

Proporções e simetrias na obra de Andrea Palladio: estudo de caso nos edifícios de *Villas*

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Abstract

This paper study symmetry as a design component in the work of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio. In opposition to popular assumption, symmetry has a much larger scope than the simple bilateral arrangement of the parts of a building. The architectural meaning of the term is found in the treatise *De Architectura*, written by Vitruvius in the 1st century BC. In defining the term in his first book, the author speaks about modular units that coordinate the parts of a building. Such modules can be divided or added, and the ratios among dimensions provide coordination to the whole work and, at the same time, allow for diversity. In the course of this work, this instrument is defined as “modular symmetry” due to its emphasis in commensurability as a means for coordination in architectural design. To check the use of symmetry in the work of Palladio twelve *villas* built during the sixteenth century are analyzed. The analysis of Palladio's *villas*, demonstrated that Palladio used in his design procedures geometrical, modular and proportional approaches related to the concept of symmetry enunciated by Vitruvius. The ordering of parts proportionate measures in plan resulted in a harmonious whole whose parts are an ordered whole by proportion. The lessons learned in Palladio's use of symmetry show the importance of ordering procedures as a system of control that strengthens inventiveness in architectural design. Such approach is as valuable today as it was in 16th century Italy.

Keywords: symmetry, proportion, Andrea Palladio, domestic architecture.