

## CULTURAL HERITAGE, URBAN PROJECTS AND PLANNING LEGACY: AN IMPLICIT NORMATIVE DIMENSION IN URBAN SPACE OF RIO DE JANEIRO CENTRAL AREA

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### ABSTRACT

*The correlation of urban planning and heritage issues is discussed, in this paper, through the investigation of the normative dimension of urban projects and their influence on the spatial configuration of Rio de Janeiro's city centre. Cultural Heritage issues permeate the normative decisions of urban planning along the historic process of city space transformations. This area has been over regulated by urban ordinances and heritage legislation, besides has been object of urban renewal projects. A historic review on urban projects and plans from the perspective of urban ordinances, examines the consequences of urban renewal projects based on razing and redesigning of traditional urban tissue, inspired by the Modern City paradigm. The case studies focus on historical areas which would be bulldozed by one of these projects, and even though it had not been fulfilled, their social and physical structures have been altered, revealing the implicit normative dimension of the spatial configuration. This discussion summarizes the multiple challenges of urban conservation in central areas of contemporary city. Moreover, it reveals the conceptual changes in the 20th century urban theory paradigms and cultural heritage principles.*

### INTRODUCTION

The current spatial configuration of urban space derives from the sedimentation of settlements and interventions undertaken both in urban and architectural scales, whose tracks become relatively evident or concealed, in various levels, such as a palimpsest. Regarding the case of Rio de Janeiro city centre, there are traces of urban legislation prescriptions concealed on urban configuration, even when the ordinances are no longer in force. This assumption has motivated this paper, which presents a historic overview on urban projects and plans from the perspective of urban ordinances, searching for their impacts on urban space, by correlating changes in normative dimension with other elements of urban dynamics, particularly heritage conservation issues. Thus, the discussion expects to contribute to the understanding of the complex dynamics of preservation and development of a historic centre, pointing out some constraints for its rehabilitation.

As current in contemporary central areas of great cities, a plethora of urban ordinances generates an overlay of regulations applied into urban tissue. Being firstly Central Business District (CBD), and more recently Cultural Heritage Preservation Site, the city centre has been over regulated by an association of zoning, building regulations and heritage norms, besides has been object of bulk urban projects. Its urbanization process has abruptly changed its spatial configuration, by implementing motorways and redevelopments, shaping continuities and discontinuities into urban tissue.

Various studies have been carried out on central areas which have been object of clearance by urban renewal projects in Brazil and worldwide<sup>1</sup>. But those drastic

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<sup>1</sup> One of notorious works is Jacobs (1961) The Death and Life of Great American Cities. Rio de Janeiro. For Rio de Janeiro's case of Catumbi district, see Santos, C. N. F. et alli. (1985). Quando a rua vira casa. São Paulo: Projeto, 1985.

projects do leave traces even when they have not been implemented. Condemnation, blighting, underused spaces are some of the noticeable repercussions which devalue the properties and threaten the resident population of those areas. In this sense, this paper brings to light a case study at Rio de Janeiro central area, which would be renovated by an urban project - the North-South Avenue - which has been revoked. Although that area has endured, and nowadays is a preservation site, its social and physical structures have been altered since the area was condemned by the Reidy's Modern project in 1949.

The successive urban ordinances applied to the city centre, combined with urban projects, have configured the current urban space. Heritage protection zones were established in the mid-1980's and 1990's. Since then, urban preservation is assured, on paper, but it is not enough, as the area needs rehabilitation efforts. Hence, it seems relevant, to correlate urban planning and heritage issues by situating heritage - its demolition or preservation - as one of the normative decisions by urban designers and urban planners.

At first the methodological approach is presented, then the contemporary situation of the city centre is outlined, to situate the research viewpoint, for then trace the historic process of urban legislation and projects, analysing spatial configurations conceived by projects and norms, in relation to the actual ones. Finally, heritage concerns are articulated to the area historic urban process.

## THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This paper brings partial results from the research "Urban legislation and Cultural Heritage: cartography of the Urban Central Area of the city of Rio de Janeiro"<sup>2</sup>. The study comprises the area where the city original settlement was located (until the XVIII century), which corresponds nowadays to Central Business District (CBD) and its expansion area. The investigations have been undertaken through the interpretation of historical cadastral maps and Street Alignments Projects, correlated to iconography and field survey, providing a comparative analysis of local urban tissue transformations along the XX century. Mapping has been, thus, an analytical tool, besides a product of the research.

The historic survey on Street Alignments Projects has been an invaluable research source, providing an inventory of non-executed urban projects for the study area. This survey has revealed projects of urban renewal based on bulk redevelopment of traditional urban tissue, inspired on Modern city model paradigm. The case study of the North-South Avenue was selected for the magnitude of its proposal of urban renewal, partially implemented, for the diverse conditions of the affected areas, and moreover, for the cultural significance of those areas.

The morphological approach of this research has the support of Panerai's (2006) methodology of urban analysis, which regards the city growth process in order to describe contemporary challenges of urban planning. According to his theories, the historical investigation of the growth process is based on regulator elements, which either direct or constrain it. This method can be associated with the viewpoint of Grumbach (1996)<sup>3</sup>, who summarizes the inherent phenomena of a city change process in the expression "dialectics of constraints". Physical limits, enclaves, land reserves, regulations, would be restrictions or constraints to be overcome by the city growth process, directed from necessities dialectics and their subsequent reorganizations. For Grumbach, as well as in this study, "*the normative constraint is so important as those relative to city materiality*"<sup>4</sup>.

The comprehension of the plurality of urban tissue City Centre is an indispensable background for this research, for being the territory upon which normative parameters have been applied. Therefore the transformations of the study area are

<sup>2</sup> Coordinated by the author, this research is developed at UFF - Universidade Federal Fluminense - and has received financial support by FAPERJ (State of Rio de Janeiro Research Agency), besides an undergraduate scholarship from CNPq (National Research Council) / UFF.

<sup>3</sup> Grumbach, A. (1996). "A dialética das restrições ou como se faz uma cidade", *RUA Revista de Urbanismo e Arquitetura* 6, 74-79. Traduced from Grumbach, A. (1994) 'La dialectique des contraintes - ou comment se fait la ville' *Le Débat* 80, 140-145.

<sup>4</sup> Grumbach, A. (1996). *Op.cit.*

examined through morphological analysis in order to investigate: the role of public space in tissue organization and in tracing permanence; the importance of land subdivision as an edification ground; the recognition of pre-existing elements in distinct analytical scales: district and street. Therefore the notion of urban process guides this research to deal with urban space through a dynamic perspective.

## CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES OF THE HISTORIC CENTRE

The controversies of the City planning process are materialized in situations of blighted areas and urban voids side by side to valued corporative towers, cultural facilities and preserved areas. The emptying process of the city centre derives from the contemporary urbanization model grounded on urban sprawl that conduced to the obsolescence of the central area. Moreover, not only the centre, but the city itself was considered archaic - for the so-called "Country of the Future" - when the Brazilian Capital was transferred from Rio to Brasilia in 1960<sup>5</sup>. Several institutions moved from the city, causing many vacant buildings, which remain as so until nowadays.

Whereas the city has expanded towards periphery, the transport system has remained insufficient, but expensive, for the growing demand. This conjuncture brings about a chaotic traffic besides parking place demand. Moreover, there is a pent-up demand for housing signed by occupations of old town houses in degraded conditions.

The debate over the directions of Rio de Janeiro central urban area of is on the current agenda of Public Authorities, Architects Associations and Academy. The area is object of a Federal Government Program for the Rehabilitation of Urban Central Areas and the Docklands region has been contemplated with an updated plan, nominated as *Porto Maravilha* - the Wonderful Port.

The central area of Rio de Janeiro has been the most regulated region along the historic process of urban planning of the city as it will be presented further. Despite that, the urban legislation currently in force - the so-called Centre's Law<sup>6</sup> - is lagged, as it was edited in 1994 as a transitory purpose, meanwhile there would be formulated the Local Plan, which has not been accomplished, although prescribed by the City Major Plan (1992). This Law has been reasoned to foster the revitalization of the area, by permitting mixed land uses, particularly housing, which had been restricted since the 1970's decade.

The Historic Centre's cultural heritage deserves notability from the viewpoint of protection policies in relation to urban legislation. Besides zoning ordinances, there are in force, in the study area, five Cultural Heritage Preservation Areas<sup>7</sup>, which protect a significant building stock, besides Listed Monuments at Federal, State and Municipal levels.

Comprising both Central Business District (CBD), and Cultural Heritage Preservation Sites, this area continues to suffer the pressures of development against preservation. Whereas certain sectors have been revitalized following a contemporary model of patrimonialization<sup>8</sup> and globalized places, much of the city core fringes had undergone a decaying process. Thus, there are kinds of oasis of hi-tech cultural centres in restored buildings, as well as poorly preserved housing. Closer to docklands region, there are great extensions of urban voids, derelict lands and underused warehouses<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Rio de Janeiro was the Federal District until 1960. From 1960 until 1975 it was Guanabara State. From 1975 onwards it is a Municipality. The variation of political status is reflected on the plethora of urban ordinances. See Sampaio (2006).

<sup>6</sup>The Law 2236/ 1994 was edited to revoke the 1976 Zoning ordinances in the City Centre..

<sup>7</sup> Besides Corredor Cultural, there are the following APAs: Docklands region SAGAS (Lei 971/1987 and dec. 7351/1988); Cidade Nova and Catumbi (dec. 10040/1991); Cruz Vermelha (dec. 11883/1992); Teofilo Otoni/ São Bento Monastery (dec. 16419/1997).

<sup>8</sup> Concept worked by Choay (2001), among others.

<sup>9</sup> About Urban voids, see Borde (2006).

## A HISTORICAL REVIEW: LEGISLATION AND URBAN PROCESS

Revisiting the urban evolution of the city, it is verified an increasing role of urban ordinances from the beginning of the twentieth century. As the most regulated area of the city, the centre has been successively object of urban ordinances, since the city first zoning (1924), up to 1970 functionalist zoning ordinances. These overlapping of guidelines have configured the central urban space as the most dense and high-rise of the city, until heritage protection zones were designated in the 1980's and later extended in the 90's.

The precursory norms had been generated for hygienists<sup>10</sup> concerns in the early decades of 1900's, aiming at controlling the growth mode of the city, with particular attention to healthy issues of housing, to the sanitation of marshy lands and the urban ventilation, supposedly hampered by the narrow streets from the urban colonial fabric. Series of urban ordinances have determined that the so-called "dirty" uses<sup>11</sup> and the proletarian tenements should be expelled from the urban area towards the outskirts. Whereas this has gradually occurred in obedience to the norms, it has definitively been eliminated by the urban reforms for opening the two main avenues in city centre: Rio Branco - formerly Central (1903-1906) and President Vargas (1941-1944). The suburban areas have received, then, population groups and crafts activities which were banned from the central area<sup>12</sup>.

This situation is affiliated to the implementation of the project of modernity, from which practical dilemmas emerge: how could a new world be created without destroying much of the existing one? Harvey (1992) introduces the image of the "creative destruction" for the understanding of this impasse of modernity. This expression would encompass the significant concern with remodelling the cities, for hygienist reasons, over all, evidenced throughout the XIX century. It can be included in this model, for instance, the Reform of Paris, which became a model for others in various places, including the ones in Rio. In this model, the normative dimension was distinguished mainly through aesthetic concerns with the valuation of monumental perspectives and façades.

The primacy of the "functional city" ideals have emerged with the Modern City paradigm<sup>13</sup>, when the notion of progress related to a city model has its peak. The ordination idea defended by Le Corbusier has decisively influenced the paradigm of modern city, which culminated in the extreme regulation of building and land use. The urban ordinance has played a major role in ensuring the implementation of such guidance criteria and the current spatial configuration is a legacy of this conjuncture.

The modernist city comprises project and norm, praises the monumentalization of the construction, the segregation of the activities, the isolation of the architectural forms and the condemnation of past forms<sup>14</sup>. The complete razing of large parts of the city, as a *tabula rasa* operation to build anew, was defended by CIAM<sup>15</sup> and put into Urban Renewal projects and practice in western cities<sup>16</sup>. The Project of North-South Avenue is one of these exemplar cases.

Following this trend, these principles have guided comprehensive urban projects from the 1940's until the 1970's decade in Rio. Yet functionalist zoning ordinances were effectively edited in 1970, which determined segregated zoning. Since then, residential use has been restricted in central area, despite the significant traditional town houses presence and some multi-family housing located in core periphery. Because of that, there were no real estate housing developments in CBD

<sup>10</sup> This followed an international concern, as discussed by Benevolo (1994). *As origens da urbanística moderna*. Lisboa: Presença. About this matter, see Abreu (1988), Sampaio (2006), among others.

<sup>11</sup> Such as slaughter house, stables, tanneries, port activities.) See Sampaio (2006).

<sup>12</sup> See Sampaio (2006). For more details on President Vargas Avenue, see Borde A., Sampaio, A., Cabral, M.C. "A Historical Approach of Avenida Presidente Vargas (Rio de Janeiro) Project: challenges and controversies towards a responsive future. 14<sup>th</sup> IPHS 2010; and Borde (2006).

<sup>13</sup> See Villaçã (1999).

<sup>14</sup> See Panerai (1996).

<sup>15</sup> "The theme of the 4th CIAM Congress (1933) was "the Functional City". The solutions for urban problems discussed on the event were summarized on a manifesto known as "The Athens Charter", written mostly by Le Corbusier.

<sup>16</sup> About Urban renewal projects in USA and Europe, see Kostof (1992).

area, provoking a population loss in the area, the decaying of existing town houses and the densification of existing urban slums. Nevertheless, this condition has avoided renovation and promoted urban preservation, even though buildings were not legally protected.

## NORMATIVE URBAN RENEWAL: STREET ALIGNMENTS DESIGN

Following a Modern City bias reasoned on circulation, urban projects and zoning ordinances were formulated to the city of Rio. Among those, Street Alignment by-laws, known as P.A.s - Alignments Projects - are urban ordinances which design new alignments to widen the streets, according to a traffic planning logic, by determining the demolition of existing urban quarters. The new alignments traces are observable as new buildings are constructed following the larger setbacks from the street. This new configuration breaks the former continuous alignment, changing the relationship between architecture and public space.

There must be distinguished two situations of P.A.s - Alignments Projects: i) when new alignment is established progressively, in a piecemeal redevelopment as each property is demolished and a new one is built; ii) when the redesign is proposed by an urban renewal project. Whereas the first one depends on the property's owner interest, the second depends on public management and usually occurs at once.

In the first situation, a paradox can be depicted: some buildings have been preserved by the PA, like in figure 1. As according to the new alignment, construction has become unfeasible in small lots, the PA avoids demolition of certain old town houses. Even though anachronistic, many of these P.A.s had been in force until preservation legislation had revoked them.



Figure 1: The Passos Ave.: Old town house has endured the new alignment of blocks with pilotis.[ photo A. Sampaio, 2008]

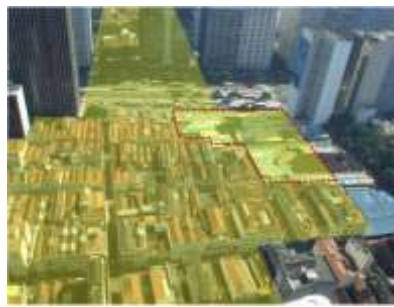


Figure 2: The SAARA Preservation Area. In yellow, the demolition trace of the PA. The red line is the popular market, placed at a razed area. The high-rise blocks are at the Pres. Vargas Ave.[ photo IPP/ RJ, 2005]

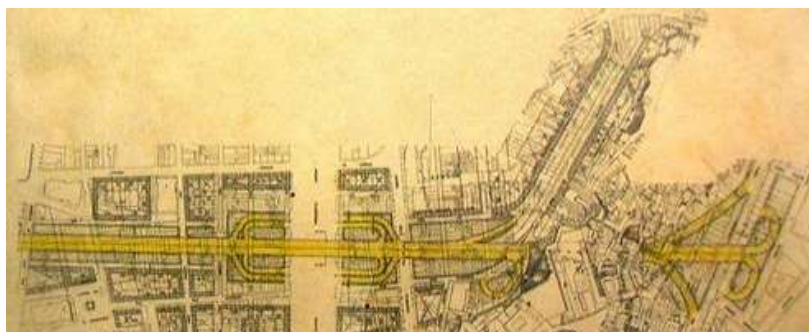


Figure3: North-South Avenue project (PA 5029) by City Urbanism Department (1949);. The yellow trace shows the proposed demolitions; the vertical void is Pres. Vargas Avenue just opened (1941-44).

The second situation brings to discussion the case of North-South Avenue (figures 2 and 3), a massive urban renewal project designed by Affonso Eduardo Reidy and Hermínio de Andrade e Silva from the City Urbanism Department in 1949. Guided

by Modern City precepts on the major role of circulation, a new road system is projected and gives place to new housing and institutional blocks. As a complement to the urbanization of Santo Antonio Esplanade, this project razes the historic Santo Antonio Hill and connects it to the Docklands region through elevated motorways and a tunnel crossing the Conceição Hill. All the surroundings extension along the motorway would be cleared, sweeping away traditional urban quarters as seen in figure 2.

This project was disapproved by the City Major Mendes de Moraes, in 1950, for its high costs. The Major censured its damage for the city centre townscape and ordered the project revision. Meanwhile the menaces of removal have hovered the region for a decade. Great part of these urban quarters which would be cleared, have lodged traditional trades and shops lead by immigrants.

The removal menace has gathered the traders of the region to associate themselves against the project, creating then the SAARA, initially as an association for the defense of its businesses and today a reference of popular bazaar in the city centre. Finally, in 1963 the SAARA traders convinced the Governor Carlos Lacerda to revoke the project by deviating its tracing and to execute only the part of the Esplanade. Thus, social engagement claims for preservation have been effective in avoiding the demolitions.

The quarter of SAARA bordering President Vargas Avenue - the main artery of city centre- where the North-South Avenue would cross it, have remained vacant. They had already been cleared for the opening of the Avenue and remained unoccupied for this PA. Nowadays these sites place a Popular Market, gathering messy stalls (figure 2).

Nevertheless, the urban quarters of the north side of President Vargas, at the bottom of Conceição Hill the situation is diverse. These quarters had already remained apart from the major commercial area for the opening of President Vargas Avenue. Less vitality, less social engagement and commercial cohesion have accelerated the decaying caused by the condemnation of urban quarters, which turn to be abandoned by the landowners, turning the buildings deteriorated and underused. Even though this area has been preserved since 1988, nowadays most of the old town houses lodges inappropriate activities such as parking and storage inside them.

Although the project has not been fulfilled, the social and physical structures of the place have been altered by this uncertain destiny, revealing its implicit normative dimension. This investigation elucidate the current stagnation of this particular heritage area, which would be bulldozed for its urban configuration been considered inappropriate for a CBD by the planners of then.

## HERITAGE AS AN URBAN ISSUE: RENOVATION x PRESERVATION

Standing at a contemporary viewpoint, the case of this Modernist project reveals situations where present pasts confront legacies from a period ideologically energized by present futures<sup>17</sup>. From these clashes, it is possible to highlight the correlation of urban planning and heritage issues by investigating the conditions that Heritage emerges as an issue, as being an obstacle or as a goal for urban planning. Thus, the decision for demolition or preservation of ancient elements is one of the normative decisions that has shaped the contemporary townscape. In practice, the Heritage Authority evaluates ancient sites, urban ensembles and buildings seeking to identify those who embody cultural heritage interest. That is a conceptual discussion founded on the placement of values, according to the current Heritage notion of each time.

A crucial point here is the understanding that the strategy of heritage's speech is based on the figure of loss<sup>18</sup> of cultural values, considered endangered of disappearing. Their permanence only could be assured through safeguard measures of protection, which have followed their current time paradigms, reflecting the urbanism model in force on that temporality. According to Choay (2001),

<sup>17</sup> Borrowing Huyssen's expressions. See Huyssen, A. (2000). *Seduzidos pela memória*. Rio de Janeiro, Aeroplano.

<sup>18</sup> Gonçalves (1996), *A Retórica da Perda*, conceived this speech as the *rhetoric of loss*.

preservation has always been in the opposite way from the prevailing urbanization process and that it was becoming an obstacle to urbanism reforms, that heritage has developed its conceptual identity in the XIX century.

As speech and representation of society, the Cultural Heritage concept has been enlarged throughout its historical trajectory. It can be summarized that Heritage notion was firstly valued for its artistic and historical aspects as National Monuments, assuming later the comprehensive notion of cultural heritage, encompassing architecture, sites and intangible goods. This conceptual shift has been expressed in the international scope through Heritage Charters since 1931, which posed statements in response to the current challenges of each time. Although those documents do not have legal force on heritage protection in Brazil, they had some influence on Cultural policies, even though with some delay.

It can be highlighted the contemporarity among the first Restoration Charter (1931) with the Italian *Restauro* Charter (1932) and the Athens Charter from CIAM (1933). Thus, the 1930's was a turning point for city challenges, when the clashes between divergent visions of city. An urban scale approach only has been brought, in post-war context, in 1964, by the "Venice Charter", which remains a reference for its enlarged concept of historic monument, embracing also culturally significant modest urban or rural settings.

In the 1970's decade, the inseparably link of social component and physical structures have been supported internationally. This was ratified by the Amsterdam Declaration (1975), which recommends the insertion of preservation policies in regional urban planning, through the concept of Integrated Conservation, "*as a fundamental qualitative factor in the management of space*", which has grounded the current policies of Urban Rehabilitation. In addition, the "Recommendation of Nairobi" (1976) has criticized the urbanization model that seriously damage historic heritage under the pretext of modernization, besides the absence of an effective legislation concerning the architectural heritage and its relation to urban planning. Massive city areas adopted this predatory model, including Rio de Janeiro.

Although at National level Heritage protection was established in 1937, when there were listings of notable Monuments, only since 1965 there were listings at local level<sup>19</sup> and in the 1980's decade that Heritage protection policies have been comprised by the city urban planning. The assimilation of the later concepts in Brazil has been delayed for the Military Dictatorship and the lack of Heritage management framework in local authorities.

Rio de Janeiro city centre has experienced a pioneer policy, known as "*Corredor Cultural*"<sup>20</sup> - *Cultural Corridor*, which has become a paradigmatic experience for other cities. Thus, since the 1980's decade it has been established a process of urban heritage conservation through the demarcation of protection areas - APA - Environmental Preservation Areas. There were designated several APAs<sup>21</sup>, in central area, which accomplished to preserve traditional urban ensembles, despite of the difficulties on development control and rehabilitation actions.

In addition, the "Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas" - "the Washington Charter" (1987) has encouraged the involvement of the residents for the success of the conservation program. Yet, it is remarkable to note that the preservation policies in Rio, at municipal level, had already adopted this approach on APA and Cultural Corridor programs, even though it had not continued so forth.

These events of the 1980's were affiliated to the Post-modernism paradigm, which encompassed a memory cult, through cultural structures consumption as a critical reaction to Modernist model, as discussed by some authors<sup>22</sup>. Yet, in the 1990's, following the globalization model, the cultural approach passed to focus on opportunities of economical revitalization, in the sense that the appearance of historic city becomes *attraction-city*. These kinds of interventions have privileged the city centre -the most visible area - and punctual projects such as the restorations of historic buildings for Cultural Centres. Other preservation areas have been designated in the city, particularly in the city centre and South Zone.

<sup>19</sup> The city was then Guanabara State (1960 to 1975) and in 1965 was created a Heritage Department. On the Municipality, the legal framework was instituted in 1980.

<sup>20</sup> Started in 1979, the Zone is regulated by the Decree n° 4.141/1983 and Law n° 506/1984.

<sup>21</sup> For Santa Teresa (1984) and São Cristovão (1986) districts and the docklands region, known as SAGAS Project, gathering the districts of Saude, Gamboa and Santo Cristo.

<sup>22</sup> Harvey (1993) has leaded this discussion.

The increasing engagement of society in heritage preservation may be perceived as a reaction of the globalization trend of homogeneous space. At this point it is relevant to remind Choay's criticism on the current heritage cult, conceived by her as a preservationist euphoria, which she refers as "Noah complex"<sup>23</sup>. This attitude devalue Historic Monument notion, turning heritage protection commonplace. Hence, it is important to highlight that the urban preservation struggle should be grounded on cultural significance<sup>24</sup> notion, according to the Burra Charter (1980).

Thus, regarding the study case, it can be posed that Reidy's project was future oriented and that erasing the city unworthy past was a goal, not a heritage issue. Hence, it can be depicted that the Heritage Notion behind that project is the one adopted by CIAM's in Athens Charter: the exceptional Monuments might stand, if they would not restraint the progress. This excuse has already justified -for the public good - the cancelation of the National Heritage register<sup>25</sup> of a Church and a historical Park in the case of the opening of the President Vargas Avenue, few years before. Although urban heritage has already aroused as an issue<sup>26</sup>, the Brazilian notion of heritage was much referred to Nationalist values, prevailing monumental architecture, especially religious buildings of baroque colonial style, neoclassical and modern architectures.

Much of the urban ensembles of city centre were built between the end of the XIX century and the beginning of the XX, affiliated to Eclectic architecture, which was barely regarded as heritage interest at National level, excepts if there were historic motivations. For the viewpoint of the Modernist urbanist, neither Eclectic architecture matters nor the resident population was appropriate to the commercial central area of the Federal Capital. It should be pointed out that the Brazilian Heritage Protection Service was initially formulated and managed by the Modernist exponents<sup>27</sup>. Thus, heritage valuation has been operated through a Modernist viewpoint.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research has disclosed some urban renewal projects based on bulk redevelopment of traditional urban tissue of the city centre, which seem unconceivable nowadays. This paper has raised a conceptual discussion grounded on a concrete situation, in order to provide analytical tools for understanding the complex dynamics of preservation and development of a heritage preserved area. It seems necessary to grasp the urban process which the area has undertaken, for realizing most of the hindrances for the area's rehabilitation. Normative tools have been applied on the area both for razing it and later for preserving it.

The conceptual course of this research demonstrates that it is necessary the articulation of urbanism, urban planning, urban law and cultural heritage. These findings contribute to the comprehension of the historic trajectory of Urbanism paradigms and instigate questions on the political and social conjunctures behind those technical projects.

As current urban city planning does not articulate sectorial policies as a whole, heritage norms are not effective in enable preservation conditions to the local. In practical terms, because there is not an effective mass transport solution, there is an increase of parking demand, becoming more profitable to maintain fake facades undercovering parking stations, even though preservation ordinances prohibit this use. It may be concluded that local legislation does not operate independently on the general one. The current absence of the City Land Use and an updated City Master Plan may provoke this dissonance between local legislations and the city context.

<sup>23</sup> Choay (2001).

<sup>24</sup> According to ICOMOS Burra Charter (1980), *Cultural significance* means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric*, *setting*, *use*, *associations*, *meanings*, *records*, *related places* and *related objects*.

<sup>25</sup> Decree-law 3.866 from 1941.

<sup>26</sup> Choay (2001) cites the pioneer contributions of G. Giovannoni in the 1930's in Italy.

<sup>27</sup> Such as the architects Lucio Costa and Alcides R. Miranda, the poets Drummond and Mario de Andrade, among others.



As it was shown, heritage is a key issue to gather morphological and planning matters, for its structural role in community's public space. Some important battles against the loss of properties and cultural references have committed social movement in Rio de Janeiro central area. This case fits on Choay's argument that urban conservation would not be a question to be formalized only by laws, but, primarily, should be an attitude of mentality formation (Choay, 2001). In this sense, the equation of preservation interests with contemporary urban interests should converge to integrated conservation policies, which take into account the lasting externalities of urban projects on urban areas.

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