Landscapes of History: Contemporary Challenges to the Conservation of Historicity in Heritage Sites.

Abstract
The production of cultural heritage faces important challenges in countries where urban or regional planning do not fully consider the implications of patrimonial management, where investments in the safeguarding or re-qualification of built structures and conservation of natural sites are modest, where private businesses are often voracious and the effective access to democratic citizenship rights is uncertain.

The empirical subject of this paper is the social production of cultural heritage in the Brazilian region officially designated the Museu Aberto do Descobrimento (The Open-Air Discovery Museum), in Southern Bahia. Analysis of this case helps to understand crucial difficulties faced by cultural preservation in the contemporary world, particularly the challenge of nurturing senses of place and historicity in regions that experience not only accelerated urban growth and socio-economic change, but also significant unequal concentrations of wealth.

The following topics are highlighted: the making of landscapes of history; conflict and negotiation in the preservation arena around the attribution of cultural historic value to urban and natural sites; the role of cultural brokers; the clash between heritage preservation standards, and the commoditisation of ways of life and senses of place for global consumption.

Introduction
The historicity of heritage, theme proposed by the conference where this paper was presented, is a controversial expression that, broadly speaking, refers to the historical character of cultural goods. But what is encapsulated in this phrase? Does historicity refer to attributes that can be sufficiently dealt with by restoration technologies or heritage management practices alone, envisaging the efficient conservation of selected artefacts, so that they become lasting documents of cultural history? Is it a quality produced by linking present experiences to bygone pasts, by means of academic or artistic interpretations and discourses? Historicity of heritage is understood here as resulting from both - management and academic practices - amplified and deferred by local social agencies, for whom these are assets that can strengthen their historic context.

The word heritage is not used here abstractly either. Rather, it is seen as the product of effective social practices developed by identifiable groups within national and international legal frameworks, in relation to what they see as meaningful and useful marks to express senses of identity, localisation and territoriality. Whether tangible or intangible, these cultural markers are ascribed patrimonial value. But the attribution of such value is not a private community matter. Indeed, it results from negotiations - and sometimes conflicts - that take place in the articulations of the various levels (local, national and sometimes international) of cultural and political space.

Historicity, being part of social experience, contains the “emotional and moral consciousness” that emerges from the processes of production, appropriation and transformation of artefacts and practices into cultural markers (Thompson 1978).

I argue that the conservation of cultural heritage, and the production of senses of historicity, face important challenges in countries where urban or regional planning does not fully consider the implications of patrimonial management, where investments in the safeguarding of cultural practices, in the conservation and re-qualification of built structures and in the conservation of natural sites are modest, where private businesses are often voracious and effective access to citizenship rights is uncertain. How, then, can we understand the concept of a landscape of history?

Landscapes of history
In relation to contemporary social experience, it is not an exaggeration to affirm that many practices are structured by the market and for it. But it is known that commodities are socially appropriated as cultural markers of identity in the production of cultural diversity and senses of identity. The time-space and identity references enrooted in these cultural markers project local or even national contexts in supranational panoramas, encouraging the formation of global senses of place in localized and localizable territories. In this respect, Massey’s (1994) conception that global places are dynamic and the results of processes emerging from the social interactions that occur at them – thus, not being confined to preexisting physical frontiers – is clarifying. They cannot be sufficiently identified by such boundaries, but instead by the nature of the relations that they establish with the broader realities in which they participate. They also do not correspond to single identities, but are internally fractured by disputes and conflicts. Their singularity does not necessarily result from long, linear historic processes, but is reproduced (and modified) by the dynamics of social life in a complex, multi-level world. These meanings, which since the 1980s have been designated...
as ‘glo-cal’, politically confront, semantically shift and materially modify the cultural references in which the ideas of tradition and of nation-ness are anchored.

Although they are hybrid realities – or perhaps because of this – ‘glo-cal’ meanings became valuable in the market of symbolic goods. Currently, commodities and services based on exotisms made-up for display became the necessary counterpart of global cosmopolitanism. In the wealthiest countries, the market is expanding to locations and themes at the margins of the mainstream developments; similarly, there is intensified pressure from the international economy, particularly via tourism, on remote sites and on culturally distant knowledge systems and cultural expressions. Both in the megalopolis and in exotic villages, large, small or micro developments offer consumers immersion in distinct, picturesque and isolated universes, where comfort and security are guaranteed. Reified cultural diversity thus becomes a marketing distinction in the construction of places of a sui generis nature, where ordinary life and contemporary patrimonial rhetorics merge, producing what might be qualified in postmodern jargon as the hyperreal.

Landscapes of history are, in this sense, hyperreal assemblages made by patrimonial discourse and practices from framing, reinterpreting and appropriating old built structures, natural sites, as well as bits and pieces of lifeways and feelings of the local peoples concerned. These newly built commodities tend to be highly scenographic, and are offered for global consumption accompanied by engaging stories staged by media celebrities. Unlike the best-known process of urban gentrification, in the production of landscapes of history both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage are put on sale on the patrimonial store shelves and windows. At the turn of the 21st century, heritage and identity increasingly and rapidly become economic and symbolic competitive resources (Fortuna 1999). While the elegant boutiques of the tourist resorts offer fusion artefacts and foods that seek to commemorate, in a globalised intertextuality, the recognisably exotic character of the ‘glo-cal’ places, the race for recognition intensifies everywhere for local cultural goods to become part of this patrimony for global consumption. There are countless examples in all continents of inter-city competition for visibility of this patrimony for global consumption. There are countless examples in all continents of inter-city competition for visibility and recognition of heritage as shared cultural reference. In addition, they must stimulate in the local people the capacity to see the territory and the existing cultural heritage as something valuable for themselves, as well as relevant to others. In sum, the challenge is to contribute to the construction or strengthening of senses of belonging and of citizenship: to nurture the historicity of cultural heritage, in a political environment that has become necessarily mediated by market economy. This is the core issue focused by the examination of the Brazilian region known as the Discovery Coast, in southern Bahia.

**The Formation of Cultural Heritage in Porto Seguro**

The landscape of the Discovery Coast is marked by magnificent cliffs and sandy beaches cut by rivers and streams that run to the ocean. Some of them are navigable only by canoe, others by larger boats. It includes the place where the Portuguese landed in 1500 - a site located in the current Coroa Vermelha [Red Crown] beach, in the municipality of Santa Cruz Cabrália - and the 78km of coast that were the object of the first report written about the country, the letter of Pero Vaz de Caminha reporting to the King of Portugal about the recently discovered lands. Various historic and archaeological sites are found there, as well as demarcated indigenous lands and isolated villages, amid various natural reserves. The economic and political processes that structured its exploration by the Portuguese Crown radiated from the province of Porto Seguro, created in 1534. The trajectory of its development can be seen through the thesis of Caio Prado Júnior (1942) who, referring to the country’s economy in colonial times, wrote: ‘if we go to the essence of our formation, we see that in reality we were established to provide sugar, tobacco [and] some other items (...) for trade with Europe’. The historian Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda (1959) completed the idea by affirming that this trend ‘would continue this way throughout the entire colonial period, and would not be interrupted by independence, or the formation of the Republic’. In fact, the products changed, but the reason for their production remained practically the same.

Between the 16th and 17th century, the colonial regime concentrated its political, military, religious and economic strength on the formation of settlement centres, protecting both the coast and the extraction of wood from which was produced the ember-red dye from which came the country’s name: brazilwood. Before 1516, Franciscan monks had created a small settlement denominated Santa Cruz (now Cabrália), close to where the ships anchored and the Portuguese landed, and it was only consolidated as a village at a safer location after 1535. Nevertheless, the first colonial settlement known in Brazil dates from 1503 and its ruins are located nearby to the south. In 1534, Porto Seguro became the centre of the capitania and the parish of Nossa Senhora da Pena, which is now currently called the historic city. The occupied territory gradually expanded southward, including the Jesuit mission of Nossa Senhora d’Ajuda in 1549 and that of São João Batista dos Índios, now Trancoso, in 1558. In the same period, at dates not precisely known, the villages of Cramimoã (now Caraíva) to the south of Trancoso and Vale Verde in the interior, close to Arraial d’Ajuda, were formed. The sugarcane cultivation and mills were progressively introduced and since the mid-18th century, the market-oriented cultivation of cacao and coffee began. These activities motivated large investments and, along with cattle raising, consumed large tracts of forest. The natural resources and the productivity of...
this region are considered modest, however, in relation to the colony as a whole. Most of the villages that became the principal heritage sites of this region have 18th century characteristics. The oldest urban plans, as well as the main architectural monuments – such as the churches of Nossa Senhora d’Ajudá, Nossa Senhora da Pena, São João Batista, and the city council and prison of Porto Seguro – were built on 16th century remnants. Their size and scope accompany the relatively modest resources accumulated locally. Until the 1950s, this region remained largely isolated from the rest of the country, except for the commercial sea routes and precarious roads used for the transportation of local products to the ports of Salvador and Ilhéus. Federal highway BR-101 was opened in 1953 and paved in 1973, running parallel to the coast, approximately 150km inland. This major highway and its secondary roads promoted integration of this region to the national economy and induced the formation of population centres in the interior, altering the then dominant standard of coastal occupation. This came to be the principal facilitator of the transformation of the region's natural and human profiles.

In 1988 and 1989, Eunápolis and Itabela became municipalities, having been respectively emancipated from Santa Cruz Cabrália and Porto Seguro, which were originally large in area but locally populated. Due to the availability of inexpensive land and expectations of insertion in the labour market, the flow of people from the interior to the cities of Porto Seguro, Cabrália and Eunápolis increased drastically between the 1960s and particularly in the 1990s, when several villages along BR-101 highway quickly became service and labour centres. In 1991, 37.56% of the whole population previously living in coastal villages to the inland, particularly to Eunápolis, Porto Seguro and Porto Itabela, increased respectively 95,84%, 90,07% and 86,76% between 1990 and 1995. Investments diversified, particularly in real estate and construction, as well as in cellulose production. As a result, deforestation intensified in a large area of the Atlantic Forest, which at the time was still vigorous and exuberant, despite the heavy extraction of wood over the centuries (PRODETUR, 1994: 49). Demographic information, shown in Table I, provides a good indication of the magnitude of these processes and their impacts on the preserved historic sites and natural conservation areas.

For comparative purposes, it is convenient to consider the neighboring municipality of Belmonte, at the northern border of Cabrália. This municipality underwent a period of population decline in the 1950s and 1960s due to the abrupt fall of cacao production and trade. On the other hand, the opening of highway BR-101 attracted large proportions of the population living in coastal villages to the inland, particularly to Eunápolis, an emergent former district of the Cabrália municipality. One of the main consequences of both processes was a significant migratory flow in the 1960s both from Porto Seguro and Belmonte to that district. Besides the continuous migration of landless and unemployed families to Porto Seguro, two important episodes of occupation of lands owned by the municipal government contributed to the population increase of 39.8% in 1970s and of 118.8% in the 1990s. These massive migrations led to the formation of several shantytowns in Porto Seguro village and in Trancoso, not far from the historic town centres. In 1991, 37.56% of the whole population previously living within Porto Seguro borders became residents of Itabela, the recently emancipated territory. On the other hand, 62.44% of that population remained in Porto Seguro, rising to 70.71% of both municipalities' population in 1996, 78.80% in 2000 and 81.59% in 2007, confirming the attraction exerted by tourism, real estate development and other emergent business activities.

**Table 1. Total population of municipalities**

(*) Figures include totals for old and emancipated municipalities
(“) Official estimates

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IBGE - Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics.
opportunities connected with heritage and environmental conservation.

In Cabrália, by contrast, the residents of the newly emancipated territory of Eunápolis represented 91.54% of the total population in 1991, while only 8.48% remained living within the old borders. Cabrália’s population rose to 20.16% of both municipalities’ population in 1996, 22.12% in 2000 and dropped to 21.08% in 2007. Unlike Porto Seguro, the attraction of the new city along the BR-101 federal highway predominates over that of the oldest zone of occupation in Cabrália, where indigenous lands and most heritage initiatives are located. Investments and businesses opportunities marketed in conjunction with the celebration of Brazil’s 5th Centennial were important driving forces of the population movements during the 1990s. High investments in real estate developments, the modernisation of urban infrastructure, the glamourisation of tourist attractions (including the restoration and the scenic illumination of historic buildings), as well as an intense and efficient marketing campaign of Porto Seguro and Cabrália as ‘lands of good business’ exerted a strong appeal both on entrepreneurs and on the poor people living in this region. In Cabrália, for example, the inevitable consequence was that, within a short time, the government had to confront a need to limit its attractiveness as a migratory destination in order to preserve its quality as a tourism attractor. In 1997, technical agencies recommended urgent intervention of the local authorities with the goal of generating jobs while inhibiting this migratory flow, considering that employment grew at a sluggish 2.8% per year while migration grew more than 20% for the same period (ibid: 28-29).

However, investments in infrastructure and in heritage conservation produced a slight improvement in local living conditions. The municipal human development index (mHDI) may be considered as a parameter: while it varied in all the locations considered from 0.5 and 0.6 in 1991, it ranged from 0.6 to 0.7 in 2000, maintaining the same ranking with Porto Seguro at the upper boundary and Belmonte at the lower. Currently, in the far south of Bahia in general and in the region considered here in particular, there have been various initiatives to diversify economic production, mainly in the agricultural sector. These measures indicate that local administrators and investors are trying to make the region environmentally and economically more balanced, and less dependent on tourism, which is an economic sector that accumulates most of its profits outside the locations that it explores.

In the decade 2000-2010 there is an indication that population growth is falling drastically in the region. In Porto Seguro it fell from 87.41% from 1990-1995 to 47.36% from 1995-2000, and to just 19.58% from 2000-2007. In Cabrália it dropped from 165.24% in the first period, to 37.81% in the second, and again, to just 5.12% in the third. This trend may suggest that the regional population has reached a certain degree of stability, which would be a positive indication as far as the limited life conditions are considered. But it also indicates how fragile and ephemeral the opportunities offered by tourism can be, how fast are the practical responses given by the poor and unemployed population and how powerful the gravity of the social consequences of this largely unstable scenario.

Social challenges to the sustainable use of cultural heritage

The demographic instabilities due to a sequence of predatory economic cycles raise countless and severe challenges for the conservation of cultural heritage (Arantes 1999), and demand efficient intervention. At the Discovery Coast, some areas are, in recent decades, subject to official protection measures because of their cultural, environmental and/or scenic value. The criteria and the motives for these initiatives vary, but they were intensified over time in connection with real estate businesses and tourism industry.

Two initial measures occurred in the 1960s. In 1961, Federal Decree 242 created the Monte Pascoal National Historic Park – an area of Atlantic Forest that includes Monte Pascoal, the first land seen in this area by the Portuguese navigators in 1500 – on the grounds of its historic and environmental values. In 1968, the historic city of Porto Seguro was officially declared national heritage site.

In 1992, a tourism development program was implemented on the Bahian coast as a whole with the support of the InterAmerican Development Bank. This program supported the creation of integrated tourist centres at “points with greater potential in natural resources, whose scenic qualities had exceptional capacity to attract international tourism” (PRODETUR 1994: 3). The land-use zoning for these tourist complexes calls for, in addition to resorts and residential services, three types of areas: (1) recreational and sports zones, including a theme park; (2) a green belt, with the explicit purpose of protecting the tourist centre by a barrier of dense vegetation; and (3) a tourist village, planned to approximate tourists to services and local culture, with a distance never more than 4km from the resorts. Through this approach to
tourist development comes to depend on the conservation of natural and cultural attractions, understood as ‘fundamental raw materials for the existence of this economic cycle’ (CODETUR 1997: chapter VII). This dependency has established a market demand for historic monuments, theme parks and various types of natural reserves. The program provided incentives to private investments in the real estate sector (mainly in the formation of residential condominiums) and in the hotel sector (the so-called anchor hotels), in addition to creating urban and highway infrastructure in the region.

Over 30 years, the following natural reserves were created:

- **1974** - Estação Ecológica Pau-brasil [Brazilwood Ecology Station]
- **1993** - Áreas de Proteção Ambiental Estadual [State Environmental Protection Areas] Caravá-Trancoso and Coroa Vermelha
- **1994** - Áreas de Proteção Ambiental Estadual [State Environmental Protection Areas] of Santo Antonio
- **1997** - Parque Municipal de Recife de Fora [Recife de Fora Municipal Park]
- **1998** - Reserva Particular do Patrimônio Natural Estação Vera Cruz [Vera Cruz Private Natural Heritage Reserve]; Parque Municipal de Preservação Marinha da Coroa Alta [Municipal Marine Preservation Park of Coroa Alta]; Reserva da Jaqueira [Jaqueira Reserve], created by the Pataxó Indians
- **1999** - Parque Nacional do Pau-brasil [The Brazilwood National Park]
- **2000** - Reserva Maturimbá [Maturimbá Reserve], created by the Pataxó Indians

In 1999, UNESCO included on its list of World Heritage Sites the Atlantic Forest reserves of the Discovery Coast, the Vera Cruz Private Natural Heritage Reserve, the CEPLAC Experimental Station, the National History Park of Monte Pascoal, the Brazilwood National Park and the National Discovery Park. Moreover the entire municipality of Porto Seguro, with an area of approximately 3260 km², was declared a national monument in 1973. In 1981, Cabrália’s historic centre was declared a heritage site, and was expanded again in 1984 by a declaration that included the Ilhéu de Coroa Vermelha, the waterfront and the three principal buildings of the high portion of the city. In 1996, the Museu Aberto do Descobrimento [Open Discovery Museum] was declared. This measure creates an instrument for the promotion of the heritage present in a territory overlapping the previously protected areas. Yet the economic interests emerging in the region since the mid 1970s, heightened by the tourist projects implanted since the early 1990s, have placed at risk those areas whose cultural, environmental or scenic values have been officially recognised. In 1999, as a strategy to strengthen the protection action developed by heritage management agencies while keeping their budgets low, the extensive area of Porto Seguro that was declared a national monument in 1973 was reduced.

The Discovery Coast has been constituted symbolically and discursively – and offered to visitors and investors – as a set of attractions that witnesses the creation of Brazil as a nation, placed in a setting with glamorised versions of regional ways of life in fusion with a world-class culture and mass communication products. This region’s scenic values – attached both to natural and built structures – include landscapes, groups of buildings of exceptional historic value, urban districts, lifestyles and entertainment activities.

In this context, the dazzling landscape described by Caminha to the King of Portugal in 1500 has a complex expression in the contemporary market, in which the themes of the country’s discovery, its natural resources and the symbols associated with them are revived, recreated and polished by investors, planners, builders, journalists, architects and designers. As in the founding discourse about Brazil, white and red cliffs facing the ocean, sand beaches cut by rivers, and the exuberant Atlantic forest are some of the symbols expressive of a luxuriant primitiveness that stimulates dreams and investments in a more effective way than the preserved colonial monuments.

The products created by this environment become part of a culture shared by so-called ‘natives’, recently arrived residents and tourists from all over the country and the world. Throughout the region, and mainly in Porto Seguro and Cabrália, spring up architectural projects, sculptures, plaques, ads, utilitarian objects, murals and souvenirs that feed on and re-elaborate this rich theme, indicating its symbolic vitality and the broad social and economic interest that it stimulates.

The discourse in and outside the field concerning the exceptional importance of preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the Discovery Coast, more than sustaining some type of consensus in relation to what would be the best form of management, encompasses important conflicting interests and strategies. There are disagreements at various levels. First, the construction of this set of preserved sites had very limited participation of the resident population (native or not), which does not necessarily recognise these historic towns and villages, natural reserves and social practices spotted by intangible heritage hunters as an expression of their own identity and ways of life. The weak identification of the population with the preserved sites is aggravated by the large proportion of recently-arrived settlers, who have little or no objective or subjective ties with that heritage; most do not recognize these references and resources as their own, nor do they understand its economic and symbolic potential or how to incorporate these potentials into their lifeways.

Moreover, the official and promotional texts tend to erase any entity in Porto Seguro and Cabrália that is not part of the marketing theme of Brazil as a tropical paradise, illuminated by the readily decreasing glow of the lights that had celebrated the 5th Centennial, nearly a decade ago. Even the Pataxó Indians, who are not exact descendents of the former inhabitants of these lands but who have lived in this region for centuries, often see themselves in the ambiguous situation of being a people with their own history, while at the same time having to respond to the expectations of a public viewing them as representatives of generic Indians and mythic personalities of the country’s foundation narratives. Furthermore, the disruptions caused by poverty will continue to grow despite this eye-catching showcase of ‘Brazilian-ness’ as long as the problems of living conditions, healthcare and housing of the resident working population are not resolved. Moreover, the residential regions to which they are gradually confined, although they are conspicuous on the landscape and grow every day, become invisible in the discursive construction of this landscape of history. It is a clear indication that the benefits of tourism tend to be accessible only to the entrepreneurs of these economic ventures and accumulated somewhere other than in the sites directly explored by this activity.
The incidence of poverty in the Discovery Coast is alarming. With the exception of Cabrália, more than half of the population of these municipalities do not have access to what in Brazil is considered a basic “food basket” and the minimal goods needed for survival. According to United Nations Development Program, in 2000, 52.17% of Porto Seguro’s population lived under the poverty line. On the other hand, inequality is clearly visible in the luxury and sophistication of summer houses, stores and hotels, which contrast with the precarious living conditions of the majority of the population. Even in the poorest segments, differences and competition between natives and migrant workers aggravate the already agitated daily life of these villages and cities. Along the Discovery Coast disputes remain among the municipalities for visitors and visibility before investors and tourist operators, and for public investments that make profitable private ventures – and therefore, induce their expansion. In particular, there are disputes between government agencies and the local population over initiatives that do not recognise important characteristics of the ways of life in practice in the area. These disputes arise in the demarcation of indigenous lands and in efforts to guarantee the right to continue traditional extractive practices with contemporary sustainability initiatives. There are confrontations between public agencies responsible for the defence of the environmental and cultural heritage and those which execute the projects demanded by the new developments. Finally, there are difficulties in governance given the overlapping jurisdictions and responsibilities of public institutions, which make their indispensable dialogue and convergent action only sporadically efficient.

Tourism at landscapes of history has at least two demands related to sustainability. On the one hand, it depends on architectural projects that make the dreamscape produced for the visual consumption of tourists compatible with the material privations dominant in the physical landscape. On the other, it implies the formulation of public policies that support the development of viable forms of coexistence between the poor local population and the rich and famous public of the resorts and summer homes. The lack of attention to these demands causes the transformation of these tourist areas not into theme parks, but into enclaves protected para-militarily. Behind the dense vegetation barriers, these social frontiers tend to generate imposing entrance gates and creative forms of identification – which depending on the point of view, can be humiliating – in addition to using showy private security systems. Here, as elsewhere, the opposite of a lack of social sustainability is control through force and intimidation, i.e., the formation of an aggressive, if not violent, environment.

Uncontrolled urban growth thus deteriorates the characteristics that make the small villages of the Discovery Coast something dear to residents and of interest to visitors. Similarly, the lack of respect for the limits imposed by the carrying capacity of the historic centres and the beaches has an impact on the fragile landscape and environmental heritage whose conservation is essential for tourism to be a viable activity in the medium or long term. Due to a lack of planning, places that could offer a peaceful life, relaxation, and contemplation of a beautiful landscape – even that of the Discovery itself – rapidly become hostage to itinerant peddlers offering all kinds of goods and souvenirs, including drugs, alcohol, noise pollution and prostitution.

The municipality of Cabrália as a whole, and much of Porto Seguro, are being once again – as in colonial times – transformed into areas dependent on only one activity: tourism and its derivatives. This trend, which on its own is alarming, is aggravated by the decadence of the sector in this region that suffers, according to a survey conducted in 1997, from:

- a low average occupancy rate, low average room prices; low average spending per tourist per day; quantity over quality of services; tourist attractions that are increasingly futile and commercial; hotel infrastructure with disadvantageous life spans, standards and size; lack of coordinated management of the private tourist sector; lack of care for public space and natural resources; a homogenized mass market tourist trade, with harmful competition (informal versus formal), an imbalanced tax collection system, and use concessions without balanced cost-benefit ratio, etc.

(URPLAN 1997: 5)

Final remarks

To conclude, I return to the main lines of argument, seeking to understand better the challenges that arise for the conservation of the historical quality of the preserved sites. In doing so I risk some generalisations concerning what is required to meet these challenges. The material and symbolic processes by which heritage sites are produced, conserved, and modified primarily aim at the formation or strengthening of the attributes of centrality, tradition, authenticity and singularity that provide the foundations of these sites’ patrimonial value. Tourism promotes both intercultural relations that feed the formation of senses of difference, and the commodification of the preserved sites’ singularity. In this way, this economic activity participates actively in the way in which cultural landmarks are territorialised and presented to the heritage holders and their public.

The framing and interpretation of these sites for the market tend to dislocate preexisting ways of life, and contribute to the redefinition of the meanings attributed by the local social agents to their own artefacts and practices (Zukin 1991, Giddens 1992). The commodification of the cultural practices and their setting into landscapes for consumption – landscapes of history – create ambivalent spaces in which the tactical manoeuvres and political and economic negotiations of the daily experience of the inhabitants of the historic sites are played out.

The agents of these negotiations frequently assume new roles as cultural brokers or mediators. These actors tend to present themselves in public life in a hybrid style, with modes of thinking, acting and expressing themselves recognised as being both native and foreign; they create products that are both craft and artistic, utilitarian and decorative, and traditional and innovative, following an aesthetic of fusion aware both of market trends and of the references and taste of the local population in transit.

This process simultaneously produces the exposure and erasure of differences and inequalities, where social belonging (including participation in the rituals and celebrations of place) come to be a value negotiated in terms of economic, political and social benefits. This is seen, for example, at the festival of the patron Saint of Trancoso (Arantes 2007), where there is an
incorporation of rich and famous visitors to the place by the oldest native families who maintain control of the community celebration and of the ways in which foreigners can participate in the local exchange systems of that festival. Perhaps the maintenance of this space of control of social ordering observed in Trancoso is an exception. But it is indicative of a latent tension— which at times becomes explicit— between the hyperrealism of the showcase in vogue, and the local aesthetics and morality, also present in the situation. In the construction of the cultural landscape as a monument for consumption, the dynamic clash of the different cultures, histories, and memories tends to be transferred to the economic arena. In these contexts, it is the market, not ideology, the agency that weaves the fabric of preservation.

But as a consequence, has the aura of patrimonial goods and practices weakened? Has their symbolic strength been drained by the change of beliefs that nurture it? Has heritage been transformed into cold visual, historic, anthropological, archaeological, architectural or geographic information? Has it become democratically accessible to broad layers of the local populations, at the cost of its meanings fading for its original holders?

These challenges to the sustainable protection of heritage and its historicity require a heightened sense of social responsibility of the policy makers. They play a fundamental role in the paving the routes (that, as in this case, have already been opened by heritage legislation) by which local social agents can recognize the officially preserved heritage as their own, and integrate it in their aspirations and plans for the future.

End Notes

1 Essay based on research carried out in the following projects: Estudo de Impacto Ambiental do Memorial do Encontro, Símbios consultoria e projetos ltda.; Identities: reconfigurations of culture and politics, State University of Campinas-Unicamp/FINEP/Phoeus; Building Democracy: citizenship, nation and contemporary urban experience, Unicamp/The Rockefeller Foundation. Text based on Arantes, 2000.

2 For E. P. Thompson, the concept of experience encompasses the mediations between abstract sociological structures and the observable plane of events. ‘Through experience’, he writes, ‘the structure is transmuted in process and the subject is reinserted in history’ (Thompson 1978).

3 The strengthening of senses of localization and identity as counterparts of globalization, mediated by market economy and tourism, are recurrent themes in cultural analyses of the world-system produced in the late 1980s. See Featherstone, 1990 (passim) especially articles by Jonathan Friedman on the interplay between the world market and cultural identities and by U. Hannerz on cosmopolitans and locals.

4 The Discovery Coast Atlantic Forest Reserves were inscribed in UNESCO’s World Heritage List in December 1999, under the following criteria. Criterion (ix): The Brazilian Discovery Coast includes a number of areas containing the best and largest remaining examples of Atlantic forest in the northeast region of Brazil and contains high numbers of rare and endemic species. Criterion (x): The site displays the biological richness and evolutionary history of the few remaining areas of Atlantic forest of northeast Brazil. The site reveals a pattern of evolution of great interest to science and importance for conservation. The fact that only these few scattered remnants of a once vast forest remain, make them an irreplaceable part of the world’s forest heritage.

5 Examples are the protests of the municipal government of Prado, in relation to the placement of a single symbolic access portal at MADE on the Eunápolis/Porto Seguro highway and not in that municipality, which according to its spokespersons, would help reinforce the centrality of Porto Seguro in the entire region. It has also protested the fact that the commemorative program of the 5th centennial conveniently did not emphasize Monte Pascoal and the Rio Caí, references and attractions located in that municipality.

6 In the cases of the beaches of the Discovery Coast, URPLAN recommends at most 6m2 per bather and predicts that if there is no control on migration and planning, by the year 2015 there will be approximately 2m2/bather, less than that now found at Copacabana.

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