



Urban and Architectural Reconfiguration in the Opening to Modernity - The Construction of the City of Porto (Portugal) between the Influence of Beaux-Arts and the Modern Movement

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The nineteenth-century's urban life, based on economic and political liberalism, required a profound re-functionalization of the city that transformed the structure and architecture of the urban space. At the turning of 1900, these changes radicalized, when associated with the radical changes in the political order, until the period between the wars, with the successive changes in the political reality from monarchy to republic, from democracy to dictatorship. The case of Porto (Portugal) permits to evaluate these urban transformations for that period, in which the municipal politic changes from constitutional monarchy to democratic republic and to dictatorship, setting the urban and architectural public projects to the new ideas and cultural purposes, adjusting images and the architectural vocabulary. The introduction of new building systems and the use of the new materials were driven by the public works, national or municipal, or by the building construction of citizen or professional associations. New images for new buildings, designed for the new public functions, which should be representative of the new ideals and new political agendas, opened an urban transformation that was structured between the centers of communication and administration and peripheral areas of socially demarcated residence. The use of new materials, particularly reinforced concrete structures appears, initially, with municipal regulations to address issues of fire safety. Specially applied to public architecture, these measures were extended to the private construction despite opposition and resistance from the owners and architects. The construction materials and systems transformation process, due to the lines of cultural and architecture modernity was slow as the common construction, in particular residential programs, individual or collective, maintained the use of systems and materials rooted in the constructive tradition. Thus, it is possible to follow an alignment of the architecture of public nature, between the images of the "beaux arts" and modernists, between traditional construction and new structural demands and possibilities allowed by the new construction materials.

KEY WORDS: Urban, public architecture, building construction history, planning history, beaux-arts, modern movement, Porto, Portugal.