The eternal and the metamorphosis. Processes of urban heritage production

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**ABSTRACT:** The proposed theme intends to approach the notion of eternal and the perpetuation of the urban heritage in the present time, to prove, from a theoretical point of view, that the urban heritage is an element created, transformed and sometimes invented by man over time. That is, it is a man-made physical and cultural identity that results from a constructive process, settled and never stagnant. In this sense, are discussed concepts such as the original, beauty or illusion, based on revised bibliography and in the morphological analysis of concrete examples in Portugal and Japan.

1 INSTRUCTION

To relate the value of the eternal to the metamorphosis of the urban heritage is to understand the impossibility of a past object to behave as a perpetual element. Even artefacts that are identified as primitive are already the result of a creative transformation process. The primordial stages of the urban heritage are hardly conserved; they are absorbed by later phases serving as physical matter to their structure and identity.

These events tend to abolish the origin and the intermediate stages to the present state. Their restitution is only possible through copies and replicas that influence the man to a mythical idea, sometimes a typified memory of a past by assumption.

Thus the main goal of this study, in this specific context, is to understand how the urban heritage was systematically transformed, created and invented to identify some concepts that support the eternal value in the urban heritage and sustain the will of man in preserving his built past, considering, among other values, the beauty of the past, the sense of the original and the illusion.

The city is the sediment of time that superposes the original. The process of eternalization of the urban artefact is the conservation of an illusion and not of an authentic reality. What is perpetuated is a notion produced over time and not an idea of initial or original urban heritage.

The constant production of the urban fabric reflects the capacity of man to reinvent himself and to invent his own tradition as a normal act of transformation and sedimentation of the city over time (Hobsbawm, 1983).

From the moment that the urban heritage acquires a value, whether in its content or form, it is imbued with meaning. And it is this condition that distinguishes him from man. It resists time, its reality is coated with perenniality, becomes eternal (Eliade, 1993).

The eternal is first and foremost a figurative state that represents an idea beyond its form. The physical condition is perishable but what it represents can last through memory, history or mythical events and rites.

The lost built heritage cannot be fully restored to its meaning. The restitution only allows the evocation or invocation of a momentary urban space and not its conjugation over time. This type of action demonstrates the interpretive sense of the physical history by society, seeking to restore a typical image of a past constructed and disappeared to the detriment of its evolutionary
process. Society departs from the continuous creative-inventive process to copy and replicate gestures of a past time.

The eternal is a goal in both the Portuguese and Japanese heritage intervention, although they are different in their approach. The narrative differs between the notions of a continuous time and the symbology of the myth. For the first, history has been constantly and progressively transformed and, therefore, often defends its crystallization as a principle to the urban heritage safeguard. For Eastern cultures, history must be preserved in its original meaning. Based on mythic thoughts the urban heritage is cyclically recreated to make their traditions alive in the present (Lévi-Strauss, 1962).

In Portugal, the preservation of the urban heritage seeks to perpetuate a "found form" and its materiality unchanged. The preservation of the physical matter is a fundamental principle, regardless of its use. Crystallization is often used. This crystallization process of the urban heritage is a methodology that desires for a formal eternalization of the urban heritage over time. This type of action had its exponent in John Ruskin's theories, emphasizing the idea that the monument has a life span and should remain untouchable in its current form.

In Japan, the eternal and its authenticity lie in an initial intention or symbology and not on its form himself. The form is just a receptacle, a tool to the diffusion of its meaning and use. In the restoration process the architectural typology and the constructive techniques are maintained but their materiality is renew.

However, in the west, reproduction processes by restitution and transcription are often applied with the goal of reconstructing a missing memory. Examples are the evocative restitution of the German Pavilion in Barcelona, seeking to restore the artistic value of the initial Mies Van Der Rohe project; or the post-war constructions in Warsaw, restoring the image of the urban fabric to enhance its memory before the war.

Complementarily, another possible form of eternalization of the urban element results from the aggregation of an urban element to another already classified, as in the relationship of a historical monument with its built environment. The contamination of the monument value to its urban context was introduced by Giovannoni's theories on the definition of the urban heritage.

The classification and hierarchization of the urban space is a method of recognizing the urban context as determinant to the appreciation of the historical and monumental value of the consecrated building. The problem is that, in this process of consecration, in the ambition to eternalize the scenic image of the historical set, the urban fabric can be stagnant.

The actions of crystallization and repetition of the form, reveal the relevance of the essence of the original in the definition of the reality and identity of the urban object. That is, it is understand that the crystallization captures the present form to perpetuate it through time and the restituted object acquires an eternal mythology because it is soaked by what today society consider as an initial meaning.

None of the processes outlined here can guarantee that the initial or sediment form, urban space or building, is eternally preserved. The eternal is a human creation that intends to attribute symbolic value to the object in a long time, perhaps different representations of an intangible meaning through successive interpretations and reinterpretations.

2 THE VALUE OF THE ETERNAL IN THE JAPANESE CONTEXT

The meaning of the Japanese shrines and temples is closely related to the values of the eternal and the purity of form, influenced by religious or philosophical beliefs. The physical structure is manipulated according to what they represent but only as an instrument that allows them to value an idea.

This process is a creative way for society to discover the symbols constructed from the recent past as visible space in the field of imaginative memory. The mythology that involves religion and the spirit seems to be in some way moldable according to the imagination of society, through the reflection of traditional symbols and rituals (Tange, 1965). Take, for example, the creation of the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo, aggregated to the religious symbolism evolved from a memorial building to a mandatory shrine on the pilgrims route (Imazumi, 2013).

However, Keisuke Fujii defends that it is a mistake to think that the Shinto Shrines, especially the Ise Shrine and its renewal cycle process, embodies the essence of the Japanese architec-
ture culture. The "traditional shape" is passed as well as its materiality (Fujii, 2008). It is true that materiality demands a constant repair, but still, the process seeks to retain the same form and meaning from its first construction, often keeping the same function and whenever possible the same material and construction techniques.

Japanese culture reviews in the Shinto shrines and Buddhist Temples their notion of eternal, not only in the physical form, but mainly in the symbolism and meaning of these sacred spaces. These places allow them an active manifestation of cultural and social traditions by introducing an authentic inheritance in space and especially in human scale experiences.

Buddhism reviews in its unique buildings its belief in the eternal life beyond death. And in this sense, the preservation of Buddhist Temples is equally as a process of eternalization, in which the nature of wood is preserved intact as long as she can stand.

Through its reconstruction and continuous repair, the buildings are continuously preserved as exemplified by the Hōryū-ji Temple at Nara, with over a thousand years old (fig.1). The preservation of the Buddhist Temples involves the disassembly and reassembly of the building to replace the damaged parts, and in some cases, if the congregation grows or changes, the Temple can be extended or even completely rebuilt.

It should be noted that this type of process of conservation of the cultural and built heritage in Japan predates the birth of the Theory of Conservation in the nineteenth century in Europe. And, the longevity of this temple intends to prove this statement.

In turn, the Shinto Shrines are symbolic representations of the mysticism that involves the relationship between religion, architecture and society with nature. For the Shintoism the divine is part of the nature and believes in the cycle as a natural process of purification and renewal of life. Its religious buildings are therefore cyclically built, in a process that continually reproduces and perpetuates its previous phase (fig.2).

Sanctuaries are fragments that go through time by a constant recycling of parts that pass between them as if it were a memory. In spite of the cyclical process of renovation, the old buildings are transferred, partially or totally, to auxiliaries sanctuaries dispersed throughout Japan. For example, the Hoden or Shōden of the Kazahino-minomya Shrine in Ise was completely disassembled and reassembled at the Sannomiya Shrine in Kyoto in 1973 (fig.3-4); the first Torii of the Hikawa Shrine in the city of Omiyia, Saitama district, which was transferred in 1976 from the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo; or the mediatic process of cyclical renewal of the Ise Shrine every 20 years.

The idea is to preserve the spirit embedded in the physical form and not the form itself. Inaga Shigemi explains that our condition is not unlike nature, the organic thing, and that we are part of a set of "impermanence" that are only part of an eternal recycle of nature. What is eternal is the cycle and not what changes within it (Imaga, 2012).

But, this type of process of renewal and recycling of individual symbols and buildings is not recognized as a historical patrimonial value. The buildings of the Ise Shrine are a monument without monumentality, entirely constituted in time by a succession of copies, a replica of itself, a "false historical" (Hernández Martínez, 2007).

There still are some doubts about the origin of the cyclical construction process of the Sanctuary of Ise. The current practice of cyclical renewal, in the image of the Ise Shrine, appears to be a process developed only in the Meiji period. In the Tokugawa period, the priests did not dismantle the old building, but left it standing at the side of the new sanctuary for as long as it could last. There are records also suggesting that the old buildings, in the event of being demolished, were not used for the recycling of construction items but for the o-fuda, the kind of domestic amulet or talisman blessed by the Shinto religion to protect the house. However, the practice of using the Munamochi-bashira of the Naiku and Geku Shrines in Ise, dismantled for the construction of the Torii of the Uji Bridge, seems to be older.

The buildings of the Naiku and Geku sanctuaries are the references of an architectural style that, somehow, are repeated in standardized forms all over the country. It is a process of diffusion of copies for exaltation of the sacred and the spirit, implicit in form, as an expression of a cultural and religious symbol (Kishida, 1935).

Thus, it seems that the heritage in Japan is a living element, a mnemonic image of the active and functional past for society. Space corresponds to a purpose where the value of authentic lies in the initial form and meaning and not in the sequential time. The amendment is accepted as a way of perpetuating the meaning that sustains social and cultural value. Form and materiality are only receptacles of this purpose.
3 THE BEAUTY OF THE HISTORICAL CITY

Discussing the beauty of the urban areas of heritage value does not seek to constitute itself as a definition of the concept of beautiful, or to identify types of urban areas whose beauty can serve as a hierarchy or personal definition. The objective is to understand different readings of the notion of beauty in these urban contexts, which often vary from concepts and processes of preservation and transformation, sometimes even invention, of the urban heritage.

For Leon Baptistista Alberti and Camillo Sitte, understanding the temporal distance between them, the influence of the art and aesthetic values on the characterization of the urban fabric is undeniable, and consequently, on the perception of the beauty. However they see it differently.

Alberti understands that for the urban space to be beautiful he must respond to a precise classical rule, a uniform urban image that does not contain innovation but proportional forms between itself and the public space. The beauty of architecture lies in its ornament and only then can its use be qualified and promoted to its permanence. The ornament refers to an order, to a cultural sense of its own that contains identity and persistent references add over time (Alberti, 2011).

Based on the stimuli of classical architecture, the author argues that the beauty of space is stimulated from the proportion of its forms. If the proportion of the form is perfect the space becomes beautiful and must be safeguarded from any transformations. Society chooses for itself the things it considers graceful, noble, enriched by adornment, and rejects others that demonstrate carelessness or even an apparent lack of aesthetic feeling. In this way, Alberti adds to the notion of beauty a sense of preservation and eternal.

For the urban object to contain art, the artist must produce it according to "rational criteria", concordant elements that awaken in man the comfort enough to stimulate his beauty. The creation of man to his "pleasure" provokes insipidity, uselessness and disorder. The absence of order is not a positional but a dogmatic question, which attributes feeling to the ornament.
In turn, Sitte considers the values and the classic rule as the starting point for the construction of the present city. The urban space is a diverse and asymmetric set and not symmetrical or simply functional. That is, the order, the artisticity and the beauty of the urban space were approached as a reference for the design and planning of an idea of urban modernity.

Sitte believed that the picturesque was not on the grand boulevards constructed at the time, and defines the ideal "urban type" based on the diversity of forms and images that produce very diversified scenic, volumetric and visual effects (Sitte, 1980).

On the other hand, Sigmund Freud's concept of beauty addresses the aesthetic relation between the subject and the environment, in the sense in which life discards what causes "suffering" and compensates it with concepts like the "beauty of forms", "nature and landscapes objects", "artistic and even scientific creations" (Freud, 2008). The perception of the beauty in the historic city is altered according to the cognitive and sensorial values of society over time. The subjectivity of the taste allows the creation of different approaches to the same historical and cultural moment. However, all tend to exclude anything that can be classified individually or collectively as annoying or uncomfortable.

The beauty of urban areas with historical values results from their ability to be both an image of comfort to society and their capacity to become surprising (Benevolo, 2011). For Leonardo Benevolo the effective knowledge of the morphological and cultural particularities of a certain space, allows the society to acquire an apparent sensation of comfort. The zone of comfort lies in the ability of the observer to recognize similar characteristics that are familiar to him between different compositional periods and urban spaces. The metric and constructive particulars of the windows and doors, the chain of an arcade, the scale of the urban fabric or the colors that characterize it are an example of this.

Surprise is a sensory perception stimulated from the observation and experience of the urban space. The surprise emerges from the sensation that comes when a singular element, monument or historical monument, stands out among others that are more or less uniform. These urban elements allow us to enrich our criteria and cultural experience to obtain an idea of historical beauty.

In Geovannoni's doctrine the beauty of these historical areas lies in their ability to be at the same time a monumental example of a constructed past and a fabric that contains life (Choay, 1983). The beauty is a product created from the relationship between society and the environment, wrapped in meanings that stimulate memory and identity.

The beauty of the urban heritage functions as a landmark of a past identity, it is a "living being" that have the ability to stimulate the memory of the present society. The importance of the aesthetics in the landscape or urban areas with historical values is reflected in the life of the local populations as a process of physical and spiritual regeneration or even as a demonstration of the artistic and cultural past life. The contemporary challenge is to reconcile these two paradigms, the past with the present, foreseeing a promising future.

4 PERCEPTION OF THE ORIGINAL

The question that we are trying to understand here is the perception of the original and its ability to prevail unchanged over time. A premise recommended by UNESCO in the process of “Safeguarding of the Beauty and Character of Landscapes and Sites”, in 1962, was the preservation of their original aspect, whether man-made or natural, and, as far as possible, its restoration (Lopes, 2004). But it is to be believed that the city is a diversified organism where the initial elements and what results from them participate together.

Claude Lévi-Strauss explains that in the urban diversity the originality of the element is implicit in the "truth of the facts", fomenting the continuous discourse of history. All the singular moments that compose the urban heritage are different expressions of action demonstrating its own culture and identity (Lévi-Struss, 2011).

However, for Freud, the original, mental or physical individual, is a state changeable in time and therefore impossible to comprehend as an original and consequently an eternal element. For the perpetuation of the original element to be constant and perfect it cannot contain other phases of construction after its creation. He has to be simultaneously the first and the last (Freud, 2008).
The author explains that the intermediate phases of the evolutionary process of the city between the beginnings of its construction until the present form only exist through their reconstruction. Abrupt events, extremely deep regression processes, as well as copies and replicas of others can represent this type of action, which seek to restore the current space to a past image. However, a copy or a replica can never reconstruct the history of the original because it is unable to show the events of its evolutionary past, "falsifying the complexity and historical truth of it" (Hernández Martínez, 2007).

In another hand, Martin Heidegger affirms that the ruin is not reversible to its pre-existing shape. The urban artefact may have the same image in a reconstruction process, but it can never be its original. His firstborn has vanished and the new one can only be a copy and not a true artistic object (Heidegger, 2015). See, for example, the transformation and evolution of the Ságres Promontory over time or the restitution process of the São Francisco Convent in Santarém (fig.5-8), both in search of its original form. This Promontorium Sacrum is the result of the stimulation of an idyllic imaginary that sequentially transformed this historical monument according to a hypothetical reading of its history, in particular the Portuguese Maritime Discoveries period.

On the other hand, the restitution of the former Convent of San Francisco in Santarém was initially developed by the DGEMN (1953-1970) and finalized by the Municipality of Santarém in 2012. The ruin of the old church was embedded in a military structure of the twentieth century, forcing the demolition of the subsequent additions for its clearing and the construction of a new structure to redefine the form considered as original. This intervention was integrated in a governmental heritage intervention program for the exaltation of the historical monuments as national symbols, building an ideal of past thought their restitution. The last intervention builds the rosacea, not as a copy of a primitive one but as a sculptural piece with current design.

It is understood, therefore, that the original state of the urban patrimony is always the one that marks the beginning of the evolutionary process. At the extreme of the equation it may even be the first drawing and not the resulting building. All subsequent phases are additions, superposi-
tions and reproductions that inevitably transform it. After that he can no longer return to its original state.

In this sense it is stated that all intermediate stages are important moments for the present condition of the landscape and natural, rural and urban sites, even those already disappeared. If their form or content originates in a creative process they have intentionality, their own identity and may, in part, be considered original and authentic. It is not, therefore, a mere affirmation of a temporal individual, but rather of an additive set of cultural forms which are intended as authentic ones as a whole or the final result.

5 ILLUSION AS A REALITY

Illusion is a complement to the present reality. A process of restitution or construction of the urban heritage, whether based on a memory or a rigorous project, that creates a reproduction of a past state, the illusion of an original state that has been culturally internalized as truth.

The illusion can mislead the observer's mind, even without loss of cultural or visual reception. What appears to be may not correspond to reality. For Sigmund Freud, the disarticulation of society with reality is obtained through the satisfaction that the artefact can provoke, either by restitution of an idea or transcription of an object. The lack of truthfulness does not constitute an "obstacle to pleasure" (Freud, 2008).

Martin Heidegger tells us that the knowledge of the essence that defines the work of art over time, through its historical and morphological study, can determine the adequacy of representations of the ante to something approximate, sometimes uncertain. In this domain, knowledge becomes captive to a hypothesis that "masks" the truth of the facts (Heidegger, 2015). "In other words, the image we make of our near or distant past is largely the nature of myth," an illusion. The myth, like history, seeks to justify a past state and to conceive from the present to the future (Lévi-Strauss, 2011).

Figures 9 and 10: Little India, Singapore, 2014.

Figure 11 and 12: Golden Street in Prague, Czech Republic, in the twentieth century and 2016.
For Mark Jones, in “Fake? The art of deception”, the notion of "false" is analysed as a work of art. The counterfeits have emerged over time as a method of learning the arts, copying the works of the past as a process of learning and transmission to established artistic codes and styles. The deceptiveness of an artwork was valued from the symbolic relation of a remarkable cultural period or the author himself with his work, even when transcribed or reproduced over time (Jones, 1990).

Sometimes, in this productive process of the urban heritage, scenarios are created based on urban spaces already consecrated as historical value, a phenomenon that Kim Jane Saunders calls "disneyfication" (Saunders, 2004). This phenomenon is an emerging process to create a historical context around the heritage itself, inventing heritage as a method of identity production. For examples it can be highlighted the Simatai village in China to welcome visitors to the Great Wall, or the exceptional case of Singapore. The city-state of Singapore is an example of a traditional and identity creation based on foreign cultures present in the local communities like Chinatown or Little India (fig.9-10).

The illusion is an intentional gesture often accepted as an original cultural concept. The object is reproduced according to previous supports, simulating exact copies of essential characteristics of other primordial elements (Calvo Manuel, 2003). For example it can be highlighted: the Roman copies of Greek sculptures such as the Discobolus of Myron in the British Museum; The Mies Van Der Rohe pavilion in Barcelona despite being a reconstruction is valued by the project and its author as if it were an original; or the Golden Street in Prague, a small theme park that represents the dwellings life in the early twentieth century (fig.11-12).

The illusion is often born of a nostalgic feeling for a past tradition, works or artistic styles that are subsequently absorbed by society as authentic, transforming into original realities. Quoting Salomé de Carvalho, the "false [objects] are a part of us, a mirror of the ego, the values of society and desires. They are mirrors of our human condition" (Carvalho, 2010).

The copies and replicas are an integral part of Man's methodological everyday life, as processes of extending the life of an object by a repetition that sometimes replace some parts or even superpose the found form (Hernández Martínez, 2007).

The urban artefact is a created entity, but also produced or manufactured in a process of events that varies according to the cultural language of the moment. "The truth in a work of art is the production of a past that was not before and will not happen again. (...) Such production is a creation" (Heidegger, 2015). See for example the Barcelona’s Gothic Quarter. This Catalan example is demonstrative of man's ability to produce the beauty of urban space from an invocative restitution of an idea of the past, even using parts of archeology to attribute value and history to the intervention. The historical ensemble was partially built in the twentieth century with the aim of asserting itself as a national symbol and example of Catalan Gothic splendour.

With the construction of the Via Laietana, integrated in the Barcelona plan, design by Ildefonso Cerda in 1860, vestiges of the medieval city were exposed and applied in the city as a process of embellishment of the urban space. The construction of the new Barcelona’s Gothic Quarter was understood as a process of historical reinterpretation, seeking to promote an idea of identity and urban tradition. However, "it is indeed a huge lie, even a lie constructed from authentic medieval fragments, designed to preserve its historical authenticity" (Ganau, 2006).

This type of action on the urban heritage was particularly active in Portugal, especially in the period corresponding to the DGEMN's management between 1940 and 1960. Methodologically the interventions were influenced by the ideas of Camillo Boito, with the philological restoration, and Viollet-le-Duc, with the stylistic restitution, that able the introduction of the illusion as a creative instrument. The illusion was often used as an attempt to the restitution of a past ideal (Tomé, 2002), based the artistic and historical values of the Romanic and Gothic periods, to value the national identity and its history through the historical monuments. Examples are the paradigmatic cases of the Palace of the Dukes of Bragança in Guimarães or the Castle of São Jorge in Lisbon.

The project for the Palace of the Dukes of Bragança (fig.13-14) reconstruction in Guimarães, was designed by the architect Rogério de Azevedo, between 1936 and 1939, with the purpose of reconstructing the monument from the idealization of a form based on the observation of other examples constructed season. He interpreted its formal restitution as a creative gesture, independent of its historicist representation to produce an illusion of a medieval palace (Azevedo, 1942).
The Castle of São Jorge in Lisbon, symbol of the military power and foundation of the nationality, was deeply rebuilt as a viewpoint facing the city and the river, defining the public space as a patrimonial factor of valorization of the historical monument. The intervention of 1939 - Plan of reintegration and urbanization of the Castle of São Jorge - had as main mentors the Minister of Public Works engineer Duarte Pacheco, the Director of National Monuments architect Baltazar de Castro, and as responsible for the work the architect Joaquim Areal e Silva.

However, this plan of "historical restoration" of the monument was not predicted to be "easy" to execute because of the destruction caused by the earthquake of 1755 and the superposition of the military quarters throughout the nineteenth century.

It is understood, therefore, that the process of restitution of these historical monument was evocative of memory but stylistic in its design and composition. The illusion results from the inability to produce an exact copy of the past. The restoration works of the castle involved the demolition of the old barracks and military towers, as well as the consolidation and restructuring of the Castle walls (Areal e Silva, 1939).

Synthesizing, the illusion results from the creation of figures, trustworthy or memories, that often transport society to an imaginary, a hypothesis of space in time. The illusion allows the transmission of techniques through its transcription, the restitution of elements that, even reconstructed, are involved of the meaning of its original.

Figures 13 and 14: Before and after of the restitution of the Duques de Bragança Palace between 1937 and 1956, Guimarães, Portugal.

6 SYNTHESIS

These mixtures of rewritten variables are representative of the diversity of the cultural heritage, collective processes of invention necessary to support the identity systems of subsequent societies. Culture is a heterogeneous concept of multiple elements that juxtapose in the form of history, aesthetics, ideology and society. In practice, human experience is itself a notion based on the displacement of concepts of meaning and not on simple transference or extension in time.

The adaptation process of the urban heritage to the present always implies its manipulation either by loss or by the construction of a tradition that supports contemporary identity. The loss can result in an imposition of modernity in the manipulation of local traditions (Vlatos, 1998).

In this way it is understood that the built heritage is the result of a cultural process that constantly recreates its meaning in different societies over time. Its recreation is an interpretive process that seeks to give meaning to the past in the present time, synthesizing each lived moment, history or myths of a determined community according to the different canons of reading that we know it.

The eternal is a condition of the urban heritage only possible through successive reinterpretations of a past state.

The beauty of the heritage is simultaneously the stimulus for its monumentalization and the representation of a culture or artistic moment passed in the present time.

The original is a momentary state of urban heritage that exists only at the time it is created. Or, at the extreme of the question, it exists only when it is idealized, where it still subsists in its pure and unaltered state.
The illusion is a perpetuation process that able the transition of an idea or physical state of the urban heritage in a past time. Therefore, these concepts in discussion allow us to understand that the conflict between what is conserved and what transforms has always existed. However, more and more the discussion aims at the question of its usefulness to society, adaptability to current time in a creative idea that seems to want to add new values and meanings. The creative effect does not prevent the eternization of the artefact from merely adding a new phase to its physical existence.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY