



## **The Urban Transformation in the Historical Centers of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador from the 1970s to Today**

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The renaissance of traditional and historical urban centers of great cities starts to make part of the paradigm of the sustainable development in the late twentieth century. The revitalization of the central areas through the reuse of the existent inheritance depends on the viability of the system. In Brazil, cities such as Salvador and Rio de Janeiro invest more intensely in the revitalization of their traditional centers from the 1990s, after several attempts and projects in previous years.

Salvador and Rio de Janeiro have a very close urban history. The two are based on the principles of Portuguese colonization. The two were important ports inside bays, with good visibility for the protection that comes from the sea and also from the interior of the land. The two had been Brazil's capitals for approximately 200 years each - Salvador from 1549 to 1763 and Rio from 1763 to 1960. The two had the slave labor as an important component of their society and economy. The urban form of the two is very similar with a vector of growth that follows the line of the bay must because of their rugged topography - towards the Atlantic Ocean followed the most privileged class and towards the interior of the bay, the less privileged. When the technology allows the change of topography, the interior is added up to the urban space of the city. Today, the two are cities of great tourist attraction, capitals of their states, maintain administrative and political functions, business and services. At their centers, the main functions are developed from their foundation up to middle of the century XX. These centers had grown, incorporated new spaces -through landfills of the bay, dismantling the hills or by vertical growth -, and they continued like spaces privileged inside the city.

However, in the end of the 1970s and beginnings of the 1980s, the centers of Rio and Salvador took opposite way because of different political decisions that made the traditional centers of the two cities distinct public spaces. While one, Rio, has always preferred to preserve its traditional centre like principal business, political and administrative space, besides cultural and historical, the other, Salvador, decided to decentralization and creates other centralities, separating the business center from the administrative center and from the historical center, each one has now their specific space. Today, we can see the antagonistic results of those different political decisions.

In Rio, more and more the inhabitants frequent its centre, also by night and weekends, occupying public and private spaces. In Salvador, the local population, especially the middle and upper classes, is far from the traditional center, leaving it to the tourists who are bewitched by the thematic park of the Pelourinho that reproduces the city of the eighteenth century. But some changes and new perspectives are open for the two centers. Discuss the new projects to Rio and Salvador historical centers are the principal point of this paper.

**KEY WORDS:** Historical center, urban Project, urban transformation.