

IMPLEMENTATIONS OF MUSEUMS AS AGENTS IN THE RENEWAL OF OLD BELO HORIZONTE CENTER - MINAS GERAIS.

CELINA BORGES LEMOS,* *Professor at the Federal University of Minas Gerais*

Rua Paraíba, 697, Funcionários. Belo Horizonte-MG, Brazil, celinaborg@gmail.com,

ALICE VIANA DE ARAÚJO, *Doctorat student at the Université de Paris IV*

Rua São Vicente, 85, Angicos. Vespasiano-MG, Brazil, aliceviana00@gmail.com

EUGÊNIA DÓRIA VIANA CERQUEIRA, *Under graduate at the Federal University of Minas Gerais*

Rua Tomaz Gonzaga , 530/1100, Lourdes. Belo Horizonte-MG, Brazil., gegesml@gmail.com

Abstract

In a relatively short period of time, it has been noticed that the implementation of museums in cities around the world has become a strategic element in the processes of urban regeneration and also an important tool for creating and socio-economic innovations in their cultural landscape. In Belo Horizonte, third largest Brazilian metropolis, some of these museums are already well established and consolidated, while others have been programmed for short term implantations, mostly in its traditional city center. This study examines the significance of these initiatives in the light of the increase in the services economy, the impacts of urban renewal and the valorization of the cultural image of the oldest part of the city. It intends also to verify the increase of the attention given by public and private sectors in these investments related to the implantation and concentration of the museums and its consequences in urban society. The following equipments will be regarded as study subjects: the Mineiro Museum, the Inimá de Paula Museum, the Museum of Arts and Crafts, the Museum of Mineralogy, the Museum Abilio Barreto and the other museums and cultural centers integrated in the new cultural circuit planned for the Liberty Square..

Foundation and development of the new capital of Minas Gerais State

Belo Horizonte is a city that was designed in late 1890s to be the new capital of Minas Gerais state, replacing Ouro Preto. In its plan were used a large number of pre-modern urban parameters, symbolizing the new republican order. Throughout its first decades of life, sought to consolidate itself as a locus of modern experience, which is specifically urban. Pointing Belo Horizonte as a modern city means to guarantee her some of the main urban functions, making it a center of cultural exchanges. Their commercial, industrial and intellectual experiences, intertwined, are the ones responsible for that transformation of the city life into urban cultural experience. In this sense it is translated at the same time, as "the center of the existing social order and the boundary-creating growth and transformation" (Bradbury, 1989:77).

At the time of the city foundation, despite the planned space, cultural life, yet distant from modern experience, brought itself very different feelings, often conflicting. On the one hand, the imposition of the layout of streets, with all its immensity, created a deep embarrassment to the civil servants, so used to the organic urban spread of Ouro Preto. The

marks, references, exchanges and appropriations, which could make the city a livable one, would only come with time. Therefore the temporal process arose as a key condition for building the sense and the experimentation of the Belo-Horizonte's space. In this atmosphere, there was a gap in Belo Horizonte identity, as a result of its no-condensation of space and time.

The Liberty Square, built to house the state administration, received in the city's plan a privileged topographical position. At the beginning of the century, this locus was a space inducer of sociability, being itself a major urban life stage. Its space involved both the public and political activities, and acted as important urban leisure equipment. Surrounded by the Government Palace and the Secretariats, the square was quickly adopted by the sparse population meant for Belo Horizonte.

While Liberty Square centered extraordinary activities, the Avenue Afonso Pena, the largest in town with width similar to the Champs Elysées in Paris, sought to reaffirm its original function: a privileged place of exchange. Linking the north and south areas, the baroque avenue functioned as a concentrator space, conditioning the urban mobility. This led those who came by train to the main points of the city. As an obligatory path, the avenue had that function reaffirmed by the concentration of special activities and services in that urban context. But while the Avenue Afonso Pena and the Station Square centered the urban mobility and the still embryonic concentration of services, the Bahia Street, in their quarters near the Avenue, became the scene and the sense of city culture. The decade of the 1920 began with innovations in the local economy and in the transportation system. The economic redefinition and the revitalization of the railway system led to architectural and urban renewal in the city. The Liberty Square had also been remodeled since the government, to incorporate the criticisms of his former project, while driven by the need for renovation, considered ideal to create a new landscape for the plaza. And in that way the life of Belo Horizonte works in its first decades. Of the red dust that tinged the city with its eclectic and neoclassical architecture, the space began to acquire a real urban feature. In the 1930s the row houses and bungalows will start to make room for the skyscrapers. The trams, which shortened the distances and propitiated the meeting, started to share the streets with cars and later with the buses.

The local modernist group became part of a real archeological urban experience, through narrative and artistic creations were rediscovered places and figured times. Other art manifestations took place in Belo Horizonte, which "embodied both modernity and tradition. The delay and the vanguard tangled up in contradictions and paradoxes "(Werneck, 1992:30). In turn, events like the "Hall of Fine Arts," held in Rio de Janeiro in 1931 directed by Lucio Costa, and two shows at Belo Horizonte in 1936 represented the tone of this difficult dilemma. The first of those two shows - XII Art Salon of Minas Gerais - was considered the official exhibition of the academy, the second one called "Exposition Bar Brazil," reached success in exposing the artistic and architectural creations consistent with the "spirit of time" itself of international modernism (Ribeiro, 1998).

The local scene also showed the changes registered predominantly in the city center, a significant portion of the original design of the Capital which, with its neoclassical principles of the late nineteenth century, offered already in this period, the air of the metropolis defined by the renewal of the landscape. To the extent that expanded exchanges between Belo Horizonte and the larger centers, new living styles, new

cultural and artistic visions as well as new building techniques and materials, began to arrive more quickly. These aspects suggest the pace of change and transience so characteristic of the modernization process, especially boosted by the arrival of Juscelino Kubitschek at local administration in the role of mayor in 1940. Beside the great architectural legacy, the Complex of Pampulha created by Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer left recorded in the city a rich and unique relationship between a succession of transformations of the national and international architecture and the architectural design developed in Minas Gerais.

The creation of the "Industrial City" and the outbreak of World War II will accelerate the local and state industrialization processes. In urban terms Belo Horizonte has its limits changed, as indicating its tendency to expand. The Center absorbed much of the urban life, being simultaneously a place of meeting, partying and, of course, working. The city offered a rich cultural life, confirming its tendency to becoming a metropolis. This fact was also conditioned by the industrial development that generated a population increase, driving the growth of the service sector. The activities that required large fields such as industrial and wholesalers that had settled in the central region near the station had during the 1950s suffered a great expansion of its network.

With the urban growth in Belo Horizonte, any traditional style of living built since its foundation was being adapted to new times and changes. Much of their everyday experiences should, or be rearticulated with time or disappear in the process of the development of this new urban metropolis. In this sense, the footing at the end of the decade had its days numbered. The socio-cultural life of the early 1960s accounted for a significant change in the context of the urban imagination. The spatial segregation and the uncontrolled spread materialized the growth of capital. As this growth developed, the first signs of saturation appeared in the Center, the main urban centrality, stage of all social practices. Because of its primacy, these years came to reaffirm its cultural and political tradition of other decades, however, it is noticed a spatial shift in the way of how these meetings happened. With an industrial diversification implemented by the State, in the 1960s Belo Horizonte must face all the typical phenomenon of the metropolis. The growth and diversification of the third sector indicated a renewal of the use of space, especially in central area, where the high-rise process was gaining a new force.

The consolidation of the capital and the first museums

Having been spurred its growth in the 1960s and 1970s; the contemporary capital seeks to consolidate itself as a state pole. The phenomenon of its metropolization has resulted into significant changes in its space. The city, in defiance of its geometric order, has "a past, a decentralized history, and a sum of personal experiences of everyday practices" (Matos, 1989:79). The policy of industrial diversification in the metropolitan area, already conceived as such in the late 1970s, has also contributed to the expansion of the third sector, defining a new profile in the capital. Despite the growth in the period, one can assert that its non-productive structure has been reinforced, characterizing it definitely as a dormitory town (LEMOS, 1993). If, within urban, the city as a planned area already has its originality represented, its economic profile achieved the same feature in the 1980s,, which helped to reinforce that characteristic. The city began to play the role of "major urban center" and, at the same time, could not rid itself of its peripheral condition, since it was still subjected to an export base.

The 1980s left very clear marks on the Minas Gerais and on Brazil's economy due to crisis that took place at the beginning of the decade. Belo Horizonte has achieved a population of over one million inhabitants, reaching the status of third most populous city in the country. Despite the crisis of the Brazilian economy, the old town and the Central Area where it is inserted became consolidated as articulators' poles, presenting a significant development of the tertiary sector. The available data indicated the trend of that last decade, as of the primacy of the activities to provide services such as offices, financial services and residential sector. The tertiary has increased its number, has gained a variety and high level of expertise, belonging to the so-called "superior tertiary" (LEMOS, 1988).

In Belo Horizonte, actions on behalf of social memory and heritage were incipient between 1960s and 1980s, since it had not been created in that time state and local agencies focused on the protection of built heritage. The creation of the Abilio Barreto Museum has its genesis from a special group of researchers of the social memory of Belo Horizonte who created an alternative way of its safeguarding. In 1941 the collection was composed of over 1,100 objects organized by different kinds of media - real estate, textual, iconographic, and bibliographic - entered into two sections, an archive and a museum. In 1943, to guard this valuable collection it was necessary to create a museum that was finally housed in the eighteenth century residential building of the ancient farmland, probably the only remaining property of the Curral Del Rey. Based on an approach more dynamic and modern, the museum has become a cultural institution dedicated to the memory and history of the city, with wider resources and powers, being more consistent in responding to the demands of contemporary society. These characteristics were attuned to the new museum concepts, which set a process of architectural revitalization and institutional rehabilitation. Due to the increase of its powers, that now include research activities, information, education and recreation, bringing together more than 7,000 objects and artifacts, it was necessary to create a new building that has been located in the garden of the same eighteenth century mansion, which was entirely restructured. By 1998, the new building became the seat of this institution, that seeks to enable a sustainable management capable of ensure the preservation, research and communication of city memory within local urban society (CITY HALL, 2009).

When it comes to transformations of Abilio Barreto Historic Museum, the first building was preserved and remains the main symbolic reference. Besides, its innovation has created conditions to attract a greater number of patrons with different profiles. However, as is situated between the Garden City district and the Luxembourg district, characterized by distinct processes of occupation, the museum is somehow connected to these regions. At the same time, it has been consolidated as a reference for research due to the existence of relevant collections that allow a deeper knowledge of the history of the county. Besides, the museum demarcates a possible break with the classical museum idea. According to Jeudy (1990:35), in a study conducted in the 1980s, this break advocates the emergence of new programs and museum concepts who value a new form of museums approach when it comes to recent heritage. This is based on cultural and scientific animation and in a different way of transmitting knowledge, aspects that are adopted by new Abilio Barreto Museum, which due to its commitment to historical research has achieved a successful *mis-à-jour*.

The first seat of the Djalma Guimarães Museum of Mineralogy, opened in 1974, occurred in the neo-Gothic building built in 1914 and remained there until 1992. Its collection was initially formed by a set of over three thousand samples from the expositions held on the old Permanent Samples Fair, being only a small part of them prepared for public exhibition. The museum houses a collection of books related to mining engineering and metals. Despite its good location, which perpetuated a cultural tradition of the Bahia Street, the museum was closed in 1992. As a complement of these goals there is the character of heritage education to highlight the importance of mineral resources - matter included in the content taught in guided tours - and to promote the contact with products originating from raw materials. One should register that the location change of the museum, although it caused a significant cultural loss to the old town, provided an institutional and technical dynamic, increasing its importance in civil society and acquiring modern characteristics. One can surely consider that the setting up of a Cultural Centre at the ancient seat of the Bahia Street did not meet the gap left with the transfer of the museum. The building could have made in programmatic terms both the museum with its innovations and held also the Cultural Centre. Therefore, its output has weakened further the cultural activity of the neighborhood, so worshiped in the first decades of the capital existence.

Differs from previous ones, the Museum of Minas Gerais, opened in 1977 and located at João Pinheiro Avenue, parallel to the Bahia Street, who represents is also a connection of the Old Town with the Liberty Square. The eclectic building was constructed with neoclassical details by the Capital Construction Commission, to serve as a residence of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Museum joins an impressive number of objects that document, in practical or symbolic ways, the different times of the formation of the state culture (SECRETARIA, 2009). Its collection was increased of thirty-six collections from donations from institutions and individuals sources. Currently the museum is closed to undergo rehabilitation and expansion. When full restored and adapted, it will form with the adjacent buildings, the cultural Archive included, a rich conglomerate part in the Museums Complex of the Liberty Square. The museum and its existing expansion are being renovated for an upgrading and modernization of its spaces. With its permanent collection so important to the cultural experience of the citizens, this space was frequented mostly by researchers from various scientific centers, and by the individuals that came from specific social sectors that possess a high degree of cultural information. However, it became a larger cultural reference because of the monumentality of the building, as it has always given priority to heritage education and has always received the students of public schools. According to the new project, that will promote the upgrading and restructuring of the *ensemble* of the Museum and of the Archive, and its integration with the Cultural Circuit of the Liberty Square, the main goal is, in addition to modernization, to guarantee an increase in the number and in diversification of its public.

The new museums and the cosmopolitan metropolis reality

The contemporary Belo Horizonte has multiplied its cultural life, and in its fragments we can find the ultimate expression of its spatial memory. It is based in a society constantly subjected to innovations that are incorporated in a fragmented cultural capital, transmitted and administered by local institutions. Besides the school and the family, the

media, the forms of organization of space / time, they all will compose the "institutions and material structures through which circulate the senses [...]" (CANCLINI, 1986:38). While the population enjoys these structures in different ways, the cultural assets accumulated over time are distributed unevenly where a great part of the population has no access to these resources. Likewise, urban development took place on the basis of segregation and consequent prioritization of areas. The social and economic differences end up conditioning practices, where some groups, more than others, have the means to take ownership of cultural property. The habits that promote the practices and schemes of perception and appreciation of the city define the different lifestyles that exist in everyday experience.

From the urban growth and the consequent proliferation of centers, Belo Horizonte and its Central Area are polarizing different kind of centralities. This fact is embodied in a wide range of services, in different forms of consumption and in the creation of a variety of symbolic goods, which also has a great effect in the mobility dynamics.. As this space shows signs of saturation, especially in its old center, it loses its sociability inducers in consolidating itself as a place of passage, business and consume. The forms of leisure and cultural expression follow the decentralization of services, having to adapt themselves to these new spaces or to transform them according to their needs. One must clearly note that there has been a decline in the supply of public spaces intended for leisure and cultural activities as the city evolved into a metropolis. At the same time, the city received the implantation of a variety of private places for the same purpose. Despite this quantitative reduction in proportion to the first decades of the Capital, these collective spaces have become references in everyday life. This dynamic are embedded differences and distinctions, which denotes social practices of the cosmopolitan city" (ALBANO, LEMOS, 1990:18).

Of all the features above, one can indicate that most part of sociability spaces are initially consumption spaces. Therefore the accessibility to cultural and leisure activities is conditioned by the economic and cultural powers of the local groups. This condition creates fragments of socio-cultural manifestations that are obviously resonated in the different urban spaces. While the government abandons the role of the ruler of the future of the city, the appropriation of public places show the public thirst for a new citizenship. It's no rare that spaces with reduced functionality are used as meeting points, as places of sociability. Furthermore the number of cultural centers and museums is insufficient and does not meet the social and cultural diversity alive in the metropolis.

The development process of Belo Horizonte, alongside its urban transformations, presents an innovation in the social and cultural life driven by a "new modernity". The circuits that were more visible reach today information technology, enabling the communication of the metropolis with the world. The growth has occurred in a discontinuous way, with regional mismatches. An ambiguous urban picture ranges between the experience and technical sophistication of the tertiary and the mediocrity of some areas. Being the city run by bureaucratic and often unjust politics, problems such as housing, transportation and the precariousness of urban facilities create negative highlights in the urban landscape. Combined with this picture, there are the business dynamics, the intelligent buildings and the sophisticated commercial malls, producing a heterogeneous image that obscures the references and the production of meanings. Sociability conditioned by cultural fashions results in

fragmented and differentiated conditions by which people experience the whole metropolis.

It can be said that the city, despite the difficulties faced throughout its one hundred years of existence, found a profile more in tune with the major international urban centers. "Belo Horizonte banished the large factories to the peripheral regions, opening doors to a wide range of lighter economic activities, creating an intensive use of urban space, activities which are the only ones compatible with its status as a metropolis that does not have a lot of available spaces" (LEMOS , 1993). The spaces of encounter and sociability of the streets and corners of the old center of Belo Horizonte have been reduced while the process of conurbation goes on. Similarly, other smaller centers, in the process of their transformation, lose their spaces of sociability, since there isn't a policy of preservation of urban structures. In the case of the old center and its surrounding areas, the concentration of services and activities coexist with the process of degradation in the local streets. The public spaces lose their roles as meeting points, and as places of enjoyment and leisure, becoming often alternative sites for the survival of marginal population. These privileged spaces, currently devoid of references, used to be traditional public places of permanence and of enjoy of urban experience. The city and its many possibilities for leisure and culture largely justify the creation of cultural centers and museums as agents of urban renewal.

The process of concentration of art and culture centers follows naturally the third sector in general and is unevenly distribution in the city, with the prevalence of such places in the South Central Region- where lies the Central Area - and the Pampulha Region. This feature is a result of the history of occupation and expansion of Belo Horizonte, regions that have registered scenarios that combine the presence of a cultural heritage of historical and artistic value and preponderance of initiatives that provide, promote and disseminate culture, art and other means and devices for training, education and meetings. A significant portion of the sectors targeted for art and culture is owned and operated by municipal and state governments, and is distributed in an asymmetric sequence in the regions. Despite the hegemony of the South Central Region, the cultural centers and libraries are distributed in a more homogeneous way. Such equipments are part of the state and local educational system, and contribute strongly to constitute medium and small cultural centralities. With regard to the museum and the arts centers, and their importance to the vast majority of the population, they are scarce or almost nonexistent in other regions besides the South Central and the Pampulha. Beside public initiatives for the regain of the value of symbolic goods, in general, a set of activities is associated with the services offered by the private sector, as the leisure and entertainment ones. These private actors promote events and concerts bound to market interests, with the participation or not of the public power. Mostly, they create and promote cultural and artistic opportunities that are developed in accordance with the economic capital of the Belo Horizonte society. Recently, and showing intentions to expand and diversify their offerings focused on the cultural and leisure initiatives emerged the public and private partnerships. This agenda of interventions, which brings together the two sectors, has represented in the later decades innovative proposals, boosting the enjoyment of cultural, educational, meeting and permanence places. Despite the existence of market interest in those partnerships, public actions associated with the private enterprise sector help to create new urban centralities. It is according to the incorporation of these sectors that one reaffirms the importance of social and cultural policies located in the Central Area, and

in the metropolitan area. Such reflections lead to a just demand of the Belo Horizonte metropolitan citizens for an expansion of areas and establishments offering leisure and culture. In response to this lack of meeting and permanence places, the public sectors have made relevant proposals for urban renewal capable of changing this scenario. The seek for an urban renewal of the old center started in the 1990s, caused by the proximity of its centenary festivities, when emerged important initiatives such as adapting the building of the former School of Engineering to implement the Cultural Center of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, the use of the house of Count of Santa Maria for the realization of artistic and cultural events; the rehabilitation of the traditional building of the Sawmill Souza Pinto for the deployment of an event center capable to operate as a multifunction building. The latter was re-opened in 1997, in the celebration of the centennial of Belo Horizonte, inaugurating the program of rehabilitation of its older centrality.

The “Programa Centro Vivo” (Living Centre Program), launched in 2003 by the municipal administration, represents an important event, and aims to reclassify the urban heritage of that area. The program provides, among other things, the upgrading and revitalization of streets, squares and parks, the implementation of various measures and actions for social and cultural inclusion, reorganization of the informal economy, recovery of cultural heritage of urban buildings and study of unoccupied or under-used buildings. Among these propositions, there are the interventions in the Sete de Setembro, Raul Soares, and Rui Barbosa Squares. In the latter, besides the environmental and landscaping rehabilitation of the area, the former Central Station was restored and adapted for housing the Museum of Arts and Crafts. The works of the museum began in 2001 and in 2005 the city received its new cultural space. The museum houses a collection that exposes the elusive world of work, arts and crafts included in the social and economic history of Brazil. This is an initiative of the Cultural Institute Flavio Gutierrez in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and the Brazilian Urban Train Company. The center's goal is the preservation of objects, instruments and tools adopted by workers during the pre-industrial Brazilian era.

So, besides the temporary exhibitions, the museum is expected to reveal the wealth of popular production, chores, crafts and arts that gave rise to contemporary professions. The building of the Central Station was restored, adapted and expanded to receive the new functions, as also was the square. The exhibition design is authored by the specialist Pierre Catel, and it unites the two buildings through a tunnel and creates in the outdoor spaces exhibition galleries. The program consists of spaces for permanent and temporary exhibitions, a garden-museum, a permanence area which is linked to the coffee shop and the arts shop. The concept prioritizes the reflection on history and social relations of work in Brazil. The Museum of Arts and Crafts is an important initiative of public private partnership, being the most complete and technological building of its kind in the city. Its presence in the Old Town has stimulated the regeneration of the area and it is setting up a symbolic reference in the landscape (INSTITUTO. . ., 2008) The new space has been specially frequented by students of public and private schools and it appears that despite being a well known cultural equipment, capable of maintaining the social memory of this people, the museum is truly legitimized and identified by residents of more distant regions, with little integration with the traditional user of the old center. The choice of its implantation place is more justified for its aesthetic quality and the need to preserve the building than the real demand of these local groups, which doesn't reduce its importance.

Rather, it consolidates the purpose of urban renewal and simultaneously has creating a new a meaning and a new scene desired for the region.

The Inimá de Paula Museum, established in 2008, registers a second initiative that legitimizes and promotes the urban regeneration of the Old Center. Result of a partnership between the Inimá de Paula Foundation and the Ministry of Culture, the museum is implanted in Bahia Street, in the old Art Deco buildings of the Club Belo Horizonte and of the Cine Guarani, built in 1932 by Italian architect Raffaello Berti. The restoration of the buildings and the museum design were made by local architect Saul Vilela. Integrated to the salons of the permanent collection, the cultural area is formed by a virtual showroom, a movie theater, a bookstore, a gift shop, a coffee shop and some living rooms. The collection defined by the Inimá de Paula Foundation itself gathers around one hundred works of the painter, some donated and other borrowed on loan. Thus the space seeks to disseminate the work of this artist and simultaneously provide venues for cultural events such as seminars, courses, among other initiatives (INIMÁ FOUNDATION ..., 2008). The Inimá de Paula Museum and its galleries reaffirm the Old Center renewal and features, as in the Museum of Arts and Crafts, an educational purpose that adds to the specialized look of its users. In the specific case of a museum showing the work of an important painter it is observed that the building is fully adapted to the new programmatic points, marking the symbolic revival of an enjoyment that signifies more than the exposure of the screens themselves. This, as in the previous museum, searches through its curatorial and museum interior space, to create a dynamic where interact architecture, interiors and the works themselves (CRIMP, 2005). In this sense, considering the different social groups who attend the Centre, the new centers of art dissemination show in its museum principles and exhibition design projects that the same symbolic goods can be enjoyed by different sectors of society. As it is, one must consider, as shown Canclini (1986), that the difference is established beyond the goods that each class has, but how they use them in their daily practices.

The Liberty Square Architectural and Landscape Area is another region of relevance to the history of Belo Horizonte and of Minas Gerais to be rehabilitated. She polarizes three sub-regions structured by Savassi, formerly part of the civil servants district, the João Pinheiro Avenue and its adjacencies and the neighborhood of Lourdes. After the recovery of the Square, in the last decade of the twentieth century, it was again recognized as a place of primacy of the activities of rest and recreation. During the mornings and afternoons of the week, its spaces receive patrons from the closest neighborhoods, as the Savassi, Lourdes, St. Peter, Central and St. Anthony regions. But at night and on weekends, the space is occupied by families, teenagers, children and youth, all in search of leisure and symbolic value of the site. The richness and diversity of their cultural heritage, the quality of landscape design and the possibilities of encounters and enjoyable permanence have led to some over use of its pleasant spaces.

The growing appreciation of the place and its constant visitation points to a revaluation and expansion of its uses. The interests showed by the square attendees to transpose the boundaries the square and the facades of the old palaces and buildings as testimonies of the capital architecture. They envision uncovering the historical and sophisticated aesthetics of these spaces that housed decisions about the future of the Minas Gerais state. This urge coincides with a special vision of the State Administrative Sector adopted that the sophisticated and revered palaces do not provide adequate conditions for the dynamic and full exercise of their

responsibilities. It was also considered that any initiative to adapt them to the contemporary demands could compromise their artistic and architectural features. Along with a thorough technical evaluation, it was also considered that in the past years there were undertaken some intervention projects that much endangered the artistic details and elements of the interiors of the buildings. Complementing this analysis, the administrative sector showed that the areas available for use of the secretaries are not sufficient to absorb the demands of modern program proposed by the current state management.

According to the above considerations and based on comprehensive research consultation in all city regions where were proposed on the conversion of the mansions into cultural spaces, came the proposed Cultural Circuit of Liberty Square. The rehabilitation of the square and its buildings aims to implement innovative activities programs, which aims to promote culture, art, education and recreation for the city and state. This action allows the preservation of the cultural heritage for present and future generations, while giving priority to production and promotion of artistic and cultural goods (SECRETARIA, 2005). The first project announced in 2005 was the Square of Science which is a partnership between the State Government, the Federal University of Minas Gerais and the company Telecom Italia America Latina. This is being implemented in the side building of the Department of Education, built in 1968. The Square's program is formed by interactive labs, a planetarium and astronomical observatory equipped with the latest technology. With features of the duo's science and technology, the square prioritizes the expansion of this knowledge to the residents of Belo Horizonte to tourists, enhancing its educational and playful character. Besides offering the experience of technical excellence and scientific, its design adds to these artistic activities, which are imposed in the context of the mainstreaming of culture. According to its creators, culture is linked to various events and activities that take place in the square of science, such as education, technology, environment, science and experience within the society itself (SECRETARIA, 2005). The project provides almost complete remodeling of the modernist building, preserving its structure and constructive parts of their external walls. There will be five floors that will house the following main program: lobby, cafeteria, souvenirs shop, showroom, laboratory and interactive digital planetarium. In the building of the Department of Education is scheduled the installation of the Museum of Mines and Metals. Much of the materials used to construct the building; the iron structure and metal roof were imported from Belgium. The staircase structure with metal body and stores incorporates the artistic experience of the Art Nouveau style, creating a certain contrast with the very eclecticism that defines part of their originality. In all three floors of the building are provided a variety of environments that intend to present a virtual trip to the world of mines and metals. The first floor will have reception, administration, cafeteria, room for temporary exhibitions, and an addition to the Professor's Virtual Reference Center. The Mines museum space occupies the second floor and is divided into three rooms: the Mines, the Mirage and the Earth Star. The collections of the Museum of Mineralogy Djalma Guimarães also occupy this floor. The third floor space is proposed for the Museum of Metal and is composed of rooms equipped with several proposals like the "Periodic Table", the "Sharp Tongue", the "Window to the World" and the "Map of the Mines" (SECRETARIA. ..., 2008). The project gives priority to the quasi-total preservation of the former secretary and simultaneously enhances the architecture of Paulo Mendes da Rocha. In its points of view, there were conceived interactive environments, equipped with innovative technologies and it has stipulated the priority to create a dialogue with the visitor. An almost poetic way, the technology, instead of putting up distances, close them, engaging the

viewer (SECRETARIA,2008). Therefore, the museum added uses of technology resources and artistic entertainment to convey knowledge about the universe of rocks, the processing of metals and the social, economic and cultural development importance of the state. In the Department of Finance will be implanted the Minas Gerais Memorial, which creates a synthesis place of history, culture, art and memory of the state. At the time of the inauguration of the Capital, was still being finished. The Memorial is designed to function as a central reception to the Cultural Circuit, being linked to public-private partnership with the mining company Vale, formerly known as Vale do Rio Doce Company. His program is based on the idea of showing the diversity, originality and boldness that characterize the territory historical background, cultural, social and political. The architectural design consists of three floors and a basement, and advocates preserving the interior architecture of the secretariat. The program is distributed in the building according to the museum project, with three core modules: the Visionary Minas, Unforgettable Minas and Minas Polyphonic. Beside the areas of thematic exhibitions, the floors incorporated functions such as management, technical resources, multipurpose room, auditorium, and a coffee shop. By advocating an interdisciplinary reach the main feature space defines the relationship between the experiences of culture, education and research, to be transmitted according to various kinds of media and technology.

The Ministry of Social Defense building is being adopted by the Bank of Brazil Cultural Center, representing a partnership of the bank with the State Government. The building had its works started in 1929. With it were completed all the administrative palaces of the state government. Linked to an eclectic revivalist, the building is characterized by a monumental architecture, based on the incidence of sober volumes. Valuing the symmetry, the front facade is marked by two sets of colonnades of Ionic style. The main windows are arched and are fully articulated with other smaller area, carrying only a functional role. The building's interior shows a detail of *Art Nouveau*, especially the stair rail, the colored glass and the presence of a simplified skylight. The area of the building is much larger than that of the others; even so, it was subsequently increased by one floor. The program proposed by the Bank of Brazil to implement the center brings together activities such as theater space for 280 attendants, multi-stage space, exhibition halls, space for educational programs, video-café, permanence rooms, in addition to other administrative and support activities. The program is distributed in six floors, a basement as a locus of culture that incorporates numerous activities, establishing itself as a discussion forum. Seek, therefore, to create a living museum that allows, at the same time, revision and recycling of artistic events, exposing products, integrating events and questioning the cultural production, with as many spaces working together, with free passage for the art, which is permanently on display (SECRETARIA. .., 2008). In this context, it calls for all public, facilitating its access, production and participation, consistent with the symbolic goods in general.

The proposed Cultural Circuit, aligned with the contemporary world, presents itself as an initiative that enables visitation and enjoyment of these exquisite interiors and endowed by a rich material and immaterial contact with the history, art and culture experienced in Minas Gerais integrated to the national and global levels. Considering the objectives, the implementation of the museums stands as an important conquest of the population. The condition of the contemporary metropolis requires that Belo Horizonte meets the current demands of our time. Thus, it is critical that corporate and institutional sectors have in traditional spaces and identified by the population, the ideal place for the promotion of their

activities. Moreover, the ratification of the proposed renovation of traditional areas translates into a contribution to Belo Horizonte to find new talent and to renew - or even rediscover - them who demonstrated their relevance throughout its history.

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