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## **The Mannerism of Giulio Romano: Innovation and dramatic imagery**

**Abstract.** Giulio Romano was a prominent Italian Mannerist architect from Mantua of the Late Renaissance who made a significant contribution to the development of architectural processes and proposed methods of interpreting the order system used in the modern era. The research aims to present the architect's activity as a natural step in the development of the classical order system. The methods of systematisation, comparative and synchronic analyses were used. The study analyses from the artistic point of view the most significant realised objects by Giulio Romano: Palazzo del Te, Cavalerizza in Palazzo Ducale, and the architect's house in Mantua. It is shown how the artist interpreted the order system to form an individual architectural style, full of drama and tension in composition. The study proposes a concept that explains the reason for the emergence of Mannerism, which is based on the Renaissance architects' perception of their place in the historical process. It is shown that the architects' understanding of their time as superior to the masters of antiquity and the awareness of the idea of permanent development as the basis of the historical process created a methodological and methodological prerequisite for Mannerism, which can be described by the term "stylisation". The study also proves that the methods of interpreting the order system proposed during the Late Renaissance were developed in the practice of postmodernism and have not lost their relevance in the present

**Keywords:** Mannerist architecture; transformation of the order system; Mantua; stylisation

### **INTRODUCTION**

The term "Mannerism" appeared in the dictionary of art and architecture historians in the late nineteenth century. It was coined to distinguish between classical Renaissance art and the "anti-classical" (according to the ideas of the time) Baroque. The acknowledged master of Mannerism was the architect Giulio Romano, whose work is mostly associated with the Italian city of Mantua. His work, due to its vivid specificity and non-triviality of architectural solutions, has long attracted scholars and many works have been devoted to his activities. In particular, the architect's work is covered in the chapters in the collected works of W.D. Faught (1969), which generally deals with the problems of the development of Italian Renaissance architecture. F. Hartt, & D. Wilkins (2003) is a synthetic

work devoted to various aspects of Italian Renaissance art. Thus, A.P.C.M. Stoeldraijer (2013) presents an interesting and important proportional analysis of the facades of Renaissance palazzos and derives general compositional and scaled regularities of their construction.

Another group of studies includes publications devoted directly to the work of G. Romano. The early (Roman) period of the architect's work is the subject of a study by D.J. Jansen (2019). T. Rutter (2019) analysed the architect's work in the context of contemporary artists. The work of M. Introini & L. Spinelli (2018) is a collection of the most prominent architectural objects of Mantua with detailed information on the time of design and construction of objects, including works by G. Romano. An important source

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for understanding not only the peculiarities of the architect's work but also the ideological context of his time was the study by D.L. Michiulis (2016), devoted to a deep and comprehensive analysis of the most prominent object of G. Romano – Palazzo del Te in Mantua.

Methodologically, the study is based on two consecutive steps: visual surveys and interpretation of the results of visual surveys. The objects presented in this article were examined by the author independently in 2018-2020. They include Palazzo del Te, the so-called "Cavalerizza" in Palazzo Ducale, the architect's own house on *Via Carlo Poma*, the city gate *Porta Giulia*, and the Fish Market. The work of any architect can only be considered in the context of the historical and political events of his time. To form the historical and political background of the development of the architecture of that time, the research of L. Kaborycha (2013) and Lviv historian L. Voitovych (2018) was used. Another important prerequisite for writing this article was the work with materials devoted to various problems of Italian Renaissance art. For example, V. Mako (2021) wrote about Mannerist interpretations of the order system, and L. De Girolami Cheney (2016) analysed the ethical problems of the Renaissance (in particular, the concept of beauty).

Based on the comparative analysis, the characteristic methods of transformation of the order system in the objects designed by G. Romano were identified. The criteria for the analysis were the following: a change in the scale of the elements of the order system, a change in compositional rhythms, and peculiarities of the interpretation of visual architectonics. Based on the historical and logical approach, the cultural context of the time when the architect worked was analysed and the peculiarities of the Renaissance's perception of the ancient heritage were determined. The semi-otic approach was used to trace the development of the semantics of the architectural order, the change in its meaning and the significance of morphological transformations.

Thus, the architect's art is mostly interpreted in studies as a phenomenon of his time and its significance for further processes of architectural development has not been considered. Therefore, the research aims to present the peculiarities of the work of Giulio Romano, one of the representatives of Mannerism in the architecture of Italy during the Late Renaissance, not only as an outstanding phenomenon of the late Italian Renaissance but also as a natural step in the development of the order system, due to the current cultural situation.

## THE BEGINNING OF GIULIO ROMANO'S CAREER IN ROME

Giulio Romano (true name Giulio Pippi, 1499-1546) is one of those representatives of the late Italian Renaissance who combined the talents of a painter, sculptor, and architect. His career is divided into two periods: the first in Rome, when he worked in Raphael's studio and was considered the most gifted of his students, and the second in Mantua. The analysis of the first period of his art is difficult (his role and importance in Raphael's workshop is unknown, as well

as the degree of independence in the execution of orders), the next period is the time of independent activity, which has brought us much more information (Jansen, 2019).

G. Romano was born and raised in Rome (he was the only known architect of the Italian Renaissance who was a native of Rome). He was among Raphael's students who were entrusted with the paintings of the Villa Farnesina, the Vatican loggias and stanzas, and the decoration of the Villa Madama in Rome (Hartt, 1944).

G. Romano is credited with the construction of two palazzos in Rome: *Palazzo Alberini* (1519) and *Palazzo Maccarani Stati* (1535). As for the Palazzo Alberini, according to some sources, it was still Raphael's project (Coffin *et al.*, 2008) and G. Romano did not take any part in the design and implementation, and according to G. Vasari, G. Romano was the architect of the palazzo (although the first floor is attributed to D. Bramante with a possible date of 1512). The palazzo was completed by P. Rosselli (Grundmann & Fürst, 1998). The current appearance of the building is the result of reconstructions in the nineteenth century. The general composition and decor of the palazzo's facade corresponded to the type of Roman palazzo of the early sixteenth century, developed by D. Bramante: the rusticated ground floor, the main second floor (where the owner's rooms were located) is decorated with the richest flat pilasters and window frames, the third floor, which was intended for the servants, had the most modest decoration.

In 1520, Romano's teacher, Raphael Santi, died, and in 1521, the architect's patron, Pope Leo X. This may have been the reason why he was forced to look for new patrons and left Rome. Thus, in 1524, G. Romano began working in Mantua for his new patron, Marquis Federico II Gonzaga (Jansen, 2019).

The historical context in which the architect's work unfolded is important for understanding G. Romano's work. The beginning of the sixteenth century in Italy was a time of dramatic military cataclysms. Political fragmentation made Italy easy prey for the neighbouring states of France and Spain, each of which had completed its unification at the end of the fifteenth century and turned into a strong centralised monarchy. The Italian states, which were constantly at odds with each other, themselves gave rise to foreign invasions – the so-called Italian Wars, which devastated the country's territory for 65 years – from 1494 to 1559. Emerging as a dynastic struggle for the throne of the Kingdom of Naples, the Italian Wars quickly turned into a pan-European conflict. Since the 1520s, the main component of this conflict has been the struggle between France and the Habsburgs for dominance in Western Europe. The political outcome of the wars was the transfer of Italy to Spanish rule, the consolidation of its fragmentation and the pushing of Italian states to the periphery of European international relations (Kaborycha, 2011; Voitovych, 2018).

The year 1521 marked the beginning of the last period of wars in Italy, which lasted until 1559. The King of Spain, together with the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, launched a military campaign against France, after which he captured Milan, where French garrisons were based. Gradually,



Charles V turned the Pope, the King of England, Florence, and Mantua into his allies. In 1530, Emperor Charles V appointed Frederick II of the Gonzago family, who had ruled Mantua since 1328, as the first duke of the newly formed Duchy of Mantua. The historical power and influence of the duchy under the Gonzago family made it one of the main artistic and cultural centres of Northern Italy. It is with the personality and activities of Frederick II of Gonzaga that the work of G. Romano is associated (Voitovich, 2018).

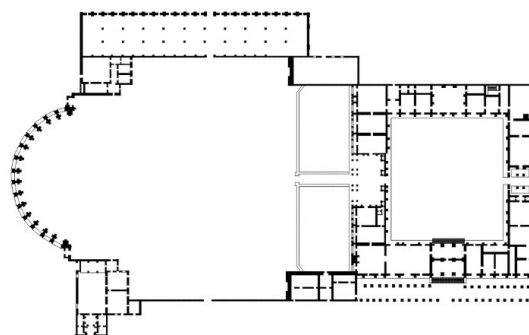
### THE BEGINNING OF GIULIO ROMANO'S CAREER IN MANTUA

After moving to Mantua in 1524, G. Romano was appointed supervisor of the construction of all the buildings of the Dukes of Gonzago in 1526, and later received the position of the so-called "supervisor of the streets". At this time, he realised his most significant projects: the Palazzo del Te, the Cavalerizza in the Palazzo Duccale, his own house, as well as the reconstruction of the Duomo in Mantua, the design of the Fish Market, the City Gate, and several smaller commissions.

One of the first buildings in Mantua, the Palazzo del Te (1525-1534), was the most significant and large-scale architectural achievement in Mantua. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the Riona Canal divided Mantua into several parts, forming small islands surrounded by lakes. One of these islands, *Tejeto*, or Te for short, was quite swampy. By order of the Duke of Gonzago, the island was drained and adapted for the construction of the stables of the Dukes of Gonzago, who were famous for breeding horses and supplying them to the most famous families in Europe. Philip II of the Gonzago family decided to build a country villa next to the stables, which was entrusted to G. Romano. It is worth noting that Federico II Gonzago was a great patron of the arts, and his relentless desire to build and decorate was considered one of his most important virtues. The construction work was completed relatively quickly in less than two years – from 1524 to 1526, and the interior decoration took a decade. However, in 1630, during the Mantuan War, the palace was looted and later abandoned. Later, it was used as sheepfolds and military warehouses. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the building became the municipal property of Mantua, it was restored, and a museum was opened there (Introini & Spinelli, 2018).

G. Romano created the palace complex as a composition of ideal geometric volumes. The palace building is low and has a horizontal composition, which allows it to harmoniously fit into the picturesque surroundings. It was fully in line with the principles of Renaissance architecture. However, at the same time, it was a completely innovative work. The architect was one of the first in the late Renaissance architecture to offer an example of an axial composition that develops in space, thus anticipating the Baroque practice (Fig. 1). The centre of the composition is the palace building, which is adjoined by a garden surrounded by rows of columns. The composition is completed by a semicircular colonnade called *Esedra*. The palace itself is a square building with a large inner square courtyard and

four entrances leading to the courtyard. The main entrance from the city is made in the form of a loggia consisting of three arches (Fig. 2). The façade planes are covered with rough rustication and are divided by the rhythm of rectangular windows and Tuscan pilasters. The main function of the pilasters is to create a clear vertical order in the façade composition. However, the architect was not particularly concerned about this: the distances between the pilasters vary without forming a specific metric series. In addition, the surface of the pilasters, which was carefully worked out in detail, contrasted with the rough texture of the rustication. Already in 1537, Sebastiano Serlio wrote that the palace looked similar to the work of human hands and the creation of nature (Stoeldraijer, 2013).



**Figure 1.** Palazzo del Te in Mantua. Layout  
**Source:** author's drawing



**Figure 2.** Palazzo del Te in Mantua. North facade, entrance to the palace

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1525-1534  
**Source:** author's photo

The façade of the palace from the side of the spacious garden is interpreted differently, and it is, after all, the most famous (Fig. 3). The architect again uses the idea of a three-bay arch but interprets it differently. This is a very harmonious, balanced composition, the core of which is the motif of a triumphal arch crowned with a triangular pediment. The five arches are supported by twin Tuscan columns, behind which is a luxurious loggia decorated with frescoes (Fig. 4). The motif of the arched colonnade is continued in the window decoration, forming a harmonious balanced horizontal. The façade is reflected in two small pools with a bridge over them, which fills the composition with additional harmony and inner peace and brings it closer to nature.



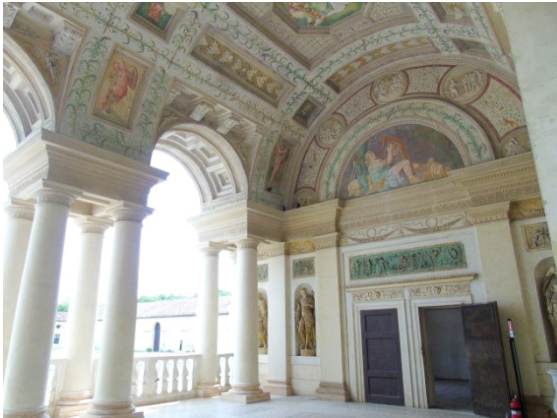


**Figure 3.** Palazzo del Te in Mantua.

The facade of the palace from the garden

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1525-1534

**Source:** author's photo



**Figure 4.** Loggia of the Palazzo del Te

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1525-1534

**Source:** author's photo

In 1530, a small building, the *Appartamento della Grotta*, was built in the eastern part of the garden. It consists of several small rooms with small loggia and its small courtyard with a grotto, where there used to be a water cascade for playing and bathing (Fig. 5; Fig. 6).



**Figure 5.** Palazzo del Te in Mantua.

Loggia of the house with a grotto

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1525-1534

**Source:** author's photo

The small loggia is decorated with Pompeian-style frescoes depicting various episodes of life and death. The side walls were once decorated with frescoes with perspective views of buildings, but they have not survived. At the top of the wall, there are 18 niches containing images from Aesop's fables. The main entrance to the house is decorated paradoxically, resembling a cave entrance, and defiantly contrasting with the balanced and harmonious composition of the courtyard. The dramatic clash of the "natural" and the man-made, the rough and the refined, again becomes the leitmotif of the architectural concept.



**Figure 6.** Palazzo del Te in Mantua.

Entrance to the house with a grotto

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1525-1534

**Source:** author's photo

However, the most interesting for analysis is the courtyard of the palace "*cortile*" (Fig. 7). The dynamism and ambiguity of the courtyard's forms contrast with the harmonious completeness and tranquillity of the garden façade. Peter Murray noted that the whole building "is full of surprises and contradictions which are obviously intentional and which, furthermore, were intended to appeal to a highly sophisticated taste since most of the established rules of architecture are deliberately flouted in such a way that the educated spectator is intended to feel a thrill of delicious horror" (Faught, 1969). The author chooses and uses elements not based on their structural function, but on their "dynamic" capabilities, giving them a new paradoxical sound in a familiar context. Here, a violation of many rules of architectonics can be noticed: the famous "falling" triglyphs from the cornice, the combination of the arched form of the portal with a triangular pediment (which is a structural paradox), the use of giant keystones, and finally, the rhythm of the semi-columns that breaks up the surface of the rusticated façade is also not uniform. A. Ikonnikov points out the ambiguity of the interpretation of the order: it may be its incompleteness, or it may be the beginning of its destruction: "The unexpectedness of the whole is emphasised by the imitation of randomness, the instability of the situation" (Ikonnikov, 1997). The abundance of textures and the combination of elements from



different architectural vocabularies seem to deliberately demonstrate a disregard for the principles of classical heritage: “The impression on the viewer of the time must have been extremely great” (Hartt & Wilkins, 2003).



**Figure 7.** Palazzo del Te in Mantua.  
Order system of the courtyard

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1525-1534  
**Source:** author’s photo

The theme of tension, destruction, and ambiguity is continued in the interior of the palace. The *Sala dei Giganti* has frescoes depicting the fall of giants (circa 1530-34) (Fig. 8; Fig. 9), based on Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. One fresco completely covers the entire surface of the hall, “crawling” onto the dome’s plane and blurring the boundary between the surfaces. The dome depicts Jupiter, who, with a bunch of lightning bolts in his hand, smashes the Giants trying to climb Olympus. Boulders and columns fall on their bodies. These frescoes, which make extensive use of illusion and a certain theatrical patheticism, are one of the most striking manifestations of Mannerist art (Michiulis, 2016).



**Figure 8.** “The Hall of Giants” in the Palazzo del Te in Mantua. The image of Jupiter on the dome of the hall  
**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1530-1534  
**Source:** author’s photo



**Figure 9.** “The Hall of Giants” in the Palazzo del Te in Mantua. Depicting the Giants trying to climb Olympus  
**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1530-1534  
**Source:** author’s photo

The iconography of these frescoes is traditionally interpreted as a recognition of the power of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, as the frescoes were executed around the time of Charles V’s global political reorganisation of Italy. And the patron saint of G. Romano, Federico II Gonzago, often acted as an ally of the emperor in the long Italian wars (Voitovych, 2018). However, researchers note that the iconography can be additionally interpreted in an alternative way – as a secret warning message from G. Romano to the emperor, whom the architect will see during the emperor’s second visit to the palace in 1532 about the possibility of the collapse of the empire and the transience of earthly power (Michiulis, 2016).

The Palazzo Ducale in Mantua was the residence of the noble Gonzaga family from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. G. Romano was commissioned to build additional rooms adjacent to the palazzo in 1538-1539, which were to face the lakefront garden. This facade, later called *La Rustica*, is now part of the courtyard (Fig. 10). Three additional facades were built later by Giovanni Battista Bertani around 1556 in the style of G. Romano (later, in the seventeenth century, this courtyard was called *Cortile della Cavallerizza*) (Introini & Spinelli, 2018).

At first glance, the composition of the façade resembles the Bramantean Roman palazzo type: a massive parterre lined with rusticated wood, and the upper floors decorated with an order. However, this analogy is not entirely correct: it is rather a free interpretation of Brahman motifs. The lower arched floor is ostentatiously decorated with a rough “rustic” rusticated style, the rhythm of the arches is off, and they have “lost” their foundations and start directly from the ground, “hinting at the instability of the foundation”. The





windows in the piers of the blind arches actually “cut into” the arches and create a certain visual tension: they protrude the keystones of the arches, which in turn “breakthrough” the line of the inter-floor cornice. However, the most surprising are the semi-columns of the second floor (Fig. 11).



**Figure 10.** The courtyard of La Rustica (now *Cortile della Cavallerizza*) near Palazzo Ducale

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1538-1539

**Source:** author’s photo



**Figure 11.** The facade of La Rustica, designed by G. Romano

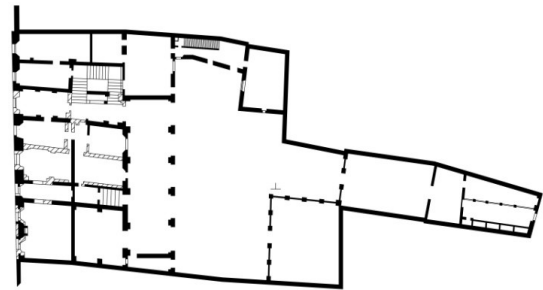
**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1538-1539

**Source:** author’s photo

The semi-columns are twisted unusually in different directions, showing the tension and destructive effects of external forces. They are supported by consoles, which, however, seem unstable themselves. The detailing of the windows and doors is also paradoxical. The windows in the smaller piers are finished with simple cornices, and this is quite enough from a structural point of view. However, above them, the theme of a bow-shaped arch unfolds, which contradicts the architectonics. The arch’s keystone is immediately “supported” by a quite classical entablature with triglyphs. It seems that it was this entablature that caused the “flattening” of the bow-shaped arch. The larger piers house the balcony doors, which have a rectangular frame. However, they are again surrounded by a blind arch. The combination of a rectangular lintel and an arch, which

in itself contradicts the constructive purity, is the same technique that has already been used in the treatment of the Palazzo del Te courtyard. The attic floor was completed after the death of G. Romano Battista Bertani around 1570. Subsequently, Bertani repeated the “mannerist” experiment on the other three facades of the courtyard, creating a coherent composition (Introini & Spinelli, 2018).

In 1531, G. Romano bought an old building and a plot of land in Mantua to build his own house. The architect partially preserved the existing building and partially completed it. The result is a building that is complex both in terms of its interior and facade aesthetics (Fig. 12; Fig. 13). It is a multifunctional building with an asymmetrical layout, which is also reflected in the organisation of the façade, which is stretched along the street front and squeezed into the row housing.



**Figure 12.** The layout of G. Romano’s house in Mantua

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1531-1535

**Source:** author’s drawing



**Figure 13.** G. Romano’s house in Mantua

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1531-1535

**Source:** author’s photo

On the ground floor was the architect’s studio, which opened onto the courtyard through an arched loggia. It displayed (according to Vasari) antiquities “brought from Rome and received from the Duke” (Introini & Spinelli, 2018). Living rooms were located on the second floor, including a frescoed salon with a fireplace. The façade is divided by a horizontal inter-floor cornice, which curves in a strange way above the main entrance, forming its pediment. In this way, the cornice loses even its illusory tectonics and turns into a



decorative element. The curvature of the cornice is accentuated by the axis, which is supported by the sculpture of Mercury in the Oedipus above the main entrance. The rough rustication of the first floor gives way to a more refined one on the second level. The main architectural theme of the second-floor façade is blind rusticated arcades with large windows with triangular sandriks in the piers. They contrast with the semi-circular ends of the arches. The keystones are embedded in the crowning cornice.

Mantua is surrounded by several lakes, so fishing and selling fish has always been an important part of the city's economy. Since the Middle Ages, many residents have been involved in the fishing business, and the city had a fishery inspection to ensure that taxes were paid properly, prices were not inflated, and products were fresh and of good quality (Grandi, 2007). Therefore, the construction of the Fish Market in Mantua was prompted by the need to streamline the control and sales processes. In 1536, this task was entrusted to G. Romano. According to medieval tradition, the market was built partially over the bridge over the Rio Canal (Fig. 14; Fig. 15). Its planning structure consists of two porticoes placed parallel to each other. The ground floor level of the porticoes is cut through by arcades with a deliberately rough rustication. The second floor is designed as a massive attic, divided by metric rows of rusticated pilasters and windows. The work was completed in 1546 (Introini & Spinelli, 2018).



**Figure 14.** Fish market in Mantua. General view

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1536-1546

**Source:** author's photo



**Figure 15.** Fish market in Mantua. Internal port view

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1536-1546

**Source:** author's photo

The Porta Giulia (*Porta della Cittadella*, 1542-1549) is a city gate through a fortified outpost for the defence of Mantua (Fig. 16; Fig. 17). The construction of the citadel began earlier in 1522-1538 by order of Federico II Gonzaga. Construction continued intermittently, and in 1542 G. Romano was commissioned to build a new city gate to replace the previous one. The leitmotif of the compositional solution was the theme of a triumphal arch with a high-arched passage in the middle and smaller rectangular entrances on the sides (a kind of interpretation of Serliana). Doric rusticated pilasters support the entablature, which is divided by triglyphs and metopes. The inner space is not only a transit communication, but a large room covered with a barrel vault. From the inner space of the gate, there were entrances to the rooms for artillery positions, the brig, and warehouses (Introini & Spinelli, 2018).



**Figure 16.** Giulia port. General view

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1542-1549

**Source:** author's photo



**Figure 17.** Giulia port. Inside the gate space

**Note:** architect G. Romano, 1542-1549

**Source:** author's photo

G. Romano also carried out other commissions, such as the reconstruction of the Duomo in Mantua in 1545 (the main façade was completed and the interiors were changed), the design of the *Torelli house at Piazza Broletto*





(1527), and the portals of palaces (Rutter, 2019). In general, the architect's projects have defined the architectural image of the city to this day.

### G. ROMANO'S MANNERISM: ORIGINS AND PECULIARITIES

The question of the origins of G. Romano's architectural "style" remains open. After all, he was not the only Mannerist in the Italian Renaissance. It is possible to mention Balthasor Perucci, Sebastiano Serlio, Michelangelo, and Andrea Palladio. These architects, whose work took place in the early to mid-sixteenth century, represented different approaches to understanding and using ancient heritage. Researchers note that the key to understanding their work is the word "manner", which was the desire to distinguish themselves and their activities from others, to find their path (Coffin *et al.*, 2008).

It is difficult to say whether Mannerism was opposed to "classical" architecture: in this case, it is necessary to understand what "classical architecture" is. It was an architecture that focused on the development of ancient heritage. However, the ancient heritage itself did not leave clear indications of what is a classical order and what is not. Its comprehension and search for "ideal" examples continued throughout the Renaissance, starting with Alberti and his reprinting and new interpretation of Vitruvius' Ten Books. Alberti was the first Renaissance architect to consistently apply the structural techniques of Roman builders – pillars, arches, cylindrical vaults, and hemispherical domes (Graschenkov, 1977). Alberti proposed a methodology for using Roman heritage in contemporary construction: projecting an ancient order onto the wall plane of a Roman palazzo (Palazzo Rucellai in Florence (1446-1451); for the facade of the Church of Sant'Andrea in Mantua (project of 1470, Alberti chose prototypes of the Roman order), Alberti chose the composition of the ancient Roman triumphal arch as a prototype, supplementing it with a "large" (three-storey high) "graphic order"; decorating the facade of the medieval church of Santa Maria Novella (1456-1470) in Florence in an "inferior" style). In Florence in the "inlay style", Alberti combined medieval and Renaissance motifs in one composition, linking them with a rational system of proportionality based on three levels (Ikonnikov, 1997).

The pinnacle of the development of Renaissance architecture was marked by the work of Bramante, where the culmination of mastering the language of the classical Roman order was reached. It was necessary to find new ways of developing architecture. One of them was the path based on the principle of autonomy of artistic form, which was especially noticeable in painting (the first signs of this phenomenon can be observed already around 1520), and later spread to other types of artistic creativity, including architecture. The spread of Mannerism in architecture is associated with the work of Raphael and his school. The specificity of the form was the preservation of the vocabulary of architectural forms of the Roman heritage, but the syntax and patterns of combining forms became a field for experimentation.

G. Romano seems to have gone the furthest, offering paradoxical, dramatic solutions (Ikonnikov, 1997).

An important question is: why did it become possible for architects to treat the heritage of Ancient Rome so "freely"? Why does a deviation from a certain norm (even conditional) become the basis of creativity? It should be noted that the famous treatise "The Rule of the Five Orders of Architecture", based on a thorough study of ancient monuments and Vitruvius' treatise, was published by G. Villola only in 1562, after the death of G. Romano.

The question requires immersion in the cultural situation of the time and an understanding of how architects understood themselves, their time, and how they related it to the past. In the Middle Ages, the question of historical distance (or the past) was not specified. After all, the past was irrelevant in the linear model of time that the Middle Ages formed: the future was predetermined in the paradigm of the providential of the end of the world and the Last Judgement (Savelyeva, 1997). However, starting from the Renaissance, a distinction between past, present, and future as modes of time began to emerge in the public consciousness. The appeal to antiquity was part of this process: antiquity became a shining unattainable ideal that was "hidden" and "distorted" by the dark ages of the Middle Ages: "But if this shining and sacred antiquity can be said to have since become something of an ideal model for imitation, then it can be argued that it is at this point that it (this antiquity) is distinguished and understood as 'otherness' – that is, its difference is manifested and defined through its distance in time. In other words, the concept of historical distance begins to emerge" (Shlipchenko, 2009). This "distance" created by the Renaissance "deprived antiquity of its reality, the classical world became an object of passionate nostalgia, which finds its symbolic expression in a newly emerging, revived – after fifteen centuries – such a charmingly alluring image... The classical past was now, perhaps for the first time, looked at as an integrity cut off from the present, as an ideal to be strived for". In other words, "the world of antiquity has died, but the dead and later resurrected souls have the advantages of 'immortality and omnipresence'" (Ikonnikov, 1997). The Renaissance rediscovered Antiquity, which had become a distant but important past, and its development was interrupted by the Middle Ages. Thus, in the fifteenth century, a new cyclical concept of time was formed: where times of prosperity could alternate with times of decline. The Renaissance was interpreted as a time of new prosperity, and the idea was formulated that "the Renaissance can approach the level of the spiritual conquests of antiquity" (Graschenkov, 1977). In the historical consciousness, the present is also reinterpreted as a transition from the past to the future. This understanding, in turn, became an impetus for a specific attitude towards the heritage of Ancient Rome: it is an ideal that needs to be imitated.

A new understanding of one's time as a link in a continuous historical process became a defining moment in the formation of the Renaissance worldview. Recognition



of antiquity as a perfect ideal stimulated the active involvement of ancient examples in architectural practice, however, a methodology for their use was developed. L. Batkyn (1989) introduces the term “stylisation” for this: “Here, of course, is the necessary term. The people of the Renaissance did not use it, because they did not use the term “personality”. They did not discuss the problems of personality, but they were interested in ‘diversity’. They did not discuss the problems of “stylisation”, but their focus was on free imitation to achieve their own goals, self-expression through the medium of a well-calculated paraphrase. This was neither epigoneanism nor following an ancient canon that was accepted without discussion, attributing a text to an anonymous author, nor subconsciously substituting, distorting, or barbarizing ancient structures in the Western and Byzantine Middle Ages. It was something fundamentally different from all of the above, namely stylisation”. Stylisation served as an “extremely successful historical solution” to the problem of imitation, and it constructively linked the “discovery of antiquity” with the justification of sovereign individual creativity: “It is easy to see that the Renaissance invention “for antiquity” was significantly different from what stylisation was later, what it became in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But one way or another, the Renaissance used it, apparently for the first time in the history of world culture, pushing away from antiquity for the sake of its rapid rise” (Batkyn, 1989).

Thus, G. Romano’s mannerism was historically grounded and reflected the worldview of the creators of his time. Romano’s “manner” was not only his stylisation. The formation of the architect’s “manner” was also influenced by the current political situation, which was discussed above, and by personal characteristics. In this aspect, the architect’s mannerism appears as a deeply subjectified reflection of the current cultural, political, and ideological situation. This complexity translated into internal drama, tension, and deep individuality of artistic images. It is impossible to deny the fact that the artistic tasks were fulfilled exclusively aesthetically: the scenographic nature of the idea, the effectiveness and originality of the solutions, and the admiration for the “speciality” of the artistic solution.

Analysing the stylistic techniques used by G. Romano in his work, which characterised his style, it is possible to distinguish the following:

- abstraction of order elements;
- exaggeration and distortion of the scale of elements;
- visual destruction and deprivation of tectonic elements;
- uneven and dynamic rhythms;
- the contrast between “natural” and “artificial”, “rough” and “refined”;
- imitation of instability and uncertainty, destruction and imperfection.

The architect’s prototypes are recognisable but interpreted in a particular way. This is an architecture that reflects “complexities and contradictions” (Venturi, 1965) and is an example of the so-called “double coding”. Romano’s art would have remained interesting only to a narrow circle of

specialists if it had not been for the postmodernism of the second half of the twentieth century. The legacy of Mannerism turned out to be not only an exciting discovery, but architects also adapted methods of interpreting the ancient heritage. One of the theorists and practitioners of Proto-Mannerism, the American architect R. Venturi, wrote: “...an aesthetic revolution made sense through Renaissance architecture that was a stylistic revival of an ancient vocabulary”, thus praising Mannerism as a significant aesthetic revolution. He compares the period of Mannerism in the architecture of the sixteenth century with the second half of the twentieth century – with postmodernism, and defines the characteristics of postmodernism, among others, as the principles found in G. Romano. These include contradiction, ambiguity, contrast, paradox, and diversity (Venturi & Brown, 2004). R. Venturi’s work demonstrates adherence to these principles, for example, the paradoxical ways of interpreting the order system are demonstrated by the completion of the wing of the National Gallery in London in 1987-1991 (Fig. 18).



**Figure 18.** Completion of a wing of the National Gallery in London (*Sainsbury Wing, National Gallery*)

**Note:** architect P. Venturi, 1987-1991

**Source:** author’s photo

On the façade of the building, it is possible to observe the confused rhythm of the pilasters, the paradoxical interpretation of classical details, visual authenticity, and an imitation of the imperfection and instability of the order system.

## CONCLUSIONS

Romano’s art is an example of how architecture reflects the complexities and contradictions of his era, full of tragic military events and profound cultural transformations. The analysis of the most significant objects by G. Romano, realised in Mantua, such as the Palazzo del Te, the Cavalerizza in the Palazzo Ducale, and the architect’s house, made it possible to see how the ideological and cultural vicissitudes of his time were reflected in the architecture of the architect. This was visualised in specific formal techniques





of architectural composition and interpretation of architectural detail, such as abstraction, distortion of scale and exaggeration of elements; visual destruction and deprivation of tectonicity; uneven and dynamic rhythms; special dramatic contrast between “natural” and “artificial”, “rough” and “refined”; imitation of instability and uncertainty, destruction, and imperfection.

In this context, the art of the Mannerist architect appears as a much deeper phenomenon than just a search for “his style”. This is an artistic reflection of the contradictions of his time, methodologically based on the involvement of forms and motifs of the architecture of the past in the current creative process. However, the Renaissance architects’ understanding of their time as one that not only reaches but also surpasses the masters of the past (antiquity), and their awareness of the idea of permanent development as the basis of the historical process, created a new methodology for using the heritage of the past, which can be described as “stylisation”. G. Romano appears as one of the most brilliant

stylists of his time, whose work was defined by emotionality and innovation. Architects saw progress in architecture in the maximum deviation from classical architecture, in the courage and unpredictability of interpretation.

The methods of interpreting the order system proposed by G. Romano have not lost their relevance to this day, as exemplified by the work of postmodern architects. The ideological basis for the transformation of the classical order has changed, but formal techniques are actively involved in the creative process of contemporary architects. Further study and comprehension of the methods of interpreting the order system in their relationship with semantic aspects is an interesting creative task for future research.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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## Маньєризм Джуліо Романо: новаторство і драматизм образів

**Анотація.** Джуліо Романо – видатний італійський архітектор-маньєрист з Мантуї доби Пізнього Відродження, який зробив значний внесок у розвиток архітектурних процесів, а також запропонував методи інтерпретації ордерної системи, що використовуються у сучасну добу. Саме тому метою статті є представити діяльність архітектора як закономірний крок у розвитку класичної ордерної системи. Для цього було використано методи систематизації, порівняльного та синхронічного аналізів. У дослідженні проаналізовано з художнього аспекту найзначніші реалізовані об'єкти Джуліо Романо: палаццо дель Те, Кавалеріцца в Палаццо Дуккале, власний будинок архітектора у Мантуї. Показано, яким чином митець інтерпретував ордерну систему для формування індивідуального архітектурного стилю, сповненого драматизму та напруженості композиції. У статті запропоновано концепцію, що пояснює причину виникнення маньєризму, яка базується на уявленні архітекторів епохи Ренесансу свого місця в історичному процесі. Показано, що розуміння архітекторами свого часу, як такого, що перевершує майстрів античності, та усвідомлення ідеї перманентного розвитку, як основи історичного процесу, створили методологічну та методичну передумову для маньєризму, яку можна окреслити терміном «стилізація». Також у статті доведено, що методи інтерпретації ордерної системи, запропоновані у період Пізнього Ренесансу, знайшли свій розвиток у практиці постмодернізму і не втратили свою актуальність і у теперішні часи

**Ключові слова:** маньєристична архітектура; трансформація ордерної системи; Мантуя; стилізація

