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RUÍNA E PATRIMÔNIO ARQUITETÔNICO NO BRASIL: MEMÓRIA E ESQUECIMENTO RUIN AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE IN BRAZIL: MEMORY AND OBLIVION

ANGELA RODRIGUES

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Angela Rosch Rodrigues is an Architect, Doctor in History of Architecture and Urbanism, and researcher at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of São Paulo. She studies the preservation of São Paulo's patrimony, especially ruins and monuments.

Abstract

This article aims to present how Brazilian preservation policies identify architectural remnants in a state of ruin as cultural assets, focusing on the monuments listed by the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN, as the acronym in Portuguese). Such study starts from the question: what can be considered a ruin? We consider a ruin as a condition of de-characterization of architectural assets from any age, affected by degradations for different reasons. Different variables make complex their understanding: cause, degree and time elapsed from the beginning of the process of ruining, age and conditions of the building's usage. Once combined, such variables direct interpretations, suggesting the organization of this analysis into three groups: ruins of time, ruins of negligence and ruins of the incident. In this structure, we find that there is a major impasse in identifying and assigning values to the ruins within the Brazilian preservation policies: how much is it desired to historicize the ruin status? In the key of memory and oblivion that are the conflicting paths of history, ruins play an essential role because of its dual informative capacity of reminiscence and loss. They are therefore dynamic records to establish a new fruition in the cognitive processes of the construction of memory.

Keywords: Ruins, Architectural heritage, Memory, Preservation

1 Introduction

In principle, we can consider that the state of ruin is the antithesis of the final purpose of preservation, whose aim is to prevent (or to contain) the degradation process of an architectonic asset. In the field of memory construction, the concept of monument-document proposed by the historian Jacques Le Goff (2010) induces to an interpretation that ruins are elements which testify about the survival of past states. From those remains, it is possible to get information about the previous object composition, the causes of destruction and all that can be forgotten. As Walter Benjamin highlighted, the intrinsic attributes of incompleteness and disarticulation of a ruin potentiate a puissant evocation field: "Allegories are, in the field of idea, what ruins are in the field of things" (Benjamin apud Barbanera and Capodiferro, 2015, p. 11).

This article aims to present how architectural remnants in a state of ruin are identified as cultural assets in the history ideology composition and memory construction led by Brazilian's preservation organs and policies. Such analysis starts from the question: what can be considered a ruin? In the history of preservation, Cesare Brandi writes in his "Theory of Restoration" (1963) that: "Ruin will be everything that testifies the human history, but with a very different aspect and almost unrecognizable in relation to how it was before. [...]." (BrandI, 2004, p. 65). Brandi considers that the complexity of identifying a ruin from an architectural asset involves the challenge of assessing how much its "potential unity" (Op. cit., p. 67) was lost and cannot be reintegrated. In the Portuguese language, the definition of a ruin embodies the theme of degradation due to several causes: "remains or parts more or less deformed from one or more collapsed buildings or destroyed by time, explosion, fire, etc.; [...] fig. state of destruction, of degradation; modification for worse; [...] which is no longer the way it was" (Houaiss and Villar, 2001, p. 2482).

Thus, the identification of a ruin is complex because it involves elements such as: the building age, cause and degree of degeneration, time elapsed from the process of ruining and conditions of use (Rodrigues, 2017). By using the designation "ruin", this analysis considers buildings of any age in different degrees of destruction caused by a combination of some of the following factors: passage of time and its unconditional impacts, loss of the original function or a lack of usage, negligence, or yet catastrophes (natural or anthropic).

Considering those reflections, we established a possible methodology to identify three groups in which the concept of "ruin" can be applied. Therefore, we used the correlation between two main aspects: the cause of degradation and the time elapsed from the process of ruining: 1. Ruins of time: assets that were ruined before the moment that cultural values were assignment to them. The time was the main agent of degradation and there is a chronological distance from the process of ruining; 2. Ruins of negligence: buildings that became ruined after its cultural value recognition. This kind of deterioration has occurred slowly in the later years by negligence in the conservation of the buildings; 3. Ruins of the incident: cultural assets that were affected by natural or anthropic catastrophes (Rodrigues, 2017).

2 Ruins of time: past and permanence

In this group, we consider buildings that were ruined by years of spoliation, weathering and alterations in a period of time that precedes the recognition of its cultural value. Those ruins constitute a physical source (sometimes the only one) of information about construction techniques, materials, architectural parties, etc. Besides, those ensembles can materialize the contraposition - and the coexistence - between what remains and what perishes. The notion of temporal linearity refers to the vanity of human works, a characteristic of what is vain, futile, fruitless and impermanent facing the time - the element that consumes everything. Since the nineteenth century, this allegory of perennity associated to a ruin was transformed into an aesthetical emotion (Augé, 2003). Therefore, the picturesque aspect was crucial for John Ruskin to establish the importance of patina conservation as an element that materializes the passage of time: "XVI. [...] in architecture, [...] the picturesque is thus sought in ruin [...] the picturesque or the extrinsic sublimity will have exactly this function, nobler in it than in any other object: to evidence the building age." (Ruskin, 2008, p. 77, our translation).

In Brazil, the writer Euclides da Cunha expressed a sensible view about the ruined forts São Tiago and São Felipe (both situated in the city of Bertioga, State of São Paulo). He visited those monuments in 1904 and his impressions reflected an alignment to Ruskin's ideas about ruins, having seen the pictorial value of those heritage assets: "[...] the main charm of the two remarkable monuments [...] is its oldness, a characteristic that was imprinted by the course of the ages" (Cunha, 1904 In IPHAN, 1964, s.p., our translation).

However, that approach which evoques vanity and a ruin's pictorial aspect is not common in Brazil. In the Brazilian heritage agencies, most of the speeches associate the condition of ruin to an emergency situation, catalysing the need to protect a cultural asset.

In 1937, it was elaborated the Decree Law n. 25, a document which established the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Service (SPHAN, as the acronym in Portuguese; after some years, it became the National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute - IPHAN, as the acronym in Portuguese). In this document, the definition of what constitutes the Brazilian heritage does not make reference to the ruins nor to the state of conservation of the monuments. There are, tho, designations about the effects of listing the assets stating that:

> Art. 17 The things that are listed in any case can be destroyed, demolished or mutilated without prior special authorization from the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Service (Decreto lei N. 25, 1937 In MEC, 1980, p. 115, our translation).

The structure of the Brazilian conservationist policy is based on the idea that associates the state of ruin with the urgency of preservation, which can be proved by the statement from Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, director of SPHAN from 1937 to 1967:

> The initiative of the head of the Nation has a relevant practical purpose to endow Brazil with an appropriated legislation to prevent the ruin or dispersion of assets with notable artistic and historical values [...] (Andrade, 1936 In Andrade, 1987, p. 48, our translation).

In Brazil, the number of heritage assets identified as ruins can be measured by the inscriptions in the List of National Heritage. There are a number of listed monuments in which have designations such as: ruin, ruins, remnants or remains. The Table 01 considers the initial phase from SPHAN, including the first thirty years of this agency (1937-1967). It is possible to verify that there is a concentration of inscriptions based on the assignment of a historical value - List of Historical Monuments.

There were few ruins that were appreciated exclusively by an artistic value - List of Fine Arts Monuments - for instance, the ancient House of Garcia D`Ávila (located in the city of Mata de São João, state of Bahia). This monument was the first ruined asset enrolled as a national heritage by SPHAN in 1938 (Fig.1). There is also the set of São Miguel das Missões (RS), the first attribution of the architect Lucio Costa as Technical Director in the newly founded SPHAN. In his report about São Miguel, Costa emphasized the value of the original architecture that was deteriorated; he made an approach based on the aesthetic character of the Church's façade without mentioning the condition of the ruin (Costa apud Pessoa, 1999). So, it is possible to identify that the assignment of an artistic value does not refer to the ruin's aesthetics itself nor to its attributes derived from a new spatial reconfiguration that re-establishes a relationship between the indoor and outdoor space.

Fig. 1: Casa da Torre de Garcia D`Ávila, Mata de São João (BA). Fonte: Autora, 2013.

	Objeto	Local	Construção	Processo	Tombo	Data Tomb.
1	Casa da Torre de Garcia D`Ávila e Capela de Nossa Sra. Da Conceição: ruínas	BA-Mata de São João	1551	0128-T-38	L.B.A.	30/04/1938
2	Povo de São Miguel: remanescentes e ruínas da igreja	RS-São Miguel das Missões	1687	0141-T-38	L.B.A.	16/05/1938 *UNESCO 05/12/1983
3	Casa da Pólvora: ruínas	PB-João Pessoa	1710	0272-T-41	L.B.A. L.H.	24/05/1938 24/05/1938
4	Fábrica de Ferro Patriótica: ruínas	MG-Ouro Preto	1811	0031-T-38	L.H.	30/06/1938
5	Forte Velho: ruínas	PB-Cabedelo	1584	0048-T-38	L.H.	09/08/1938
6	Igreja de Nossa Senhora dos Navegantes: ruínas	PB-Cabedelo	1589	0041-T-38	L.H.	12/08/1938
7	Convento e Igreja Franciscanos de Nossa Senhora da Conceição	SP-Itanhaém-SP	Séc. XVIII	0215-T-39	L.B.A. L.H.	07/03/1941
8	Convento de Santo Antônio de Paraguassú: igreja e ruínas	BA-Cachoeira	1660	0280-T-41	L.B.A. L.H.	25/09/1941 25/09/1941
9	Capela de Nossa Senhora da Pena e ruínas do sobrado anexo	BA-Cachoeira	1660	0231-T-41	L.B.A. L.H.	08/07/1943 08/07/1943
10	Convento de São Bernardino de Sena: ruínas e Capela dos Terceiros	RJ-Angra dos Reis	1758	0371-T	L.H.	23/07/1947
11	Conjunto arquitetônico e urbanístico Ruínas Igreja Matriz	MA-Alcântara	1621	0390-T-48	L.B.A. L.A.ET.P. L.H.	10/10/1974 10/10/1974 29/12/1948
12	Forte Príncipe da Beira	RO-Costa Marques	Séc. XVIII	0395-T-50	L.H.	07/08/1950
13	Recolhimento de Santa Teresa: remanescentes	RJ-Niterói/Itaipú	1764	0365-T-46	L.B.A.	08/01/1955
14	Igreja de Nossa Senhora do Rosário e ruínas da Igreja de São José do Tocantins	GO-Niquelândia (distrito de Traíras)	Séc. XVIII	0510-T-54	L.B.A.	19/01/1955
15	Vila colonial de Porto Calvo: remanescentes	AL- Porto Calvo	1636	0515-T	L.A.ET.P	17/01/1955
16	Remanescentes da antiga Vila Colonial - Igreja Matriz (obras de talha e imagens antigas), conjunto arquitetônico	SP-São Vicente	1560	0514-T-51	L.H.	17/01/1955
17	Forte de São Matheus: remanescentes	RJ-Cabo Frio	1617	0447-T-51	L.H.	05/10/1956
18	Igreja de Santana: ruínas	BA-Rio de Contas	Séc. XVIII	0446-T-51	L.H.	29/08/1958
19	Convento Carmelita: ruínas e Igreja de Nossa Senhora de Nazaré	PE-Cabo de Santo Agostinho	Séc. XVI	0619-T-61	L.B.A.	06/07/1961
20	Engenho dos Erasmos: ruínas	SP-Santos	Séc. XVI	0678-T-62	L.H.	02/07/1963
21	Engenho do Cunhau: ruínas da capela	RN-Canguaretama	1614	0666-T-62	L.H.	16/06/1964
22	Casa de Câmara e Cadeia: ruínas	RN-Vila Flor	1768	0665-T-62	L.H.	16/06/1964
23	Real Fábrica de Ferro São João do Ipanema: remanescentes	SP-Iperó	Séc. XVI a XIX	0727-T-64	L.H.	24/09/1964
24	Forte de São Felipe	SP-Guarujá	1765	0752-T-64	L.H.	31/03/1965

Tab. 1: Assets listed by IPHAN, 1930-1960 - Ruins and derived terms. Source: Caption: L.A.ET.P. - List of Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape Monuments; L.A.A. - List of Applied Arts Monuments; L.B.A. - List of Fine Arts Goods; L.H - List of Historical Monuments. Source: Noronha Santos Archive, available at http://www.iphan.gov.br/inicial.htm [Accessed in: 01. jun 2015]. Prepared by the author. Collaboration: Wagner Nascimento

From 1930 until 1960, the inscriptions of ruins in the List of Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape Monuments are scarce. This aspect indicates that the Brazilian precolonial references are not constituted by architectonic remnants associated to ancient civilizations such as the ones that can be found in other Continents or regions of America. Our paleoindian legacy is characterized by other types of material evidences as: artefacts, geoglyphs, rock paintings, sambaquis, megalithic sites, among others (Bastos, 2008). So, in Brazil, the recognition of ruined heritage assets does not considered the archaeological aspect, according to Rodrigo M. F. Andrade:

> *The idea of protecting the archaeological collection of Brazil would perhaps have been manifested early among us if the Portuguese colonizers found in this country, as happened to the Castilians in other regions of America, the monumental remains of a materially more evolved civilization. (Andrade, 1952, p.11, our translation)*

As from the 1960s, there has been another scenario regarding the perspective on cultural heritage. After the Second World War II, the social sciences were incorporated in the discussions leading to an expansion of the concept of monument which was expressed in the Venice Charter (1964). In Brazil, after Rodrigo M. F de Andrade retired in 1967, Renato Soeiro took over the management of IPHAN. As for the legal extent, the definition of cultural heritage presented in the Decree Law of 1937 was then reaffirmed by the definition expressed in the Constitution of Federative Republic of Brazil, enacted in 1988, and this document incorporated the social plurality of the Brazilian national culture.

Considering this new scenario established from 1967, it is possible to verify in the Table 02 that, just as in the earlier period, most of the ruins enrolled as National Heritage are concentrated in the List of Historical Monuments. However, there is a greater incidence in the List of Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape Monuments which reflects the development of a concern about the archaeological research in Brazil. This aspect can be understood considering that it was established a Federal Law in 1961 (n. 3924/1961) that prescribes the legal protection of archaeological sites (Deblasis, 2006).

	Objeto	Local	Construção	Processo	Tombo	Data Tomb.
1	Povo de São João: ruínas e remanescentes do povoado	RS-Entre-ijuís	Séc. XVII e XVIII	0813-T-69	L.H.	22/01/1970
2	Povo de São Nicolau: ruínas e remanescentes	RS-São Nicolau	Séc. XVII e XVIII	0813-T-69	L.H.	22/01/1970
3	Povo de São Lourenço das Missões: ruínas e remanescentes do povoado	RS-São Luiz Gonzaga	Séc. XVII e XVIII	0813-T-69	L.H.	18/03/1970
4	Forte de Santa Tecla: fundações	RS-Bagé	1774	0392-T-48	L.H.	26/11/1970
5	Fazenda do Pombal: remanescentes	MG-Ritápolis	Séc. XVIII	0832-T-70	L.H.	21/09/1971
6	Conjunto arquitetônico e paisagístico: ruínas da Igreja São Francisco e Igreja N. Sra. Do Outeiro	BA-Porto Seguro	Séc. XVI	0800-T-68	L.A.ET.P. L.H.	01/03/1974 01/03/1974
7	Conjunto Paisagístico do Sítio da Trindade Arraial Velho Bom Jesus (antiga fortificação)	PE-Recife	Séc. XVI	0487-T-53	L.H.	17/06/1974
8	Fazenda da Conceição: casa	SP-Paraíbuna	1841	0910-T-74	L.H.	22/11/1974
9	Fortaleza de Santo Antônio: remanescentes	MA-São Luís	Séc. XVII	0930-T-75	L.A.ET.P.	06/08/1975
10	Arraial Novo do Bom Jesus	PE-Recife	Séc. XVII	0942-T-76	L.H.	08/04/1980
11	Convento de São Boaventura: ruínas Fazenda Macacu	RJ-Itaboraí	1612	0690-T-63	L.B.A. L.H.	28/04/1980 28/04/1980
12	Sítio Santo Antônio das Alegrias ou do Físico: ruínas	MA-São Luis	Séc. XVIII	1017-T-80	L.A.ET.P. L.H.	29/01/1981 29/01/1981
13	Engenho do Murucutu: ruínas e Capela de Nossa Senhora da Conceição	PA-Belém	Séc. XVIII	0439-T-50	L.H.	08/10/1981
14	Serra da Barriga - República dos Palmares	AL-União dos Palmares	1630	1069-T-82	L.A.ET.P. L.H.	19/02/1986
15	Conjunto arquitetônico, urbanístico e paisagístico Ruína da Igreja Nossa Senhora do Rosário	TO-Natividade	1734	1117-T-84	L.B.A. L.A.ET.P. L.H.	16/10/1987 16/10/1987 16/10/1987
16	Vila Bela: ruínas	MT-Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade	1730	0877-T-73	L.H.	13/06/1988
17	Conjunto arquitetônico, urbanístico e paisagístico: ruínas de habitações de pedra	BA-Andaraí (Igatu)	Séc. XIX	1411-T-98	L.B.A. L.A.ET.P. L.H.	20/06/2000 20/06/2000 20/06/2000
18	Quilombo do Ambrósio: remanescentes	MG-Ibiá	1726	1428-T-98	L.H.	11/07/2002
19	Conjunto da Fortificações Brasileiras Forte de São Joaquim do Rio Branco: Ruína	RR-Caracaraí	Séc. XVIII	1613-T-2010	L.A.ET.P. L.H.	11/09/2014
20	Conjunto das Fortificações Brasileiras Forte Vera Cruz ou do Calvário: Ruína	MA-Rosário	1620	1613-T-2010	L.A.ET.P. L.H.	11/09/2014

Tab. 2: Assets enrolled by the IPHAN in the decades of 1970-2015 - ruins and derived terms. Source: Caption: L.A.ET.P. - List of Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape Monuments; L.A.A. - List of Applied Arts Monuments; L.B.A. - List of Fine Arts Goods; L.H - List of Historical Monuments. Source: Noronha Santos Archive, available at http://www.iphan.gov.br/inicial.htm accessed on: 01. jun 2015. Prepared by the author. Collaboration: Wagner Nascimento.

In 1972, the General Assembly of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) established the "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage", a fact that contributed to the globalization of ocidental values and references in the preservation practices (Choay, 2001). Gradually, Brazil has had inscriptions in the select roll of the "World heritage". The ruins of the Mission of São Miguel (in the State of Rio Grande do Sul) joined this list in 1983. In July 2017, the archaeological site of Valongo Wharf (in the city of Rio de Janeiro) was enrolled in UNESCO list as the main landing site of the slave trade in Brazil. That set dates back to an infrastructure installed in 1811. In 1911 this structure was grounded and in 2011 its ruins came to light due to works for the urban operation called Porto Maravilha. The remnants materialize the memory of pain and suffering of slavery in Brazil being the main reference of the African roots in America.

The inscriptions from ruined assets as Brazilian national monuments should be interpreted considering the criteria and values adopted by IPHAN as a background. The creation of this institute in 1937 proposed a model of approach towards the heritage based on a search of the Brazilian nation origins through the architectural remnants in order to articulate the idea of the national heritage with a cultural identity (Miceli, 1987). After the 1960s, the inscriptions of ruins as national heritage still reproduce this model and the architectural typology of the monuments are the same. There is a concentration of buildings that refer to the memory of the Brazilian colonial period (16th until 18th centuries), being basically: fortifications, religious structures and rural buildings linked to the manufacture of products (farmhouses and sugar mills). There are few ruined sets from the 19th and 20th centuries identified as national heritage.

For example, the architect Luis Saia elaborated a technical report to enrol the sugar mill of São Jorge dos Erasmos (located in Santos, in the State of São Paulo) as a national monument. Saia has assigned a historical value to those remnants based on its antiquity, rarity and uniqueness (Fig. 2). These features were also based on the thesis of the historian Maria Regina da Cunha Rodrigues who considered this ancient asset as: "the initial mark of the industrial production of sugar in Brazil, [...]" (Rodrigues, 1962 In IPHAN, 1962, s.p., our translation).

In this first group analysed (ruins of time) it was verified that the identification of a ruin as a Brazilian national heritage is mainly related to the oldest assets. This characterization assigns the ancient remnants as a historical testimony that bases the idea of origin and the national cultural identity constitution.

Fig. 2: Panoramic view of the ruins of the sugar mill São Jorge dos Erasmos.Source: Author, 2013.

Assigning a cultural value to an asset and prevent its degradation is a good action leaded by the concept of "urgency of safeguarding" (Lamy apud Rodrigues, 2001, p. 32). As it was presented, the necessity of saving from a process of ruin was fundamental to structure the heritage policy in Brazil. In general, the process of listing a building as a national heritage is related to the purpose to save it from an imminent loss, preserving its architecture features that are representative of a relevant past.

Yet, there are still flagrant cases of buildings that are going into a ruin while they are waiting for identification, a cultural appreciation and a safeguard initiative. One example is the case of the Environmental Protection Centre of Balbina (in the city of Presidente Figueiredo, in the state of Amazonas). This Centre was projected by the architect Severiano Mário Porto and it was built in 1984. This reference of the twentieth-century Brazilian architecture is marked by regionalism in its architectural language and materials usage. This set has entered in a process of ruin that led to complaints and social mobilizations for its preservation. Finally, in 2016, the asset was listed as a monument in addition to 27 works of the same architect in that region.

However, the act of imputing a cultural value to a building and to enrol it as a heritage is not enough to preserve it from a gradual decharacterization. As Sônia Rabelo de Castro (1991) points out, in Brazil, the concept of "preservation" is often confused with the act of listing an object as a heritage. While preservation is a concept in which: "[...] we can understand any and all actions of the State aiming to preserve the memory of cultural facts or values of a Nation" (Castro, 1991, p. 5, our translation), listing an asset as a heritage, on the other hand, is a stamp attributed by a certain group linked to the official institutes: "[...] the law delimits it, establishing the limits of the exercise of this police power of the administration, disposing over its content, its procedure [...]" (Op. Cit., p. 8).

The concept of "negligence" that we are considering to designate this group of ruin refers to the inefficiency of the preservation actions. This kind of ruin devastates many cultural monuments and is the product of a silent process derived from the lack of concrete actions to conserve them. It is a process of ruin caused by dilapidations, careless and inappropriate uses. Eventually, there are complaints and a clamour by different sectors of the civil society, or even by the heritage preservation agencies, but the degradation continues until it reaches a painful reality: an original and relatively intact monument has been turned into a ruin.

Considering the Brazilian scenario, it is impracticable to measure the number of heritage assets that have been affected by this kind of degradation, but there are some relevant situations that can be mentioned. For instance, the historical centre of the city of Salvador (State of Bahia) that was recognized in 1959 as a national monument and it was declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage in 1985. In 1993, the serious state of degeneration of this historical centre was a factor that motivated an urban revitalization in this area (Marins, 2012). This urban intervention has expropriated and restored several properties visibly degraded. Although, after more than two decades it is still possible to verify ruined houses in the neighbourhood of the intervention area (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: The degradation of some old houses in the historical centre of Salvador (BA).Source: Author, 2013.

Looking at the scale of the building, there are also some flagrant cases of degradation such as the ancient house of Sítio Mirim (situated in the city of São Paulo, State of São Paulo). This rural house has its earliest information dates back to 1750 and was studied by the architect Luis Saia to be enrolled as a national monument in the 1960s. He pointed the exceptionality and uniqueness of the architectural features of that house. At that time there were also some restoration works in progress for this heritage asset. However, without a specific use, the house has entered in a progressive process of ruin until now. In an article published in 1973, Luis Saia made an explicit criticism to the municipal government due to its negligence: "There was a lack of care from the city hall. [...] That is why Sítio Mirim has become what it is today, ruin and only ruin." (Saia apud Lima, 1973, p.14 In IPHAN, 1965, s.p.)

In the course of memory construction, there is a struggle in identifying these kind of assets ruin as a consequence of the negligence on all parties involved (agencies of preservation and civil society). From a symbolic point of view, besides the idea of transience of the human works associated with ruins, it is possible to add in this group the idea of negligence, an irreparable loss of what could have been saved. The evocation of abandonment provoked by those ruins is quite different from that one related to the passing of time. The careless incurs in the nullity of actions, repentance, or inoperability as attested by the philosopher Henri-Pierre Jeudy: "The ancient ruin already has a heritage status. When it is current, in the process of transforming under our eyes, it gives an idea of abandonment, of degradation, a testimony of the inability to preserve" (Jeudy, 2005, p. 70). From a documental point of view, the analysis of this group of ruins is quite different from the previous one, because the process of ruin is more recent. In this case, there are more references and studies about the buildings in its prior situation. There is also a lot of information reporting the degradation process, a material that has a tone of complaint and that can be found in official records or other means of communication.

In the intricate relation of meanings that contrasts memory to oblivion, the main question posed here by the identification of this group of ruins is how to accept these decharacterization features as a part of the monument history, and how to assign a cultural value to these marks of degradation as a witness of negligence.

In this group, the challenge of identifying these ruins is constantly renewed considering that many architectural assets are continually affected by catastrophic incidents derived from anthropic (fires, collisions, criminal demolitions, wars, etc.) or natural factors (floods, earthquakes, etc.).

In Brazil several situations have reached the national heritage constituting partial or total destructions, caused mainly by fires and floods: Church of Rosario e Santo Benedito, Rio de Janeiro (RJ) - fire in 1967; Paço do Saldanha (current Lyceum of Arts and Crafts of Bahia), Salvador (BA) - fire in 1968; Central Market (Mercado Modelo - Casa da Alfândega), Salvador (BA) - fires in 1969 and 1984; Museum of Caraça, Catas Altas (MG) - fire in 1984; Church of Nossa Senhora do Carmo, Mariana (MG) - fire in 1999; the Minster of São Vicente city (SP) - fire in 2000; historical center of Goiás city (GO) - flood in 2001; the Minster Nossa Senhora do Rosário, Pirenópolis (GO) - fire in 2002; Pilão Hotel, Ouro Preto (MG) - fire in 2003; Cultura Artística Theater, São Paulo (SP) - fire in 2008; the Minster of São Luiz do Paraitinga city (SP), flood in 2010; São Pedro de Alcântara Chapel, Rio de Janeiro (RJ) - fire in 2011; Solar Boa Vista (mansion), Salvador (BA) - fire in 2013; Public Market, Porto Alegre (RS) - fire in 2013; Chico Mendes` House, Xapuri (AC) - flooding in 2015; Portuguese Language Museum, São Paulo (SP) - fire in 2015; Mission Museum, São Miguel (RS) - hurricane in 2016.

Several of these goods have passed through interventions aimed to recovering them from the ruinous state. The methodology and criteria for the accomplishment of such works evidences questions about how much of the pre-existence can be preserved as support to the image of the lost architecture and what is the limit for the interposition with the new one.

From a documentary point of view, this type of ruin can reveal valuable architectural details hitherto hidden, such as building materials beneath coating surfaces, foundations composition, etc., fundamental information to deepen the knowledge of the monument and subsidize future actions for its preservation. As in the previous groups, these ruins document a tragic episode, being it the concrete result of the destruction. The evocative character of this group of ruins points to perplexity facing the tragedy and destruction; a sentiment that can be summed up by the following assertions of Jean Starobinski: "[...] For a ruin

to look beautiful, destruction must be quite distant [...] No one dreams peacefully in the face of recent ruins that make the massacre felt: they are soon uncovered to rebuild." (Starobinski, 1994, p. 202).

Alois Riegl`s assertions in "The Modern Cult of Monuments - Its Essence and Its Origin" (1903) are a key to understand the complexity of facing the impact of these ruins. By highlighting an architectural value of "usage", Riegl refers to the feeling of loss when one sees a building that had a function (such as a house, a church or another one) and does not have it anymore, which can provide a sudden and intolerable impression of "violent destruction" (Riegl, 1990, p.59). In the case of buildings we have already known without any usage, the lack of a human activity is not as disturbing (such as the ruins of a medieval castle or a Roman temple - identified in this analysis in the group of ruins "of time").

The ruins of incident can become symbols that ensure the "memorable sense attributed to any catastrophe" (Jeudy, 2005, p.59, our translation). In Brazil, the ruins provoked by the Samarco Mineração SA dam collapse (2015) in Bento Rodrigues city (sub-district of Mariana, MG) amplified in a divergent way the heritage with a message of a painful survival.

Opposing the idea of becoming a memorial monument, ruins of a fulminating destruction may lead to another approach: the strength of reconstruction condensing the resilience of a social group. The ruin's denial becomes a way to transform the destructive event in a moment of convergence and union agglutinating the moral force of the civil society involved.

The Minster of São Luiz de Tolosa (São Luiz do Paraitinga, SP) destroyed by a flood in 2010 is a case that illustrates this situation. The alternative of a new and a formal distinct project has been raised. However, the option chosen was the reconstruction taking as reference the Church aspect before it has been ruined by the flood, under the justification in which was considered: "[...] the reality of the local community, which wishes to have its social reference exactly as it was before disaster." (IPHAN, 2010, p. 148 our translation). There was intense popular participation in public audiences and at the construction site, highlighting the importance that this reconstruction had for the community. As a final result, externally the Church keeps its prior characteristics (Fig. 4), and it is not possible to distinguish its recent age; internally, the reconstruction is evidenced in some environments by the contrast of the old walls and the new constructive techniques - lateral galleries (Fig. 4) and Baptism room.

Fig. 4: Minster of São Luiz de Tolosa - external aspect after its reconstitution. Source: Author, 2014.

Fig. 5: Minster of São Luiz de Tolosa - lateral gallery with the exhibition of some ruins of the original walls. Source: Author, 2014

Among the factors for the approach and interpretation of this group of ruins, there are: the evident contemporaneity of the degradation process; the dimension of the physical and symbolical losses; the acceptance (or not) of these damages; and the

resilience (or not) towards the tragic incident. So, in the scope of memory and history construction, the main question that stands here is: how much do we intend to historicize the incident that caused this kind of ruin?

5 Final considerations

The building assets in ruins, as discussed here, are part of the routine of the cities and constitute the intricate network of meanings that composes the construction of history, memory and cultural identity. Understanding a ruin is hard because it involves a complex conjunction of variables: cause, degree and time elapsed from the beginning of the process of ruin, age and conditions of usage of the building. In our analysis, we have structured the ruins into three groups and it was possible to verify some characteristics about the identification and the assignment of values towards the heritage assets in ruins by the Brazilian preservation policies.

In the group of "ruins of time" the identification and the acceptance of the state of degradation is more legible. However, the number of ruined monuments enrolled as Brazilian national heritage is low and it is predominantly based on the assignment of a historical value to buildings in which age is from the 16th until the 18th centuries. The approach under the archaeological bias is tenuous, but it has been advanced since the 1960s and have culminated in the indication of the Warf of Valongo (RJ) by IPHAN to integrate the UNESCO's World Heritage list. During the constitution of our national memory those vestiges were summarily forgotten. Although, those ruins are relevant in an uninterrupted need for a historiographical revision of our cultural identity.

In the groups of ruins "of negligence" and "of the incident", we have analysed some buildings that have turned into a ruin after being recognized as cultural heritage. The identification and assignment of values to those remnants is complex due to: the existence of references from the previous architecture; the lack of chronological distance from the process of ruining; and, especially, the negative connotation (negligence and tragedy) associated to those recently damaged buildings that used to be integer and a part of a community's life. So, there is a negative evocation related to those abrupt losses.

We find the major impasse that permeates those three groups (ruins "of time", ruins "of negligence" and ruins "of incident") can be established by the following question: how much is it desired historicizing the ruin status? In the key of memory and oblivion that are the conflicting paths of history construction, ruins play an essential evocative role because of its dual informative capacity of reminiscence and loss. A network of meanings can be attributed to those remnants due to the ambiguity of their materiality which simultaneously refers to presence and absence; continuity and discontinuity; permanence and ephemerality.

Therefore, ruins are not stagnant elements that only refer to a past, but they are dynamic records that condense the present and future rearticulating the building spatiality and establishing continuously a new fruition in the cognitive processes of memory construction.

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