



MESA-REDONDA 2: MADEIRAS NA ARTE SACRA: ÁRVORES, SIMBOLISMO, CONSERVAÇÃO E RESTAURO

The wood in the Italian sacred art (and hints of Western Europe)

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Italian sacred art closely intertwines with the Christian Catholic religion and the Catholic Church. Byzantine art significantly impacted European artistic expressions until the Medieval era. However, from the 12th to the 13th century, Western artists began to cultivate their own style, which diverged from the typical expressiveness of Orthodox icons. The Lutheran Reformation and the subsequent Catholic Counter-Reformation fundamentally transformed the symbolism and rituals of services. These changes in symbolism also affected relevant artistic expressions in sacred contexts. But did the list of modifications in the Christian cult change the role of wood in the sacred art of Western Europe? Is wood merely a raw material that supports the images, and is its selection for specific use only linked to the required technological features? Expressions of sacred art include statues, painted wooden panels, marquetry found in choirs and sacristies, certain architectural decorations, and among these, the monumental wooden gates of important churches. My contribution will examine the wood species used in Italy and several neighbouring European countries, focusing on the categories of the listed artifacts. Additionally, some examples of the symbolic use of wood in statues will be considered.

Palavras-chave: Wood, Cultural Heritage, Sacred art.

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