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Lucrative coercions

The Carioca¹ “Cultural Landscape” as a construction of Heritage determined by sustainable development

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Abstract: “Rio + 20” 2012 / “Football World” Cup 2014 / “Summer Olympics Games” 2016. Rio de Janeiro, guest city of these events, is a real laboratory for new territorial and town planning policies. In this context, the submission of the city to the UNESCO World Heritage List as a “Cultural Landscape” brings questions not only related to landscape and heritage but also about territorial management and governance on the ongoing transformation of the city. The leader of this application has redefined the notion of “Cultural Landscape” regarding local characteristics and established the tools for the management of the Heritage topic according to premises on sustainable development and economic progress. This paper focuses on the articulation and reciprocity of notions such as landscape, heritage and sustainable development in the carioca territorial context; it is a unique chance to observe the implementation of these concepts and their semantic and ideological configuration.

Keywords: Rio de Janeiro, Landscape, Cultural Landscape, Sustainable development, UNESCO³, IPHAN⁴, Heritage, Identity, Territory.

1. Introduction. Sustainable development

In 1972, the “Stockholm declaration”⁵ places environmental questions as an issue of global concern.

Made well-known by the World Commission on Environment and Development⁶, the notion of “sustainable development” is an answer to the unequal distribution of wealth and the accelerated degradation of the biosphere. This notion acts on the increase of population in a wise, sensible and responsible way⁷.

At the end of the Conference “Earth Planet” hosted in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the “Declaration of Rio”⁸ was adopted. This new statement declares that “Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature”. It also states that “In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it”. This declaration establishes the link between heritage, population, environment and development in order to achieve a sustainable development.

In 1992, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee completes its heritage policies creating “Cultural Landscape” as a category in the World Heritage List. This new category understands the heritage value of landscape as a “tool” in connection with human activities. Twenty years later, in 2012, the submission “Rio+20”⁹ brought together countries, once again concerning sustainable development. This new United Nations conference took place in the guest city of the next big international sportive event¹⁰, creating the opportunity to experience sustainable development in the middle of an urban-landscape undergoing transformation.

Between the international agenda, territorial transformation and the inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL), the city of Rio de Janeiro becomes a place to rethink the notions of landscape, heritage and sustainable development all at once.

How has this new connection between landscape and heritage been influenced by the notion of sustainable development?

How does this relation of reciprocity ensure that the mutation of a territory develops in a sustainable way?

The results of fieldwork in Rio de Janeiro since 2011 in the context of a PhD¹¹ give the possibility to create a platform for additional

thoughts over these questions. The outcome of this research is based on interviews with professionals involved in the development of Rio de Janeiro’s application, on information taken from documentaries and from active participation at meetings of the Committee of the site “Rio World Heritage”.

2. From Landscape to Cultural-Landscape

The idea of landscape is used in many disciplines and has a lot of different meanings. In this specific study case, we are going to focus on its connection with what is at stake regarding sustainable development in the context of “heritage understanding”. For that, we will observe the semantic evolution of the idea of landscape through some official texts of the UNESCO framework. Then in the particular case of the development of the application of Rio de Janeiro to the UNESCO, we will observe a local adaptation of this notion.

2.1 From landscape to ‘cultural landscape’

From the Athena’s Charter for building restoration in 1931¹² to the Washington Card in 1986 or the European Landscape Convention in 2000¹³, the setting of standards shows the existence of a long-standing concern for the preservation of landscape as an “object of heritage”. This series of texts illustrates the evolution of the idea of landscape as a natural element, appreciated for its beauty, towards the more complex and less aesthetic idea of a relation between historic city and its natural and/or cultural environment. Progressively the heritage value attributed to landscape contributes to the perpetuation of uses and habits between generations with *landscape itself being the place of their implementation* (Berque, 1984:33). Sustainable development considerations, such as economic and social productions and the dynamic nature of landscape, have progressively been taken into consideration in the heritage approach.

The creation of the category “Cultural Landscape”¹⁴ in 1992 by the UNESCO marked an additional step in heritage standards, embracing landscape itself as an asset to preserve, and no longer as the environment surrounding a monument. The landscape is indeed considered as a result of the interaction between the natural and

the cultural; and it is based on the relation between human and environment. The addition of the word “cultural” recognizes the intangible values of landscape despite the risks of fragmentation and eventual loss of significance due to territorial transformations.

Today, accelerated urban development is exposing cultural landscape to new issues. In reaction to this, in 2011 the UNESCO adopted a recommendation concerning Historic Urban Landscapes¹⁵. This text brings a regulatory framework to assure some control over the important evolutions that urban and historic sites will experience. This new UNESCO instrument favors responsible management of territories that find themselves in delicate situations between economic development and maintaining their heritage value. This recommendation has already been cited for the granting of the building permit for a development project, deemed necessary for the regeneration of a world heritage site (“Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City” March 2012¹⁶).

The UNESCO’s tools for recognition of heritage have thus evolved from an approach based on the static idea of a landscape-monument towards a more inclusive and evolutionary approach of cultural-landscape and towards the historic-urban-landscape. This evolution shows the increasing consideration of the interaction between humans and their environment and the dynamic nature of this process which comes with the development of concerned territories. Therefore we can develop a new hypothesis that sustainable development motivates the creation of “cultural landscape” to recognize the connection between territories, sociopolitical practices and heritage.

In light of the complexity of the notion of cultural landscape, as defined by the UNESCO, the term suffers issues arising from “semantic reconfigurations” depending on the cultural areas that consider it. Each interpretation is motivated by the social and cultural orientations of that society towards heritage, landscape and sustainable development.

2.2 From cultural-landscape to urban-cultural-landscape

A first application of the city of Rio de Janeiro to the UNESCO WHL¹⁷ was submitted in 2003 in the category “Mix Site”¹⁸. However, it was rejected by IUCN¹⁹ and deferred by ICOMOS²⁰. ICOMOS suggested submitting a new application as “Cultural Landscape”. That is why in 2008, some professionals²¹ started to develop a second application. They attempted to redefine the notion of “Cultural Landscape” as understood by the UNESCO. This new understanding was made in order to respect the cultural and geo-historic specificity of the country and to fulfill the political, social and economic wills of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

Marked by colonial, then post-colonial reality, and by significant political-economic hardship, Brazil is a nation with multiple heritages. These traditions and landscapes find themselves today confronted with strong growth and rapid development in urban zones. As such, Brazilian customs and landscapes are experiencing perpetual mutation. The particularity of Brazilian territories arises from the synthesis of incessant change between values from different horizons all along its history. In this changing and chaotic reality, where identity comes from “process” rather than from roots, projection towards the future is a daily leitmotiv to the detriment of nostalgia towards the past.

As Dalmo Vieira Filho²² said, “Heritage does not deal with the past, but with what has to be part of the future”. Heritage has since then been seen as a tool for the future, a tool for development.

In order to understand the urban cultural landscapes within their environmental, geographic and social-historic context, the Brazilian

heritage approach prefers the “Urban Cultural Landscape” notion instead of “Historic Urban Landscape”. Considered as a new paradigm, this notion allows the revisiting of methodologies and practices used by heritage institutions regarding ways of life and urban dynamic evolutions. This choice makes possible the connection between heritage and economic development especially in situations such as those involving deep social disparities (e.g. slums) in emerging economies, depopulation and degradation of historic centers, urban mobility or precariousness of administration and technical structures responsible for urban management.

The historic constitution of Rio de Janeiro is one of a close and original relation between landscape and city, through the production and cultural activities of its inhabitants. Today, the carioca cultural landscape takes its basis in the relation between nature and urbanity. This approach of “Cultural-Landscape” as “Urban-Cultural-Landscape” has become the structural axis of the entry document for the UNESCO. The carioca cultural landscape has been described as a dynamic element resulting from the interaction between city and sea, city and mountain, city and defense, city and forest, city and gardens, and city and production (IPHAN, 2011).

The inscription of the carioca cultural landscape at the UNESCO WHL must also be placed in a wider context of “Urban Marketing” in which the city of Rio de Janeiro engages, where the city is currently undergoing major urban transformations occurring as a result of this particular labeling. For these reasons, it is important that the institutions involved create new tools to protect the nature-urbanity relation in light of the possible negative consequences of the upcoming events. Inherent to being the host of big events, Rio de Janeiro is a real laboratory of urban policies that regulate important territorial transformations (Porto Maravilha, construction of a third subway line, reorganization of the red bus, urban planning of the “favelas”...). These policies, to some extent, have been drawn up with consideration of the impact on communities and the preservation of the landscape. As an example, we can consider the actions of the World Cup Popular Committee²³ that defends the rights of inhabitants whose living conditions will be profoundly impacted by urban transformations. Or the “green corridor” implemented by the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro, which is used to identify natural zones and preserve them while allowing the development of the transport infrastructures needed to host these events.

We are thus witnessing a more sustainable approach towards “Heritage”.

In this way, the application changed the notion of “Cultural Landscape” by including the urban dimension, so that the related urban heritage would become the driver for territorial transformation.

2.3 Conceptual turning point

Initially considered for its aesthetic value, the landscape has been progressively constituted on one hand as a geographic dynamic element and on the other hand, as a fixed heritage element, carrying territorial identity construction. It is in this confrontation between a dynamic approach of the landscape (territorial development) and a more static one (preservation) that the notion of cultural landscape has gradually developed.

In the particular context of the city of Rio de Janeiro, this notion has been enlarged by the urban dimension leaving a conciliatory and multidisciplinary vision of the carioca territory.

3. Management of the Carioca Urban Cultural Landscape: a tool for a sustainable territorial development

The inscription to the UNESCO WHL imposes that a strategic plan be submitted to the World Heritage Committee. The position of cultural landscape is becoming a leitmotiv to improve the territorial management, taking into consideration the goals of heritage preservation and those of territorial development.

The territorial scale of a “Cultural Landscape” sets a wide multidisciplinary vision. Its management requires the implication of different actors in order to articulate the investment of the global scale while keeping the local character. In order to design the framework for the “Rio World Heritage” management plan, IPHAN created a “Committee”²⁴, composed of three levels of authorities²⁵ (State, District and City), the directors of specific natural areas and as well private partners²⁶. This Committee has regular meetings every fifteen days since the beginning of 2012. Based on this, we are going to analyze how it turns towards sustainable development.

3.1 Gradual approaching towards the regulatory framework

One of the main purposes of the Committee is to bring together the already existing regulatory frameworks that benefit some of the territories included in “Rio World Heritage”: urban (such as the master-plan of the city²⁷), but also social and preservation (such as the areas of cultural environment protection – APAC²⁸). The challenge is to work on the continuity of the existing normative regimes in order to have a progressive consistency. If some areas do not have any ruling framework, the Committee proposes the creation of new regulations to complete the ones that already exist.

The position of “Rio World Heritage” with the “urban cultural landscape” concept favors a multidisciplinary and trans-scaled vision of territories. This approach requires actors, in a dynamic and global vision of the landscape, to work with a non-sectarian view of territory, integrating the different existing plans. This will to reconcile and harmonize tends to influence all urban policy in the city, starting with the landscape. Territorial management thus contributes to the constitution of a rule-system that favors continuity between all territorial implementations, with a geographically balanced sustainable development.

3.2 What role for population?

Even if their voice is not officially integrated in the elaboration of the final document for the UNESCO, the population is now a major actor due to the obvious impact on their lives. The role of the inhabitants, while drawing up the management plan, is thus another important axis and one of the key points to the success of the implementation plan. The Committee has debated since the beginning of 2012 on participation or education towards population. Does the association have to be part of the elaborating process of the plan? Does this plan have to be submitted to a population consultation?

On the other hand, the UNESCO label attributed to the Carioca Landscape placed the question of the landscape in the inhabitant’s interests and concerns. The Committee wants to make the inhabitants aware of the quality of the places they use/live in, and the link between their city and its natural environment. This sensitization work seeks to make them understand the value of this landscape. The Committee places great importance on communication and education about the topics of heritage and cultural landscape, and

they are currently preparing a national survey. “Rio World Heritage” tends to create a sense of responsibility and appropriation towards the environment.

3.3 The Committee tools

In order to achieve the goal of the regulation system and the inclusion of the population, the Committee created nine Sub-committees, each responsible for one of nine topics. These programs coordinate the general topic of the “Rio World Heritage” with the desire for sustainable development for carioca territories. These topics are: Education, Institutional, Natural Heritage Conservation, Implementation and Finances, Communication and Promotion, Intangible Heritage, Infrastructure and Tourism. Each sub-committee now has to work with the “Urban Carioca Landscape” as a main guide, but focusing on its own topic.

3.4 Towards territorial governance

One of the major consequences of the labeling as “Cultural Landscape” is the fact that, for the first time, political leaders have been made to work together for the same goal: the management of the carioca cultural landscape. The landscape is a territorial entity which mixes humanity, nature and urbanity. This combination needs the participation of all the actors involved. The Committee encourages dialogue between the State, the District and the City. This connection is a way of new territorial governance.

The position of “Rio World Heritage” favors horizontal cooperation between the different authorities. Its sustainable development is then based on new ways of public decision-making that give priority to democratic dialogue. Given the title of “Cultural Landscape”, the UNESCO gives to the city of Rio de Janeiro a way of thinking Carioca Landscape as a sustainable territory. The management plan becomes an opportunity to rethink “Cultural Landscape” as directly linked to sustainable development.

4. Lucrative Coercions

The notion of landscape as a heritage object has changed from the idea of a “cliché” towards a “process of implementation”. As a result of this confrontation, the cultural landscape can now be considered as a territorial figure charged with the goals of sustainable development.

It is interesting to understand how in a country such as Brazil, “cultural landscape” has been manipulated in order to answer to local interests. Thus, in Rio de Janeiro, landscape and heritage have been brought together in the context of sustainable development to lead to the notion of urban cultural landscape. The purpose of the UNESCO application was to reveal a Heritage consciousness about landscape being a question of sustainable development.

Brazil can bring new and interesting approaches, in this case, to work with the landscape in a sustainable manner in this world in transition.

Notes

¹ The word carioca is used for everything which comes from the city of Rio de Janeiro

² Laboratoire Architecture Ville Urbanisme Environnement

³ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

⁴ National Institute for Artistic and Historic Heritage of Brazil

⁵ Final declaration of the United Nations on environment, Stockholm, 1972. <http://www.unep.org/Documents/Multilingual/Default.asp?documentid=97&articleid=1503&l=fr> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

⁶ Commission created in 1983 by the UN, also named as Brundtland Commission

⁷ Brundtland report (Notre Avenir à tous, 1987), Chapter 2: Sustainable development. <http://www.agora21.org/international/ressources/rio%2B20/information/acces-a-linformation/notre-avenir-a-tous.html> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

⁸ For more information about the "Declaration of Rio": <http://www.v1.agora21.org/dd.html> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

⁹ For more information about Rio+20: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/rio20.html> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹⁰ Such as the Military Olympic games in 2011, the Football World Cup in 2014, and the summer Olympic games in 2016.

¹¹ This PhD research is titled: "Global Logics. Local Practices. The multiple territory in the margins of heritage. The case of the entry of the city of Rio de Janeiro at the World Heritage List of the UNESCO".

¹² Athens Charter for the restoration of historic monuments document: <http://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/167-the-athens-charter-for-the-restoration-of-historic-monuments> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹³ European Landscape Convention available on the Council of Europe website: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/landscape/default_EN.asp? [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹⁴ UNESCO Cultural Landscape text: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/477/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹⁵ UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹⁶ City council grants planning permission for development scheme at World Heritage site "Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City": <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/848/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹⁷ World Heritage List

¹⁸ UNESCO criteria for selection: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

¹⁹ International Union for Conservation of Nature. Website: <http://www.iucn.org/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

²⁰ International Council on Monuments and Sites

²¹ Architects, landscapers, geographers, anthropologists, historians with the responsible of the concerned sites.

²² President of the DEPAM (department of material heritage)/IPHAN until 2011

²³ Blog of the Brazilian World Cup Popular Committee: <http://comitepopulário.wordpress.com/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

²⁴ The *portaria* n°464 of 29/12/2011 is the official text for this creation. The text can be read in the "Diário Oficial da União": <http://sintse.tse.jus.br/documentos/2011/Dez/30/portaria-no-464-de-29-de-dezembro-de-2011-dispoe> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

²⁵ IPHAN, Environment ministry, defense ministry, Governor State Rio de Janeiro, Municipality sectors.

²⁶ Such as the Roberto Marinho Foundation. Website: <http://www.frm.org.br/> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

²⁷ Master-plan of Rio de Janeiro available on the municipal secretary of urbanism website: <http://www.rio.rj.gov.br/web/smu/exibeConteudo?articleid=138989> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

²⁸ Description of the "Área de Proteção do Ambiente Cultural" (protection area of cultural environment) on the municipality website: <http://www0.rio.rj.gov.br/patrimonio/apac.shtm> [consulted on the 2013-01-28]

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