Moisture transport properties of brick – comparison of exposed, impregnated and rendered brick

In regards to internal insulation of preservation worthy brick façades, external moisture sources, such as wind-driven rain exposure, inevitably has an impact on moisture conditions within the masonry construction. Surface treatments, such as hydrophobation or render, may remedy the impacts of external moisture. In the present paper the surface absorption of liquid water on masonry façades of untreated, hydrophobated and rendered brick, are determined experimentally and compared. The experimental work focuses on methods that can be applied on-site, Karsten tube measurements. These measurements are supplemented with results from laboratory measurements of water absorption coefficient by partial immersion. Based on obtained measurement results, simulations are made with external liquid water loads for determination of moisture conditions within the masonry of different surface treatments. Experimental results showed a very clear reduction of the liquid water uptake for hydrophobated cases. However, hygrothermal simulations demonstrated clear differences in the effect of the surface treatments on the moisture content of brick depending on the brick type.

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