

Historiography of Wood Construction in Portugal

Authors : João Gago dos Santos, Paulo Pereira Almeida

Abstract : The present study intends to deepen and understand the reasons that led to the decline and disappearance of wooden construction systems in Portugal, for that reason, its use in history must be analyzed. It is observed that this material was an integral part of the construction systems in Europe and Portugal for centuries, and it is possible to conclude that its decline happens with the appearance of hybrid construction and later with the emergence and development of reinforced concrete technology. It is also verified that wood as a constructive element, and for that reason, an element of development had great importance in national construction, with its peak being the Pombaline period, after the 1755 earthquake. In this period, the great scarcity of materials in the metropolis led to the import wood from Brazil for the reconstruction of Lisbon. This period is linked to an accentuated exploitation of forests, resulting in laws and royal decrees aimed at protecting them, guaranteeing the continued existence of profitable forests, crucial to the reconstruction effort. The following period, with the gradual loss of memory of the catastrophe, resulted in a construction that was weakened structurally as a response to a time of real estate speculation and great urban expansion. This was the moment that precluded the inexistence of the use of wood in construction. At the beginning of the 20th century and in the 30s and 40s, with the appearance and development of reinforced concrete, it became part of the great structures of the state, and it is considered a versatile material capable of resolving issues throughout the national territory. It is at this point that the wood falls into disuse and practically disappears from the new works produced.

Keywords : construction history, construction in portugal, construction systems, wood construction

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