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## PALLADIO'S ARTISTIC HERITAGE AND ARCHITECTURAL TRADITIONS: CONCEPTUAL PARALLELS

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**Abstract:** The phenomenon of Palladianism in architecture in terms of factors and circumstances that contributed to its emergence, dissemination and particular popularity in Eastern European region has been examined in the article.

**Key words:** palladianism, architectural traditions, composition of architectural environment.

### 1. Introduction

The Age of Renaissance endowed the world of architecture with a number of famous artists. They left us a grand architectural and artistic heritage. But the creative achievements of the majority of them represent only the Renaissance architecture. Their names remained within their historical time, and their undoubtedly outstanding works did not turn into a recognized symbol of the architectural ideals of the Renaissance. Quite a different situation is seen in relation to the architectural heritage of Andrea Palladio. The composition principles and proportions embodied in his works, passed the timeframe of the Renaissance, gained many followers that had reflected these principles in their new buildings for many centuries. Palladio's name is mentioned not only in the context of Renaissance architecture, it is associated with the architecture of classicism, historicism, and even with the modern buildings. The basis for the architectural composition of these buildings erected in different times and within different styles lies in the Palladio's creative principles. They formed the foundation for the special phenomenon of Palladianism in the world architecture. Palladian architecture does not fade, it is rather timeless. As confirmed by Encyclopedia Britannica, the buildings inspired by the works of Andrea Palladio appeared in England, Ireland, the United States, Italy, as well as in Russia, Poland (which included the territory of modern Ukraine at that time), and Sweden in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. [1]. Thus, Palladianism was spreading across the European architecture unevenly. In addition to native Italy, the principles of compositional architecture of Andrea Palladio were graciously accepted in Northern and Eastern Europe. In Poland the Palladian type of palace architecture spread in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Palladio's influence is noticeable in the projects of almost all contemporary architects. Palladian architecture is considered to be a feature of Polish classical architecture. Among the objects representing the Polish Palladian architecture and inspired by the Palladio's projects are the "Królikarnia" (D. Merlini, 1782–86) constructed by the principle of Villas Rotonda in Warsaw, mansion in Lubostron (S. Zavadski, 1795–1800), the palaces in Smilow (S. Zavadski, 1797) and Bialaczow (I. Kubitski, 1797–1800). The Palladian style was brightly embodied in today's Ukraine as well. There were many followers of Palladio among Russian representatives of classicism and neoclassicism. In Ukraine, among others, Zavadovskiy mansion in Lialychi (G. Quarenghi, 1794–1795) and the residence of Rozumovskiy in Baturyn (Ch. Cameron, 1799–1803) were created adhering to the Palladio's architectural principles. The residence in Baturyn can be considered to be Palladian not only in terms of the building architectural proportions but also due to its landscape location on the high bank of the Seym river and is seen as a treasurable crown amidst the greenery of the park. It should be noted that the Palladian style manifested itself primarily in the palaces and residences, i.e. buildings that were ordered by the individuals. This means that the architectural and compositional principles Palladio applied in his work were generally clear and met the society aesthetic tastes. It is important that this trend has remained unchanged for a long historical time.

Since both Andrea Palladio and contemporary architects used the similar compositions and aesthetic design principles specific to the Renaissance, the following questions arise: 1) why the work of Andrea Palladio became a model for subsequent generations of architects; 2) why did the creative heritage of Andrea Palladio gain so many supporters in Eastern Europe? The aim of this study is to find the answers to these two questions.

## 2. Basic Theory Part

One would assume that the reason for the continuing relevance of Andrea Palladio's creative technique lies in the ideological and compositional principles of the Renaissance architecture he had embodied in his works. However, other architects of the Renaissance followed the same principles. Both Palladio and his contemporaries drew them from the single common source – from classical Roman architecture. So, there must be some other reason why the work of Andrea Palladio reached far beyond its historical time. There exist various hypotheses. One of them is that Palladio bequeathed a kind of universal “architectural blocks” to his colleagues from which architects were creating their own architectural ensembles without a great effort for many centuries. It is also noted that his drawings are clear and visible, so they are easy to be borrowed. It is recalled that Andrea Palladio was a pioneer in architecture; he was the first to forge a private housing to decent architectural level and actually gave a new lease of life to theater and theatrical scenery, having constructed Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza.

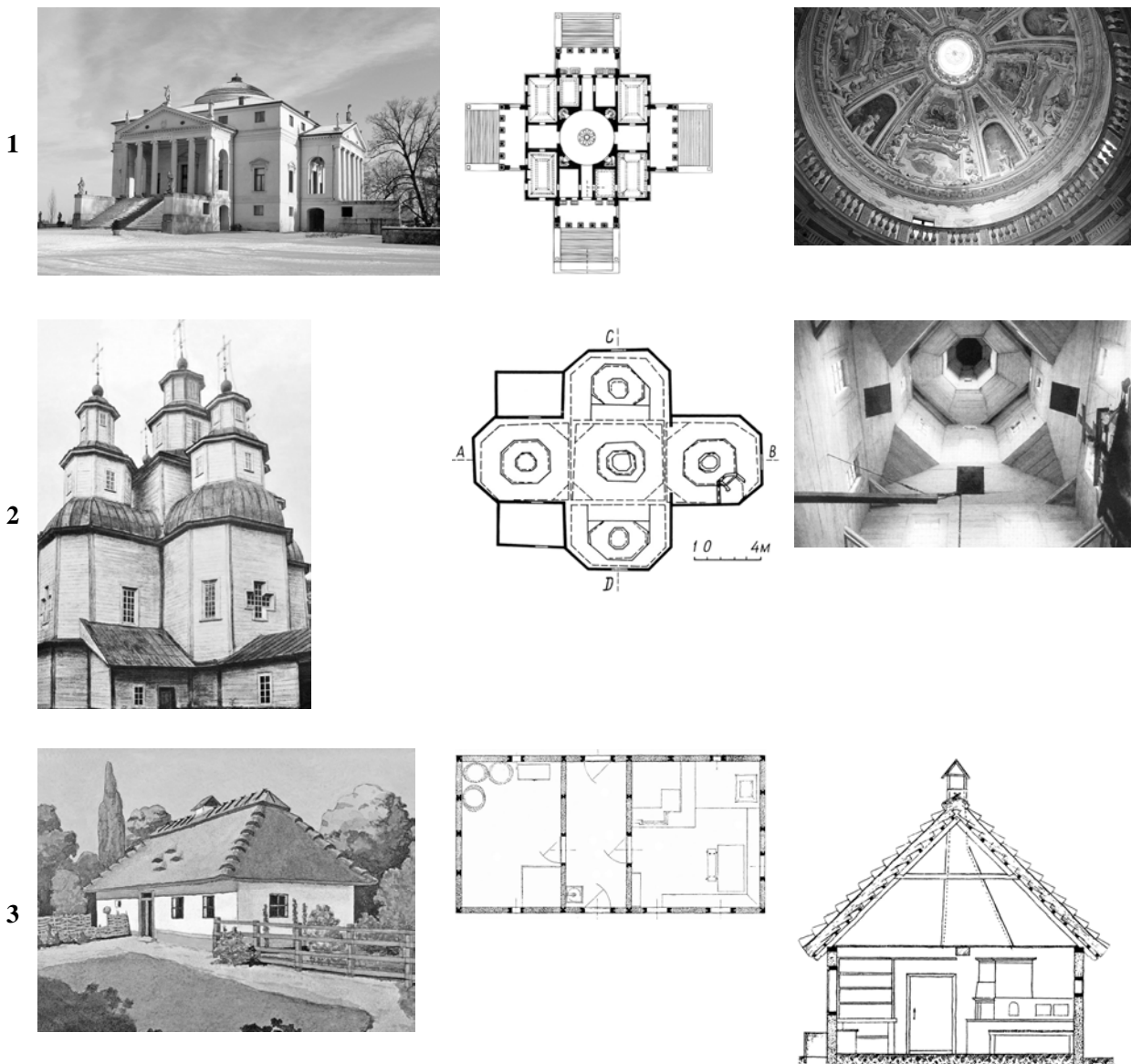
Without prejudice to these merits of Andrea Palladio, though, we would suggest that the answer is to be looked for much deeper. We believe that the fact that Andrea Palladio managed to seize the essence of the ancient builders' technique and find the way to use this ancient technique in the contemporary architecture is due to his view on the architect's tasks rather than to his professional skills. At that time it was introduced in the forms of the Renaissance and was also relevant within the other architectural styles. Obviously, it is consonant with the archetypal ideas what architectural structure should be and how it should be embedded into the environment. The hypothesis of this research is that the two important factors, namely, the first, that Andrea Palladio managed to find and implement some timeless aesthetic and philosophical values in the architecture, thus his works turned out to be always relevant and the second, that the local traditions of environment forming in Eastern Europe coincided with the compositional principles of Palladio and served as a resonator, which promoted spread of Palladian architecture in the European region have greatly contributed to the emergence of the Palladian architecture phenomenon and its particular popularity in Eastern Europe.

In the course of analyzing the Palladio's heritage in terms of this hypothesis the two special features of his architectural works were discovered. First is the devotion to the architectural image. The architectural form of a building appears to meet the constructive principle of its design. The authors note in the book “Architectural Theory from the Renaissance to the Present” that the main creative credo of Andrea Palladio was the desire to revive the ancient architectural traditions and endow them the universal values through his architectural works [2]. The ancient architectural traditions evolved from traditional construction and unjustified decor is alien to them. Ancient architecture is thought to be very rational and functional, hence the presence of structural construction. Columns and all other parts of the ancient order are primarily structural elements that ensure the building stability. Decoration simply emphasizes their functional significance and therefore naturally complements the overall architectural appearance of the building. Palladio reinterpreted an ancient heritage and returned the original structural function to the order system. The architectural forms of the buildings have always been structurally and functionally justified. Probably, it was due to the fact that Palladio once worked at the construction site and found out a lot about the construction “from inside”.

Andrea Palladio's merit lies in his drawing on rather the constructive logic of ancient buildings than in their exterior decor in his works. Naturally, he creatively approached the application of this constructive logic, since architecture got new functional tasks during the Renaissance. Palladio never considered ancient heritage to be some unconquerable compositional dogma. For example, designing the basilica in Vicenza, he made the adjustments to the ancient prototype being guided by aesthetic and functional arguments and aspiration to emphasize the building modernity. In this case, he acted like the architects of ancient Greece or ancient Rome: they solved a particular problem, and selected the appropriate proportions and decorative solution of architectural details. The proportions of Greek Doric order are known to be constantly improved and changed throughout the history of Greek architecture: if the height of Doric columns of the temple in Corinth was equal to four their diameters in the early period, the height of a column in the sanctuary in Delos erected in the late period of Greek culture and was already equal to six of the diameter. Just in the same experimental way the ancient Greek architects worked on the design of the bell of the Greek Corinthian order.

Consequently, there are significant differences between the Corinthian columns of Lizikrat monument and the ones of Apollo temple at Miletus.

The match between the form and the constructive solution is old-established and therefore is always a current requirement for the architectural construction. This approach is seen in the architectural solution of the Kyivan Rus temples, where all the design elements are clearly reflected in an external shape and highlighted by neat fixtures on the facade. This principle is also a characteristic feature of the folk architecture, regardless of the national identity, functional use (residential, commercial or sacred), and the type of construction (carcass or frame). Particularly evident shapes matching the design can be seen in the sacred buildings with the domes. For example, a dome in Ukrainian traditional architecture, which is visible from the outside, almost always opens into the interior regardless of the material the building is constructed of (Fig. 1). Obviously, an architectural form matching the constructive solution is psychologically comfortable for humans. The fact that the stylistic return to the authentic sources and the constructive truth of the architectural image formation regularly occurs over the centuries in the architecture history supports this statement. An illustrative example of such returns is the constructivist architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. So, Andrea Palladio implemented the principles of ancient origin that are considered to be traditional and therefore are not associated with any specific historical time frame.



**Fig. 1.** Match between the form and the constructive solution in Palladio's Villa Rotonda (1), Ukrainian traditional church (2), and Ukrainian folk architecture (3)

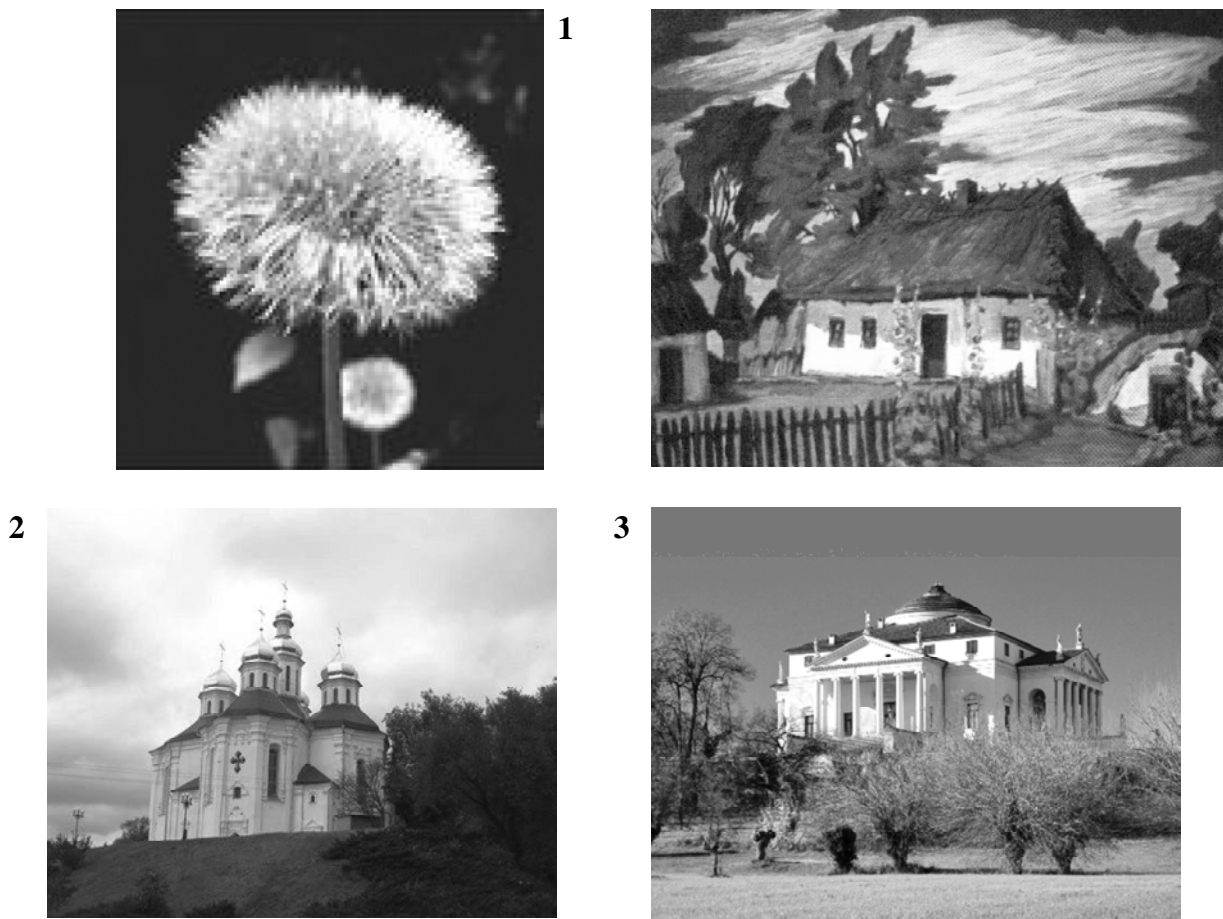
The second feature of Palladio's work is compositional harmony between the architectural object and the landscape (Fig. 2). This harmony is implemented in two directions. The first is the way of building placement amid a natural environment. Here Palladio always tried to choose a kind of scene in the landscape, which could demonstrate the benefits of the architectural structures he designed. It could be a little low hill, as in case of villas in Vicenza neighborhood or an island amid water surface, as in case of churches in Venice. It is important that Palladio always tried to keep a free exposition space near the buildings, if it was possible. He not only thought of visual communication in the "environment – house" direction but also paid great attention to the scenery opening from the windows and loggias directed "from the house inner space towards the surrounding landscape". In contrast to the tradition of confined interior spaces common for the Mediterranean, Palladio sought to maintain the two-way visual link between the interior and exterior architectural environment whenever the circumstances allowed. The researcher David Watkin notes: "The countryside is visible not only from the porticoes of the Villa Rotonda but even from the central circular hall or saloon ..." [3]



**Fig. 2.** The buildings location in the natural environment: in the traditional architecture of Ukraine (1; 2; 3) and in the buildings designed by Palladio (4; 5)

The second direction concerns the selection of architectural forms and color structures in the natural environment. Palladio used the contrasting aspects of both of these characteristics while he was placing his villas into the landscape. Buildings designed by Palladio always are marked by clear symmetry, statics, geometric accuracy and perfect proportions. Being located amid the landscape they constitute visual and even philosophical contrast to the beautiful, unpredictable, and dynamic natural surroundings that vary over the time. In addition, Palladio's works are very concise in color. They are perceived as an integrated light accent against a rich colored landscape. Thus, there is the contrast of colors, which is always present but formed in different hues, depending on the season.

Such contrasting concept applied by Palladio is based on the same principles as that a picturesque natural landscape is formed on. Indeed, in terms of the environment the objects that are the most important from the functional point of view (e.g. flowers necessary for the species' continued existence) are relatively small, but possess a regular, symmetrical structure as well as the fine details. They form a contrast to the surroundings in color, scale, shape, and thus attract the attention (Fig. 3). Buildings designed by Palladio are the example of this "flower principle" when placing architecture amid the landscape. This is applied not only to the residential architecture. For example, the San Giorgio Maggiore church in Venice contrasts with the natural space represented by the lagoon water.



**Fig. 3.** The "flower principle" – a contrast to the surroundings in color, scale, shape – in the traditional architecture of Ukraine (1 – picture of Jaroslav Sheremeta; 2) and in "Villa Rotonda" Palladio (3)

### 3. Results and Discussion

There is reason to believe that architectural works of Andrea Palladio are based on the same compositional principles as the traditional folk architecture was formed upon. It maintains the archetypes of the ideas about how the house should look like and how it should fit organically into the environment.

But we need to answer the two questions in order to investigate the causes of the Palladian architecture spread in Eastern Europe. The first one – how do local architectural traditions pertain to the relationship between the building shape and its design? The second – how do these traditions pertain to the buildings location in the natural environment? Talking about archetypes reflection it is important to determine whether the architectural traditions of the region are old-established, and whether they are autochthonous. The way of arranging the architectural space established in ancient times is the basis of the architectural identity of this area later as well.

Eastern Europe is one of the most favorable in the climatic aspect. Numerous archaeological finds, of the age that is estimated as hundreds of thousands of years [4], suggest of the availability of inhabitants there from ancient times. Scientists believe that in the area of North Black Sea region and adjacent lands there was gradual formation of the Indo-European, and later Slavic cultures. [1] This means that the local architectural traditions are autochthonous. Europe, including its eastern lands, has never been geographically isolated. At different times the geopolitical systems intertwined here, as well as a lot of transit communication routes passed through. They provided for contacts with Central Europe, Central Asia and China. “Salt” and “Iron” ways led to the Ciscarpathian and the Caucasus; “Greek” way passed along the Dniπρο and linked the Rus with markets of the Baltic and Black Sea region [5]. The location at the intersection of the communications of global significance allowed the inhabitants of Eastern Europe to get acquainted with the culture and architecture of the neighboring countries. They certainly knew that there formed a different approach to the architectural space composition in the south and west of Europe, within the area of Mediterranean cultures. It consisted in forming compositionally closed spaces of interior type with predominant geometric planning that was visually separated from the natural environment. This composition approach is most clearly evident in the architecture of the Roman Empire. Architectural environment of Central Asia cities was also formed according to such principles. Local architecture in Eastern Europe was formed by the other principles. So it was the result of conscious choice of the option that best met the local psychological and aesthetic priorities. The basis for the architectural traditions of the Eastern European region (to which Ukraine also belongs) is the composition that is opened to the surrounding landscape. Natural terrain with geometric shapes of architectural buildings has formed a single picturesque ensemble with nature’s elements as an equal party of this composition. In addition, the houses built in the Ukrainian tradition always stood out in a natural environment by light, often by the white walls [6].

Visual links between the architectural spaces of different levels were of great importance in Eastern Europe. In particular, the construction legislation of Kyivan Rus included the so-called “rule of clarity”. It obliged the constructor to keep the ways of visual communication with the surrounding landscape open for the neighbors. This rule still persists in the national traditions. The words of public philosopher Andrii Voron indicate a psychological necessity of the space: “It is good if there is the space where you live. And when the eye is not clinging to fences, sheds, etc. Trees, shrubs or cross poles should be the fence. It shall breathe, not to be locked. Such homes did our ancestors choose” [7].

In addition, traditional folk architecture is the mirror of social priorities – the principle of external shape correspondence to the internal space of the building has always professed in this area. Domes of the sacred buildings in traditional architecture were opened into interior space, the facades reflected internal planning structure, and decoration was focused on the most functional elements to emphasize their significance for the house. Vsevolod Karmazyn-Kakovsky wrote about this feature of the folk architecture: “... the spatial-plastic veracity of the major forms of architectural monuments of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the correspondence between the interior and the exterior, avoidance of unmotivated decorative constructions – these all are the result of veracity of the natures of the very folk artists, ... their conviction of what we now call the formalism” [8].

Thus, having correlated the described features of traditional architectural environment with creative technique of Andrea Palladio, there are reasons to believe that Palladian architecture being the super-temporal phenomenon in architecture turned out to be the most popular in those European regions where the local architectural traditions were in tune with the architectural concept of Andrea Palladio, and were a kind of its resonator.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Undoubtedly the works of Andrea Palladio are the perfect example of the Italian Renaissance architecture. It is difficult to find works equal in rank and exclusivity. Naturally, it is incorrect to make a direct comparison them with the works of folk architecture, since they belong to the different “architectural worlds”. However, it is impossible to deny the obvious fact of a number of similarities in the works of Palladio and traditional folk architecture in Eastern Europe as to methodological approaches at the levels of facility shaping concepts and environment architectural arrangement. Conceptual parallels that explain the phenomenon of Palladian architecture in architecture and its particular popularity in Eastern Europe are clearly visible.

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#### **ТВОРЧА СПАДЩИНА ПАЛЛАДІО І АРХІТЕКТУРНІ ТРАДИЦІЇ: КОНЦЕПТУАЛЬНІ ПАРАЛЕЛІ**

*Анотація.* У статті розглянуто феномен палладіанізму в архітектурі в аспекті факторів та обставин, що сприяли його виникненню, поширенню і особливій популярності в східноєвропейському регіоні.

*Ключові слова:* палладіанізм, архітектурні традиції, композиція архітектурного середовища.

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