

BETWEEN THE LEGAL PROTECTION AND THE NEW USES: THE INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE IN PERNAMBUCO, BRAZIL

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A committee for the preservation of the industrial heritage appeared in Brazil in 2003, the same year of Nizhny Tagil's Letter. The academic debates on the importance of industry and the preservation of their remains can date from the 1970s. Warren Dean published *The São Luiz de Itu factory: a study of Industrial Archeology*, in 1976, which was followed by other works on industrialization presenting and discussing the presence and the influence of industries in the country, from mills and mills to factories in large cities.

Even though the legal protection of industrialization traces dating back to the 1960s, the country still “does not have a national inventory of its heritage, and even the documentation related to the activity of the industry is only partially organized”¹². The remains of the São João de Ipanema Royal Iron Factory in Iperó, São Paulo, were listed by Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) in 1964. Almost thirty years had passed since the first registration of an industrial source, the São Julião Patriotic Iron Factory, located near Ouro Preto, listed in 1938.

The modernists had a crucial influence on the national heritage image, which was associated with Minas Gerais and the wealth provided by gold exploration. In consonance with the recognition of the colonial remains promoted by the modernists, several sugarcane mills were listed, in the 1940s, at a time of disintegration of this mode of sugarcane exploration in northeastern Brazil. However, these are isolated initiatives. They did not systematically aim at the specific industrial heritage category.

From debates and international agreements, as well as proposals at the national level, the Constitution of 1988 expanded the notion of historical and artistic heritage to cultural heritage in Brazilian legislation. The focus of the patrimonial policy would not only be the preservation of the “property inserted in the landscape that framed it but, above all, inferring its nexus in the web of representations of the space that was affectionate to it, whether rural or urban”.³ In this circumstance, the city appears as a set that can be preserved.

Hence, action on urban heritage becomes much more than *tombar* certain buildings, “it is, rather, to preserve the balance of the landscape, always thinking as interrelated to infrastructure, lot, building, urban language, uses, the historical profile, and the natural landscape itself”.⁴ The theme of recognizing the values of the urban landscape thus becomes an important point in the debate on industrial heritage. The continuous process of deepening this debate paved the way for the appreciation of artifacts until then considered “minor”, such as the so-called basic architecture, architectural sets, and built landscapes that came to be recognized for their special compositional and environmental qualities.⁵

Recommendations such as integrated conservation appear in the Venice and Washington letters and the Declaration of Amsterdam. Despite the debates and the introduction of new bases that support the protection of industrial heritage, the absorption of these novelties does not mean a clear and broad definition of the guidelines with the bodies responsible for preservation in the legal sphere. Furthermore, proposals for intervention and use of industrial heritage present positions that are far removed from these studies and international guidelines. “The project proposals [...] show very aggressive urban appropriation strategies, direct repercussions of the predominantly contemporary city's modes and methods of production”.⁶

According to Harvey, urban revitalization projects are linked to the phenomenon of “entrepreneurship in urban management”⁷, where cities take on entrepreneurial behavior, including the search for new forms of financing. Safeguarding the remnants of industries in this way faces many challenges. “In addition to the generally privileged location, these former industrial areas represent potential reserves of idle, degraded and low-cost urban land”.⁸ These elements stand out as advantages for the implementation of new ventures, arousing the interest of several agents involved in the production and transformation of the city, both from the public and private sectors.

The difficulties, however, are even broader. The diversity and complexity of buildings and spaces that compose the industrial heritage represent a series of obstacles to the correct understanding of their specificities. In addition to the previously mentioned privileged location, it is possible to indicate the large extension of the areas, the understanding of the relationships between built spaces, social codifications and aesthetic expressions, the proper apprehension of their evolutionary characteristics, formal composition, and integration with the surroundings. Furthermore, the initial impasse in defending its characterization as a cultural asset and the speculative pressure to which they are often subjected.

In terms of state or even municipal preservation agencies, the importance of work and production spaces is redefining; often associated with local affections, or defining urban aspects of neighborhoods or even cities, manufacturing or railway spaces are recognized as parts of urban reality that cannot simply be obliterated.⁹

The working-class neighborhoods and villages, or business cities, were part of the urbanization of several places in Brazil in the 20th century. The period so-called *Encilhamento* (1890-1891)¹⁰ was marked by the boom of the industrial sector in the early 1890s. The expansion of the industrial sector's performance would come together with the emergence of many new factories in different regions of Brazil. Some of these companies, founded between the years 1890 and 1892, would later be considered large textile factories in the country.

In Pernambuco, the cotton textile industry was present, throughout almost the entire 20th century, as a prominent activity in the industrial sector. In 1905, Pernambuco already had eight textile factories. Paul Singer (1979) highlights the relationship between industrialization and urbanization in the cities of Pernambuco. Factories such as *Companhia de Tecidos Paulista*, *Macaxeira* and *Tacaruna* became an element that drives urbanization. The urban conception of modernity is qualitatively linked to industrial production, with the construction of another city model, spatially materializing technical, economic, political, and social ideologies.¹¹

Macaxeira (*Apipucos*) Factory and *Paulista* Factory were founded in 1891, close to water sources, the *Apipucos* weir and the *Timbó* river, respectively. The *Macaxeira* factory was also close to the Recife to *Limoeiro* Railroad. And both had a vast territory available for the installation of manufacturing plants and other instruments necessary for production, the flow of goods, and accommodation of labor. *Fábrica Tacaruna* was installed in 1894, initially as a sugar refinery, known as *Usina Beltrão*, with water supply from the *Beberibe* river, despite being entirely located in Recife¹².

The location of the factories follows different logics, from the proximity of rivers, given the importance of water for the production process, regions with forests for the supply of firewood, and the availability of infrastructure. However, the occupation of spaces for the production of large industries, especially in more isolated areas, was accompanied by the

creation of their structures, and the construction of social life intertwined with daily factory life, developing an intimate relationship with spatial transformations, the creation of places and ways of living and appropriation of the city. Thus, industrial activity consisted of an important element of spatial structuring.

The productive restructuring and industrial deconcentration intensification that metropolises are experiencing coincide with the growth of the industrial centers dismantling from the 1980s onwards. Most of these 19th century factories stopped their activities in the 1990s, amidst the diffusion of neoliberal ideas, in addition to a fiscal and financial crisis in the Brazilian economy. Therefore, considering the construction of the contemporary city, the spaces of deindustrialization tend to remain decontextualized and seen as obsolete and unproductive.

The three industrial centers mentioned in this article face differences and similarities concerning legal protection and management. The Recife Metropolitan Region Development Foundation (FIDEM) developed, in 1978, a plan for the preservation of the historic sites of the Recife Metropolitan Region, where the remnants of these industrial centers appear inserted in areas of preservation interest. Also covered by preservation laws at the municipal level: the institution of Special Preservation Properties (IEPs). With the decline of industrial activity in the textile sector, some elements that compose the workers' village were modified to modernize the industrial parks. Nevertheless, after the closing of the factories, the villages suffered other changes, demolitions aiming the city infrastructure modernization, and abandonment.

According to Paula Aragão Souza, the inventory that includes the workers' villages in the Metropolitan Region of Recife, developed by FIDEM, would have, in the case of Paulista, indicated isolated items precisely around the condition of integrity of the goods¹³. An interpretation that can also be extended to the remains of Macaxeira and Tacaruna factories. Additionally, the actions taken by the Foundation for Historical and Artistic Heritage of Pernambuco (FUNDARPE), aiming legally protect the remains, are far distant from each other. The development of these registration processes, even with the presence of delimitation of state or municipal preservation zones, highlights a problem as indicated by Beatriz Kühl: preservation is considered *a posteriori*. In other words, issues that should be premised and require time to be developed, as further assessments, studies, and analyses to support the preservation and new uses, are not considered until critical moments, with imminent destruction or appropriation. "The problems of preservation on this scale are rarely inserted in an articulated way in the dynamics of the management of cities, causing preservation and urban and territorial planning to behave as separate instances, bets, and not truly integrated".¹⁴

The main building of Tacaruna Factory goes under state protection in 1994¹⁵. In Paulista, the former residence of the industrialists family becomes the first building in the workers' village to be listed by FUNDARPE, in 2002, followed by the chimneys of the two CTP factories and administrative building, in 2012. Recently, the Saint Isabel Church, located in the center of Paulista, was also listed¹⁶. On the other hand, Macaxeira Factory has only one of the buildings classified as IEP, without FUNDARPE's protection or guidelines. The predominance of legal protection for isolated elements emerges as a common point of this institutional preservation, whether municipal or estatal.

Different paths were followed regarding the interventions on the remnants discussed here: the remains of the CTP Factories are integrating a shopping mall and a residential condominium, however, only the old administrative building gained an adapted use for its

structures. Inserted in the external area of Paulista Northway Shopping, the building was used as a restaurant and an event space. The industrial's residence remains closed for all these years. In Macaxeira, the administrative building and warehouses, including some that were not even listed as IEPs, and the wooded area around the factory were used to provide public services and leisure to the community in which it operates: the Macaxeira Urban Park¹⁷. While the attempts to transform the Tacaruna Factory into a cultural center did not materialize effectively¹⁸. Nowadays, the building, that belongs to the state government, is completely abandoned.

Public opinion is extremely important in this process, as the significance of these assets can change, and without a doubt, a more traditional conception of heritage, still rooted in the idea of monument and isolated elements, can influence the population's point of view, and the community affected by possible interventions. Despite legally referring to the conservation of material goods, buildings and structures generally do not correspond to parameters of architectural exceptionality, in addition to undergoing modifications to modernize during their evolutionary process, challenging more traditional notions of integrity and authenticity. It should also be highlighted the value of industrial culture, in the sphere of work, daily customs, in the construction of many cities, in addition to issues such as local identity. Adapted use that is poorly grounded and based mainly on profit makes it possible to forget these values.

Even though the legal protection of the traces of industrialization is still a relevant issue, due to the rarity and little systematization of action on this type of good, *tombamento*, or legal recognition, is far from being a guarantee of the physical conservation of a building, and the continuity of the memory to which it refers. It is not that it remains static and untouched, however, the constructed meanings need public policies and an effort from other actors for its valorization. In this sense, authors such as Cristina Meneguello consider that “the path to the valuation of industrial heritage cannot lie exclusively in the performance of government preservation agencies, but in the performance of organized society”.¹⁹ In addition to “registration”, actions around the uses and re-significations of this heritage deserve attention and broader debates.

In this way, many questions can be asked: How did the intervention projects consider the use-value, as opposed to the exchange value? What is the importance of a new use for the physical conservation of these goods and their symbolic value? Are the new uses gentrifying these spaces? It is necessary to deepen the construction of heritage laws in Brazil and Pernambuco, intertwining this process with international debates, analyzing the extent to which the approach to its conservation includes criteria of global influence. What local specificities contribute or not to the valuation of these goods? How have real state speculation and urban regeneration projects acted on the complexes since their deactivation and how are these changes approached in practice? How were their usage projects thought and carried out? And without a doubt, it is necessary to think about the participation or use of the community in which they are inserted in this process of valuing, appropriating, and constructing industrial heritage. From the deepening of this analysis, seeking to answer these questions, it is expected to understand the place of industrial heritage in contemporary urban dynamics in the Pernambuco metropolis, which still has abandoned, forgotten remnants, or in constant dispute for its preservation and memory.

¹ MENEGUELLO, Cristina. Patrimônio industrial como tema de pesquisa. Anais do I Seminário Internacional História do Tempo Presente. Florianópolis UDESC; ANPUH-SC; PPGH, 2011, p. 1829.

² All the quotations were translated by the author of the present paper.

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 - ⁶. Rufinoni, p.15.
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 - ⁹. Meneguello, p. 1826.
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