



with texts by
Colin Rowe
Peter Eisenman



05

MMXII Press

Palladio Instructions for Use



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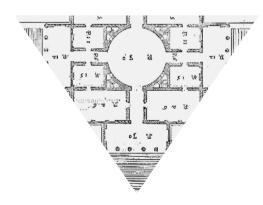
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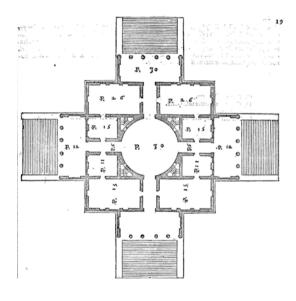
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Rotonda's plan; from Palladio A., *I quattro libri dell'architettura*, Venezia 1570, *Libro secondo*, p. 19.

Alessandro Rocca Measures and Proportions, in the Virgil's Dream The idea that design is a mathematical exercise is fascinating and, at the same time, illusory. The result of this famous Colin Rowe text, *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa*, is that, in different ways, architecture takes advantage of mathematics, uses it, folds it and transgresses it. But it is also true that this divide between the means (math) and the ends (architecture) does not diminish the importance of composition at all. On the contrary, is the architect's ease, the arbitrariness and the originality of his choices, which manage to transform mathematics into a process that generates order, proportion, form and meaning.

At first, at the beginning of his complex argument, Rowe is in perfect continuity with the classical culture and, using a statement by Christopher Wren, bases the legitimacy of architecture on the laws of the natural world. The quotation from Wren's *Parentalia* covers the role of an overture that, promptly, directs the reader to Rowe's reasoning: nature is not the occasional actor that, as in the story of Vitruvius about the birth of the Corinthian capital, suggests the architect a new architectural form. Rather, nature is the set of abstract rules, set by Neo-Platonic Humanism, which architecture alone is able to receive and return to a material representation of the world of ideas.

"Geometric figures are naturally more beautiful than

irregular ones: the square, the circle are the most beautiful... There are only two beautiful positions of straight lines, perpendicular and horizontal" writes Wren, and Rowe seems to be warning us that all his reasoning will take place within these beliefs, trying to explore and explain the breadth of this territory through two apparently far-off masters, such as Andrea Palladio and Le Corbusier. Rowe's discourse resumes the idea of classical architecture as a discipline organized according to abstract laws of nature, but also engaged in a dialogue, specific, physical, with the most obvious and most architectural aspect of nature: that is, with landscape.

Christopher Wren's short text can sound astonishing, and even paradoxical, when it says that there is nothing more beautiful than the right angle, the square and the circle, because these are the most natural forms. We know that this is not true, literally, and that, on the contrary, these forms represent exactly what in nature does not exist. The idea of the beauty of nature, declaimed in Virgilian terms by Palladio himself, thus coincides with the idea of an architecture that includes and incorporates the deepest, most hidden laws of natural beauty. The classical order is, for Palladio, and, perhaps, for Rowe too, the measure of all human things, the knowledge and the discipline that allow

us to transform the world respecting its most secret oand truest rder. It is a non intuitive reasoning, based on an intimate adherence to the values of the classical age and to the conviction that, for modern culture, classicism is a living and working reference.

The Rowe's parallel, between Palladio's Rotonda and Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, reveals a profound analogy on design, and also about the common confidence in the harmonic possibility of architecture, in its potentiality and vocation to present itself as a sublimated nature, such as visual focus and architectural reason of a natural landscape.

But, proceeding beyond the Virgilian idyll, Rowe leaves the two most known masterpieces and prefers to concentrate on two more complex, and maybe more difficult, projects. Then, he enters into the heart of the composition by comparing plans and facades of villa Foscari, the so-called Malcontenta, with those of Villa Stein in Garches. The analysis starts from the observation that both follow a similar scheme, based on the repetition of eight units, the alternation of simple and double spans, and a tripartite body. The adopted diagrams follow the theoretic principles of architects: Palladio considers the symmetry necessary for building stability, while Le Corbusier asserts that free plan is the inevitable consequence of the punctual

structure and Rowe, not without malice, notes that there are buildings built in traditional masonry that are asymmetrical and perfectly stable, as well as there are perfectly symmetrical framed, punctual, structures. The relationship between structure and form, therefore suggests Rowe, is essentially a theoretical production and, moreover, we may say that, for these two masters, this relationship gives life to ideological, tendentious syllogisms that pretend to derive from imaginary technological constraints pure formal determinations.

This is especially evident for Le Corbusier, because of the clarity of its five points: the free plan and the free facade (thanks to the independent structure), the window in length or the glass pane, the pilotis, the roof garden; and we can also consider, for our discours, the interior service facilities that allow to free up space from the furniture. The Corbusian theory grows on a series of operations and goals where the keyword is 'to free', to make each building's fundamental element independent of one another: the plan, the facade, the structure. The project is therefore derived from the composition of parts that, in some way, have evolved and refined independently and are later assembled into the unit of the complete building.

After carefully measuring the observance and

discretion that Palladio alternates with respect to the predetermined proportional relationships, Rowe comes to a remarkable observation that rescues the four centuries separating the two masters with one simple and convincing equivalence: Palladio found in section the same freedom which Le Corbusier, through the application of the five points, gained in plan. As Rowe writes: "Instead of the free plan (Palladio uses) the free section". And it follows that, for Le Corbusier, the drawing that shows the formal matrix (proportional, but not only) of the project is the façade, while for Palladio is the plan, because is there that the rule wins, while the same rule is no more readable in the drawings related to the 'freed' parts, elevations and sections.

The beautiful dissertation of Rowe ends with the recognition of the mastery of both architects, whose works have generated, for good and for evil, a long series of replicas and imitations where rules are transformed in styles, leaving intact the incredible values of their theoretical and practical *oeuvres*.

In the following pages, the first publication of Colin Rowe's *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa. Palladio and Le Corbusier compared*, in «The Architectural Review», March 1947.

After Wittkower

In the academic year 1945-46 Colin Rowe (1920-1999) was the lonely student of Rudolf Wittkower (1901-1971), at the Warburg Institute in London, where he obtained his Master in History of Arts with a thesis intitled The Theoretical Drawings of Inigo Jones: Their Sources and Scope. The relationship between the German historian of architecture and arts and the young architect from Liverpool was crucial, for the education of the second, and there is no doubt that there is a close continuity between the Wittkower's Principles of Palladio Architecture, the seminal essay published in two separate sections, in 1944 and 1945, in «The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes», and then included in the Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism (1949), and Rowe's The Mathematics (1947). The Wittkower tractatus was based on a wide bibliographical and architectural research, and, along with the analysis of Alina Payne, was in a clear relationship, deeper than evident, with the themes of the architectural modernism that were under discussion in those years. In particular, Payne identifies two aspects which make the Wittkower' text completely different, in comparison with the prevoius studies on Italian Renaissance architecture, and absolutely modern.

The first aspect is the theoretical process adopted from Wittkower, who starts from a close reading of the texts which determined these architectural principles: first, the

The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa

Palladio and Le Corbusier compared

"There are two causes of heavin-mattered and customary. Natural is from generaty consisting in mailleanthy, that is aquality, and proposition. Onestmony heavin is fangetten by the none, as familiarily hereds a love to things not in themselves levely. Here like the great occasion of ercore, but always the tree tree is natural or generatived heavity. Geometrical figures are naturally more heaviful than irrepulse ones it the upone, the circle are the most heavifully, beaut the parallelegams and the veal. These are only two locatified positions of straight lines, perpendicular and harbounds; this is from Sature and consequently executive, no other than amodel being fines." 312 (2013)791928 SERS)

By Colin Rowe

Pulladia's Ville Capez, solled the Rotunda, has, perhaps more then any other bones, imposed has, perhaps more then any other bones, imposed that in the imagination of subsequent generations, and as the ideal type of central building, it has become part of the general European experience. Mathematical, alteract, four square, without appearmaniford, alteract, four square, without appearing to the property of the control of the control of its Coulomb of the production of the control of its Publishie in Vapical.

"The size is as planear and distinctive as can be found, bourse it is upon a small still of very eary access, and is watered on: one side by the Bandalphone, a suppliable river; and out the other control of the size of the

which because with the instancy there are oughts could in all four femals, and four femals with the condition of the one by the other, a passage from Le Corbosier's Précisions is unavoidably reminencent of this. No less lyrical, but rather soore explosites, he is describing the site of his Masion Survey at Puisay.

tot rather more exposity, in a description of the desired of his Massion berrops at Robert to dome the desired of the Massion berrops at Robert to dome radius deep resident dominant to warper. He et as just place dans l'append payang de Princy. Les indistants vousse le purse que cette compagne agrande estal helle evre en vie de campagne, lies la contemplement destallement de la configuration de la contemplement destallement indistants des la robert de la configuration de la configu

The Saveye Riesse has been given a fair number of interpretations: it may be a machine for leving in, an arrangement of interpretaring volume and external eques, another connaction of space, things, in the the wagestite reference to the dreams of Varyll, and a certain similarity of site, soletion and feeling put can in mind of the passage in which Philairis describes the Riestenda. The which Philairis describes the Riestenda Chempton of the C

larger, but the office is somehow the same.

Patholis, synthag elsewhere, supplies the sheal side of the vills. If a sevene, from which the brogside of the vills. If a sevene, from which the broghis possessions, and savour the propassey of contrast
between his fields and his gandens; reflecting on
mutability, but ill montemplate through the peace
the artipies virtues of a disripler zero, the harmonotous ordering of his life and evidate will be ain

"The micinal sages community used to retire to such places, whose being offentiums visited by their circums friends and relations, laving house, and above all their virtue, they could easily attain to as much lappiness as one be attained been below." Perhaps these were the dreams of Vergil. Freely

been accompanied to the control of t

A more specific comparison that presents itself—such a claim, which is somewhat in exists of the in that between Pallado's Villa Pissani, the reasons they advance. Solid wall exemines Maleonstents, and the house which in 1927 Pallado's declares, demand absolute openenty; a

ingrammatic comparison will reveal the funda-

In general idea, as on the som, the system of the two bosses of oloudy similar. They are both conceived as single blocks, with one projecting element and purpose principle and office of the control of the property of the control of

Structure, of course, are extirctly different, and both architects look to structure to some critect as a putilization for their dispositions. Pallodio employs a solid bearing wall, and of this system he arrive.

As in the desired value of the control of the factor and the terms in one place as in the other and the control of the control

Palladio is concerned with the logical disposition of motifs degmatically accepted; but he afterupts to discover a structural remain for his planning symmetrics. Corbositer, who is proving a cost for structure as a basis of the formal elements of design, contrasts the new system with the old. U.S. With over technique.

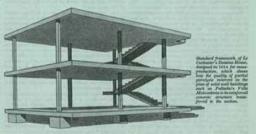
e is a little more inclusive.

"Je vous rappetle on 'plan paralysi' du susion
de parse et ooci à upot nous semones amires avec
la maison de for on de cinerat armé.

Espaire libre manifere independante frodites en kongueur ou pau de vere

pilotie toti jardin et l'inforieur roomi de cusiers et datuer

Federoalterment dos needles." Pulladio's attentional options madest il almost necessary to repeat the same plan on svery level of the halling; and point support allows Corbusies a fairly ferable savangement; but both architects make a claim, which is necessary to the needless of the reasons they advances. Solid wall structure, Pulladio declares, demand administe presenting; is



the personal extension of high style, for elevation and the pavilin of the garden front, asymmetrical liablings in the traditional sunners are placed respectively in symmetrical and to fact remain stanting, and frame buildings of asymmetrical relation to the faculty below. As suspentional plan continue to give authoris at the Malconienta, they are dominant feature

feature and flight of steps. The main floor of the Malcontenta shows a craciform ball, and symmetrically disposed about it are two suites of three rooms each, two staircases and a portion. At Garches the central tail remains, one of the two starrases occupies a similar position, but the other has been turned through an angle of ninety degrees, the entrance half has been remarked from this level by an assummetrical well, and the external feature corresponding to the portion becomes parity a re-critical volume, obliterating a line of support and placed in a less perceptible relation-shap to the main room. The enactions shape has disappointed, and a Z-shaperi halance is achieved by throwing the small library into the main apartment. There is a subsidiary cross axis at Male tenta, which is suggested at Gorches by the crutral yords of the end walls. These convey a certain enreful character to the plan, but there is no

The wall at the Malcontenta forms the traditional solid pierced by wertical openings, with the central emphasis in the pediment; and the outer ones have quality of the block. The double have in the middle is expressed by a single door, or in the mar-chrystian by a "Morean boths" motif, and carries the apper pediments of the real. Horizontally the wall fulls into these main divisions: base; piano notale, corresponding to the Inno order of the portice, terminated by a flattened entablature. and a superimposed attir with comice. The base plays the part of a projecting, consistently supporting soud, upon which the house rests; but while the attic and piano nobile are maticated. the base is treated as a plain surface. A feeling of even greater weight carried here is achieved by this highly amobined inversion of the social

throught wists.

In the Villa at Garches the exploitation of the siructural system has led to the conception of the wall as a series of konteental strips, alternating void and soled, a system which places equal universe, their basis, accountle and voltagess, was interest in both centre and extremity of the quate measurable. Palladio had the astimuten faqued, and a maintained by Coctoniers almost of an entirely objective seathers. regard, see in management of Accessor's almost or on curvey operative winters. Consider the double layer, which are unusued to Certificate has expressed similar occavitations present in the double layer, which are unusued to regard the support have. Any system of crustless about proportion. Mathematics being "do vertical accept, and infection of the wall limiting circups qui's average to a regard to the proportion of the sum of the proportion of the pr the Maloositenta. They are reparated, the one compying the three lays to the left of the facade. and the other a central position in the solid, but diamonal of the staircast forms the belance.

The entrance elevation estates the central feature herizontal voids, restrulty repeated in the hare, would be gratesque. Displacement and breaking up of the feature are again compromoted by disposal relationships; and in the ground floor entrance marquise and service door fulfil these purposes.

The other chief point of difference lies in the idea of the roof. In the Malocorpicta it diene w pyramidal expendractum dominated by the temple fronts of the upper polyments, which never slowe, and sugment the central features of the main

from arrangement : these must be, at least partie, plantic elements, the framed terrace of the extraces in the composition, but in neither case are they In both homes the principal rooms are on the placed in direct vertical relationship with the first face, linked to the garden by an external principal features of the lower wall. principal features of the lower wall.

Corbonier's freatment of the base is not poor by set-backs or horizontal voids, chewhere it is not expressed.

Mathematics and musical concord as the buns of ideal proportion was a common belief in felt to be a correspondence between the perfect numbers, the proportions of the human figure and the elements of musical harmony. Six Henry as Wotton, as Ambanador at Venice reflects some part of this attitude when he writes ---

The two principal Communes that must ravish the Far are, by the consent of all Nature, the Pittle and the Orlaw, whereof the first frieth radically from the Proportion between two and those, the other from the double interpal between one

the windows placed towards the extremities of the 11 was not in fact suggested that architectural facade, a device which access to reinforce the origin proportions derived from musical harmonies, but rather that the laws of proportion were satablished mathematically and universally diffused, The Platonic and Pythagorem universe was com-pounded of the simpler relationships of numbers. and such a world was formed within the triangle made by the square and cube of the numbers 1, 2, 8. Its qualities, rhytheas and relationships was established within this framework of sumbers up to 27; and if such numbers governed the works of God, it was fitting that the works of man should be similarly constructed, and that a building should be a representative in mirrocosm, of the same process exhibited to a larger scale in the workings of the weeld. In Affecti's words Nature is sure to not consistently and with a constant analogy in all her operations," what is patent in music must also be so in architecture, proportions are a reflection of the harmony of the

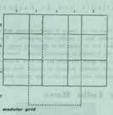
result in the parden elevation at Carrier shows neutrons that he seeks, the overall controllers itself in the displacing of portion and roof pavilion, chape; and within, not the unchallengeable from the contral position which they occupy in clearurss of Pallistic's volumes, but a sort of planned obsermity. Consequently, while in the Malcostents geometry is diffused through the internal volumes of the building, at Garches it an asymmetrical one in the whole elevation. The residus only in the total block and the disposition

of its supports. The Oncectical hasts on which Pulludio cented in the upper street, but it is sufficiable that the broke down in the eighteenth reatory, when profurther development of this feature within itself, portion became a matter of individual sensibility is asymmetrical. The downward indication of and inspiration; and Corbusier, in spite of the weights in this sort of façade is impossible; and conducts which mathematics affect loss, occupies to see the central feature, interrupted by the co such massafields position. The functionalist theory was, perhaps, as attempt to re-scort a scientific authorise with the objective value of the old. Its interpretation was crude. Results can be measured in terms of the solution of a particular process; proportion are apparently accidental theory that Corlanier imposes mathematical patterm upon his buildings; these see the universal

"verifies elemenfortunden." Thus, either because, or in spite of theory, both and suggisted for chronic natures of the mass. "These cathler because, or is upon of theory, tock-wall, furthern and inhorsts on provided by the architects share a common scandard, a nonthe-semble-valuing quality, resulting the complicated and within the limitations of a particular parameterization of the mire disappeared contribution of generate, in an an empirical granter, in a not empirically and the belock when the contribution of the contribution of the particular particular party as reclaims control of the fact, has certainly indicated in invalationality to and westered with the irregular incident of regulating lines, dimensions and figures, and over gazebo, perferation and paython. The main all he places the ratio of the golden section,

Willia Statementures

The mobiles prof. plim and section of Pollutie's Villa Metassistent Index provide a mostling com-paration with that of the relia by Le Coloration proposite. For extilect digressors of sight and quantum tion, in the mollemental lasts of sicer danger lasts are including have per impressed frame in common.

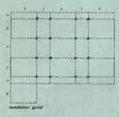




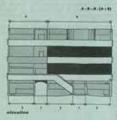


Villa at Gaechas

Le Chebasier's Fille de Menale ar thorcher le liter Pathativ's Filles Midenantes, en resey de file research heatig has by Fren's dyfection is from genesity. Le Cethosin historif explicit in pro-portional mondering of the chestyns and planes the relies of the goods number selects has strong.







A. B.-D. (A.-R). Thus be infinites the ideal Blaborate external development in Operform with which he would wish his façade to correspond, although in actual fact the figures #; Seed; # thus represented are only opproximate.

Palladio also provides his pian with cryptically explanatory dimensions, and thus the rooms comprinter the states of three can be read as a rescommon from a B : 4 to 2 : 5 relationship. They are municipal 18 - 16, 10 - 16, and 16 - 26.

The facule is divided vertically into four main built, the two central men being really a single fivision by their remmon expression as portion. The horizontal divisious are consilested by the introduction of the order, which precuppour thronion into fifthe a fifth part to the artic and approximately three-sides of the semining wall markets to caller and catalitation.

Corbuster also divides his facade into fiste units; but in his oney horseconally. The two central milit are partly unifed by their piscing alongsels the number between and could be considered as surresponding to Palitatio's pieto nobile. The vertical divisions are in the relationship indicated by the equation (3; 5), which Palladio uses hori-In both cases there are dishorations in secontally. possibly. In 60% cases there are exacercious as the process constraint of the process constraint of the process constraint of the process constraints of the and pyramidal elements with the aquare, access proteinty of extremal effect. The structural both to occeed and ampily the real nature of system of the Pointy boose is less clear, and its the volumes. Some of these resources are the prerogatives of solid will construction, freedoms of the "plan paralyse," and the introduction of author home and pitched roofs is a liberty which Cochrater at Garches is unable to allow higgest. In the frame building it is not, as in the solid wall structure, the enclosing walls that are a in these façades; but there are analogous develop-dominant, but the horizontal planes of floor and wrests from the earlier bosses in both cases. Such roof. The quality of partial paralysis, which are Pallistic's development of restral engineers to Cochainer has reduced in the plan of the solid wall. Solid plans and observations, and Cochaines's extended structure, in the frame building in remaining to three librogations that focusing and objecting of structure, is the frame leading a transfer of the considerable of the color, Perforation of foors giving a certain focus. The complexable volumes of the rection formation of pages is possible; but the garrient replace the Philadian principle read and acceptance garrier of the hability of the hability of the readings are except as version; planelocky fore projecting lengths; are dampered, and there exists never of Philadian or supposed, and there exists any understanding of parties, which could also be considered, as the the established horizontal planes; free wetten is replaced by free plan, paralysed plan by paralysed section) and the limitations in both cases are sphere of customary heavy, their two groups equally severe; as though the solid wall structure of leiblings are in different words. Pullship had been turned on its side, the former come amplet complete elarity of pion, the most hand plexities of section and subflicties of elevation are organisation of correctional ultracents hazed on now transferred to plan.

The dispersioness and spatial audacties of the Garden plan continue to thrill; but it is an solerice which seems to be regulated by the intellect only, operating, as it were, itside a stage vacuum. There is a permanent tension between round were always the great halls of the Imperial the organised and the apparently fortunes. To therme, and such teichings as Hadrian's villa of the infector it is clear, but the senses deeply per Truti. He has several achieves of archeological plexing; and it seems not to be possible to stand. reconstruction of Greek and Recom demonstruction anywhere in it, at any one point and receive the pulpable impression of the whole. Both initiage can be absorbed from without; but from within, in the prociders bulk of the Malcontenta, there is a effect to the whole building, which is organization; and focused there. At Garches, the theoretical equidictance between floor and ceiling seaveys an equal importance to all parts of the volume to between. Allowed a sufficient height it night be of innovation, then an extension of ideas already treated as a single volume, but otherwise the implicit. development of focus becomes a somewhat. arbitrary proceeding. Corbonics accepts this limit and would appear to be sensitions thinged with a tation, and accepts the principal of horizontal comparable historicism. He seems to find a extension; it disorders the contral focus has been shown to show to feature to consume and aeroscolid. consistently insket up, concentration at our point, displayed in the ingraine planning of the moons in distributional, and applaced by a purishmal label, the tackground of a social life at once recordispersion of incident. The dismusbered frag amplified and intimate. The French have an ments of the central focus become, in fact, a surt of serial installation of interest round the extremition of the plan.

against the rigid bounding lines of the neutangular remainsent of those source bouloins and vastificates, block, which is fundamental to the programme. Corbinier missiers the Byzantine architecture of

impossible, and Cortonier logically employs the apposite resource, inversion in the place of extenon, googing out large volumes of the block as the brever and the roof garden, and exposing them to the outer space. Thus the peripheral incident, which replaces the form, constitute becomes one and the more with the revenues. which recognize an equation's similar feature to Palladio's vertical extension.

This system of regular diffusion of interest and irregular development of points of concentration, throws into interms rated the geometrical scientific and the properties of the propertie structure of the building. A computable process alonguide the "natural" proportions, a series of to that as the plan takes plans in the elevations surely "publicative processings in fact these where the hosticotal window treatment convergencemental and a surely as the regard adversed to the order and ergor of the facedor. figures show, they roughly approximate to a said produces similar chantegration of vertical surplants and diminorment of the central feature. Elizabeation of focus emporifately transfers interest to extremities of the block, which acquire a clarity and tentures, as through they were trying to restrain the pertubural incident from fiving out of the block

> between the Villa Rotunds and the Savoye House of 1990, the lamper which second to provide it. The problem, although at first it appears to be sentral character is somewhat discounted by the cantilevered prolongations of what are presumably the east and west faquées; and by the "directed" expression of the ground floor, with its porte cochier and utility entrance. There is a noticeable easiness and lack of teneion the donor saloon of the Motunda.

Symbolically, and in what might be called the symmetry, as the agent menorable form of order, and mathematics as the supreme exection in the world of external forms. In his own misel his work was associably that of adaptation, the adapta tion of the ancient house; and at the back of his buildings, based on Vitrorius and Phry, and incorporating elements, which in Greek and Reman smarter, would have been found only in robble leridings, but which he regarded as general. Bonse for him was still alive, and if the autients had mispted the temple from the house, their large scale planning was no doubt similarly referlive. Development was, therefore, less a matter

Corbuster has an equal excremes for mathematics. unbroken tradition of this nort of planning; and one discovers, in a beaut arts atilization of an are of the plan, are of the plan, are one of the plant of the plant of the plant of the plant extension comes up proceeded Corbuner, would have been coriously

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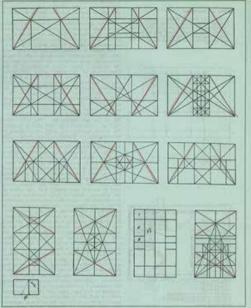
the Mediterranean world, and there is also present a purely French delight in the more comprehensible aspects of mechanics... the little pavilion on the roof at Garches is at the same time a temple

case, the most compact accentertural vocations fitted with running water. Gossectrically, both architects may be said to ex-approached something of the Platonic betype of the villa, which the Virgilian dressu the conflict between the contingent and the absolute, the natural and the abstract; the gap between the ideal world and the tax human action. The bridging most be as competent morelling as a well-excepted fugue, charges

or sophisticated, witty allersion; it is an intel-lectual feat which reconciles the mind to the

fundamental discrepancy of the programme. sixteenth century reporture of well-humanised forms. He translates this "customary" material with a possion and a high arriousness litting to the continued validity that he finds it to powers the reference to the Pauthoon in the superimposed portioned to the therma in the reuniform valored to ambiguity, profound, in both idea and form. in the equivocal conjunction of temple front and dominito block. These are charged with meaning th for what they are and for what they signify and their impression is posgnant. The accient house is not re-created, but there is in its place a concrete apparition of antique virtue, excellence, perial spendour and stoicism : Rome is there

silusion, the ideal world by prometry.
By contrast, Corbusier is in some ways the most ous of ecirctics. The orders, the Roman ion, are the apparatus of authority; customary and in a some universal forms. It is hard for the modern architect to be quite so emphatic about any marticular significations, and with Corbonies there is always present an element of wir, suggest-ing that the historical reference has remained a ways the double value of the quotation sociations of both old and new context. world of classical Mediterranean culture, on which Palladio drew so expressively, is closed for Corbusics. The emblematic representations of the moral virtues, the loves of the Gods and the lives have lost their former historical asocopoly Albuion is dissipated at Garches, concentrated at the Malcontenta; within the one cube the peremance is mixed, within the other, Roman, behavior selects the irrelevant and the particular. he fortuitously picturesque and the incidentally his virtuosity. They retain their original implica-tions of classical landscape, mechanical precision, record intimacy; one is able to cease hold of hem as known objects, and sometimes as basic hapes; but they become only transiently proentive. Unlike Palladio's forms there is nothing next would seem to be affected by the artificial



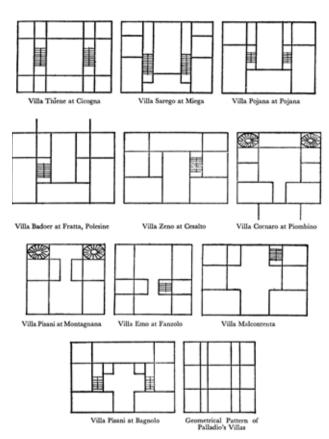
founded by the apparent arbitrariness, and the coses, and a had portion is issually more convincing inheliest recore than convinced by the intuitive than an ill-excepted incident. It is the may knowledge, that here in spite of all to the contrary, afformly realizable quality of the originals which there is order and there are rules. Corbusier has become the source of fervest and exponents of "Je style Corbu,"

particles, and witty exhibition techniques: the is that between the mirrorad, and the decreative non-Pallichan villa became the pictureoque object or merely competent; perhaps in hold cases it is in the English park. Content is different in both the adherence to miles which has lapsed

Leon Battista Alberti's De re aedificatoria (first edition in 1450) and, of course, I quattro libri dell'architettura by Andrea Palladio. This narrow connection between the books and the buildings means, for example, a subterranean but clear parallel with the phenomenon of the Modernist architecture which, again, put the writing - books, essays and magazines - as a complement directly integrated in the process of definition of the new architecture. And this strong relation between theory, criticism and practice evolved especially thanks to the scholars of the German area who, for political reasons, gathered in London and in the United States, such as historians and theorists Sigfried Giedion, Nikolaus Pevsner, Ernst Gombrich, and leading architects such as Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

The second aspect which made of *Principles* a main reference book and a best seller in the modernist arena, was a quite loosian refusal of the ornament. Wittkower was radically indifferent to the materiality of the construction, to colors, textures and ornamental apparatus; Italian architecture of XV and XVI century, for him, was a refined and cerebral application of the sophisticated principles which were able to translate the myth of Roman architecture and culture in a brand new, 'modern', architectural language, a new classicism which becomes the timeless basis of our modern, and modernist, era.

Humanistic architecture, in the perfect Wittkower's enunciation, is absolutely similar and coherent with the methodological premises and formal aims of the rationalist and hermetic wing of modernist architecture, the modern mouvement, of the twenties and thirties of XX century. The tools that really made Wittkower's arguments perfect to be tranferred and applied to contemporary architecture of his time were his meta-historical, timeless diagrams, which made immediately understandable the relationship between proportions, program, typology and spatial organization; eliminating, on the other side, any reference to technology, materials, and tridimensional perceptions. The diagrams, imagined to explain the planimetric schemes of the Palladian villas, became a by-pass wich projected Renaissance architecture in the middle of the modernist debate. And it was his pupil Colin Rowe who, first, jumped over a gap of 450 years and compared the Palladian with the Corbusian diagrams as if they were made of the same matter, for the same world. This extremely abstracted approached allowed to go straight to the compositional questions, and, in its radical nakedness, it was perfectly aligned with two of the main currents of Modernism: the ideals of the Corbusian purism, and the funcionalist reduction to the typological schemes operated, in particular, by Ernst Neufert (1900-1986), the German architect who, in the Bauhaus years, was a collaborator of Walter Gropius and Otto Bartning. Neufert's Bauentwurfslehre (Architect's Data), firstly published in 1936, sprawled widely the use of diagrams as a simplified and effectual international language for learning the principles of modernist architecture. It is also important



Schematized Plans of Ten of Palladio's Villas, from: Rudolf Wittkower, *Principles of Palladio's Architecture*, in «Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes», vol. 7 1944, pp. 102-122.

to remember that, in those years, one of the editors of «The Architectural Review» was Nikolaus Pevsner, the leading modernist historian and ideologist who, like Wittkower, arrived in London fleeing racial prosecution in Nazi Germany. In this perspective, in the Wittkower's Palladian diagrams we can see a reduction of the Renissance villas to an orthodox modernist approach and, of consequence, the starting point of the Palladio's transfer into the domain of modernist architecture operated, through the comparison with Le Corbusier, by Rowe.

The strong input generated by the texts of Rudolf Wittkower, first published in the «Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes» and then collected in Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism (1949), a book which had a large, immediate and durable echo in the international architectural debate, took Andrea Palladio again at the center of the architectural scenario. The combined effects of the splendid Wittkower's diagrams and the Wölfflinian detailed comparative analysis which Rowe exploited between the Palladio's Malcontenta and the Le Corbusier's villa Stein de Monzie, put again the classical principles at the center of the modernist debate.

As described by Anthony Vidler, the English neopalladianism of the forties met a short life, quickly overpassed by the interest of other personalities, such as Reyner Banham and the Smithsons, towards technology and informality, tendencies which at the end led to the

construction of the movement called New Brutalism, and, for other paths, to high-Tech architecture.

Nevertheless, the manneristic approach of Rowe found a direct representation, in his times, in the architectural design of James Stirling, who managed and manipulated the modernist images, matters and myths with the refined disenchantment of a modernist mannerist, an analogous of the Italian painters and architects of the second half of the XVI century studied and beloved by Rowe (see the Peter Eisenman's report on Perspecta 41).

Stirling shared with Rowe the same citizenship, both came from and were educated in Liverpool, at the same school of architecture, and Stirling got his degree in architecture under Rowe's supervision. But it was interesting another Rowe's link with a great architect, the American Peter Eisenman, who mentored in a memorable Grand Tour through Italy, in 1961. In some way Eisenman, through the intense frequentation of Rowe, arrived to the Wittkower's diagrams, something that he reinvented for his anaytical drawings of Giuseppe Terragni's architecture and, recently, for Palladio. And, coming back along the Warburg Institut's cultural origins, Eisenman fixes Heinrich Wölfflin as a father of his own approach to architecture, considering that "Wölfflin argues that Renaissance architecture was autonomous because it was governed by an idea of formal beauty internal to its discipline, one not deduced from the characteristic exhibited in the works of a particular style but that exists in its own right" (Eisenman, 2008).

This full immersion of Eisenman in the classical Italian heritage can suggest the reason of his constant interest towards a classical idea of architectural composition, his fascination and, at the same time, his impossibility to accept a classical explicit influence.

A wide representation of this duplicity, the love and the refusal of the classical, is the reason of his seminal text, The End of the Classical: The End of the Beginning, the End of the End. In this essay, published in the volume 21 of «Perspecta» (1984), Eisenman establishes a possibility of maintaining the Classical as a fundamental reference, finding for it a new life free of any historicism, nostalgia and revivalism.

Before Eisenman: architecture as a cold case

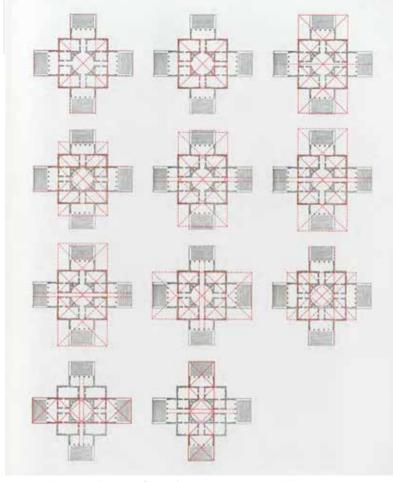
"Instead of focusing on typology, geometry, proportion, or history, the analytic drawings, models, and descriptive texts presented here place Palladio in a new light, marking a departure in a sense from contemporary concerns with aesthetic ideals of surface representation, parametric projection, or figure-ground reversals in favor of conceptual and topological arrangements of solid and void that are other than the literal solid and void described by geometry and function" Peter Eisenman, Palladio Virtuel.

With his recent book about Palladian architectural principles, Eisenman explicitly keeps on the lessons of Wittkower's Principles and Rowe's Mathematics, but avoiding any trace of historical approach in favor of a pure formal analysis. As already explained in The End of the Classical, also in this last research Eisenman wants to act as an architect, as it is in his own words, establishing a strategical point of view: in his study, architectural samples are cleaned from any historical dust and dissected in an anathomical manner, such as pure formal constructs.

The bodies of evidence, the buildings, are transformed in cold cases that, indipendently from their origin and age, are available to be examined and (dis)solved. The buildings become corps which can be dissected, polished from any soft and liquid matter and reduced to their conceptual and geometric skeleton. Of course, in Eisenman's postRowian perspective, the skeleton is the mathematic ideal or, to better say, the pure spatial and topological idea of the building. Screening the Palladian villas, Eisenman produces a X-rays representation which is quite similar with Wittkower's and Rowe's schemes, but with a great difference. While the first are simply the schematic and univocal (closed) representation of the plan, the Eisenman's are deleuzian (open) series of variations which, tendendially, could be infinite. The matrix of the villa is a palimpsest, rather just a geometrical trace, whose greatness is exaclty in its generative capacity. It, the scheme, has the precise duty to proliferate, to incube and grow infinite possible compositions.

In the Eisenman's infinite jest, there is no difference between the original and the copies, or, to be more precise, there is no original, because Palladio is already working in a post-historical condition, being a Venetian Republic citizen of the XVI century working with forms, tools and images of the archeological – and literary – remains that he studied in Rome. The perfect description of this condition, that Eisenman shares not just with Palladio but, in a sense, with all of us contemporary architects, is dedicated to the end of classical, a text that establishes a possible useful link between us and the history of architecture.

In particular, Eisenman designs a continuity with classical principles through the permanence of three "fictions": representation, reason and history, which are the vehicles to simulate meaning, truth and timelessness. For his



Geometric diagrams of Rotonda. From: Eisenman P., with Roman M., *Palladio Virtuel*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London 2015, p. 39.

text, Modernism is in continuity, is still inside classical architecture because it did not cease to follow these three fictions. Now, for Eisenman, it is time to leave these fictions and start with a new beginning, with an architecture freed by these fictional aims and open to the risk of losing meaning, truth and timelessness. An architecture which can use, manipulates and reinvents the simulacra of the Classical as a basic, fundamental material which can gives representation, reason and historical meaning to our time. Then, Eisenman's reasoning moves on two interlaced goals. The first is the logical demonstration of the continuity of the classic from the Renaissance to the Modernism and. ultimately, the attestation that we do not have, in fact, an architecture, a history and a culture outside the classical. The second goal is the institution of the possibility to rebuild architecture on a base that, to be quick, could be defined as postmodern, or post-historical, and that he calls with the term: non-classical. An architecture that is defined by subtraction, for its deliberately withdrawal from the simulation of classical architecture. After all, Eisenman's demonstration is based on a process of smuggling, demystification and radical burial, an alchemical distillation process at the end of which remains, it should remain, the essence of architecture. But it is also true that this process is based on the elements of its denial: the potentiality of nonclassical architecture can only be measured in relationship with the classical one, and therefore its reasoning is still a long, elliptical reference to representations, reasons and

histories of classical narratives constructed by theorists and architects, as well as Andrea Palladio, of the Italian Renaissance.