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PALLADIO: NOW AND FOREVER

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Abstract: This article seeks to remember and, with this, reaffirm the figure of this great architect, who despite the passage of time continues to impact the world of architecture, both for his great architectural work, as well as for his literary work and his great influence on later architectural styles. Every year the *Corso Internazionale di Architettura Andrea Palladio* takes place in Vicenza, where new perspectives on his work are added and, at the same time, participants are impacted by the tours of some of his most prestigious works.

We believe that insisting on the knowledge of Andrea Palladio's work at this time is important for the new generations of architects, who are looking for a professional path in life and who, quite possibly, only have as an architectural reference, the work of some contemporary architects, which limits their possibilities of creation and development.

Keywords: villas, palaces, Mannerism, XVI century, Vicenza.

INTRODUCTION

It is now 445 years since the death of this great architect and we never cease to remember him. Palladio has been one of the great architects of history due not only to the work he created, but also to the influence he had on other architectural styles such as the neoclassical, and not least his theoretical contribution through *The Four Books of Architecture*, which catapulted him as one of the main masters of architecture. "He is the most imitated architect in history and his influence on the evolution of English and American architecture has probably been greater than that of all other Renaissance architects combined" (Ackerman, 1966-1980, pp. 5), "There is no architect in the history of Western art of such perennial influence through the centuries..." (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp.6). Even now his influence on the design of the Escorial in Spain is discussed (Navascués, 1980).

Born in Padua in 1508 with the real name of Andrea di Pietro della Gondola, just when the Republic of St. Mark (or Most Serene Republic of Venice), was suffering the trauma of an anti-Venetian war, in which the Emperor of France and the Pope were allied against this prosperous city, a war that became known as the War of the Cambrai League, and which ended in 1516 with numerous damages throughout the Venetian territory. This war was initiated by Pope Julius II to contain Venetian influence in northern Italy, for which he created the so-called Cambrai League, which also included Louis XII of France, Emperor Maximilian I of Habsburg and Ferdinand II of Aragon, who in the battle of Agnadello forced the Serenissima to abandon the Lombard territory. Faced with the subsequent friction between Julius II and Louis XII, the Pope allied with Venice against France under the Holy League, which expelled the French from Italy in 1512 (Chizzoniti, 2017).

After this war, Venetian agriculture had a further increase supported by the commercial importance that Venice had, so many Venetian nobles were supported in the agricultural activity seeking to preserve or recover their fortunes, which prompted the need to invent a new architectural form that, added to the agricultural activity, would allow them to enjoy nature in a rich environment of fertile fields (Rigon, 1980). Venice had suffered, first, from the Turks who kept it away from their commercial metropolis in the eastern Mediterranean, then the Portuguese, Vasco da Gama, discovered a direct sea route to India and, finally, the war against the Cambrai League. If we consider that even cereals were imported and that the entire population lived directly or indirectly from maritime trade, we understand the economic crisis that this city and its territory were facing (Wundram and Pape, 2004). An investment in the mainland is carried out through a policy of resource

provisioning through the commercial guidelines of the territory, which had a remarkable impulse through the organic restructuring of the Venetian provinces. A reorganization of the internal trade routes was also carried out to achieve a structure of settlements that would guarantee the control of the territory. Thus some strategies are carried out such as: a bonus program, the passage from an intense and poor cultivation to an extensive one, the adoption of programs of provisioning and distribution of resources through the regulation of navigable canals (Chizzoniti, 2017).

HIS LIFE

Son of Pietro *della Gondola* (so called because he owned a boat and was of Venetian origin), whose main job was as a miller, and a woman named Marta “zota” (the lame). During the war, Padua suffered invasions from both sides, with the consequent situations of terror that Pietro della Gondola, together with his family, will have to face (Olivetto, 2022). Padua is very affected by the war and, after the conflict, would live a construction boom that would last several years, replacing many of the wooden buildings with stone. Thanks to Vincenzo Grandi, a friend of his father, the young Andrea worked as a mason and sculptor in the workshop of Bartolomeo Cavazza da Sossano in Padua, a job he left in 1521 to flee to Vicenza to join his father, thus abandoning the six-year work commitment acquired with Cavazza. He joined the workshop of Giovanni di Giacomo da Porlezza, related to the architect Michele Sanmicheli, but was forced by Cavazza to return to Padua to fulfill his contract. However, the following year he again escapes and returns to Vicenza, joining the workshop of Giovanni da Pedemuro San Biagio, where he worked for fourteen years as a modest stonemason in a workshop that produced most of the sepulchral monuments, portals, etc., and other sculptural decorations. In 1524 he

joined the local brotherhood of masons and stonemasons (masonry). In 1534, at the age of 26, he married Allegradonna, a young woman of humble origins who bore him five children to whom they both decided to give classical names (Rigon, 1980; Olivetto, 2022). Leonida, Marcantonio, Orazio, Zenobia, Silla and, probably, he had a sesto. Palladio would later suffer with his adult children. Leonida, the eldest, will be accused of murder and later acquitted, however, he dies in 1572. Orazio, who disappeared in the same year, was involved in a heresy trial by the Holy Office. These bereavements would dramatically mark the last years of the life of the architect and his wife, who died possibly in 1578 (Olivetto, 2022).

His generation was full of Venetian visual artists such as Veronese, Tintoretto and even Titian, who died three years before his own death, “all names that bring to mind rich color, luminosity and varied textures, peculiarly Venetian luxuries whose architectural equivalents Palladio knew how to devise,” although in his generation there was no other leading Venetian architect born and trained in the Veneto. Sansovino and Sanmicheli “adapted the language of central Italy to the Venetian tradition, but they never fully assumed [...] the Venetian imagination nor the marvelous luminosity and radiance of Venetian provincial architecture of the early Renaissance” (Ackerman, 1966-1980, pp. 5).

In a short time, the young sculptor reveals his innate talent, he is intelligent and meticulous, he has a taste for details, so he begins to progress, receiving more and more important commissions (Olivetto, 2022). His life was transformed when he worked as a stonemason for the humanist poet and scholar Gian Giorgio Trissino, between 1537 and 1539, a personality of great relevance in the Vicentian cultural environments, who relied on him during the construction of his villa in Cricoli, near Vicenza. Trissino gave him the name of

Palladio (the angel messenger of the poem *L' Italia liberata dai Goti* by the humanist himself), as well as taking him with him on numerous trips that allowed him to learn about the work of the most famous living architects and, at the same time, to study the buildings of Antiquity. It also gave him the opportunity to read about architecture, engineering, ancient topography and military science. With these experiences and incorporating the treatise of Sebastiano Serlio, his style was formed, classicist but innovative at the same time (Fernandez and Tamaro, 2004; Rigon, 1980; Ackerman, 1966-1980).

From 1540 and, in the following three years, he traveled through the Veneto and, following Trissino, resided in Padua where he was able to come into contact with local humanist circles and learn about the theory of the return to nature, whose precursor had been the architect Giovanni Maria Falconetto, who died in 1535; he was also able to meet a critic of architecture: Alvise Cornaro (with whom Falconetto had worked), a farmer and scholar who wrote a brief anti-Roman and polemically practical treatise on architecture "He was impatient with Vitruvius and the humanist theorists because they could not help build the comfortable, healthy and cheap house that everyone needed." From this treatise, Palladio would make his own the seven rules for construction (Ackerman, 1966-1980, pp. 8; Rigon, 1980). From Falconetto, he takes up the spirit of the most prestigious interpreter of the constructive renaissance, of a renewed style after the war of Cambrai, represented in the Villa dei Vescovi di Luvigliano, in which Falconetto sought the ideal model of the country residence (Rigon, 1980).

Also in Padua, Palladio had the opportunity to appreciate the sculptural work of the greatest exponent of 16th century Venetian architecture, Jacopo Sansovino, who arrived in the Veneto as a result of Charles V's inva-

sion of Rome in 1527. In Verona he was able to study the imposing ruins of buildings of classical Rome, and also to admire and study the "modern" work of the architect Michele Sanmicheli, who had a decisive influence on the young artist. Palladio was also greatly influenced by the illustrations and understanding of architecture of Sebastiano Serlio, "who had gone to Venice to prepare the first two of a planned series of seven books on architecture, the third and fourth, published in 1537 and 1540" (Ackerman, 1966-1980, pp.9; Rigon, 1980). So, in addition to the teaching of these two Tuscan-rooted architects, Sansovino and Sanmicheli, his sources were conversations with learned nobles, the books of Vitruvius and Serlio (Ackerman, 1966-1980).

In 1541 he traveled to Rome with Trissino in search of "a moral rather than an aesthetic ideal" that sought to recover historical and cultural values. He became acquainted with the modern classical architecture of Bramante, Raffaello and Peruzzi, and within Mannerism he became acquainted with the work of Raffaello's most gifted pupil, Giulio Romano, who also had an important influence on Palladio. It is with this first trip to Rome and, with the second (between 1546-1547), that he established himself as the great architect he was to become (Rigon, 1980).

Already known as Andrea Palladio, a period begins in which the history of his life coincides with the history of his work. Between 1542 and 1546, works such as the Villa Pisani in Bagnolo or the urban palace of the Thiene family in Vicenza, inspired by the tea palace of Julius Romanus in Mantua, stand out (Rigon, 1980).

Between 1552 and 1553 he received the commission for the only two works he carried out in the territory of his native city: the villas of Montagnana and Piombino Dese, whose noble Venetian clients, the Pisani and, above all, the Cornaro, provoked a correction in the

route to be followed by the projects for country houses, characteristics that would deviate him in the form and use of the agricultural estates that would become known as “villas”. The Venetian nobility will thus transfer their mercantile, non-agricultural mentality, with which they had built their wealth, similar to the system that Venice uses for its business (Rigon, 1980).

In 1554 the Venetian humanist and diplomat Cardinal Daniele Barbaro, his new mentor, introduced him to the humanist and cultural circles of Venice, and he was appointed chief architect of the Venetian Republic, replacing Jacopo Sansovino, a position he held until his death in 1580. During this period he studied Vitruvius’ architecture both theoretically and practically, publishing a translated and illustrated edition two years later. In 1554 he traveled with Barbaro and other Venetian noblemen to Rome. In 1556 he completed the only palace not built in Vicenza, the Antonini Palace in Udine. From then on and for the next ten years he dedicated himself to a series of works on villas for illustrious Venetian families, among them the Villa Badoer di Fratta Polesine (1956), the Villa Barbaro (between 1557-1558), the Villa of the Foscari called the Malcontenta (1559-1560) (Rigon, 1980).

It is from 1566 onwards, when he developed most of his activity in Venice, where we owe him, among other buildings, the churches of San Giorgio Maggiore and the Redentore. His last masterpiece was the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza (completed by Scamozzi), where he attempted to recreate a civilian Roman theater (Fernandez and Tamaro, 2004). As the theater was planned to present classical plays, Palladio’s design was a direct reconstruction of the ancient Roman theater in Orange, southern France, as well as a description of an ancient theater conceived by Vitruvius. In imitation of the ancient Roman open-air theater, Palladio had the ceiling painted to resemble a sky with clouds (Cartwright, 2020).

MAIN WORKS

THE BASILICA OR PALAZZO DELLA RAGIONE

In 1549, the city of Vicenza commissioned him to rebuild the basilica, for which until then no architect had managed to come up with an interesting proposal. “In the same way as other Renaissance architects, such as Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472) did with the churches in Florence and Rimini, Palladio ignored the medieval form of the building’s frame and covered it with a classically inspired ensemble formed by arches and columns covering two floors” (Cartwright, 2020), becoming from then on the preferred architect of the Vicenza aristocracy (Fernandez and Tamaro, 2004).

The complex of the Basilica of Vicenza was built in two distinct moments separated by exactly one century between them. The Palazzo della Ragione was built in the middle of the 14th century by Domenico da Venezia. Between 1481 and 1494 Tommaso Formenton surrounded it with a double order of loggias, and a couple of years after its completion a couple of loggias in the southwest corner failed. There were several proposals for reconstruction by the most prestigious architects of the time, but finally the Palladian idea of a new perimeter wall (in the style of the walls of the ancient Roman theaters), which will surround the old complex enriched by the use of the serliana, whose columns are duplicated towards the interior of the loggia, was accepted. The project imposes itself as a brilliant restoration solution that sought to revive, with classical forms, the ancient basilicas (Rigon, 1980; Wundram and Pape, 2004; Beltramini, 2014). The last payments for the work date from March 14, 1617 and the sculptures on the façade were not finished until the middle of the 17th century (Wundram and Pape, 2004).

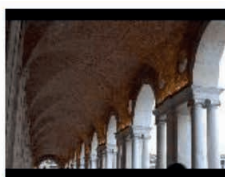


Image 1 shows part of the classical façade designed by Palladio and image 2 shows the contrast between the new face of the basilica and the previous building (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 1 and 2. The Basilica of Vicenza

THE PALLADIAN VILLAS

The construction of houses in the countryside, as an engine of multiple agricultural activities and as a place of rest, leisure and humanistic inactivity for the city's noblemen, represented a typical phenomenon of the Veneto. These first "villas" had arisen in the "four hundred" taking independent characteristics with respect to the urban constructive types of the Middle Ages, thanks to a particular climate of peace and security guaranteed by the policy of the Republic of Venice, so that agriculture could flourish and prosper. In the face of this new mentality and the economic recovery after the Cambrai War, Palladio contributed in a decisive way "by giving new ideological and formal meanings to a building tradition formed in the previous century" (Rigon, 1980, pp. 40).

Palladian villas differ from Roman or Florentine villas in that, while the latter were conceived exclusively for the recreation and rest of their owners, the Palladian villas served as small centers of agricultural production. Twenty-four villas are considered to be of their own, which were declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO in the 1990s (Tomé, n.d.). One of the first is the so-called Villa Godi, built for the brothers Girolamo, Pietro e Marcantonio Godi in Lonedo, the first confirmed work of Palladio (Beltramini, 2014), in the which the architect sought to combine classical theories with the building tradition of the area. Designed in 1537 and completed in 1542, "the main

building flees from any ornamental boast in favor of the most absolute symmetry, with two perfectly symmetrical wings flanking a central body, opened by means of a loggia accessible through a staircase" (Tomé, n/d, n/p). Certain reminiscences of Trissino's Villa Cricoli can be seen... "the central part of the façade is embedded as a wedge between the two projections, each of them surpassing the other in width", which are superior only in their actual measurements (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp.15). The work, of course, belongs to a phase prior to the Roman experiences that will allow the artist to incorporate the "classical" vision to his already acquired baggage. The loggia opens onto the valley dell'Astico, pre western alps, on whose slopes this villa was built. The interior was decorated by Giambattista Zelotti (Rigon, 1980) and by Battista del Moro (Wundram and Pape, 2004).

Continuing the tour with the Villa Pisani of Bagnolo, built next to a watercourse through which the agricultural products of the vast cultivated fields reached Venice, and whose facade remained unfinished, "as the project of the roof of the two side towers remained unresolved towards the river Guà, inserted in the center of the three arches with pilasters, in an approach that sees the coexistence of the Venetian tradition of the four hundred of the "dovecote" towers, and the Roman, braman-tesque, mannerist and classical novelty of the semicircular staircase, of the rustic finish and of the pediment" (Rigon, 1980, tav. 4). Already completed in 1544, it was "conceived as a rustic villa, for agricultural exploitation, intended to provide its lords - the Pisani were counts - with the comforts of their status". Today only the manor house can be seen, as the wings disappeared over time (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 34).



Image of the facade of Villa Pisani, showing one of the side towers, the rustic finish and part of the gable (Cedeño, 2023).

Figure 3. Villa Pisani of Bagnolo

The Villa Saraceno, located in a locality of Finale di Agugliano, near Vicenza, is situated on an artificial promontory on the banks of the Liona canal. It is a work of simple architectural forms, rare in Palladian production, with a simple architectural language, typical of his early works. The staircase, the arches of the portico, the tympanum, are wisely arranged at the center of the project in carefully studied proportional rhythms, conferring a historical dignity to the owner's dwelling. It was completed in 1552 (Rigon, 1980; Wundram and Pape, 2004). It is only the architectural design that gives the building a magnificence, despite its reduced dimensions, using the same architectural elements of the ancient Roman temple: the first level is elevated and rests on an earthen podium, where the cellars find space; the loggia of the façade is crowned by a triangular tympanum. Small windows illuminate the attics, where the grain was kept (Beltrami, 2014). The composition of the facade with three central arches revived by the splendid rusticated flattening, the polygonal staircase and the tight and airy space next to the loggia, confirm a typical Palladian syntax. Inside there are frescoes by Giambattista Zelotti and Giovanni Antonio Fasolo (Rigon, 1980). As there is a discrepancy between the work and what is written about it in the *quattro libri*, it is believed that these texts were "suitably adjusted to the requirements of an exemplary di-

dactic work" (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 55).

The Villa Poiana, built in Poiana Maggiore, near Vicenza and possibly completed around 1555, for a family of chivalric tradition and closely linked to the production of war material (Wundram and Pape, 2004). The villa, one of his most beautiful projects, has five round openings in the manner of Bramante and a broken or open pediment at the base to give a respite to the lower arch and which, "thanks to the interruption of the cornice is organically integrated into the surface of the wall" (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp.59; Rigon, 1980). The renunciation of any ornamental form "fits well with the military tradition of the Poiana, being part of an architectural practice that aims to express the defensive character of a building by suppressing any decorative element [...] In the absence of a prominent portico, the loggia is escorted by the body of the building" and, as the rooms are located on the sides, the loggia allows a view of the whole (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 62). The inspiration is considered to have been ancient thermal environments, especially the baths of Diocleziano in Rome (Beltrami, 2014).



Image 4 of the facade shows the five round openings and the broken pediment. Image 5 presents a view from the villa towards the access of the property (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 4 and 5. Villa Poiana

The Villa Cornaro is located in the center of Piombino, more as a rest residence than as an agricultural farm, built between 1552 and 1553 for Giorgio Cornaro, a Venetian high patrician, although only the central body, since

in 1554 the works were suspended resuming until 1569 and 1588, this last stage finished by Vincenzo Scamozzi (Beltramini, 2014). For the first time Palladio's will to "harmoniously merge in a villa the concepts of utility and prestige" is expressed (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 88). The double facade of the property is articulated to the north towards the street and the village, in a high pronaos on a gentle ramp. Towards the private garden, in a loggia between two sectors, is the oval staircase leading to the upper floors. At the rear, another different but equally beautiful façade is observed, something unusual in the design of Palladio's urban buildings, which could define this construction as a villa-palace (Rigon, 1980). "The great hall is the dominant spatial element" because of its dimensions and because the succession of the enclosures is subordinate to it (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 62). The theme of the double loggia on the façade is frequent in lagoon Gothic constructions, so it is considered a "Latin translation" of traditional Venetian themes (Beltramini, 2014).



Images 6 and 7 show the facades of the Villa Cornaro. Image 6 presents the main facade as seen from the street and Image 7 the rear facade facing a large garden (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 6 and 7. Villa Cornaro

Villa Pisani (Montagnana). This building constructed for Francesco Pisani, patron and friend of artists and literati such as Paolo Veronese (Beltramini, 2014), on the outskirts of the medieval wall of Montagnana and between two streets with heavy traffic, leaves specialists with the doubt whether to classify this property as a villa or as a palace, in short it can be considered a suburban villa, housing in its

interior a craftsman's workshop. The opposite front or garden façade takes on village characteristics with the double loggia opening onto the garden, one of the characteristics that unites the villa-palace of the Pisani with the villa-palace of the Cornaro, in addition to the fact that the latter was built in 1552, that is, at the same time. The internal layout is also similar in these two villas (Wundram and Pape, 2004; Rigon, 1980). The street façade is closed, almost fortified, in which Palladio tries to give the closed wall surface a certain dynamic of chiaroscuro "so that the calm infused by the strictly geometric proportion of the openings becomes a growing movement produced by the columns" (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 100).



Image 8 shows the rear and most important façade of Villa Pisani, while Image 9 allows us to see a detail of the interior (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 8 and 9. Villa Pisani

Palladio designed in 1554 for the Venetian nobleman Francesco Badoer, a villa destined to become the center of gravity of the vast agricultural extension of almost five hundred fields, which he inherited six years earlier (Beltramini, 2014). The compositional novelty of the Villa Badoer of 1556 with respect to other Palladian rural constructions, is noted in the two "barchesse" or semicircular wings that join the Sunday house, raised on a high plinth, surely to protect it from possible floods, frequent in the area (Rigon, 1980). These very elegant curvilinear "barchesse" are the only ones concretely realized by Palladio among many projected (Beltramini, 2014). This work "Fits perfectly into the architectural ideology of the villas, in which the manor house must assume and enhance the utilitarian character

of the work”, i.e. the agricultural exploitation (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 117). A similar example is that of the Villa Trissino, although only here did he find the facilities for this scenographic conception. At the center of the small garden stands the Ionic loggia that rises above the very articulated staircase. Inside are frescoes by Giallo Fiorentino (Rigon, 1980).



Image 10 shows the facade and part of the famous "barchesse" or wings that surround it, while image 11 allows us to admire the Ionic loggia of the main facade (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 10 and 11. Villa Badoer

The Villa Barbaro reflected “the ideal of a secluded life, of a new Arcadia, totally absent from reality”, which separates this villa from those built for productive purposes (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 126). Built for Cardinal Daniele Barbaro, one of the most cultured and famous men, not only of the Veneto, but of Rome itself. Palladio worked with him in the recovery of architectural texts by Vitruvius, so we can infer the participation of this nobleman in the spatial conception of his country villa, which Palladio built around 1560. “If the construction contains all the typical elements of the architecture of a villa, it is clear that in part it had lost its agricultural functionality to assume the characteristics of the great dwellings of a humanist doctor, who in the recovery of the Latin ideals of life through contact with nature, restores his spirit in the leisure of the countryside”. The upper interior plane, which was inhabited by the cardinal, exhibits frescoes by Veronese and the lower one remained as the dwelling of the cardinal’s brother (Rigon, 1980, tav. 15). The vertical articulation of the Palladian villas is taken to its

ultimate consequences. “The change from segmental to triangular pediments does not occur horizontally, but vertically, the triangular pediments corresponding to the windows of the upper floor, and the curved ones to those of the first floor. The wings are topped with dovecotes. From the gables that crown the wings, there are arches on each side, which descend gently to the height of the wings, of a single floor” (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 127).



Image 12 shows the façade and the right wing, which it has despite not being a villa with a productive purpose. Image 13 shows a pictorial detail of the interior (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 12 and 13. Villa Barbaro

The Villa Foscari called “la Malcontenta” was a novelty in the Venetian and Venetian artistic panorama of the 16th century. It stands as an isolated block without agricultural annexes, east of the lagoon and the Brenta River. With its facade facing north, which was a break with tradition, and with the building built on a powerful plinth, an Ionic portico evoking the great civilization of ancient Rome could be seen surprisingly from the river. On the façade over the garden, on the other hand, it seems that Palladio wanted to create a Venetian image. One of the elements that will be recognized as classics of the Palladian language appears: a thermal window that breaks up the base of the triangular pediment. The practical aspect can be disregarded, since the Foscari built it as a country retreat, without service wings, which could qualify it as a villa-temple. This villa is a demonstration of Palladian mastery in obtaining monumental effects using poor materials such as brick and plaster (Rigon, 1980; (Wundram and Pape, 2004; Beltramini, 2014).

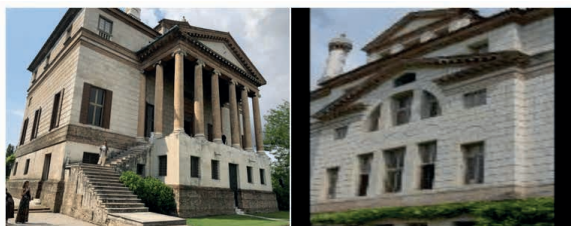


Image 14 shows us the imposing main facade facing the Brenta River, while image 15 presents the rear facade with its characteristic thermal window (Cedeño, 2023). Images 14 and 15. Villa Foscari

The Villa Emo can be considered the success of a new typology, where the practical needs of agricultural life are translated into an unprecedented form and language inspired by ancient architecture. It was built by Palladio between 1558 and 1565, in the middle of vast lands that Leonardo Emo owned in the countryside, whose plot and orientation refers to the ancient designs of the Roman centurions, since the area was crossed by the ancient via Postumia (Beltramini, 2014). A balanced compositional coexistence between the Venetian building tradition of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and the recovery of ancient Roman culture finds confirmation, in the fusion between building and landscape. The interior is frescoed by Giambattista Zelotti (Rigon, 1980). Palladio mentions in his *Four Books* the barns and pavilions on both sides of the main building which could be accessed without having to go outdoors, and whose side wings are of unusual length, reflecting the great productivity of the fields belonging to the villa. “The villa embodies the pure form of a productive facility that, under the idea of “holy agriculture”, renounces all ostentation, yet has the character of a nucleus of practical and spiritual order for the entire estate” (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 169).



Image 16 shows the main façade of the Villa Emo inspired by Roman architecture. Image 17 shows a view of the right pavilion, where the cellars were housed (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 16 and 17. Villa Emo

The Villa Capra “La Rotonda” is considered the most famous work of Palladio who built it, around 1567, to the canon Paolo Almerico, and which appears as an extraordinary novelty due to the presence of four facades that propose the identical solution of an Ionic portico on the faces of a cube, which gave this work abstract characteristics of a temple of the arts. From the height of a pleasant hill near the city of Vicenza, the villa dominates the surrounding landscape and, at the same time, presents itself as a cosmic, natural and human point of reference. The dome covers the round central hall of the villa, from whose perfect and absolute form the building takes its name (Rigon, 1980). “Moreover Palladio was very interested in mathematical harmony and this is reflected in the precise dimensions of each of the rooms of the villas, as well as in their dimensions in relation to each other.” (Cartwright, 2020, n/p). It highlights the close relationship and penetration of landscape and architecture, in addition it is a building subject to strict proportions, “which embodies the idea of the centralized work par excellence, as a “pure” concept of art, which is opposed to Nature” (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 186). The pictorial decoration was commissioned to Maganza, with whom the sculptor Rubini, also the author of the four statues and the figures on the tympanums, collaborated on the stuccoes (Rigon, 1980).



Images 18 and 19 show the superb façade of this stupendous work (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 18 and 19. Villa Capra

THE PALACES

Thiene Palace. It is accepted as a date of construction between 1542 and 1545, which allows us to understand the padding in the purest style of Julio Romano that it adopts after his first contacts with this artist (Rigon, 1980). It is actually a restructuring of a palace of the previous century that the Thiene brothers consider necessary to remodel due to their rank and cosmopolitan visits appropriate to the category of these Italian nobles (Beltrami, 2014). Only two of the four projected wings were built to the palace, being the unbuilt part the most interesting part of the project, with a facade that would face the main avenue of the city of Vicenza (Rigon, 1980).



One of Palladio's first works was Palazzo Thiene, a restructuring of an earlier palace, on whose façade can be seen the cushioning inspired by Julio Romano (Cedeño, 2023).

Image 20. Palazzo Thiene

Palazzo Chiericati (1550), harmoniously proportioned, classical in spirit, yet with enough originality of facade treatment, with a contrast between clear and massive, that it is considered a magnificent building. "It is the only palace by Andrea Palladio that conforms practically in its entirety to the plans of its author" (Wundram and Pape, 2004, pp. 78). Girolamo Chiericati was one of those who supported Palladio in taking over the Basilica at the same time that Palladio was building this palace. "To give it greater magnificence, but also to protect it from the frequent floods (but also from the cattle that were sold in front of the palace on market days), Palladio raises it on a podium with a central staircase clearly borrowed from an ancient temple. The extraordinary novelty of this palace in the panorama of Renaissance urban residences is due to Palladio's extraordinary ability to interpret the place in which it was built. A context that makes it an ambiguous building, palace and suburban villa together (Beltrami, 2014, pp. 20).



One of his best palaces is Palazzo Chiericati located in Vicenza and of which the image allows us to see a detail of the right loggia (Cedeño, 2023).

Image 21. Palazzo Chiericati

CHURCHES IN VENICE

San Giorgio Maggiore. In 1565, Palladio received from the Benedictines of the island of San Giorgio the commission to rebuild the old convent church, which was completed after his death, between 1583 and 1589, and the facade until 1611 (Rigon, 1980), a building

inspired by the Basilica of Maxentius (built in the fourth century in the Forum of Rome) and the ancient Roman baths. The facade, with its columns on massive bases are crowned with Corinthian capitals and its two front temples are intertwined. In the planimetry one can clearly read the four spatial entities that for Palladio would compose the body of the building (Cartwright, 2020; Beltramini, 2014). In relation to the location of the church, Palladio understood perfectly the conditions imposed by the visual axis of the surroundings (Wundram and Pape, 2004). Among the works of art found inside the church are paintings by Tintoretto (Cartwright, 2020).



Image 22 allows us to appreciate the Roman-inspired façade of San Giorgio. Image 23 shows the architectural purism of Palladio inside the church (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 22 and 23. San Giorgio Maggiore

THE REDEEMER

In 1576, due to a plague epidemic, the Venice city senate decided to erect a votive church to the Redeemer, specifically located on the island of Giudecca (Wundram and Pape, 2004). The luminous white Istrian stone façade contrasts strikingly with the red brickwork of the rest of the building. The interior design of the Redeemer reflects its function to welcome the *doge* in the great annual procession held on the third Sunday of July, the feast of Jesus Christ the Redeemer. For this reason, the nave is extremely wide and has no aisles. The interior has very little decoration and is rather white in color (Cartwright, 2020). The plan derives from the harmonious composition of four perfectly defined and diverse spatial

cells: the rectangle of the nave, the side chapels, the tricora cell and the choir (Beltramini, 2014). Palladio preferred to give character to the church through the play of abundant light reflected on its arches and columns of Corinthian order. The luminosity in the interior is produced by the semicircular windows made with a highly transparent glass, a specialty of the workshops of the city of Murano known as *cristallo* (Cartwright, 2020).



Image of the facade of the Redentor (Cedeño, 2023).

Image 24. The Redeemer

THE OLYMPIC THEATER

Palladio was a member of the Olympic Society of Vicenza, when on February 15, 1580 he was asked for a design and a model, which he presented on February 20, which confirms that Palladio had been working on the theater for more than two decades, and that due to the suddenness of his death that same year, he could not see it finished, signing a contract in 1584 with Vincenzo Scamozzi for its completion, which introduced some modifications to the original project (Wundram and Pape, 2004).



The Teatro Olimpico was Palladio's last work, which he was unable to finish. In addition to all the scenography surrounding the theater, particularly interesting are the vanishing views that were achieved on the stage (Cedeño, 2023).

Images 25 and 26. The Olympic Theater

THE FOUR BOOKS OF ARCHITECTURE

In addition to his vast architectural work, Palladio is recognized for his “*quattro libri dell'architettura*”. His great influence on architectural design lies in this work (Risebero, 1991), a brilliant treatise in which, thanks to his profound knowledge of classical theorists - mainly Vitribius - he laid the foundations of a new architectural language based on proportion and ancient architectural orders (Tomé, n/d). It was printed in all European countries from 1570 onwards and contributed greatly to publicizing his concern for classical forms and proportions. Because it included drawings of his own works, this work also helped to publicize the architect (Risebero, 1991).

The work consists of the following four volumes:

The first deals with the architect's tools, the choice of materials, construction techniques, classical orders and the rules of proportion. The second volume proposes several models of palaces both in plan and in elevation. A way to put into practice the theories presented in the first book. In the third book, based on Vitruvius, Palladio focuses on the construction and organization of streets, squares, palaces, bridges, basilicas and various urban facilities. The last book presents several ornamental models that the author compiled during his visits to Rome (Tomé, n.d.).

PALLADIANISM AND NEO-PALLADIANISM

His ideas embodied in *The Four Books of Architecture* transcended the transalpine borders, spreading with notable success during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries throughout the different European territories, especially England, where his theory was ahead of Neoclassicism, even influencing countries such as the United States, China or Australia (Tomé, n/d).

Until the middle of the 18th century, English architecture was under the total influence of the so-called Palladianism (Engel, 2000). After the Civil War, there was a boom in England of large stately mansions in the countryside, where the landowners spent the summer entertaining themselves with all kinds of entertainments such as hunts and reciprocal visits. Thus “the bourgeois and noble landowners, who had acquired a new awareness of their own importance after the establishment of the constitutional monarchy, were the first in Europe to abandon the formal baroque language to build their residences, and the first to look for a more discreet and moderate ideal of creation, but which would not cease to be dignified and solemn” (Engel, 2000, pp.15). They found it in Palladio “whose constructions were characterized by great simplicity and a marked balance, based on the application of strict symmetry and a logical system of proportions”. Moreover, Palladio was not unknown, since in the 17th century the English architect Inigo Jones had already taken his works as a model (Engel, 2000, pp.15). Jones designed magnificent structures such as the Queen Consort's House in Greenwich and the Banqueting House in Whitehall, London (Cartwright, 2020, n.p.). Later in the 18th century, Colen Campbell's Mereworth Castle, Kent (1722), is a reproduction of Villa Capra, unsuited to the English climate. Very similar is Chiswick House (1725) by Lord Burlington

and William Kent. For these Palladian houses the garden constituted an integral part of the design, initially designed by Kent in a style opposed to that of the French Le Nôtre, who imposed a rigid discipline on nature. The English garden has an informal and artistic system, seeking to enhance the natural landscape and not to restructure it (Risebero, 1991). “The Palladian style offered a good routine solution for the design of many of the public buildings” such as the Senate House in Cambridge (1722) by James Gibbs and the Horse Guards building in London (1750) by Kent. The best is arguably Somerset House in Strand, London (1776) by William Chambers (Risebero, 1991).

CONCLUSIONS

Something that is very complicated when admiring Palladio's complete work is to be able to choose those works that in our opinion are the best. Perhaps the Villa Capra is the most beautiful of his villas and the Palazzo Chiericati the most beautiful of his palaces? Difficult to decide! And what about the

Basilica or the Teatro Olimpico. It is difficult to make a decision because each of his works has special characteristics that make them unique, and of course, a great beauty. All this great work of Palladio that we have reviewed here, which is not all that Palladio produced, show us the ability of this great architect to design, build, write, and subsequently influence the architectures of other times and countries. The years go by and people continue to write about the great work of this great architect, without seeming to get fed up with it. The truth is that Mannerism marks a moment in history in which architecture becomes full enjoyment, and not only Palladio, but other architects who shared with him the historical moment of the Veneto as Julio Romano, Sansovino or Sanmichelli continue to delight us with their works despite the passage of time. But we must not forget the Neoclassical, a style in which, without intending to, Palladio becomes the protagonist. Anyway, let us continue to delight us with his works.

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