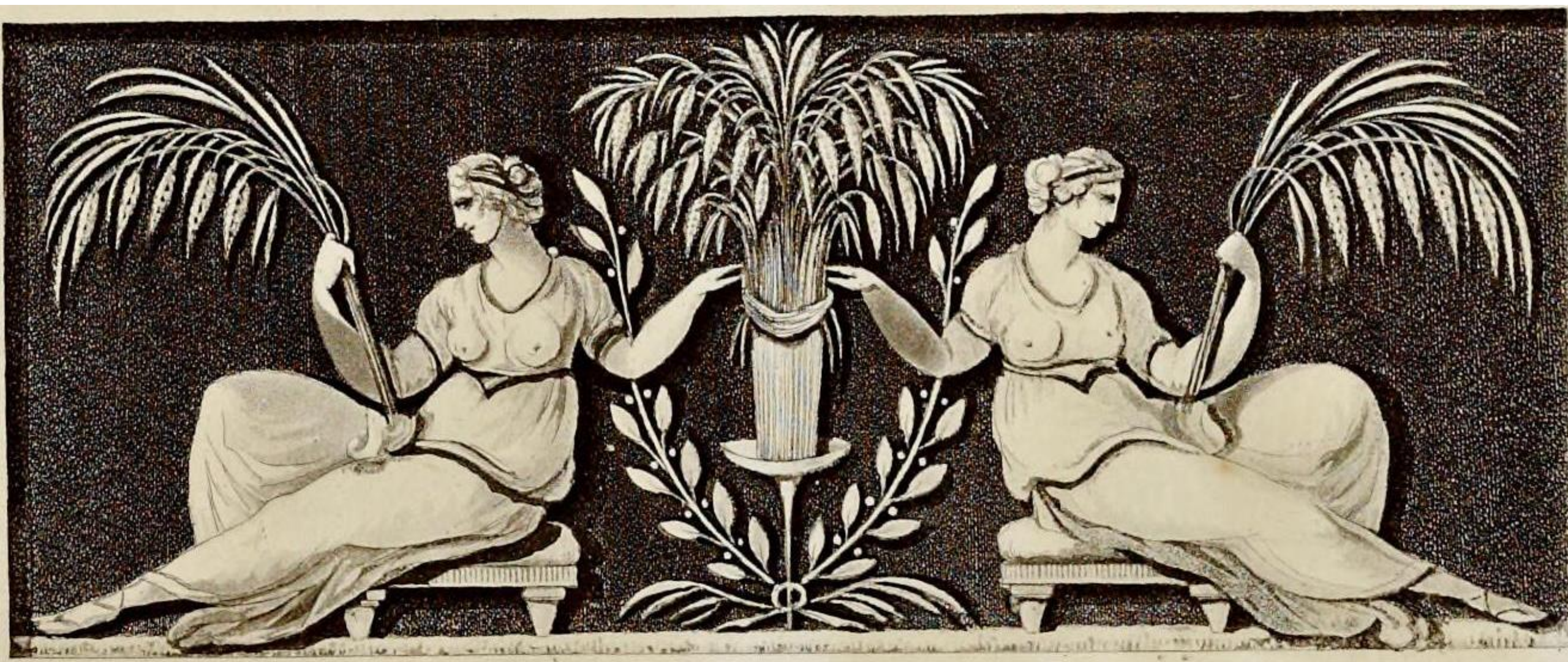
GEOMETRIC

TYPOGRAPHY

HYBRID (+2)

HUMAN

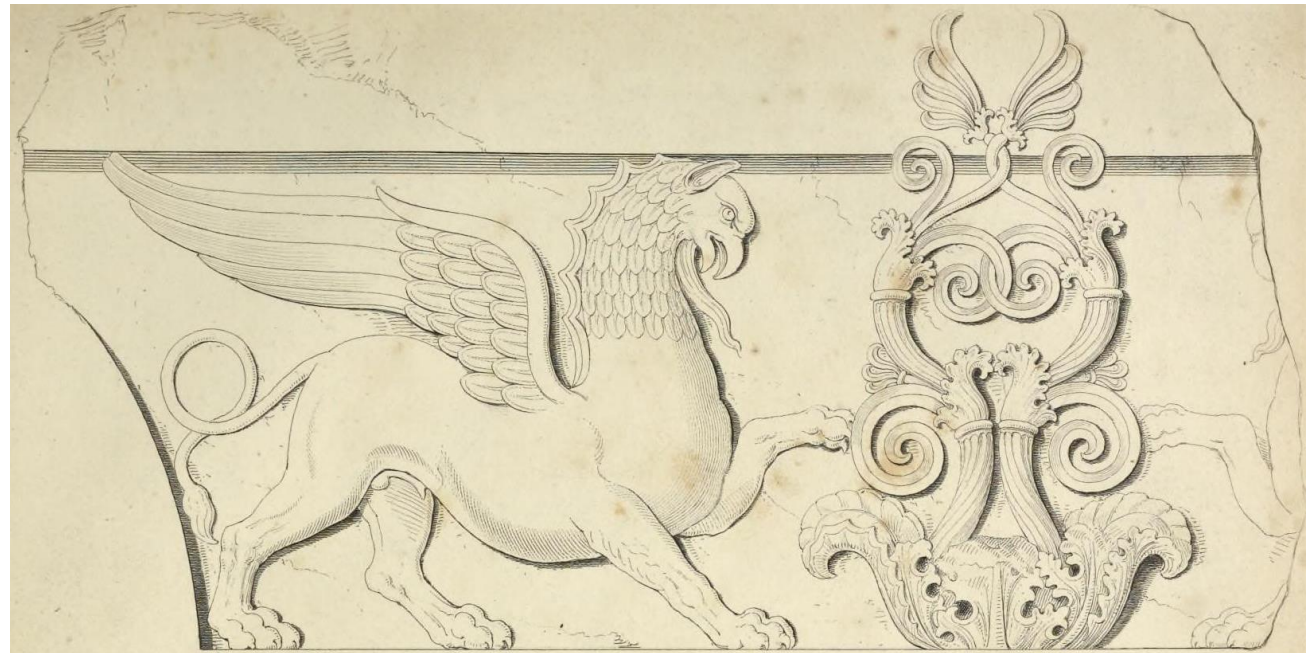
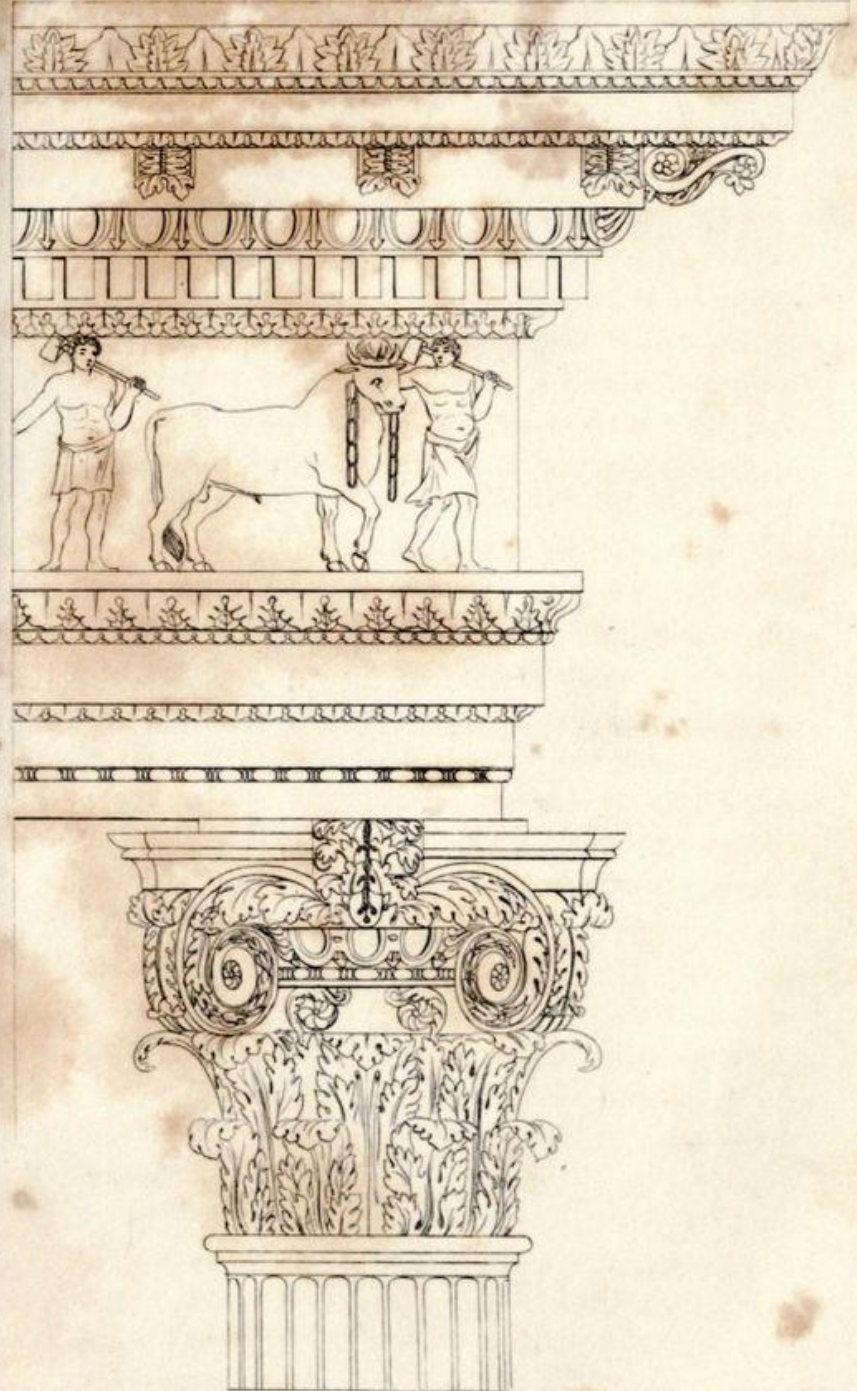


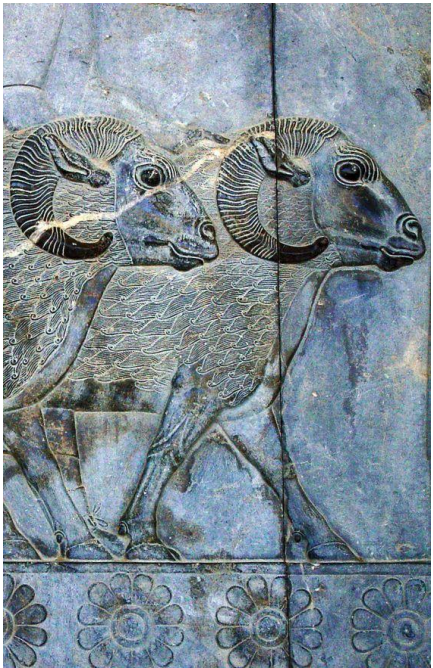


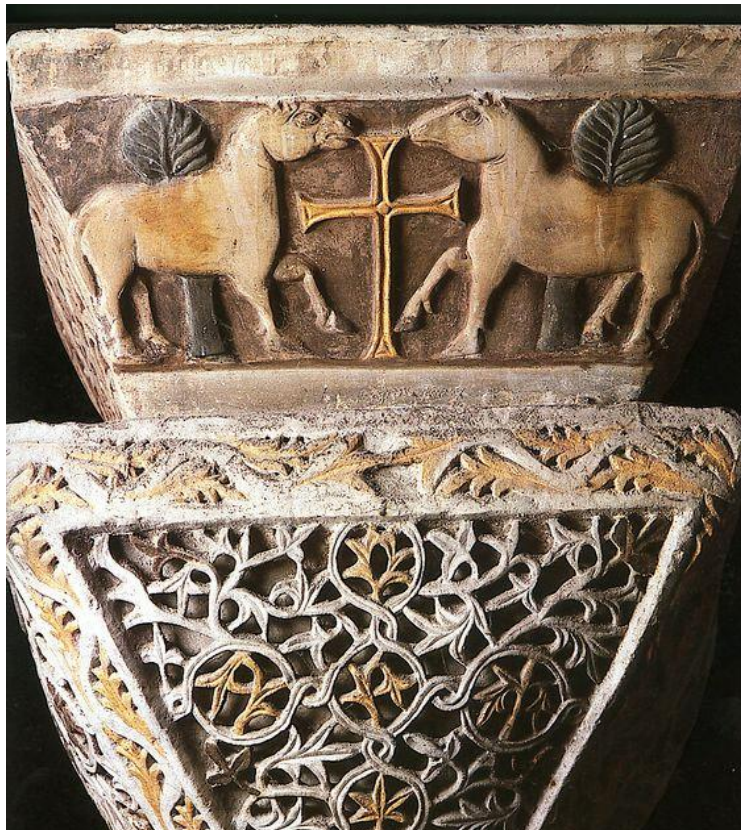
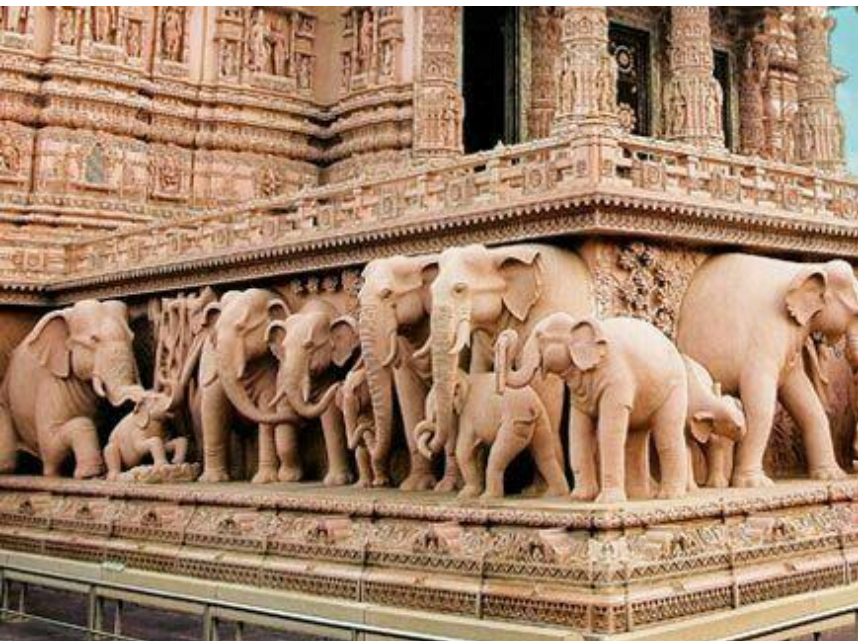
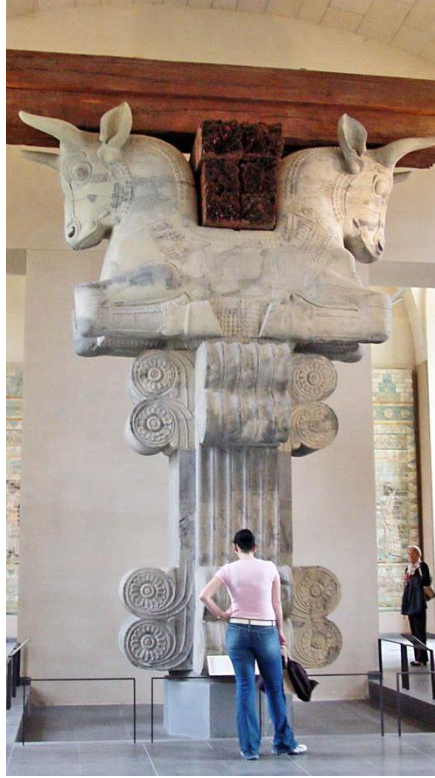




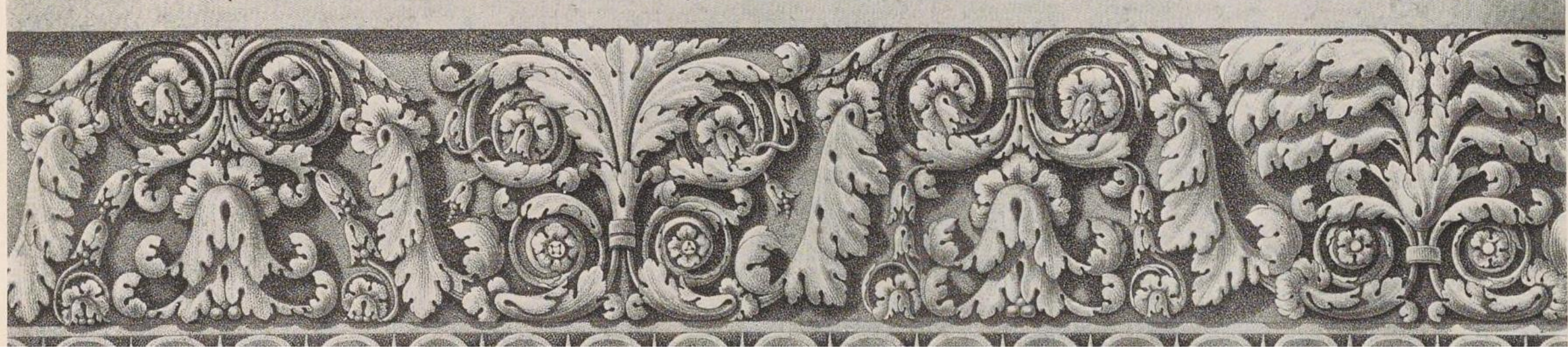
ANIMAL

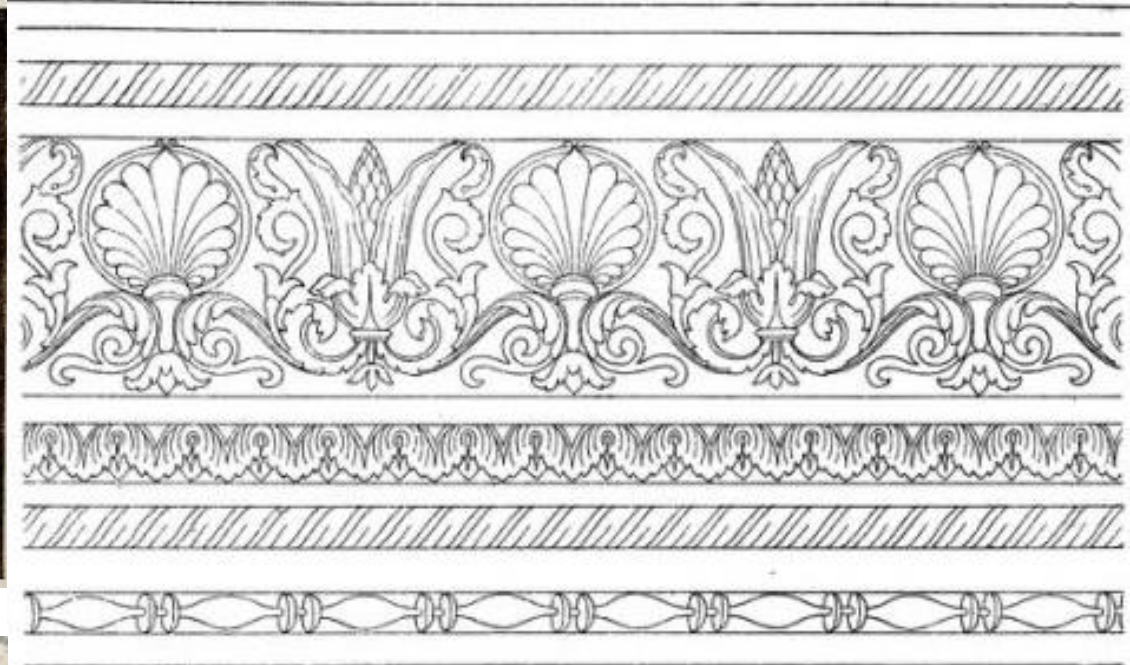
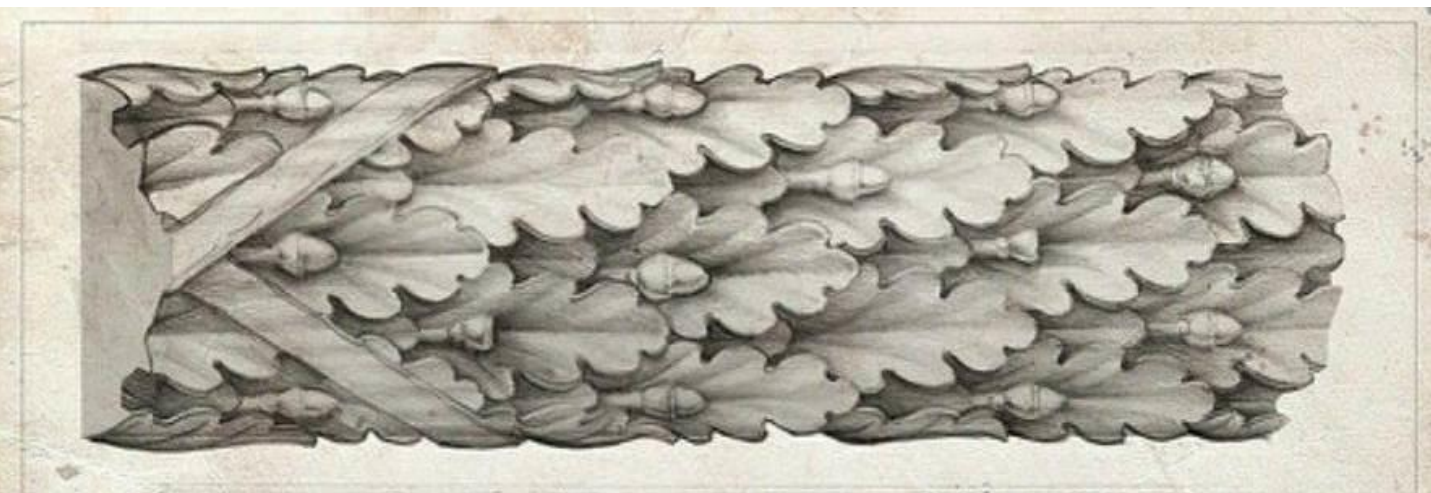
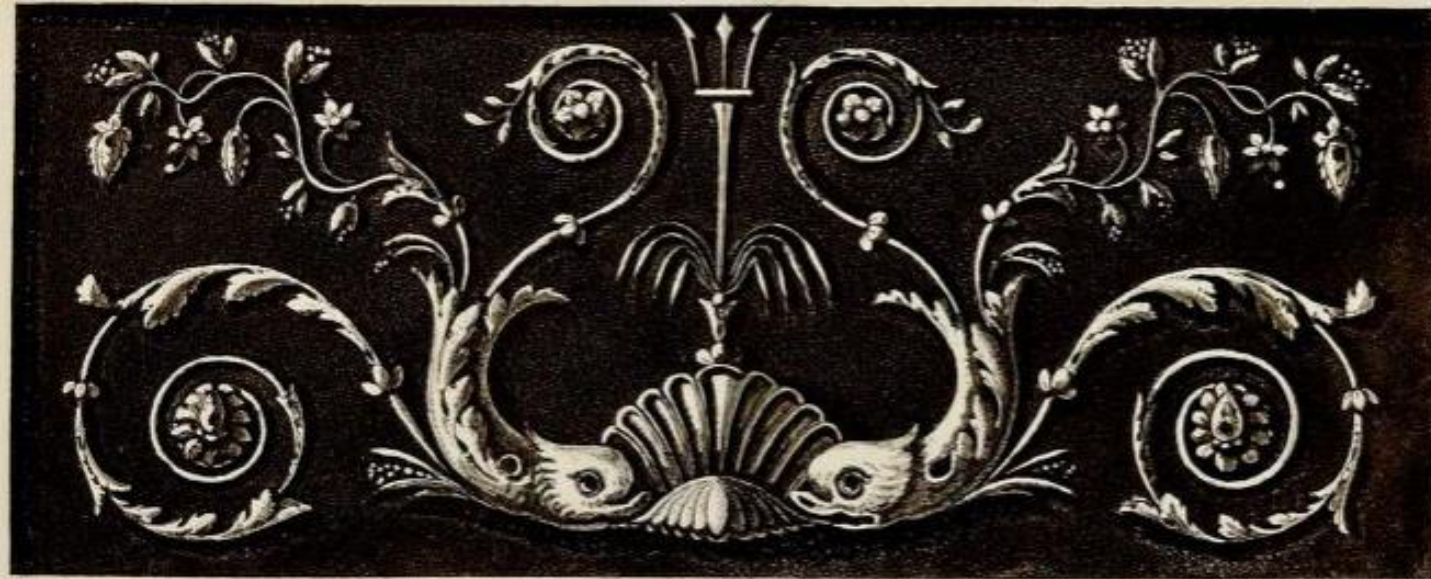




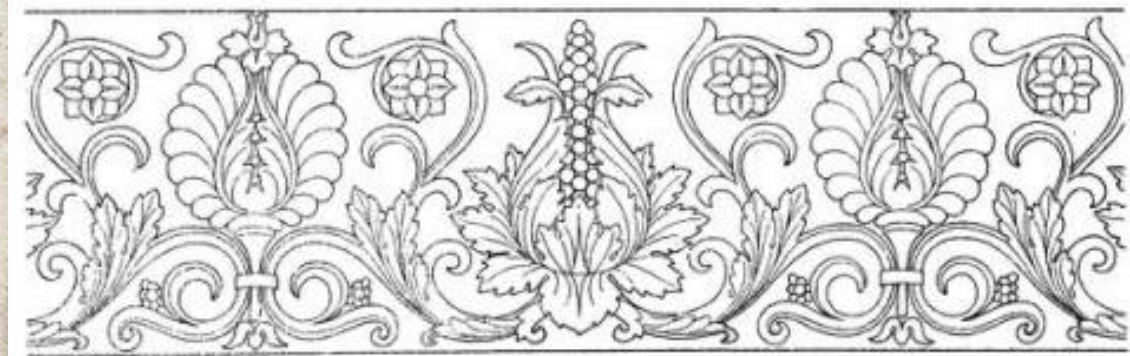


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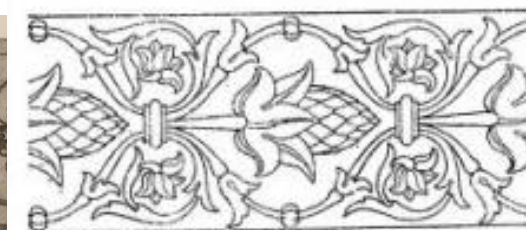




A



B



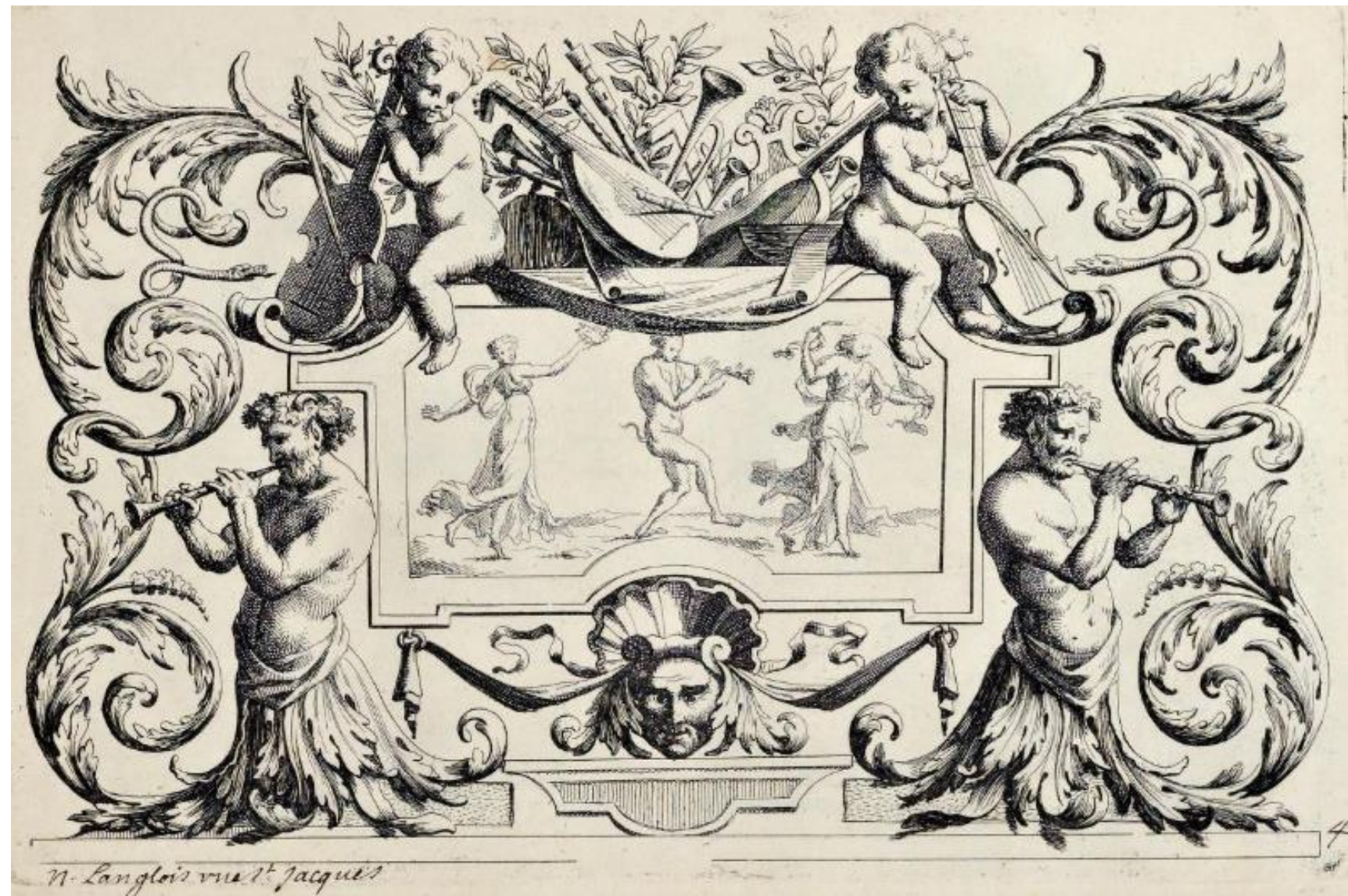
C



D

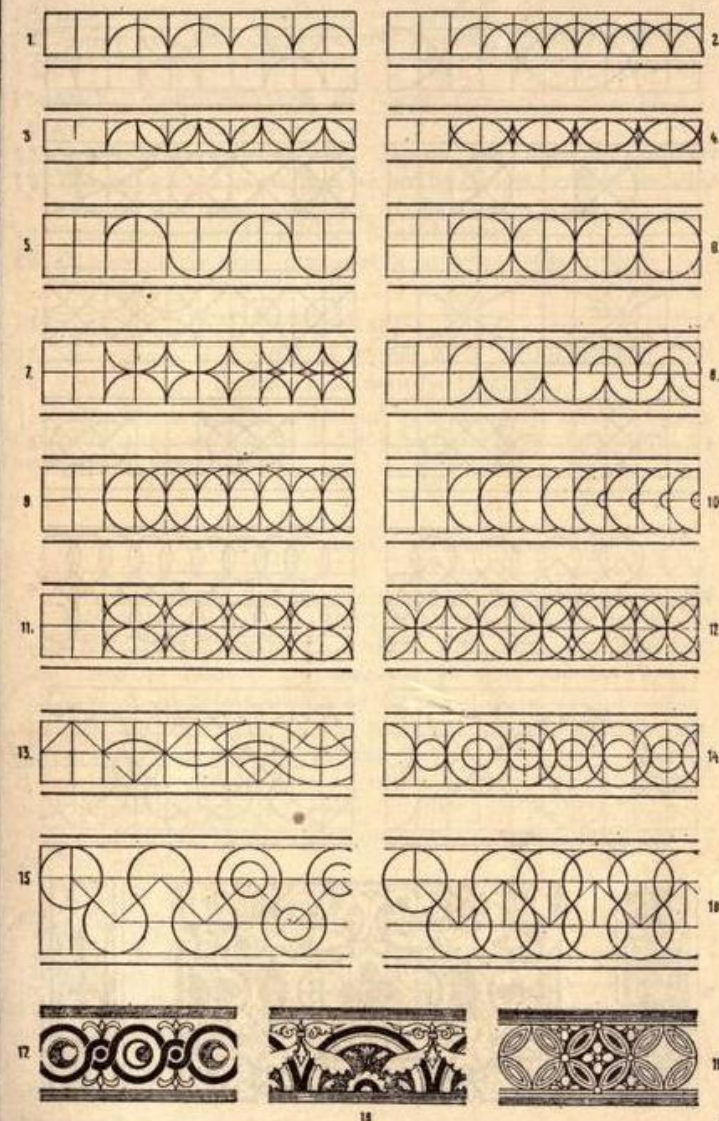


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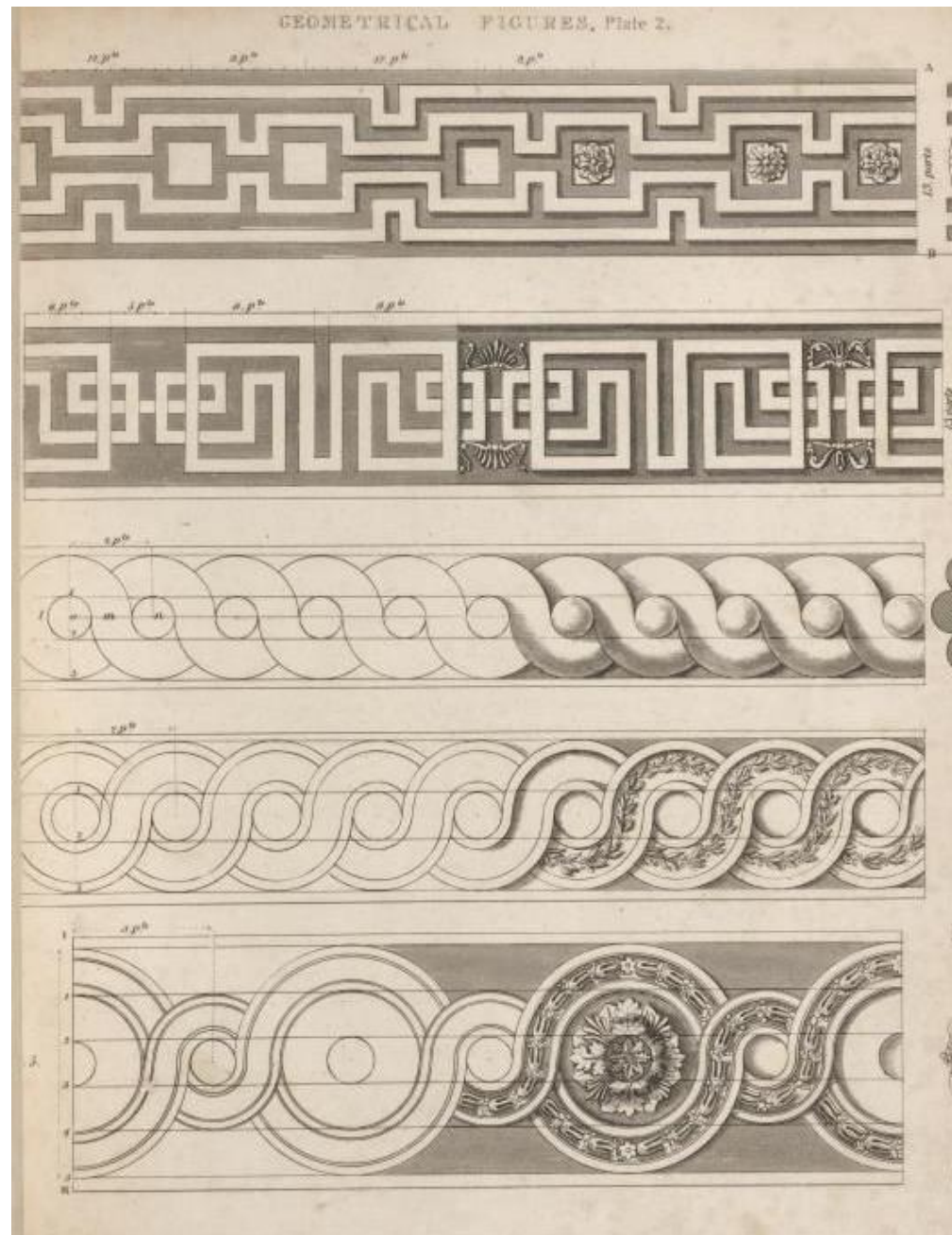
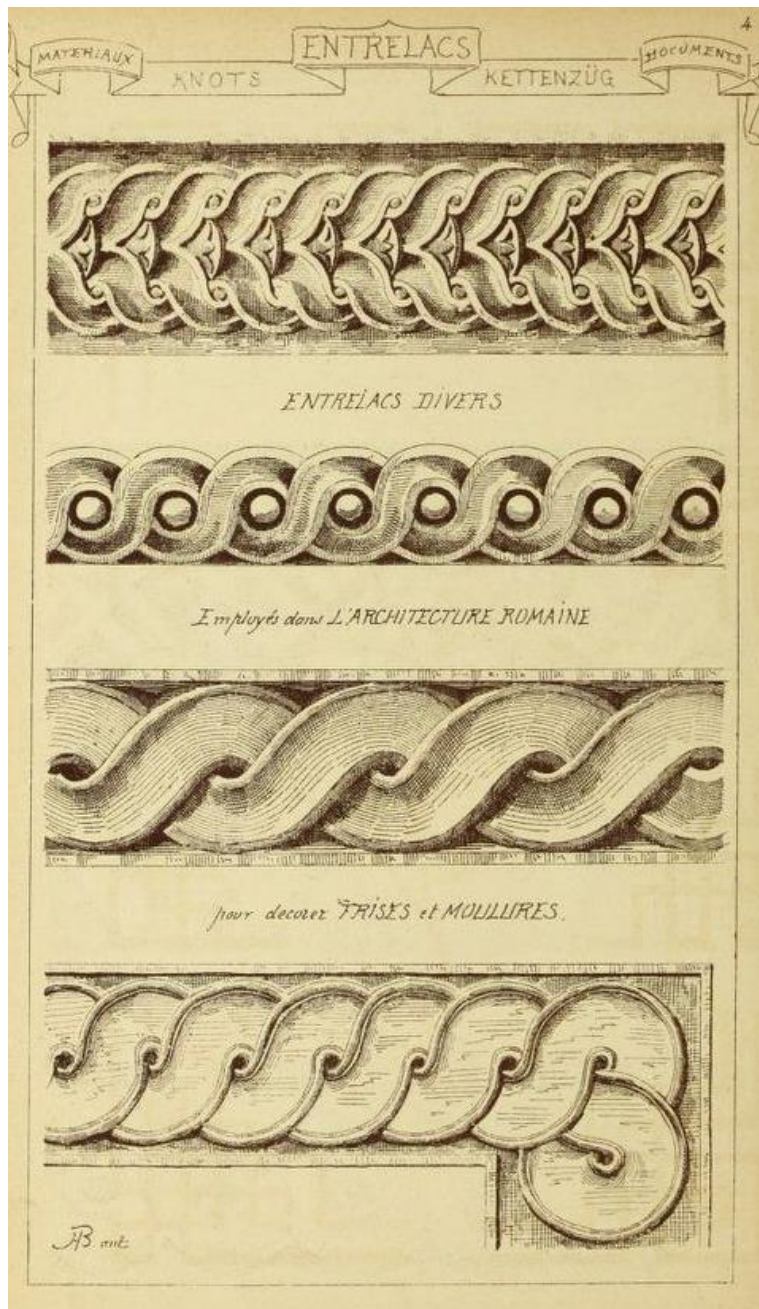


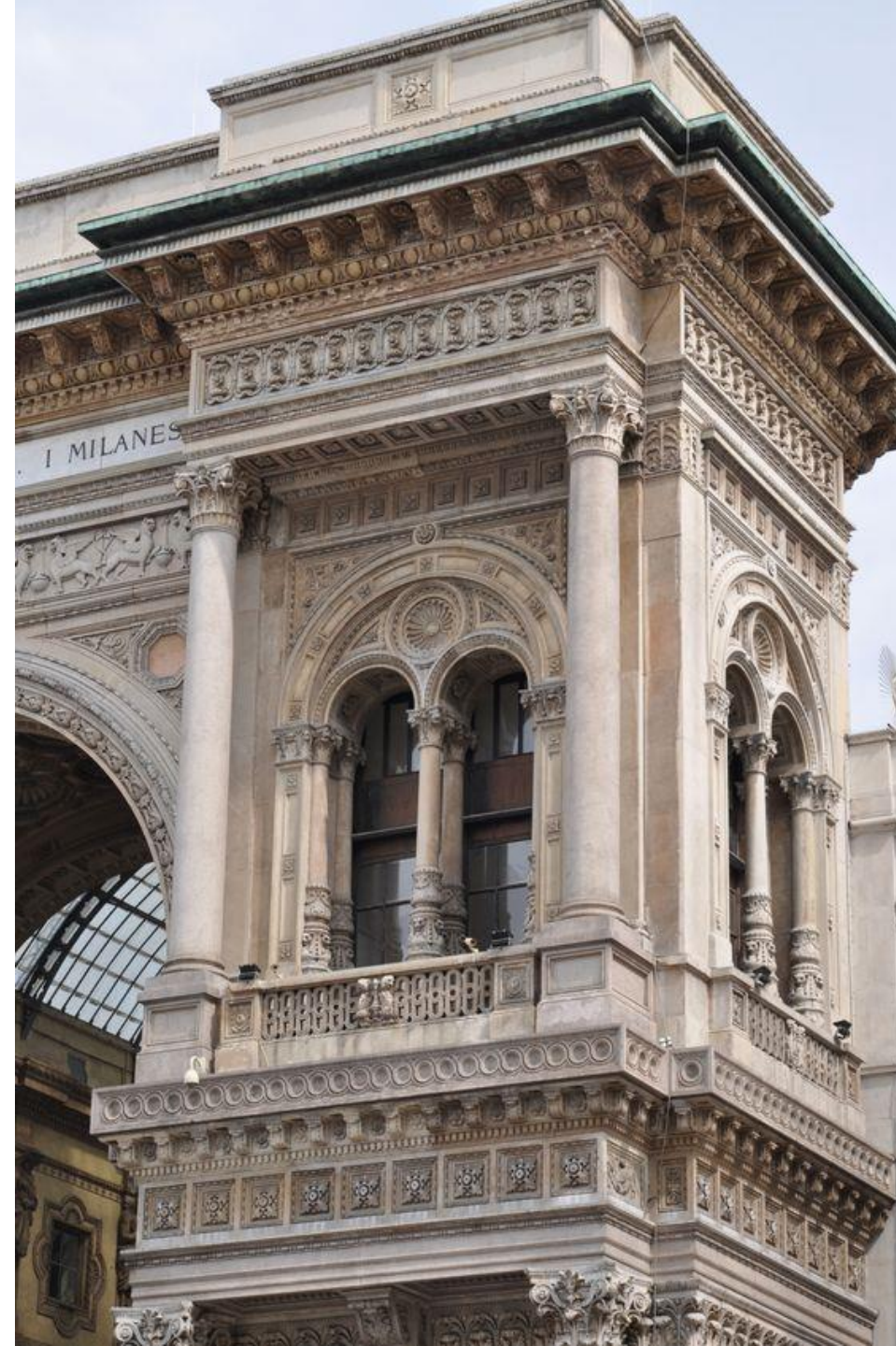


GEOMETRIC



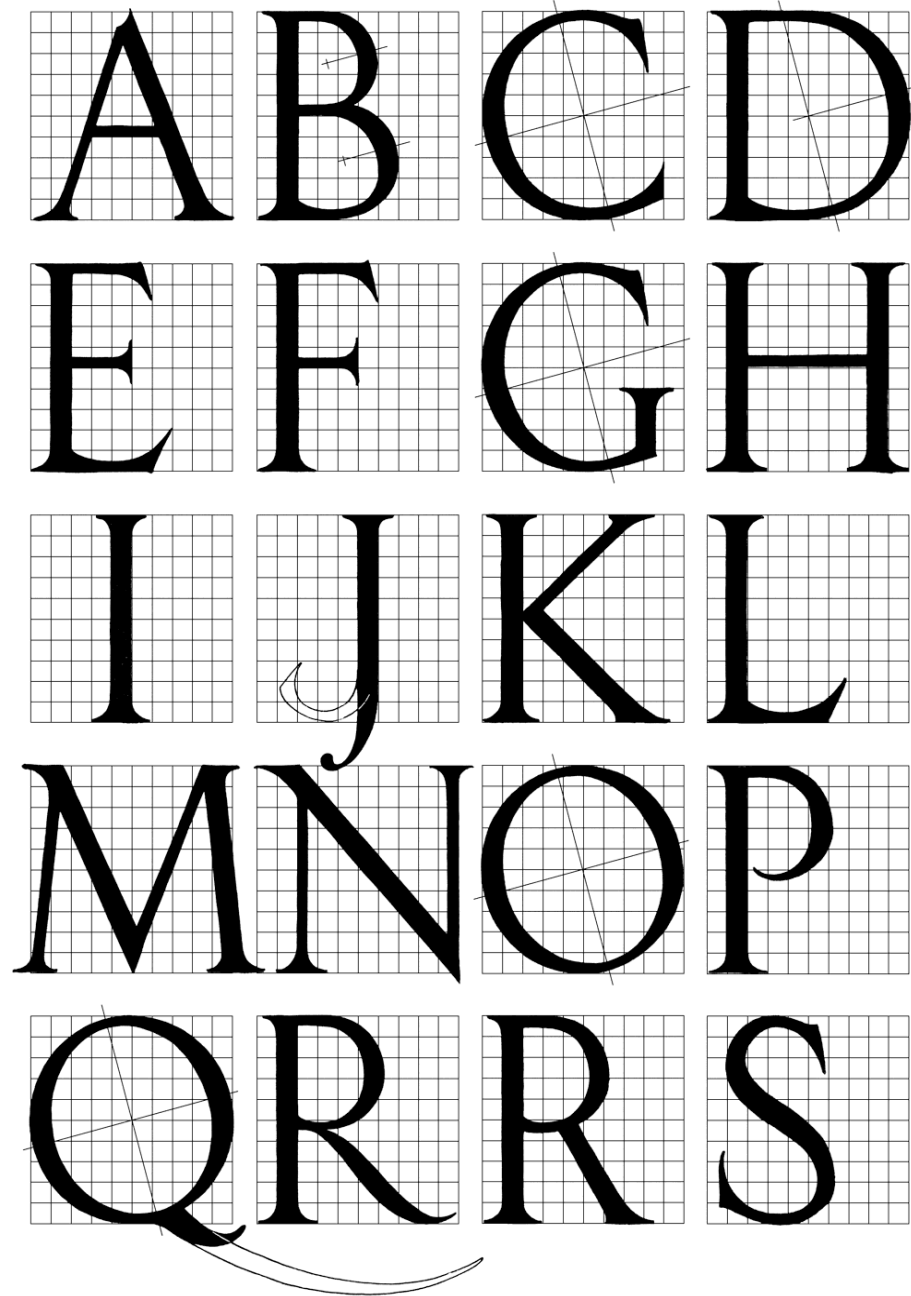
Band Motives.







TYPOGRAPHY



A B C D E F G H I J
 K L M N O P Q R S
 T U V W X Y Z & ;
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0
 a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s
 t u v w x y z
 a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

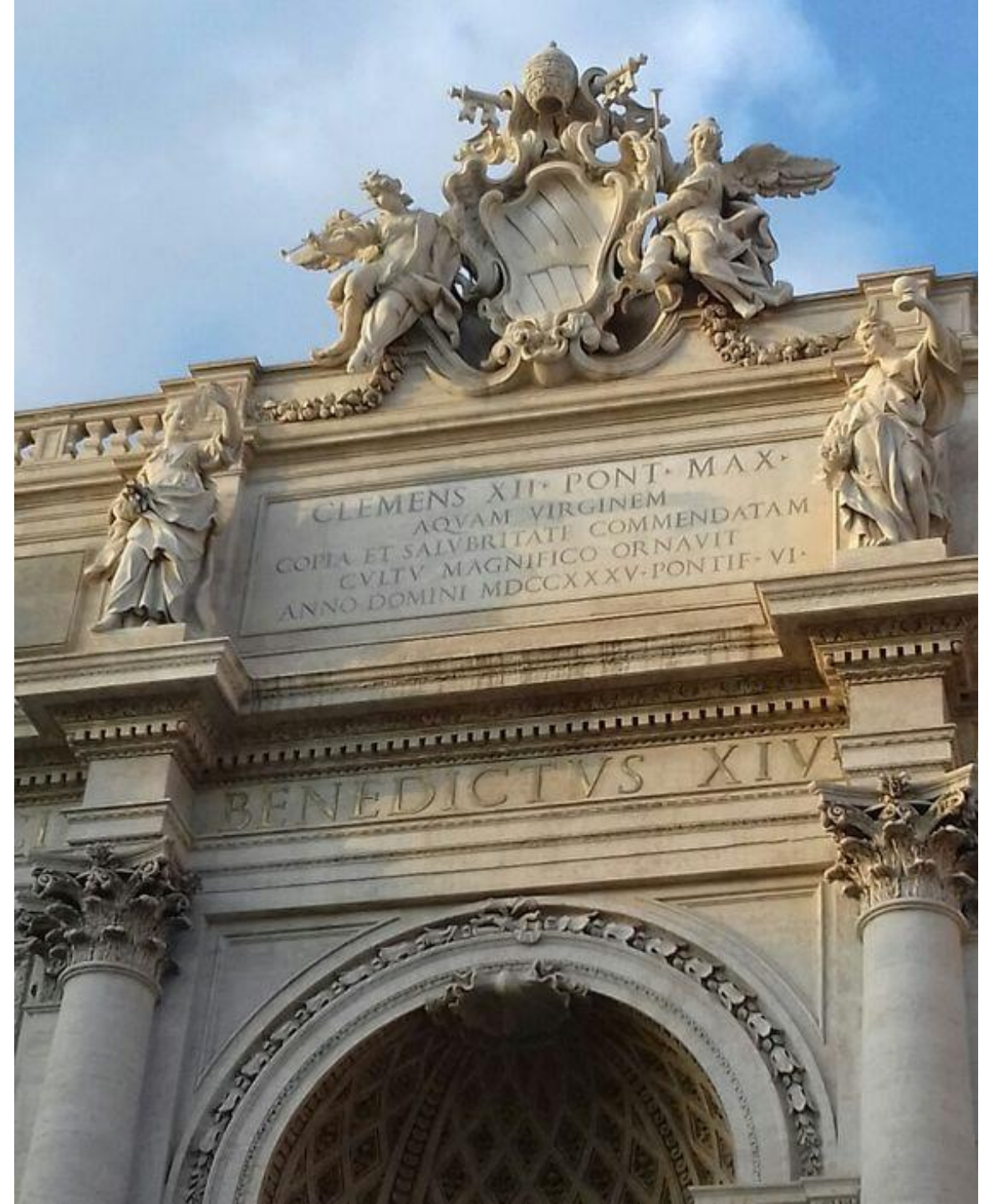
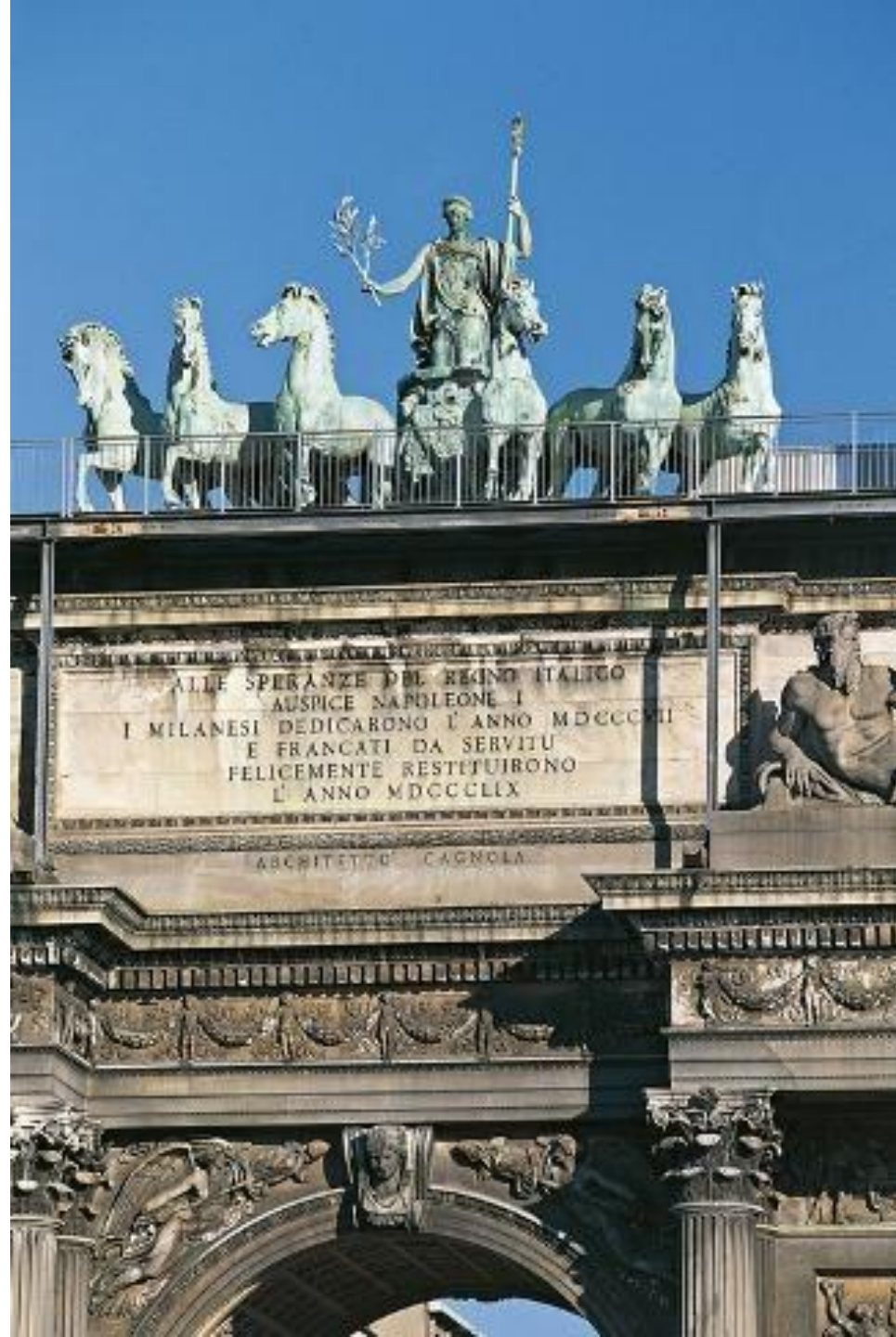






CHILDREN
OF THE TOWN
OF NORWALK
HAVE GIVEN
THIS TABLET
IN LOVING
MEMORY OF
HIM WHOSE
LAST WORDS
WERE ONLY
REGRET
THAT HE HAD
BUT ONE LIFE
TO LOSE FOR
MY COUNTRY

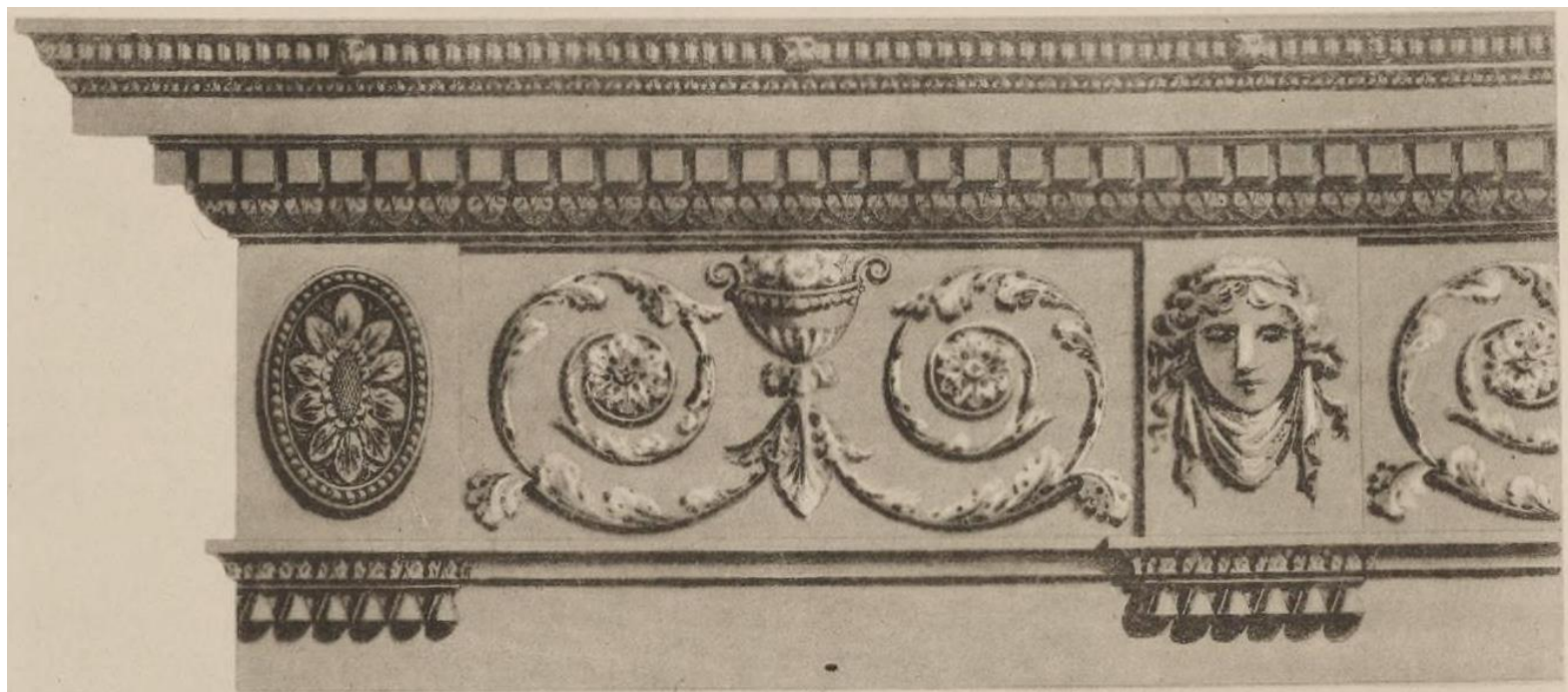
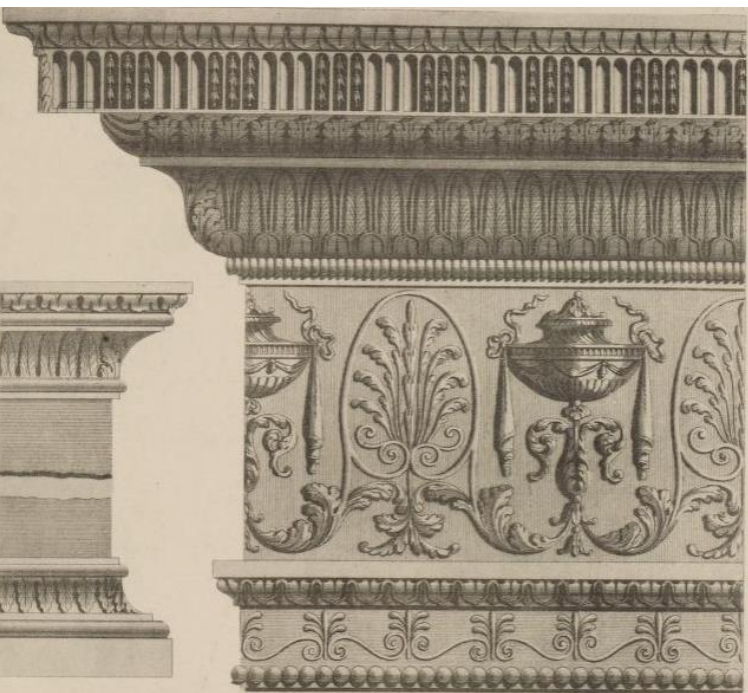
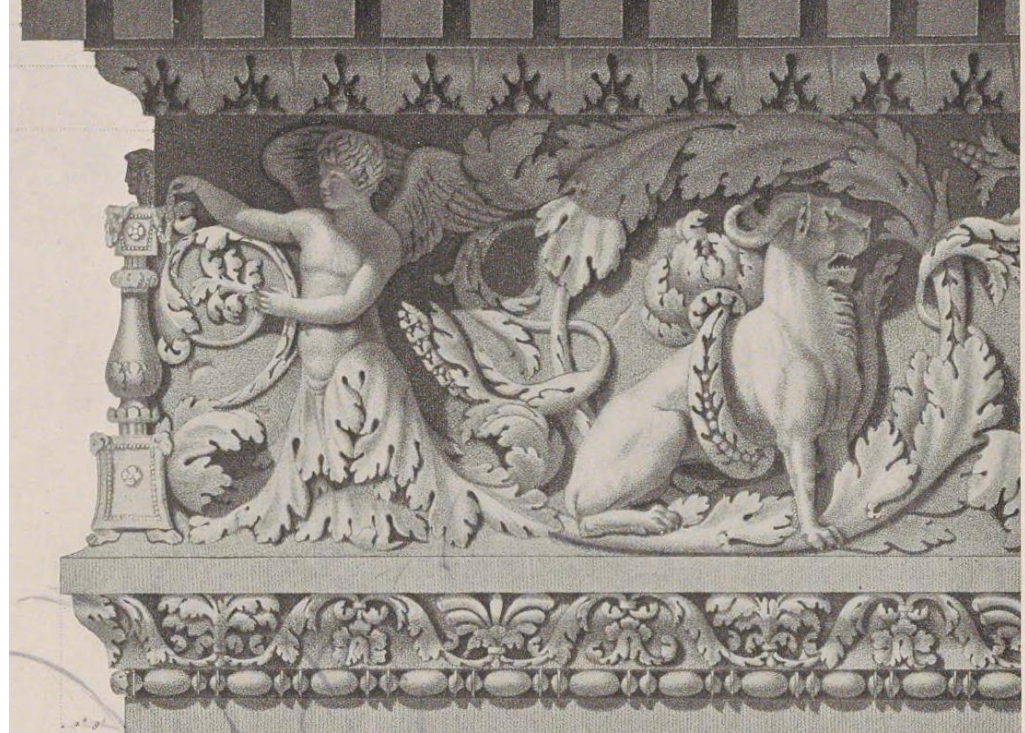


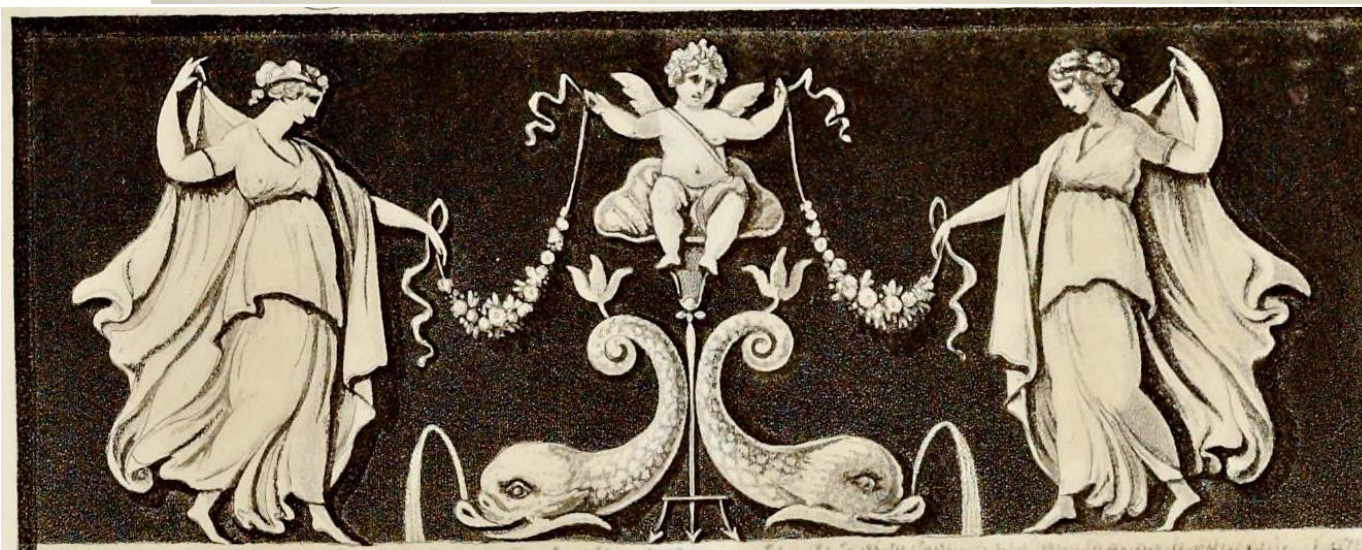



HYBRID (+2)











“A building without ornament, is
like the heavens without stars.”

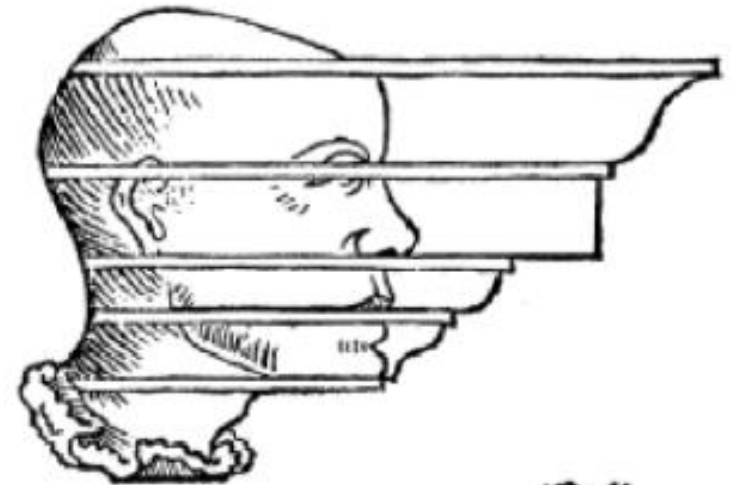
- George Santayana

PLACING ORNAMENT

ANTHROPOMORPHIC NATURE OF MOLDINGS

“Having measured very many other cornices I have found plenty which do have the proportion of a head.”

- Francesco di Giorgio Martini



Classical Molding Elements

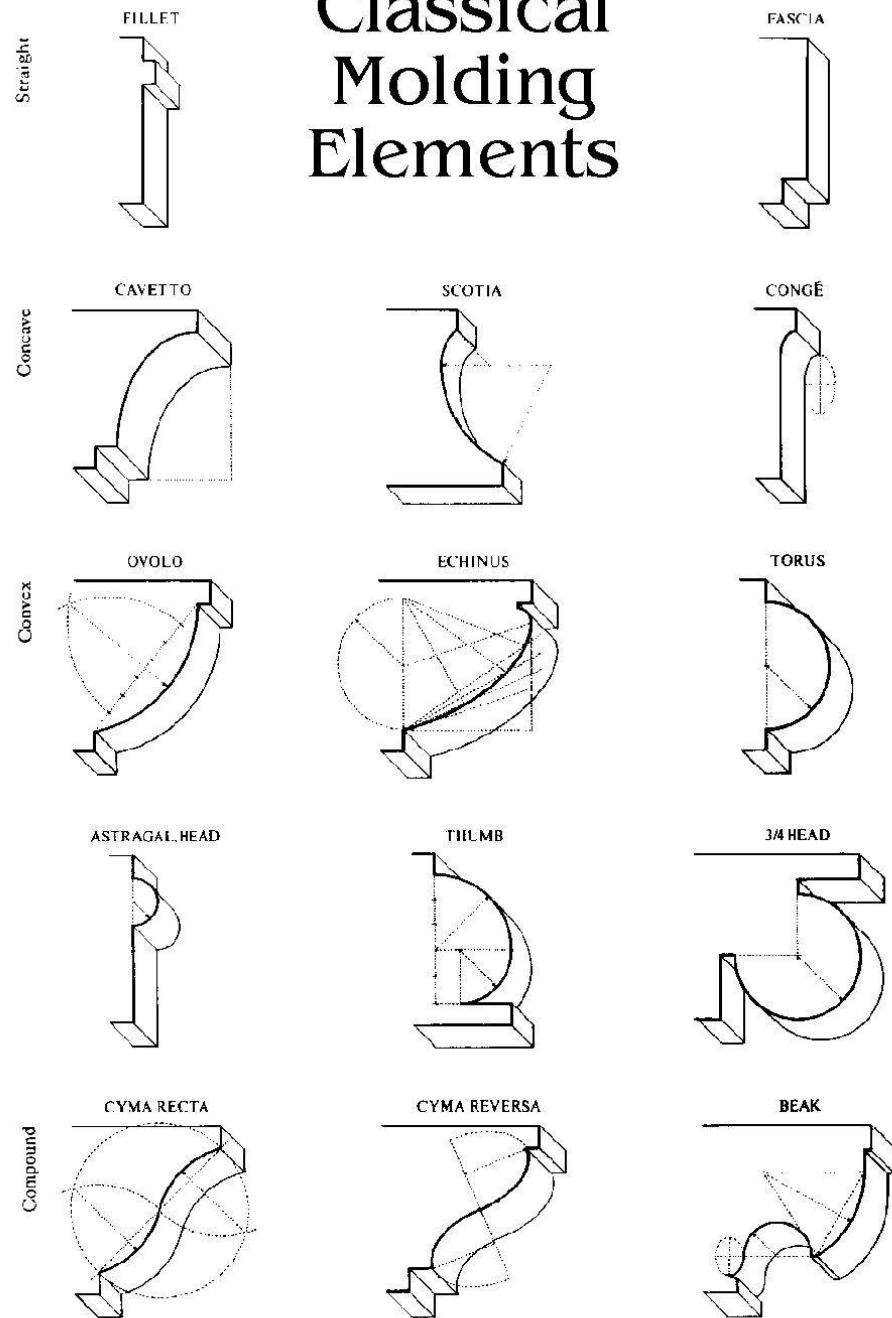
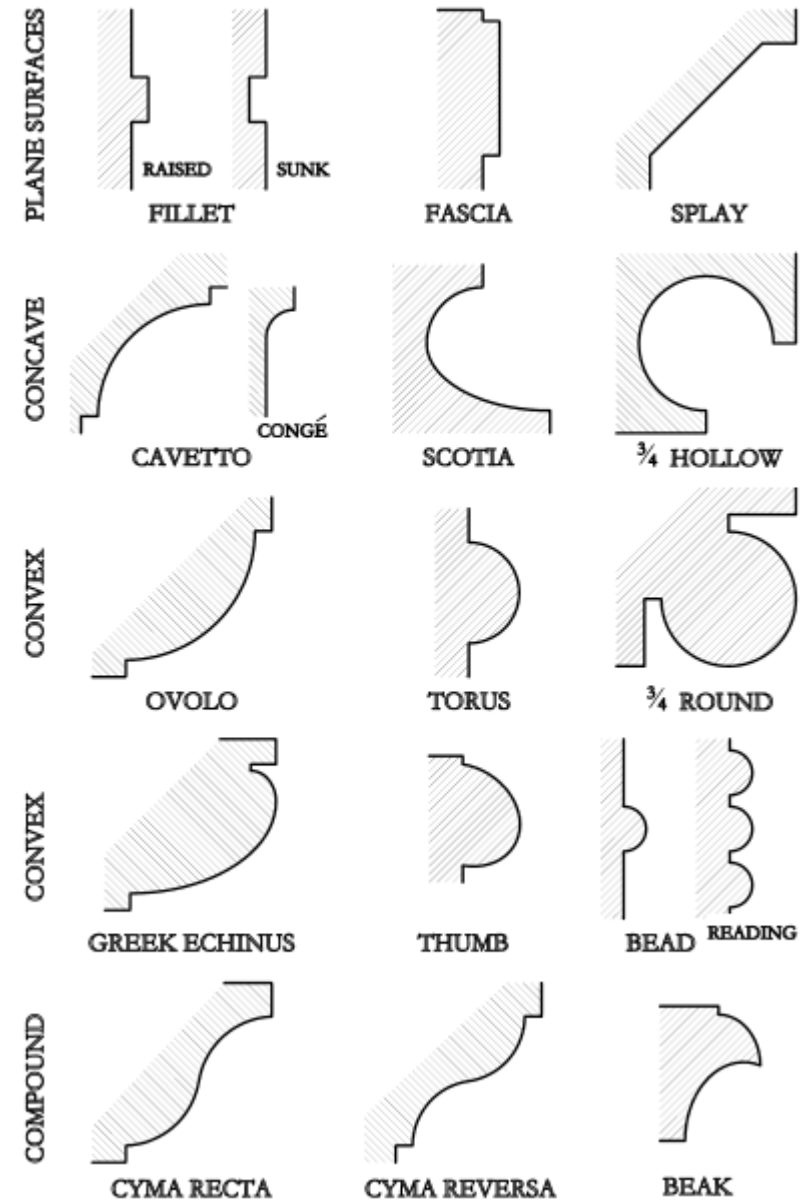
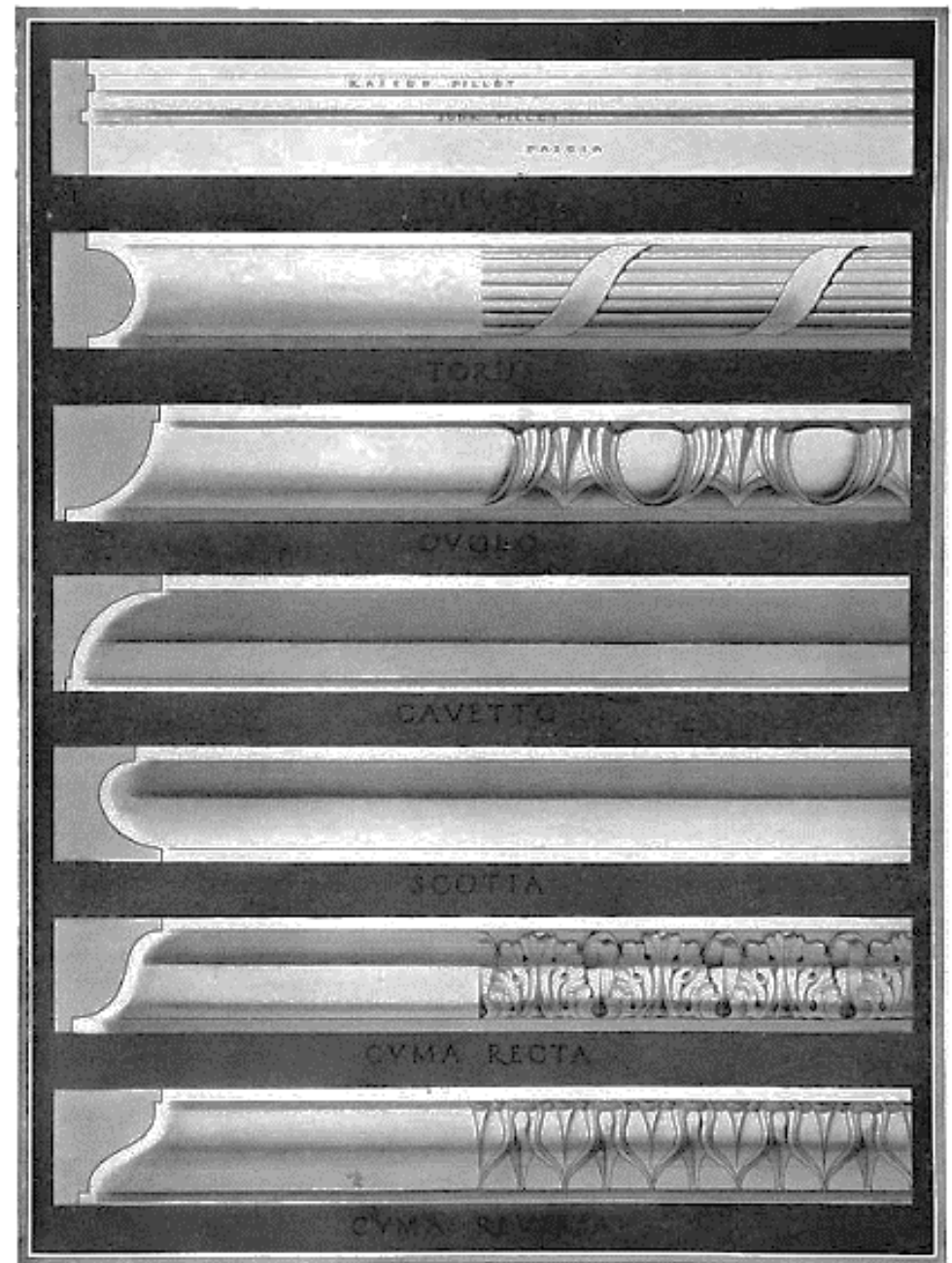
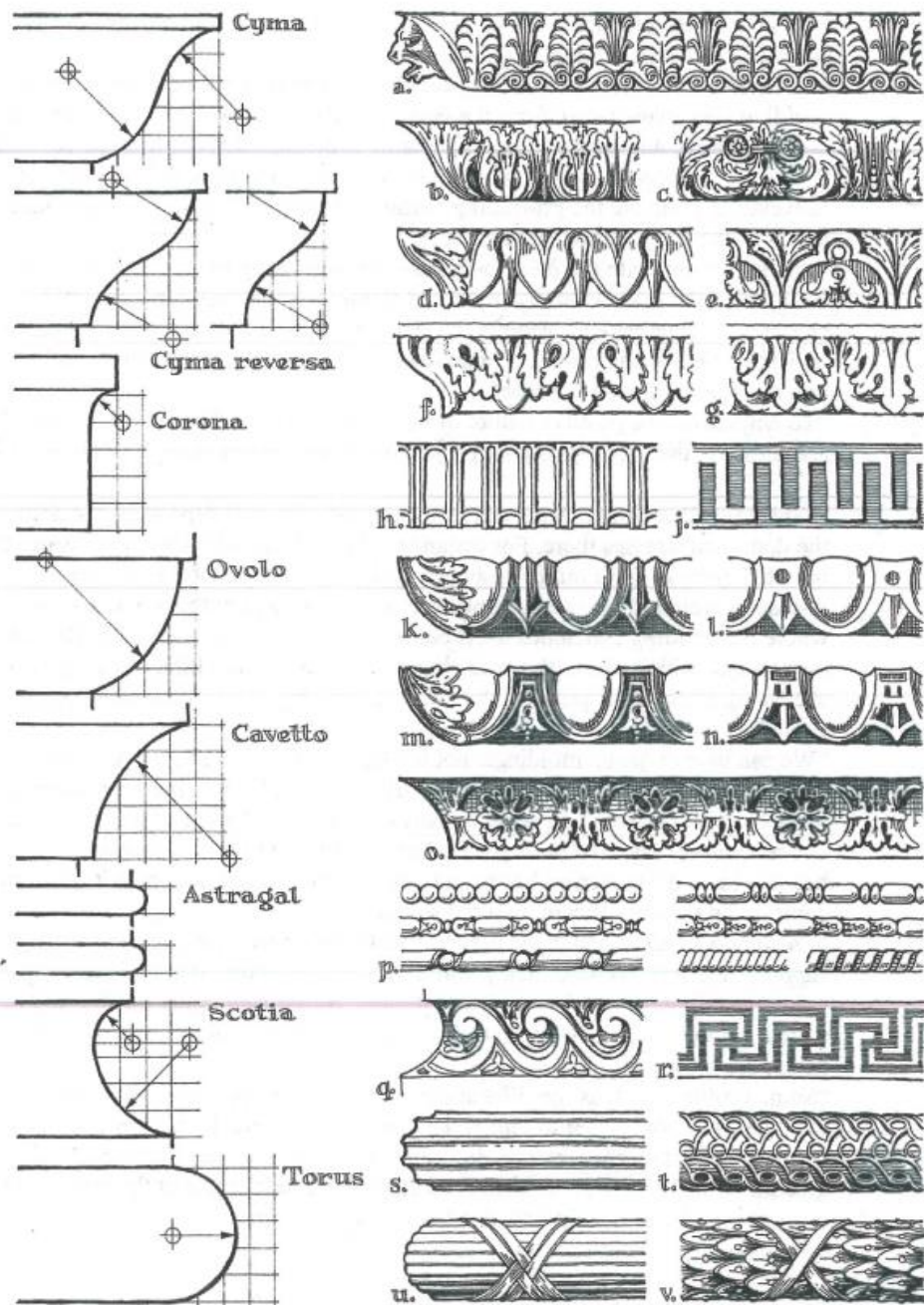


Figure I

MOULDING PROFILES





Running wave

Vegetal motif (cyma recta)

Egg and dart

Bead and reel

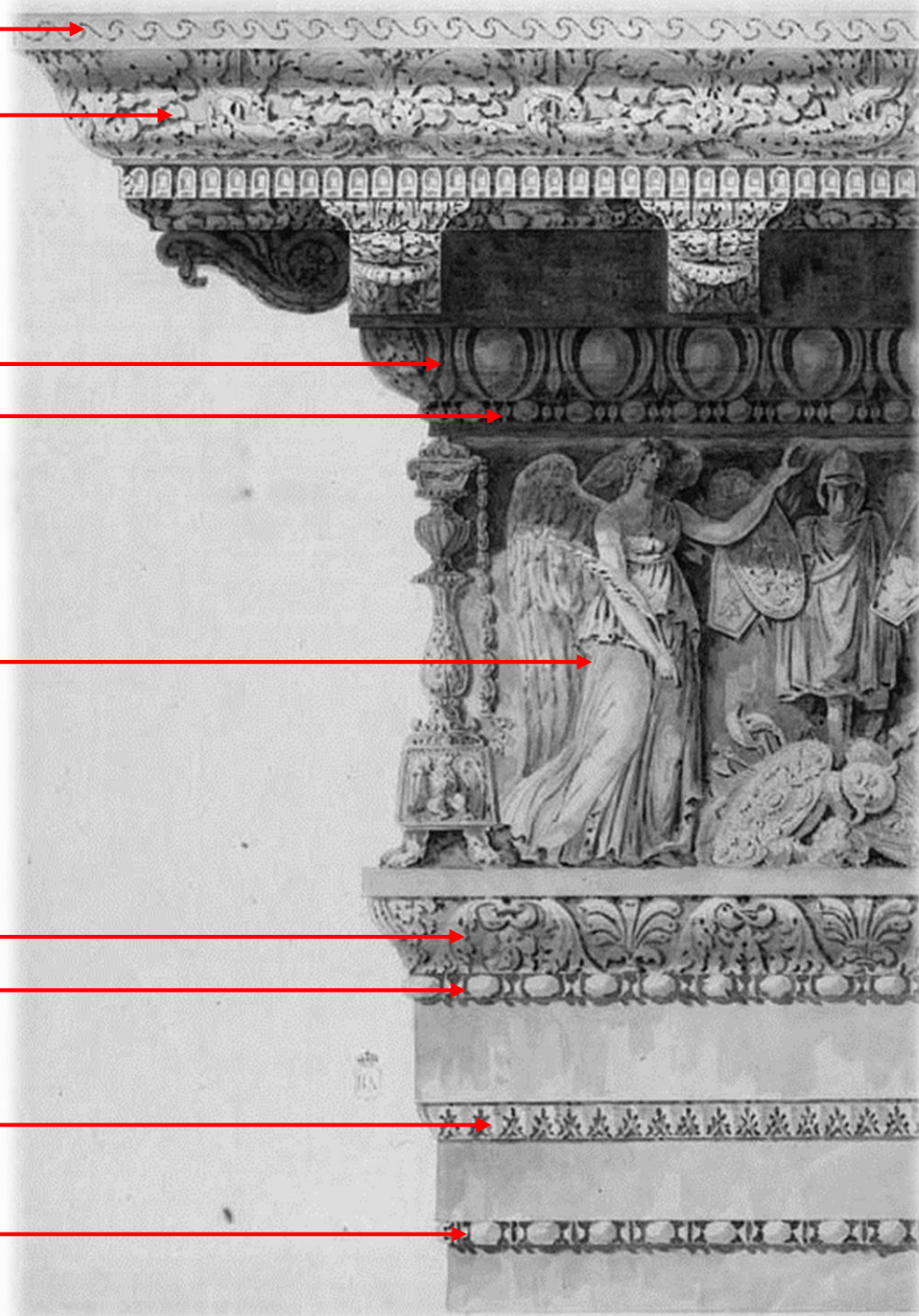
Sculptural relief (Humans, manmade objects)

Vegetal motif w/anthemion (cyma reversa)

Bead and reel

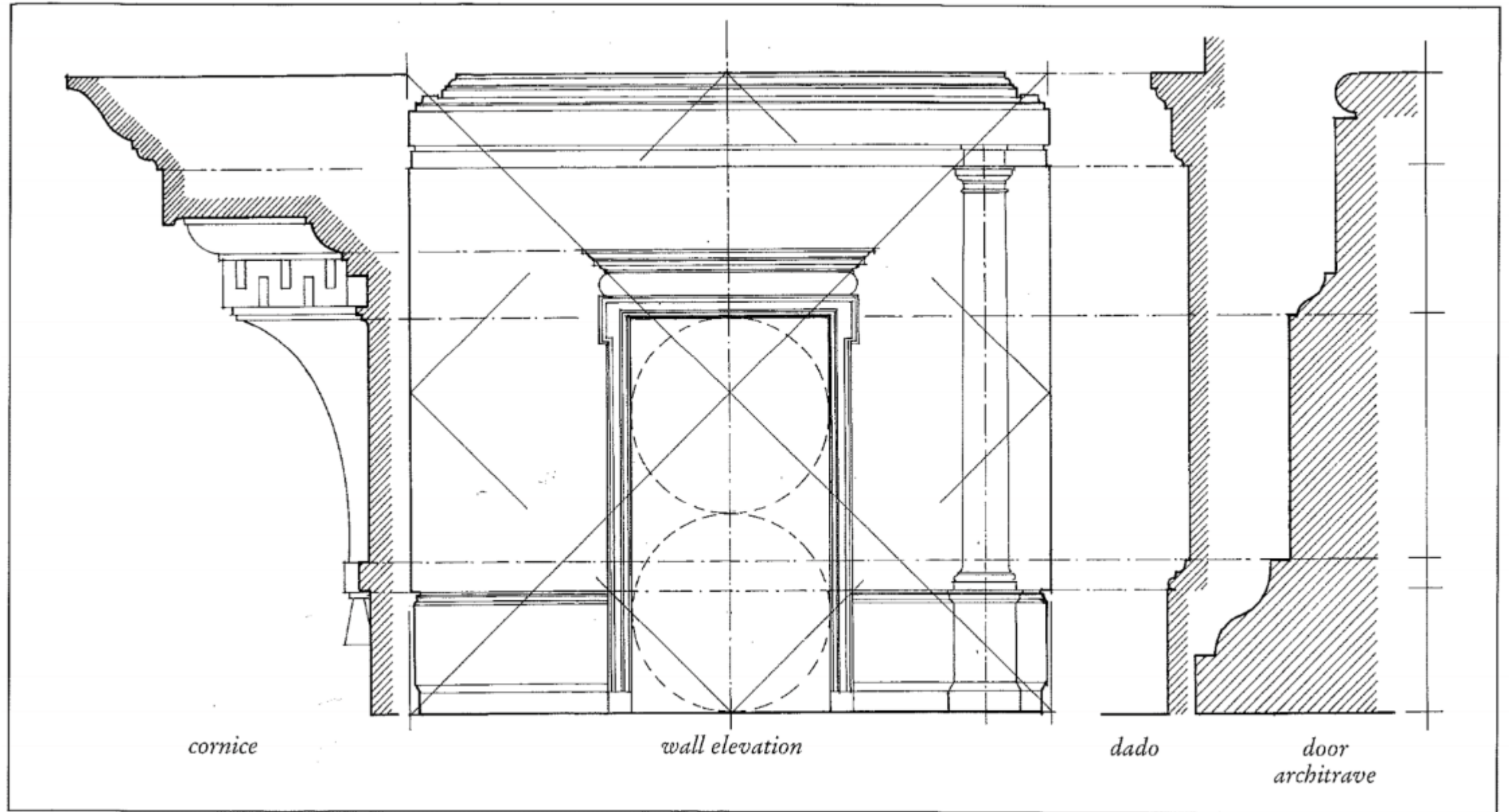
Leaf and dart

Bead and reel



“I shall define **beauty** to be a **harmony of all the parts**, in whatsoever subject it appears, **fitted together with such proportion and connection**, that nothing could be added, diminished or altered, but for the worse.”

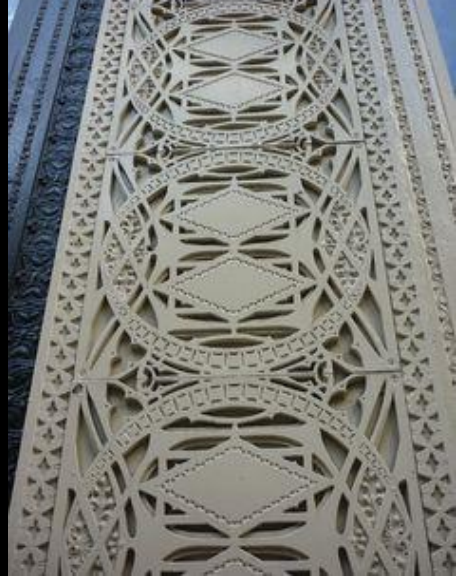
- Leon Battista Alberti, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, bk VI, ch II, p.113



Proportional relationships are important at all scales – including ornament.

Design by Richard Sammons, 2003

DESIGN PROCESS



MANIPULATION OF THE ORGANIC.



1



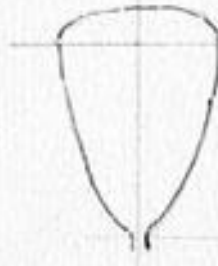
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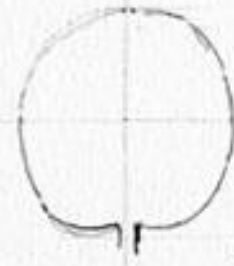
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4



5



6

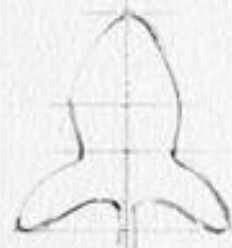


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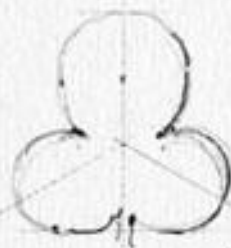
Simple Leaf-forms.

By manipulation any of these forms may be changed into any of the others through a series of systematic organic changes known technically as

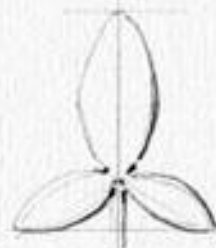
MORPHOLOGY



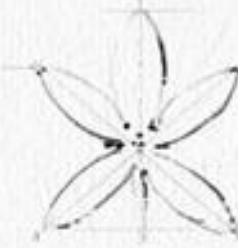
8



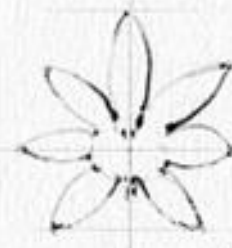
9



10



11



12



13



14

COMPOUND LEAF-FORMS

Derivatives of the above: technically, but organically, expressions of differing identities of seed-germ.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14

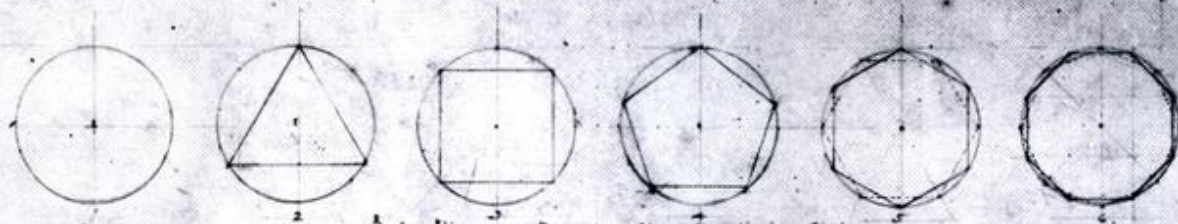
Technical Morphology of "7" into "12": Plastic changes following Natures method, of liberating energy

Same method

THE INORGANIC.

MANIPULATION OF FORMS IN PLANE-GEOMETRY

MOBILE GEOMETRY



Basic Elemental Forms: Shown inscribed in Circle.

These simple forms, of ancient discovery and use, were given esoteric meaning and occult powers by the men of that day, in an effort to control, by means of formulas and secret ritual, the destiny of Man amidst the powers of NATURE. With mystic numbers, and other phenomena, they formed part of an elaborate system of MAGIC: To which the world pinned its FAITH.

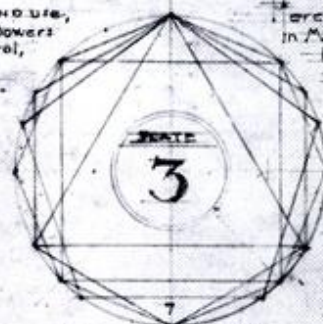
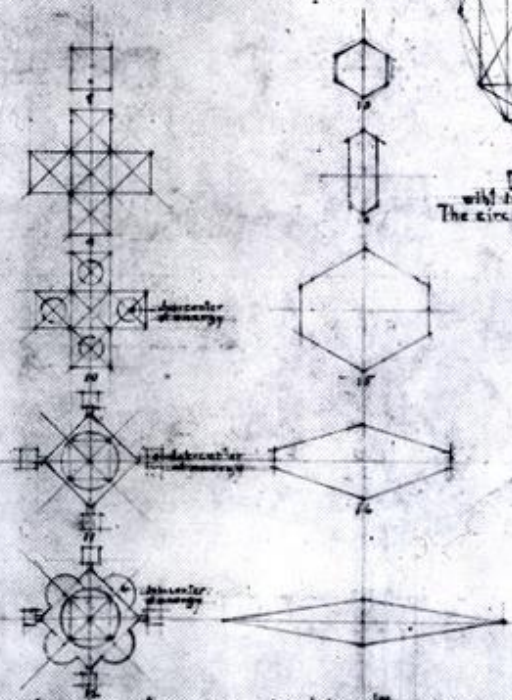


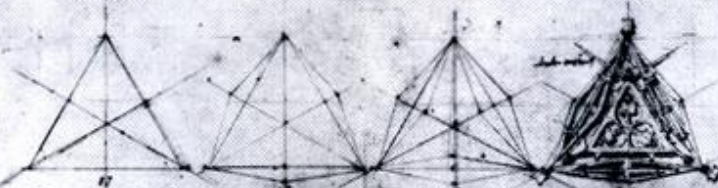
Diagram of: CIRCLE with inscribed regular POLYGONS. The circle is assumed to be the FORM.

There now over a NEW FAITH is advanced a faith in MAN: an unwavering faith that MAN, with his natural powers, developed and FREE, may and shall control his DESTINY through the finer magic of his enlarged vision, and of his will to ATTAIN. Master of the Inorganic and the Organic, he will, when he has FOUND himself, become MASTER OF HIMSELF. (See the PRELUDE to this work.)

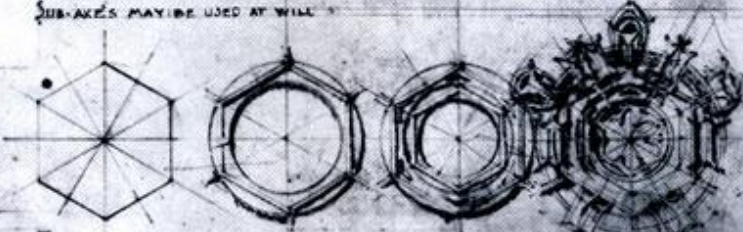
TECHNICALLY, as shown in the progress of our demonstration, the above forms, rigid in their reality, are to be considered, in our philosophy, as CONSTRUCTS of radial energy: EXTENSIVE and INTENSIVE. The Intensive: Extension of form along lines or axes radiating from the center and/or Intention of form along the same or other, radials from the periphery toward the Center. Here then appears the Will of Man: to cause the Inorganic and Rigid to become FLUENT, through his power. Note also that we assume energy to be resident in the PERIPHERY, and that all lines are Energy-lines. This may be called PLASTIC GEOMETRY.



Morphology of the HEXAGON. Geometrical extension and intention, concerning the idea of AXES. MORPHOLOGY is a process whereby an original form gradually changes into ANOTHER form.



One example of plastic development of equilateral triangle. More SUBTRACT in DO. THE SUB-CENTERS OF ENERGY MAY EXTEND OUTWARD AND INWARD INDEFINITELY. SUB-AXES MAY BE USED AT WILL.



Further treatment of the Hexagon: Seen shown above for the triangle. OUR FORMS ARE GRADUALLY BECOMING MOBILE, and the substances and the substances of energy are becoming more visible.

PLATE 10. COROLLA TYPES

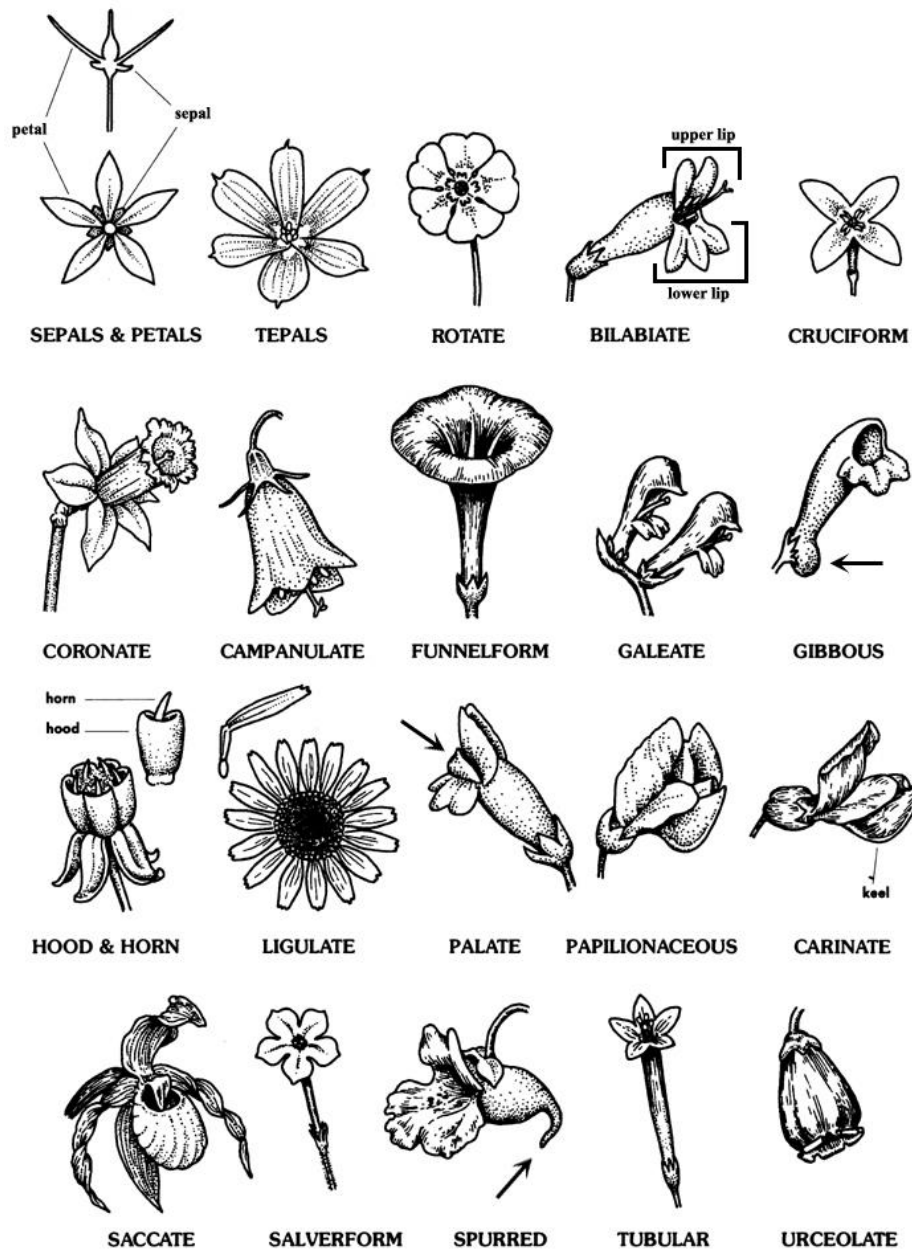
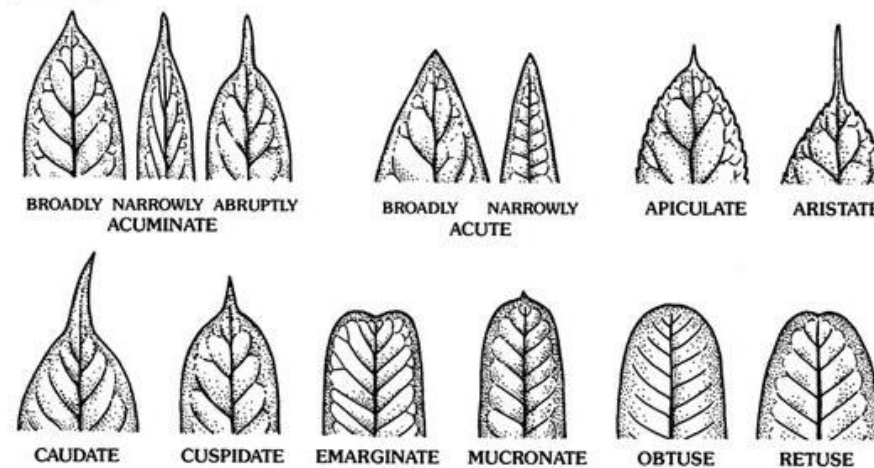
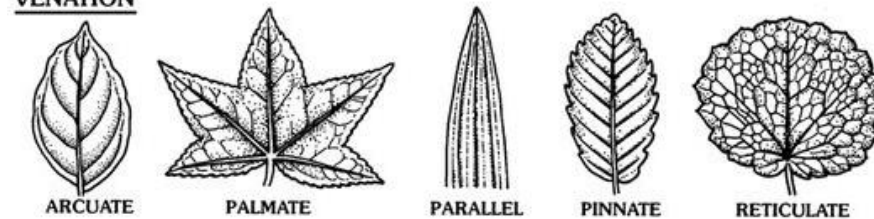


PLATE 5. LEAF APICES, VENATION, AND BASES

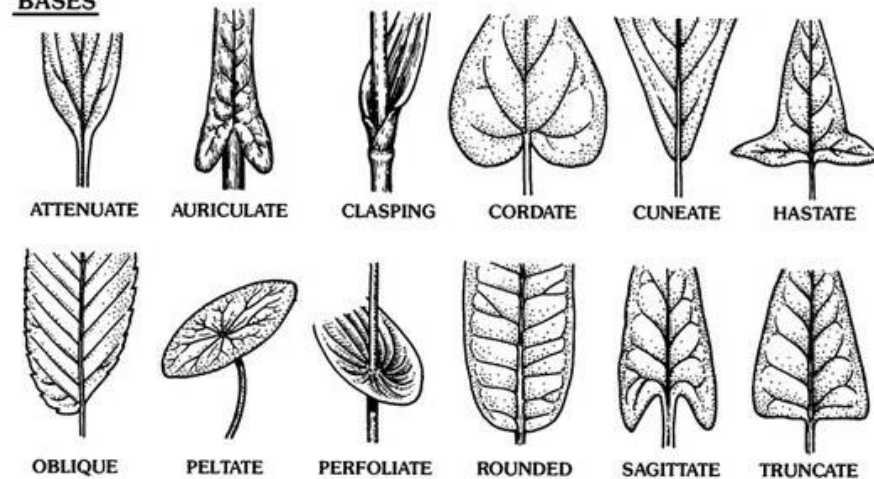
APICES



VENATION

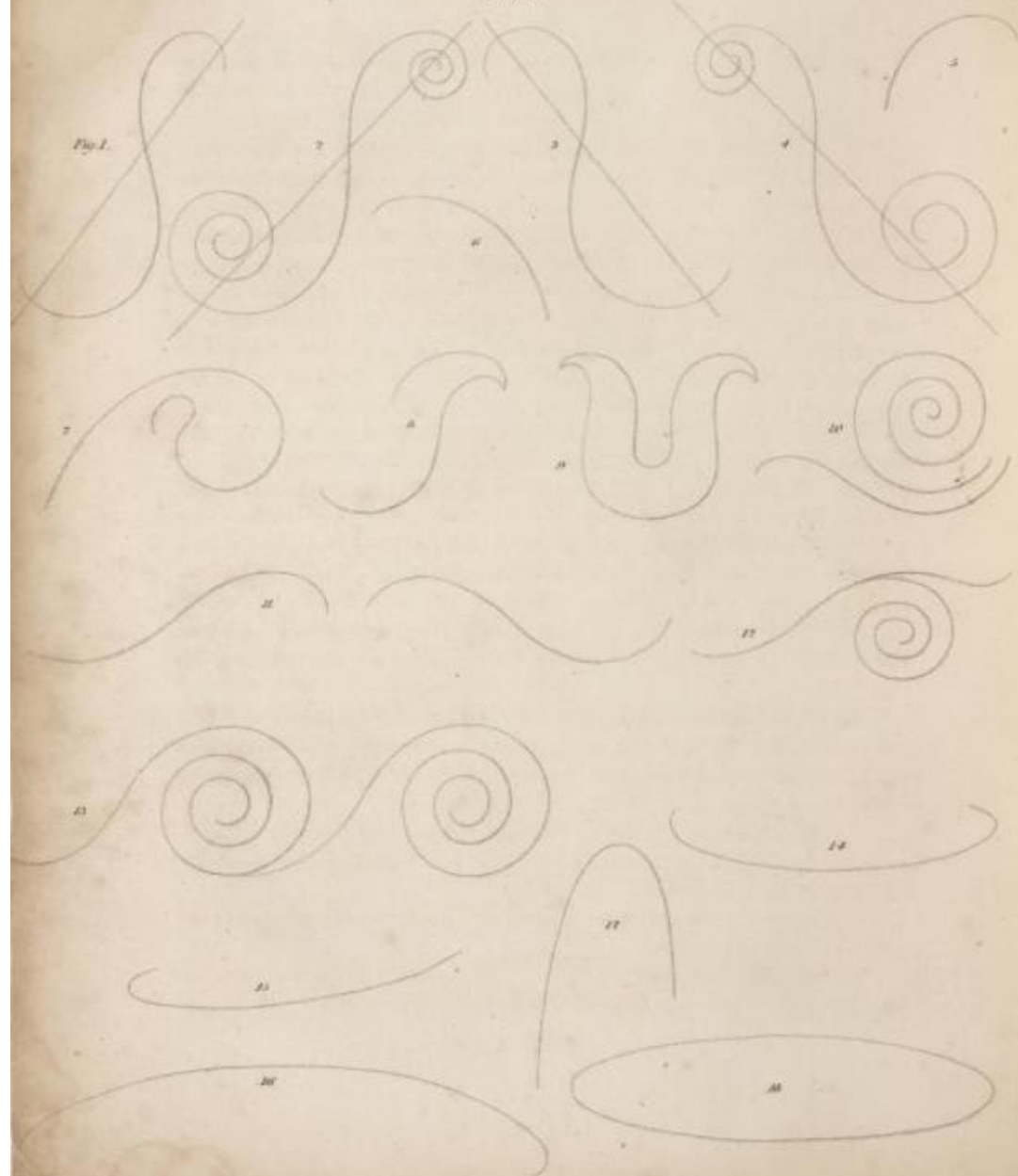


BASES

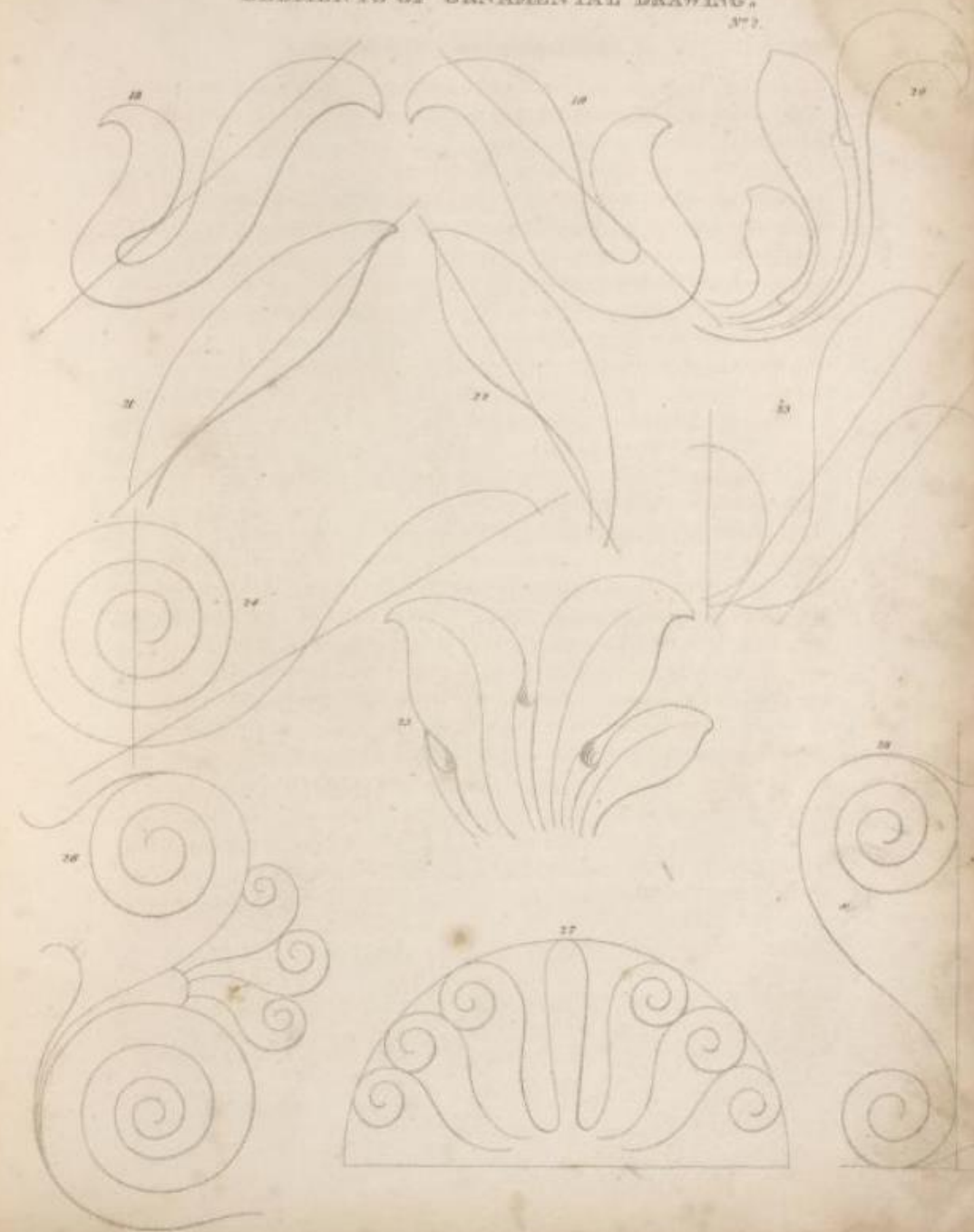


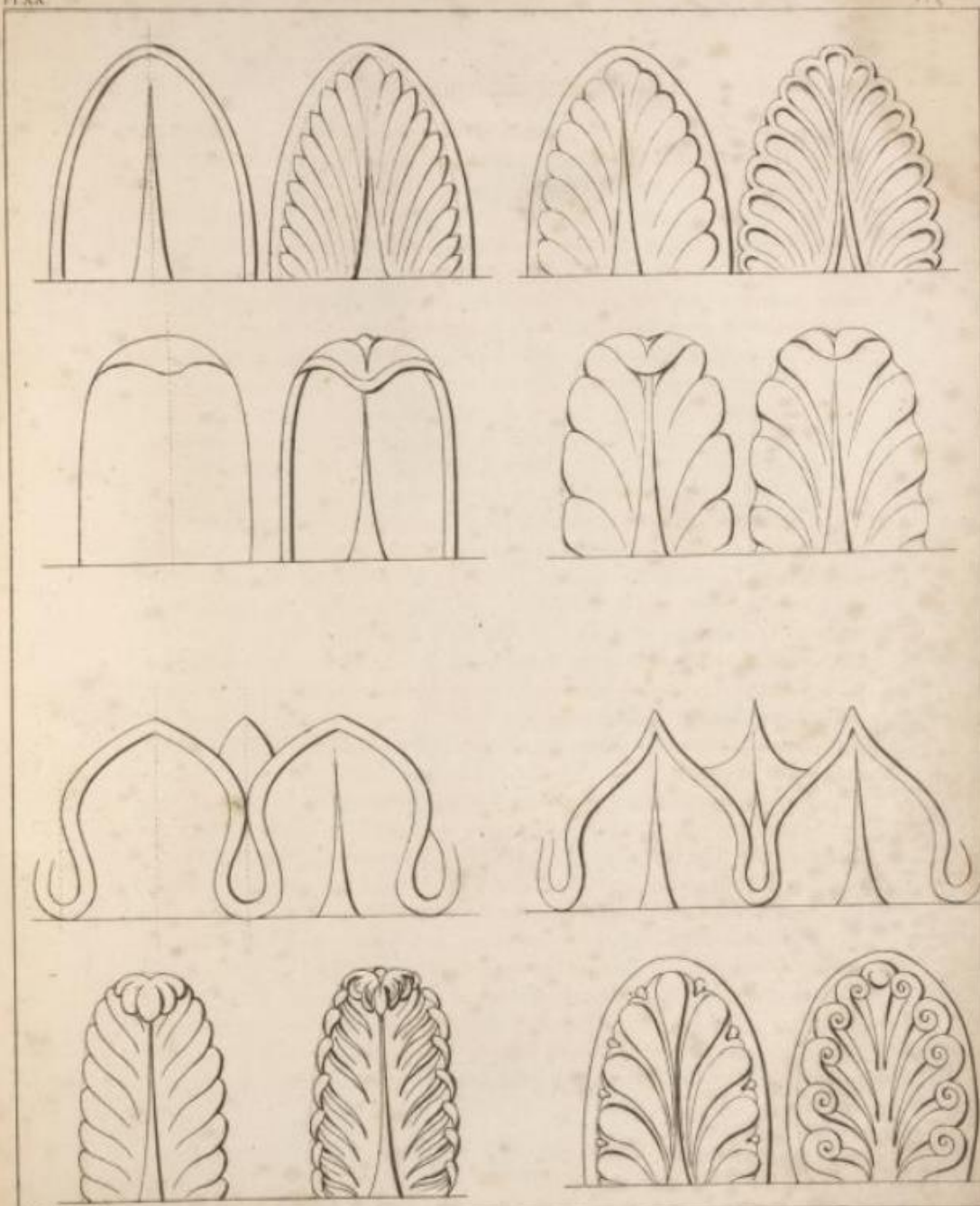
Outlines.

N° 1.

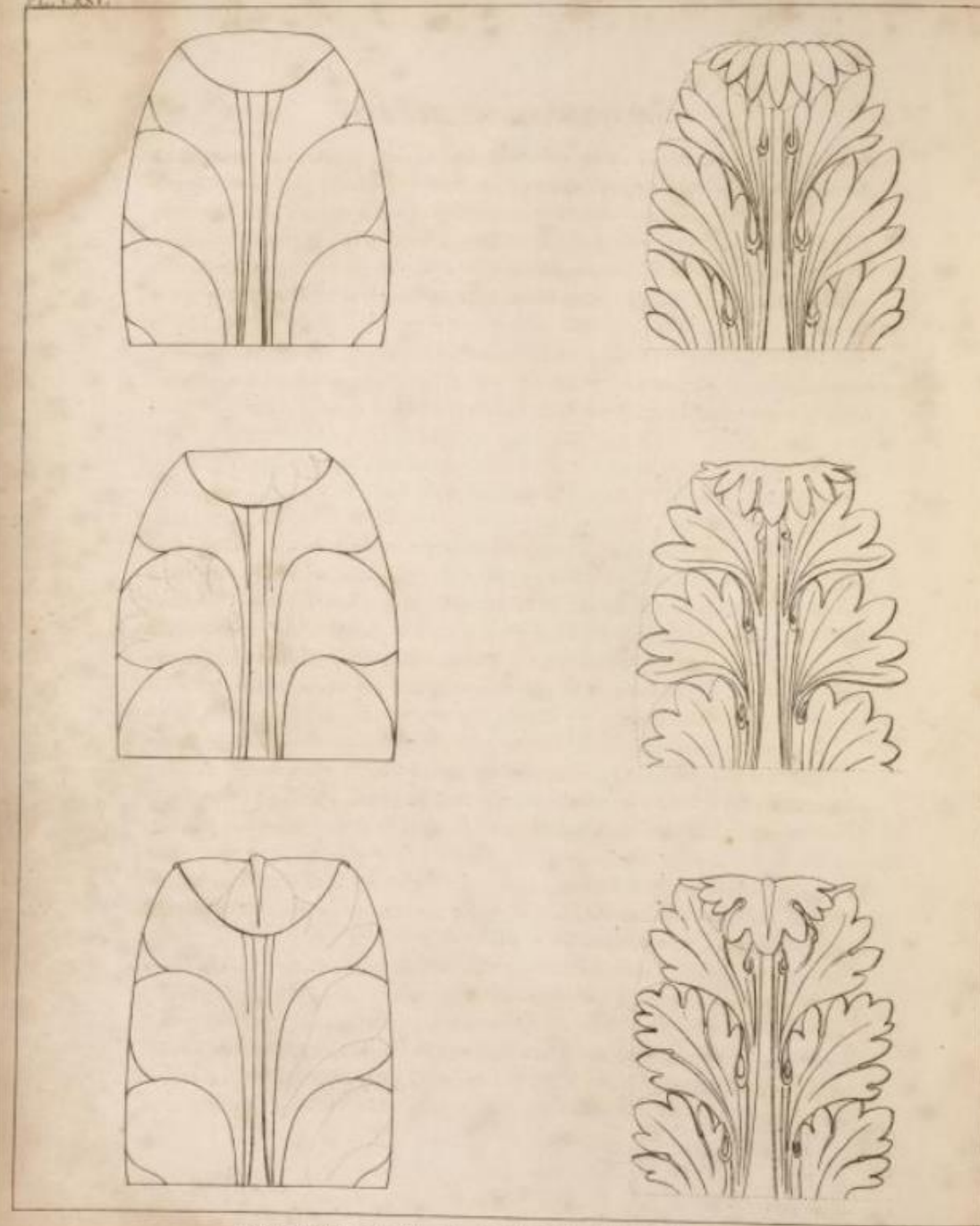


N° 2.

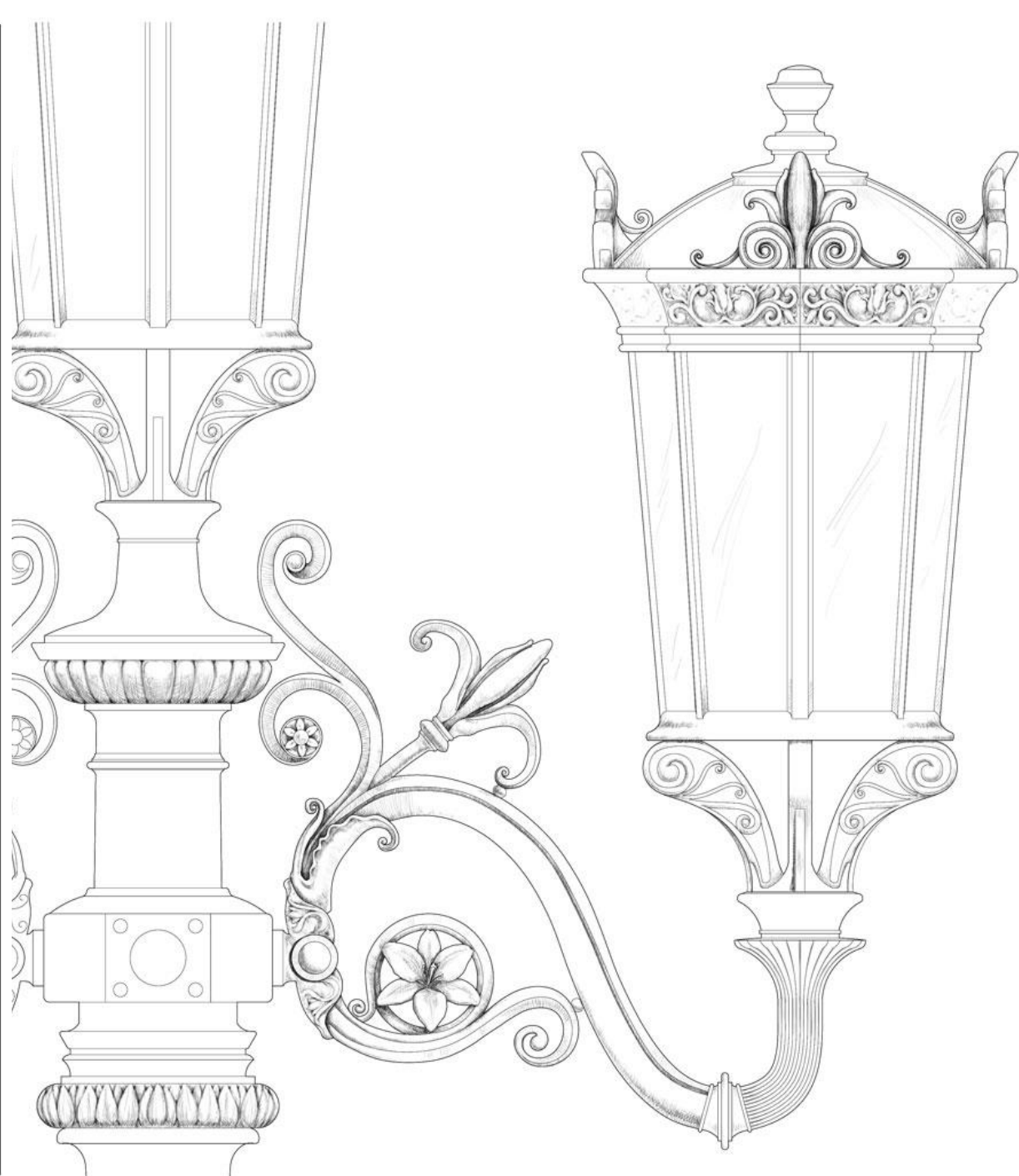
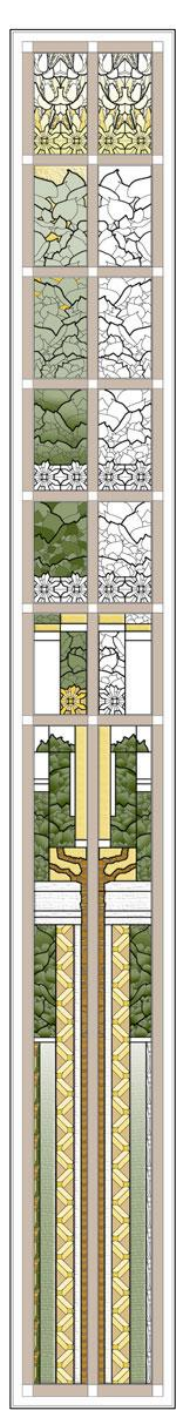
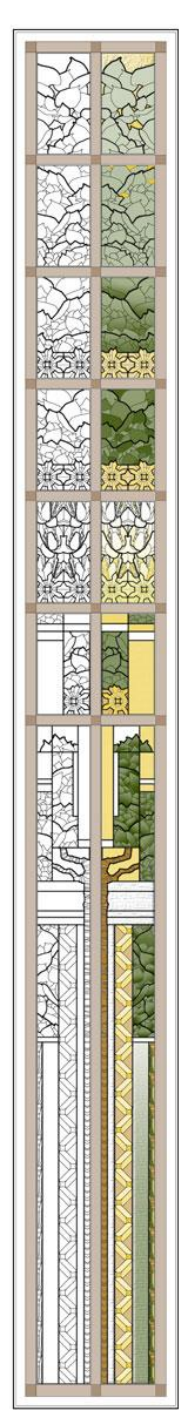




Elements of Ornament, exemplified in the forms and method of drawing divers kinds of leaves, employed in that branch of Art.



ORNAMENTAL DRAWING LEAVES, II.



“It is virtually impossible to invent a new system of ornament, just as it is virtually impossible to invent a new language. Ornament works like grammar, its forms drawing life from their repetition and subtle variation while remaining grounded in memories and recognizable models.”

- Steven Semes, *The Architecture of the Classical Interior*, p.74