

COLLECTION  
Nouveaux patrimoines

# LE SPECTACLE DU PATRIMOINE

THE SPECTACLE  
OF HERITAGE



• Sous la direction de  
Guillaume ETHIER



Presses de l'Université du Québec





# COLLECTION

## Nouveaux patrimoines

Collection dirigée par Lucie K. Morisset et Luc Noppen

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La Chaire de recherche du Canada en patrimoine urbain de l'École des sciences de la gestion de l'Université du Québec à Montréal destine la collection «Nouveaux patrimoines» aux travaux des chercheurs de la relève. Elle cherche à valoriser des études et analyses sur les objets, les traces, les usages et les savoir-faire, mais aussi des représentations et des mémoires, selon une définition élargie des notions de patrimoine.

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# LE SPECTACLE DU PATRIMOINE

## Une introduction

**L**e patrimoine, dès lors qu'il est reconnu comme un phénomène de représentation<sup>1</sup>, engage toute personne qui s'y intéresse à se questionner sur les dispositifs par lesquels il apparaît à la conscience. Jamais accédé comme une donnée brute et essentielle, il est au contraire perçu collectivement à travers un jeu de miroirs qui, de la mémoire enfantine jusqu'aux instantanés circulant en ligne, structure notre compréhension des actifs patrimoniaux. Voilà ce que nous pourrions appeler, de la manière la plus large possible, le «spectacle du patrimoine»: l'ensemble des signes qui indiquent sa présence, font rayonner sa connaissance, participent de la compréhension que nous en avons et concourent à démontrer sa valeur. C'est l'aspect le plus extérieur du patrimoine, sa partie véhiculée et échangée. C'est aussi celle qui est négociée et contestée. Ce spectacle peut être mis en scène par des acteurs politiques, médiatiques ou privés pour valoriser un lieu ou une pratique, tout comme il peut être porté par des citoyens qui font campagne pour attirer l'attention sur un bien patrimonial menacé. Nous dirons en ce sens qu'il est l'affaire de tous à une époque qui, pour le meilleur et le pire, est noyée dans les images.

Le spectacle du patrimoine se joue sur la scène médiatique, mais se manifeste aussi sur d'autres registres, comme à travers des interventions architecturales de mise en valeur et d'actualisation du patrimoine bâti, qui sont, selon Alexandra Georgescu Paquin, autant de «phénomènes communicationnels<sup>2</sup>». Le spectacle du patrimoine, c'est également celui qui efface d'autres mémoires, qui gomme des différences pour peindre une carte postale dont sont exclus les aspects les moins reluisants. Le cas

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1. Morisset, Lucie K., 2012, «Le patrimoine et ses limites», *Hermès, La Revue*, vol. 2, no 63, p. 57-62.

2. Georgescu Paquin, Alexandra, 2014, *Actualiser le patrimoine par la médiation de l'architecture contemporaine*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, coll. «Nouveaux patrimoines», 282 p., p. 13-14.

récent de nombreuses villes brésiliennes, dont il sera largement question dans ce livre, montre bien que des opérations de spectacularisation du patrimoine liées à des méga-événements (Coupe du monde de la FIFA 2014 [Fédération internationale de football association] et Jeux olympiques de Rio 2016) ont permis de masquer de vastes et douloureuses opérations d'expropriation résidentielle. À l'inverse, des exemples réunis ici montrent des occasions où des citoyens se sont saisis de ce spectacle, car bien que les puissants possèdent des moyens toujours plus importants pour rayonner dans la sphère médiatique, la mise en spectacle patrimoniale n'est pas hégémonique et peut faire émerger de l'ombre des réalités autres.

Pour Xavier Greffe, les images véhiculées par le spectacle du patrimoine culturel ont évolué à travers le temps ; d'une «image fixe», unitaire, associée pour toujours à l'essence d'un monument et invitant à la seule commémoration du passé, le patrimoine est devenu «image film» quand, au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, sa conservation a fait entrevoir un enchaînement d'utilités nouvelles, répondant à ce titre à des impératifs liés au développement économique des sites et des villes<sup>3</sup>. Les images qui font le spectacle du patrimoine sont alors devenues celles du renouveau, de la «remise en état» et de la «remise en service» des artefacts du passé. Or, le patrimoine n'en était pas à sa dernière évolution selon Greffe, car l'ouverture du paradigme numérique fait maintenant circuler son «image virtuelle», une image multiple, partagée, abondante et réinterprétée en temps réel par tout un chacun, écrasant de ce fait les deux logiques – fixe et séquentielle – qui marquent ses incarnations précédentes. Nous sommes donc entrés de plain-pied dans une ère où le patrimoine ne peut plus être envisagé en faisant fi de ses doubles imagés et du flux de médiations dans lequel il repose, et c'est la raison pour laquelle nous avons voulu, dans ce livre, réfléchir aux diverses incarnations de la mise en spectacle du patrimoine et en particulier du patrimoine urbain.

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## Trouver l'intermédiaire approprié

N'en déplaise à ceux qui voudraient qu'il en soit différemment, «l'immense accumulation de *spectacles*» annoncée par Guy Debord dans la thèse I de *La société du spectacle* s'est largement matérialisée – ou dématérialisée? –

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3. Greffe, Xavier, 2014, *La trace et le rhizome: les mises en scène du patrimoine culturel*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 216 p.

aujourd’hui et, de fait, «tout ce qui était directement vécu s'est éloigné dans une représentation<sup>4</sup>». Nous touchons ici à une question sensible dans le domaine des études patrimoniales. L'aspect le plus extérieur du phénomène patrimonial, sa représentation médiatique et tous les artifices qui accompagnent sa mise en valeur, sa «spectacularisation<sup>5</sup>» en somme, est presque toujours interprété par les chercheurs comme constituant sa dimension la plus superficielle, la plus inauthentique. C'est un mal nécessaire, au mieux, mais qui se confond presque toujours avec les pratiques les plus vulgaires de commercialisation et d'instrumentalisation du patrimoine. N'est-ce pas Françoise Choay, par exemple, qui concluait son incontournable *Allégorie du patrimoine*<sup>6</sup> en évoquant la dégénérescence des logiques patrimoniales actuelles et en dénonçant les valeurs – ou l'absence de valeurs – d'une industrie patrimoniale qui cherche partout à éclairer les patrimoines comme autant de spectacles arrachés à l'inertie des usages anciens? Nous ne contestons pas ce constat général et critique, mais nous pensons qu'il est nécessaire d'élargir la catégorie du spectacle afin d'y faire entrer autre chose que les variations les plus dommageables de son expression. Ainsi, nous serons plus à même de comprendre une réalité nouvelle où la survie du patrimoine est, plus que jamais, condition de sa visibilité. Référons-nous ici à ce que Jacques Rancière a appelé le «paradoxe du spectateur» pour appuyer notre argument. Son essai sur le théâtre intitulé *Le spectateur émancipé*<sup>7</sup> s'ouvre en effet sur une réflexion éclairante à propos du rapport ambigu, mais fondamental, qui existe entre les productions culturelles et leurs auditoires :

Ce paradoxe [du spectateur] est simple à formuler: il n'y a pas de théâtre sans spectateur [...] Or, disent les accusateurs, c'est un mal que d'être spectateur, pour deux raisons. Premièrement regarder est le contraire de connaître. Le spectateur se tient en face d'une apparence en ignorant le processus de production de cette apparence ou la réalité qu'elle recouvre. Deuxièmement, c'est le contraire d'agir. La spectatrice demeure immobile à sa place, passive. Être spectateur, c'est être séparé tout à la fois de la capacité de connaître et du pouvoir d'agir<sup>8</sup>.

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4. Debord, Guy, 1992 [1967], *La société du spectacle*, Paris, Gallimard, coll. «Folio», 209 p., p. 15.
  5. Barrette, Yanick, 2014, «Le Quartier des spectacles à Montréal: la consolidation du spectaculaire», *Téoros*, vol. 33, no 2, n.p., <<https://teoros.revues.org/2691>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.
  6. Choay, Françoise, 1992, *L'allégorie du patrimoine*, Paris, Seuil, 272 p.
  7. Rancière, Jacques, 2008, *Le spectateur émancipé*, Paris, La Fabrique, 145 p.
  8. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Deux conclusions générales peuvent être tirées d'une telle constatation, dit Rancière. La première consiste à condamner toute forme de spectacle, de simulation de la réalité. Rejet du théâtre, donc, mais aussi de toute illusion interdisant la connaissance véritable et l'action en société. Cette posture intellectuelle, proche de celle de Platon dans *La République*, trouve son écho aujourd'hui dans des positions comme celle du philosophe Jean Baudrillard, pour qui la culture occidentale s'est progressivement éloignée de la représentation du réel pour pénétrer dans des ordres de simulacres de plus en plus avancés, jusqu'à l'hyperréalité<sup>9</sup>. Argument massue pour condamner les dispositifs spectaculaires qui nous enveloppent, cette posture souffre par contre d'un transfert difficile vers l'action sociétale, car nul de nos jours ne peut prétendre agir à l'abri de toute forme de publication. Sur le plan patrimonial, il s'agit même d'une posture qui frôle l'impensé; il n'y a en effet pas de patrimoine sans public, car c'est à la condition même de sa reconnaissance qu'il est estimé et défendu. La critique intégrale de la spectacularisation du patrimoine s'en trouve par le fait même réduite à ce qu'elle est fondamentalement: un discours critique, incapable à ce jour de proposer un chemin différent en dehors, au-dessus ou en dessous de la voie spectaculaire.

Pour Rancière, une seconde réponse au dilemme du spectateur a été formulée au théâtre et pourrait nous éclairer quant au problème qui nous concerne. Nous pouvons en effet partir du même paradoxe, mais plutôt que de considérer l'illusion spectaculaire comme étant intégralement mauvaise, rappeler qu'il existe des formes de théâtre qui tentent de sortir le spectateur de sa passivité en l'engageant activement dans un processus lui permettant d'en apprendre davantage sur lui-même et sur le monde mis en exergue devant lui. Ce théâtre différent, critique de la société, ne se contente pas de séduire, mais cherche à faire réfléchir, soit en créant une distance réflexive et empathique avec le spectacle du monde, soit encore, stratégie inverse, en tentant d'abolir le quatrième mur entre la scène et les spectateurs pour les engager dans leur vitalité propre. Qu'importent les moyens employés, l'idée consiste à dire que l'ennemi identifié – le spectacle abrutissant – est en même temps la condition de notre époque et que, à cet égard, il est peut-être plus efficace de le combattre de l'intérieur, en utilisant les mêmes moyens spectaculaires, mais tournés intelligemment, plutôt que de s'en extraire bêtement ou hypocritement (car ceux qui ont le luxe de se passer de publicité laissent souvent les autres

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9. Baudrillard, Jean, 1981, *Simulacres et simulation*, Paris, Galilée, 240 p.

la faire à leur place). Un dilemme similaire s'était présenté à Michael Hardt et Antonio Negri qui, ayant identifié dans *Empire*<sup>10</sup> un nouvel impérialisme mondialisé, avaient proposé de le combattre de l'intérieur par la constitution de la «multitude» – un réseau mondial de citoyens mobilisés –, plutôt que de s'engager dans la voie traditionnelle des luttes anti-impériales et anticapitalistes, des positions sans compromis, certes, mais dont l'impact franchit difficilement les grilles du palais.

Ramenée aux questions patrimoniales, cette seconde voie nous dit qu'il est possible d'attirer l'attention sur le patrimoine par des moyens spectaculaires tout en faisant connaître ce patrimoine de manière «authentique» – du moins dans l'intention – et en encourageant l'action. Cette voie nous dit également qu'un message peut être transmis au grand public de manière divertissante et ludique sans que cette «mise en valeur» du patrimoine n'avale sa qualité propre ni ne devienne une obsession. Cette voie nous dit enfin que le spectacle du patrimoine ne fait pas qu'en voiler l'essence et nous aliéner de sa vérité propre, mais qu'il constitue surtout l'interface permettant au plus grand nombre d'identifier un bien patrimonial dans la somme des objets anonymes, de le sélectionner et, suivant une mise en scène bien orchestrée, de le valoriser et de le sauvegarder en conséquence. La «spectacularisation» du patrimoine, en d'autres termes, n'est pas que l'affaire d'exhibitionnistes et de voyeurs, c'est aussi la *voie* et la *voix* de milliers de luttes patrimoniales à travers le monde où la sauvegarde d'un patrimoine local passe par sa médiation sous toutes ses formes: fêtes citoyennes, campagnes publicitaires et médiatiques, tracts et vidéos en ligne, occupation temporaire des espaces publics, campagnes de socio-financement, exposition de photos *in situ* et ainsi de suite. Nous proposons en ce sens de penser théoriquement le spectacle du patrimoine dans les termes plus neutres d'un «intermédiaire», soit l'interface entre, d'une part, des pratiques et des objets patrimoniaux et, d'autre part, les publics qu'ils tentent d'attirer, d'informer et de sensibiliser.

L'objectif de ce livre consistera donc à identifier, dans chaque cas étudié, «l'intermédiaire adéquat», soit les pratiques de médiation les plus appropriées à chaque situation. Certains auteurs formuleront plutôt une critique intégrale des moyens adoptés pour instrumentaliser un patrimoine, mais jamais ceux-ci ne proposeront de trouver «l'intermédiaire juste», ce qui signifierait qu'il existe une façon absolue et définitive de valoriser le

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10. Hardt, Michael et Antonio Negri, 2000, *Empire*, Paris, Exils, 559 p.

patrimoine, un modèle d'adéquation parfait entre son essence et sa surface médiatique. Cet intermédiaire, au contraire, est imparfait par définition, et les «images virtuelles» qu'il fait circuler, suivant à nouveau Greffe<sup>11</sup>, sont plus que jamais multiples et en perpétuel processus de réinterprétation. En ce qui concerne plus particulièrement le patrimoine urbain, nous verrons que cette médiation s'est accélérée récemment, une transformation qui s'est faite au diapason de l'évolution des représentations urbaines.

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## Patrimoine urbain et spectacularisation des villes

Ramenons ici la discussion à l'échelle des sujets abordés dans cet ouvrage, dont l'objet n'est pas le patrimoine dans son acceptation la plus large, mais plus spécifiquement le patrimoine urbain. Le contexte d'évolution des villes postindustrielles est ici à considérer pour comprendre comment a évolué la spectacularisation du patrimoine. De manière très schématique, signalons qu'une rupture marque l'évolution des villes occidentales depuis les années 1970, suivant le ralentissement du régime d'accumulation économique basé sur la production de masse de produits standardisés<sup>12</sup>. La mondialisation facilitant par la suite le déplacement de la production industrielle vers l'Asie, notamment, mais surtout hors des centres urbains un peu partout ailleurs, les villes américaines et européennes vont perdre une large part de la base industrielle sur laquelle reposait leur économie, amorçant leur déclin, mais invitant par ailleurs à penser leur développement autrement.

C'est dans ce creuset que vont se déployer de nouvelles stratégies de développement urbain que Sharon Zukin range dans la catégorie des «*artistic modes of production*<sup>13</sup>», soit des approches basées notamment sur la revalorisation du cadre bâti ancien et la consommation culturelle. S'ouvre alors une ère où les villes vont sentir le besoin de rivaliser dans une vaste compétition interurbaine dont l'enjeu n'est plus directement

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11. Greffe, *La trace et le rhizome...*, op. cit.

12. Filion, Pierre, 1995, «Urbanisation et transition économique: du fordisme à l'après-fordisme», dans Alain-G. Gagnon et Alain Noël (dir.), *L'espace québécois*, Montréal, Québec/Amérique, 305 p., p. 189-213.

13. Zukin, Sharon, 2001, «How to create a cultural capital: Reflections on urban markets and places», dans Iwona Blazwick (dir.), *Century City: Art and culture in the modern metropolis*, Londres, Tate Publishing, 288 p., p. 258-265.

l'accumulation matérielle, mais la mise en valeur de leur capital symbolique. Dans l'économie du savoir en émergence, les villes les mieux nanties sont celles qui arrivent à mettre en valeur leur unicité. C'est ainsi que le cadre bâti des villes fera l'objet de nombreuses interventions d'esthétisation à partir des années 1980. Nous entendons par «esthétisation» l'adoption d'un ensemble de pratiques «d'emballage<sup>14</sup>» des espaces urbains visant à leur donner un caractère propre, par exemple l'ajout de mobilier thématique, d'œuvres d'art public, ou encore l'adoption d'un plan lumière. Ce sont en somme des interventions concrètes sur le corps de la ville, mais qu'il faut envisager dans leur dimension intangible, car elles imposent une certaine ambiance en jouant sur les conventions culturelles qui régulent la vie urbaine. Elles participent en ce sens à renforcer certains problèmes propres à la ville néolibérale, comme la gentrification, la marchandisation de la culture ou le nettoyage des quartiers. Or, ce changement de paradigme correspondra aussi à une sorte «d'âge d'or» sur le plan de la sauvegarde du patrimoine urbain, possiblement parce que la filiation historique permet d'asseoir la légitimité des nouvelles appropriations spatiales en plus d'exprimer la singularité des lieux<sup>15</sup>. Mais l'accent placé sur l'attractivité des biens patrimoniaux joue-t-il seulement en leur faveur, ou faut-il craindre au contraire que leur «authenticité» soit menacée par une reconfiguration en des formes et des usages plus faciles à assimiler pour l'industrie touristique et les médias?

Il y a déjà 25 ans, le sociologue David Harvey annonçait la spectacularisation croissante des espaces urbains devant accompagner la rapide transformation des modes de représentation des populations dans la société occidentale et dans ses aires d'influence culturelle<sup>16</sup>. Sa thèse, dont la pertinence est chaque jour confirmée, consistait à dire qu'une compétition accrue s'organise dans la production d'images dont est faite l'expérience quotidienne des individus dans la ville néolibérale. Dans la forêt de signes produits par la collectivité, seuls les artéfacts les plus scintillants arriveraient momentanément à attirer notre attention. Toute production culturelle conçue sous le règne de la vision tendrait ainsi à devenir

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14. Gravari-Barbas, Maria, 2000, «Stratégies de requalification dans la ville contemporaine. L'esthétisation du paysage urbain, symptôme d'une privatisation croissante des espaces publics», *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, vol. 60, n° 1, p. 223-247.
  15. Veschambre, Vincent, 2008, *Traces et mémoires urbaines – Enjeux sociaux de la patrimonialisation et de la démolition*, Paris, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 315 p.
  16. Harvey, David, 1989, «From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in urban governance in late capitalism», *Geografiska Annaler*, vol. 71, n° 1, p. 3-17.

spectacle, à être structurée à partir de son extériorité. «L'histoire (éloignement dans le temps), dit Marc Augé, est figée dans des représentations de divers ordres qui en font un spectacle pour le présent et plus particulièrement pour les touristes qui visitent le monde<sup>17</sup>.» Le patrimoine urbain, en ce sens, est désormais marqué du sceau du présentisme. En même temps, et peut-être de manière contradictoire, le sort du patrimoine dans cette course effrénée à l'attention médiatique est marqué du fait qu'on le pense déjà à partir de la menace de disparition qui pèse sur lui. Nous pouvons alors demander comment des patrimoines moins connus parviendront à émerger dans le flux des événements spectaculaires s'ils souffrent déjà d'un certain déficit d'intérêt à leur égard. Enfin, des manifestations récentes sur le plan mnémonique ont pareillement montré l'importance de mettre en lumière des mémoires problématiques, celles liées par exemple à des régimes dictatoriaux ou à des guerres civiles<sup>18</sup> dont on fait revivre l'horreur en investissant les lieux emblématiques. Que nous enseigne cette triade de manifestations typiques à la spectacularisation du patrimoine? Et d'ailleurs, la «disneyfication<sup>19</sup>» du patrimoine urbain, la médiation des petits patrimoines et la mise sous les projecteurs de mémoires conflictuelles participent-elles du même phénomène et consacrent-elles enfin le «triomphe de l'image sur le contenu», comme le prévoyait Harvey<sup>20</sup>? Ce sont là les questions auxquelles il sera intéressant, à terme, de répondre de manière systématique, mais qui devront d'abord faire l'objet de réponses localisées et partielles.

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### A Vez do Rio (Le tour de Rio)

Le Brésil est un cas exemplaire où toutes ces dynamiques spectaculaires sont à l'œuvre et se combinent parfois, créant une sorte de laboratoire où les conséquences d'un urbanisme propulsé par des questions d'image peuvent être observées. Plus précisément, le long crescendo de még événements qui s'est ouvert en 2007 (Jeux panaméricains) et qui a culminé

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17. Augé, Marc, 2010, «Retour sur les "non-lieux"», *Communications*, vol. 2, n° 87, p. 171-178, p. 173.

18. Ethier, Guillaume, 2008, *Patrimoine et guerre: reconstruire la place des Martyrs à Beyrouth*, Québec, MultiMondes, 162 p.

19. Souther, J. Mark, 2007, «The Disneyfication of New Orleans: The French Quarter as facade in a divided city», *The Journal of American History*, vol. 94, n° 3, p. 804-811.

20. Harvey, «From managerialism to entrepreneurialism...», *op. cit.*, p. 13.

avec les Jeux olympiques de 2016 a créé au Brésil, et en particulier à Rio de Janeiro, un climat d'urgence justifiant des interventions visant à refaire l'image de la ville et du pays<sup>21</sup>. Déjà, en 1995, un plan stratégique pour Rio promettait de restituer la «vocation naturelle» de la ville en tant que destination touristique internationale<sup>22</sup>, ce qui justifia par la suite une série d'interventions spectaculaires et exceptionnelles, interventions marquées par ailleurs par des manquements importants sur le plan de la gouvernance démocratique. Prenons le cas du Parc de Flamengo en exemple, un lieu inscrit sur la liste du Patrimoine mondial de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO) depuis 2012 dans l'ensemble «Rio de Janeiro, paysages cariocas entre la montagne et la mer», mais qui a fait l'objet d'intenses luttes récemment pour la protection de son caractère public. Un des effets les plus néfastes de la spectacularisation du patrimoine urbain est ici à l'œuvre de manière éclatante, soit la tendance à vouloir contrôler l'accès et à réguler l'état des biens patrimoniaux jugés essentiels sur le plan de l'image. Le problème vient du fait que ces «réserves» ne sont pas créées en pleine nature sauvage, mais bien dans des contextes urbains, et à plus forte raison dans une ville marquée par des écarts de richesse importants, ce qui conduit inévitablement à une forme de ségrégation socio-spatiale. Fort heureusement, des groupes de citoyens se sont mobilisés et ont réussi à empêcher qu'on impose un tarif à l'entrée du parc, ce qui montre par ailleurs qu'un autre public, plus engagé socialement celui-là, était réceptif au spectacle déployé par les défenseurs du site...

Un autre effet de la spectacularisation du patrimoine urbain semble être la tendance à favoriser des interventions sur le cadre bâti qui appartiennent au règne du visible, au détriment des besoins invisibles comme ceux liés aux travaux d'infrastructure, à l'entretien des sites ou aux besoins en main-d'œuvre. Un cas litigieux peut être évoqué ici, celui du projet de téléphérique complété en 2013 et reliant la plus vieille favela de Rio, Morro da Providência, aux grands réseaux de transport de la ville, tout en permettant aux touristes d'accéder à cette zone caractéristique du paysage urbain de Rio. Présenté par les autorités comme une contribution à la

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21. Sánchez, Fernanda et Anne-Marie Broudehoux, 2013, «Mega-events and urban regeneration in Rio de Janeiro: Planning in a state of emergency», *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development*, vol. 5, n° 2, p. 132-153.

22. Acioly, Claudio, 2001, «Reviewing uban revitalisation strategies in Rio de Janeiro : From urban project to urban management approaches», *Geoforum*, vol. 32, n° 4, p. 509-520.

mobilité urbaine de ses habitants, le projet a été perçu avec suspicion par ceux-ci, car c'est surtout la fonction touristique qui semble avoir justifié sa construction. Notons à cet effet que ce «projet spécial» a accaparé 46% du budget de 163 millions de reales (BRL) du programme Morar Carioca destiné à la réfection des infrastructures et au décloisonnement spatial des favelas de Rio<sup>23</sup>. Tout du rapport particulier qu'entretient la ville avec ses bidonvilles sur le plan de l'imaginaire urbain est ici en jeu : «*fetishised as seductive, authentic engines of popular culture and abhorred as ugly vectors of violence and disease—a counterpoint to the asfalto; the blander, safer dwelling places of the city's more respectable denizens*<sup>24</sup>». Il est tentant de penser cette connexion aérienne comme l'ultime expression d'un modèle de planification urbaine qui entrevoit le territoire en surplomb, choisissant ici et là les paysages qui méritent d'être fixés par le regard touristique, pour reprendre les termes de John Urry<sup>25</sup>, tandis qu'on a vraisemblablement choisi ailleurs de cacher d'autres favelas en ajoutant, par exemple, des barrières acoustiques le long de la route menant au Parc olympique<sup>26</sup>.

La planification de Rio comme ville hôte de méga-événements, en définitive, a suivi cette logique du *champ de vision*. L'un des principaux enjeux lors de la planification des jeux consistait par exemple à relier cognitivelement les quatre sites principaux – très éloignés les uns des autres – dans lesquels se sont déroulées les principales épreuves des Jeux olympiques. À nouveau, le caractère néfaste de cette approche visuelle du territoire tient au fait que les interventions ont été réalisées sur un tissu urbain densément peuplé, et que cette mascarade sera en partie à l'origine d'une vaste campagne de relogement qui, entre 2009 et 2015, aura entraîné le déplacement de 22 059 familles vers la conurbation de Rio<sup>27</sup>. D'autres facteurs

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- 23. Johnson, Stefan, 2014, «Providência's cable car launch: Urban mobility or tourism?», *Rio on Watch*, n.p., <<http://www.rioonwatch.org/?p=16464>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.
  - 24. Douglas, Bruce, 2016, «The story of cities #15: The Rise and ruin of Rio de Janeiro's first favela», *The Guardian*, n.p., <<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/apr/05/story-cities-15-rio-de-janeiro-first-favela-providencia-2016-olympic-games>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.
  - 25. Urry, John, 1990, *The Tourist gaze: Leisure and travel in contemporary societies*, Londres, Sage Publications, 180 p.
  - 26. Anne-Marie Broudehoux, citée par Caza, Pierre-Étienne, 2016, «La revitalisation de Rio», *Actualités UQAM*, n.p., <<http://www.actualites.uqam.ca/2016/Rio-de-Janeiro-metamorphosee-en-vue-des-Jeux-olympiques>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.
  - 27. Rio Prefeitura, 2015, «Explaining Rio de Janeiro habitational policy», rapport, Rio Prefeitura, Rio de Janeiro, 9 septembre, 108 p., p. 5.

ont évidemment joué dans la reconfiguration de Rio en vue du Mondial de football en 2014 et des Jeux olympiques de 2016, mais comme ces spectacles internationaux ne durent en définitive que quelques semaines et que le regard du monde entier s'en détourne abruptement par la suite, il faut bien reconnaître que l'accent placé sur le spectacle urbain aura creusé, en arrière-scène, des cicatrices profondes dans la ville.

On avait prévu le pire pour les jeux, notamment sur le plan de la sécurité, mais la catastrophe annoncée n'a pas eu lieu, et les jeux de Rio se sont même avérés être un succès, du moins sur le plan sportif<sup>28</sup>. Mais affirmer, comme le faisait le président du Comité international olympique (CIO) Thomas Bach en clôture des jeux, que «l'histoire retiendra qu'il y avait un Rio avant et un Rio bien meilleur après les jeux», c'est oublier que les millions de Cariocas qui étaient aux premières loges des jeux ont aussi assisté au funeste spectacle des évictions et des soulèvements populaires qui ont marqué la longue et douloureuse marche vers l'événement.

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## Des spectacles, des acteurs et des spectateurs

Le règne de l'image n'a pas que des conséquences fâcheuses sur l'évolution du patrimoine urbain. Les enjeux entourant les méga-événements concernent en effet une classe d'acteurs très spécifique que Leslie Skalir appelle la «Transnational Capitalist Class<sup>29</sup>» et qui pense le spectacle urbain dans les seuls paramètres de la *big business*. Or, la vague spectaculaire qui a happé le Brésil au cours des dernières années a aussi fait vibrer d'autres cordes sensibles, notamment par l'intermédiaire d'actions pour rappeler à la mémoire des pans entiers d'histoire populaire vécue par les victimes du régime dictatorial (1964-1985), comme au Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo inauguré en 2005. D'autres interventions ont aussi permis de mettre en valeur un patrimoine bâti moins connu et d'enrichir l'expérience des villes brésiliennes. À São Paulo, à nouveau, la firme locale Brasil Arquitetura a converti avec succès, en 2012, un ancien conservatoire de

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28. Vergne, Laurent, 2016, «Bilan des Jeux : Rio n'a pas à rougir de ses Jeux, mais...», *Euro Sport*, n.p., <[http://www.eurosport.fr/jeux-olympiques/rio/2016/bilan-des-jeux-rio-n-a-pas-a-rougir-de-ses-jeux-mais.\\_sto5734766/story.shtml](http://www.eurosport.fr/jeux-olympiques/rio/2016/bilan-des-jeux-rio-n-a-pas-a-rougir-de-ses-jeux-mais._sto5734766/story.shtml)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

29. Skalir, Leslie, 2005, «The Transnational capitalist class and contemporary architecture in globalizing cities», *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 29, n° 3, p. 485-500.

musique en complexe culturel, la Praça das Artes, dont l'enveloppe est formée par un édifice contemporain en béton. La réussite de ce projet se mesure toutefois auprès d'un autre public, plus intéressé à l'architecture et au design, et qui inscrit cet édifice dans la riche tradition d'architecture moderne qui a marqué le Brésil avant la dictature<sup>30</sup>.

En vérité, les chapitres réunis dans ce livre montrent que le phénomène de la spectacularisation du patrimoine urbain est marqué par la variété de ses manifestations. Reprenant la métaphore du théâtre à notre compte, nous dirons que ce spectacle est fait de trois composantes essentielles : le spectacle en tant que tel (sa partie visible); ses acteurs et metteurs en scène (les agents derrière le spectacle); et le public (celui à qui est destiné, ou non, le spectacle).

À cet effet, les chapitres nous apprennent d'abord que la nature des spectacles varie considérablement : les biens patrimoniaux se confondent parfois complètement avec leur médiation lorsqu'il s'agit, par exemple, de valoriser une rue, comme dans le chapitre de Diego Finder Machado ou celui d'Aline Fonseca Iubel et Dayana Zdebsky de Cordova. Ailleurs, le spectacle est surtout relayé sur d'autres plateformes et s'incarne comme icône à travers la photographie ou des textes, et même en logo sur des tee-shirts comme dans le cas de la tour Choukhov à Moscou (chapitre 2 de Julie Deschépper). Ce qui semble émerger des réflexions sur le contenu des spectacles, c'est que les plus grandes réussites proviennent de mises en scène qui défient la perception des publics. En montrant les failles et les contradictions propres à une mémoire, ces mises en scène rappellent qu'il est possible d'en réinterpréter le sens.

Plusieurs chapitres parlent très directement des agents du spectacle et des processus par lesquels ils mettent en scène le patrimoine. Ici, un très large consensus semble rallier les auteurs : le succès d'une mise en scène dépend en grande partie du niveau de consultation, de conciliation et d'implication des acteurs locaux. Sans appui populaire, un sentiment d'aliénation mine les projets à la base et les marque durablement.

Or, si les riverains d'un patrimoine urbain peuvent être considérés, à juste titre, comme ses premiers spectateurs, tout un pan de réflexion est ouvert ici sur la question des publics du spectacle patrimonial, sur leurs

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30. Hennigan, Tom, 2014, «Then and now: A Country builds its Future», *Architectural Record*, vol. 202, n° 5, p. 71-77.

besoins et leur relative capacité à soutenir un intérêt pour des biens patrimoniaux plus méconnus. Fait curieux, ces spectateurs sont souvent qualifiés à l'aide de termes abstraits (*touristes, visiteurs, public*) qui décrivent mal la masse critique sur qui repose pourtant tout le dispositif spectaculaire déployé autour du patrimoine. Tout se passe comme si, souvent, on ne savait pas exactement à qui l'on s'adressait. Du reste, on arrive plus facilement à identifier les négligés de la spectacularisation des espaces urbains, car ceux-ci sont presque toujours issus de la population locale. En résultent plusieurs réflexions, comme nous le résumons maintenant, quant à la compatibilité entre l'identité culturelle des villes et les images stéréotypées qui sont rattachées au patrimoine urbain.

Le chapitre 1 d'Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes aborde la question des stratégies de régénération urbaine qui accompagnent la tenue des még événements, et en particulier les Jeux olympiques. L'auteure propose de comparer ce qui a été fait en termes de spectacularisation des espaces urbains à Barcelone en 1992 et à Rio en 2016. De tous les cas étudiés dans ce livre, celui-ci engage le plus large consortium d'acteurs politiques. La gouvernance stratégique des jeux relève en effet d'instances internationales comme le CIO ainsi que l'UNESCO, mais interpelle aussi les paliers successifs de gouvernement national et local, ainsi que d'autres partenaires privés et publics. Le jeu des comparaisons entre Barcelone et Rio montre que la valorisation des centres historiques et du littoral procède dans les deux cas d'une logique spectaculaire opérant une «réduction symbolique» de la richesse culturelle des lieux, et ce, dans une plus large mesure à Rio, où les résidents semblent laissés pour compte par des interventions urbaines dominées par une logique touristique.

Dans le chapitre 2, Julie Deschepper propose de resserrer la discussion sur un objet patrimonial en particulier, la tour Choukhov à Moscou, qui adjoint à sa vocation première d'antenne radio la fonction symbolique de paratonnerre canalisant toutes les dissensions mnémoniques liées au passé communiste de la Russie. Il est toujours étonnant de constater comment un simple objet architectural, relayé ici dans sa forme iconique – sa silhouette unique faisant office de symbole véhiculé dans la sphère médiatique –, peut engendrer de telles quantité et diversité d'actions de défense, engager des acteurs de tous les milieux sociaux et intéresser jusqu'à la communauté patrimoniale internationale, interpellée ici par l'intermédiaire des médias de masse. C'est ce processus de patrimonialisation que retrace Deschepper, insistant sur le rapport complexe à l'avant-garde soviétique

dont la compréhension et l'appréciation varient considérablement en Russie et ailleurs. L'auteure décrit par ailleurs les moyens originaux engagés par les groupes mobilisés pour faire connaître la tour Choukhov, ajoutant à l'arsenal de techniques habituelles des campagnes de sensibilisation fort réussies où l'on a, par exemple, reproduit la silhouette de la tour sur divers objets et vêtements, en plus d'améliorer son indexicalité virtuelle – sa capacité à être repérée en ligne.

Viennent ensuite deux chapitres à propos de rues brésiliennes au statut historique et conditions actuelles comparables, mais dont l'analyse conduit à considérer le spectacle du patrimoine sous des angles différents. Au chapitre 3 d'Aline Fonseca Iubel et Dayana Zdebsky de Cordova, les actions récentes de revitalisation de l'axe historique de la rue Riachuelo à Curitiba au Brésil sont analysées dans une perspective temporelle de succession entre un état de dégradation et son pendant nécessaire, soit sa réhabilitation. Toutefois, les auteures montrent bien comment la «dégradation» évoquée ici a été largement le fruit d'un discours médiatique alarmiste tenu par le même réseau d'acteurs privés et publics qui appuient la revitalisation de la rue. C'est donc la supposée «culture de la violence» qui devient spectacle et qui crée un vide dans lequel la faune urbaine «créative» est censée venir se loger. Plutôt que de chercher à maintenir cette binarité, les auteures nous invitent à considérer la culture immatérielle du lieu dans toute sa richesse. Diego Finder Machado, au chapitre 4, entrevoit quant à lui les enjeux d'appropriation de la Rua do Príncipe à Joinville au Brésil dans une perspective spatiale, en joignant les concepts de «marges» et de «porosité» à son analyse. Ancienne allée monumentale plantée de palmiers et culminant sur un palais princier, l'histoire de la rue, dit Machado, a été marquée par le fait qu'aucun prince n'y a jamais mis le pied! Par contre, la rue a été le théâtre de nombreuses représentations populaires à travers l'histoire, comme en 2012, quand une performance artistique a vu l'arrivée d'un acteur noir déguisé en prince pour rappeler la présence afro-brésilienne à Joinville. Au fil de son histoire, la patrimonialisation de cette rue a été marquée par la négociation entre des acteurs se réclamant d'une conception légitime de son passé et de ses usages présents. Et comme aucune action de revitalisation n'a encore changé intégralement la rue, des édifices abandonnés, ou livrés aux vendeurs de drogue, parsèment le paysage. Les conflits d'appropriation concernant ces édifices feront dire à l'auteur, en somme, que la spectacularisation du patrimoine urbain est allergique à la «porosité», à tout ce qui se trouve en marge du spectacle.

Faisons maintenant un détour en Tunisie où Nader Meddeb nous invite, dans le chapitre 5, à parcourir l'histoire des actions aménagistes opérées successivement par les régimes politiques sur la médina de Tunis. Il ressort de son étude du langage architectural et des configurations spatiales de la ville que la médina a constitué, à diverses époques et pour diverses raisons, un authentique instrument de propagande. Fait intéressant, ce sont ici les erreurs stylistiques qui permettent à l'auteur de décoder les idéologies en présence, comme cet orientalisme qui dénote l'emprise du colonialisme, ou la plus récente quête de « tunisianité » qui ne peut s'expliquer complètement que dans le contexte de la décolonisation et, surtout, dans celui de la touristification du pays et la relance de la tradition du voyage en Orient.

Dans le chapitre 6, Vivian Legname Barbour ouvre une dimension nouvelle de la spectacularisation du patrimoine urbain, la résidentialité. À São Paulo, un complexe d'habitation des années 1910 à l'architecture insolite, Vila Itororó, a fait l'objet de nombreuses tentatives de reconversion au cours des dernières décennies, et les désignations patrimoniales sont venues s'ajouter à ce jeu comme autant d'étiquettes permettant de négocier la conservation – ou l'abandon – de sa fonction résidentielle. À l'analyse critique des discours tenus sur le patrimoine par les différentes instances en charge de la conservation à São Paulo viendra se superposer, plus récemment, un enjeu économique important : que faire de ce complexe résidentiel dans une aire de la ville en plein processus de gentrification ? L'éviction des locataires en 2012-2013 et sa conversion prochaine en centre culturel indiquent sans l'ombre d'un doute que des résidents à faible revenu ne cadreraient plus dans le spectacle, et que les qualités visuelles de l'édifice ont fini par supplanter sa dimension humaine.

Le dernier chapitre ferme la boucle en abordant la question du spectacle de la mort. Rebeca Lopes Cabral nous transporte en Argentine où divers dispositifs mnémoniques ont été érigés récemment au Parque de la Memoria, à Buenos Aires, parmi lesquels le Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado (Monument aux victimes du terrorisme d'État) constitue la pièce maîtresse. Matériellement, aucune vieille pierre n'est ici impliquée, mais une mémoire bien plus lourde vient asseoir le projet sur des bases solides, quoique contestées. En tant que monument dont l'expérience cherche à rappeler tout autant qu'à remettre en question le passé dictatorial du pays, l'installation tient elle-même du spectacle. Elle fait écho aux actions passées des mères et grand-mères de la Plaza de Mayo qui

ont bravé, dès 1977, le régime totalitaire alors en place pour demander des comptes sur leurs enfants disparus. Des problèmes d'accessibilité au parc et la proximité de vrais lieux d'emprisonnement et de torture ont entraîné quelques contestations au cours des années ; néanmoins le complexe architectural répond dans l'ensemble à la dure tâche d'offrir un espace d'expression de la mémoire problématique qui invite les spectateurs au recueillement, mais aussi à la remise en question. Ce lieu rappelle enfin, à propos du spectacle du patrimoine considéré dans son ensemble, que la logique commémorative fait partie du passé de la patrimonialisation. Les citoyens de la société du spectacle savent maintenant lire les différentes facettes des images, en détecter les motifs propagandistes, et peuvent même les ajouter à l'arsenal des dispositifs qui organisent, dans la sphère virtuelle, la représentation de soi. Comme le dit avec justesse David M. Smith à propos de l'exercice d'interprétation du monde, «*[w]e may watch a play, but we now recognize ourselves as actors in another broader drama*<sup>31</sup>».

**Guillaume Ethier**

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31. Smith, David M., 1988, «Towards an interpretative human geography», dans John Eyles et David Marshall Smith (dir.), *Qualitative methods in human geography*, Oxford, Polity Press, p. 255-267, p. 258.



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# MEGA-EVENTS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

## Rio 2016: A new Barcelona 1992?

**Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes**

A growing number of cities are seeking to position themselves competitively on the global market. Such positioning has been increasingly strengthened through an urban model of entrepreneurship that guides the cities' authorities through strategic actions such as tourism development, image promotion, and the holding of mega-events.<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays, to attract investment and leverage their economies, many contemporary cities face fierce competition from rivals all over the world.<sup>2</sup> Many public sectors develop strategies to remain competitive, seeking to increase their revenue thanks to national and foreign investments from private-sector entrepreneurs in order to improve their infrastructures, create jobs, and have a multiplier effect for the municipality.<sup>3</sup> This can be achieved through mega-events as well as the inclusion on the World Heritage List, thus raising the awareness of the media about the candidate cities and consequently attracting investors and tourists from all over the world. Therefore, more and more cities seek to position themselves as tourist destinations and undertake urban renewal projects aimed at promoting their image and cultural heritage.

In light of the above, we intend to discuss in this chapter the association between cultural heritage, tourism, and contemporary urban strategies through a geographical approach, since this triad triggers the “spectacularization” of cities and their cultural heritage, and emphasizes the socio-spatial inequalities.

The transformation, spectacularization, and promotion of the image of cities through mega-events and tourism constitute new ways of appropriating and consuming space, triggering the touristic development of cultural heritage and the transformation of its cultural (use) and economic (exchange) values, and changing its meaning accordingly.

In this chapter, the cities of Barcelona (Spain) and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) are used as empirical examples for the analysis of processes such as urban renovation motivated by a public management that focuses on urban

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1. Harvey, David, 1989, "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in urban governance in late capitalism", *Geografiska Annaler*, vol. 71, no. 1, p. 3-17.

2. Vignati, Federico, 2008, *Gestão de destinos turísticos – como atrair pessoas para pólos, cidades e países* [Tourist destination management – How to attract people to poles, cities, and countries], Rio de Janeiro, Senac, 252 p.

3. Sassen, Saskia, 1991, *The Global city: New York/London/Tokyo*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 433 p.

entrepreneurship and image promotion through the spectacularization of cultural heritage, seen as a tourist resource, and therefore as a commodity. These cities were chosen because Barcelona has experienced since the 1990s—on the occasion of the 1992 Olympic Games—the process of promoting its image as an international tourist destination; as for Rio, it seems to be following the same path.

On the run-up for Rio to host the Olympic Games in 2016, the mayor, Eduardo Paes, referring to the iconic “Barcelona model” prevalent in the world since the 1992 Games, announced his desire for the future of Rio to be similar to that of Barcelona.

More than two decades after its implementation, this “model,”<sup>4</sup> characterized by a series of urban interventions (opening of public spaces and the city to the sea, installation of cultural and sports facilities, creation of a cultural circuit to promote the city’s Modernist heritage ...), suffered a crisis. Most of these interventions were successful, turning the city into one of the most popular tourist destinations in Europe.<sup>5</sup> However, the spectacularization of Barcelona’s public spaces, where traditional neighbourhoods and part of their cultural heritage are losing cultural meaning owing to a management model that supports mass tourism, creates problems for the city.

Rio, it seems, is going in the same direction, becoming a “city spectacle” through the strategic promotion of its image. After confirmation that it was to host the 2016 Games, the city was again in the spotlight when a large section of its urban setting (between the Tijuca National Park’s mountains and the sea) was listed as a World Heritage Site in the Urban Cultural Landscape category (2012) by the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO). This further consolidated Rio as an international tourist destination, focusing its urban entrepreneurship interventions on the promotion of the symbolic and economic values of its territory.

However, the cultural landscape recognized by UNESCO was biased, valuing only the places already renowned as touristic attractions, an action that reflects the importance of marketing-oriented image policies instead

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4. Borja, Jordi, 2011, *Luces y sombras del urbanismo de Barcelona* [Lights and shadows of Barcelona’s urbanism], Buenos Aires, Café de las Ciudades, 368 p.

5. World Tourism Organization, 2015, *World Tourism Barometer*, UNWTO, vol. 12, 55 p.

of policies aimed at the protection of the city's identity and heritage. This state of affairs influences the urban interventions of cities that become increasingly more concerned with the spectacularization of public spaces, for example by revamping downtown areas and creating cultural facilities in that area, as will be discussed in this essay.

In order to reflect on these issues, I will draw on sources addressing the proposed themes as well as on field surveys conducted in the cities of Barcelona (2014) and Rio de Janeiro (2015). In both cities, interviews were realized on site with various social agents: technicians, public officials, researchers, and neighbourhood resident associations affected by the interventions and tourism.

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### **Tourism and urban renovation: binomial for the spectacularization of cities and cultural heritage**

Within a neoliberal regime, where the government does not intervene much in the public administration, the old urban model of administration (management of cities with public investments) was replaced by an urban model of entrepreneurship. That shift occurred in the second half of the 20th century, when the urban interventions started being planned, implemented, and managed on the basis of private rather than collective interests. "In recent years in particular, there seems to be a general consensus emerging throughout the advanced capitalist world that positive benefits are to be had by cities taking an entrepreneurial stance to economic development."<sup>6</sup>

Such interventions are planned by hegemonic agents acting on the arena of neoliberal economic policy. Public-private partnerships are formed within an urban entrepreneurial management model (that is, the private use of spaces by companies). Thus, urban interventions are oriented so that the city's image is (re)created to emphasize the symbolic and economic appreciation of its territory.<sup>7</sup> Based on this hegemonic market logic, cities are co-opted by "producers of space" from the private sector, such

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6. Harvey, "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism ...," *op. cit.*, p. 5.

7. *Ibid.*

as hotels, restaurant chains, and construction companies, who appropriate space by making it more valuable for real-estate purposes, its symbolic (use) value being transformed into an economic (exchange) value.

This model of urban entrepreneurship and the fierce competitiveness that it entailed have meant, therefore, that cities opened up to increasingly more aggressive property speculation. The result was “a serial reproduction of science parks, gentrification, world trading centers, cultural and entertainment centers, large scale interior shopping malls with postmodern accoutrements, and the like.”<sup>8</sup>

During the process of de-industrialization of cities, the service sector has established itself as the new vector of capital accumulation, making the territory the main factor of production through its appropriation, speculation, marketing and promotion via all kinds of real-estate projects. In such a competitive environment, many managers opt for the development of tourist activities on their own national territory since tourism requires an extensive offer to meet consumers’ expectations. Some cities choose to sell parts of their territories to foreign companies, who in turn use invest in hotel chain franchises, restaurants, multi-purpose performance halls and auditoriums, and so on, thus are responsible for fragmenting the urban tissue and social relations by creating new conditions in the reproduction of the geographical space. As their tourist offer and products grow in number, cities become more attractive.

The tourist offer and products, that is, “all the resources and services purchased and consumed by tourists during their stay in a destination,”<sup>9</sup> include the development of lodging facilities (hotels, hostels, campsites, etc.); tourist transport companies (air, road, rail, and sea); food and beverages (bars, restaurants, cafés, etc.); travel agencies, and tourism, entertainment and leisure spaces, convention centres for business tourism, as well as other related industries (car rental, taxis, tour guides, sporting equipment rental, etc.).

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8. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

9. [My translation] Ruschmann, Doris V.M., 1997 [14th ed.], *Turismo e planejamento sustentável: a proteção do meio ambiente* [Tourism and sustainable planning: protection of the environment], Campinas, Papirus, 199 p.

In addition to entrepreneurs in the tourism sector, this logic is powered by other hegemonic actors, such as real-estate speculators interested in land valorization and real estate based on the value of cities (as national and international investors inject money in them), all of these in line with public policies related to city planning and management through public-private partnerships. To that effect, many states grant tax and financial incentives to attract private capital. “City governments are headed by a corporate ideology aimed at creating and enabling an environment that will attract capital to their respective cities.”<sup>10</sup>

Besides infrastructures such as convention centres, performance halls and auditoriums, and sports stadiums that make up the overall tourist services, urban renewal projects, transformation of public spaces, and reuse of cultural heritage buildings or tourism and leisure tertiary activities are common in intra-urban competitiveness.

The revalorization of historic centres and cultural heritage buildings, the renovation of public buildings, port areas and coastlines, the so-called waterfronts, are typical examples of strategic management projects and city image promotion policies. The recovery of waterfronts, for example, has become a widespread popular strategy since the 1970s and it inspired several cities. The fate of urban waterfronts has changed dramatically throughout the world in recent times; from obsolete and degraded areas they turned into spaces oriented toward economy, services, and consumption (such as tourism, leisure, and recreation). Cities (including Barcelona and Buenos Aires) have seen their old seaports renovated and turned into main areas of leisure and consumption, thus gaining value and generating funds that can be reinjected in the cities’ various structures.

The main difficulty with that type of project is to transform commercial and desolated areas into public spaces that can be appropriated by the entire population and be sufficiently integrated into the “living city”; in short, they have to be both affordable and attractive, “otherwise they risk becoming a refuge for a few privileged (mostly tourists), or be turned into

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10. [My translation] Dodson, Belinda and Darryll Kilian, 2001, “De porto a playground – a revitalização da enseada de Victoria & Alfred, Cidade do Cabo” [From port to playground – The revitalization of Victoria & Alfred Cove, Cape Town], in Duncan Tyle, Yvone Guerrier, and Martin Robertson (eds.), *Gestão de turismo municipal – teoria e prática de planejamento turístico nos centros urbanos* [City tourism management – Theory and practice of tourism planning in urban centres], São Paulo, Editora Futura, p. 193-222.

ghettos, sometimes unsafe, subject to deterioration and abandonment.”<sup>11</sup> Once revitalized, these spaces attract investments, with the consequence that their cultural heritage is privatized and spectacularized with luxury services and facilities such as restaurants, shops and cultural installations that lead to a process of socio-spatial segregation.

Currently, Rio de Janeiro is undergoing a similar process of urban renovation of its waterfront through a project entitled “Porto Maravilha” [Marvelous port] and the creation of cultural facilities in the region, as will be discussed below.

These projects clearly show that cities with distinct social, cultural, economic, political, historical, geographical, and demographic contexts can experience the same processes, something typical of the neoliberal regime, which seeks competitiveness, leading to the spectacle and thematization of the cities. To summarize, globalization homogenizes cities, who tend to develop similar urban models of entrepreneurship and host the same leisure and specialized facilities, including shopping malls, cinemas, and thematic parks.<sup>12</sup>

In turn, cultural heritage is one of the main elements co-opted by the business logic that guides the management of cities. Cultural heritage is used in tourist offers and products, essentially becoming another economic resource. Henceforth, the use value of cultural heritage is transformed into exchange value through

cultural products manufactured, packaged, and distributed for consumption. The metamorphosis of its use value into economic value is attributable to “cultural engineering” ... The task is then to explore monuments by all means in order to constantly increase the number of visitors.<sup>13</sup>

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11. [My translation] Arantes, Otília B.F., 2012, *Berlim e Barcelona: duas imagens estratégicas* [Berlin and Barcelona: Two strategic images], São Paulo, Annablume, 159 p.
  12. Muñoz, Francesc, 2006, “Urbanización: la huelga de los paisajes” [“Urbanization”: Landscapes on strike], in Rafael Mata and Àlex Tarroja (eds.), *El paisaje y la gestión del territorio. Criterios paisajísticos en la ordenación del territorio y el urbanismo* [Landscape and territory management. Landscape criteria in the urban planning], Diputació Barcelona, xarxa de municipis, p. 143-163.
  13. [My translation] Choay, Françoise, 2006 [4th ed.], *A alegoria do Patrimônio* [The Allegory of heritage], São Paulo, Estação Liberdade, UNESP (Universidade Estadual Paulista), 282 p.

To remain competitive, cities spectacularize their cultural heritage through the commercialization of their culture. Immaterial heritage (dances, costumes, music, and typical food), as well as the landscape, material heritage and public spaces (streets, parks, squares, pedestrian pathways, etc.), are all appropriated for tourism and transformed into “disneylands” moulded with products and services intended to please tourists and visitors, where the actual consumer becomes a consumer of illusions. The commodity is this effectively “real illusion,” and the spectacle, its general manifestation.<sup>14</sup>

This quest to promote cities as tourist destinations reveals a preoccupation with their aesthetic and economic values at the expense of their true identity and cultural meanings. The issue of tourism, however, is that when it is developed on a very large scale, it reduces cities to commodities.<sup>15</sup> This process affects the forms of reproduction and uses of the geographical space, the dynamics and uses of the city, reducing and changing their values and meanings, thus promoting a stereotyped image of the city.

It is therefore a strategic business attitude grounded in city-marketing actions focused on promoting the city as a tourist destination that guides the management and urban interventions in the city. From this perspective, public spaces and cultural heritage are managed as economic resources (tourism) and not as elements to be used by its population. In this scenario of symbolic value and aesthetics, the relationship between tourism, urban regeneration and cultural heritage intensifies, and this can provoke the symbolic weakening of the cultural heritage and hence of cities.<sup>16</sup>

From a geographical perspective, therefore, the corporate behaviour highlighted by David Harvey<sup>17</sup> implies processes that impact the urbanization production and consumption of space and its spectacle as a tourist

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14. Debord, Guy, 1997, *A sociedade do espetáculo* [The Society of spectacle], Rio de Janeiro, Contraponto, 237 p.

15. Jafari, Jafar, 1994, “La científización del turismo” [Tourism scientification], *Estudios y perspectivas en Turismo* [Studies and perspectives in tourism], vol. 3, no. 1, p. 7-36.

16. Peixoto, Paulo, 2013, “A cidade performativa na era da economia das experiências” [The Performative city in the era of experience economy], in Carlos Fortuna, Lucia Bóguis, Maria Amélia Corá, and José Junior (eds.), *Cidade e espetáculo: a cena luso-brasileira contemporânea* [City and spectacle: The Luso-Brazilian contemporary scene], São Paulo, EDUC-PUC [Publisher of the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo], p. 141-151.

17. Harvey, “From managerialism to entrepreneurialism ....,” *op. cit.*

activity. This behaviour, in turn, will generate processes of gentrification, real-estate speculation, increased land value, and the consequent eviction of traditional inhabitants from their neighbourhoods and urban environments due to the increased cost of living; socio-spatial segregation, and fragmentation of the cities; transformation of traditional trades to trades intended exclusively for tourism; spectacularization of public spaces; and symbolic reduction of uses and meanings of cultural heritage where the image is superimposed on the object itself, intentionally turning the cities and their heritage into theme parks, as exemplified by the speech of France's Minister of Tourism in the 1980s: "our heritage should be sold and promoted with the same arguments and the same techniques that made the success of amusement parks."<sup>18</sup>

To better understand the processes described above, I will examine in the following section the cities of Barcelona and Rio de Janeiro as empirical objects of the analysis set out in the introduction.

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### The spectacle and narrative reduction of Barcelona's cultural heritage

Barcelona's history is marked by waves of urban renewal projects, having its heyday in the 1980s, culminating on the occasion of the 1992 Games, an opportunity seized by the government to continue the interventions that had been initiated after the fall of Francisco Franco's regime and the beginning of the democratic era in the late 1970s.

These interventions consisted of urban policies that sought to solve problems inherited from the dictatorship, for example the scarcity of public spaces due to the density of the city, the lack of institutions such as schools, health, sports and cultural centres, as well as the lack of housing.<sup>19</sup> In the early 1980s, Barcelona began to implement a strategic policy through urban operations developed with the participation of neighbourhood residents' associations to remedy these problems. From 1986 on, after its nomination to host the 1992 Olympic Games, these interventions were

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18. [My translation] Choay, *A alegoria do Patrimônio*, op. cit., p. 211.

19. Cabrera, Pere Massanés, 2007, *Ciutat Vella de Barcelona: memòria d'un procés urbà* [Old City of Barcelona: Memory of an urban process], Badalona, Ara Llibres, 231 p.

intensified through public and private investments in construction works which, if they were already in progress, were accelerated. Barcelona used an exceptional event such as the Olympics to restructure the city using public investments.<sup>20</sup>

The changes in Barcelona transcended everything that is material, and its image was projected internationally as a pluralistic metropolis, dynamic, cultural, and modern, shaped by a varied tourist offer; in other words, it turned from an industrial city into a services-based city.

The series of urban interventions carried out, nicknamed as a whole the “Barcelona model,” were considered a success and prompted city image promotion policies. Among the interventions witnessed in the Catalonian city (such as the opening of public spaces, the installation of equipment in the districts, the modernization of urban mobility, and so on), the most significant one in terms of changing the city image was the opening of its waterfront (in the city physical barriers such as railway lines prevented access to the sea), which left a material legacy: the construction of the Olympic Village, the revitalization of the Port Vell (old port area) (figure 1), the conversion and reuse of old factories that today house museums and restaurants, the creation of new public spaces for leisure. But these changes also left an intangible legacy by strengthening the Mediterranean culture among the citizens of Barcelona, who previously had no access to the beaches.

The campaign “Barcelona Posa’t Guapa” [Barcelona is becoming beautiful], led by the public administration, was also essential to transform the city’s image. This campaign encouraged the “beautification” of Barcelona through the revitalization of its urban landscape. With private investment of large enterprises, the main monuments and historical buildings were restored.<sup>21</sup>

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20. Capel, Horacio, 2011 [3rd ed.], *El modelo Barcelona: un examen crítico* [The Barcelona model: A Critical examination], Barcelona, Ediciones del Serbal, 119 p.

21. Benach, Nuria, 1993, “Producción de imagen en la Barcelona del 92” [Image production in Barcelona ‘92], *Estudios Geográficos*, vol. LIV, no. 212, p. 483-505.

**FIGURE 1**  
Port Vell Barcelona.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2014.

Due to the diffusion of this new image for Barcelona, one that focuses on its Mediterranean culture, investments prospered, especially in the tourism sector.<sup>22</sup> Hotels and restaurants were built in the harbour, and luxury yachts henceforth abounded on the seafront. Nevertheless, these renovations today contribute to the region's mass tourism, causing traditional neighbourhoods to lose their public spaces for the benefit of tourists. Other problems followed, such as increased cost of living, real-estate speculation, eviction of residents from their neighbourhoods and loss of their identity, according to information obtained through interviews with representatives of neighbourhood residents most affected by tourism.

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22. Montaner, Josep Maria, 2011, *La revolución del “modelo Barcelona” (1973-2004)* [The Revolution of the “Barcelona model”], in Fernando Álvarez, Josep M. Montaner, and Zaida Muxí (eds.), *Archivo crítico: modelo Barcelona, 1973-2004* [Critical file: Barcelona model], Barcelona, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, p. 11-25.

Likewise, mass tourism directly affected the city's modernist cultural heritage buildings, which today suffer from its spectacularization and economic exploitation. Catalan modernism, expressed through a series of current buildings in the Barcelona landscape—the main competitive advantage of the city—is chosen on purpose as one of the highlights in the international promotion of the city, where the cultural heritage becomes another element of value in the space transformed by urban interventions.

The appropriation of modernist heritage<sup>23</sup> by the tourism sector and its marketing and distribution are enhanced by the “quality label” awarded by UNESCO to nine works conceived by two leading Catalan architects: Antoni Gaudí and Lluís Domènech i Montaner. In the period between 1984 and 2005, the following buildings were recognized as World Heritage: Casa Batlló, Casa Milà (“La Pedrera”) (figure 2), Casa Vicens, Crypt de la Colònia Guell, Palau Guell, Park Guell and Sagrada Família (Gaudí's works), as well as the Palau de la Música Catalana and the Hospital Sant Pau Modernist Recinte (figure 3), both by Domènech i Montaner.

The city's promotional material clearly indicates the formulation of a narrative that highlights the cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO, given that it is filled with images that present these works as Barcelona icons, conveying the feeling that the only way to really experience the city is to visit these sites. Such visits, most often, are conceived for mass tourism, with one- or two-day tours in the city where tourists can walk through and around the buildings, take pictures and move to another destination in an “empty” form of enjoying heritage. This type of promotion reduces the Barcelona narrative to the modernist heritage, totally ignoring other equally important elements of its history, such as the Roman, Gothic, and industrial heritage.

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23. Catalan Modernism is the name of an artistic movement that reached the graphic arts, painting, sculpture, literature, theater and especially architecture, and which developed in the Spanish region of Catalonia, mostly in Barcelona, at the end of the 19th century and early 20th century. For many authors, this style is the Catalan variation of the French style Art Nouveau, which sought to express modernity and wealth of the Catalan bourgeoisie after the overthrow of the medieval walls and the city's growth for the Eixample district, from the Cerdá Plan (1859). Mendoza, Eduardo, 1989, *Barcelona modernista* [Modernist Barcelonal], Barcelona, Planeta, 176 p.

**FIGURE 2**

Casa Milà.



Photo: Guillaume Ethier, 2013.

The promotion of Barcelona's image through modernist works reached its peak in 2002 during the International Year of Gaudí. Since then, the works are published and included in the major tours and tour guides of the city which, not incidentally, display their titles, giving them status and visibility, and which also increase the flow of visits.

Since 2005 the architectural and cultural offer of the city, which fits with the modern cultural heritage, has been for tourists more popular than other attractions like beaches, football, and food.<sup>24</sup> The spaces of architectural interest most visited in Barcelona in 2014 include seven of the

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24. Barcelona Turisme, 2015, *Estadístiques de turisme a Barcelona i comarques* [Barcelona's tourism statistics and its counties], Barcelona, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona.

**FIGURE 3**

Hospital Sant Pau Modernist Recinte.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2014.

nine UNESCO World Heritage Sites, indicating that, currently, cultural heritage is the main tourist attraction in the city. Remaining first in the ranking of the most visited attractions during the last twenty years is the Basilica of the Sagrada Família (figure 4).

In 1994 the city received 700,000 tourists. A decade later, in 2004, the number increased to 2.2 million and reached in 2014 the milestone of 3.2 million, a statistic proven by the hordes of people lining its streets every day.<sup>25</sup>

The cultural heritage of Barcelona is consumed, from the visit sites themselves to their commercialization, via a range of products such as souvenirs, specialized books, home furniture, apparel, accessories, etc.

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25. *Ibid.*

**FIGURE 4**  
Sagrada Família Church.



Photo: Jace Grandinetti, 2016.

When walking through the streets, besides noticing the pull of “modernist gems” in the landscape, the visitor is also “bombarded” by the extensive range of products derived from these gems exposed in hundreds of newsstands and shops throughout the city.

From this angle, the symbolic value added to the aesthetics of contemporary cities through such a spectacularization is responsible for the perverse effects mentioned above such as the rocketing value of lands, the private appropriation of public spaces, and the rising cost of living for the residents. The thematization of the cities also decreases the significance of cultural heritage as it changes from a symbolic to an economic value, a process that entails new reproductive conditions of geographic spaces with the insertion of new uses and services in favour of tourists but to the detriment of the local population.

The symbolic and aesthetic recognition of contemporary cities, and the patrimonialization of their property, turn them into landscape commodities aimed at tourism consumption, thus decreasing their symbolic value,<sup>26</sup> like what happened with the Italian city of Venice that now presents itself as a romantic site which impregnates the romantic imaginary of couples in love.

The notion of symbolic reduction is connected to the concept of narrative reduction, which happens as elected fragments of the city are selected to promote it thematically.<sup>27</sup> This, in turn, feeds back into the process in a dialectical process, and enhances the promotion of cultural heritage through the symbolic fragmentation of cities. This fragmentation is often irreversible, because once a stereotype is created, it is difficult to change the image of a place, converting it into an alienated space.

The prevalence of this type of promotion of the urban landscape, oriented toward mass tourism, causes adverse effects.<sup>28</sup> In the case of Barcelona, there is a clear trend toward the reduction of the city's narrative and its cultural heritage, because the Catalan territory is reduced to modernist works (previously listed), especially by Gaudí, that are recognized by UNESCO. This heritage, appropriated most of the time through an empty enjoyment of meanings, is transformed into a cultural consumer brand within a dynamics that impacts not only the heritage, but its surroundings alike. As such, more than two decades after the implementation of such urban interventions, it can be said that the discourse about the "Barcelona model," copied by many cities, is more about the legitimization of some policies than an effective agent of urban change.

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### Rio de Janeiro spectacularized: a new Barcelona?

Once it was chosen to host two mega-events in a short time (the 2014 Football World Cup and the 2016 Olympics), the city of Rio de Janeiro intensified the promotion of its image in the style of the urban entrepreneurship and strategic planning already prevalent in the city since the 1990s.

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26. Peixoto, "A cidade performativa na era da economia das experiências," *op. cit.*, p. 143.

27. Berdoulay, Vincent, 2005, *Espaces publics et mise en scène de la ville touristique. Rapport final de recherche*, Pau, Université de Pau et des Pays de L'Adour.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

The city had already tried to host the Games in the late 1990s when it ran for the 2004 Olympics. At the time, the political quest was to reproduce Barcelona's success by bringing significant transformations in the city's urban tissue. The proposal, successful in 2016, was also inspired by the Catalan city. In different speeches, the current mayor of Rio, Eduardo Paes, made clear his desire for Rio to become a new Barcelona. In a recent speech at the Seminar on "The Olympic Games and the Legacy for Brazil" (held in Rio in May 2015), Paes declared that the Olympics go beyond being a sporting event, they are also a geopolitical event where countries have the opportunity to show their potential to the world. His speech clarified the kind of urban entrepreneurship that was being developed in Rio and in many cities worldwide. He further stated that the legacy of Rio would be far greater than that of Barcelona after their games.

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**FIGURE 5**

Praça Mauá Rio de Janeiro (Mauá Square).



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

Inspired by the projects he personally visited in Barcelona, Paes began intensive urban renovations, such as the revitalization of the city's old port area, through a project called "Porto Maravilha," which is one of the largest urban renovation sites of the city, a situation similar to what was realized in Barcelona's Port Vell.

However, Rio's proposal, in many regards, differs from the Catalan proposal. In the central port area, where the Porto Maravilha project is being developed, the renovations at Praça Mauá (figure 5), which mark that area out, are based on the realization of cultural facilities such as the Rio Art Museum (MAR) (figure 6) and the newly opened Museum of Tomorrow, designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava.

The revitalization of the Port of Rio (built in the early 20th century) has proven positive for tourism. With the revitalized area, once common activities like selling drugs, prostitution, and violence decreased as the

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**FIGURE 6**

Museu de Arte do Rio (MAR) – Rio Art Museum.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

space started being increasingly used for leisure.<sup>29</sup> Although museums attract tourists arriving both by land and by sea (cruises), the peculiar architecture of both museums stands out in their surrounding neighbourhood, thus “spectacularizing” the space. On visiting the site, it seems obvious that residents of the area do not appropriate these spaces as they do not identify with them, preferring to attend nearby places such as Largo da Prainha or Pedra do Sal (figure 7), a “stronghold” of samba in Rio.

In addition, according to some of the residents interviewed, the revitalization process of the port area forced many local residents to leave their homes, and those who resisted were forcefully evicted by the police. We can also correlate gentrification processes in the area to the rising costs of living. Some traditional restaurants now charge the same prices as found in the wealthy restaurants in the southern area, in Ipanema and Copacabana for instance.

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**FIGURE 7**

Pedra do Sal (Stone Salt).



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

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29. Information collected during field research in the city and through interviews conducted with municipal authorities.

The spectacularization of public spaces in Rio aimed at promoting the city also directly affects its cultural heritage, as can be expected since the inclusion on the Heritage List is, for many countries, a symbol of international status and therefore a major boost for international tourism.<sup>30</sup>

When the city was listed as World Heritage by UNESCO in the Cultural Landscape category, its candidacy was entitled “Carioca Landscapes between the Mountain and the Sea,” and only included some iconic elements of the city’s landscape, already consolidated in tourist circuits, such as Sugar Loaf (figure 8), Corcovado (figure 9), Flamengo Park, Botanical Garden, Copacabana Beach Waterfront (figure 10), Guanabara Bay, and Tijuca Forest, hence leaving out other relevant areas of the landscape, such as the favelas on the hillsides. This contributed even further to the fragmentation of the landscape and the spectacularization of these elements to promote the city’s image.

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**FIGURE 8**

Sugar Loaf.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

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30. Scifoni, Simone, 2006, *A construção do patrimônio natural* [The Construction of natural heritage], doctoral dissertation in geography, Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas da Universidade de São Paulo, 294 p.

**FIGURE 9**

Corcovado.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

**FIGURE 10**

Copacabana Beach.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

The urban renovation model taking place in Rio is not concerned with the urban tissue, nor it is concerned with the actual protection and preservation of its assets<sup>31</sup>; indeed, some of the aforementioned elements recognized by UNESCO, for example Flamengo Park, are undergoing deplorable interventions for the Olympics Games. This park, already recognized as cultural heritage at the federal level in the 1960s, was altered following deforestation and the addition of buildings that compromise its protection. Next to it, an underground parking garage is being built and the flanking marina (Marina da Glória) has been expanded to welcome a complex of shops and restaurants (figure 11). Some buildings already exceed 14 metres in height while the maximum height legally approved is 12 metres, consequently contributing to the loss of part of the view on Sugarloaf Mountain, harming the cultural landscape otherwise recognized as World Heritage. This is a case of spectacularization and elitist use of public space and property that, ironically, puts heritage at risk.

Moreover, the mayor has approved the expansion and renovation of many hotels in another area recognized by UNESCO: Copacabana. These works are also impacting the landscape and changing its value. Copacabana residents feel that the rising cost of living and property speculation are direct consequences of urban renovation. Speculation, for example, has forced many traditional traders from Ipanema to close their doors due to a 60% increase in rents between 2009 and 2014. This is because the city government concentrates the largest interventions and investments in elitist areas (the Olympic Village and the Olympic Park are located in Barra da Tijuca). The proposal is elitist, speculative, and reinforces social inequalities through the fragmentation of the urban tissue, and it is unsustainable in terms of environmental costs. Moreover, it is economically unviable, as this state of affairs creates an offer that will unlikely meet a corresponding demand. Added to all this, Rio's strategic planning is more concerned with the promotion of its cultural heritage than its preservation.

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31. Borja, Jordi, 2011, "Barcelona y su relación con otras ciudades: Bilbao, Monterrey, Río de Janeiro y Buenos Aires" [Barcelona and its relations with other cities: Bilbao, Monterrey, Río de Janeiro, and Buenos Aires], in Fernando Álvarez, Josep M. Montaner, and Zaida Muxí (eds.), *Archivo crítico: modelo Barcelona, 1973-2004* [Critical file: Barcelona model], Barcelona, Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, p. 225-240.

**FIGURE 11**

Marina da Glória and Sugar Loaf in the background.



Photo: Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, 2015.

In short, Rio has lost the opportunity to develop less privileged areas, promote social inclusion, and effectively preserve its cultural heritage.

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### Concluding remarks

The relationship between urban renovation, tourism, and cultural heritage highlights the commercialization and the spectacularization of public spaces and cultural heritage. This is because tourism consumes cultural heritage, which in turn provokes a reduction of its narrative value, as these spaces are transformed, along with the whole cities, into spectacles.

In this sense, the logic of mega-events and nominations on the UNESCO World Heritage List is to promote a city and make it competitive in order to attract international investments as well as a solvable<sup>32</sup> tourist base.

Mega-events should be used as an opportunity to improve cities' public spaces in real urban renovation models. The city of Rio de Janeiro is partly making use of this opportunity, but within a capitalist and neoliberal logic where public policies privilege speculative interventions in elite areas at the expense of some peripheral areas that need more urgent social investment, resulting in the fragmentation of the landscape and urban tissue as a whole.

A city like Rio could invest in degraded areas in an attempt to alleviate social inequalities and promote the "right to the city."<sup>33</sup> However, the opposite situation reigns with projects that spectacularize public space and cultural heritage, reinforcing further the disparities.

Given that Rio de Janeiro took Barcelona as its mirror, both cities were discussed in this chapter as a means to understand which strategies could have been developed in Rio to make it a competitive city model, with effective protection of its heritage and good structural and social conditions for its citizens, helping them to take possession of public spaces with the dignity and the quality to which they are entitled.

City "models" should serve as parameters for each city to analyze their own reality and create their own management tools. In this case, the titles granted by UNESCO to cultural heritage sites should be an instrument for effective urban renovation and protection, guided by environmental, cultural, economic, and social sustainability. However, this research encountered the opposite: the recognition by this organization used to promote cities makes them more competitive in publicizing its heritage as a tourist resource, only attracting investors and tourists, consequently contributing to mass tourism.

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32. Vainer, Carlos Bernardo, 2002 [3rd ed.], "Pátria, empresa e mercadoria: notas sobre a estratégia discursiva do Planejamento Estratégico Urbano" [Country, company and commodity: Notes on the discursive strategy of strategic urban planning], in Otilia Arantes, Ermínia Maricato, and Carlos Vainer (eds.), *A cidade do pensamento único: desmanchando consensos* [The City with a unique thought: Crumbling consensus], Petrópolis, Vozes, p. 75-104.

33. [My translation] Lefebvre, Henri, 2001, *O direito à cidade* [The Right to the city], São Paulo, Centauro, 145 p.

Finally, the binomial tourism and urban renovation contributes greatly to the spectacularization of cultural heritage, that is, its economic valorization to the detriment of its symbolic one. As a consequence, it appears to be appropriated, assimilated, and consumed through an empty fruition of meanings.





# 2

## SPECTACULARISATION ET PATRIMONIALISATION DANS LA RUSSIE CONTEMPORAINE Le cas sans précédent de la tour Choukhov (Moscou)

**Julie Deschepper**

Toute la vie des sociétés dans lesquelles règnent les conditions modernes de production s'annonce comme une immense accumulation de spectacles. Tout ce qui était directement vécu s'est éloigné dans une représentation<sup>1</sup>.

**L**e 25 février 2014, le Comité d'État pour la télévision et la radio russe annonçait officiellement le vote du démantèlement de la tour Choukhov de Moscou. Commandée par Lénine, cette dernière avait vocation à devenir la première antenne radio dans la jeune Russie bolchevique ; elle fut construite entre 1919 et 1922 par l'architecte et ingénieur Vladimir Choukhov [1853-1939]. Conçue comme un outil de propagande pour diffuser la parole communiste, véritable incarnation des idéaux de la Révolution, cette tour est avant tout un chef-d'œuvre architectural. Sa structure hyperboloïde en fer puddlé (modèle de forme conique dont les parois sont imperceptiblement courbes), que Choukhov fut le premier au monde à utiliser<sup>2</sup>, lui confère une silhouette parfaitement reconnaissable – qui n'est néanmoins pas sans rappeler sa cousine française, la tour Eiffel (figures 1 et 2). Située au sud de la ville, au cœur du premier quartier de logements sociaux, Chabolovka, elle culmine à 160 mètres : c'est un élément incontournable de la *skyline* moscovite (figure 3). Elle s'inscrit donc dans un paysage urbain historiquement, stylistiquement et symboliquement très riche.

Alors qu'elle a cessé d'émettre depuis 2002 et qu'elle est fermée au public, cette tour demeure un haut lieu du constructivisme russe et est à ce titre inscrite comme appartenant au patrimoine de la Fédération de Russie au niveau régional<sup>3</sup>. En 2003, la Douma d'État a par ailleurs adopté, pour le 150<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'architecte, la Décision n° 4415-III sur le

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1. Debord, Guy, 1992 [1967], *La société du spectacle*, Paris, Gallimard, coll. « Folio », 209 p., p. 15.

2. Voir notamment sur ce sujet : Mikhailov, Konstantin, 2006, « The hyperboloid of engineer Shukhov. Unique heritage and careless heirs », dans Alexander Kudryavtsev et Natalia Dushkina (dir.), *20th Century. Preservation of cultural heritage*, Moscou, Kapital Grup, p. 104-113.

3. Il existe différents types de classement du patrimoine en Russie : aux niveaux local, régional et fédéral.

**FIGURE 1**

Vue de la tour Choukhov et de sa structure.



Photo : Julie Deschépfer.

**FIGURE 2**

Vue de la tour Choukhov et de sa structure.

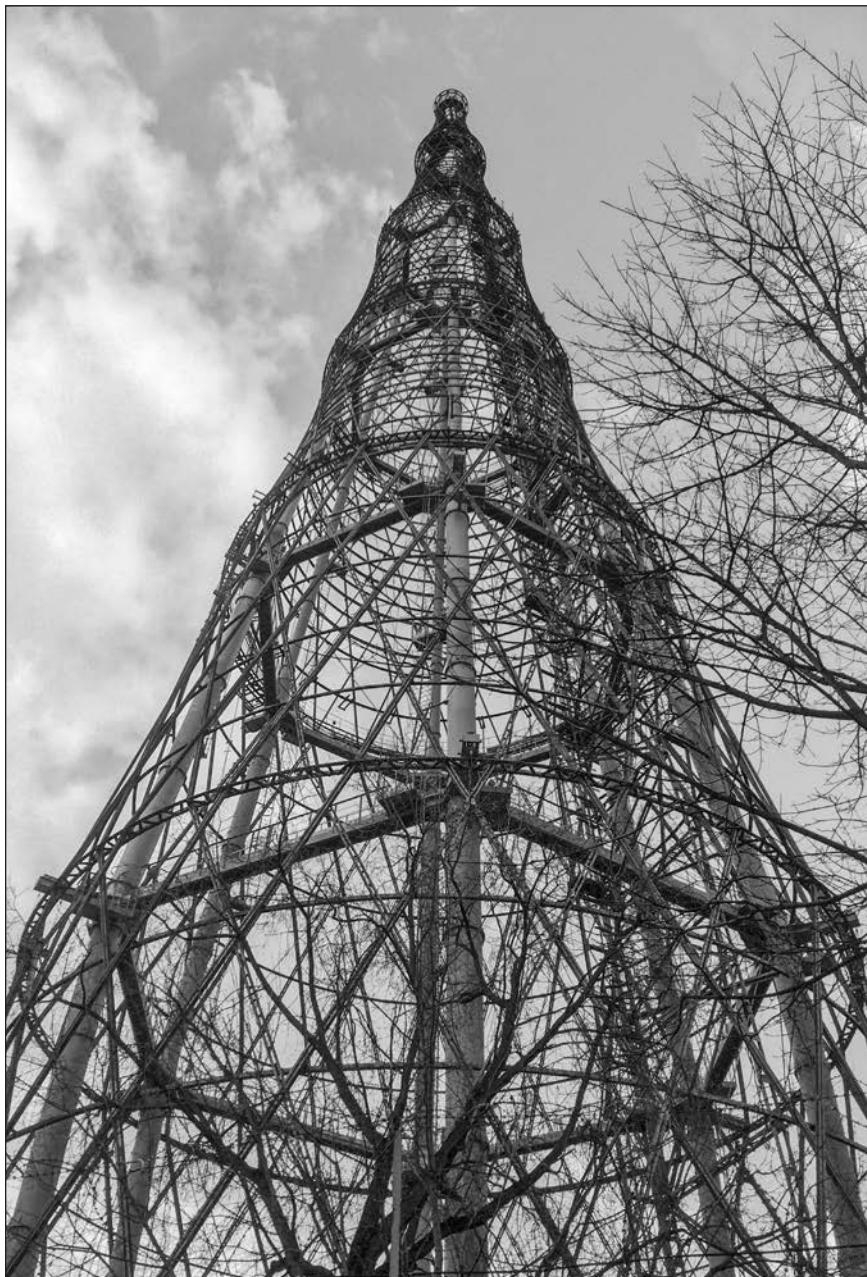


Photo : Julie Deschépfer.

**FIGURE 3**

Vue de la tour Choukhov.



Photo : Natalia Melikova.

patrimoine de Vladimir Choukhov dans laquelle il est dit que «la conservation de ces constructions de génie, édifiées selon les projets de Choukhov à Moscou et dans d'autres villes de Russie, est particulièrement importante et c'est pour cela qu'il faut prendre les mesures qui s'imposent<sup>4</sup>». Pourtant, l'état de déshérence dans lequel se trouve la tour ainsi que la contradiction apparente entre son statut unique et la décision de la détruire reflètent indéniablement la complexité des politiques patrimoniales dans la Russie contemporaine, notamment envers l'architecture datant de l'époque soviétique.

4. Décision de la douma d'État de la Fédération de Russie du 10 mars 2003, n° 4415, liée au 150<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de l'ingénieur russe Vladimir Choukhov. La traduction est de l'auteure.

Plus de vingt-cinq ans après la chute de l'Union soviétique, le legs de la civilisation éponyme<sup>5</sup> reste omniprésent. Tantôt considérées comme les souvenirs néfastes d'une période rejetée ou comme les témoins bienvenus d'une période (re)valorisée, ces traces du passé sont problématiques<sup>6</sup>. Elles invitent dès lors à penser l'existence d'un patrimoine soviétique dans sa diversité et sa particularité. Mais si cette notion semble évidente d'un point de vue occidentalocentré, tel n'est pas le cas en Russie. L'association de l'architecture édifiée en Union des républiques socialistes soviétiques (URSS) à son patrimoine national n'a été ni immédiate, ni évidente, mais plutôt tardive et complexe. La gestion de ces bâtiments cristallise en ce sens des enjeux cruciaux dans la Russie contemporaine que le cas de la tour Choukhov incarne parfaitement : urbains et économiques, identitaires et mémoriels et, en ce sens, éminemment politiques, mais aussi internationaux.

Dans ce chapitre, il s'agira plus particulièrement de mettre en lumière les nouveaux modes de patrimonialisation – expression qui ne trouve aucun équivalent dans la langue russe – de cet héritage problématique. La réflexion s'articulera autour de trois axes. Après une mise en perspective du statut patrimonial encore controversé de la tour Choukhov, la mobilisation que l'annonce de son démantèlement a engendrée sera analysée dans sa dimension spectaculaire. Enfin, la spectacularisation sera envisagée comme un nouveau mode de patrimonialisation.

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## La tour Choukhov : le reflet du rapport à l'avant-garde russe

La polémique née autour de l'annonce du démantèlement de la tour Choukhov s'inscrit dans des problématiques plus larges indéniablement liées à l'appréhension de l'architecture de l'avant-garde en Russie. Ces dernières sont essentielles pour saisir les multiples enjeux que recouvre le « dossier Choukhov ».

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5. La question de l'existence d'une civilisation soviétique est débattue dans l'ouvrage de Raviot, Jean-Robert et Taline Ter Minassian, 2006, *De l'URSS à la Russie. La civilisation soviétique de 1917 à nos jours. Genèse, évolution, métamorphoses*, Paris, Ellipses, 176 p.

6. Ter Minassian, Taline (dir.), 2013, *Patrimoine et architecture dans les États post-soviétiques*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, coll. «Art et Société», 320 p.

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## L'architecture de l'avant-garde russe : un patrimoine controversé

Le patrimoine architectural soviétique peut être distingué en fonction de la période de construction des bâtiments et de leurs styles architecturaux. Ces derniers s'articulent autour de trois grands mouvements, qui connaissent évidemment des subtilités propres et des influences mutuelles. Les avant-gardes des années 1920 et 1930, souvent réduites au constructivisme ou encore désignées sous le terme de «style international», sont le reflet de la rupture qu'incarne la Révolution tant théoriquement qu'esthétiquement. Cette architecture prônait la volonté de créer, dans un esthétisme radical, de nouveaux modes de vie<sup>7</sup> répondant aux théories communistes portées à leur paroxysme dans la vie quotidienne<sup>8</sup>. L'architecture néo-classique qui lui succède est quant à elle grandiloquente, démesurée et pharaonique, à l'image des ambitions de Staline<sup>9</sup>. Enfin, le modernisme des années 1950, 1960 et 1970 se caractérise par ses tons et ses formes austères et son aspect monolithique, et ses dernières productions ont pu être qualifiées d'«architecture cosmique<sup>10</sup>». L'apprehension de ces types d'architecture très différents, tant par les citoyens russes que par les pouvoirs publics, est donc largement différenciée.

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7. Nous avons consulté à ce sujet le projet de thèse en esthétique de Thouvenot, Claire [en cours], *Projets architecturaux de l'avant-garde russe et création de nouvelles formes de vie: la controverse entre suprématistes et constructivistes entre 1918 et 1932. Politiques de l'architecture, à partir d'archives soviétiques inédites en France*, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense.
  8. Pour une courte synthèse sur ces problématiques, voir: Bronovitskaya, Anna, 2013, «Glimpses of today in visions of Russian Avant-Garde architects», *Modernism: Between nostalgia and criticism, Architekturos leidiniu fondas*, p. 71-82, <<http://www.archfondas.lt/leidiniu/en/alf-02/eanna-bronovitskaya-glimpses-today-visions-russian-avant-garde-architects>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.
  9. Voir notamment sur cette question l'ouvrage, qui date, mais dont l'analyse est encore pertinente : Kopp, Anatole, 1985 [2<sup>e</sup> éd.], *L'architecture de la période stalinienne*, Paris, École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 414 p.; ou encore: Groys, Boris, 1990, *Staline, œuvre d'art totale*, Nîmes, Jacqueline Chambon, 187 p.; Paperny, Vladimir, 2002, *Architecture in the age of Stalin, Culture Two*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 371 p.
  10. Pour une courte synthèse sur l'architecture moderne en URSS, voir: Chaubin, Frédéric, 2013, «Une approche esthétique du modernisme soviétique», dans Taline Ter Minassian (dir.), *Patrimoine et architecture dans les États post-soviétiques*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, coll. «Art et Société», 320 p., p. 213-231.

L'avant-garde – à laquelle appartient la tour de radio de Vladimir Choukhov en tant que haut témoignage du constructivisme russe – est considérablement représentée à Moscou : environ 300 bâtiments y ont été construits entre 1925 et 1932. Parmi eux, 37 ont été inscrits entre 1987 et 1989 sur les listes des monuments de l'histoire et de la culture<sup>11</sup> protégés par l'État au niveau local. Néanmoins, l'avant-garde fait aujourd'hui l'objet de politiques patrimoniales divergentes, allant de l'abandon à la muséification, tendances que représentent respectivement le Narkomfin (1928-1930) de Moisei Ginzbourg et Ignaty Milinis et la maison Melnikov (1927-1929) de l'architecte éponyme. Pourtant classé comme patrimoine au niveau régional, l'ancien bâtiment des employés du ministère des Finances se trouve dans un état de dégradation très avancé jugé particulièrement inquiétant par le World Monuments Fund<sup>12</sup>. La maison Melnikov a quant à elle été inaugurée en janvier 2015 comme une branche du Musée national d'architecture de Moscou, après des années de lutte pour la succession et la préservation du lieu<sup>13</sup>. Si ces deux cas sont les plus connus, car largement médiatisés sur la scène internationale, les exemples pourraient ici être multipliés. Le constat – désormais reconnu et bien documenté<sup>14</sup> – est effectivement celui d'une architecture de l'avant-garde particulièrement menacée sur le territoire russe.

Au-delà d'une réflexion sur le respect et l'application des lois en Russie<sup>15</sup> – qui reste un élément de réponse pour comprendre ces contradictions –, il convient d'invoquer ici les différents enjeux que porte en elle cette architecture ainsi que le contexte dans lequel s'inscrivent ces politiques.

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11. Cette locution est la plus employée pour désigner l'ensemble « patrimoine », qui trouve sa traduction en russe dans une pluralité de termes.

12. Stubbs, John, 2007, « Mobilizing support for conserving 20th century architecture », dans Jörg Haspel, Michael Petzel, Anke Zalivako et John Ziesemer (dir.), *The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, Heritage at risk* 2006, Berlin, ICOMOS (Conseil international des monuments et des sites), 194 p., p. 25.

13. Cecil, Clementine, 2007, « The Melnikov House-Studio », dans Jörg Haspel *et al.* (dir.), *The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, Heritage at risk* 2006, Berlin, ICOMOS (Conseil international des monuments et des sites), 194 p., p. 73-74.

14. Voir notamment: Haspel *et al.* (dir.), *The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, op. cit.*; Bronovitskaya, Anna, Clementine Cecil et Edmund Harris (dir.), *Moscow Heritage at crisis point*, Moscou, MAPS (Moscow Architecture Preservation Society), 301 p.; Malling, Jens, 2014-2015, « Les bijoux de l'architecture constructiviste sombrent dans l'oubli », *Manière de voir*, n° 138, *Le monde diplomatique*, décembre-janvier, p. 64-67.

15. Sur la dimension fictive de la loi en Russie, voir: Harriet, Murav, 1998, *Russia's legal fictions, law, meaning and violence*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 280 p.

La grille de lecture proposée en 2007<sup>16</sup> par Anke Zalivako, spécialiste allemande de l'avant-garde, semble ici tout à fait pertinente pour saisir le rapport complexe à ce type d'architecture. Celle-ci évoque cinq raisons majeures – l'économie, la diffamation, la priorité envers d'autres monuments, le manque de volonté et le peu de connaissances – qu'il s'agit de mettre en perspective tout en les enrichissant d'éléments nouveaux.

L'état de délabrement dans lequel se trouvent la plupart de ces bâtiments peut avant tout être expliqué par la faible qualité et le manque de solidité des matériaux utilisés pour les construire (ossature en béton, sol en bois et ciment, encadrement de fenêtres en bois). Ils ont considérablement souffert de la fuite du temps, problème accentué après la chute de l'Union, qui signifia bien souvent la fin de leur utilisation et, parfois, leur désertion, laissant place à une « destruction sans démolition<sup>17</sup> ». La question de la restauration est ici cruciale. Le manque de moyens alloués à cette tâche, associé au manque de compétences et de connaissances des bâtiments<sup>18</sup>, a pu conduire à des dommages sévères. De plus, dans un contexte de reconstruction urbaine de la Moscou post-soviétique tendant vers une « Las Vegasisation<sup>19</sup> », les promoteurs immobiliers se préoccupent peu souvent de la conservation de l'authenticité des bâtiments.

Il est nécessaire de distinguer ici les appréhensions émanant de la société russe et celles des pouvoirs publics. En effet, s'il existe des dénominateurs communs à ce désintérêt prégnant, il s'agit néanmoins d'aspects proprement personnels, d'une part, et politiques, d'autre part.

Au sein de la population, cette architecture demeure largement méconnue, peu comprise et peu appréciée d'un point de vue esthétique. Certains bâtiments sont intégrés au paysage urbain sans que la distinction avec les autres strates architecturales ne soit faite. Aussi, quand pour certains

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16. Zalivako, Anke, 2007, « 2000-2006: Monitoring Moscow's avant-garde architecture », dans Jörg Haspel *et al.* (dir.), *The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, Heritage at risk 2006*, Berlin, ICOMOS (Conseil international des monuments et des sites), 194 p., p. 63-70.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

18. Sur cette question, voir notamment: Dushkina, Natalia, 2005, « Reconstruction and its interpretation in Russia », Quinzième assemblée générale d'ICOMOS et Symposium international *Monuments and sites in their setting – Conserving cultural heritage in changing townscapes and landscapes*, Chine, 17-21 octobre, <<http://www.icomos.org/xian2005/papers/2-12.pdf>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

19. Zalivako, « 2000-2006: Monitoring Moscow's avant-garde architecture », *op. cit.*, p. 63.

citoyens ces bâtiments n'ont rien de typiquement russe<sup>20</sup>, pour d'autres ils incarnent la volonté qui était celle du jeune pouvoir bolchevique de créer un homme nouveau ainsi qu'une nouvelle famille en transformant le quotidien de la société. Le rapport à l'avant-garde est donc tantôt inexistant, tantôt sensiblement négatif<sup>21</sup>.

Par ailleurs, la valeur patrimoniale de ces bâtiments semble être, si ce n'est rejetée, tout du moins mise à l'arrière-plan par les autorités en charge de leur conservation. Quand Anke Zalivako insiste sur le manque de volonté de l'État dans cette préservation, nous pouvons ici pousser la réflexion plus loin et parler d'un déni de la valeur patrimoniale de ces monuments<sup>22</sup>. En 2011, dans un rapport établi par la direction de la ville de Moscou pour la protection des monuments (*Moskomarkhitektoura*), il était effectivement indiqué que le bâti de cette époque a longtemps été négligé faute d'une estimation réelle de sa valeur historique et patrimoniale<sup>23</sup>. Certains bâtiments pourtant protégés, et par là même érigés au rang de patrimoine, ne semblent donc plus être considérés comme tels. C'est pourquoi nous pouvons évoquer l'idée d'une «dépatrimonialisation» correspondant à ce fossé creusé entre le statut législatif et les représentations effectivement associées à cette architecture. Rappelons que le patrimoine est un objet socialement construit, «fabriqué<sup>24</sup>», et que «toute entreprise de patrimonialisation répond aux impératifs politiques et découle des idéologies dominantes de son temps<sup>25</sup>». Le fait que cette architecture unique incarne l'idéologie communiste dans ses débuts peut être ainsi envisagé comme un prisme d'analyse de ce phénomène. Cette architecture

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20. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

21. Ces diverses considérations sont issues de l'analyse d'entretiens menés avec des citoyens russes engagés dans la protection du patrimoine soviétique : Anna Bronovitskaya (16 février 2015), Alexandra Selivanova (22 février 2015), Nikolaï Vassiliev (4 mars 2015), Natalia Melikova (24 avril 2015), Marina Khrustaleva (6 mars 2015), Natalia Dushkina (1<sup>er</sup> avril 2016) et Aïrat Bagaudinov (2 avril 2016).

22. Zalivako, «2000-2006: Monitoring Moscow's avant-garde architecture», *op. cit.*, p. 64.

23. Document cité par Raviot, Jean-Robert, 2013, «Moscou, les "Moscobourgeois" et le patrimoine urbain», dans Taline Ter Minassian (dir.), *Patrimoine et architecture dans les États post-soviétiques*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, coll. «Art et Société», 320 p., p. 257.

24. Heinich, Nathalie, 2009, *La fabrique du patrimoine : «De la cathédrale à la petite cuillère»*, Paris, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 286 p., p. 64.

25. Raviot, «Moscou, les "Moscobourgeois" et le patrimoine urbain», *op. cit.*, p. 257.

coïncide en effet difficilement avec la narration actuelle du passé soviétique, désormais présentée comme essentiellement linéaire et au sein de laquelle la rupture qu'incarne la Révolution de 1917 et la période encore controversée de la prise de pouvoir par Lénine semble avoir été délaissée pour mieux valoriser la modernité et la grandeur de la période stalinienne. Bien plus, ce style «international» inspiré de l'étranger ne répond plus à la construction d'un discours national sur l'identité post-soviétique.



## La cas Choukhov

Dans le cas de la tour Choukhov, qui s'inscrit parfaitement dans les logiques évoquées précédemment, les raisons invoquées pour justifier sa destruction étaient variées. Le ministre de la Communication, Nikolaï Nikiforov, déclarait : « *The only possible option for a solution to the problem is a two-stage reconstruction and renovation of the radio tower, which stipulates in the first stage its dismantling for the conservation and preservation of elements for later restoration<sup>26</sup>.* » L'argument officiel était par conséquent que seule sa destruction – et son éventuelle reconstruction sur un autre site – permettrait sa conservation. Cela étant, un plan de restauration avait été prévu dès 2009 avec une annonce<sup>27</sup> de Vladimir Poutine – alors premier ministre – et une somme de 135 millions de roubles avait été allouée à cet effet en 2011. Pourtant, aucun travaux ne furent réalisés car les expertises ont conclu à l'état trop abîmé de la tour. Ce dernier point met en lumière la complexité de l'évaluation des restaurations à mener et la gestion problématique des fonds étatiques dans le cas d'une restauration. Entre négligence volontaire ou incomptance des pouvoirs russes en matière patrimoniale, il ne nous appartient pas de répondre. Il convient plutôt ici de mettre en lumière les multiples enjeux qui sont au cœur de cette polémique.

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26. Cité dans : *The Moscow Times*, 2014, « 1920s Soviet radio tower to be dismantled », 12 février, n.p., <[http://www.themoscowtimes.com/arts\\_n\\_ideas/article/1920s-soviet-radio-tower-to-be-dismantled/494395.html](http://www.themoscowtimes.com/arts_n_ideas/article/1920s-soviet-radio-tower-to-be-dismantled/494395.html)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

27. Voir notamment : *Interfax*, 2009, « Poutine poderjal initiativou restavrirovat' Choukhovskou Bachniou » [Poutine a soutenu l'initiative de restaurer la tour Choukhov], 13 mars, n.p., <<http://www.interfax.ru/culture/68186>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

Si l'accent a été mis sur le danger représenté par la tour qui menacerait de s'effondrer – argument remis en cause par des rapports indépendants<sup>28</sup> –, les raisons financières et urbaines sont ici sous-jacentes. Une fois détruite, la tour pourrait être légalement remplacée par un bâtiment de la même hauteur; et si plusieurs hypothèses avaient été émises – notamment sur la volonté de construire des bureaux<sup>29</sup> –, aucun projet ne fut confirmé.

Ces premières remarques sont nécessaires pour saisir le « dossier Choukhov » et les problématiques multiples qu'il recouvre. Mais au-delà de son caractère représentatif d'une tendance patrimoniale envers l'architecture de l'avant-garde, c'est surtout la mobilisation sans précédent que l'annonce de son démantèlement a entraînée qui sera ici mise en perspective.

## Une mobilisation spectaculaire

Cette décision polémique a immédiatement engendré un ensemble de mobilisations et d'actions variées. Présentes à différentes échelles, celle d'un quartier – Chabolovka –, d'une ville – Moscou –, et au niveau international – par Internet et par le biais des organismes internationaux –, toutes ces démarches convergeaient vers un but commun: empêcher la disparition de cette tour hautement symbolique de la *skyline* moscovite. La spécificité de cette mobilisation réside bien dans l'engouement immédiat et inédit qu'elle a suscité, lui conférant une dimension spectaculaire.

## La préservation de la tour Choukhov: un enjeu international ?

Quelques semaines seulement après l'annonce officielle du gouvernement russe, la réaction fut d'ampleur internationale. L'architecte français Jean-Louis Cohen et le photographe britannique Richard Pare, tous deux

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28. Cité par Melikova, Natalia, 2014, «The Campaign to save Shukhov Tower», *Docomomo United States*, 26 mars, n.p., <[http://docomomo-us.org/news/campaign\\_save\\_shukhov\\_tower](http://docomomo-us.org/news/campaign_save_shukhov_tower)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.
29. Larochelle, Jean-Marc, 2014, «À Moscou, la tour Choukhov menacée», *Le Monde*, 17 mars, n.p., <[http://www.lemonde.fr/culture/article/2014/03/17/a-moscou-la-tour-choukhov-menacee\\_4384715\\_3246.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/culture/article/2014/03/17/a-moscou-la-tour-choukhov-menacee_4384715_3246.html)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

spécialistes de l'avant-garde russe, ont dès le 13 mars 2014 rédigé une lettre ouverte au président Vladimir Poutine qui a fait figure de véritable pétition internationale<sup>30</sup>. Elle a recueilli la signature de 38 des plus grands noms de l'architecture et du design sur la scène mondiale : Tadao Ando, Kengo Kuma, Rem Koolhaas, Thom Mayne, Elizabeth Diller, Nicholas Serota... pour ne citer qu'eux. En filigrane d'arguments techniques, économiques, historiques et culturels, les auteurs mettaient l'accent sur le caractère unique de cette tour au niveau national, mais aussi et surtout international : « *we are urging you to take immediate steps to assure the preservation of this essential part of Moscow's heritage, a unique contribution of Russian engineering genius to world culture*<sup>31</sup>. » Débutant par une comparaison entre Vladimir Choukhov et Gustave Eiffel, la lettre s'achève par une proposition d'inscription sur la liste du Patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO (Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture). Cette mobilisation internationale a indéniablement eu un impact sur le sort de la tour, avant tout parce qu'elle a permis la médiatisation de la polémique en Russie et à l'étranger. Les plus grands journaux ont effectivement couvert l'affaire : *The New York Times*, *Le Monde* ou encore *The Guardian*<sup>32</sup> – souvent dans des articles assez critiques, participant à une stratégie de dénonciation plus générale du pouvoir russe par les médias occidentaux.

Émanant de la communauté intellectuelle et culturelle internationale, cette pétition fut appuyée par les actions d'organismes internationaux de protection du patrimoine. La présidente du Groupe de travail pour la Documentation et la Conservation des bâtiments du Mouvement Moderne, de leur site et de leur ensemble urbain (Docomomo), Ana Tostoes, critiquait cette volonté de démantèlement et apportait tout son soutien à la branche russe de l'association (Docomomo Russia). Sheridan Burke et

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30. A Letter to Putin | The Constructivist project, « An Open letter to President Vladimir Putin concerning the fate of the Shukhov radio tower on Shabolovskaya St. Moscow », 13 mars 2014, 4 p., <[http://speciali.espresso.repubblica.it/pdf/a\\_letter\\_to\\_putin.pdf](http://speciali.espresso.repubblica.it/pdf/a_letter_to_putin.pdf)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

31. *Ibid.*

32. Kimmelman, Michael, 2014, « Broadcasting a plea to save a historic tower. An Engineering landmark faces demolition in Moscow », *The New York Times*, 16 mars, n.p., <[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/17/arts/design/an-engineering-landmark-faces-demolition-in-moscow.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/17/arts/design/an-engineering-landmark-faces-demolition-in-moscow.html?_r=0)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017 ; Larochelle, Jean-Marc, « À Moscou, la tour Choukhov menacée », *op. cit.* ; Luhn, Alec, 2014, « Architects unite in campaign to save “Russia’s Eiffel Tower” », *The Guardian*, 19 mars, n.p., <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/19/shukhov-tower-architects-moscow-putin>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

Stephen Kelley, présidents du Conseil international des monuments et des sites (ICOMOS), et respectivement présidents du Comité scientifique pour le patrimoine du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle (ISC20C) et du Comité international pour l'analyse et la restauration des structures du patrimoine architectural (ISCARSAH), adressaient quant à eux au président russe, le 16 mars 2014, une lettre plus détaillée et plus virulente. Ils inscrivaient le même jour la tour Choukhov sur la liste des «Alertes» de l'ICOMOS, la plaçant de ce fait au cœur des préoccupations. Fin octobre 2015, le World Monuments Fund inscrivait lui aussi la tour Choukhov sur sa Watchlist, cette icône du modernisme rejoignant alors le Narkomfin, la maison Melnikov et le Club Rusakov du même architecte (1927-1929) comme patrimoine moderne «en danger» en Russie<sup>33</sup>. Afin de rendre public et concret ce dernier soutien international, et pour célébrer l'anniversaire de la tour, un «Shukhov Tower Watch Day» fut organisé les 19 et 20 mars 2016 au Centre de l'avant-garde de Moscou – situé à quelques mètres de la tour. Après une conférence de presse, les deux journées s'articulaient autour d'activités scientifiques et culturelles à destination d'un public très large : visites guidées gratuites de la tour, projection de films, présentation d'ouvrages et ateliers pour enfants (figure 4).

Si les arguments avancés étaient visiblement similaires dans la pétition internationale et dans la lettre d'ICOMOS, il convient de remarquer que Sheridan Burke et Stephen Kelley insistent lourdement sur le fait que la Fédération de Russie commettait de ce fait une infraction à la «loi patrimoniale» :

We note that the Shukhov tower is an official monument of Regional significance, used by the «Russian TV and Radio Systems» (RTRS) and the Russian Ministry of Communication. The idea to reerect the Radio Tower in a different place in Moscow (being in its nature an immovable property), contradicts the purpose of its dedication as a «monument» under the National heritage legislation, and it also endangers its internationally important heritage values<sup>34</sup>.

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33. Ces trois bâtiments sont ou ont été inscrits sur la *Watchlist* du *World Monument Fund*. Le Narkomfin y a été inscrit à trois reprises : 2002, 2004 et 2006. La maison Melnikov a été inscrite en 2004 et le Club Rusakov, en 1996.

34. Lettre de Sheridan Burke et Stephen Kelley au président Vladimir Poutine, 16 mars 2014, n.p., <[http://icomos-isc20c.org/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/icomos\\_isc20candscarshshukhovtower.pdf](http://icomos-isc20c.org/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/icomos_isc20candscarshshukhovtower.pdf)>, consulté le 20 novembre 2014.

**FIGURE 4**

Dessin d'enfant, «Tour Choukhov. Sauvons le patrimoine».



Photo : Julie Deschepper.

Sheridan Burke reprend d'ailleurs cette idée dans son commentaire d'une pétition lancée par un citoyen russe sur *Change.org* – qui a recueilli 18 174 signatures –, dans lequel il va tout de même plus loin en écrivant que «[c]est un problème d'ordre international<sup>35</sup>». Cet argument s'inscrit dans une logique plus large qui remonte au milieu des années 2000 et qui se présente comme une clé de compréhension essentielle des mécanismes qui se jouent ici.

Les organismes internationaux de protection du patrimoine ont effectivement placé depuis peu la conservation du patrimoine moderne au cœur de leurs activités<sup>36</sup>. Suivant ce processus, du 17 au 20 avril 2006 avait été organisée à Moscou la conférence annuelle *Heritage at risk – Preservation of the 20th Century architecture and World Heritage* d'ICOMOS, de Docomomo et de l'Union internationale des architectes (UIA). Un court texte pointant du doigt l'insuffisance flagrante de la politique de protection des bâtiments de l'avant-garde en Russie avait alors été rédigé, appelant les autorités à «agir de façon urgente pour sauvegarder, protéger et préserver des dommages les bâtiments du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle», et appelant plus loin à «une stricte application des lois de protection du patrimoine culturel et naturel, en particulier pour ce qui est du financement du patrimoine du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, qui est d'une valeur universelle remarquable<sup>37</sup>». Cette Déclaration de Moscou sur la préservation du patrimoine culturel du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle marquait alors une rupture. Elle dévoilait en fait publiquement les lacunes du pays en matière de protection du patrimoine moderne et interpellait directement les autorités russes. Elle proposait en outre l'inscription de la tour Choukhov sur la liste du Patrimoine mondial. Pour autant, ce texte ne fait pas figure de document officiel et il s'agit donc d'interroger la façon dont la Russie s'est sentie contrainte dans l'application immédiate de ces recommandations émanant des plus hautes «autorités patrimoniales». Si Khan Magomedov, un des grands historiens de l'architecture russe, écrit qu'«il ne faut pas oublier que le patrimoine architectural de [leur] expérience socialiste appartient au monde entier, et c'est pourquoi sa

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35. Pétition en ligne, disponible sur <<http://oua.be/28bd>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

36. Voir notamment les deux chapitres suivants du livre de 2007 de Jörg Haspel *et al.* (dir.), *The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism*, op. cit.: Burke, Sheridan, «Twentieth-century heritage at risk and the role of ICOMOS in its conservation», p. 15-21; et Jokilehto, Jukka, «Modern built heritage as world heritage», p. 45-47.

37. La traduction est de l'auteure. Voir: «Moscow Declaration on the Preservation of 20th-Century Cultural Heritage», dans Haspel *et al.*, p. 11-12, <[http://www.icomos.org/risk/2007/pdf/Soviet\\_Heritage\\_02\\_Moscow\\_Declaration.pdf](http://www.icomos.org/risk/2007/pdf/Soviet_Heritage_02_Moscow_Declaration.pdf)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

conservation n'est pas seulement une question de patriotisme, mais c'est surtout [leur] devoir international<sup>38</sup>», il ne semble pas que les pouvoirs en charge de la protection du patrimoine considèrent ainsi cette mission. Cela étant, cette Déclaration est surtout devenue aujourd'hui une référence sur laquelle ces mêmes organismes se fondent pour interpeller la Russie, comme ce fut le cas en 2011, alors que l'ICOMOS renouvelait son inquiétude dans une résolution spéciale sur l'«Architecture russe de l'avant-garde», adoptée lors de sa XVII<sup>e</sup> Assemblée générale à Paris<sup>39</sup>. C'est pourquoi, dans le cas de la tour Choukhov, cette chronologie des «rappels à l'ordre» est soigneusement reprise. Face à ces réactions, spectaculaires par leur ampleur, les plus hautes autorités russes se trouvent difficilement en mesure d'outrepasser ces conseils – bien qu'elles jouent encore un double jeu entre l'acceptation des règles et leur interprétation proprement russe, correspondant dans le fond aux grandes lignes de la politique internationale : l'intégration tout en affirmant l'exception.

Le cas de la tour Choukhov met précisément en exergue l'existence d'enjeux internationaux liés à la protection du patrimoine moderne en Russie. Il invite par ailleurs à penser le phénomène d'«internationalisation» de la problématique du patrimoine soviétique. Il soulève en outre la question du rôle et de l'efficacité de la «scène internationale», tant des organisations patrimoniales que de l'opinion publique, dans l'application des politiques patrimoniales en Russie et, par là même, interroge la nécessité, réelle ou imaginée, de passer du local au global.

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## Les mobilisations sociales pour la tour Choukhov en Russie: acteurs, objectifs et enjeux

L'implication de la société civile dans le domaine de la protection du patrimoine peut être datée de 1966 avec la création de la Société panrusse de protection des monuments historiques et culturels (VOOPIK). Cette

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38. Khan-Magomedov, Selim, 2006, «Le XX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans la structure du millénaire» / «XX vek v strukture tysiatchelietii», dans Jörg Haspel *et al.* (dir.), *The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, The Soviet Heritage and European Modernism, Heritage at risk 2006*, Berlin, ICOMOS (Conseil international des monuments et des sites), 194 p., p. 32.

39. Voir: «Résolution 17AG 2011/24 – Patrimoine de l'architecture russe d'avant-garde», 2011, XVII<sup>e</sup> Assemblée générale de l'ICOMOS, Paris, France, 27 novembre au 2 décembre, <[http://www.icomos.org/Paris2011/GA\\_2011\\_Resolutions\\_FR\\_finaldistr\\_20120109.pdf](http://www.icomos.org/Paris2011/GA_2011_Resolutions_FR_finaldistr_20120109.pdf)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

dernière était principalement destinée à protéger les monuments révolutionnaires et léninistes qui avaient alors besoin d'être mieux conservés et restaurés, mais s'est néanmoins largement concentrée sur le patrimoine ancien<sup>40</sup>. D'autres types de mouvements ont alors émergé, la plupart du temps au niveau local, pour devenir des acteurs clés dans la patrimonialisation d'édifices en danger – c'est notamment grâce à eux que 30 des monuments de l'avant-garde furent inscrits en 1987, comme évoqué précédemment. Avec l'environnement, la question patrimoniale a effectivement été à la fin de la période soviétique une véritable « force profonde de la perestroïka<sup>41</sup> » tant elle représentait une problématique mobilisatrice au cœur des protestations émanant de la société. Depuis le début des années 2000, les mobilisations patrimoniales tendent à se revitaliser et à se diversifier tant en ce qui concerne leurs acteurs et leurs pratiques que les objets qu'elles défendent. Dans ce mouvement, le patrimoine soviétique s'est progressivement érigé, si ce n'est au cœur de la société, tout au moins comme une problématique cruciale. Non seulement cela témoigne du désintérêt croissant des pouvoirs publics pour cette architecture, mais cela correspond aussi à la période nécessaire pour la prise de conscience de son indispensable patrimonialisation. En outre, cela coïncide avec la destruction, en 2004, d'un authentique symbole de l'époque soviétique, deux facteurs qui ont joué un rôle de déclencheur et donné notamment naissance à la Moscow Architecture Preservation Society (MAPS)<sup>42</sup>.

Dans le cas de la tour Choukhov, les mobilisations ont revêtu deux aspects. Le premier, mené par Arkhnadzor – l'association la plus « efficace » pour la protection du patrimoine à Moscou –, se fondait sur des actions de contestation, essentiellement avec des pétitions et des rassemblements aux slogans accrocheurs (figure 5). Visant à critiquer la décision du gouvernement considéré comme incompétent et à exprimer publiquement l'indignation engendrée par cette décision, ces actions s'inscrivaient dans une logique sensiblement politisée et relevaient en ce sens d'une

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40. Kropotkine, Anne, 2006, «Les ambiguïtés du dégel. Que faire du patrimoine culturel?», *Cahiers du monde russe*, vol. 47, p. 269-301.
  41. Raviot, Jean-Robert, 2001, «L'écologie et les forces profondes de la perestroïka», *Diogène*, n° 194, p. 152-159.
  42. Cette association a été créée en 2004, mais n'est plus active aujourd'hui. Elle était constituée de jeunes architectes, de chercheurs en histoire et en patrimoine, ou encore de journalistes, tous issus de différents pays, notamment pour permettre une résonance internationale aux problématiques de conservation du patrimoine en Russie.

**FIGURE 5**

Manifestation pour la protection de la tour Choukhov.



Photo : Natalia Melikova.

certaine « grandeur civique<sup>43</sup> ». Cette tonalité politique, plus ou moins consciente et affirmée, invite à interroger combien ces actions en faveur de la protection de ce patrimoine incarneraient une opposition plus large au gouvernement.

Par ailleurs, ce mouvement a surtout été caractérisé par l'implication de citoyens, qui symbolisent aujourd'hui cette lutte. Alexandra Selivanova, directrice du Centre de l'avant-garde, considérée comme chef de file de ce mouvement, et Vladimir Choukhov, arrière-petit-fils de l'architecte et directeur de la Fondation Choukhov, en sont des exemples. Bien plus, un petit groupe s'est véritablement formé pour la défense de la tour : le groupe d'initiative « Chabolovka », composé d'historiens de l'architecture, de gestionnaires de la culture, de journalistes, de designers et d'habitants du quartier. Remarquons alors que s'il existe une communauté très active dans

43. Heinich, *La fabrique du patrimoine : « De la cathédrale à la petite cuillère »*, op. cit., p. 69.

le domaine de la protection du patrimoine, celle-ci est visiblement restreinte – ce que confirme l'analyse des réseaux sociaux, ces derniers permettant de mettre en évidence des liens, somme toute virtuels, mais au demeurant reflets d'intérêts communs, et l'appartenance (dans les faits et sur Internet) aux mêmes groupes de défense du patrimoine. En outre, il existe une certaine homogénéité sociale entre ces acteurs, que Jean-Robert Raviot a bien mise en perspective : «ils se rattachent aux catégories sociologiques et éthiques de l'*intelligentsia russe*<sup>44</sup>».

Menées par un petit groupe d'individus engagés – se situant quant à eux dans une logique «moins agressive<sup>45</sup>», selon les termes d'Alexandra Selivanova –, les premières actions relevaient néanmoins d'une stratégie globale tout à fait réfléchie dont l'objectif était d'informer et de mobiliser la population locale. Ces événements avaient donc pour but premier d'attirer l'attention sur le patrimoine architectural de l'avant-garde du quartier et de faire prendre conscience aux citoyens de la nécessité de préserver cette tour. De cette façon, des pétitions ont circulé dans le quartier et dans Moscou. Des visites guidées gratuites de la tour, des conférences sur son histoire et la biographie de son créateur ont été proposées. Cette mobilisation a aussi donné lieu à la conception d'une exposition et à la publication d'un petit guide sur l'avant-garde : *L'avant-garde autour de la Tour – Guide sur l'architecture du quartier Chabolovka des années 1920 et 1930*<sup>46</sup>. Il est alors tout à fait intéressant de remarquer combien l'attention portée sur la tour a été utilisée comme un moyen pour sensibiliser la population sur l'architecture de l'avant-garde dans son ensemble. Enfin, des interviews de personnalités célèbres (journalistes, artistes, musiciens) ont été réalisées et mises en ligne, et ce, afin d'intégrer la tour Choukhov dans des expériences personnelles et de créer autour d'elle une narration, un discours, voire un certain imaginaire. Cette forme de mise en scène et de médiatisation annonçait le début d'une mise en spectacle de la tour et de son histoire.

Si l'idée directrice de ce mouvement était la sensibilisation, la nature des actions a progressivement glissé d'actions «classiques» vers des événements plus spectaculaires pour s'ériger au cœur des stratégies de

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44. Raviot, «Moscou, les “Moscobourgeois” et le patrimoine urbain», *op. cit.*, p. 254-255.

45. Propos recueillis lors d'un entretien le 22 février 2015, Centre de l'avant-garde, Chabolovka, Moscou (1 h 19 min 15 s).

46. Petit guide publié par le Centre de l'avant-garde de Moscou. La traduction est de l'auteure.

mobilisation. C'est ainsi le spectacle, compris dans ses acceptations les plus diverses, qui a véritablement participé à la vie, à la survie et à la création d'une nouvelle vie pour cette tour.

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## La spectacularisation : un nouveau mode de patrimonialisation en Russie ?

Ce mouvement citoyen a su développer de nouveaux moyens tout à fait inédits pour valoriser la tour et, parmi eux, la spectacularisation est un élément incontournable. Cette dernière notion est ici comprise dans ses acceptations diverses. D'une part, elle correspond à la mise en spectacle de la tour avec l'organisation d'événements relevant du spectacle vivant ou étant de nature spectaculaire. D'autre part, elle renvoie, dans une perspective plus imagée, à la production autour de cet édifice de représentations symboliques à la force évocatrice indéniable, plaçant ainsi la tour au cœur de l'attention.

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## La mise en spectacle de la tour Choukhov

Alors que les premiers mouvements avaient pour but de combler le manque de connaissances des Moscovites sur cette tour et de leur faire prendre conscience de sa valeur patrimoniale, le spectacle a quant à lui essentiellement pour objectif d'attirer un public plus nombreux et plus divers.

De nouveaux événements ont donc été organisés, dont la journée du 20 avril 2014, la «Fête de l'avant-garde autour de la tour», est significative (figure 6). Cette journée proposait un programme pour le moins chargé et des activités très diversifiées. Elle rompait alors avec les événements organisés auparavant, ouvrant une nouvelle page dans ces mobilisations patrimoniales. Elle comprenait des promenades thématiques à pied et à vélo dans le quartier Chabolovka, mais aussi des activités de construction de modèles réduits de la tour. Un concert convivial, des dégustations autour d'un samovar et la projection du film *Les aventures extraordinaires de Mr West au pays des bolcheviks* de Lev Koulechov (1924) faisaient aussi partie des activités proposées. Mais c'est surtout l'envolée d'une montgolfière (figure 7) qui permet d'évoquer une véritable spectacularisation de la tour portée ici à son paroxysme. Cette journée fut organisée par un

**FIGURE 6**

Affiche de la journée du 20 avril 2014.



Source : Alexandra Selivanova.

**FIGURE 7**

Envolée d'une montgolfière dans le quartier Chabolovka (20 avril 2014).



Photo : Alexandra Selivanova.

ensemble d'acteurs (en partenariat avec la section de modélisation d'avions du palais des Pionniers et l'Université de cinéma du quartier): le Centre de l'avant-garde, l'association Moskva Glazami Ingeniora [Moscou vue par un ingénieur], Docomomo Russia, la galerie Zamoskvorechchie, les salles d'exposition de Moscou et l'École d'art № 600 – aussi située dans un bâtiment de l'avant-garde.

Cette journée témoigne de plusieurs logiques. Avant tout, cette multiplicité d'actions menées et leur rayonnement invitent à interroger la nécessité de trouver des approches toujours renouvelées pour rendre le patrimoine avant-gardiste – délaissé par les pouvoirs publics et autant rejeté par le grand public – attrayant et attractif. De surcroît, elle met en avant la volonté d'attirer et de toucher un public très large grâce à des événements relevant du divertissement, tentant en ce sens de dépasser le seul cercle des Moscoubourgeois<sup>47</sup>. L'enjeu était bien de raviver ou de faire naître des souvenirs grâce au spectacle : en somme, de susciter des «émotions patrimoniales», liées tant au caractère exceptionnel, à l'ancienneté, à l'authenticité, à la beauté, que simplement à la présence de cet objet architectural<sup>48</sup>. Et si la volonté des organisateurs était d'agir au niveau local, il s'agissait dans le même temps de créer une communauté autour de la tour Choukhov en cherchant des références communes et en créant un lien social grâce au spectacle, confirmant ainsi les propos de Guy Debord sur la question : «Le spectacle n'est pas un ensemble d'images, mais un rapport social entre les personnes, médiatisé par les images<sup>49</sup>.» En outre, ces événements mettent en lumière la diversification des acteurs impliqués. Des structures culturelles et éducatives (galerie d'art, École internationale de cinéma, École de design ou encore Académie du textile), mais aussi des lieux commerciaux (cafés, bars, marchés) de Chabolovka se sont progressivement joints au mouvement et attestent de la réussite d'une action locale. S'est ainsi véritablement créé un *cluster* culturel<sup>50</sup> innovant au cœur du quartier Chabolovka réunissant les institutions éducatives et commerciales

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47. Expression de Jean-Robert Raviot (dans «Moscou, les “Moscoubourgeois” et le patrimoine urbain», *op. cit.*).

48. Fabre, Daniel (dir.), 2013, *Émotions patrimoniales*, Paris, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, coll. «Ethnologie de la France», 408 p.

49. Debord, *La société du spectacle*, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

50. Cette expression est employée par les acteurs eux-mêmes. La notion de «*cluster*» traduit ici l'idée selon laquelle un réseau d'acteurs variés s'est progressivement créé sur un territoire donné, le quartier de Chabolovka, et ceux-ci partagent un objectif commun : préserver le patrimoine de l'avant-garde.

du quartier dans un seul réseau et se définissant lui-même comme la «symbiose de l'éducation, la culture, la science et la technique<sup>51</sup>». Enfin, cette concentration événementielle et cette multiplication d'activités semblent coïncider avec le concept énoncé par John Strubbs d'«agitation pour l'action<sup>52</sup>», soit l'idée de se mobiliser le plus possible avec des moyens réduits pour pousser les autorités à agir.

Cette logique de patrimonialisation «par le bas», si elle n'est pas nouvelle, porte néanmoins en elle des spécificités. Ces mobilisations puisent en effet leurs sources de légitimation dans des normes internationales, aspirent avant tout à attirer l'attention au-delà des frontières russes et sont menées par des acteurs russes et étrangers, rompant par conséquent avec les pratiques habituelles de la société civile et reflétant une forme d'«occidentalisation» de l'espace public russe. La question patrimoniale semble dès lors avoir sensiblement modifié les pratiques de la société civile, quand ces nouvelles formes de mobilisation ont permis de susciter un intérêt inédit pour cet héritage sensible.

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### La tour et son image spectaculaire

S'appuyant sur la tour, sa symbolique et sa silhouette, cette nouvelle forme de mobilisation par le spectacle a engendré une image elle aussi spectaculaire de la tour Choukhov. C'est cette iconographie fascinante née et créée par et pour cette mobilisation qu'il convient enfin de mettre en perspective.

La silhouette de la tour a été déployée sur un ensemble d'objets: badges, stickers, posters, tee-shirts, tasses ou encore sacs en toile (figure 8), mais aussi sur des aliments (figures 9 et 10), devenant par là même un véritable «produit marketing» – parfois comestible – au cœur d'une campagne non plus de sensibilisation mais de communication, impliquant des designers et des artistes. Certains habitants ont même désormais sur leur bras un tatouage de la tour Choukhov! L'enjeu était pour les organisateurs de prouver que la protection du patrimoine pouvait être associée à un engagement simple, concret, ponctuel et en vogue. Jouer sur la force évocatrice

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51. Dépliant «Chabolovskii koulturnyi klaster» [Le *cluster* culturel de Chabolovka], consultable au Centre de l'avant-garde de Moscou. La traduction est de l'auteure.

52. Stubbs, «Mobilizing support for conserving 20th century architecture», *op. cit.*, p. 26.

**FIGURE 8**

Affiche d'Irina Goriacheva pour la défense de la tour Choukhov qui invite à venir signer une pétition : « Empêchez le démontage ! Non au démontage de la tour Choukhov. »



Source : Alexandra Selivanova.

**FIGURE 9**

Image de la tour Choukhov peinte sur des œufs.



Photo : Alexandra Selivanova.

de la silhouette de la tour a indéniablement contribué au succès des mobilisations et au retentissement de l'affaire. Permettant d'atteindre deux cibles principales – les citoyens déjà sensibilisés et désireux de montrer publiquement leur engagement autant que les «nouveaux connaisseurs» –, cette campagne fut une réussite, dont les nombreux *selfies* pris devant cette icône du constructivisme sur les réseaux sociaux avec le slogan «La tour Choukhov est plus cool que la tour Eiffel» et le mot-clic (*hashtag*) #Choukhov témoignent parfaitement. Toute cette iconographie reflète combien l'image de la tour et sa silhouette symbolique se sont finalement substituées à l'objet architectural en lui-même, tant la période dont il témoigne que les idées qu'il incarne, en d'autres termes : les raisons profondes de sa nécessaire patrimonialisation.

**FIGURE 10**

Gâteau d'anniversaire de la tour Choukhov lors du « Shukhov Tower Watch Day » les 19 et 20 mars 2016.



Photo : Julie Deschepper.

Enfin, l'engouement que cette affaire a suscité reflète une tendance plus large. On assiste en effet à un retour sur le devant de la scène de l'avant-garde : glissant ainsi de l'abandon au «nouveau phénomène de mode<sup>53</sup>» selon Marina Khrustaleva, des propos renchéris par Natalia Melikova qui déclare non sans humour : «*Avant-Garde is a cool thing again*<sup>54</sup>.» La veille hebdomadaire réalisée sur Internet et sur les réseaux sociaux permet de confirmer cette idée : des pages (sur Facebook et Vkontakte – le Facebook russe) et des sites dédiés à différents projets, notamment photographiques, à l'image du *Constructivist Project*<sup>55</sup>, connaissent un succès certain et se multiplient. Il est cependant nécessaire de replacer cette nouvelle tendance dans une perspective plus globale. S'il existe une spécificité du cas russe dans le rapport au patrimoine de l'avant-garde, éminemment liée à la mémoire ambiguë du passé soviétique, ce nouvel attrait envers le patrimoine moderne n'est pas sans lien avec les préoccupations sur la scène internationale de protection du patrimoine architectural moderne.

Bien plus qu'à une patrimonialisation «par le bas», on a pu ici assister à une véritable patrimonialisation par le spectacle. Ce nouveau schéma semble se présenter comme une nouvelle tendance dans la Russie contemporaine. En effet, des mécanismes similaires ont pu être observés dans la campagne de protection menée par le groupe *The White Tower Project*<sup>56</sup> pour la préservation de la Tour blanche (1929-1931) de Moïse Reicher à Ekaterinbourg – un autre chef-d'œuvre de l'architecture de l'avant-garde laissé à l'abandon depuis les années 1960.

La tour Choukhov n'est pas encore sauvée, bien que le projet de son démantèlement ait été abandonné. Deux tendances se sont esquissées pour la protéger, s'érigent ainsi comme des phénomènes inhérents à la protection d'un héritage à la valeur patrimoniale encore controversée.

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53. Marina Khrustaleva, coordinatrice d'*Arkhnadzor*, cofondatrice du projet «Chkola Nasledia» [L'école du patrimoine] et membre de Docomomo Russia. C'est l'une des personnalités les plus actives dans la protection du patrimoine soviétique depuis le début des années 2000 en Russie. Propos recueillis lors d'un entretien à Moscou le 6 mars 2015 (57 min 28 s).

54. Natalia Melikova, Américaine d'origine russe, est photographe, fondatrice de *The Constructivist Project*, membre de Docomomo Russia. Ces propos ont été recueillis lors d'un entretien mené par le biais de Skype le 24 avril 2015 (1 h 21 min 43 s).

55. Voir : <<http://theconstructivistproject.com>>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.

56. *The White Tower Project* est un projet international initié par le groupe d'architectes PODELNIKI, qui est depuis 2012 le propriétaire légal de la tour.

La mobilisation spectaculaire en Russie et à l'étranger ainsi que le développement d'un nouveau type de mobilisation ont incontestablement contribué à sa médiatisation et à la prise de conscience progressive de l'indispensable patrimonialisation des monuments de l'avant-garde. Dès lors, l'effervescence et la portée de cette nouvelle dynamique à deux volets laissent penser à un véritable renouveau de la protection du patrimoine soviétique en Russie, qui n'émane cependant que de la société. En effet, alors que le ministère de la Culture russe annonçait le 15 octobre 2015 que le patrimoine de l'avant-garde serait conservé et listé sur tout le territoire, reconnaissant ainsi sa valeur nationale et universelle, l'un des célèbres monuments de l'avant-garde vient d'être rasé en plein cœur de Moscou<sup>57</sup>.

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57. Le bâtiment historique, surnommé Taganskaïa ATC, construit en 1929 selon les plans de l'architecte Basile Martynovitch, a abrité l'un des premiers terminaux téléphoniques automatiques de la capitale russe. Il a été détruit en avril 2016. Voir par exemple sur le sujet, en français: Grynszpan, Emmanuel, 2016, «Moscou démolit un monument du constructivisme russe», *Le journal des Arts*, 17 avril, n.p. <[http://www.lejournaldesarts.fr/site/archives/docs\\_article/136079/moscou-demolit-un-monument-du-constructivisme-russe.php](http://www.lejournaldesarts.fr/site/archives/docs_article/136079/moscou-demolit-un-monument-du-constructivisme-russe.php)>, consulté le 20 janvier 2017.



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# BEFORE THE REVITALIZATION, THE DEGRADATION

**Aline Fonseca Iubel and  
Dayana Zdebsky de Cordova**

Valorization discourses accompanying heritage making processes in several cities are often replete with disputes between different actors to gain the attention of mass media. These media disputes involve attempts—sometimes successful—at crystallization and construction of heritage-related spectacular images and icons within the collective imagery, in line with what French thinker Guy Debord<sup>1</sup> called the society of the spectacle: a society wherein increasingly abundant icons and images mediate social relationships between people. Within this process of spectacularization of the urban space,<sup>2</sup> we could argue that the “traditional” media (television and newspapers) still assume the leading role in the production of images that focus on the experiences of people and cities.

If the notion of spectacle refers primarily, in our imagery, to the beautiful, grandiose, and out-of-the-ordinary, a careful look at localities prone to heritage making reveals that the spectacle may also occur differently: in the production of negated images and in what is routinely interwoven in the fabric of the cities, regarding what should be rejected rather than displayed, forgotten, obscured, and unenlightened. Thus, localities considered to be prone to heritage making, before being considered as such, and sometimes before achieving grandiose narratives, assumed the leading role in socially constructed narratives based on notions such as “degradation” and “marginalization.”<sup>3</sup>

Seeking to ponder on this double meaning that spectacularization may assume in heritage making urban projects, we will bring to light the example of Curitiba’s Rua Riachuelo (Riachuelo Street), in Brazil. We will discuss in this chapter the complex interplay of conversations, rhetoric, and discourses concerning heritage making attempts, intensified by a 2009 revitalization project for this street, called *Nova Rua Riachuelo* (New Riachuelo Street). That project involved a diverse network of individuals,

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1. Debord, Guy, 1994, *The Society of the spectacle*, New York, Zone Books, 154 p.
  2. Harvey, David, 1989, “From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in urban governance in late capitalism,” *Geografiska Annaler*, vol. 71, no. 1, p. 3-17; Harvey, David, 1990, *The Condition of postmodernity. An Enquiry into the origins of cultural change*, Cambridge, Blackwell, 378 p.
  3. Quotation marks are used in this chapter to indicate native speeches delivered in informal personal communications, interviews, or published material. In the first case, we chose not to nominally identify our interlocutors while in the second case, the respondents’ names accompany the quotes. As for publications, their respective references are provided in footnotes.

and especially of private enterprises, associated to both the state's public administration and the business community. Our goal is to consider the implementation of heritage making policies from multiple perspectives—that of the state, traders and local residents, institutions for trade support and encouragement, and the media—emphasizing the latter's action in the production of Rua Riachuelo as a degraded space.<sup>4</sup>

We will start this exposé with a description of the context. Curitiba is the capital of the state of Paraná, located in Southern Brazil. It has a population of about 1.7 million inhabitants. Due to the fact that throughout the second half of the 20th century, a number of the city mayors were professional architects or urban planners, it became a lab for several urban experiments that resulted in the production, constantly reiterated (for its inhabitants as well as for Brazil and the world), of a city image as being possibly the “most modern Brazilian city.” Several slogans were chosen by municipal administrations throughout the years in order to characterize the city: Smile City, Ecological Capital, American Capital of Culture, Social Capital, Brazil’s European Capital, and Model City. To these slogans we may add city marketing actions aimed at an attempt to insert Curitiba in specific contexts—touristic as well as entrepreneurial, commercial, and political. Overall, these actions and productions of the city may be interpreted in light of the aforementioned concept: spectacularization. This refers to city urbanization processes and projects that generally follow a market-driven logic.<sup>5</sup> In these processes and projects there is huge competition between cities, albeit quite varied within these.

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4. The hypotheses and occasional conclusions herein presented are the results of a research project—called *Rua Riachuelo: Uma Paisagem Cultural Curitibana* [Riachuelo Street: A Cultural landscape in Curitiba]—undertaken between 2010 and 2014 along with the Fundação Cultural de Curitiba [Curitiba’s Cultural Foundation], through the Lei Municipal de Incentivo à Cultura (Municipal decree for subsidized patronage), whom we take this opportunity to thank. In addition to the authors (anthropologists), this paper was supported by a multidisciplinary team (a historian, architects, urban planners, and a photographer). To all of them we wish to express our appreciation. We notify the reader that any remaining failures are ours. To learn more about the research, see: Cordova, Dayana Z., Aline F. Iubel, and Fabiano Stoiev, 2014, *As muitas vistas de uma rua: histórias e políticas de uma paisagem* [The Many views of a street: stories and policies of a landscape], Curitiba, Máquina de Escrever, 159 p., <[https://issuu.com/karolinefischer0/docs/as\\_muitas\\_vistas\\_de\\_uma\\_rua\\_-\\_riach](https://issuu.com/karolinefischer0/docs/as_muitas_vistas_de_uma_rua_-_riach)>, accessed January 20, 2017.

5. Harvey, “From managerialism to entrepreneurialism,” *op. cit.*; Harvey, *The Condition of postmodernity* ..., *op. cit.*

**FIGURE 1**

Rua Riachuelo in the works.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2009.

The notion of Curitiba as a model city, for instance, was spread in the 1970s and is closely associated to investments, mainly during Brazil's military government period, aimed at turning the city into a kind of urbanistic lab. In the early years of the Brazilian dictatorial period (which lasted from 1964 to 1985), the Curitiba Master Plan was implemented, and the Instituto de Pesquisa e Planejamento Urbano de Curitiba (IPPUC – Institute of Research and Urban Planning of Curitiba) was created, the latter being some sort of urbanistic intelligence agency from and for the state. Thus, Curitiba became a city of urban planners and architects, who assumed positions not only in the IPPUC, but also in other state agencies, such as the city council. In this scenario, Jaime Lerner was the most visible actor in the city. He participated in the creation of the IPPUC (and was its president during the 1960s) and the implementation of the Master Plan. He was appointed mayor twice during the military government (a period in which there were no municipal elections). He was then elected mayor in the final years of the 1980s, and governor of the state of Paraná twice in the 1990s. Some of Lerner's ideas regarding the heritage making actions in Rua Riachuelo are implied in our analysis further below.

During his childhood, Lerner lived in Rua Riachuelo, one of Curitiba's first streets, which therefore is located in the heart of the city. Through its history, which dates back at least to the 1820s when the street first appeared in the minutes of the Town Hall under the name *Rua Lisboa* (Lisbon Street), it had several other denominations: Carioca do Campo, Rua da Carioca, or Carioca da Cruz.<sup>6</sup> This street, no longer than 500 metres and connecting two important city squares, acquired its current name in 1871, after the Paraguayan War.<sup>7</sup> At that time, Riachuelo became an almost obligatory passage for visitors of various spaces of the downtown area, such as the Passeio Público (Public Promenade), which opened in 1886; or the Municipal Market, where Generoso Marques Square is currently found, right at the beginning of Riachuelo Street. A tram line connecting the street to the railway network mainly aimed at transporting

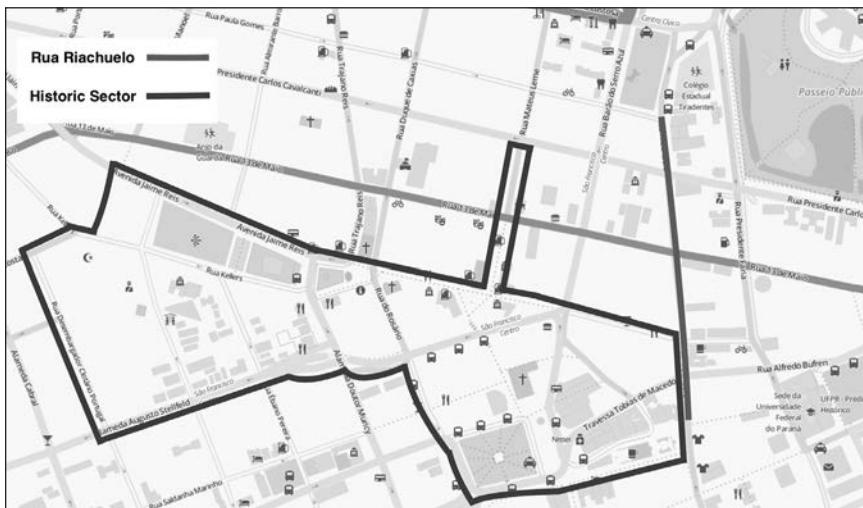
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6. Trevisan, Edilberto, 2000, *Curitiba na província: ruas, moradores antigos, explosão de cidadania* [Curitiba in the province: streets, former residents, explosion of citizenship], Curitiba, Vicentina, 299 p.

7. The Paraguayan War opposing Paraguay to the Triple Alliance (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay) lasted from 1864 to 1870; it is considered Latin America's largest international conflict.

**FIGURE 2**

Map of downtown Curitiba, highlighted the Riachuelo street.



Source: <[www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)>, accessed January 7, 2017.

the production of yerba mate<sup>8</sup> to the Platine Basin was built in 1887.<sup>9</sup> New buildings and commercial establishments were consequently erected on the street. At the turn of the 20th century, Riachuelo had a wide-ranging variety of shoe stores, bars, haberdasheries, pharmacies, bookstores, barber shops, butcher shops, and warehouses. Thus was born Riachuelo's "vocation" for commerce.

However, as it is usually the case in the history of many city spaces, Riachuelo went through different moments: from an age of glory, of commercial as well as political frenzy to a period of decline, deterioration, oblivion, and degradation, until the 2000s when it surfaced once again from the drawing boards of Curitiba's architects and urban planners and in the projects of politicians. Before that, when the historical sector of

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- 8. Yerba mate is a tree native to the sub-tropical region of South America, whose leaves are consumed as tea (and similar beverages) in different parts of the continent. Drinks containing yerba mate were very popular and consumed by different indigenous groups long before the arrival of Europeans in the region.
  - 9. The largest hydrographic basin in Brazil, constituted by the rivers Paraná, Paraguay, Uruguay, and their tributaries, also reaching the countries of Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina and Bolivia.

Curitiba was outlined in the 1970s, Riachuelo had been left out. The abridged story of this episode is more or less as follows: in 1970, a team of architects roamed through many streets of the downtown area in an attempt to outline the historical section. Such an initiative was part of the new Master Plan for Curitiba, also known as the Wilhein-IPPUC Plan, elaborated in 1966, which, contrarily to the previous plan—the Agache Plan—privileged the linearization of urban development, that would result from the constitution of structural pathways and public transportation. The Plan also included the development of an industrial zone and the pedestrianization of the downtown area, as well as the revitalization of historic buildings. The idea was to establish a Historic Sector as a spectacularized space, with cultural and economic activities focused on tourism and leisure for the urban middle classes. Attention was centred on buildings that presented a colonial, neoclassic, eclectic, or art nouveau architectural vocabulary, disregarding any post-1930 architecture. Some of Riachuelo's street blocks, along with all their buildings, were part of this collection, but the decision to leave the street out of the Historic Sector was based on the fact that there were few buildings of historic or architectonic value in the street. In other words, its art déco buildings were of no interest to the official conception of heritage at the time.<sup>10</sup>

Through a multidisciplinary research (historical, imagetic, architectural, and ethnographic) conducted intermittently between 2011 and 2014, but underlining an ethnographic perspective,<sup>11</sup> the attempt to present in this chapter multiple perspectives, discourses, and imageries regarding a specific location is by no means an easy task. Such an exercise becomes even more demanding when the number of actors involved and the lines and nodes of the tangle of discourses are countless, and shadowed by city

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10. In addition to being divided into neighbourhoods, for legal purposes, the city of Curitiba was divided into zones and sectors, with the purpose of creating specific criteria and parameters for regulating land occupation, use, and the development of each area. The special sector Centro Cívico, for example, “comprises the area concentrating the administrative and institutional activities of the state and municipal public services, allowing residential and commercial use as well as the provision of services.” The special Historical Sector is “part of [Curitiba’s] central area, encompassing a large number of buildings originating from the city occupation process since the late 19th and early 20th centuries, characterizing the urban nucleus with a greater historical and cultural expression.” Law 9800/2000, City of Curitiba, p. 7.

11. See footnote 4.

**FIGURE 3**

The old Mútua Predial building (left), currently Mercado Matriz, at the beginning of Riachuelo street.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

locations with a strong symbolic appeal. Also, regarding the city as something experienced first-handedly in real-life events, rather than defined in material forms and perennial institutions,<sup>12</sup> makes this task ever more complex. This chapter analyzes conversations and views on Rua Riachuelo that tend to relativize and deconstruct one another, stemming from different ethnic groups, social classes, and actors in several activities, both commercial and non-commercial. These conversations and views constitute and belong to a street that insisted on evading institutionally imposed contours, not passively accepting its revitalization processes, and not giving in to the urbanistic capacity of its city leaders. A raging, rebel street

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12. Agier, Michel, 2009, *Esquisses d'une anthropologie de la ville. Lieux, situations, mouvements*, Louvain-la-Neuve, Academia-Bruylant, 158 p.

that does not fit into an attempt of homogeneous readings by those who intend to intervene on it, or by those who place it into the various categories of public policies. A street that, much like the city, is “*ni virtuelle ni irréelle, plutôt immatérielle, au sens où elle existe en plus et au sein de son organisation visible, où elle lui donne une part importante de son sens quotidien.*”<sup>13</sup>

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## Media discourses: rhetoric of loss and violence

The many discourses coming from some actors and related to the different interests of preservation and revitalization of Riachuelo have recently been added to the efforts of making the street economically stronger and more “sophisticated,” thus giving it back to the “good citizens.” Despite their “good intentions,” some actions are similar to the former practices that revitalized the Historic Sector of Curitiba, but made Rua Riachuelo and other surrounding routes the hangout for “illegal” practices, “violent” and “dangerous” locations. Now, these discourses of violence and danger are used to justify interventions on the street. Alike what happened as a result of the Master Plan in the 1970s and 1980s, these actions on Riachuelo have marginalized other streets in the area. Electing locations for revitalization also means to move aside some elements considered undesirable: drug users, prostitutes, the poor ...

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13. Agier, Michel, 2004, “La ville, la rue et le commencement de la politique. Le monde rêvé de Chloé,” *Multitudes*, 2004/3, no. 17, p. 139-146, p. 141, <<https://www.cairn.info/revue-multitudes-2004-3-page-139.htm>>, accessed January 20, 2017. As a methodological clarification, we should note that much of the research data on which this chapter is based come from fieldwork research conducted on Riachuelo Street, on public institutions, and on governing bodies located in the city of Curitiba. In this research, we conducted interviews and had several conversations (formal or otherwise) with wholesalers in the area (selling clothing, used furniture, textiles, food, a jeweler, a tailor—among others); with residents and street regulars (bystanders, customers, store or street office employees); employees from the IPPUC, the City Council, the Curitiba Cultural Foundation, the State Secretariat of Culture; with employees from the SEBRAE and consultants for the New Riachuelo Street project; with prostitutes working in the area; with different inhabitants of the city of Curitiba, etc. The fieldwork research also included the survey and analysis of content circulating in the media (televised, printed, and virtual) about Riachuelo Street.

The discourse of degradation was used and expressed by public authorities and journalists in the portrayal of Riachuelo over the last decades. It is important to highlight that degradation is not a natural process of the street, but rather steadily constructed by a series of actors. According to journalist José Carlos Fernandes,

finding out the causes of the decay [of Rua Riachuelo] is a task for a whole group of historians. No consensus exists. Some say that express buses are to blame, having transformed the boulevard into a corridor in the 1970s. Others, ironically, claim that the removal of buses in 1995 left the path to fend for itself. There are those who say that the problem comes from the time of its inception: Riachuelo is narrow, has an unattractive perspective and is on the outskirts of Rua XV. As a punishment, it only received the leftovers.<sup>14</sup>

In other words, the way Riachuelo was occupied through policies related to the flow/circulation in the downtown area is constantly brought up as one of the possible causes of its marginalization. The “express drama” appeared in our research almost as an allegory for the wrong choices made by urban planners.<sup>15</sup>

To some extent, large projects (such as the Master Plan), which imprint city spaces with a new dynamic, and specific projects such as the more diverse and recent revalorization projects for “Curitiba’s new downtown area,” are reinforced or undermined in different media discourses. Thus, it would be impossible to speak about the media without mentioning

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14. Fernandes, José Carlos, 2010, “Justiceiros da Riachuelo” [The Riachuelo Avengers], *Gazeta do Povo* [People’s gazette], May 30, n.p., <<https://goo.gl/UtQkNo>>, accessed January 20, 2017. All quotations from Portuguese publications were translated by us.

15. Other less frequently mentioned choices of the public administration that may have had a significant impact on the “marginalization of Riachuelo” are those related to large commercial initiatives, especially those close to the city’s downtown area, as may be seen in a document produced by the IPPUC: “among the decisive factors for the erosion of the downtown area we find, on one hand, the new spatial organization format for commerce—shopping malls—a world tendency that was introduced in Curitiba in the beginning of the 1980s, the entry of imported goods, mainly low-cost, non-durable goods, which resulted, in the nineties, in the emergence of popular stores with strong consumerist appeal for the less fortunate social classes; in this sense the informal market kept getting bigger, creating within society a new kind of merchant, the street vendor, who in order to survive increasingly converged toward the downtown area to sell his merchandise.” It is up to the public authorities, however, to regulate the commercial activities that are, or not, allowed in specific city spaces. Instituto de Pesquisa e Planejamento Urbano de Curitiba – IPPUC, 2008, *Revivendo Curitiba* [Reliving Curitiba], Eixo Barão-Riachuelo, Curitiba, IPPUC.

**FIGURE 4**

Façade of the old São João Hotel, which, being publicly acknowledged, will remain preserved after the construction of a new building on the site.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

these projects, and vice versa, for both are mutually supportive. Of course, those who live on the streets are passively played upon, especially the merchants and their customers who provide information on these projects but are ultimately engulfed in a logic oftentimes alien to them.

The most frequent topics in news articles on Riachuelo's revitalization are violence, drug trafficking, and prostitution. In 2012, for example, a local radio station broadcasted a news report titled "Rua Riachuelo: from abandonment to revitalization, and still violent!"<sup>16</sup> in which the reporter stated that during the daytime the number of people on the street has increased after improvements were made to the sidewalks and security; at night, however, everything is "back to the way it was before, with plenty of violence, drug trafficking, and prostitution." Crime narratives for Riachuelo are plentiful. The aforementioned problems are also associated, by the media as well as public authorities, to the high rate of abandoned properties—places allegedly prone to illegal practices. An article in the

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16. Television report titled "Rua Riachuelo: do abandono à revitalização, mas ainda violenta!" [Riachuelo Street: From abandonment to revitalization, and still violent!], dated September 26, 2012, <<https://goo.gl/5d1Mo4>>, accessed January 20, 2017.

newspaper *Gazeta do Povo*<sup>17</sup> indicated that in 2011 about 100 buildings (30 of them in the downtown area) were either empty, irregularly occupied, or used by drug addicts in Curitiba. The same article stated that there were “about 12,000” crack addicts in the city at that time, showing Riachuelo as one of the “small crack dens” (*Cracolândia*) of Curitiba.

Violence, strictly related to drugs and prostitution, is used as justification for different types of interventions and projects on Riachuelo Street. A journalist wrote for instance in the leading local newspaper that “the preservation of public space pushes criminality away and reduces problems related to the maintenance of order.”<sup>18</sup> Another example is an article by Cíntia Végas titled “Marginality is Riachuelo’s routine,” in which the journalist states that

prostitution, drug trafficking, homicide, and burglaries are part of the routine of Riachuelo and São Francisco streets in downtown Curitiba. Criminality in these locations scares customers away from commercial establishments, forcing people to change their route to avoid these streets.<sup>19</sup>

A more detached gaze on these narratives might elucidate some points of the *modus operandi* of both the media and the city itself. In anthropological or sociological analyses, we may consider violence as belonging to discursive tropes,<sup>20</sup> understanding that discourse, besides being essentially a mediator, also has the potential to construct opinions, representations, and social imageries. According to Yves Michaud,<sup>21</sup> media aestheticizes violence in the etymologic sense of the word “aesthetic,” which refers not to the domains of beauty and art, but to those of appreciable perception and affective appreciation.

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17. Aníbal, Felipe, 2008, “Curitiba inicia ofensiva para esvaziar as ‘minicracolândias’” [Curitiba starts offensive to empty “small crack dens”], *Gazeta do Povo*, November 29, n.p., <<https://goo.gl/ft35LG>>, accessed January 20, 2017. *Cracolândia* is a local reference to Brazil’s most famous crack consumption region located in São Paulo, the largest city in the country.
18. Tavares, Osny, 2012, “Antídoto social contra a falta de segurança” [Social antidote to the lack of security], *Gazeta do Povo*, May 23, n.p., <<http://www.gazetadopovo.com.br/especiais/paz-tem-voz/antidoto-social-contra-a-falta-de-seguranca-2k9fpzu0741wgk1lx3ykyku>>, accessed January 20, 2017.
19. Végas, Cíntia, 2004, “Marginalidade é rotina na Riachuelo” [Marginality is Riachuelo’s routine], *Paraná online*, January 26, n.p., <<http://www.tribunapr.com.br/noticias/parana/marginalidade-e-rotina-na-riachuelo/>>, accessed January 20, 2017.
20. White, Hayden, 1978, *Tropics of discourse: Essays in cultural criticism*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 287 p.
21. Michaud, Yves, 2002, *Changements dans la violence: essais sur la bienveillance universelle et la peur*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 288 p.

**FIGURE 5**

Interior of a used furniture store.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

To critically ponder on the role of the media and other official voices in the construction of an imagery on Riachuelo does not negate that some (“real”) violence does exist on that street. It rather allows us to consider how this violence is not solely established by a sequence of facts, but also “imaginatively” through media narratives (for example), which in turn endorse a series of actions, including emptying Riachuelo Street, thus ironically making it even more prone to the violence depicted in the news.<sup>22</sup> If the media produce a scenario of violence, they also construct

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22. Anthropologist Teresa Caldeira (2000, *Cidade de muros: crime, segregação e cidadania em São Paulo* [City of walls: crime, segregation, and citizenship in São Paulo], São Paulo, Editora 34, EDUSP, 400 p.) calls “discourses of crime” the everyday narratives, commentaries, conversations, and jokes that have crime as their main topic, that promote a symbolic reordering of the world, developing prejudices and naturalizing the perception of certain groups as dangerous, criminalizing specific social categories, and dividing the world between good and evil. These kinds of conversations seem to have a specific space in the imagery and guidelines related to Riachuelo. In “discourses of crime,” violence and fear occupy the central position and are repeated in a fragmented and repetitive fashion, feeding a circle in which fear is worked upon and reproduced, where violence is at the same time fought and expanded. “Discourses of crime” are not only significant, but also productive. The notion is that while crime breaks meaning and disorganizes, “discourses of crime” symbolically reorganize, establishing a still frame of this same world.

a nostalgic imagery of the past and a critical reading of the present (and, why not, hope for the future?). Cid Estefani, for example, wrote in his newspaper column in 2010:

In contrast to the currently existing commerce, Rua Riachuelo had, until the middle of last century, establishments attracting Curitiba's elite to its counters and offices. To name a few: Hotel Martins, Casa Yvonne, Alfaiataria Marquart, Farmácia Sommer, Ótica e Relojaria Raeder, Casa Luhm, Irmãos Riskalla, Casa Favorita, Casa Porcellana, Casas Pernambucanas, Casa Tókio, Casa Verde, Modas Madame Odette, Barberi & Cia., besides a few beauty parlours and barber shops. Nowadays, Rua Riachuelo fulfills the destiny of all large town alleyways, its commercial establishments having been scared away in order to make room for marginality. Rundown hotels are used for prostitution. Unimpeded drug abuse, robberies, and a series of other misdemeanors scare away any citizen passing by after dark. The "good citizens" who still insist on living on Riachuelo may tell you about it. Everyone's hope is that, with the changes designed by the city administration, the environment will once again be socially acceptable.<sup>23</sup>

There are also those who see the other side of the street: its diversity and subtlety. Such is the case with José Carlos Fernandes, who published a column in which the subheading reads: "Historic downtown street amasses decades of bad reputation and abandonment. However, despite the problems it faces, such as drug trafficking and prostitution, the street is a unique scenery of human diversity." Fernandes adds that until the middle of the 20th century, the street had concentrated part of the city's top-level businesses and it has since then slowly become synonymous with "low-class pubs, cheap prostitution, trafficking, and beggary." Regarding the street's diversity and richness, the journalist writes:

At first glance, Riachuelo shocks due to the amount of broken glass, damaged historic buildings, and freely roaming "drug freaks." After this first impression, a surprise remains: in the narrow street where at least two men are always seen carrying wardrobes around—out of the crossing—plenty of small talk can be heard. These people know each other by name.<sup>24</sup>

Despite this nostalgic memory, the rhetoric of violence has always been present when it comes to Riachuelo, even within the state apparatus, and it is an intrinsic part of any attempt at understanding the street since it is

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23. Destefani, Cid, 2010, "Naquele tempo era assim" [That's how it was back then], *Gazeta do Povo*, May 3, p. 7.

24. Fernandes, "Justiceiros da Riachuelo," *op. cit.*, n.p.

**FIGURE 6**

Corner of Riachuelo and São Francisco streets.

Buildings featured in the photo, from left to right: Palácio Riachuelo, Edifício Rosa Perroni, and Brechó Vest Bem.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

a constitutive part of our imagery about it.<sup>25</sup> As far back as the beginning of the 1850s, when Rua Riachuelo had not yet been paved but was an major commercial section in the capital of Paraná, some merchants used

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25. Clifford Geertz (1978, *A interpretação das culturas* [The Interpretation of cultures], Rio de Janeiro, Zahar Editores, 207 p., p. 185) writes: “[I]magery is nothing more than building a picture of the environment and making it run faster than the environment.” This thinking is flexible when it comes to the manipulation of images shaping it and, being a constitutive part of reality itself, is able to distort, metamorphose and recreate reality. In this sense, every urban image is an accumulation of stereotypes, a fallacy. Additionally, according to Mónica Lacarrieu (2007, “La ‘insopportable levedad’ de lo urbano” [The “Unbearable Lightness” of the urban], *Revista Eure*, vol. 23, no. 99, p. 47-64), there is a critical difference between image (urban public explanations that are symbolically condensed and crystallized, most of them official and officialized constructs operating in power and control instruments and imposing politics of localities) and imagery (which are the senses of localities, emerging from the ensemble of the imagery shared by different social groups and pertaining to the daily lives of inhabitants). This does not mean that image and imagery do not mix up or often overlap, but that differences seem to be subtle. And in Riachuelo’s case, the results of both discourses have different effects and reach. Within the imagery of the street, the memories and experiences of the merchants, inhabitants, and patrons refer to violence, but also to happy childhoods, friendships, and life stories. When it comes to public images, violence takes the centre stage, and it has been the case since early in the history of Riachuelo.

to resort to the media to complain and draw the attention of governing authorities to the many problems related to the street's infrastructure. Above all, the unpaved street and the poor lighting that made it a shadowy place and, thus, exposed to activities possibly illegal or undesirable for the shopkeepers, who already at that time thought that such problems could drive their customers away. These local voices have always fed the media and public authorities and have recently provided justification for revitalization projects led by the city in partnership with the Serviço Brasileiro de Apoio às Micro e Pequenas Empresas do Paraná (SEBRAE/PR – the Micro and Small Business Support Service of the Brazilian State of Paraná) and the Sistema Fecomércio do Paraná (Fecomércio/Pr – the Paraná State Federation of Tourism and Trade of Goods and Services),<sup>26</sup> and other

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**FIGURE 7**

Night photo of the corner of Riachuelo and Alfredo Bufren streets.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

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26. This Federation comprises 61 employer unions representing more than 480,000 retail companies in Paraná (PR).

public-private partnership agencies. These voices come, to some extent, from information, complaints, and impressions obtained from and within Riachuelo itself, in formal and informal conversations with those living there: merchants, property owners, dwellers, clients, service providers ... However, the same voices also provide people in the street with arguments for the reconstruction of an imagery that has long been based upon a rhetoric of loss, deterioration, devaluation, degradation, and violence.

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## ● Light and shadow: attempts at revitalization

The revitalization process of Rua Riachuelo is a result of the production of a complex network of individuals and companies, associated with both the state/public administration and the business community—a structure that, with different configurations and people, has been present for decades in the production of city spaces.<sup>27</sup> This network understands that revitalizing is reforming, but also believes in requalifying the street, and that such requalification stems from physical changes in this space as well as actions on practices formalized within this space, particularly those related to business. Thus, it is deemed necessary to reform and change the street's occupation as well as the practices within that space, regarded as violent and dangerous, in order to raise "good citizens interest." The strategy for such a change would be the requalification of commercial businesses in order to attract a more economically affluent clientele, that is to say, the requalification of the people who live in the street. The SEBRAE/PR also comes into play in this context, a support service that was already present in the area through a partnership with Fecomércio/PR. The latter was responsible for the renovation and administration of the old Municipal Palace on Generoso Marques Square, erstwhile the head office for the City Hall<sup>28</sup> and the Museu Paranaense building, currently a unit of Serviço

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27. Oliveira, Dennison de, 2000, *Curitiba e o mito da cidade modelo* [Curitiba and the myth of model city], Curitiba, Editora da UFPR (Universidade Federal do Paraná), 204 p.

28. The Brazilian political system is based on the separation of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers. At the municipal level we separate what we call the Prefecture or City Hall (where the mayor works alongside his or her secretaries and advisers—the executive power) and the City Council (where the city councillors work as a part of the city's legislative power). Therefore, in order to avoid any confusion regarding the executive and legislative powers, we choose to use the term City Hall to refer not only to the place where we find the city administration and its offices, but the entire city's administrative and executive structure.

Social do Comércio do Paraná (SESC/PR – Paraná's Businesses Social Service), called Paço da Liberdade (Freedom Palace). If the City Hall was in charge of coordinating physical changes in the city, the SEBRAE/PR focused its work on Riachuelo, which is inside the Paço da Liberdade area, in order to diagnose its commercial establishments and, from that research, engender actions aimed at requalification, respecting the identified local commercial "vocation." In Rua Riachuelo's case, given the presence of second-hand furniture shops and thrift stores, its vocation was to become a "re" street: *recycling, reusing ...*<sup>29</sup> For example: removing the second-hand furniture shops from Riachuelo was not an object of consideration, but *requalification* of these stores was desired, with the improvement of the furniture offered, thus transforming the street, making it more modern and distinguished, less violent.

Institutional press releases and bulletins of the New Rua Riachuelo project (the name given to this revitalization movement since 2009) described it as being the result of a partnership between the trade association, the City Hall and the SEBRAE/PR, which, together, would

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**FIGURE 8**

Merchant in his footwear and clothing store.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

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29. Just as in English, the particle "re" in Portuguese, used as a prefix, refers to the reuse or reutilization of things and places.

constitute a harmonious and consensual voice for the revitalization of the street. On closer inspection, however, these connections have proven precarious, their discourses oftentimes dissonant, varying between perspectives regarding the street and its various actors and different logics and temporalities. Some argue that the City Hall does not keep its terms and promises while others argue that the SEBRAE/PR does not understand the peculiarities of the street's stores; or else that the merchants do not engage in the improvement of the public space, seemingly uninterested in organizing themselves and formalizing their establishments, thus leaving the street's representation to a small number of merchants (who are also comprised of Syrian-Lebanese immigrants) not inclined to institutional relationships.

The SEBRAE/PR seems to have taken on multiple tasks during the revitalization process of Rua Riachuelo: encouraging local merchants to organize themselves, surveying the local businesses' specific characteristics and demands, as an agent with its own interests in the production of meaning and understanding/construction of the vocation/value of Rua Riachuelo as a "re" street: *recycling, reinventing, reenchanting*. While not present in any of the official SEBRAE/PR bulletins or communications or in any other company statement involved in Rua Riachuelo's revitalization process, a word/concept/idea was frequently heard in informal conversations with some of the actors involved in the process: "to sophisticate." The street's businesses had to be sophisticated in order to lure sophisticated customers. The notion behind this was that the merchants of Riachuelo could not handle the power and potential of the "re" idea or that they did not understand the value of this vocation in order to attract customers with a greater purchasing power. Consequently, they would not understand this value as desired by the SEBRAE/PR, whose aim was to "gradually reinforce some characteristics that could be sustained in this reinvention process" (Aparecida de Fátima Nogarolli – SEBRAE/PR consultant), characteristics that had been constructed/elected from a diagnosis of the local businesses made by the SEBRAE itself. Such lack of understanding of the value behind recycling, reusing, and other ideas made it hard for merchants to cater to the customers, as desired by the SEBRAE, given the lack of a good presentation for their products as well as their low quality ("you need to do a lot of digging in order to find good 'design' furniture and objects as they are lost in the middle of all this old, poorly preserved furniture"<sup>30</sup>).

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30. Opinion expressed by an architect in a private conversation during field research, April 2012.

**FIGURE 9**

Corner of Riachuelo and São Francisco streets.

On the right, building erected on the site of the former headquarters for Casa da Porcellana.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

In addition to “sophisticate,” other words/concepts/actions came up during the research: to civilize, to tame, and to moralize. Ethnocentric as they are, these ideas are largely known in anthropology as being used by those who consider themselves more civilized, more human, more evolved—and therefore culturally superior—when referring to savaged, animalized others whose practices evade our society’s humanity, or rather, this society’s elite. People who fail to act as this elite and fail to fit into their moral limits pose a threat to this same elite. To civilize, tame, and moralize means to remove all kinds of illegal activities from the street, such as drug trafficking and pimping and sexual exploitation, but also to dispel drug users, prostitutes, and homeless people living on the street who, albeit in different situations and performing wholly different activities, including legal activities, are all clamped together within the same degradation process discourse. This same discourse, while aiming toward the sophistication of a popular street commerce, might chase away current customers through its symbols of distinction, ultimately driving the

businesses themselves closer to the people included in the degradation process. And ultimately everyone seems to be associated with danger, violence, dirt, and shadows.

To clean and to lighten were two other verbs activated in this street revitalization process. Much has been said on the location's cleaner look after painting the façades (which was made possible thanks to the support of a paint company); on the removal of a number of parking spots (which hindered the struggle against drug trafficking and consumption since dealers and users would hide behind cars in order to sell and use drugs); on safety through intensive police action; on the installation of security cameras and street lighting. The notion of literally lighting areas once considered to be shadowy was one of the main actions repeatedly brought up in our field research by IPPUC professionals:

We are afraid of the dark: within it reside potential danger, violence, the immoral, the illegal; it evades our eyesight as it is reprehensible and threatening. Within the dark dwells the unknown, through which passage is avoided, where we are alone and away from the gaze and protection of our social peers.<sup>31</sup>

We observed that marginal, shadowy areas were created by the public authorities themselves, whether through the outlining of the historic downtown sector and the creation of margins within this outline, or through urban planning policies consistent with the installation of private consumption places in central city areas. When we talked about this issue with architect Omar Akel, the administrator of Regional Matriz in 2009 (a City Hall subdivision responsible for the downtown city area), he said:

As you implement lighting, as opposed to shading, you create a positive dynamic between the lit spots. Of course, negative users within this space will be gradually removed. We are not eliminating the drug dealer, the street dweller, the prostitute, the transvestite, we are not eliminating them, we are, deep down, taking them away from these spaces. But they will find new spaces. They are moving, and suddenly we receive complaints from the people at Saldanha Marinho, that they went over there ...<sup>32</sup>

If shadows are the location of the unknown, of the inaccessible, when talking to some of the prostitutes who work in the area, whose profession is probably the oldest in Rua Riachuelo and who, according to them, have

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31. Fragment of an interview conducted in 2012.

32. Interview conducted on March 21, 2012.

**FIGURE 10**

Interior of a clothing store.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

been in the area for generations, we realize that shadowy zones are relative and depend on where one looks. When talking about the street occupation and its activities, one of them asked us if we knew what was inside the building that became so elegant after the reform, in the square up above.

“The Palace, at Generoso Marques Square?” we checked.

“I think so,” she said.

“You never went in there after the reform?” we asked, “It’s a public access building with exhibitions, movie festivals, anyone can get in there!”

“Even us?” she replied.

Or when another girl described a three-storey building located near Colégio Tiradentes, with a strange flow of people, only opening at night-time, the windows with a low yellow light making it impossible to discern what is going on inside, security guards on the front and well-dressed people arriving by car:

“It must be some kind of club, a lot of wrong things must be going on inside,” she said.

“No, that is Île de France, an old French restaurant,” we observed about one of the city’s most expensive restaurants.

“Really? I think you’re wrong,” she replied.

Who will give them voice and include them as recipients of public policies? Who will consider these women as subjects and agents, deserving of rights and part of the street's history? Who will brighten their shadows?

Another strategy for lighting/sophisticating places in need of revitalization is the use of some sort of a “culture squad”: the occupation of these “empty gaps” is fostered primarily by artists and other people connected with the so-called economy of culture, capable of symbolically valuing the space and drawing the attention of elite consumers to their exclusive “design” products or their actions in a given area. One example of such actions on Riachuelo was the Galpão Thá Cultural project, when one of the city’s most traditional real-estate developers supported a series of artists and people connected to the culture economy in order to occupy the space of the Arts building to promote the area and its new undertaking. This followed a trend in urban revitalization processes in which new scenarios or landscapes are constructed where the old and the new reside side by side. However, from what we have seen, there are a series of inconsistencies in this cohabitation. On the one hand, architectural styles may fail to establish a dialogue among themselves, but this is not quite regarded as a problem in most Brazilian cities. On the other hand, the expectation is that these revitalized places become inhabited by a new

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**FIGURE 11**

Interior of a used furniture store.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

type of people, who will live or work in dully restored historic buildings or in the newly built towers. But what about those who made Riachuelo's history? Will the street still have room for them? Some people cannot afford the real-estate speculation, even though they overcame years of degradation and abandonment. Others persist, as if they were in a time capsule. What we do know is that new landscapes and new pages of this history are yet to come.



## Closing Remarks

The ideal of constructing a plural place where different social groups may cohabit has appeared in the discourses of actors involved in Riachuelo's revitalization. However, from these conversations emerged conflicting concepts related to the removal or eviction of parts of those who formerly inhabited the space. We fear that, in our urban planning practices and other city productions, we might not be able to dissociate ideas of poverty, popular businesses, violence, and prostitution. Without promoting the sophistication of Riachuelo, many believe that it would not be possible to attract occupants different from those already there. It is as if this sophistication were incompatible with the presence of "common folks" on the streets. If the street without a "sophisticating intervention" is seen by the most economically wealthy as dark and dangerous, thus hindering their presence, the desired sophistication carries signs of not belonging or estrangement for the economically less affluent population who live, visit, and work on Riachuelo Street. In this sense, revitalizing Riachuelo has meant, to some extent, evicting and replacing former residents. Thus, the cohabitation of public spaces by different social groups is not something as desirable or obvious as could be imagined—at least not in a segregationist society that produces economic and social inequalities such as ours. Thus, we must constantly think about how to build a public space as a place where the encounter with others and the cohabitation between different people—in multiple ways—become possible.

Throughout this article we emphasized Rua Riachuelo as an ethnographic case and how a significant share of the battle for urban space does not take place within the disputed physical space, but is spread across a number of institutional spaces (governmental or otherwise), sometimes distant from those who practice and experience these spaces on a daily basis. We also underlined how the mainstream media were

central in the production of the perceptions for the people living in Curitiba in regard to Rua Riachuelo, be it as a revitalized space, but mainly before that as a degraded space—either by occult forces, not made explicit within this degradation rhetoric, or impaired by those who, powerless as they were, did no more than occupy an interstitial space, largely produced by the same actors who compete for that space and its post-revitalization signifiers. Prior to the luminous spectacle of a space for consumption by the city's middle classes<sup>33</sup> came the grim spectacle of degradation—which, at least on Riachuelo, still seems more effective than the former.

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**FIGURE 12**

Night overview of Riachuelo street after reforms.



Photo: Leco de Souza, 2014.

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33. Debord, *The Society of the spectacle*, *op. cit.*; Harvey, "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism," *op. cit.*; Harvey, *The Condition of postmodernity* ..., *op. cit.*





4

THE MARGINS OF  
THE SPECTACLE  
Subversive appropriation  
of cultural heritage in a  
contemporary city

**Diego Finder Machado**

In 1989, an editorial published in a regional newspaper revealed concerns with unpunished disrespect toward the legislation regulating the use and occupation of Joinville's downtown area in southern Brazil. It claimed that passing through Rua do Príncipe (Prince Street), one of the oldest streets in town, led to "embarrassing discoveries." The street, after being embellished, was occupied by "eyesore buildings." To the columnist, in spite of the nobility of the name, the street was turned into a kind of "ghetto of improvisation," with "stalls on the pavement, fast-food services lacking minimal hygienic conditions," and producing "ample and grotesque visual pollution." It was in an "awful state of extensive decadence." An alert, then, was directed to the municipal administration: if nothing was done, "Joinville would soon lose what was left of the beauty and well-being that the population and tourists used to enjoy in a very recent past."<sup>1</sup>

Nowadays, the scenario is not very different. Notwithstanding the fact that local governments have invested a great deal of effort to promote more appropriate uses, Prince Street remains as it was in 1989, a place of subaltern practices. New buildings are adjacent to old buildings on which, after repairing them, the owners started installing window displays to expose goods for mass consumption. Even if there is still a desire to beautify the city and, above all, to promote social hygiene, Prince Street remains vulnerable to disruptive uses. An inexorable passion for improvisation still dominates that public space.

In a chronicle from 1928, Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis described a journey to Naples.<sup>2</sup> There, public and private mingled in a vital chaos, something that was perceptible in the unconventional ways of using and occupying the space. More than a territory, Naples was a "moment," because it induced movement and metamorphosis. The before overlapped the after, the archaic invaded modern life. In Naples, porosity was an inexhaustible law of urban life: "Porosity results not only from the

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1. N.B.: All quotations from Portuguese and Spanish sources are my translations. Ternes, Apolinário, 1989, "Enfeiando Joinville" ["Uglifying" Joinville], *A Notícia* [The News], Joinville, April 2, p. 2.

2. Benjamin, Walter and Asja Lacis, 1986, "Naples," in Peter Demetz (ed.), *Reflections*, New York, Schocken Books, p. 163-173.

indolence of the Southern artisan, but also, above all, from the passion for improvisation, which demands that space and opportunity be at any price preserved. Buildings are used as a popular stage.”<sup>3</sup>

Porosity is an interesting metaphor to think about contemporary cities. In contrast with a utopia of full order, the population’s sociability permeates the materiality of the city in unpredictable ways. The city is turned into a stage of everyday play and encourages creative improvisations. New buildings are mixed with remains of a decadent past or with ruins of unfinished buildings. Life happens in this fickle and conflicting scenario.

According to Svetlana Boym, “porosity exists in any city, reflecting the layers of time and history.” It has to do with a “spatial metaphor for time in the city, for the variety of temporal dimensions embedded in physical space.”<sup>4</sup> Wondering about city’s porosity is to wonder about traces of time. Reinhart Koselleck argues that “thinking about time requires metaphors, because we can only express it through movements in spatial schemes.” By making sense of the course of something so ineffable, we express the transition from the past to the future as a space travelled through. In this sense, Koselleck proposes the geological metaphor of “layers of time,” because it allows the expression of “various systems with different durations and differentiable origins which are, nonetheless, present and acting simultaneously.”<sup>5</sup> This is particularly intriguing when we seek to unravel narrative threads which allow us to weave the non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous.

Joinville’s downtown area has solid temporality in its built landscape and relies on items recognized as cultural heritage. In the early 1980s, the potential to preserve some of its architecture was identified by Udo Baumann, a German engineer who was on a mission in southern Brazil. Prince Street, the focus of his remarks on Joinville, was considered one of the oldest streets, and therefore deserving particular attention. Something had to be done, because an agglomerate of services companies “would lead to the depopulation of the street, the construction of new skyscrapers, and the loss of the preserved historical substance.” The risk

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3. *Ibid.*, p. 166-167.

4. Boym, Svetlana, 2001, *The Future of nostalgia*, New York, Basic Books, 432 p., p. 77.

5. Koselleck, Reinhart, 2014, *Estratos do Tempo: estudos sobre história* [Layers of time: Studies on history], Rio de Janeiro, Contraponto, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, 352 p., p. 9.

was thus “an impoverishment of the urban landscape.”<sup>6</sup> In fact, as predicted by Baumann, nowadays only a few of the old buildings are used as residences. The street was not completely depopulated as he pessimistically predicted, but there is an intense commercial activity that attracts many users and gives a new atmosphere to the city.

When walking along Prince Street, one quickly notices the royal palms amidst the landscape. These are the main components of the Alameda<sup>7</sup> Brüstlein, or Rua das Palmeiras (Palm Street) as it is now known, that was built in the mid-19th century. The discussions in this chapter will focus on this area in particular. This is a place that played a very meaningful role in the narratives about the history of Joinville’s settlement, and it has also been in the spotlight at different moments of heritage activation and subversive appropriation in the city.

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### A peculiar predilection and the construction of a monumental scenery

Alameda Brüstlein is a street that is double-lined with royal palms, the seeds of which were brought from the Jardim Botânico in Rio de Janeiro in the mid-19th century.<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that no member of the royalty has ever lived in Joinville, it is this scenery that gives access to the building known as the Palace of Princes (figure 1). The building, which shelters

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6. Baumann, Udo, 1983, *Parecer sobre a situação atual e a valorização do patrimônio histórico do século XIX nas cidades de: Joinville, São Bento do Sul e Blumenau, no Estado de Santa Catarina* [Opinion on the current situation and valorization of 19th-century historical heritage in: Joinville, São Bento do Sul and Blumenau, in the Santa Catarina State], Joinville, Fundação Cultural de Joinville, 53 p., p. 6.

7. An alameda is a street or path lined with trees. According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, “Spanish speakers used *álaro* as the basis for their word *alameda*, which can name either a grove of poplars or a tree-lined avenue. English speakers found alameda so appropriate for a shady public promenade that they borrowed it as a generic term in the 1700s.” See: <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/alameda>>, accessed January 20, 2017.

8. Royal palms (*Roystonea oleracea*), from the Antilles, were introduced in Brazil in 1809. See: D’Elboux, Roseli Maria Martins, 2006, “Uma promenade nos trópicos: os barões do café sob as palmeiras-imperiais, entre o Rio de Janeiro e São Paulo” [A Promenade in the tropics: The Coffee barons under the royal palm trees between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo], *Anais do Museu Paulista* [Annals of the Museum of São Paulo], São Paulo, vol. 14, no. 2, p. 193-250.

**FIGURE 1**

The Palace of Princes in 1951, headquarters of the Dona Francisca Domain.



Source: Joinville Centenary's Commemorative Album. Collection of Joinville Historical Archives.

the National Museum of Immigration and Colonization<sup>9</sup> since 1957, served in the past as a residence for Frédéric Brüstlein and as the headquarters of the Dona Francisca Domain<sup>10</sup> in the Dona Francisca Colony (the current geographical boundaries of Joinville and surrounding communities). Frédéric Brüstlein arrived in Joinville in 1863 as prosecutor for the French Prince François Ferdinand Philippe Louis Marie d'Orléans, the so-called Prince of Joinville, and was, between 1875 and 1899, responsible for the administration of the Colony.

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9. Museum created by Federal Law no. 3.188, July 2, 1957, with the objective of collecting and exposing objects and written documents related to the historic process of immigration and colonization in southern Brazil. Although it was created by a federal law, the management of this institution is under municipal jurisdiction.
  10. According to Carlos Ficker, in 1867 Frédéric Brüstlein decided to "construct a new residence, with representative dimensions and worthy to be set as headquarters for the Dona Francisca Domain." Completed in 1870, the "Palace of Princes" was then called "Maison de Joinville." Ficker, Carlos, 2008, *História de Joinville: subsídios para a crônica da Colônia Dona Francisca* [History of Joinville: Subsidies for the chronicle of Dona Francisca Colony], Joinville, Letradágua, 397 p., p. 235.

In 1843, the Prince of Joinville received, as an endowment for his marriage with the Brazilian Princess Francisca Carolina, lands located in the northeast of the province of Santa Catarina. After facing some financial difficulties, he sold parts of the land to the Colonization Company of Hamburg, which started to bring in German and Swiss immigrants to establish a colony.<sup>11</sup> Ironically, the royalty, always present in the narratives about that moment, never set foot on this land. This particular fact, as it is reported, denotes bewildering feelings of an undesired absence and an unsatisfied longing.

Some historians believe that the decision of sowing royal palms in Joinville aimed to satisfy the Prince's desire. In 1838, François d'Orléans reported enthusiasm with the Brazilian vegetation, focusing on his predilection: "*Partout le cocotier, mon arbre favori!*"<sup>12</sup> To these historians, his fondness extended to the palms, a tree from the same botanical family.<sup>13</sup> This would have motivated the preparation of a seductive scenario (figure 2) with the intention of convincing the Prince to establish his home in the colony and govern a population that supposedly wanted his sovereignty.

The taste for trees in Europe after the 17th century is related to the Prince's preference. Nowadays, as Keith Thomas says, "we think it is better to plant trees rather than cut them down." For him, "it is in the early modern

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11. The immigration and colonization process in Joinville infers a link between private interests of the Hamburg's Colonization Company and public interests from the Brazilian government. Cunha, Dilney Fermino, 2003, *Suíços em Joinville: o duplo desterro* [The Swiss in Joinville: The Double exile], Joinville, Letradágua, 255 p.

12. On January 1st, 1838, the Prince of Joinville jotted down in his travel journal the moment he arrived at Guanabara Bay in Rio de Janeiro: "Firstly I would like to wish Happy New Year to all. We travelled along the coast and admired the scenery full of beautiful trees, this rich and beautiful equatorial vegetation. There are coconut trees everywhere, my favourite tree." D'Orléans, François Ferdinand Philippe Louis Marie, 2006, *Diário de um príncipe no Rio de Janeiro* [Diary of a Prince in Rio de Janeiro], Rio de Janeiro, José Olympio, 83 p., p. 20.

13. This understanding was spread through the city by historians Adolfo Bernardo Schneider and Elly Herkenhoff, descendants of German immigrants who worked as researchers at Joinville Historical Archives. For Herkenhoff, "the Prince of Joinville always loved palm trees, so that when he arrived in Brazil for the first time in 1838, he exclaimed: '*Partout le cocotier, mon arbre favori!*' Although he was talking about the coconut tree, there is no doubt that his predilection included all species of palm trees. The same thing happened to engineer Brüstlein and all the other immigrants." Herkenhoff, Elly, 1987, *Era uma vez um simples caminho: fragmentos da história de Joinville* [Once upon a time there was a simple way: Fragments of Joinville's history], Joinville, Fundação Cultural de Joinville, 225 p., p. 170.

**FIGURE 2**

Alameda Brüstlein in 1903.



Source: Collection of Joinville Historical Archives.

period that the origin of this new attitude lies.”<sup>14</sup> Planting trees for purely aesthetic purposes became a common option and gradually, trees—like animals—were domesticated. In this context, they became a valuable source of delight and inspiration. Among the aristocracy, the farming of ornamental trees represented “a complex mixture of social assertiveness, aesthetic sense, patriotism, and long-term profit.”<sup>15</sup>

The Prince of Joinville’s brief quote helped historian Adolfo Bernardo Schneider to form his opinion when, in 1982, he was asked to rule on the protection of Alameda Brüstlein. For him, the presence of such royal palms represented an “ineffable joy” to people from Joinville, who, as heirs, should assume their protection. The Prince of Joinville loved the royal palms, and people were given the responsibility of growing two lines of these trees, so that “should the Prince decide to live in Joinville, he would feel at home.”<sup>16</sup>

Not all historians shared Schneider’s views. In December 1961, Carlos Ficker, president of the committee responsible for the establishment of the National Museum of Immigration and Colonization, wrote several texts with the intention of clarifying some issues.<sup>17</sup> He explained that the word *cocotier* used by the Prince meant coconut tree, not palm tree, that word in French being *palmier*. Ficker emphasized “the impression that the Prince of Joinville’s dream, despite his love for coconut trees expressed in 1838, had not come true.” After all, “the Prince lived in Claremont and Neuilly and probably had very little interest for palm trees in his land in Joinville.” Nevertheless, Ficker made clear that he did not want to “disappoint romantic souls and historians convinced that thanks to the Prince’s true love for the ‘COCOTIERS,’ Joinville has a castle at the end of a beautiful and long alameda of palm trees.”<sup>18</sup>

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14. Thomas, Keith, 1988, *O homem e o mundo natural: mudanças de atitude em relação às plantas e os animais, 1500-1800* [Man and nature: The Evolution of attitudes toward fauna and flora in England, 1500-1800], São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 454 p., p. 235.
  15. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
  16. Schneider, Adolfo Bernardo, 1982, *Parecer sobre o tombamento da Alameda Brüstlein* [Opinion on the Alameda Brüstlein’s listing], Joinville, Fundação Cultural de Joinville, 5 p., p. 5.
  17. Texts originally written for the newspaper titled *A Notícia*, and published in 2013 in Carlos Ficker’s book: *Colonos de Joinville na Guerra do Paraguai* [Joinville settlers in the Paraguayan war], Blumenau, Nova Letra, 206 p.
  18. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

Motivated or not by the Prince's predilections, there is no doubt that growing palm trees represented an assertion of power. An arrangement of trees in line composed a framework in the landscape, displaying the place where the political power was held in the former colony. According to Thomas, "the extended alamedas ... were a very obvious way of submitting the whole district to the authority of the mansion."<sup>19</sup> In particular, an alameda of royal palms shows a clear intention as the trees look like giant columns conveying monumentality to the landscape. Roseli Maria Martins D'Elboux argues that the dissemination of royal palms was linked to the idea of the superiority of the neoclassical language. The row of royal palms resembled a colonnade, a fundamental architectural element of palaces and temples. D'Elboux contends that since the beginning of the 19th century, these species of trees have always been associated, in Brazil, to the "image of monarchical power, the idea of nobility and class distinction."<sup>20</sup> In Joinville, growing royal palms was possibly intended to illustrate loyalty to the Brazilian empire.

This story is important to understand how Palm Street, during the 20th century and at the beginning of the 21st century, was ennobled by patrimonialization practices and urban interventions. Such ennobling refers to the way the "absent presence" of the princes is constantly reiterated in the heritage value assigned to the place. The Palace of Princes and the alameda of royal palms make up the scenario of a history that brings nobility to the origin of the city.

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### Ennoblement of history

Llorenç Prats writes that heritage activation depends on political powers, which, in order to be legitimated, need to promote negotiations. The intention is to reach the highest level of agreement. Heritage activation, more than valuation, has to do with the production of discourse. Every heritage activation "includes a discourse which is relatively explicit, relatively conscious, relatively polysemous, yet absolutely real."<sup>21</sup> This process

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19. Thomas, *O homem e o mundo natural ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

20. D'Elboux, "Uma promenade nos trópicos ...," *op. cit.*, p. 202.

21. Prats, Llorenç, 2005, "Concepto y gestión del patrimonio local" [Conception and management of local heritage], *Cuadernos de Antropología Social* [Social Anthropology papers], no. 21, p. 17-35, p. 20.

implies the following actions, she adds: *selection* (choice of elements which stand up from the variety of goods and cultural events), *assortment* (mapping and reports which give coherence to the set), and *interpretation* (restriction of possible polysemy). These are reinforced by economic power, academic interests, and technical skills.

Heritage activation involves the production and reproduction of an “authorized heritage discourse.”<sup>22</sup> As Laurajane Smith says, such a discourse

focuses attention on aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places, and/or landscapes that current generations “must” care for, protect and revere, so that they may be passed to nebulous future generations for their “education,” and to forge a sense of common identity based on the past.<sup>23</sup>

This has some consequences: the definition of legitimate spokespersons for the past, the heritage experts, and the perception that the heritage is intrinsically valuable and, therefore, deserves special care. Nevertheless, the main consequence of this discourse “is the way it constructs heritage as something that is engaged with passively.” Although exposed to the public gaze, it is believed that this perception can be educated to take the heritage’s messages in an uncritical way. Heritage is not defined by the authorized discourse as “an active process or experience, but rather it is something visitors are led to, are instructed about,” but yet are not invited to engage with more actively.<sup>24</sup> However, it is important to take into consideration that it is through the public gaze that the authorized heritage discourse might be legitimated or rejected.

Palm Street went through different moments of heritage activation in order to emphasize the ennoblement of its history. In 1939, the federal authority in charge of preservation listed the former headquarters of the Dona Francisca Domain, but did not include the alameda of royal palms to be preserved.<sup>25</sup> In this listing, the building was named Palace of Princes, which highlights president Getúlio Vargas’s nationalistic policies by linking the history of the former German colony to the Brazilian imperial past.

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22. Smith, Laurajane, 2006, *Uses of Heritage*, London and New York, Routledge, 351 p.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

25. Listing Process 161-T-38. That listing occurred a short time after the creation of the Historic and Artistic Heritage National Service, whose protection mechanism was established by Decree-law no. 25 of November 30, 1937.

When, in 1957, the building was transformed into a museum, museologic narratives tried to unify the ethnic issues. In other words, the German mark was associated with immigration and colonization, while “Brazilianness” was symbolized in the association with the empire’s history. Thus, Palm Street inherited a metaphorical sense. On the one hand, it represented the success of the colonizing venture, a seed germinated and rooted in Brazilian territory which, over time, developed. On the other hand, it expressed the attention to the peculiar preference of the Prince and the colony’s loyalty to the nation.

An urban intervention by artist Juarez Machado, in 1973, closed the street to vehicular traffic (figure 3). A monument to Princess Dona Francisca, made by Fritz Alt, was relocated in the street, becoming another element representing the ennobled history. The transformation of the alameda into a *boulevard* with grass and flowers where, before, there was a path, turned out to be an obstacle to users. In 1990, the National Museum of Immigration and Colonization’s Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the intervention: “With that modification the Alameda unfortunately lost its purpose, which was to give access to the ‘Palace of Princes.’” The members therefore suggested that “the centre of the alameda should remain a pedestrian path.”<sup>26</sup>

In 1982, two years after the enactment of the municipal law relative to the listing, the protection of Palm Street was discussed. At that time, the Heritage Committee, composed of local politicians, German descendants, and technicians, put the site at the top of their list of priorities. However, the register of the listing was lost, leading to disregarding that act. Palm Street was formally listed by Municipal Decree only in 2005. It considered Palm Street as a cultural property that “gives distinctive characteristics to the urban landscape of Joinville and that it has been, for over a century, both a reference and symbol of the city.”<sup>27</sup>

At the turn of the 21st century, there were discussions about changing the street for new uses and functions. A revitalization project of the downtown area was presented in 2014 by the Institute of Research and Planning for the Sustainable Development of Joinville, a foundation linked to the

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26. National Museum of Immigration and Colonization’s Committee, 1990, *História das Palmeiras Imperiais da Alameda Brüstlein de Joinville SC* [History of Alameda Brüstlein’s royal palms in Joinville SC], Joinville, MNIC, 7 p., p. 7.

27. Joinville, Municipal Decree no. 12.276, March 9, 2005.

**FIGURE 3**

In 1973, Palm Street was closed to vehicular traffic.



Source: Collection of Joinville Historical Archives.

municipal administration. Marcel Virmond Vieira and Vânio Lester Kuntze, the main architects involved in the project, justified it by stressing the importance of the place as “one of the major signs of local identity.”<sup>28</sup> Their project acknowledged that the obstruction of the street had become an urban problem as “its degradation was increasing”: “nowadays our main postcard is insufficiently used, because people are not encouraged to visit the site.”<sup>29</sup> The recovery of the original design, with an open area for pedestrians, was then suggested, an action that would result in the “re-appropriation of the space by the community, considering not only its physical but also its social rehabilitation.”<sup>30</sup>

Discussing the terms employed in urban interventions in historic centres, Paulo Peixoto points out that such terms are self-evident, and therefore discussions are needless. Because of their technical characteristics, these terms seem to be free from political onus, covering up interests for consolidation of a leisure urban market and a competitive scenario for the city.<sup>31</sup> As he states, what is involved is the construction of a spectacular landscape in order to boost the symbols of affirmation and identification. Proposals of rehabilitation or requalification, in keeping with receptiveness for cultural heritage, have been marked by the nostalgia for a lost city. Peixoto believes that the ungrateful finding of some interventions is that, despite the efforts, “historic centres are no longer, after all, what they, in fact, have never been.” Besides,

to glorify social uses for an ennobled space ... can bring about a gap between the designed city and the resulting city, this gap serving only to reveal that the re-qualified spaces take too long, thereafter, to become what they certainly should be.<sup>32</sup>

In 2012, a path designed by architect Raul Walter da Luz was opened between the royal palms (figure 4). This intervention, where the pavement was adapted to people with special needs, provided improved public lighting, as well as public furniture such as benches, bins, and billboards

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28. Fundação Cultural de Joinville (FCJ), 2005, *Listing Process FCJ.CPC.2005-002: Alameda Brüstlein*, Joinville, 468 p., p. 11.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*, p. 11.1.

31. Peixoto, Paulo, 2009, “Requalificação Urbana” [Urban requalification], in Fortuna Carlos and Rogério Proença Leite (eds.), *Plural de Cidades: novos léxicos urbanos* [Pluralism of cities: New urban lexicon], Coimbra, Almedina, p. 41-52.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

**FIGURE 4**

In 2012, a new urban regeneration project opening a pedestrian pathway easily accessible was realized.



Photo: Diego Finder Machado, 2012.

with information about the place. Despite the positive opinions of some of Joinville's residents, Juarez Machado considered the intervention as an offensive against his 1973 project: "I feel hurt and betrayed not to have been consulted. They are transforming the noblest area in Joinville."<sup>33</sup>

In addition to these evocative moments, other actions were taken by the municipal and state governments to protect houses on Palm Street and the surrounding area. Such actions raised issues on the debate about Alameda Brüstlein's heritage value, prompting responses from public

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33. Mazzaro, Rafaela, 2012, "Juarez Machado questiona projeto para revitalizar Rua das Palmeiras" [Juarez Machado questions the project to revitalize Palm Street], *A Notícia*, March 5, <<http://wp.clicrbs.com.br/aniversariojoinville/2012/03/05/juarez-machado-questiona-projeto-para-revitalizar-rua-das-palmeiras/?topo=84,2,18,,84&status=encerrado>>, accessed January 20, 2017.

authorities in order to ensure the preservation of this historic site and to promote it as an iconic image of the city; these responses, as in the cases of houses 66 and 82, will be discussed below.

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## A Black Prince and a “Drag Princess”

The frustrating wait for a noble presence in Joinville was mocked in some public performances. In 2002, during a TV program called “Terras de Joinville” [Joinville Land],<sup>34</sup> an actress, Andreia Malena Rocha, impersonated a reporter during the early years of the colony. Characterized as a German immigrant from the 19th century, she repeatedly showed up on Palm Street to say that the Prince and the Princess had not arrived yet, but that they would certainly show up soon. Years later, two other shows performed the arrival of the noble characters.

During an event named ArtCIDADE in 2012, an actor, Robson Benta, played the role of the Prince of Joinville; contradicting all expectations, he was a Black Prince who came to take possession of his realm in Brazilian territory (figure 5).<sup>35</sup> In keeping with the ArtCIDADE 2012 objectives, the motivation for this performance was to raise awareness about the Afro-Brazilian presence in the history of Joinville. “In a city where the colonization is typically German, where people had waited for a Prince who never stepped foot on this land, the arrival of a Black Prince advocates to be provocingly open-minded about the ethnic origins of Joinville’s population.”<sup>36</sup>

In recent years, the staff at the National Museum of Immigration and Colonization started to deliberately expand the notion of immigration led by the institution: they included the process of Black African slavery as compulsory immigration. In line with this deed, they emphasized that if the museum’s challenge was to address the immigration process in southern Brazil, it would not make sense to neglect the presence of Black people. This change of focus was driven by social movements, especially after 2009, when the First Week of Black Consciousness was organized.

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34. Rede Brasil Sul de Televisão, 2002, *Terras de Joinville* [Joinville Land], Joinville, RBS TV.

35. Online video performance: <<https://vimeo.com/54063601>>, accessed January 20, 2017.

36. Luiz Henrique Schwanke Institute, 2012, *Catálogo do artiCIDADE 2012: espaços de performance* [ArtiCIDADE Catalog 2012: Space for performing], Joinville, ILHS, 50 p., p. 41.

**FIGURE 5**

"The Prince Has Arrived," performance by Robson Benta.



Source: ArtCIDADE 2012 Catalogue, Luiz Henrique Schwanke Institute, 2012.

In 2015, there was a performance about Princess Francisca Carolina during the First Seminar on Inventing a Gender organized by the Arco-Íris Association (figure 6). On a rainy afternoon, the Princess showed up at the palace's door lip-synching Edith Piaf in her rendition of *La Marseillaise*. The character played by Calupsyta Zabelê, Calu Zabel's stage name, was a drag queen, or rather a drag princess. She climbed the steps of the palace telling how she had built up her gender.<sup>37</sup> The show drew attention to the fact that the invention of a gender is a performative act. After all, according to Judith Butler, "the parodic repetition of gender" exposes "the illusion of gender identity as an intractable depth and inner substance."<sup>38</sup> Gender is a construct, an act that is subject to break away and to self-parody.

37. Online video performance: <<https://vimeo.com/140162647>>, accessed January 20, 2017.

38. Butler, Judith, 2015, *Problemas de Gênero: feminismo e subversão da identidade* [Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity], Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 287 p., p. 252-253.

**FIGURE 6**

“Joinville Princess,” performance by Calu Zabel.



Photo: Jessica Michels, 2015. Copyright granted to the author.

In Joinville, discussions on the gender identity of LGBT (lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals and transgenders) was encouraged by the organization of new social movements. Palm Street was also a place for demands related to LGBTs rights to express their sexual diversity. On the International Day Against Homophobia (May 17, 2009), as a symbolic act, a rainbow flag of 200 metres was laid on the street to give visibility to the fight against violence caused by homophobia (figure 7).

These performances took advantage of historical and heritage narratives told and retold to exhaustion. They are strategies of daily life, or, as Michel de Certeau would say, “ways of unauthorized hunting.”<sup>39</sup> Such performances do not aim to break the established narratives but rather to give them new significance. The meaningful place, framed by centennial royal palms, serves as a stage for “lesser performances” which claim for visibility in a contemporary city.

39. De Certeau, Michel, 1994, *A invenção do cotidiano* [The Practice of everyday life], vol. 1, Petrópolis, Vozes, 351 p.

**FIGURE 7**

A symbolic act on the International Day Against Homophobia in 2009.



Photo: Diego Finder Machado, 2009.

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### An undesirable margin of a heritage scenario

While the heritage value of Palm Street is justified, these narratives only take into consideration the interpretation of a distant past neglecting, thus, the way this cultural property is used nowadays. On the one hand, a significant number of historic narratives are disappointed by the Prince's absence, and on the other hand, they are also distressed by the presence of undesirable users of the city. There is a point here: in order to ease tensions and conflicts, moving the sight to the margins of the spectacle of heritage is necessary.

Palm Street earned, in the last decades, a spectacular function: a stereotypical image organized with marketing strategies in order to include Joinville in a global and regional market. Furthermore, it is necessary to underscore its specular function, in other words, the function of being an accessible mirror to its residents, who were—or not—born in the city, aspiring to turn this mirror into a reflection of not only a well-known history, but also one that they perceive as their very own, a common icon of identity. Such intention encourages people to engage in the task

of passing on the marks of the past to contemporary and future generations. According to Henri-Pierre Jeudy, “in order to keep a perceived heritage, it has to be fathered, society has to recognize in it the reflection of itself, and its places, objects, and monuments as reflections of its history, its culture.”<sup>40</sup>

Maria Tereza Böbel, a German translator, formerly in charge of the National Museum of Immigration and Colonization, said in an interview in 2003 that the museum was important “to make people think about what has to be thought.”<sup>41</sup> While developing this heritage mirror, the intention was not to control the content of the narratives related to the history of Joinville, but rather to heighten public perception. Moreover, the strategies designed to produce an idealized perception attempt to control users’ behaviours, the way we and “the Others” appropriate the heritage. In this way, observing the margins of a heritage spectacle is to become aware of the crack in the mirror in which people hopefully see themselves.

The uses and appropriations of two adjacent buildings, houses 66 and 82 (figure 8), tell the story of the fate of heritage goods at the margins. In spite of being protected by municipal listing, these houses are currently in ruins. Both have been damaged by fire, in 2009 and 2010 respectively. There is evidence that, inside the remarkable territory, these buildings were used by the homeless as non-authorized shelters.

The fire of house 82 was reported by local newspapers, and metaphors were employed to describe the incident. The *A Notícia* newspaper reported: “Fire in the Heart of the City.” It said that “house 82, abandoned for many years, stole the show and smoke was seen all over the city.”<sup>42</sup> In a very creative way, another newspaper, *Notícias do Dia*, designated the day of the fire the “Ash Thursday,” writing that the building had been “abandoned” since 2001, and that “it was occupied by the homeless and drug users.”<sup>43</sup> The same newspaper had previously reported inappropriate uses and

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40. Jeudy, Henri-Pierre, 2005, *Espelho das Cidades* [Mirror of cities], Rio de Janeiro, Casa da Palavra, 157 p., p. 19.

41. Böbel, Maria Thereza, 2003, *Interview with Diego F. Machado and Eleide A.G. Findlay*, Joinville, University of Joinville’s Oral History Lab.

42. Geisler, Josi Tromm, 2010, “Fogo no coração da cidade” [Fire in the heart of the city], *A Notícia*, Joinville, February 19, p. 18-19.

43. Prado, Windson and Sandro Gomes, 2010, “Quinta-feira de cinzas” [Ash Thursday], *Notícias do Dia* [Daily News], Joinville, February 19, p. 4-5.

**FIGURE 8**

Houses 66 and 82 in Alameda Brüstlein.



Photo: Bruno Strohmeyer Marques, 2014. Copyright granted to the author.

noted in 2009 that “walking along Palm Street, Joinville’s postcard, should be a pleasant activity.” However, “the beauty … gives way to the homeless who insist on turning the garden into their shelters.”<sup>44</sup>

Just as other cities, in the last decades, the oldest areas in Joinville were transformed. Hamlets, whose functions were previously residential and commercial, were vacated by their owners. Without a clear definition for use and occupation, the houses began to serve occasional urban practices which, according to many people, degraded the remarkable properties. Prostitutes, homeless, drug users, street gangs, street vendors, among others, have integrated, since then, Palm Street’s landscape, engendering fear and disgust.

44. Jacomini, Indianara, 2009, “Um cartão-postal abandonado” [An Abandoned postcard], *Notícias do Dia*, Joinville, November 18, p. 3.

Being abandoned and, at the same time, occupied by undesirable users, a morally established contradiction, is shown in the documents of the listing process. In 2011, Councilman James Schroeder's proposal claimed for urgency in the process of Palm Street's revitalization, because the fact that "being occupied by drug users and the homeless" has turned "the place that promotes the city of Princes" into an "inhospitable and desert place." Furthermore, it gives the "impression that we, Joinvilenses, are careless with our heritage, history and culture."<sup>45</sup> When Schroeder employed the expression "we, Joinvilenses," he was stressing the alameda's importance as a reference point in the perception of a common history and culture. Yet "we, Joinvilenses" surely did not mean the unwelcome drug users and the homeless. They are the undesirable margin of a heritage scenario.

House 66's listing was challenged<sup>46</sup> in 2009 by lawyers who questioned its leading motivation: the cultural relevance of being part of Palm Street's whole. They claimed that "if the statement that Palm Street is honoured as cultural heritage, the existing situation denotes that public authorities have been neglecting it."<sup>47</sup> On the street, "idle people and beggars occupy what is called the 'symbol of cultural heritage,' scaring citizens who would like to walk along the alameda." This would contradict the expected heritage value, because "it seems that the area considered as a 'historical and cultural ensemble' does not show urban evolution, but degradation."<sup>48</sup> As the appellants believed, "idle people" and "beggars" are not only at the margins of what is considered "we, Joinvilenses," but they also could not even be considered as citizens. House 82's listing was also challenged, as one of the proprietors pointed out that the listing would be impossible because "the house is, unfortunately, ruined."<sup>49</sup>

In addition, expertise reports were written by professionals who defended the listing as a way to preserve not only a trace of the past, but also its present use. In 2009, historian Fernando Cesar Sossai reaffirmed the importance of house 66's listing. According to him, the construction

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45. FCJ, *Listing Process FCJ.CPC.2005-002*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

46. It was a means, under the municipal legislation, for some of the owners to oppose the listing before its actual adoption.

47. Fundação Cultural de Joinville (FCJ), 2009, *Listing Process FCJ.CPC.2009-001: Alameda Brüstlein*, 66, Joinville, 369 p., p. 71.

48. *Ibid.*

49. Fundação Cultural de Joinville (FCJ), 2009, *Listing Process FCJ.CPC.2009-025: Alameda Brüstlein*, 82, Joinville, 235 p., p. 70.

“is being reinvented/reframed in sociable practices that dialogue with urban transformations.”<sup>50</sup> Taking into consideration the strategic location of the house, Sossai defended the importance of heritage education focused on “memory, identity, and citizenship.” He emphasized that “the building’s state of repair as well as its occupation by drug users also provide data for heritage education strategies in order to discuss ‘different cities’ within Joinville.” It would be necessary to “go beyond its materiality,” that is, to look past the tangible things. In conclusion, he reminded that “the discomfort caused by the alleged subversive use of the place also makes it possible to analyze hygienist desires that, nowadays, permeate people, space, and sociability.”<sup>51</sup>

House 82’s report, presented in 2011 by anthropologist Sonia Regina Lourenço, declares that Palm Street is “one of these scenarios where social experiences of different distinction and plural practices are enunciated.” New sociability and appropriations reaffirm the unique, symbolic significance of the place. She adds that Palm Street is a “spot for competition,” a place of conflict between two antagonistic images: it is “intended as a postcard,” but also “a marginalized and dangerous street.”<sup>52</sup> Lourenço further sustains that “at first sight, it is common sense to see it only as a place where uses are considered undisciplined, marginal, impure and, therefore, criminalized.” In her words, “citizens, most of the times, are categorized as abject beings, unwanted in heritage spaces and subject to stigmas and different forms of violence.”<sup>53</sup> In keeping with Lourenço, the act of listing should take into consideration the fact that different ways of appropriation “are part of the heritage of the city.”<sup>54</sup>

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### Windows on “another world”

In her book *Uses of Heritage*, Laurajane Smith declares, in a provocative tone, that “there is, really, no such thing as heritage.”<sup>55</sup> In fact, even when the intention is the protection of what is material, heritage is never just

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50. FCJ, *Listing Process FCJ.CPC.2009-001*, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 186.

52. FCJ, *Listing Process FCJ.CPC.2009-025*, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

55. Smith, *Uses of Heritage*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

“a thing.” It exists in a network of discourses and practices that attribute, amongst other things, disputes, values and meanings to this thing. Even when tangible, heritage only makes sense in its intangibility, in other words, in different forms of sociability which “go beyond its materiality,” as suggested by Sossai. It is important to highlight the complexity of life in heritage places, bringing the construction of a spectacular and specular scenario to the discussion. The objective here was to discuss how an idealized image of the city is disturbed by its margins.

We cannot talk about heritage value without talking about moral value. Some see the preservation of heritage as a possibility of preserving a way of life suitable to what is considered “we, Joinvilenses.” Some places in the contemporary city are taken as a refuge for something that is not or something that has never been, and never will be. Nostalgic feelings nourish desires of rebound to a bygone way of life which is believed to be better. As Svetlana Boym suggests, “it is the promise to rebuild the ideal home ... tempting us to relinquish critical thinking for emotional bonding.”<sup>56</sup> Therefore, critical thinking is required to address the past uses, and divert the gaze away from disputes, conflicts, and tensions.

The spectacularization of heritage is opposed to porosity. Those who promote it expect, by proposing to rehabilitate heritage, a sort of “social restoration” which implicitly aims to remove the marginalized. However, as de Certeau says, in the cities “the remains of waning pasts open up, in the streets, vistas on another world.”<sup>57</sup> This means that the heritage opens up windows to another world of the past, to temporalities settled in the present. Nonetheless, it also suggests windows to another world where we are contemporaries, a world of sociability which takes heritage places as if they were stages. Realizing the potential of everyday life, often made invisible in the discourses to promote the city, allows us to reflect critically on patrimonialization practices. These practices, when focusing on material preservation, fail to consider that without uses, heritage has little or no purpose. This everyday life can cause discomfort, although that discomfort may serve as a way to think differently.

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56. Boym, *The Future of nostalgia*, op. cit., p. XVI.

57. De Certeau, Michel, Luce Giard, and Pierre Mayol, 1996, *A invenção do cotidiano* [The Practice of everyday life], vol. 2, Petrópolis, Vozes, 376 p., p. 191.





5

LE PATRIMOINE  
ARABO-ISLAMIQUE  
EN SPECTACLE  
La médina de Tunis à  
l'épreuve du projet colonial  
et de la décolonisation  
(1881-1964)

**Nader Meddeb**

**A**vant que la ville arabo-islamique de Tunis – la médina – ne devienne un patrimoine mondial classé par l'UNESCO (Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture) en 1979, elle a dû subir l'action aménagiste de trois pouvoirs successifs : beylical (ottoman), protecteur (français) et indépendant. Chacun d'eux, selon sa conception de la « modernité », a fait de ce noyau historique l'instrument de sa propagande officielle. On assiste à partir de la seconde moitié du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle à sa mise en spectacle pour des fins politico-économiques complexes que nous détaillerons plus tard. Néanmoins, notons d'entrée de jeu que ce spectacle fut une activité concertée qui, d'un pouvoir à l'autre, avait pris plusieurs formes, avait des visées divergentes et avait servant la valorisation des arts islamiques que leur dévalorisation. Partant, en nous intéressant particulièrement au patrimoine bâti, nous tenterons dans le présent chapitre d'identifier les raisons d'être de ce spectacle, sa part dans ce processus de valorisation/dévalorisation de l'héritage arabo-islamique et ses retombées sur les productions architecturales de l'époque et de nos jours.

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### **De notre compréhension du spectacle : lutte et ambiguïté du patrimoine à l'heure de la mondialisation**

On vit pleinement, de nos jours, « le monde où l'on catche ». Roland Barthes amorce l'édition de 1957 des *Mythologies* par une réflexion sur le catch qu'il préfère placer dans la catégorie des spectacles plutôt que des sports. Le catcheur, dit-il, ne doit surtout pas tomber et céder dès le premier coup reçu, sinon il risque de déplaire à un public recréant à une différence près les scènes sanglantes des théâtres antiques. Le spectateur a payé, d'abord, une série d'images épisodiques que les catcheurs, comédiens par excellence, se chargent de reproduire en boucle avec leurs gestes, leurs attitudes et leurs mimiques, désormais signes d'un langage bien décrypté. Mais, en plus, il s'attend à une transgression de la règle : « un combat régulier n'est

rien d'autre qu'un combat exagérément poli [...] Le catch véritable tient son originalité de tous les excès qui en font un spectacle et non un sport<sup>1</sup>. Ce qui distingue un combat d'un autre, c'est donc cet excès ou encore ce dépassement voulu de la règle dont on ignore souvent les conséquences et qui finit couramment par un spectacle du spectacle.

Le spectacle du ring n'est finalement qu'une illustration à l'échelle réduite d'un moteur principal des sociétés dites modernes. Elles tournent grâce à leur capacité à tout mettre en spectacle pour une fin sans cesse limitée à un loisir servile commandé par des nécessités politiques et économiques. Dans ce contexte, le spectateur est réduit à un regard passif hypnotisé par la magie de l'image et il se soucie de moins en moins de la qualité ou de la valeur de l'objet en devanture. L'effet du spectacle est encore plus accentué si cet objet est enjolivé par un passé et un fétichisme culturel qui participent à l'hypertrophie de son mythe. Pour ce type de spectacle, l'objet patrimonial représente depuis quelques années une cible prometteuse dont le triomphe peut être lu, entre autres, dans l'ambiguïté croissante autour du vocable « patrimoine ». Véhiculée à outrance par les divers organismes nationaux et internationaux, par les industries patrimoniales comme les agences de voyages et, bien entendu, par les différents médias qui asservissent notre quotidien, la notion de patrimoine, «en dépit d'un apparent consensus, et d'une monosémie postulée, [...] est loin d'être clair[e]<sup>2</sup> ». En réalité, le manque de clarté, l'ambiguïté et l'illusion volontaires représentent la clé de ce spectacle, sorte de simulacre devenu trait particulier de nos sociétés mondialisées et d'une culture « rhizomatique » en trompe-l'œil.

Étant l'une des toiles de fond de cette culture, l'héritage édifié, en l'occurrence arabo-islamique tunisois, s'offrait jadis à des manipulations diverses entre exposition, mise en scène, muséification, reproduction, fétichisation et marchandisation qui forment les échelons de son processus de spectacularisation.

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1. Barthes, Roland, 1957, «Le monde où l'on catche», dans *Mythologies*, Paris, Seuil, 247 p., p. 21.

2. Choay, Françoise, 2009, *Le patrimoine en questions: anthologie pour un combat*, Paris, Seuil, 214 p., p. 9.

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## Les prémisses du spectacle : de la fausse copie à la fétichisation du patrimoine dans le laboratoire des expositions universelles

La véritable spectacularisation du patrimoine arabo-islamique bâti débute, à notre avis, par l'exposition d'une fausse copie d'un édifice dans le cadre des expositions universelles. Même si cette pratique remonte vraisemblablement à une date antérieure à la tenue de *The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations* qui prit place en 1851 dans le Cristal Palace à Londres, c'est à l'occasion de ces foires internationales qu'elle a prospéré pour évoluer de la simple exposition au spectacle excessif. Depuis cette date, la Régence de Tunis, alors sous la domination de la Sublime Porte, se consacrait un coin de la section réservée à l'Empire ottoman pour afficher ses richesses économiques et culturelles. Quand l'Empire devint «l'homme malade de l'Europe<sup>3</sup>», les beys de Tunis décidèrent dès 1705 de se détacher progressivement de celui-ci en nouant des relations économiques avec les puissances européennes. Lors de l'exposition universelle de 1867 à Paris<sup>4</sup>, Sadok Bey (1813-1882) déclara officiellement l'autonomie de la Régence en se réservant un pavillon construit entièrement à sa charge (figure 1). L'édifice fut conçu par l'architecte français Alfred Chapon [1834-1893] sous la direction du diplomate Guillaume Jules de Lesseps [1809-1887], et se voulait une réplique du palais du bey au Bardo (Tunis). Par souci d'authenticité, l'architecte, qui ne s'est jamais rendu à la Régence, fit venir des artisans tunisois chargés de décorer les lieux. On lit dans *Le monde illustré* du 13 juillet 1867, un des hebdomadaires qui ont fait l'éloge de la construction, que

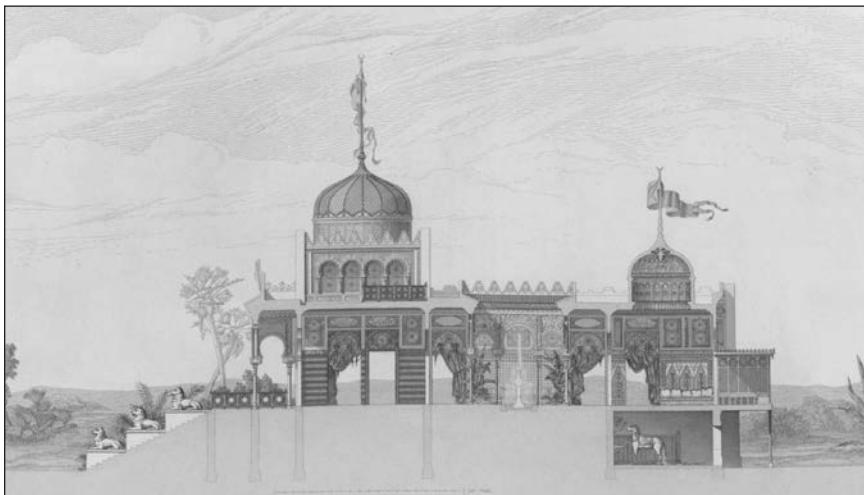
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3. Thoraval, Yves, 2001, *Dictionnaire de civilisation musulmane*, Paris, Larousse, 334 p., p. 215.

4. C'est dans le laboratoire des expositions universelles et «à partir de 1867 que se développent ce que l'on va appeler des "architectures d'expositions", c'est-à-dire une série de bâtiments, reproduction, réduction, résumé, juxtaposition d'éléments censés caractériser un pays ou une civilisation; les expositions se présentent alors comme de vivants recueils d'architecture et d'ornements, le plus raffiné côtoyant le plus grossier». Mathieu, Caroline, 2007, *Les expositions universelles à Paris: architectures réelles ou utopiques*, Paris, Musée d'Orsay, 49 p., p. 10.

**FIGURE 1**

Pavillon de la Tunisie à l'exposition universelle 1867 à Paris, coupe longitudinale.  
Architecte Alfred Chapon.



Source: Alfred Normand, 1867, *L'architecture des nations étrangères : étude sur les principales constructions du parc à l'exposition universelle de Paris (1867)*, Paris, A. Morel éditeur-libraire, 150 p., p. 79.

le Bardo est le morceau architectural le mieux réussi de toute l'Exposition au point de vue de la restitution d'un style et d'un caractère. M. Alfred Chapon, l'architecte de cette œuvre remarquable, a fait preuve d'une profonde connaissance de son sujet et d'un goût d'une exquise pureté<sup>5</sup>.

Vue de près, la réplique n'avait qu'un rapport lointain avec sa référence. Chapon suivit en effet les consignes de Jules de Lesseps, à l'époque consul de France à Tunis et chargé d'affaires du bey, comme il se conforma à la tendance orientaliste<sup>6</sup> faisant de l'Alhambra et de la mosquée de Cordoue les principales références utilisées par les Occidentaux dans l'imitation de l'architecture islamique. Il combina alors les formes, jongla avec les

5. A.H., 1867, «Exposition universelle: l'intérieur du palais du bey de Tunis», *Le monde illustré*, 13 juillet, p. 22.

6. «Le mot “orientalisme” entre officiellement dans le dictionnaire de l’Académie française en 1791 pour désigner l’étude – en Europe – de l’Orient (Proche, Moyen et Extrême). Dans son acceptation actuelle, le terme qualifie particulièrement les études liées au monde musulman dans son sens large, les spécialistes des autres régions ayant une appellation propre: “indianistes”, “sinologue”, etc.» Thoraval, *Dictionnaire de civilisation musulmane*, op. cit., p. 2016.

styles et classa l'ensemble dans le répertoire encore mal défini de l'architecture orientale ou islamique<sup>7</sup>. Les dissemblances furent clairement soulevées dans l'étude de l'architecte Alfred Norman sur *L'architecture des nations étrangères* (1867) à l'exposition. L'auteur montre que le vrai palais du bey et l'architecture de la médina de Tunis, blancs et sobres de l'extérieur, ne pouvaient pas satisfaire les visiteurs venant vivre les couleurs de l'Orient et se perdre dans l'univers abracadabrant des *Mille et une nuits*. Ainsi, en embellissant les extérieurs par des motifs empruntés à d'autres registres ou extraits des intérieurs inviolables, Chapon ne faisait que répondre aux objectifs majeurs de l'exposition, à savoir, distraire la classe ouvrière, nourrir ses fantasmes et la faire voyager dans le monde en un seul jour<sup>8</sup>. Ici, le spectacle qui dépasse la règle est à résumer dans cette extériorisation de l'ornement et son placage inconscient sur les façades. Détaché de son contexte, dénudé de sa dimension signifiante et plaqué sur les façades internes et externes du pavillon pour des fins purement esthétiques, il est réduit à un pastiche, à un produit de consommation, voire à une marchandise à vendre auprès des assoiffés d'une mode orientaliste désormais en vogue dans toute l'Europe. Le pavillon qui remporta

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«Depuis la publication par Edward Sait d'un livre polémique (*Orientalism*, 1979), et sous l'influence de l'anglais, les termes orientalisme et orientaliste, désignant des savants non musulmans, tendent à qualifier une attitude extérieure, parfois soupçonnée de colonialisme.» Rey, Alain, 2005, *Dictionnaire culturel en langue française*, t. III, Paris, Le Robert, 2318 p., p. 1210.

7. Notre histoire coïncide avec les premières tentatives de théorisation de l'architecture islamique et l'intégration de celle-ci dans l'histoire générale de l'architecture. Les premières pages écrites au dernier tiers du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle étaient basées sur les récits de voyage et les recueils à caractère encyclopédique comme la *Description de l'Égypte* (1809-1829), là où l'architecture islamique est introduite au public sous forme de détails architectoniques et ornementaux isolés de leur contexte. Cela a amplement facilité leur reproduction et leur usage systématique en tant que pur décor.
8. Ce sont des objectifs que conserveront les expositions universelles jusqu'à aujourd'hui. En 1967, lors de l'exposition majeure qui a eu lieu à Montréal, les visiteurs étaient dotés d'un vrai passeport qu'ils faisaient tamponner à l'entrée de chaque pavillon étranger. Cette formule de Pierre Dupuy, commissaire général de l'exposition, argumente ce choix: «Nous avons pensé, dit-il, au citoyen moyen qui lit, chaque fin de semaine, des pages et des pages de son journal consacré aux croisières, aux villes d'eau, aux stations de sports d'hiver, à des villes antiques et pittoresques, mais qui doit rester sur sa soif. En lui offrant un passeport, nous lui avons remis la clef du rêve. Rêves d'Asie, rêves d'Afrique.» Dupuy, Pierre, 1972, *Expo 67, ou La découverte de la fierté*, Montréal, Éditions La Presse, 237 p., p. 60.

le prix du jury pour la meilleure construction étrangère a, de cette manière, atteint son double objectif: satisfaire sa clientèle et permettre au bey d'annoncer de façon spectaculaire le nouveau statut politique de la Régence tout en le rapprochant de la puissance française.

Par référence aux thèses freudienne et marxienne à propos du fétichisme, on note que, dans ce processus, la fausse copie devenue marchandise a procédé par fétichisation de ce patrimoine architectural. Pour Freud, le fétichisme consiste à prendre la partie pour le tout et à résumer la valeur de l'ensemble dans une perception personnalisée de son détail<sup>9</sup>. Pareillement pour Marx qui le voit d'un point de vue économique, le fétichisme

confond la forme de la valeur avec la valeur elle-même. C'est ce fétichisme qui est la matrice idéologique du discours pratique des capitalistes, qui calculent en monnaie, et du discours théorique de l'économie politique, qui reste au niveau de l'apparence des prix<sup>10</sup>.

Freud et Marx conviendraient que «le fétichisme ne désigne plus un culte primitif mais des phénomènes sociaux ou psychiques contemporains [...] [Il] résulte de l'absence de réflexivité critique sur la production sociale et de l'attribution aux choses sociales des propriétés naturelles<sup>11</sup>.» Par ailleurs, nous comprenons ainsi la position de Walter Benjamin, pour qui

les expositions universelles sont les lieux de pèlerinage où l'on vient adorer le fétiche marchandise [...] Elles créent un cadre où la valeur d'usage passe au second plan. Elles inaugurent une fantasmagorie à laquelle l'homme se livre pour se laisser distraire. L'industrie du plaisir l'y aide en l'élevant au niveau de la marchandise. Il s'adonne à ses manipulations dans la jouissance de se sentir étranger à lui-même et aux autres<sup>12</sup>.

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9. Bensaïd, Daniel, 2011, *Le spectacle, stade ultime du fétichisme de la marchandise : Marx, Marcuse, Debord, Lefebvre, Baudrillard, etc.*, Fécamp, Lignes, 139 p., p. 55.

10. Rosier, Michel, 2011, «Le marxisme», dans Élisabeth Graf, Jack Mayorkas et Claude Grégory (dir.), *Encyclopædia Universalis*, Paris, Encyclopædia Universalis éditeur, Support numérique DVD.

11. Bensaïd, *Le spectacle, stade ultime du fétichisme de la marchandise...*, op. cit., p. 55.

12. Benjamin, Walter, 2000, «Paris, capitale du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle», dans *Oeuvres III*, Paris, Gallimard, 374 p., p. 52-53.

Dans notre cas, le spectacle du décor orientaliste engage le récepteur dans un autre spectacle encore plus large et abstrait. Emporté par ce travestissement de l'objet, la substance lui importe peu face à un code abstrait qu'il maîtrise de moins en moins.

Dans le fétichisme, explique Baudrillard, ce n'est pas la passion des substances qui parle (que ce soit celle des objets ou du sujet), c'est la passion du code qui, réglant et se subordonnant à la fois objets et sujets, les voue ensemble à la manipulation abstraite<sup>13</sup>.

Inconscient des coulisses de ce théâtre et contraint de satisfaire son désir loin d'une lecture critique, le spectateur passif nous fait passer de la consommation du spectacle au spectacle de la consommation. « Le fétichisme, dit le psychanalyste Roland Chemama, déploie devant la réalité un voile qui la dissimule, et c'est ce voile que le sujet finalement surestime. Il y a là une illusion, mais une illusion qui se retrouve sans doute dans tout désir<sup>14</sup>. »

La réduction de l'architecture arabo-islamique tunisoise à de fausses copies atteignit son apogée dans les expositions qui succédèrent à celle de 1867. La spectacularisation gagna cependant une autre dimension liée à la situation politique du pays devenu colonie française à partir de 1881. Par conséquent, les pavillons de la Tunisie ne se limitaient plus à la reprise d'un seul édifice. Pour traduire l'étalement géographique de la France et sa mainmise sur sa colonie, ils deviennent des mini villes où sont agencés de manière abusive plusieurs monuments du pays. Le pavillon conçu par l'architecte Henri Saladin [1851-1923] en 1889 parcourt la Tunisie du nord au sud, attribue au souk la coupole d'un hammam et au bureau administratif le minaret d'une mosquée. Quant aux intérieurs, ils sont peuplés par un « zoo humain » où l'indigène et son folklore, théâtralisés, deviennent l'attraction du spectacle. La dance du ventre et la fantasia servent certes à distraire, mais aussi à véhiculer l'image d'un indigène débarrassé de toute forme de civilisation<sup>15</sup> et, plus loin, à inciter au voyage, à l'investissement et à la réussite du projet de colonisation.

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13. Baudrillard, Jean, 1995, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Tunis, Cérès, 244 p., p. 88.

14. Chemama, Roland, 1993, *Dictionnaire de la psychanalyse: dictionnaire actuel des signifiants, concepts et mathèmes de la psychanalyse*, Paris, Larousse, 307 p., p. 85.

15. Au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, la notion de civilisation était assimilée au seul progrès technique. Pointer l'archaïsme de l'indigène revient à sensibiliser à son impuissance et à son éventuel dressage.

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## La médina de Tunis, entre l'invention d'une néo-tradition, la propagande touristique et sa modernisation

Plaçons-nous maintenant du côté de la colonie et essayons de mesurer l'écho du spectacle universel sur les productions architecturales locales et le statut de l'héritage arabo-islamique durant la colonisation française.

Installés en Tunisie le 12 mai 1881 en tant que protecteurs, les Français agissaient conformément à la stratégie adoptée en Algérie peu après sa colonisation en 1830. Mise au point par le gouverneur Célestin Jonnart [1857-1927], cette stratégie consistait à se réconcilier avec l'indigène en parlant son langage architectural et en limitant les destructions massives de son héritage. On assiste à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle et jusqu'aux années 1930 à l'accomplissement d'un «style du protecteur<sup>16</sup>», sorte de prolongement de la façon de faire architecturale des expositions universelles et de leur projet de colonisation. En effet, ce néo-style, qui ne tarda pas à faire spectacle en plein chef-lieu de la médina (figure 2), agissait comme un anesthésiant pour l'indigène : ce dernier y voyait à la fois un frein à la diffusion de l'architecture néo-classique au seuil de sa médina et une reconnaissance de son art. En revanche, les professionnels occidentaux pensaient avoir corrigé et embellî l'architecture locale. Le propos de l'architecte Raphaël Guy, auteur de plusieurs constructions orientalistes en Tunisie et précurseur d'une néo-tradition franco-arabe qu'il nomma *Architecture moderne de style arabe* (1912), était clair là-dessus :

L'art de bâtir était somnolent depuis près d'un siècle chez les Arabes : nos artistes français reprisent l'architecture au point où elle avait été abandonnée et ils apportèrent leur esprit de méthode, leur habileté technique, leur imagination. Jadis les immenses palais musulmans, charmants et pittoresques, déconcertaient par leurs erreurs d'accommodation. Aujourd'hui les monuments franco-arabes sont exactement appropriés à leur destination sans perdre leur grande allure. Enfin les villas qui se multiplient, offrent une variété de profils et de façades [figure 3] que les constructions d'agrément d'anciens arabes, presque toutes identiques dans leur forme extérieure, ne connurent jamais<sup>17</sup>.

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16. Le «style du protecteur» par opposition au «style du vainqueur» sont des appellations données respectivement aux styles néo-mauresque et néo-classique par François Béguin dans son ouvrage *Arabisances*, 1983, Paris, Dunod, 196 p., p. 20.

17. Guy, Raphaël, c. 1912, *L'architecture moderne de style arabe: première série*, Paris, Librairie de la construction moderne, 60 p., p. 6.

**FIGURE 2**

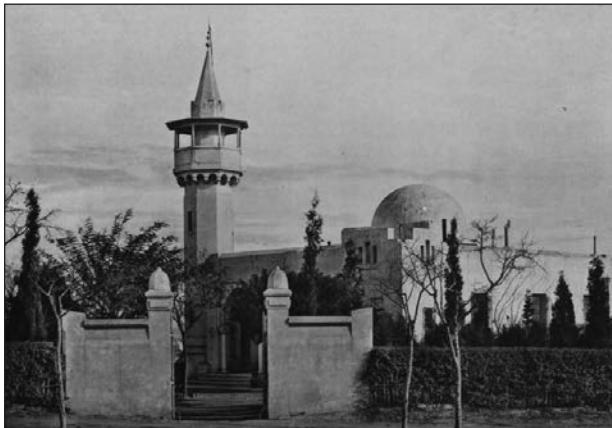
Bâtiment du ministère des Finances situé à l'angle de la place de la Casbah (Tunis), fin XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Architecte Raphaël Guy (extension en 1915).



Photo : Nader Meddeb, 2011.

**FIGURE 3**

Villa de style néo-mauresque dite « villa Braquehaye » à Tunis, début XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. La résidence emprunte à la mosquée son minaret et sa coupole et devient symboliquement source de controverse. Architecte M. Guesnier.



Source : Guy, Raphaël, c. 1912, *L'architecture moderne de style arabe : première série*, Paris, Librairie de la construction moderne, p. 30.

En 1897, l'architecte Petrus Maillet s'est vu confier la construction du premier lycée-collège moderne de Tunis, le collège Sadiki (1875). Hormis son minaret, à voir ses deux volumes latéraux surmontés de coupoles et ses arcs hispano-maghrébins, on ne peut s'empêcher de faire le lien avec le pavillon de 1867, très similaire (figure 4). Ici, la référence devient la fausse copie. Cette évolution de l'objet infidèlement reproduit élargit le hiatus entre le symbole original et ses copies. Elle lui fait perdre son «aura» ou son authenticité et le met au péril d'une crise de signification. Dès 1935, Walter Benjamin avait sensibilisé aux dangers de cet usage répété et abusif :

[Cette] reproduction détache l'objet reproduit du domaine de la tradition. En multipliant les exemplaires, elle substitue à son occurrence unique son existence en série. Et en permettant à la reproduction de s'offrir au récepteur

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**FIGURE 4**

Collège Sadiki à Tunis. L'édifice est construit en 1897 alors que la fondation est beylicale, remontant à 1875. Architecte Petrus Maillet.



Photo : Nader Meddeb, 2011.

dans la situation où il se trouve, elle actualise l'objet reproduit. Ces deux processus aboutissent à un puissant ébranlement de la chose transmise, ébranlement de la tradition qui est la contrepartie de la crise que traverse actuellement l'humanité de son actuelle régénération. Ils sont en étroite corrélation avec les mouvements de masse contemporains<sup>18</sup>.

Grâce à cette néo-tradition, le voyage en Orient remporta durant le premier tiers du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle un succès sans précédent auprès de l'élite intellectuelle et artistique européenne. Depuis le jour où Chateaubriand décida de faire de Tunis la station finale de son Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem (1811)<sup>19</sup>, la Tunisie devint une destination privilégiée qui rivalisait de force avec Le Caire, Alger et Madère. Conscient de cet engouement, le colonisateur multiplia les affiches publicitaires, les promotions et les guides de voyage, les congrès internationaux, etc., où il allia affaires et tourisme (figure 5). Aussi, il commença progressivement à s'intéresser à la conservation de l'héritage arabo-islamique alors qu'auparavant ses efforts étaient concentrés uniquement sur les vestiges gréco-romains. En effet, l'ancienneté dont se chargent les ruines de Carthage et la quête des traces occidentales en Orient, appuyées par le fameux mythe de *Salammbô* (1862) qu'inventa Gustave Flaubert<sup>20</sup>, l'emportait sur les considérations de l'architecture maghrébine initialement prise pour austère. «La ruine, dit Aloïs Riegl, fait apprêhender la valeur d'ancienneté de manière particulièrement forte et précise; trop forte, bien sûr, pour combler pleinement la sensibilité de l'homme moderne<sup>21</sup>.» Il fallait donc conserver, voire réinventer l'Orient imaginaire pour donner lieu à une véritable attraction touristique.

- .....
18. Benjamin, Walter, 2000, «L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproductibilité technique», dans *Oeuvres, op. cit.*, p. 276.
  19. «Grâce à François René de Chateaubriand qui décide d'y achever son Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem, la Tunisie figure dès le début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle comme une étape dans l'itinéraire idéal d'un voyageur en Orient. Chateaubriand, venant d'Alexandrie, pense passer quelques jours à Tunis, mais les conditions climatiques sont défavorables. Du fait des vents contraires, il doit d'abord faire halte aux îles Kerkennah et gagne finalement Tunis le 18 janvier 1807, où il est reçu chez M. Devoise, consul de France. Il y demeure sept semaines, trouvant chez le consul et sa femme "l'hospitalité la plus généreuse et la société la plus aimable".» Ben Mahmoud, Feriel et Nicolas Daniel, 2008, *Le voyage en Orient (1850-1930): de «l'âge d'or» à l'avènement du tourisme*, Paris, Place des Victoires, 237 p., p. 193.
  20. Flaubert, Gustave, 2001, *Salammbô*, Paris, Flammarion, 466 p.
  21. Riegl, Aloïs, 2013, *Le culte moderne des monuments: son essence et sa genèse*, Paris, Seuil, 168 p., p. 70.

**FIGURE 5**

Notice publicitaire pour le tourisme en Tunisie, 1975. Même si datant de 1975, c'est-à-dire plusieurs années après l'indépendance du pays en 1956, cette notice montre que l'image de la Tunisie n'a pas changé aux yeux des investisseurs : elle demeure à deux visages intimement liés – tourisme et affaires.



Source : *Le Monde*, 30-31 mars 1975, Paris. Numéro repéré dans les fonds d'archives de l'architecte Jacques Marmey. SIAF/Cité de l'architecture & du patrimoine/Archives d'architecture du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

Par conséquent, la première action conservatrice à proprement parler de la médina eut lieu en 1920, à l'issue du plan d'aménagement de Tunis fait par l'architecte orientaliste Victor Valensi [1883-1977] dans le cadre de la loi Cornudet de 1919. Dans une prise de position contraire à l'opinion de Raphaël Guy, Valensi s'opposa à tout percement massif de la ville indigène et qualifia son urbanisme de «supérieur», formant un «tout invisible<sup>22</sup>». Il attira l'attention sur la valeur touristique de la médina et, bien entendu, sur le spectacle vivant qu'offraient ses ruelles et ses souks. Il l'éleva au rang de joyau intouchable, la condamna pratiquement à l'immuabilité et voulut en faire un musée à l'échelle urbaine. Son plan d'aménagement taxé de «trop Beaux-Arts» n'a pu avoir de suite, mais il donna lieu aux décrets du 3 mars 1920 et du 13 septembre 1921 relatifs à la délimitation de trois zones de préservation dans la médina de Tunis.

Après le plan Valensi, les propositions d'aménagement se succédèrent tout en mettant en péril l'unité<sup>23</sup> de la ville indigène, omission faite des décrets ci-dessus mentionnés. Pour compléter son réseau d'acheminement des cargaisons, le colonisateur voulait la faire traverser par les voies nécessaires, soi-disant pour améliorer ses conditions d'hygiène, sa circulation mécanique et l'embellir. À chaque fois, les «amis» de la médina, cadres administratifs et personnes de la société civile, rappelaient à l'administration coloniale son investissement publicitaire, les images vendues et le spectacle escompté par les touristes. Cet extrait d'une lettre adressée à l'administration par le directeur de la chambre de l'agriculture à propos du plan de 1934 en témoigne :

On a fait pour la Tunisie une publicité fort coûteuse. On a invité le monde entier à venir la visiter. Qu'a-t-on dit pour attirer le visiteur? À quarante-huit heures de Paris, vous vous trouverez transporté en Orient. On n'a pas invité les touristes à admirer une avenue plantée de ficus, ni à assister à des représentations théâtrales qui rivalisent avec celles de la métropole, mais on lui a montré les images de villes ayant conservé leur cachet oriental, des bazars,

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22. Valensi, Victor, 1920, *Notice sur le projet d'aménagement, d'embellissement et d'extension de la ville de Tunis*, Tunis, Municipalité de Tunis, 29 p., p. 10 (une copie est conservée à la Bibliothèque nationale de Tunisie : BNT, RBV 663-6552).
23. On doit noter ici qu'avec le plan Valensi et aussi ceux qui l'ont suivi, on est face à deux propositions extrêmes : le premier condamne la médina à l'inertie et prend à peine en considération son état vivant en pleine évolution, alors que les autres perturbent profondément son unité en proposant d'en raser une grande partie. Il a fallu attendre la fin des années 1950 pour qu'une proposition faite par l'architecte Bernard Zehrfuss puisse éclairer l'administration sur une solution d'entre-deux respectueuse tant de l'unité que de l'évolution de la ville indigène.

puis des oasis, enfin des ruines romaines. Sans aucun doute, les souks de Tunis peuvent être classés parmi les plus beaux du monde oriental, mais ils appartiennent à un ensemble. La ville ancienne et ses faubourgs forment avec eux un tout, et c'est ce tout qu'il faut protéger<sup>24</sup>.

Ce plaidoyer pour la conservation intégrale de la médina a certainement joué un rôle primordial dans sa sauvegarde, mais on ne doit pas écarter le risque de muséification qu'il impose à un ensemble urbain en pleine vie. Aussi, l'accent mis sur le pittoresque réduit la médina à un répertoire d'images à vocation touristique. À cette carte postale s'ajoute la néo-tradition architecturale pour créer un véritable amalgame formel et identitaire dont les retombées négatives seront nettement visibles pendant la période postcoloniale.

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## Le spectacle du patrimoine vu à travers une tentative d'haussmannisation de la médina

La Tunisie a accédé à son indépendance le 20 mars 1956. Peu après, en 1957, Habib Bourguiba [1903-2000] est nommé premier président de la République. Faisant partie d'une élite pour qui la modernité consistait à rompre avec une Tunisie d'antan, il voyait dans la médina un signe de décadence qu'il fallait raser plutôt qu'entretenir. Le colonisateur a laissé derrière lui un centre historique à l'agonie, voué à l'exode rural et à des pratiques peu adaptées au vécu de la médina. L'assainir, le décongestionner et y faire entrer l'automobile se présentaient comme des défis urgents à relever. C'est ainsi que le chef de l'État décida de faire traverser la médina par une percée massive (75 mètres de large) destinée à prolonger l'artère principale de la ville européenne jusqu'aux limites de la Casbah (figure 6). Il s'agissait d'une véritable tentative d'haussmannisation que Michel Kosmin, architecte chargé de l'opération, estimait inéluctable pour créer «un accès représentatif aux quartiers des ministères et [pour] le décongestionnement de la place de la Casbah<sup>25</sup>». Le projet reçut ensuite l'approbation de

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24. Extrait du rapport rédigé par G. Baccouche, président de la Chambre d'Agriculture et membre du Grand Conseil, le 9 juin 1929, et présenté par M. Poinsot, directeur des Antiquités des Arts, en guise d'appui à sa lettre adressée le 9 mai 1934 au Secrétaire général du gouvernement tunisien. Archives nationales de Tunisie, «Plan d'aménagement de la ville de Tunis 1934», Série : SG, S/Série : SG2, carton : 31, dossier : 3.

25. Archives de l'UIA, boîte I/8, «Plan d'aménagement de la ville de Tunis : rapport explicatif» réalisé par Michel Kosmin en 1957.

l'architecte-conseil du président, Olivier Clément Cacoub [1920-2008], qui couvait l'idée depuis sa résidence à la villa Médicis<sup>26</sup>. Néanmoins, la divergence des opinions professionnelles quant à la faisabilité du projet suivie par la réaction de la société civile en réponse aux premiers décrets d'expropriation incitèrent le président à élargir son cercle de conseillers et à solliciter l'intervention d'une institution internationale. Il eut alors recours à l'Union internationale des architectes (UIA) pour l'organisation d'un concours international pour une étude d'aménagement à Tunis. L'opinion de l'UIA peut être résumée dans le propos de son secrétaire général, l'architecte Pierre Vago [1910-2002] :

C'était une idée que tout le monde déplorait et craignait, sans avoir assez d'arguments – et de courage – à opposer au patron. J'étais tout à fait d'accord pour considérer que, à tous égards et à tous points de vue, le percement de la ville historique construite sur une colline, entre les deux dépressions – le lac de Tunis et la zone marécageuse du Sedjoumi – était une lourde erreur et ne résoudrait aucun des sérieux problèmes que posaient l'aménagement et le développement de la capitale du nouvel État. Ayant fait le tour de la question, nous arrivâmes à la conclusion qu'un concours international d'idées était le meilleur moyen de donner une réponse ayant un poids suffisant, à la volonté du président de réaliser une importante opération d'urbanisme<sup>27</sup>.

Malgré sa position claire, l'UIA s'engagea quand même dans l'organisation de la compétition. Seule importait la création d'un événement international. Sans entrer dans les détails<sup>28</sup>, mentionnons que le concours fut lancé à la hâte avec un programme sommaire, qu'une cinquantaine d'équipes étrangères proposèrent leurs solutions et, comme prévu, que cinq solutions furent primées, mais qu'aucune ne fut considérée comme étant réalisable. Les projets primés ont fait le tour du monde grâce à des

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26. En 1953, Clément Cacoub décroche le Grand Prix de Rome en architecture. Il choisit dans le cadre de son projet final de quatrième année de se pencher sur la modernisation de la médina de Tunis. En guise de solution à son délabrement, il propose son percement est-ouest, d'en raser une grande partie et de remplacer les maisons vétustes par des immeubles modernes. L'idée reçoit l'encouragement des professionnels de la villa. Pour eux, la ville indigène est un «milieu musulman individualiste» alors que le projet de Cacoub est «un travail où l'urbanisme et l'architecture sont étroitement et heureusement associés, il a le mérite d'être, malgré son ampleur, très réaliste». Archives de l'Académie de France à Rome (AFR), Villa Médicis, Catalogue de l'exposition annuelle inaugurée le 11-22 mai 1957, carton n° 403, Promotion 1953.

27. Vago, Pierre, 2000, *Une vie intense*, Bruxelles, AAM éditions, 542 p., p. 350.

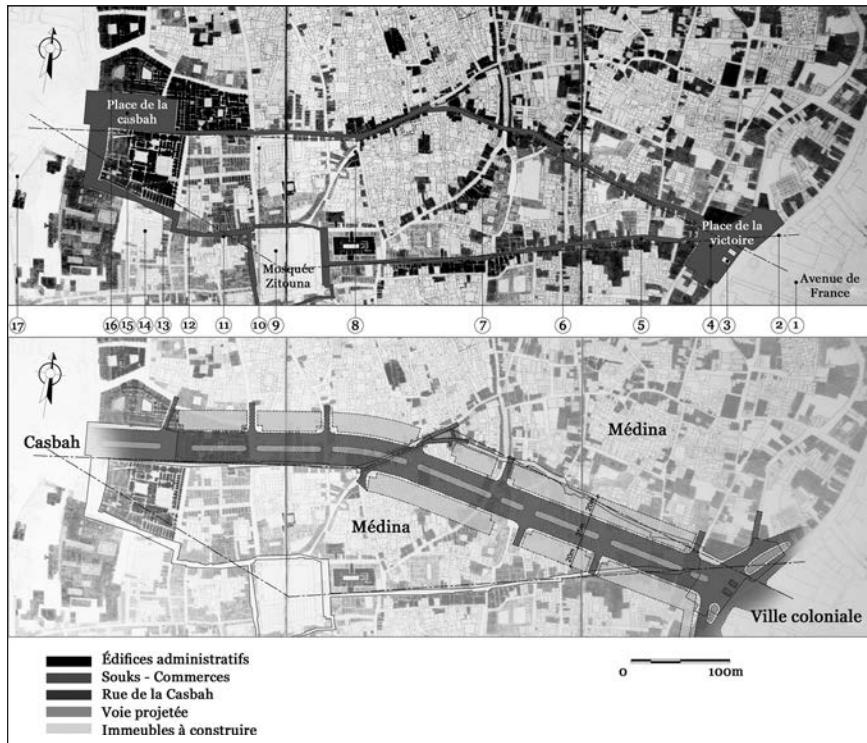
28. Meddeb, Nader, 2015, *La modernisation de Tunis: un urbanisme et une architecture d'État au miroir d'une anthologie de la percée dans la médina (1881-1987)*, thèse de doctorat en aménagement, Université de Montréal, 466 p., p. 261-333.

**FIGURE 6**

La percée est-ouest à travers la médina.

En haut: Zone d'intervention et principaux repères : 1-Avenue de France, 2-Rue Mongi Slim, 3-Porte de France, 4-Place de la Victoire, 5-Rue Jamâa Zitouna, 6-Rue de la Casbah, 7-Souk El Ouzar, 8-Souk El Balghagia (Babouchiers), 9-Mosquée Zitouna, 10-Mosquée Hammouda Pacha, 11-Souk Ettourk, 12-Direction des travaux publics, 13-Dar El Bey, 14-Mosquée Youssef Dey, 15-Place de la Casbah, 16-Ministère des Finances, 17-Boulevard Bab M'nara.

En bas : Allure de la percée telle qu'imaginée par Michel Kosmin.



Dessin : Nader Meddeb.

Source : Meddeb, Nader, 2015, *La modernisation de Tunis : un urbanisme et une architecture d'État au miroir d'une anthologie de la percée dans la médina (1881-1987)*, thèse de doctorat en aménagement, Université de Montréal, 466 p., p. 234.

revues internationales comme *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* et la *Revue de l'UIA*. La compétition fut rapidement suivie d'une exposition des projets à Tunis et d'un colloque international autour des résultats du concours. Ce second événement international, auquel ont participé quelques personnalités des plus actives dans l'histoire du Mouvement moderne comme George Candilis [1913-1995], Bernard Zehrfuss [1911-1996], Sir Robert Hogg Matthew [1906-1975] et Cornelius Van Eesteren [1897-1988],

déboucha sur une reprise des mêmes questions/réponses soulevées depuis l'occupation française concernant la possibilité d'un percement est-ouest dans la médina. Le procès-verbal publié dans le numéro 95 (avril-mai 1961) de *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* condamne tout percement massif, invite l'État à réfléchir à la médina dans son ensemble et, surtout, à engager une enquête socioéconomique sérieuse auprès des ménages susceptibles d'être touchés par les éventuelles interventions, suivant en ce sens les recommandations faites par Valensi depuis 1920.

Le spectacle peut être lu différemment dans chacune des phases de cet aperçu historique. Notre étude de la percée inaboutie et du chantier qui a suivi<sup>29</sup> a montré que le projet de création d'un boulevard national, anciennement dit avenue Jules-Ferry et rebaptisé avenue Habib-Bourguiba au lendemain de l'indépendance, avait plusieurs retombées politiques liées à l'image que se faisait le président de la capitale moderne du pays. En effet, Bourguiba voulait faire de ce boulevard les «Champs-Élysées tunisiens» avec, comme arc de triomphe, une ancienne porte de la médina réduite à un monument solitaire après la démolition des remparts de la ville indigène (figure 7). En prolongeant l'ancienne vitrine du pouvoir colonial au cœur de la médina, les autorités comptaient éliminer une grande partie du noyau historique que Bourguiba n'hésita pas à nommer «nid de vermines» et une trace décadente «d'un passé révolu<sup>30</sup>». Aux yeux du président, la médina était désormais une prison à portes ouvertes pour les ruraux qui formaient «un vrai péril pour la capitale» et «une masse facile à manœuvrer<sup>31</sup>», concluait-il lors d'un prêche public. Pour le maire de Tunis et futur fondateur de l'Association de sauvegarde de la médina,

le Chef de l'État est, en réalité, le premier urbaniste de la Tunisie. Le Président Bourguiba est quelqu'un qui voit grand. Il a conçu le projet d'une grande avenue qui partirait de la place de la Casbah et traverserait le lac de Tunis jusqu'à La Goulette. Le Président voulait que ses statues édifiées

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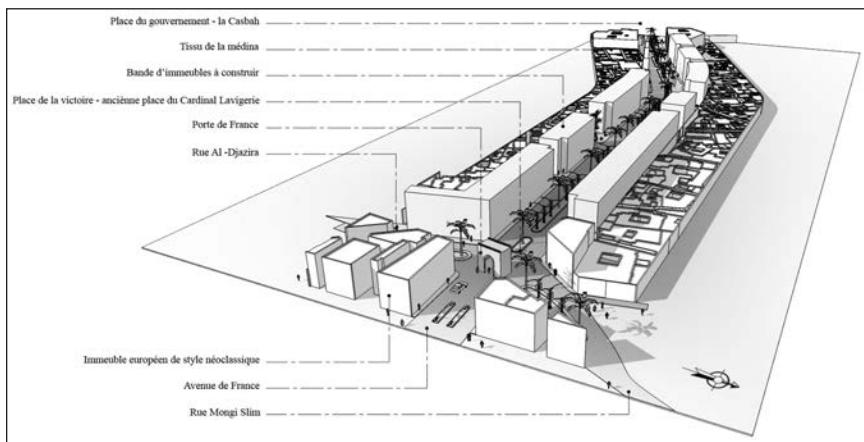
29. *Ibid.* Le prolongement de l'artère principale de la ville coloniale à travers la médina n'a pu aboutir. Cependant, des transformations touchant sa toponymie, ses monuments statuaires et la vocation de certains édifices lui seront apportées tout au long des années 1970 et 1980.

30. Bourguiba, Habib, 1978, *Citations*, Tunis, Dar El Amal, 592 p., p. 311.

31. Bourguiba, Habib, 1975, *Discours*, Tunis, Secrétariat d'État à l'information, 232 p., p. 317.

**FIGURE 7**

Simulation de la percée : les Champs-Élysées de Tunis.



Dessin: Nader Meddeb.

Source: Meddeb, Nader, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

place de la Casbah et place de l'Afrique puissent être vues d'un côté à l'autre de la ville. Dans l'esprit du Président, le vieux Tunis représente le sous-développement<sup>32</sup>.

Effectivement, notre analyse de la toponymie de l'actuelle avenue Habib Bourguiba, de ses édifices et de son culte statuaire depuis l'indépendance du pays a montré que l'avenue a fait l'objet d'une réorganisation intelligente faisant d'elle le portrait urbain du « combattant suprême<sup>33</sup> » et le spectacle de son pouvoir absolu<sup>34</sup>.

Par ailleurs, l'épisode du concours international et son colloque forment un autre spectacle qu'on peut lier à un facteur historique précis. En effet, la fin des années 1950 a été marquée par l'accès de plusieurs colonies à leur indépendance. Pour affirmer leur autonomie politique à l'échelle internationale, les États naissants ont eu recours aux concours internationaux pour aménager leur capitale ou pour concevoir un monument national. Dès lors, l'événement a été fortement médiatisé et certains chefs des

32. Cité par Abdelkafi, Jellal, 1989, *La médina de Tunis: espace historique*, Paris, Presses du CNRS, 227 p., p. 122.

33. Titre donné à Bourguiba à la suite de sa libération en 1939 après deux années passées dans une prison du Sud tunisien.

34. Meddeb, *La modernisation de Tunis...*, *op. cit.*, p. 335-398.

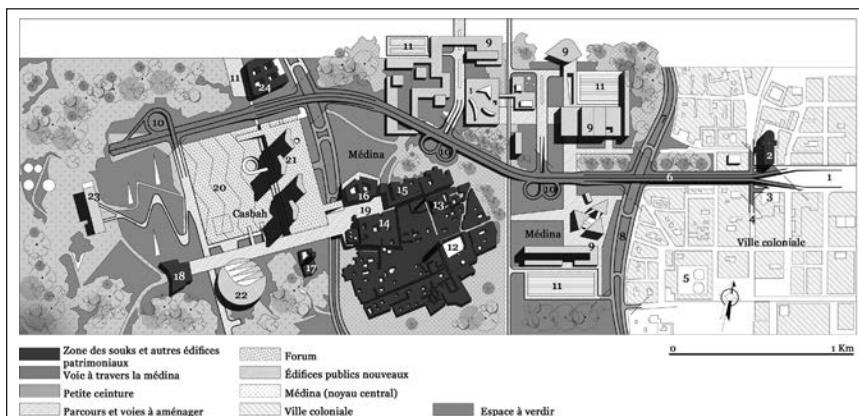
États en ont profité pour mettre en scène leur parcours de combattant et leurs œuvres réformatrices au sein de leur pays. En ajoutant au programme du concours tunisien, en plus du problème de la percée, les projets d'un palais présidentiel et d'un monument commémoratif de la lutte nationale, la Tunisie s'est bien insérée dans la tendance.

En outre, dans les projets primés issus du concours, on a pu constater une autre spectacularisation étroitement liée à l'héritage idéologique de la ville arabo-islamique. La plupart des concurrents ont limité la valeur patrimoniale de la médina à son foyer religieux et économique, à savoir la grande mosquée de la Zitouna et les souks qui l'entourent, soit les seuls endroits accessibles aux étrangers depuis le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Ils ont donc cherché à mettre en scène cette portion de la ville, désormais réduite à un fragment de musée, moyennant des infrastructures routières hors échelle et complètement étrangères à l'urbanisme indigène (figures 8 et 9). En contrepartie sont sacrifiés palais, maisons bourgeoises et demeures modestes au profit d'un programme moderne dédié au loisir et au commerce. L'heure est celle de la rentabilité économique, du loisir servile et du musée urbain à vocation touristique.

#### FIGURE 8

Mise en scène d'un fragment de la médina.

Dans la proposition de l'équipe polonaise, la médina est complètement rasée. Seule en reste une masse centrale (partie en gris foncé, mosquée centrale et souks) que les concepteurs du projet voulaient convertir en un musée urbain à contempler depuis le futur pont à construire (élément 6). Concepteurs : Wladislaw Bryzek, Barbara Perchal, Jerzy Plesner, Mieczyslaw Turski et collaborateurs.

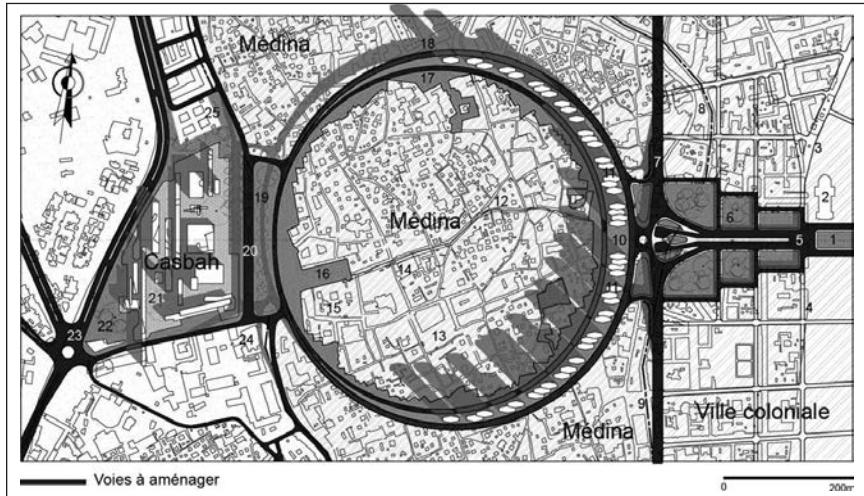


Dessin : Nader Meddeb.

Source : Meddeb, Nader, *op. cit.*, p. 306, fait sur la base d'un cliché photographique repéré dans les archives de l'UIA, boîte I/8.

**FIGURE 9****Tentative de muséification de la médina.**

Soucieuse de la valeur historique de la médina, l'équipe italienne propose d'encercler le noyau central par deux anneaux routiers et une série de tours à construire à l'est de la médina. Les auteurs du plan comptent conserver le centre et en faire un panorama dont jouiront les habitants des tours, les piétons et les véhicules empruntant la circulation giratoire. Concepteurs : Barucci Piero, Lugli Piero Maria, Nicolosi Giuseppe, Quaroni Ludovico, Vagnetti Luigi et collaborateurs.



Dessin : Nader Meddeb.

Source : Meddeb, Nader, *op. cit.*, p. 318, fait sur la base d'un cliché photographique repéré dans les archives de l'Université de Florence, Biblioteca di scienze tecnologiche/Architettura, Archives Luigi Vagnetti, 3.132.

### Conclusion : de l'orientalisme occidental à l'orientalisme renversé ou local

La tentative de percement de la médina suivie par une intervention chirurgicale inaboutie en 1964, sous la direction de l'architecte italien Ludovico Quaroni, ne tardèrent pas à provoquer une élite tunisoise qui, épaulée par le Conseil international des monuments et des sites (ICOMOS) et l'UNESCO, donna lieu en 1967 à une première dans le monde arabe : l'Association de sauvegarde de la médina (ASM). On doit aux efforts de cette fondation la protection du noyau historique, un exemple suivi plus tard par toutes les médinas tunisiennes ainsi que par d'autres pays du monde arabe. Par contre, ses premières interventions sur l'espace historique n'ont pu échapper aux erreurs stylistiques et conceptuelles nourries

par la tradition orientaliste. En effet, son atelier d'urbanisme initialement composé d'un corps professionnel étranger et d'architectes et urbanistes tunisiens formés à l'étranger affirma la résistance de cet enseignement. En témoigne le projet de rénovation de la place Bab Souika en 1984 où la référence orientaliste supplanta le vrai vocabulaire architectural local.

Dans les années 1980, avec l'effondrement du régime bourguibien et la remise en question d'une modernité accélérée, la Tunisie tomba dans la quête d'une «tunisianité» qu'on croyait perdue<sup>35</sup>. Les professionnels et la société civile trouvèrent refuge dans l'orientalisme architectural pris pour, soi-disant, une association harmonieuse entre la tradition et la modernité et un lieu où s'effacent les stigmates de l'industrialisation. Conscient de cette tendance et de son rôle dans la conquête de la confiance citoyenne, le régime politique d'après-Bourguiba paria sur la revalorisation de la tradition. Il renoua donc avec le passé en lui consacrant des journées nationales où sont revisités costume traditionnel et produit artisanal dans une ambiance carnavalesque, sorte de spectacle/musée temporel qui n'est autre que la preuve même de la mort de ces produits. Dans ce contexte,

le goût de l'ancien est caractéristique du désir de transcender la dimension de la réussite économique, de consacrer en un signe symbolique, culturalisé et redondant, une réussite sociale ou une position privilégiée. L'ancien, c'est, entre autres choses, la réussite sociale qui se cherche une légitimité, une hérédité, une sanction noble<sup>36</sup>.

Pareillement, en faisant du secteur touristique le cœur battant de son économie, l'État encouragea la consommation de l'orientalisme architectural tout en relançant l'ancienne tradition du voyage en Orient. Une «folklorisation» du patrimoine architectural fut alors de mise dans les médinas artificielles et les hôtels de charme.

En guise de clôture, à voir les rouages politiques et économiques qui ont animé ce spectacle loin d'une critique profonde et d'une lecture rationnelle des crises identitaires qu'il engendre, on devient plus sensible

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35. Zaouche, Ahmed, 2011, «L'aventure arabisante en Tunisie : de la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle à la reconstruction», dans Juliette Hubert et Claudine Piaton (dir.), *Tunis architectures 1860-1960*, Tunis, Elyzad, 251 p., p. 41.

36. Baudrillard, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, op. cit., p. 24.

à la tâche ardue que constitue la lutte patrimoniale dans le «monde où l'on catche» et on finit par adhérer à cette formule de Michel Serre tirée de *Temps des crises*:

Pour éviter de traiter les questions vraies, si difficiles, notre société se réfugie, comme on sait, dans la représentation et le spectacle: de la terreur, de la piété, d'une part, avec des morts et des cadavres, pour lester de réel et de grave des répétitions vaines; du pain et des jeux, de l'autre pour susciter l'intérêt. Elle se drogue alors à la question: qui va gagner<sup>37</sup>?

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37. Serre, Michel, 2012, *Temps des crises*, Paris, Le Pommier, 112 p., p. 54.





# 6

## IMPOSSIBLE DIALOGUES? The Vila Itororó case and the alleged tension between housing and culture

**Vivian Legname Barbour**

This chapter aims to critically analyze the theoretical and practical references that guided preservation practices in the city of São Paulo in the 1970s and the 1980s. During that period the Brazilian heritage field was going through conceptual revision movements, mostly related to the development of Brazilian cities and to the international scenarios regarding preservation, with experiences such as those developed in Paris (Malraux Plan) and Bologna.

The focus of this essay is the paradigmatic case of Vila Itororó, an architectural ensemble in the heart of São Paulo that brought to the fore various important matters related to the preservation field. Through the analysis of its heritagization process, as it was developed by the Conselho de Defesa do Patrimônio Histórico, Arqueológico, Artístico e Turístico (CONDEPHAAT – Historical, Archeological, Artistic and Touristic Heritage Defense Council<sup>1</sup>), it is possible to see a tension gradually building between the cultural and the housing uses of the site, and a consequent impasse about Vila's preservation possibilities. The statements and discussions found in the CONDEPHAAT's procedure, whether to preserve Vila Itororó or not, and how to do it, translate how those debates evolved over time. On the practical side, however, the preservation proposals signaled a constant reiteration of paradigms still very close to the hegemonic heritage practices developed and consolidated, since the 1930s, by the Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (SPHAN – Brazilian Federal Agency for Heritage Preservation). In this hegemonic paradigm, heritage was first restricted to monuments, and then understood as material manifestations of an “official history.” Thus, heritage would commonly be withdrawn from everyday life, as if it had an inherent cultural value. The maintenance of these hegemonic practices can be seen, in Vila's case, in the difficulty to devise complex institutional arrangements that could allow heritage preservation without excluding it from its social context. As this essay will show, even though there was an important theoretical evolution, the preservation practices related to Vila Itororó contributed to the emergence of a spectacle in which the material features of the buildings were greatly emphasized in order to create a simulacrum enhancing the superficial fruition of the ensemble.

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1. All organizations' names and quotations from Portuguese and Spanish publications were translated by me.

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## From terrain to monument

With access via Pedroso, Maestro Cardim, and Martiniano de Carvalho streets, Vila Itororó can remain unseen by passers-by who do not pay particular attention. Erected in the Itororó River Valley, the group of buildings is known for its “collage plastic character,” resulting from the joint use of different materials and ornaments taken from older, demolished buildings such as the Teatro São José, built and torn down in São Paulo at the beginning of the 20th century<sup>2</sup>. However, the subtle fit into the landscape does not make the site immune to intense disputes.

Vila was idealized and built by the Brazilian-Portuguese entrepreneur Francisco de Castro as a rental housing complex for those who wanted to live close to downtown in the 1910s. The ensemble was administered by de Castro until he passed away in the early 1930s. Afterward, its use remained connected to housing, although it cannot be ignored that the dwellers’ profiles have changed considerably over time. Due to its privileged location—near Paulista Avenue and other important avenues and neighbourhoods of São Paulo—and also due to its specific material and aesthetic characteristics, Vila has attracted the interest of architects, city authorities, real-estate moguls, and the nearby population, especially since the 1970s.

The architectural qualities of Vila Itororó were first underlined by Luis Saia, an important public servant who represented the SPHAN in São Paulo. In 1972, in a study of the housing projects built in the city during the last three centuries, Saia pointed Vila Itororó as a building whose style was “surrealistic.” In conclusion, because of its picturesque features, the author outlined the necessity of in-depth research on the place.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Even though it is broadly said that the recovered materials used in Vila’s construction come mainly from the demolished Teatro São José, it is important to mention that, at that time in São Paulo, it was very common to reuse demolition material in new constructions due to the difficulty to obtain new materials, in a city that was growing faster than the building material industry could supply.

3. Saia, Luis, 2012 [3rd ed.], *Morada Paulista* [São Paulo’s dwelling], São Paulo, Perspectiva, 311 p., p. 219.

**FIGURE 1**

Vila Itororó's main building seen from the pool, at the very centre of the district.  
The four-storey building can remain unnoticed from those passing by.



Photo: *Vila Itororó*, Andrea Barbour, 2014.

**FIGURE 2**

Vila Itororó's main construction, built in stages. The bizarreness of the building resulted in part from that process.



Photo: Milu Leite personal archives.

The choice, made in this chapter, to use Vila Itororó's case to analyze the references built around heritage in São Paulo is well explained by architect Victor Hugo Mori, who cooperated with the CONDEPHAAT on the heritagization process and participated in the final decision of turning Vila into heritage:

Vila Itororó is, without a doubt, one of the most complex cases, in which the question of "how to preserve it and for whom" is emphasized, because it involves an ensemble of large dimension, located in a valuable central area of the city, belonging to numerous private owners and occupied by a low-income population. That's why it can become a preservation paradigm for CONDEPHAAT.<sup>4</sup>

As pointed out by Mori, Vila is a case in which heritage debates emerged among other complex issues regarding the place. Also, at the time of the first discussions on Vila's preservation, heritage in São Paulo

4. Mori, Victor Hugo, Technical report, CONDEPHAAT 22.372/82 procedure, p. 271.

**FIGURE 3**

Vila Itororó's main construction, built in stages. The bizarreness of the building resulted in part from that process.



Photo: Milu Leite personal archives.

was at a turning point. On the one hand, the city was designing its first zoning regulation,<sup>5</sup> in which “cultural areas” were outlined to be preserved under specific zone identifications. Heritage preservation was being drawn along with urban planning. On the other hand, the institutions related to heritage in the local sphere were being created or in the process of revising and consolidating their practices.<sup>6</sup>

5. Municipal law 7.805, November 1, 1972.

6. CONDEPHAAT was established in 1968 under the state’s Constitution. Until then, the only governmental institution related to heritage that would protect São Paulo’s cultural goods was the SPHAN, that is, the federal agency for heritage preservation. The municipal agency, São Paulo’s Conselho Municipal de Preservação do Patrimônio Histórico, Cultural e Ambiental da Cidade de São Paulo (CONPRESP – Historic, Cultural and Environmental Heritage Preservation Council), was only created later, in 1985.

**FIGURE 4**

Vila Itororó's main construction, built in stages. The bizarreness of the building resulted in part from that process.



Photo: Milu Leite personal archives.

Concurrently with the debate about Vila's values in the heritage discourse, the site was experiencing certain tensions that illustrate the climate in the city of São Paulo during the 1960s and 1970s. Vila's housing conditions reflected the gradual impoverishment of housing in downtown São Paulo. As the Paulista Avenue area was developing in terms of commercial and service activities and high-income housing, the central area was abandoned by the traditional activities, a phenomenon that contributed to further impoverishing its population. Accompanying this movement, Vila also experienced the ensuing impoverishment of its dwellers and material conditions. That is when discussions about its possible preservation were initiated.

In September 1981, the National Architects Institute – Department of São Paulo (IAB/SP) formally asked the CONDEPHAAT to initiate Vila's heritagization process. The central argument of the request was the threat of imminent destruction faced by the ensemble due to sales announcements that circulated in some newspapers at the time (figure 5). These described Vila as a large area with access to different streets, without any mention of its buildings. Additional values were also pointed out by the IAB/SP to justify Vila's preservation: its original and bizarre features; its builder Francisco de Castro and his imaginative projects; its historical importance as a testimony of the spontaneous occupation of São Paulo; and its deterioration process, allegedly related to the use of Vila by low-income dwellers. Finally, the request was based on a 1975 restoration proposal designed by architects Benedito Lima de Toledo and Decio Tozzi, which enjoyed public recognition and had earned in 1976 the Brazilian Architects XVIth Congress' award. The urban recuperation proposal for Vila Itororó was the result of a request by the city authorities for a project that would make Vila Itororó's preservation possible.<sup>7</sup>

Apparently, the sales announcements were the outcome of earlier sales negotiations, started in 1977, between the Instituição Beneficente Augusto de Oliveira Camargo (IBAOC – Augusto de Oliveira Camargo Charity Institution), Vila Itororó's owner, and the Serviço Social do Comércio (SESC – Social Service of Commerce), who was interested in buying the

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**FIGURE 5**

Big terrain, no buildings – Vila Itororó being announced as a piece of land for the real-estate market.



Source: *O Estado de São Paulo*, 1981, July 7, p. 66.

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7. At the same time, the municipality was ordering several other projects in order to reach some of the goals of the new zoning regulations. Through them, the local power was trying to control and plan the unbridled growth of the city.

architectural complex. The SESC mentioned, at that time, that its intention was to create a complex comprising a restaurant, public square, art gallery, museum, and library, among other things, in order to “preserve the memory of São Paulo’s architecture.”<sup>8</sup> In the early 1980s, these negotiations ended, and the IBAOC published sales announcements in newspapers.

In 1977, at the start of the negotiations, Vila Itororó was not protected as a heritage site. This first occurred with the 8.769/1978 municipal law, when the site was classified as Z8-200, a specific “preservation zone,” under the zoning regulations implemented in the city since 1972. The Z8-200 zones were the first municipal legal instruments created to preserve architectural buildings as cultural heritage in São Paulo.<sup>9</sup> Once the site was classified as a Z8-200 building, any further changes had to be first authorized by the appropriate municipal agencies.<sup>10</sup>

Even though the official and institutional recognition of Vila Itororó as heritage only occurred in 1978, the place already enjoyed popular recognition due to its historical and artistic values. Mostly, the place was known by the general public because of the project designed in 1975 by Toledo and Tozzi. Their main proposal was to turn Vila Itororó into a cultural centre in order to “give back a rearranged area to the population’s culture and leisure activities.”<sup>11</sup>

In the 1972 book by Luis Saia, Vila was described as a surrealistic and bizarre ensemble. In 1975, the urban recuperation proposal for Vila Itororó underlined the same material and aesthetic characteristics of the site as remarkable features that would justify its preservation. In 1981, similar arguments were also raised by the IAB/SP during the heritagization request. The Vila Itororó news coverage in the second half of the 1970s

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8. Ortiz, José, 1978, “Vida nova para a velha vila” [A New life for the old Vila], *Folha de São Paulo*, January 23, p. 10.

9. The definition of the Z8-200 was the following: “Buildings that are historical or present exceptional artistic, cultural or landscape value, designated for preservation.” Municipal law 8.328/1975, art. 1, d.

10. Municipal law 8.328/75, art. 2, 1st paragraph.

11. Coordenadoria Geral de Planejamento (COGEP – General Planning Coordination Office), 1975, *Vila Itororó. Proposta de recuperação urbana* [Vila Itororó. Urban recuperation proposal], p. 9.

**FIGURE 6**

A side view of the main building. Its colours and its walls testify to Vila's historicity.



Photo: Andrea Barbour, 2014.

clearly reflects that characterization. The concepts of “originality,” “surrealism,” and “bizarre features” were recurring, dialoguing with the following extract from the 1975 project:

Vila Itororó, a unique set of 37 houses built in the 1920s on the slope of the Itororó valley, constitutes an example [of significant monuments of the spontaneous historic occupation] that stands out in the urban landscape, for its original and eclectic features and its bizarre architecture, a construction that reflects an unusual aspect of a wealthy and, in this specific case, imaginative Portuguese immigrant [de Castro].<sup>12</sup>

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12. *Ibid.*, p. 3. In 1974, Vila was already seen as a surrealistic ensemble that deserved to be preserved, as written in an urban plan designed for Bela Vista, which is Vila's neighbourhood and one of the first areas of São Paulo to have a specific urban plan for zoning regulations (COGEP, 1974, *Bela Vista, Z8-010. Plano de renovação urbana* [Bela Vista, Z8-010. Urban renovation plan]). Even though this Bela Vista plan did not result in any preservation practices, it is possible to say that since 1974, Vila Itororó was added to the local authorities' agenda as a site worthy of preservation.

In order to preserve those features, the IAB/SP understood that heritagization was the best way to “safeguard the place from imminent destruction and eventually lead to the attribution of a *nobler* function, as proposed in the [1975 Toledo and Tozzi restoration] project.”<sup>13</sup>

The request makes reference to a “nobler use” that Vila could acquire after being recognized as heritage. In the Toledo and Tozzi proposal, as well as in the IAB/SP request, the alleged opposition between the main use of the site—housing—and the “cultural” use that they intended to develop there is clear. Regarding Vila Itororó’s use, the Toledo and Tozzi 1975 proposal mentions:

After [Francisco de Castro’s death], Vila was donated to a charity institution, Santa Casa de Indaiatuba Hospital<sup>14</sup>—that prevented the loss of its identity but not the deterioration and the loss of Vila Itororó’s movable property. Nowadays, Vila is a collective housing ensemble with inhuman and marginal character, exploited under a lease regime.<sup>15</sup>

The central thread that will mark the discussions around Vila Itororó’s heritagization process is the question of its final use: whether it should be maintained as a housing complex or be transformed into a cultural centre. These contrasting proposals, coming from different categories of actors in society, reverberated their concept of heritage. As we will show, the impasse surrounding these conceptual and practical matters will be one of the reasons for the delay of the final recognition decision, that occurred as late as 1994.

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## Housing versus culture?

The request to turn Vila Itororó into heritage, elaborated by the IAB/SP, presented the constructive and formal aspects of the site as the main factors making the place “a part of the capital’s memory and, as a consequence,

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- 13. Letter sent by César Bergstrom, president of the IAB/SP, to architect Eduardo Kneese de Mello, a CONDEPHAAT member, 1981. This material is available from the Inactive IAB/SP Archive.
  - 14. Actually, Vila did not belong to Santa Casa de Indaiatuba Hospital. Its real owner was the charity institution IBAOC, which administered the hospital with the lease payments received from Vila Itororó dwellers.
  - 15. COGEP, 1975, p. 6.

**FIGURE 7**

Internal aspect of Vila Itororó's main building. The collage of different elements is obvious in this living room.



Photo: Andrea Barbour, 2014.

of the state's memory itself.”<sup>16</sup> In that document, the 1975 proposal was used to support the request and to underline the historical and formal aspects of the ensemble as sufficient arguments to turn it into heritage.

However, the case was more complex because it embraced numerous different interests, which were well summarized in Maria Cristina Wolff de Carvalho’s technical report, in June 1984:

According to her [Maria Cândida Moraes de Almeida Sampaio Filha, IBAOC’s treasurer], the lease payments were derisory and, because of that, almost did not come to any help to maintain the IBAOC, which had been looking for a solution to that problem for a long time ... As we can see, in this process, besides the matter of preserving a cultural heritage, the owner’s interests are at stake, and they differ from the tenants’ interests.<sup>17</sup>

For Carvalho, there was the overall interest of preserving the site, but there were other conflicting issues, like those of Vila’s owner, who hoped to make a profit with the property, and its tenants, with non-consensual interests regarding whether to stay in Vila or not.

Even though Vila Itororó’s values were pointed by some sources as unequivocal, and for that reason, sufficient to support the preservation decision, in August 1984, the CONDEPHAAT chose to adjourn the heritagization procedure because the agency did not have a document unifying its practical and theoretical references.<sup>18</sup> This decision followed architect Carlos Lemos’s technical report to the effect that “the inexistence of a ‘heritage policy’ makes it extremely difficult for the CONDEPHAAT to judge the merits of Vila Itororó architectural site.”<sup>19</sup>

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16. IAB/SP, initial petition, CONDEPHAAT procedure 22.372/82, p. 4. These factors were pointed as being: “a typical example of the process of occupation of the city districts by popular collective or middle-class housing, a phenomenon that marks the beginning of the 20th century and São Paulo’s industrialization. However, Vila Itororó differed from other villas for its peculiar characteristics, such as the monumental space, imaginative form in which its constructor reused fragments of scholarly buildings (interpreting them), the absence of the typical monotony of that type of buildings and the intensive use of its enclosed area for leisure, a situation that almost turned the place into a public square.”
  17. Carvalho, Maria Cristina Wolff, Technical report, CONDEPHAAT procedure 22.372/82, p. 94.
  18. Synthesis of the CONDEPHAAT’s decision, ordinary session, August 20, 1984, minutes of meeting 615, CONDEPHAAT procedure 22.372/82, p. 100. The CONDEPHAAT was created in 1968 but, until the beginning of the 1980s, it did not have any guiding document to standardize its practices related to heritage preservation.
  19. Lemos, Carlos, Technical report, CONDEPHAAT procedure 22.372/82, p. 99.

By that time, the Council was preparing a heritage policy document that could become a guideline for the agency's practices. The ensuing document, the *Diretrizes para a formulação de uma política de atuação do CONDEPHAAT* [Guidelines for the formulation of a CONDEPHAAT's practical heritage policy], was delivered in 1984 to the São Paulo State Cultural Office. As indicated by Marly Rodrigues, this document was the result of a series of discussions between technicians and counselors aimed at identifying the CONDEPHAAT's specific conceptual and practical difficulties.<sup>20</sup>

Important conceptual progress can be observed in this document. It defines cultural heritage as belonging to the domain of meaning production, so that there cannot be an "official heritage," or fixed selection criteria. Somehow, this document attempted to deconstruct some concepts crystallized in the SPHAN's heritage practices since the 1930s, when national identity was a concern. In that period, the federal heritage agency would designate the material manifestations that could be chosen to exemplify the construction of the Brazilian nation. Due to the predominance of architects in the SPHAN's technical staff since its creation in 1937 until at least the 1970s, the cultural heritage's formal and aesthetic aspects were overrated, resulting in a greater representation of cultural heritage made of "lime and stone," especially those from the 17th, 18th and 20th centuries, and of the specific baroque, colonial and modernist architectural styles.<sup>21</sup> Reviewing that context, the Diretrizes' document pointed to a conceptual enlargement toward heritage, which would no longer be related to some representations of the past, but would result from processes of the present. About this movement, Marly Rodrigues writes:

The Diretrizes' document would enlarge these concepts by establishing the CONDEPHAAT's goals through the perspective in which heritage is a privileged axis of social identity and, in this way, it serves to enrich quality of life through the political dimension that historical awareness allows. Under this aspect, the state's participation should be developed according to three guidelines: identification, protection, and valorization of cultural heritage. The use of the word "cultural" to qualify heritage means that the Diretrizes

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20. Rodrigues, Marly, 2000, *Imagens do passado: a instituição do patrimônio em São Paulo* [Images of the past: The Institution of heritage in São Paulo], São Paulo, Editora UNESP, IMESP, CONDEPHAAT, FAPESP, 183 p., p. 133.
21. For a comprehensive critic of heritage practices developed by the SPHAN in the first fifty years of its existence, see: Miceli, Sérgio, 2001, *SPHAN: Refrigério da cultura oficial* [SPHAN: Solace of the official culture], in *Intelectuais à brasileira* [Intellectuals by the Brazilian way], São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 435 p.

wanted to establish a specific concept from which a universe of goods, objects, and landscapes could be composed, selected by cultural criteria in a way to not only be a testimony to the past but also be related to the present, not only for its materiality, but also for the symbolic representations that are implicit in human relations, memory included.<sup>22</sup>

The technical report issued by counselor Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses (on March 25, 1985) was an important consequence of these heritage conceptual revision processes and it was decisive in the whole Vila Itororó heritagization process. For the first time, it was mentioned that it would be impossible to preserve the site if it would imply the eviction of its dwellers and the unviability of the housing use. Supported by the Diretrizes' document, Meneses recognized the cognitive, formal, and affective Vila Itororó values, but was against its recognition as heritage as it was stated in the procedure. The specific arguments used by the counselor to stop the heritagization process were:

In these conditions, the preservation would only make sense if related to an urban revitalization project in which, among other concerns, we would avoid the eviction of the dwellers—and the international experience has been calling the attention to that for the past fifteen years. Projects of “cultural uses,” such as the one mentioned [in reference to the 1975 Toledo and Tozzi proposal], do not eliminate the risk that ... instead of improving the quality of life, they compartmentalize life into different values, some of which artificially privileged. The issue of urban heritage is essentially one of qualifying *all* values of urban life, with the values that heritage allows us to mobilize. Thus, to take the universe of labour and daily life out of an abstract “cultural life” and to hide it in the outskirts of the city, for the benefit of some uses and functions considered *nobler*, is to establish hierarchy between spaces, times, users, and activities.<sup>23</sup>

The counselor made some overwhelming critics to the initial arguments that sustained the request to turn Vila Itororó into heritage. As seen before, the IAB/SP based its request on the 1975 urban recuperation proposal for Vila Itororó and on the possibility that heritage recognition could bring *nobler* uses to the site. Both were criticized by Meneses. Those ideas corroborated the notion of heritage as something that would have inherent values. This idea was very common in the SPHAN's practices as it believed that the impartial look of its technicians would identify the goods that

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22. Rodrigues, *Imagens do passado*, op. cit., p. 135.

23. Meneses, Ulpiano Bezerra de, Technical report, CONDEPHAAT procedure 22.372/82, p. 172.

**FIGURE 8**

External aspect of Vila Itororó's main building.



Photo: Andrea Barbour, 2014.

deserved protection.<sup>24</sup> Thus, political choices were hidden, as if cultural heritage did not have any subjective criteria. The critics formulated by Meneses were an attempt to bring those choices back to the political dimension, notably because they produced very sensitive consequences on the urban landscape, such as the exclusion of the lower income population from the central area of the city.

In his report, Meneses recognized the Vila's so-called *immanent* values, related to its origin and to its formal aspects. But, for him, those values could not be the only and main arguments for preservation. He believed that turning Vila Itororó into a cultural destination was not the more adequate way of preserving it because that would mean that housing and culture could not coexist, that housing and culture were inevitably opposed, and that the dwellers could not "produce" culture. Even if his report does not clearly mention that Vila's dwellers were the ones responsible for giving it value, he does not accept that the supposedly identified values such as originality and bizarreness should be preserved by themselves, withdrawing the cultural heritage from its daily usage to be put into some aseptic "cultural life." In face of this scenario, Meneses was against the heritage recognition.

His position shows that the international heritage vision between the 1960s and the 1970s was somehow impacting Brazil. By mentioning the "international experience" on requalifying urban centres without evicting its population, he may have been referring to the Bologna case in

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24. Central to the studies of the federal preservation practices in Brazil, the work of Maria Cecilia Londres da Fonseca attributes the success of the first three decades of the SPHAN to its ability to have composed and trained a technical staff able to make this exercise of identifying the cultural goods that would testify to the national identity of the country. For the author, these technicians' work was marked by political pragmatism and ethical capital, both dimensions that would indicate moral patterns. Their practices were not seen as a product of subjective choices: "This pattern is settled, on the one hand, in a knowledge ethic: the unrestricted compromise with the authenticity of the objects and with the truth of the knowledge produced by them; on the other hand, in a practice ethic: expressed by the defense of the public's interests above those of individuals and the state, and the most absolute honesty and transparency in the use of public resources and the complete and disinterested devotion of this staff to its work in the institution." Fonseca, Maria Cecília Londres, 2009 [3rd ed.], *O patrimônio em processo: trajetória da política federal de preservação no Brasil* [Heritage in process: The Evolution of federal preservation policies], Rio de Janeiro, Editora UFRJ, 293 p., p. 126.

Italy, in which the historic centre was not understood to be something separate from the rest of the city, but was conceived as a whole in the contemporary urban experience.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, in an article published in the *CJ Arquitetura* journal, Meneses quotes Píer Luigi Cervellati, a main character in the recuperation of the Bologna historical centre: "There is no preservation outside social preservation."<sup>26</sup> In this article, Meneses makes a critical analysis of how the concept of cultural heritage had been used as something predetermined, "a finished, objective product, whose symptomatic qualities could be identified and named to justify its inclusion in the 'heritage catalogue'."<sup>27</sup> Therefore, the author was already reflecting on this new approach to heritage that was gaining attention in the 1970s.<sup>28</sup>

Meneses's report is an important transition point in Vila Itororó's heritagization process because, from then on, the CONDEPHAAT launched several attempts to negotiate with public agencies dealing with housing in order to find a solution that would maintain the dwellers. A few months after this report, the first meeting to discuss that subject occurred between the CONDEPHAAT and the São Paulo State Housing Office. The purpose of the meeting was to define each organization's contribution in the Vila Itororó housing matter.<sup>29</sup> These negotiations, nevertheless, would turn out to be unsuccessful, as the CONDEPHAAT's procedure attests.

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25. The sparse bibliography related to the Bologna case, at least in Brazil, shows the big gap that still needs to be filled as regards the theoretical and practical references on heritage, when it comes to new approaches to this subject. For more specific literature on Bologna, see: Cervellati, Píer Luigi, 1976, *Bolonia: política y metodología de la restauración de centros históricos* [Bologna: politics and methodology related to the restoration of historical centres], Barcelona, Editorial Gustavo Gili, 124 p.
  26. Meneses, Ulpiano Bezerra de, 1979, "Patrimônio Ambiental Urbano" [Urban environmental heritage], *CJ Arquitetura*, year V, vol. 19, p. 45.
  27. *Ibid.*
  28. In an interview given to Luciana Quillet Heymann and Aline Lopes de Lacerda, in Rio de Janeiro, de Meneses mentioned that the contact with Cervellati and its work was, indeed, remarkable in the debates on heritage in the 1970s: "There was a second edition [of heritage conservation and restauration], with the CONDEPHAAT's intervention, and we brought Píer Luigi Cervellati from Bologna. Bologna is, I think, the most representative city of the new urban renovation mentality among those cities that were destroyed by the war. And Cervellati said: 'Either you legitimize the form or it makes no sense.'" Heymann, Luciana Quillet and Aline Lopes de Lacerda, 2011, "Entrevista com Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses" [Interview with Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses], *Revista Estudos Históricos*, Rio de Janeiro, vol. 24, no. 48, p. 427.
  29. CONDEPHAAT procedure 22.372/82, p. 177-179.

**FIGURE 9**

The imposing columns living together with the vernacular.



Photo: Andrea Barbour, 2014.

The absence of further documents showing the dialogue between the agencies testifies to the difficulty encountered in initiating an institutional arrangement between housing and cultural areas aimed at preserving this cultural heritage site. For this dialogue to exist, it would have been necessary to include, in the housing policies, programs specific to heritage areas. In addition, heritage policies should have taken into account that housing could be a dignified way of using cultural goods. The unsuccessful negotiations did not result in the recognition process, that is, not until March 1994, when four Vila Itororó buildings were torn down by its owner, that is the IBAOC charity institution.<sup>30</sup> The final decision that recognized Vila Itororó as heritage was clearly a consequence of these demolitions. In fact, between 1985 and 1994, the CONDEPHAAT was seeking to realize Meneses's recommendations, or was immobilized by them, because they demanded a dialogue among the city's authorities and suggested to overcome the exacerbated division between public policy areas.

In the final report that supported the decision for Vila Itororó's recognition, published on June 13, 1994, counsellor Victor Hugo Mori emphasized that in all the reports concerning that specific procedure, there was a "unanimous recognition of the unequivocal cultural value of Vila Itororó, and a divergence on whether the place should be recognized as heritage or not,"<sup>31</sup> which resulted from different understandings of the consequences of the recognition process. For Mori, it could not be merely seen as a way to freeze the cultural goods, but as a part of a political action process. Therefore, the recognition process could not end up in simplistic solutions, because Vila Itororó's case was very complex. Indeed, Vila Itororó was a paradigmatic case because it combined several matters so common to heritage practices: its location was privileged and thus it greatly interested the real-estate market; it was related to "urban recuperation" projects connected to historic centres; its formal aspects indicated monumental features; and its use by low-income dwellers was seen as a problem in the context of its recognition as a monument.

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30. By that time, in 1994, Vila Itororó's representative stated that the demolitions were made in order to prevent "invaders" to stay in its buildings. Jones, Francis, 1996, "Casarão exótico se deteriora na Bela Vista" [Large exotic house deteriorating in Bela Vista], *Folha de São Paulo*, April 5, p. Z6.

31. Mori, Technical report, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

The problem with the final decision being made after the demolitions is that none of these tensions could be well problematized. Once again, the CONDEPHAAT played its part to safeguard cultural goods as they were threatened with disappearance. This kind of practice was disapproved by the Diretrizes' document<sup>32</sup> because it would not allow the CONDEPHAAT to play a more coherent role in heritage preservation, based on a knowledge that could overcome the fixed criteria usually used for heritage recognition. The necessity of protecting what was threatened to disappear overlaps a heritage policy that dialogues with the social context in which heritage is inserted.

In addition, the recognition procedure as an antidote to disappearance presupposes that heritage has an inherent cultural value. To identify a heritage site as an object from which value emanates is to go against the idea that it can only be truly comprehended when analyzed in its daily practices. In this way, even though Vila Itororó's heritagization process raised some important conceptual arguments about *how* and *for whom* heritage should be maintained, especially through Meneses's report, its preservation practices only reiterated an idea that sees heritage as a decontextualized material manifestation. Although Mori pointed Vila Itororó's potential to be conceived as a paradigm, the final recognition decision, in 1994, curtailed any further discussions about its destiny. Actually, the 1975 proposal was used in the 2000s as the starting point of a new attempt at Vila's restoration.

Nowadays, the site is completely empty—its dwellers were all evicted in 2012 and 2013—in order to establish a cultural centre inspired by the one proposed in the 1970s.<sup>33</sup> And for that reason, there is a good possibility

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32. "After fifteen years of activities and efforts, the CONDEPHAAT became a reference on the heritage field in São Paulo, to the point of being considered, excessively, as the salvation to all the evils of the city ... However, there are serious limitations that stop this precious archive of competences, so slowly built, to achieve its goals. Specially the absence, in the last public administration, of an expressive practical policy ... On the contrary, we are working as a first-aid post, attending emergencies that we cannot predict well in advance, or tilting at windmills, for lack of resources or support." CONDEPHAAT, 1984, *Diretrizes para a formulação de uma política de atuação do CONDEPHAAT* [Guidelines for the formulation of a CONDEPHAAT's practical heritage policy], p. 1.
  33. The current project being developed at Vila is at dispute because it has passed through different political and governmental administrations, interfering on its purposes and directions.

**FIGURE 10**

After the dwellers' evictions, the place stayed abandoned for at least two years.  
Detail of belongings that were left behind.



Photo: Andrea Barbour, 2014.

that the *voyeuristic* view is the only relation that will persist between Vila Itororó and its urban context. Meneses classifies that view as the mere contemplation of heritage, to which people only relate superficially, without getting accustomed to it. The voyeuristic posture overrates heritage's formal and imagery aspects, thus contributing to emptying all the meanings and values that connect heritage to social and political processes.





7

# TRAUMATIC MEMORIES IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE OF BUENOS AIRES

## The “Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado,” in the Parque de la Memoria

**Rebeca Lopes Cabral**

Memories related to traumas, episodes of state violence, massacres, and disasters, called traumatic memories,<sup>1</sup> have been widely discussed in recent years to raise public awareness and build a sense of justice. In Argentina, since the beginning of the post-dictatorial regime, starting in 1983, groups of civilians asked for sites related to the military dictatorship—such as torture rooms, memorials, and public squares—as legal proofs, spaces of political and symbolic significance to the memory of the victims of the violence that occurred between 1976 and 1983. The “Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado – Parque de la Memoria,” object of the present chapter, is one example of these movements. Occupying fourteen acres alongside the Río del Plata, close to the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), the park-monument is constituted as a public space in commemoration of the 30,000 dead and missing.

A careful spatial analysis of the park’s design and some of the processes at its origin raise broader questions on the possibilities of representing memories of the dictatorship in spaces located within the city. It exemplifies the three key issues at the intersection of art and terror—architecture could also be mentioned—formulated by Ilena Diéguez, of which I will discuss throughout this text: the fascination sometimes produced by the contemplation of a horror show—a point inserted in a central issue in post-modern debates about the subjection of contemporary cities to the marketing dynamics of late capitalism; the aesthetic and ethical potential of art to represent horror; and the need to produce art in times of terror and violence<sup>2</sup>.

In light of authors like Andreas Huyssen, Hugo Vezzetti, and Graciela Silvestri who wrote on that subject, I aim to map the international and national scenarios of memory matters to then reflect on the representation of trauma in the spatial forms that are present in the park. My goal is consequently to comprehend the role of this place and its surroundings—the area of the Costanera Norte (north coast)—in the urban landscape of Buenos Aires, as a way to reflect on the possibilities of representing trauma in public spaces.

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1. Huyssen, Andreas, 2000, *Seduzidos pela memória* [Seduced by memory], Rio de Janeiro, Aeroplano, 117 p., p. 9.

2. Diegúez, Ilena, 2013, *Cuerpos sin duelo: iconografías y teatralidades del dolor* [Bodies without mourning: iconographies and theatricalities of pain], Córdoba, Ediciones Documenta/Escénicas, 292 p., p. 53.

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## Traumatic memories in times of globalization

Time and space as categories fundamentally contingent upon historically rooted perceptions are closely linked to each other in complex ways, and the intensity of borderless discourses of memory, which is characteristic of a great portion of contemporary culture in various regions of the world today, prove that point. In fact, issues of different temporalities and modernity in distinct stages emerged as key pieces to a new strict understanding of the globalization processes that seek to be something more than just updated Western paradigms of modernization.<sup>3</sup>

Especially since the 1970s<sup>4</sup>, there has been a radical change in cultural practices and in the ways time and space are comprehended.<sup>5</sup> I wish to map some of these changes in order to situate memories of historical trauma as an emerging issue in that context. It is indeed interesting to highlight one of the key matters of this period, named post-modernism by some authors: a memory boom triggered by the advent of globalization that still resonates today.<sup>6</sup> In this light, I would like to analyze, theoretically, the scenario where sites related to the memories of pain gain importance in the urban spaces of Western cities.

In the 1980s, the configuration of what Andreas Huyssen calls the culture of memory was especially characterized by the emphasis on the past in different spheres of life, as in the cultural, political, or economic fields. In architecture, for example, the Strada Novíssima exhibition in Venice stands out as a moment when signs of classical Italian architecture were revisited.<sup>7</sup> The restoration of historical city centres<sup>8</sup> and the continued

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3. Note that all quotations from Portuguese sources were translated by me. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

4. The first signs of a shift from modern to post-modern times began in the 1960s, in the wake of revisionist and historicizing movements (*ibid.*, p. 10), but it intensified in the 1970s and 1980s. Huyssen, Andreas, 1984, *Mapeando o Pós Moderno* [Mapping post-modernism], in Heloisa Buarque de Holanda (ed.), *Pós-modernismo e política* [Post-modernism and politics], Rio de Janeiro, Rocco, p. 15-80.

5. Harvey, David, 1992 [6th ed.], *Condição pós-moderna* [The Condition of post-modernity], São Paulo, Loyola, 352 p., p. 8.

6. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

7. Arantes, Otília F., 1993, *O lugar da arquitetura depois dos modernos* [The Place of architecture after modernism], São Paulo, Editora da Universidade de São Paulo (EDUSP) (University of São Paulo Press), 248 p., p. 28.

8. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

construction of new museums<sup>9</sup> were also linked to the growing interest for the past. Other emblematic examples of this trend were the success of the retro fashion, memorial and confessional literature, self-recordings using photography and video, the creation of the History Channel (an American TV channel), movies portraying the 20th-century violence, and the return of figurative painting—after a long period of predominance of the abstract movements—and photography to visual arts.<sup>10</sup>

Even though Huyssen recognizes the frequent random and commercial use of memory, in his article on “Mapping post-modernism”<sup>11</sup> he stands against other contemporary critics, such as Fredric Jameson and Jean Baudrillard, who see post-modernism as a “pastiche” or “pale parody.”<sup>12</sup> On this matter, Huyssen argues that “[s]uch total rejection will blind us to post-modernism’s critical potential which, I believe, also exists, even though it may be difficult to identify.”<sup>13</sup> To this German intellectual, the potential of criticism, to which we should pay attention, is inherent in the rise of post-modernism, as it is located precisely in the contrast between the attention given to the past and the privilege that was given to the future in the economic development projects that characterized the 20th century. For Huyssen, post-modernism arose from a historical

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9. Baudrillard, Jean, 1991, *Simulacros e Simulação* [Simulacrum and simulation], Lisbon, Galilée, 202 p., p. 81.

10. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

11. Huyssen, *Mapeando o Pós Moderno*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

12. Jameson, Fredric, 1985, “Pós-modernidade e sociedade de consumo” [Post-modernism and the consumer society], *Novos Estudos CEBRAP* [Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento], São Paulo, no. 12, 26 p., p. 18. Huyssen’s post-modern perspective opposes the ideas of thinkers such as Jameson who, in the early 1980s, considered post-modernism as a pastiche or pale parody. Post-modernism, according to Huyssen, should be characterized as a *potpourri* of various signs. The signs start to isolate themselves, in a way that they no longer point to the world. In that way, the significant (visuality and sound of the word) is no longer connected to the significance (meaning of the word), as materiality is excluded from the world. In analytical terms, Jameson states that the post-modern time perception relates to the time perception of a schizophrenic who lives instant experiences that are not interrelated. Baudrillard also stands by this position. In general terms, he argues that the fascination with the images that invade post-modern times provokes an aversion to the reference point, opening doors to simulation and, therefore, to hyper-reality: “Simulation is the generation through models of the real without origin or reality: a hyper-real.” Baudrillard, *Simulacros e Simulação*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

13. Huyssen, *Mapeando o Pós Moderno*, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

conscience in light of the atrocious events that portray the 20th century, such as the two World Wars, the Apartheid in Africa, the Holocaust in Germany, and the dictatorial regimes in Latin America.<sup>14</sup>

This historical conscience, intrinsic in the post-modern dynamics, opposes itself to a totalizing view of the world, which was still defined in modernism.<sup>15</sup> For the first time in the 1960s, following the phases of decolonization, social movements looked for alternative and revisionist stories seeking other traditions and the traditions of “others.”<sup>16</sup> Thus, “meta-narrative” discourses—large-scale interpretations with universal applicability<sup>17</sup>—fell through. Political and ethical concerns came forth with force, shining light on some of the local problems that had until then remained in the shadow.

In that way, it can be said that the look to the past, characteristic of post-modernism, followed in the wake of regional actions and thoughts. However, there is a paradox<sup>18</sup> in all that, because at the same time these movements, looking to local particularities, refute a totalizing dimension of globalization; they were influenced and absorbed by it. New technologies, the expansion of written and visual medias weakened and expanded national boundaries, contributing “in a deliberate way to the vertiginous whirlwind of memory speeches that spread throughout the world.”<sup>19</sup> The information and narratives on local memories started being diffused quickly and easily to other countries, by means of international television channels on cable TV, movies produced worldwide, online newspapers, and social medias. We read about everything and everyone at a hectic pace. As Huyssen puts it: “Surely the media’s voracity and its appetite for recycling seem to be a *sine qua non* condition of local memory discourses crossing borders, entering a network that goes beyond national borders and creating a so-called culture of memory.”<sup>20</sup> Therefore, once the culture

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14. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

15. Huyssen, *Mapeando o Pós Moderno*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

16. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

17. Harvey, *Condição pós-moderna*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

18. Huyssen calls it the “globalization paradox” in *Seduzidos pela memória*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

19. Huyssen, Andreas, 2003, “Memory sites in an expanded field: The Memory Park in Buenos Aires,” in *Present pasts: Urban palimpsests and the politics of memory*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, p. 94-109, p. 95.

20. *Ibid.*

of memory establishes itself through and from globalization, regionalism, partly absorbed by it, finds itself in the middle of the dynamic relationship between the global and local spheres.

For Huyssen, the acceleration of memory discourses was triggered by the rise in Holocaust-centred debates of a series of events related to the Third Reich in Germany that had also occurred in other countries. The memorialization process of the Holocaust is emblematic of the globalization paradox.<sup>21</sup> If, on the one hand, the Holocaust gained a totalizing dimension, entering a mass culture dynamic (the author underlines that it primarily spread through the North American TV series entitled “The Holocaust”), on the other hand, this same globalization dimension locates and distinguishes different contexts<sup>22</sup>: in a vulnerability scenario—cultural, political, and economical in the early 1980s—of countries affected by catastrophes, the discussion on the Holocaust, when revealed, gave rise to locally centred actions. That is especially notable in the increasing number of monuments, memorials, commemorative plaques, political manifestations, and artistic interventions related to that issue.<sup>23</sup>

Although the memories of historical trauma are immersed in the culture of memory, something in them goes beyond that. Looking for an expansion of historical conscience and trying to build a new sense of justice, victims or their relatives fight in order not to forget the dictatorial atrocities and constantly claim for representations related to the tragedy. In that way, collective memory spaces—such as torture rooms, memorials, and public squares—have been acting as legal proofs of symbolic and political significance, important to post-traumatic groups. As Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper writes:

[B]uildings, sites, and landscapes, in their shape and material substance, are precious witnesses to history. They contain answers to questions that we may not have considered but that our children might. As three-dimensional objects, they are more complex than a written source, although less easy to read. And the *genius loci*—the spirit of the site—is often hard to describe but doubtlessly perceptible to the open-minded, and it makes people feel that they share past experiences, as if they were a direct access to history.<sup>24</sup>

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21. Huyssen, *Seduzidos pela memória*, op. cit., p. 13.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Jelin, Elizabeth, 2002, *Los trabajos de la memoria* [The Works of memory], Madrid, Siglo Veintiuno de España, 156 p., p. 37.

24. Dolff-Bonekämper, Gabi, 2002, “Sites of hurtful memory,” *The Getty Conservation Institute Newsletter*, vol. 17, no. 2, p. 4-10, p. 5.

An emblematic example of a country that has mobilized signs of memories related to the Holocaust in order to deal with its own memories and constitute memory works<sup>25</sup> is Argentina, whose capital Buenos Aires does not hide the scars of its pain.

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## The traumatic urban landscape of Buenos Aires

The end of the dictatorship in 1983 was defined by the beginning of a shift in the political discourse in Argentina. After the defeat of their military troops in the Falklands War, a compilation of victims' testimonies entitled *Nunca Más* (never more) was published in 1984 by the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP – National commission on the disappearance of people). Referring directly to the legal processes that followed the Holocaust, the document stated the atrocities that occurred during the dictatorial regime and configured the empirical and symbolic foundation for the beginning of the trials of military junta generals in 1985.<sup>26</sup> The extensive spread of the cases from the Juicio a las Juntas (trial of the military juntas), by means of public hearings and media coverage, was a decisive factor that led to the end of the military dictatorship.<sup>27</sup> This series of actions created a progressive change in the predominant discourse: the theory of *los dos demonios*<sup>28</sup> (the two demons)—which justified the military coup and gained strong acceptance during the Alfonsín government—was replaced by the general agreement that the state had violated human rights.<sup>29</sup>

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25. According to Jelin (*Los trabajos de la memoria, op. cit.*, p. 35), the memory works are created from the symbolic transformation and elaboration of the meanings of memories.

26. Huyssen, Andreas, 2014, *Culturas do passado presente: modernismos, artes visuais, políticas da memória* [Cultures of the present past: modernism, visual arts, memory policies], Rio de Janeiro, Contraponto: Museu de Arte do Rio, 216 p., p. 162.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 163.

28. *Los dos demonios* were two groups of the extreme right-wing and the urban guerrilla terror of the left-wing that were numerically insignificant but that were utilized to justify military actions (*ibid.*).

29. *Ibid.*, p. 164.

As a part of these movements for justice and memory, sites were devoted to the persistent search for the whereabouts of people who were still missing. A hurtful topography<sup>30</sup> became visible in Buenos Aires, and the Parque de la Memoria – Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado and its surroundings are part of it. To explain the composition of this topography, I will provide a brief overview from three very distinctive examples of representation that were key references to the park-monument: the Madres y Abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo (mothers and grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo), the artistic intervention *Siluetazo*, and the memorials situated in the former Centros Clandestinos de Detención (CCDs – clandestine detention centres).

The most well-known example of living memorials to the victims of the dictatorship was initiated even before the end of the military regime. In Plaza de Mayo, in front of the Casa Rosada, mothers and grandmothers have been calling out for their missing children and grandchildren since 1977. The occupation of the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo gave a political purpose to the square that became an international symbol of the military dictatorship resistance. These women, called Las Locas (the crazy women) by the dictatorial government, were essential to end the military regime and to trigger the emergence of other memory-related interventions and works. In the case of the Madres, international media played a crucial role to provide them assurance in a situation of constant threat, as the city was hosting the 1978 Football World Cup.<sup>31</sup>

The first edition of the political/aesthetic intervention, the *Siluetazo*, was held during an afternoon of 1983 and was one of the country's most notable actions against the dictatorship. For the event, silhouettes drawn on cardboards were pasted all over the city to signify the presence of those who were absent.<sup>32</sup> The intervention, created by artists Rodolfo Aguerreberry, Julio Flores, and Guillermo Kexel, in partnership with the association of the Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, occurred in the context of the III Marcha de la Resistencia (third March of the Resistance) called on by the mothers and grandmothers. The country's population quickly joined

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30. The topography of pain mentioned by Dolff-Bonekämper ("Sites of hurtful memory," *op. cit.*) is composed by the paths, places, and spatialities that trauma-related memories configure in urban spaces.

31. Huyssen, *Culturas do passado presente ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

32. Flores, 1984, cited by Bruzzone, Gustavo and Ana Longoni, 2008, *El Siluetazo*, Buenos Aires, Adriana Hidalgo, 510 p., p. 7.

the practice and the silhouettes spread out to the walls of other Argentinian cities.<sup>33</sup> This way of representing the bodies also refers to the Holocaust. The Polish artist Jerzy Spasky, in a work where he depicted the 2370 persons who died each day in Auschwitz, used the sign of the silhouettes. Regarding the *Siluetazo*, Vezzetti writes that

[t]he crucial point in this intervention on spaces and bodies was a form of resignation that tended to translate into a universal figure. And very early on, through this image taken from the memory of Auschwitz, the tragedy of the disappeared was associated to this wound in the conscience of the West, the Holocaust.<sup>34</sup>

Some of the former CCDs, by becoming sites of memory, also turned into iconic examples of pain representation. During the military dictatorship, approximately 600 CCDs were established in Argentina to shelter tortures, questionings, and to incarcerate political prisoners. About 140 were located in the province of Buenos Aires, of which seven are today centres of memory (Pozo de Banfield, Mansión Sere, Sevicio de Inteligencia Aeronáutica, Club Atlético, Olimpo, Escuela de Mecánica de La Armada, and Centro de Automotores Orletti). Embedded almost indistinctively in the city landscape, many of the CCDs were disguised under a fictitious name, others were even located inside military buildings where, apart from regular day-to-day activities, political prisoners were being incarcerated and killed. Similar to those former clandestine centres are the series of old Nazi concentration camps that were transformed into memorials. The most well-known camp is Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland, which receives thousands of tourists every year.

These are a few representations of the military regime that still exist today in Buenos Aires. With their own practices, symbols and icons,<sup>35</sup> each one gives meaning to different city spaces in a particular way. By shining light on memories of deep hidden pains, public spaces, previously

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33. Bruzzoni and Longoni, *El Siluetazo*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

34. Vezzetti, Hugo, 2010, "Memoriales del Terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires: representación y política" [Memorials of the state terrorism in Buenos Aires], in Peter Birle, Vera Carnovale, Elke Gryglewski, and Estela Schindel (eds.) *Memorias urbanas en diálogo: Berlin y Buenos Aires* [Urban memories in dialogue: Berlin and Buenos Aires], Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires Libros Editorial / Heinrich Böll Stiftung, p. 101-117, p. 107.

35. Schindel, Estela, 2008, *Lugares de memoria en Buenos Aires* [Memory sites in Buenos Aires], in Peter Birle *et al.* (eds.), *Memorias urbanas en diálogo: Berlin y Buenos Aires* [Urban memories in dialogue: Berlin and Buenos Aires], Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires Libros Editorial / Heinrich Böll Stiftung, p. 87-101.

restricted during the dictatorial government, started to be gradually appropriated. With white bandanas on their heads, the Madres and Abuelas of Mayo reveal their most private traumas on the main public square of the Argentinean capital; the *Siluetazo*, as an ephemeral artistic intervention of educational character, allows women, men, children, and young or older adults to experience moments of the suffering of others by drawing and posting the silhouettes throughout the city. The former CCDs, where many of the crimes took place, became, in turn, live witnesses of history. When perceiving this wide range of means of representation, as Graciela Silvestri says, it becomes easier to reflect on the ways a monument, in its generic and emphatic tradition, can symbolize what has happened.<sup>36</sup> As a possible answer, initiatives for the construction of the park-monument began, articulating art and monument, with the task of witnessing and symbolizing a troubled historical episode.<sup>37</sup>

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### Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado – Parque de la Memoria

The first initiatives for the construction of the Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, Parque de la Memoria (figure 1) can be found in the 1990s debates. At the time, there were increasingly more incentives to build spaces of memory in Argentina, a momentum that partly derived from the accelerated implementation of international human rights laws. In this perspective, pain-related contemporary architectures, with their tangible experiences and exceptional visualities, were seen as opportunities to be not only witnesses of history, but also objects that work together to the construction of alternative discourses. In other places around the world, some iconic architectural works—from memorials and monuments to great skyscrapers—strived for monumentality and for a high-impact plastic effect. As the results of commissions or competitions, these projects were local and global aesthetic icons, being used as a form of publicity by the cities where they are located.

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36. Silvestri, Graciela, 2000, *El arte en los límites de la representación* [The Art in the limits of representation], Buenos Aires, Punto de Vista, no. 68, p. 3.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

**FIGURE 1**

Areal view of Parque de la Memoria.



Source: Google Earth Pro, accessed January 19, 2017.

When reflecting upon such cases that occurred in and out of Argentina, the memorial park could be established as the first and greatest architectural work in homage to the country's missing persons. Occupying fourteen acres alongside the Río del Plata in the Costanera Norte, close to Ciudad Universitaria, it was designed by architects of the Estúdio Baudizzone: Jorge Lestard, Alberto Varas, Claudio Ferrari, and Daniel Becker. As described in the project's presentation document, the objective was to give back to the city that important public space, which had slowly deteriorated over the years.<sup>38</sup>

The initiative to build the monument came from organizations composed of victims and relatives—the Madres de Mayo was one of those—and was part of a larger project called “Buenos Aires y el Río” (1996), which

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38. Vecchione, Virginia, 2014, “La monumentalización de la ciudad: los sitios de memoria como espacios de intervención experta de los hacedores de ciudad” [The Monumentalization of the city: Memorials as spaces of expert intervention by city makers], in *Estudios Sociales Contemporáneos* [Contemporary social studies], no. 10, p. 37.

aimed to redevelop the public areas of the river's north coast by "giving it back" to its population.<sup>39</sup> The construction of the park-monument was a long and arduous process. There were obviously the expected conflicts between victims and militaries, although unforeseen struggles between human rights organizations also appeared as an obstacle to the construction. For different reasons, as described by Huyssen, certain victim groups were vigorously against the construction: some opposed the park project because they wanted to transform the Escuela Mecánica de la Armada itself into a museum of terror—a proposal whose time may come some decades from then at the earliest, according to him—while others believed that the park was too close to the ESMA and would consequently be shunned by those more directly affected by the terror; yet others argued that projects such as the park brought up too many memories of the dictatorship.<sup>40</sup>

In December 1997, pro-monument groups came forward with some demands for the city government that would result later in Law number 46. This law ensured the construction of a piece that would comprise the names of the 9000 missing persons (the number calculated by the Nunca Más report, in the 1990s, although 30,000 *desaparecidos* are now unofficially estimated) and a sculptural complex. It also ensured the creation of the pro-monument commission—to be formed by a vice-president of the first legislature, eleven deputies, four employees, one representative of the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), and one representative of each human rights organization. Finally, the commission decided to launch an architecture competition for the construction of the park. Although some government representatives participated, the dialogues between the Commission, the state, and the UBA, were scarce.<sup>41</sup>

It is also important to mention that beforehand, in mid-1997, another competition called "Parque Público Costanera Norte" had been launched by the Sociedad Central de Arquitectos associated with the city government, for the creation of a leisure park in the vicinity of the University. The winning project, designed by Aída Daich and Victoria Migliori,

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39. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

40. Huyssen, "Memory sites in an expanded field ...," *op. cit.*, p. 100.

41. Vezzetti, "Memoriales del Terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires ...," *op. cit.*, p. 119; Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, *op. cit.*

proposed a memory park, also composed by sculptures and a memory route—something that was not required in the competition's brief.<sup>42</sup> Although the idea was praised by the jury, who declared that the project solved the equation between memory and present life, the place was never developed. Instead of a memory park, the government opted to build the Parque de los Niños, a children's park,<sup>43</sup> even though the idea of a space dedicated to the missing people was the key reference for the construction of the park memorial.<sup>44</sup>

The resurgence of this idea happened in parallel with the raging debates regarding the fate of the area surrounding the Universidad de Buenos Aires.<sup>45</sup> Therefore, the place assigned to the victims was part of the wider range urban development strategy for the Costanera Norte. For that program, a partnership was formed between the City of Buenos Aires and the UBA that led to the launch of a Concurso de Ideas (competition of ideas). The sector of intervention was divided into three parts: the first one was based in the ruins of the Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina (AMIA),<sup>46</sup> and would be destined for the Parque de la Paz; the second part would be dedicated to the missing people; and the third was to become an homage to Monseñor Ernesto Segura,<sup>47</sup> promoted by the Casa Argentina Israel Tierra Santa.<sup>48</sup>

As problematized by Silvestri,<sup>49</sup> the information given to the participants of the competition was minimal, which resulted, among other things, in a disregard for the reasons why a monument for Ernesto Segura should be built. The space that was to be destined to the memories of the victims

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42. Vecchiole, "La monumentalización de la ciudad ...," *op. cit.*, p. 38.

43. *Ibid.*

44. Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

45. Varas, 2008, "Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado en el Parque de la Memoria" [Monument to the victims of state terrorism in the Memorial Park], in *Congreso Arquitectura y Memoria* [Memory and Architecture Congress], Buenos Aires, Organización Memoria Abierta [Open memory organization], August 2009, 72 p., p. 41; see also: Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, *op. cit.*

46. In 1994, the Argentinean AMIA building suffered a terrorist attack that killed about 84 persons. See: <<http://www.amia.org.ar/index.php/content/default/show/content/13>>, accessed January 20, 2017.

47. Ernesto Segura worked as an auxiliary bishop in Buenos Aires from 1969 until 1972.

48. Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

49. *Ibid.*

was handled by the state as a mere complement to the ambitious urban planning Buenos Aires y el Río project. Furthermore, the pro-monument organization held a second competition to select the sculptures that would make up the complex in the park. The result, according to Silvestri, was particularly disastrous, as the realization of the works do not communicate in an effective way with the monument itself. Although the monument suggests an austere rigidity, the sculptures seem to be randomly displayed on the grass and in the square,<sup>50</sup> despite the concern of the park's art department to establish a dialogue between the sculptures and the architectural design. As a consequence of this tortuous process and the lack of a precise financial budget plan, the project is, to this day, unfinished.

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**FIGURE 2**

Parque de la Memoria

View from one of the art works of Grupo de Arte Callero (GAC).



Photo: Rebeca Lopes Cabral, May 5, 2016.

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50. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

**FIGURE 3**

View of the park from the Avenue Costanera Norte.



Photo: Rebeca Lopes Cabral, May 5, 2016.

Nowadays, the Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado, Parque de la Memoria is composed of an educational room (Pasado Ahora y Siempre – PAyS room), the poly-sculptural complex, and the monument to the victims of state violence during the military dictatorship. Although these elements result from some of the conflicts briefly presented, each one is immersed in broader, more complex and specific issues. Here I have chosen to focus on the architectural aspects of the project that was built. In the wake of Andreas Huyssen's thoughts, I propose an initial question from where the present reflection is developed: what are the strategies used to represent the memories of the dictatorship in the Parque de la Memoria and, further, how do they dialogue with one another and with other global modes of representation?

The visitor arriving by Avenue Costanera soon sees a large green area that gives continuity to the surrounding horizontal landscape. The only vertical elements are the sculptures on the lawn and in the square. When entering the square, a first wall encloses and announces the monument. Taking that direction, the floor becomes narrower and leads to a path that follows horizontal marks. Then the visitor comes to four walls that make

up a zigzag. On the surface of the walls are 30,000 rectangle plates, but only 9000 are completed with the names of missing persons (the official number reported by the Nunca Más). According to the architects, the architectural drawing refers to an open wound—evoking the etymological notion of trauma, from the Greek “injury”.<sup>51</sup> The path suggested by the spatiality induces the reading of the inscriptions on the walls. A statement on the first wall reads as follows: “The names present on this monument refer to the victims of state terrorism that were detained, went missing, were murdered, and to those who died fighting for the same ideals of justice and equality.” Further down the path, the names, organized in an ascending chronological order, are inscribed on small rectangular plaques. At the end of the pathway, the view opens to the immensity of the Río del Plata, where thousands of bodies were thrown in during the dictatorship.

The zigzag of the walls that cuts though the ground, as a blade cuts through skin, makes reference to the same sign used by Daniel Libeskind at the Holocaust museum in Berlin (figure 4).<sup>52</sup> According to Libeskind, the memories represented in the museum are between the lines that surpass and make up the construction. Two lines, therefore, also define the Argentinean park: the sidewalk line, which separates the monument from the park, and the coastal line (figure 5). It was the lack of funds that stopped the construction in the park and kept it away from the attention usually given to museums like the one in Berlin. In addition, this silence that seems to derive from a mournful aura encourages an almost ritual walk that incites reflection and thought. The monument creates a theatrical atmosphere, capable of modifying the visitors’ corporeality and body language.

Nomination—literally, writing the names of victims on a monument—is an old practice in memory spaces that in recent years has been used and re-signified.<sup>53</sup> In Argentina, this practice is frequently observed in memory-related works. The *Siluetazo*, for instance, was the first work that dealt with the number of missing persons through drawing each individual’s

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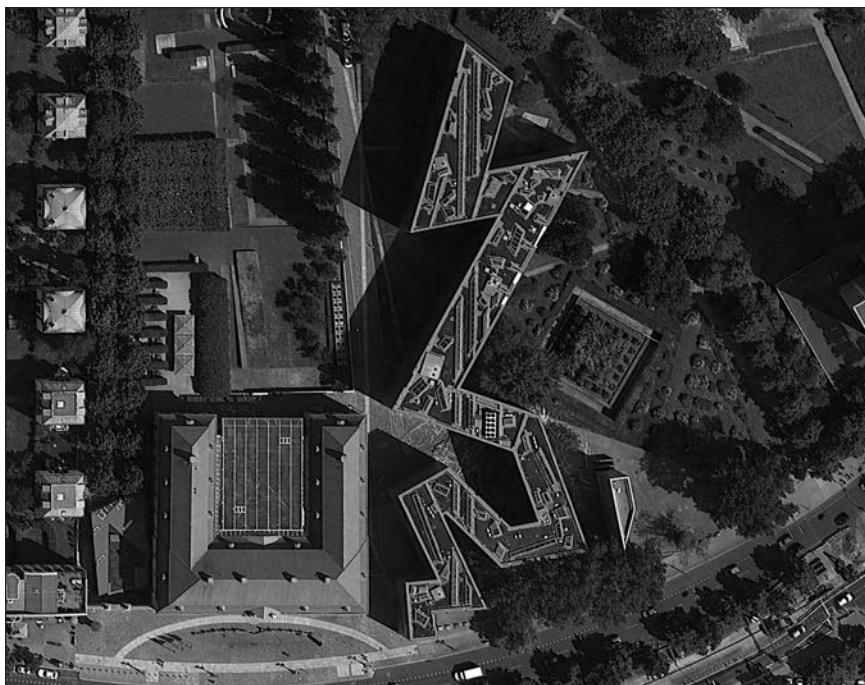
51. Nestrovski, Arthur and Márcio Seligmann-Silva (eds.), 2000, *Catástrofe e representação* [Catastrophe and representation], São Paulo, Escuta, 264 p., p. 8. Nestrovski and Seligmann-Silva emphasize that the word *trauma* derives from the Indo-European root with a double meaning: on the one hand it means “friction, torture” and on the other “surpass, pass through.” It is the idea of something that gnaws at us but at the same time helps us get through our problems.

52. Huyssen, “Memory sites in an expanded field ...,” *op. cit.*, p. 105.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

**FIGURE 4**

The Jewish Museum Berlin designed by Daniel Libeskind.



Source: Google Earth Pro, accessed January 19, 2017.

silhouette in full scale. Much like the memorial park, the initiative seems to make present all the 30,000 absentees. Another emblematic example is the *desaparecidos.org* project, a virtual work that reached many Latin American and Asian countries victims of a dictatorship. This online archive gathers names, photographs, and a brief biography of the people who were murdered or went missing, making up a “virtual wall” (figure 6).

Differently from the epic 19th-century statues that portrayed the names and images of national heroes, the names of the victims are marked on a monument in the park—and other mentioned works—without stating profession, age or reason, and they are also seen alongside the plaques that are still blank. It is through that restitution of the absent that an outbreak of legal and symbolic questions occurred.<sup>54</sup> From a legal perspective, the

54. Huyssen, *Culturas do passado presente ...*, op. cit., p. 164.

**FIGURE 5**

The view of the Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado in the Parque de la Memoria in Buenos Aires.



Source: Google Earth Pro, accessed January 19, 2017.

**FIGURE 6**

Print screen of the Desaparecidos.org Project.



Source: <<http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/victims/muro2.html>>.

group of names transformed the space into a document-monument that refers, initially, to the works of the Nunca Más report. From an aesthetic point of view, the names placed side by side invite visitors to look at them in different manners: the visitor is either attentive to the set of names, or he reads them individually; either he notices the number of missing people, or their individual identities. The absence of some names is constantly noticeable, as if the missing names were present and absent at the same time (figures 7 to 9).

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## Conclusion

The park memorial is part of a wider constellation of practices, symbols, and icons.<sup>55</sup> The walls in zigzag as a horizontal monument give another meaning to Libeskind's "in between" or "void" idea. An easy design, focused

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**FIGURE 7**

Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado.

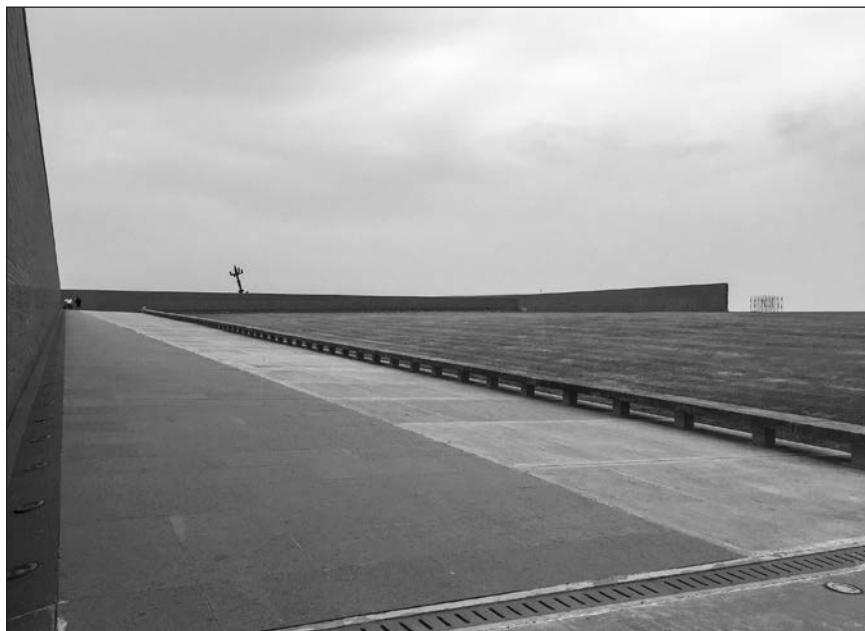


Photo: Rebeca Lopes Cabral, May 5, 2016.

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55. Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, op. cit., p. 1.

**FIGURE 8**

Names on wall of Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado.

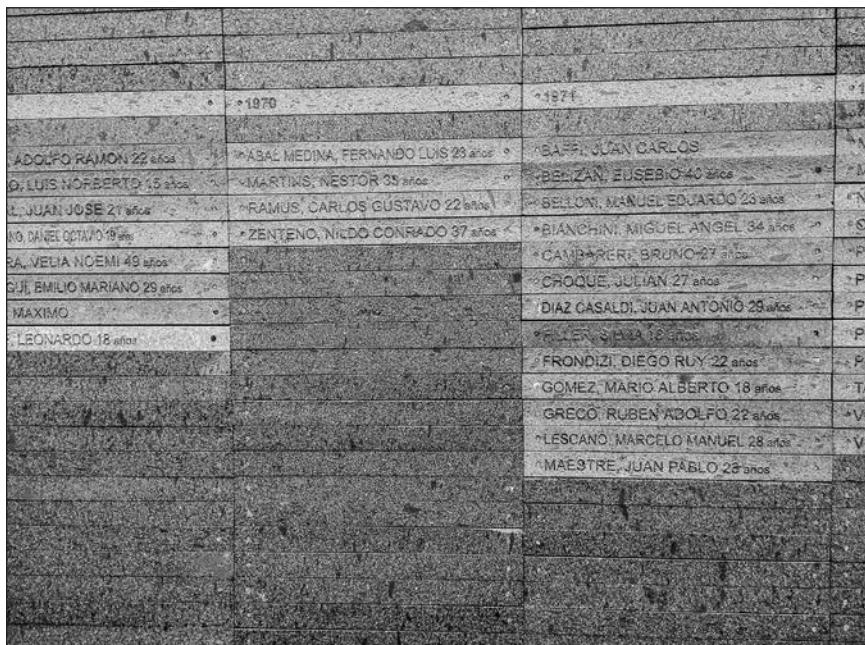


Photo: Rebeca Lopes Cabral, May 5, 2016.

only on the form, was denied, and the proposal of a horizontal object tried to expand the traditional sense of the monument. After all, having grasped the diversity and complexity of the different ways to represent the Argentinean dictatorship memories, as shown in this chapter, it is possible to think that there is no more room to accommodate isolated monuments dedicated to great heroes.<sup>56</sup>

The site is also strategically situated in Buenos Aires' topography of pain (figure 10): on the margin of the Río del Plata, where bodies were thrown in during the military regime; three kilometres away from the military Jorge Newberry airport, from where the *vuelos de la muerte* (flights of death)<sup>57</sup> departed; near the Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA), where many of the victims studied; and in the same neighbourhood as the former

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56. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

57. The *vuelos de la muerte* were a common extermination practice under the dictatorial government. People were thrown in the Río or Mar del Plata from an airplane.

**FIGURE 9**

View of the Río del Plata, from the end of the Monumento a las Víctimas del Terrorismo de Estado.



Photo: Rebeca Lopes Cabral, May 5, 2016.

Centro Clandestino de Detención, the Escuela Mecánica de la Armada. Its location, at a distance from the hectic urban ambiance, allows for a time to reflect and think,<sup>58</sup> and thus generates a mourning ritual.<sup>59</sup> When entering this space, voices quiet down, steps become lighter, and attention is heightened.

Additionally, despite its aesthetic success, the lack of funds to complete the architecture project prevented the site from being properly connected with the Costanera Norte, making the access to the site even more difficult.<sup>60</sup> In this way, the park and its outskirts remained in the same precarious situation, with giant empty spaces without any usage whatsoever.<sup>61</sup>

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58. Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, op. cit., p. 7.

59. Diéguez, *Cuerpos sin duelo ...*, op. cit., p. 24.

60. Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, op. cit., p. 8.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 9

**FIGURE 10**

Sites of hurtful memory close to the Parque de la Memoria.



Source: Google Earth Pro, accessed January 19, 2017.

It is “an almost invisible project for the people living in the city. It is not that the project is poorly constructed, but nothing has been done to promote its connection to the urban perception and experience.”<sup>62</sup>

The lack of a consistent and continuous policy of state memory, contrary to what was announced since early construction, did not articulate the possible relationships between park and city, or between the architecture and the sculptures that make up the site.<sup>63</sup> The space became a memory condenser, as memory is found radically different from that in the houses, streets, squares, and corners of Buenos Aires. The elements that are gathered in the park seem to be randomly displayed, more so that apart from the poor articulation between the architecture and the poly-sculptural complex, the relationship between the works of art is equally precarious.

62. Vezzetti, “Memoriales del Terrorismo de Estado en Buenos Aires ...,” *op. cit.*, p. 112.

63. Silvestri, *El arte en los límites de la representación*, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

Using the words of Frederic Jameson,<sup>64</sup> when characterizing post-modernism, it can be said that the park's unfinished project configures a group of signs with no sense.

Retrospectively, the government seemed more interested in advertising its coastal revitalization program, while the College of Architecture and Urbanism was interested in the announcement of the architecture and sculpture competition, resulting in the lack of a more serious political approach demanded by this delicate subject matter.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, these problems are similar to those of other urban practices that were frequently undertaken in the 1970s and 1980s—as pointed out by David Harvey<sup>66</sup>—when the state began to internationally advertise cities with architecture and urban planning. Nevertheless, when addressing the trauma and pain that are still present in the Argentinean society, it is worth questioning the ethical attitudes that the Government of Buenos Aires undertook as manager of this wide range of memories.

However, I should add that in no way does this undermine the efforts of the architects and the pro-monument commission who, in the Parque de la Memoria, sought to build a place where poetry would be possible. The historical proximity to the events centred on the dictatorship gives room for uncertainties concerning the political, legal, and aesthetic choices that should be made. Nonetheless, alternative possibilities should be explored when considering the limits of the architecture and urban fields in memory policies. After all, how is it possible, among the cruel ambiguities of contemporary cities, to create spaces of critical narrative in order to build bridges between the memories themselves, the victims, and the future generations responsible for the memory works yet to come?

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64. Jameson, “Pós-modernidade e sociedade de consumo,” *op. cit.*

65. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

66. Harvey, David, 1989, “From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in urban governance in late capitalism,” in *Geografiska Annaler*, vol. 71, no. 1, p. 3-17.



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Graduated from Universidade de São Paulo's Law School (2007-2012), **Vivian Legname Barbour** is currently a master's student at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, USP. Her research is supported by a scholarship from the São Paulo Research Foundation FAPESP (2014-2016). She worked at Vila Itororó (2008-2009) through the University Legal Consulting Service, an extension program that developed land regularization projects with dynamics based on popular education methods. Its purpose was to help Vila Itororó's dwellers to articulate their fight for housing rights in heritage sites. She also worked as a heritage educator at Casa Modernista, Brazil's first modernist building (2013-2014), where she developed the project "Memory is present – building a modernist archive," based on oral history dynamics. As a member of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies, she presented partial results of her current research at the III Biannual Conference of the ACHS (Montreal, 2016). She is a collaborator of N&D Service, a start-up that develops creative economy projects, specially related to education in cultural sites (2016).

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Ce travail concrétise des années de formation pluridisciplinaire entre l'histoire contemporaine, les relations internationales et les études patrimoniales, et témoigne de la variété de ses questionnements. Forte de plusieurs expériences professionnelles dans le monde muséal et grâce à son engagement dans le monde associatif, elle a par ailleurs su développer une approche tant théorique que pratique des enjeux liés au patrimoine.

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**Aline Fonseca Iubel** and **Dayana Zdebsky de Cordova** are both Brazilian anthropologists. They graduated in social sciences from the Federal University of Paraná and obtained their masters in social anthropology from the same institution. Aline presented her dissertation on justice practices aimed at (police) investigation and (legal) proceedings related to crimes against children and teenagers in the field of legal and state anthropology. During her master's studies, Dayana researched the institutional production of contemporary art in Curitiba. She is currently a Ph.D. student in social

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**Diego Finder Machado** is a doctoral history student at the University of Santa Catarina State – UDESC, whose area of studies is contemporary history. He has graduated in 2005 in history at the University of Joinville – UNIVILLE, and completed in 2009 his master's in history at UDESC. His doctoral research, under the supervision of Janice Gonçalves, discusses the perceptions of the remains of the past in Joinville, Santa Catarina, trying to understand the social effects of the subversive uses of cultural heritage. Between 2009 and 2012, he worked at Joinville's Cultural Foundation as a manager of public policies for cultural heritage. He is a member of the City, Culture and Difference Research Group (UNIVILLE). At UDESC, he works in the Cultural Heritage Lab (LabPac) and is a member of the History Teaching, Memory and Culture Research Group.

**Nader Meddeb** est architecte diplômé de l'École nationale d'architecture et d'urbanisme de Tunis en 2005. Il obtient son master en architecture de la même institution en 2007. En 2015, il devient titulaire d'un doctorat en aménagement décerné par l'Université de Montréal avec une thèse intitulée *La modernisation de Tunis, un urbanisme et une architecture d'État au miroir d'une anthologie de la percée dans la médina (1881-1987)*. Ses travaux de recherche s'insèrent dans le cadre des études postcoloniales

et tendent à identifier l'influence des pouvoirs politiques dans la définition des formes architecturales et urbaines, à dévoiler leur instrumentalisation du patrimoine bâti et les répercussions des décisions gouvernementales sur la valorisation ou la dévalorisation de l'héritage édifié. Dans ce cadre précis, il s'est intéressé, entre autres, à l'orientalisme architectural dans les expositions universelles.





Sous la direction de  
Guillaume ETHIER

**L**a tenue récente de méga-événements sportifs au Brésil entraîna, dans bien des villes du pays, la conclusion de vastes campagnes de régénération urbaine dont les conséquences demeurent incertaines à ce jour. Entre autres choses, l'importance accordée à l'image dans la gestion du patrimoine urbain fut maintes fois critiquée et nous fournit aujourd'hui une occasion de réfléchir à la question du spectacle du patrimoine. Comment valoriser les actifs patrimoniaux alors que leur survie dépend de plus en plus de leur visibilité dans le flux d'images qui nous assaillent ?

Dans cet ouvrage, les délicates questions entourant la spectacularisation du patrimoine urbain sont abordées à l'aide d'exemples tirés de l'expérience du Brésil, mais aussi de celles de diverses villes à travers le monde.

**T**he recent sporting mega-events held in Brazil have given rise to widespread urban regeneration strategies, the consequences of which remain uncertain. In particular, it is the image-centric approach to urban heritage, the much-criticised notion of spectacle in urban space that gives us cause for comment and reflection. How do we valorize heritage sites when their survival is increasingly contingent upon their visibility on an already crowded stage ?

With examples drawn from Brazil, as well as from other cities around the world, this collection investigates the sometimes difficult questions raised by the spectacularization of urban heritage.

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- **Avec la collaboration de** Vivian Legname Barbour, Rebeca Lopes Cabral, Dayana Zdebsky de Cordova, Julie Deschépper, Guillaume Ethier, Ana Maria Vieira Fernandes, Aline Fonseca lubel, Diego Finder Machado et Nader Meddeb