

A History of Reinforced Masonry Construction Designed to Resist Earthquakes: 1755-1907¹

Stephen Tobriner²

Abstract*:

Although the reinforcement of masonry buildings against earthquake damage was known as early as 1755, it only came of age in the United States in the late 1930s. The early history of the invention and adoption of earthquake-related reinforcement techniques is important, given we are still struggling with the problem of earthquake-resistant design, and the even more formidable problem of urging widespread adoption of antiseismic design solutions. What follows is a survey of reinforced masonry construction from its early use in response to earthquake danger in 1755 to developments which occurred in the years following the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. Such a survey helps to place our current efforts in an historical context.

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² Assoc. Professor of Architectural History, University of California, Berkeley, CA.