

NON-HEGEMONIC GLOBALIZATION AND CHANGES IN THE HISTORIC CENTER OF BELÉM GLOBALIZAÇÃO NÃO-HEGEMÔNICA E MUDANÇAS NO CENTRO HISTÓRICO DE BELÉM

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Abstract

Since the last century, non-hegemonic globalization has been seen as a business opportunity by Asian countries, which started to produce and export low-cost products, through the establishment of networks structured as pyramids and composed by suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, and sellers. At the end of these networks, there are the buying-selling relations, normally established between Asians and local consumers, who have been changing traditional tertiary urban spaces, considering that the counter-hegemony emerges as a reaction to globalization (hegemonic and non-hegemonic), through actions and/or fights for the democratic distribution of wealth. The present article will analyze how this process appropriates spaces and how the global-local dialectic results in changes in the use and occupation of the land of historic centers. Based on bibliographical research, the role of Asian transmigrants in the recent socio-spatial processes, observed in historic centers, will be discussed. Then, from the field survey, the spatial distribution of buildings used for commercializing popular merchandise, of Asian origin, in the Historic Center of Belém (CHB), will be measured, characterized and analyzed. Thus, the study will show: (i) the expressive number and spatial concentration of buildings in the CHB that commercialize merchandise of Asian origin from the non-hegemonic globalization circuit; (ii) that, in addition to establishments managed by transmigrants, there is a great number of stores commercializing, predominantly, products of Asian origin; (iii) that the popular commerce of products from Asian countries is redefining the social division of space in the CHB.

Keywords: Non-hegemonic Globalization, Cultural Patrimony, Popular Commerce, Asian Merchants, Historic Center of Belém

1 Introduction

Globalization is a process characterized by the increase of interdependence among countries and by the compression of space-time, provided by increasingly fast means of transportation and communication (Harvey, 1992, 2005, 2013). More recently, a deepening of the so called non-hegemonic globalization or popular globalization, which articulates powerful capitalist agents to the unfavored layers of society through the flow of popular merchandise, is observed (Ribeiro, 2006; 2009; 2010; 2011). In this sense, Santos (2017) suggests that the counter-hegemonic movement of dissatisfaction at a global level, with the hegemonic reproduction of the capital, causes a transformation of how to face capitalism, through the globalization of the fight for the democratic distribution of wealth, influenced by the principle that: “We have the right to be equal when the difference makes us inferior and to be different when being equal decharacterizes us.” (Santos, 2002a, p. 75, our translation).

Therefore, the counter-hegemonic globalization refers to a process of local reactions to the global forces (hegemonic and non-hegemonic) that, on the other hand, promote translocal connections through transnational operations and networks that share a same purpose (Santos, 2002a). In the present study, we understand non-hegemonic globalization or popular globalization as a movement parallel to hegemonic globalization, in which fractions of dominant groups ally or not with local groups articulated to the wide network organized at a global scale, even from the coalition established between capitals and transmigrant Asians, to produce and/or commercialize low-cost goods and services, usually with quality standards similar to those offered by the productive chains linked to the hegemonic globalization circuits. This type of globalization increasingly gains strength and has manifested especially by the occupation of a great number of buildings by Asian-product stores, usually controlled by transmigrants of the same origin.

The globalization processes seek to promote sociocultural, economic and spatial homogenization, as they spread uniform processes in terms of social relations of production; the massification of consumption and they are directly and indirectly tied to the chains aimed at the magnified reproduction of the capital. However, this homogenization does not occur in the same way in the several socio-spatial segments, not only because globalization is selective in its allocations throughout the globe, but also because it must adjust and, not rarely, re-elaborate political, economic, cultural processes and the constructed local environments, which must be inserted in the transnational perspective and also in concrete places and fights (Haesbaert; Limonad, 2007; Santos, 2002a, 2002b). Thus, we note the relevance of

identifying and understanding the spatial manifestations and configurations, notably concerning the impacts on historical centers, socially produced spaces of great cultural and symbolic value.

Developed in the scope of urban studies of the Urban Development and Environment Post-graduation Program at the Amazônia University and inserted in the research and study group on the real estate market in historic centers of Brazilian cities (MICH), the present article aims to investigate how this globalization process is operating in the Historic Center of Belém (CHB), located in the state of Pará, northern Brazil. Regarding this center, we highlight that, since the colonial period, it supplies not only the local population, but also neighboring cities and rural communities connected by roads and/or river. Due to being a research with explicative and exploratory purposes, we allied the set of methodological procedures of bibliographic research (conceptualization about hegemonic, non-hegemonic and counter-hegemonic globalization); documental research (for comparison regarding the type of use of the land before and after the intensification of Asian occupation) and the case study of the CHB (observations and *in loco* visits, for the systematization of the commercial establishments that are tied to this logic).

Besides the introduction, the article is composed of three parts. After presenting a general overview on how the urban centers and, above all, the historic centers have been transformed by the globalization processes, we will discuss the role of the transmigrant in the establishment of networks that articulate and connect international frontiers. Then, we will analyze how the CHB behaves in light of the referred changes, quantifying, characterizing and spatializing the properties where there is commercialization of popular Asian-origin products, with or without the presence of Asian transmigrants in control of the cash registers of the commerce and service establishments. Lastly, the possible paths to be taken will be pondered, considering the results observed in the CHB.

2 Globalization and the Historic Center

The urban space is the set of uses of fragmented lands articulated by meeting points, destined for social actions, capital circulation and information sharing. The location with maximum accessibility in the urban space is called the main center and, usually, is the best serviced area by transport systems, infrastructure and urban equipment. Furthermore, it is where the portion called the city's historic center is defined through time, being a place of convergence of people, ideas, goods and services and references and elements that provide the identity that best characterizes the urban (Corrêa, 1989; Villaça, 2012; Tourinho, 2007).

When studying the general transformation processes experienced by traditional centers and the historic centers of Brazilian cities, it becomes possible to identify three distinct moments: the first moment is marked by the installation of railway stations and/or ports that are converted into points of inter-regional transport. Thus, to reduce costs of product outflow, several activities are clustered in the transshipment stations, turning them into the focus of interurban transports and, with the formation of the city, in points of maximum accessibility. The economy of agglomeration, thus generated, originated the main centrality of the city, usually called downtown (Villaça, 2012). The area called historic center is usually formed in the first phase. Therefore, it is responsible for polarizing a great part of the social, administrative, economic and religious functions of the city, acquiring historic and symbolic value through several generations.

The second moment is characterized by the decentralization of the economic activities and shift of higher-income residences to other parts of the city. This process, whose spatial manifestation is the formation of subcenters, is caused by endogenous and exogenous factors to the traditional center, such as: the populational and spatial growth of the city, which increased the distances at the time and cost levels (house-purchases); the development of the transport system and the use of automobiles; the need for extended capital accumulation, especially real estate capital, and the increase in the price of land and real estate situated downtown, which dispersed the activities that could not pay for the offered benefits, while other parts of the city offered land in abundance for a low cost (Corrêa, 1989; Villaça, 2012). With the departure of activities and residences aimed at the higher-income classes, there is a change in the role of historic centers, which start to be occupied by goods and services activities aimed at the popular class. In addition, several

properties were vacated, underused, and suffered processes of total or partial degradation, compromising the architectural historic patrimony (Capel, 2013).

The third moment refers to the scenario of the last decades and, above all, comes from the intensification of the globalization processes. The increase of the interdependence of global economies, regarding the circulation of information, money, people and goods beyond national frontiers, redefines the “here” and “now” and promotes the “shortening of distances” between countries and places, through increasingly agile means of transportation and communication (Harvey, 1992). This ease of articulation between countries was seen as a business opportunity by transnational companies that wanted to incorporate new consumer markets.

In light of the intensification of the capitalist accumulation process, the historic centers have been inserting themselves more and more in the international networks through two chains connected to globalization. One is that articulated the historic center with the hegemonic globalization, incorporating it into the international competition through urban reconfiguration by the implementation of building and economic projects, especially those related to tourism and/or multiuse complexes (Smith, 2002; Wyly and Hammel, 2005; Rufino, 2017). This solution, when undertaken by the state, seeks to attract capital to invest in the centers directly or indirectly, using the rehabilitation of these areas and the concession of fiscal incentives, among others, as strategies. The second chain is connected to non-hegemonic globalization, which permeates and organizes several networks, functioning as a pyramid, in which the powerful transnational agents are at the top, but need the participation of the poorer layers of society to move the system. Therefore, they offer them access to the flow of wealth, producing and commercializing products with low production cost, similar to the ones offered by the holders of the production means situated in wealthy and advanced countries (Ribeiro, 2006, 2011).

It is worth noting that the transnational companies use globalization to install productive chains in nations with cheap labor and consumer markets with potential for expansion. Asian countries that presented significant extreme poverty rates, in 1990, according to the UN’s criteria (UN, 2015), such as Vietnam, Malaysia, and the main one, China, incorporated and explored this logic of merchandise production and circulation. Thus, they constitute a relation with the historic center of other countries through complex and transcultural webs that tie manufacturers, distributors and consumers (Massey; Alarcon; Durand; Gonzáles, 1990; Appadurai, 2006).

The present study has a focus directed to the spatial configuration of the non-hegemonic globalization process in the CHB, from the presupposition that, even if it is almost impossible to completely visualize the network, at its end, there is a relation between consumer and merchant, in which the Asian transmigrant can perform the role of manager or seller. Schiller, Basch and Blanc (1995) define the transmigrant as non-institutional figure or group, which permeates a country and depends on multiple connections through international frontiers. Despite being situated “here”, they are committed to the network “there”, creating contacts, institutions, transactions, influencing and being influenced by the events of the country they emigrated to, at the national and regional level. Furthermore, they can transform the urban landscape of the places they occupy, imprinting marks of their culture in the urban space of the society they integrate now, making the agents and the space adapt to their presence.

The Asian merchants who go to other countries enlist fellow countrymen workers and maintain closer contact with manufacturers and suppliers of Asian products, establishing direct relations between the consumer country and their origin country. It is worth highlighting that the historic centers always received ethnic groups of merchants at an international level, for example, Italians, Portuguese, Germans, Dutch, Japanese and others. The difference is that, currently, the migration is closely tied to a global system of non-hegemonic globalization, since it enlists a large number of individuals to structure paths and networks for production and circulation of merchandise and global capital.

3 Non-hegemonic Globalization and CHB Occupation

The city of Belém, as shown below in Figure 1, is located in northern Brazil at the shore of the Guarujá Bay and is an important Amazon metropolis. Its historic center, composed by the Campina neighborhoods, part of the Cidade Velha

neighborhood and the port area of the Reduto and Umarizal neighborhoods, was created by Municipal Law N° 7.401/1988, preserved by the Organic Law of the City of Belém from 1990 and outlined by Municipal Law N° 7.709/1994, which established parameters for the use and occupation of the land. The Historic Center of Belém has, in its totality, 3,079 lots and 7,339 buildings, 1,708 being of historical value (Lima, 2015).

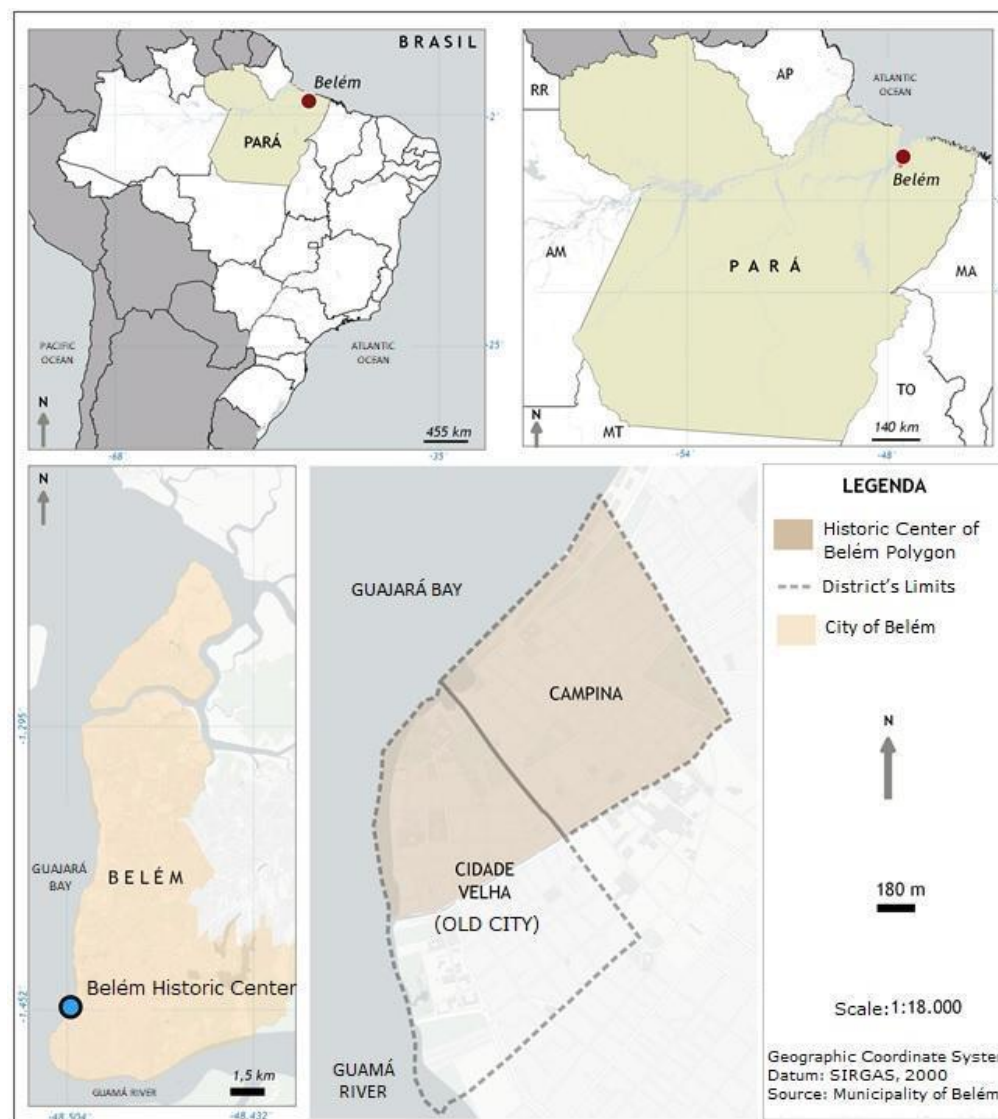


Fig. 1: Location of Belém and its Historic Center. Source: Gusmão, 2021.

The non-indigenous occupation of the CHB began in the 17th century, in a site considered by the Portuguese colonizers as strategic for the defense of the territory and control of the Amazon River bay. With the capital flow coming from the exploration of rubber, in the second half of the 19th century, the regional economy was strengthened, consolidating the CHB as the main centrality of Belém and in the whole Amazon region. The urban growth, and the decentralization process that followed, caused the CHB to already show signs of physical decline in the 1960/70. In the Campina neighborhood, the horizontal, single-family habitational use gave space to verticalized multifamily and buildings with commerce, services and more sophisticated establishments were substituted or reformed (Lima, 2015; Lacerda, Tourinho, Lôbo and Venâncio, 2018) or were displaced to nearby neighborhoods. In the 1980s, the appearance of shopping centers and closed residential condominiums in other areas of the city accelerated the move of the wealthier layers of society to surrounding areas or far from the CHB (Mercês; Tourinho; Lobo, 2014; Lacerda, Tourinho, Lôbo and Venâncio, 2018).

The expansion of the urban fabric, the decentralization of activities and the shift of wealthier families to other neighborhoods caused transformations in the functions of the CHB. Buildings of the referred historic center were

abandoned or under-occupied and many protected buildings, or of interest for protection, went through processes of deterioration. To revert this dynamic and foment touristic activity, the public power, especially from 1990s on, invested in urbanistic interventions, for example, the requalification of the port area, as shown below in figure 2 (Mercês; Tourinho; Lobo, 2014; Lima, 2015; Lacerda, Tourinho, Lôbo; Venâncio, 2018). However, such actions were not enough to promote the classic gentrification¹, nor to contain the degradation process, although some authors identify the beginning of consumption gentrification (Trindade Júnior; Amaral, 2006; Trindade Júnior, 2018).



Fig. 2: Intervention in the Docks Station. Source: Pará Turismo, 2000. Available at http://www.paraturismo.pa.gov.br/vejamaiz_negocios_eventos/belem/escafo. Accessed 4 Nov. 2022.

Progressively, the profile of the goods and services installed in the CHB changed. In the first moment, between the 1970s and the beginning of the 1990s, the establishments aimed to serve the middle and wealthy classes were vacated or substituted by establishments aimed to serve the popular segments in general. Then, several buildings started to house activities of selling products of Asian origin, managed or not by Asian transmigrants (Lacerda; Tourinho; Lôbo; Venâncio, 2018).

To measure and spatialize the real estate occupation by Asians in the CHB, the research group Real Estate Market in Historic Centers (MICH) carried out, between October of 2018 and February of 2019, a field survey in all buildings that commercialized popular products imported from Asia and classified them in two groups: the ones that had their cash registers controlled by Brazilians and those that were managed by Asians. The location of the buildings, for mapping purposes, was obtained with the aid of *Google Street View*. Furthermore, through *in loco* visitations, the researchers, in the condition of buyers, collected business cards and ad print-outs tied to the establishments that sell popular Asian products, which aided in the categorization of the commercialized products, since the Asian merchants refused to participate in the research. Part of these cards and ads can be seen below, in Figure 3 (Tourinho; Lôbo; Froes; Cabral, 2019):

¹ About the concept of gentrification, see: Gottdiener, Budd and Lehtovuori (2016).



Fig. 3: Business Cards and Ad Print-outs of the surveyed stores. Source: Tourinho, Lôbo, Froes and Cabral, 2019. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354842884_os_asiaticos_e_a_ocupacao_dos_imoveis_do_centro_historico_de_belem_chb_cultura_e_memoria. Accessed 4 Nov. 2022.

Figure 4, below, shows that the present research identified 394 buildings in the CHB that commercialized, almost exclusively, Asian products. Of these, 392 were located in the Campina neighborhood and 77 units (19.5%) were managed by Asians, compared to 317 stores (80.5%) that were administered by Brazilians. These results reveal the extension and capillarity of the Asian network in adjusting and integrating, even in the local merchant elite (Tourinho; Lôbo; Froes; Cabral, 2019).

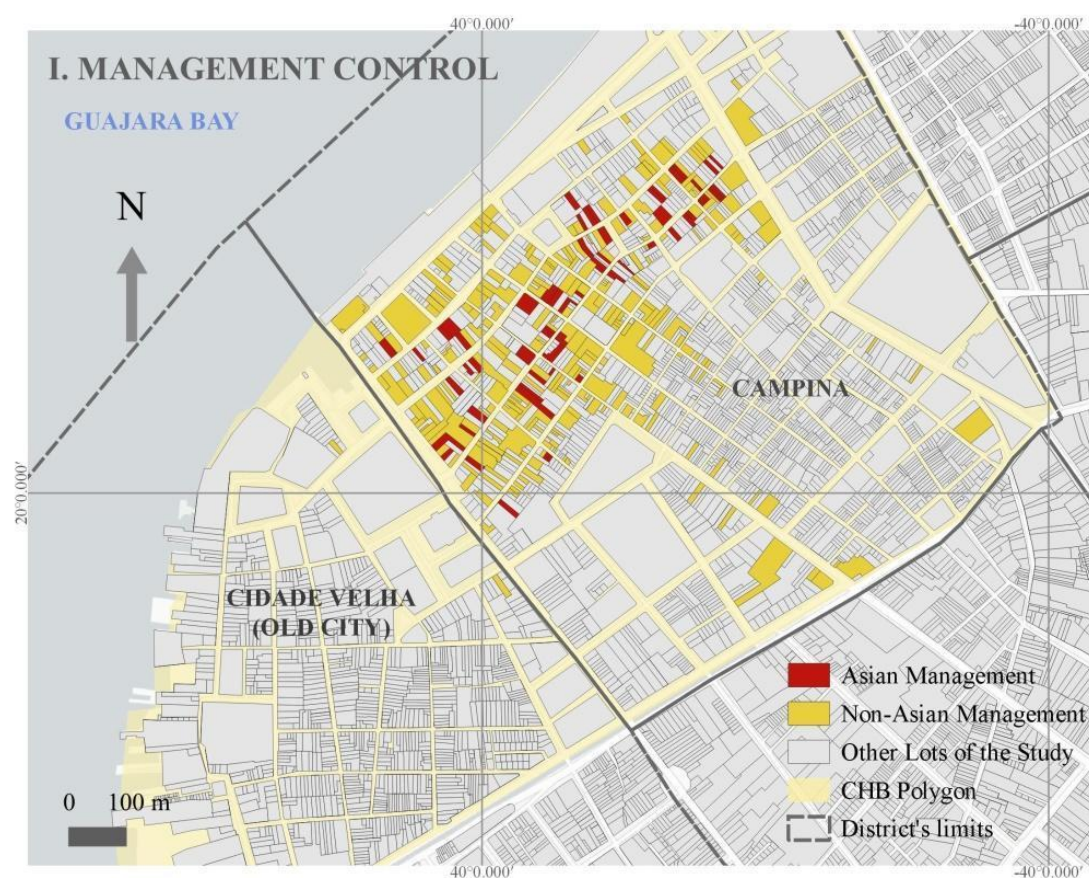


Fig. 4: Real estate units tied to Asian occupation and commercialization of Asian products. Source: MICH Research Database, 2019.

Analyzing figure 4, we noted that the location of the real estates managed by Asians formed a corridor, around which the establishments managed by non-Asians gravitated. Regarding the number of floors of the buildings occupied by establishments managed by Asians, of the 77 occupied buildings, 69 units have up to three floors, which represents 89.61%. Then, figure 5 shows the preference for the occupation of buildings with up to three floors, as the ground floor is used for retail commerce, while the other floors can be used for storage. Thus, the presence of these storages is fundamental, not only to supply the stores themselves, but also the street vendors, as we will discuss (Tourinho; Lôbo; Froes; Cabral, 2019).

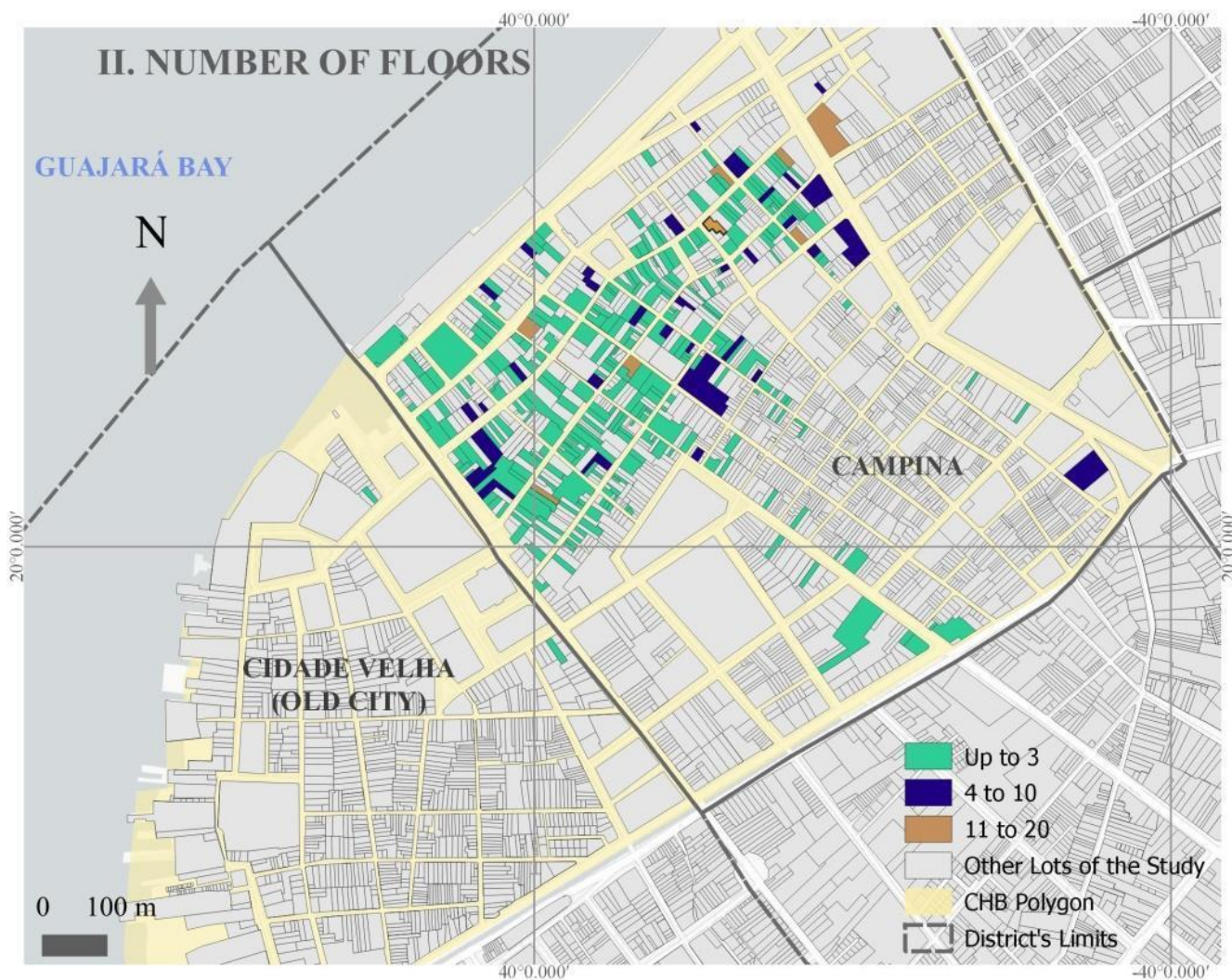


Fig. 5: Number of floors in the buildings occupied by Asian businesses. Source: MICH Research Database, 2019.

The establishments were categorized regarding merchandise class, based on the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE), developed by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 2002. This classification considers that the establishment is specialized in a specific product if 50% of sales refer to this product, while establishments with more than four classes of products are considered mixed. When analyzing the spatial distribution of the establishments in the CHB regarding the class of the commercialized products, based on the CNAE classification (IBGE, 2002), it is noted, as shown in figure 6², the occurrence of sequential tracks and street specialization. On the internal streets, the commerce of clothes, accessories, shoes, travel items, jewelry and watches prevails (Class D). On the intermediate streets, the sales of perfumery, cosmetics and optical items (Class C) and miscellaneous merchandise (Class M) prevails. On the borders, there are stores with computer equipment, communication, audio, video, lighting,

² Legend: A – Retail commerce of computer and communication equipment; domestic utility items and equipment; B – Retail commerce of cultural, recreational and sport items; C – Retail commerce of pharmaceutical, perfumery and cosmetic products and medical, optical and orthopedic items; D – Retail commerce of clothes and accessories, shoes, travel items, jewelry and watches (new and used products); M – Mixed.

musical instruments and domestic utility items (Class A), in addition to the stationary stores and recreational items (Class B) (Tourinho; Lôbo; Froes; Cabral, 2019).

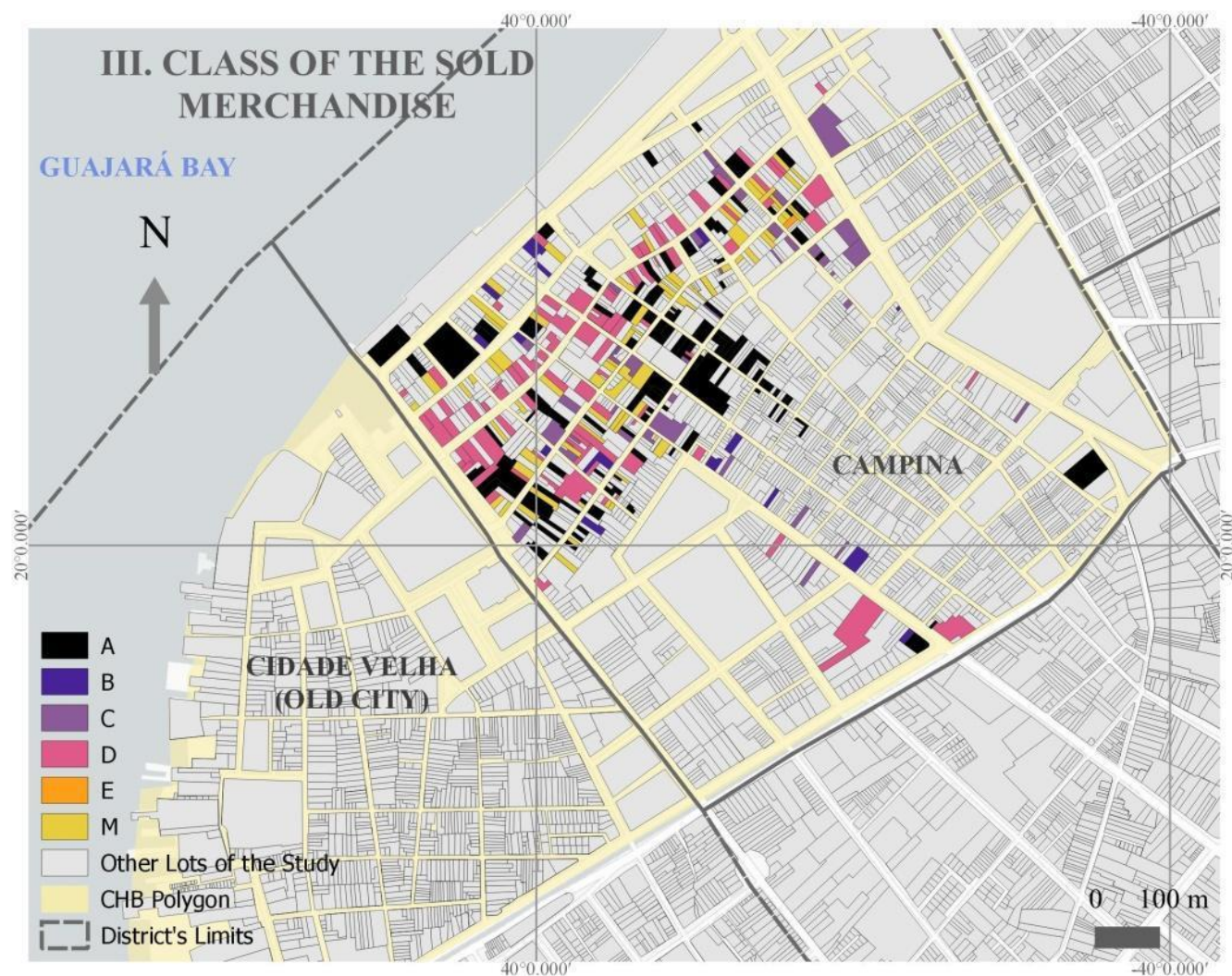


Fig. 6: Building occupation regarding the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE). Source: MICH Research Database, 2019.

Regarding the use and occupation of the CHB land and Asian commerce, Macedo (2020) compared the map of land use and occupation from the Multipurpose Technical Registry CTM (1998), provided by the City Hall organ called CODEM – Belém Metropolitan Area Development and Administration Company (CODEM), with the map of real estate units tied to Asian occupation and commercialization of Asian products, produced by the MICH Research Group. As will be shown in figure 7, of the 77 establishments managed by Asians, 59 (76.62%) were already of commercial use. In five cases (6.49%), they were associated with services; four buildings (5.20%) were residential; seven stores (9.09%) performed other functions and one building (1.30%) was of religious use. It was not possible to obtain data on one building occupied by Asians (1.30%).

As we can also observe in figure 7, of the buildings which commercialized Asian products, but were managed by Brazilians, 230 establishments (73.02%) were situated in buildings that were already used for commerce; 20 stores (6.34%) were in buildings previously used for services; 44 establishments (13.97%) in buildings previously used as residences and the remaining 16 establishments (5.08%) were aimed at other uses. No data was obtained on five of the analyzed establishments.



Fig. 7: Change in the use of buildings according to Asian occupation and commercialization of Asian products. Source: MICH Research Database, 2020.

When studying the composition of the buildings' façade, Macedo (2020) observes that the occupation of Asian commerce manifests through the ostensive installation of parasite elements, such as: signs, storefronts and advertisements that prevent the visualization of the buildings' upper floor and hinder the reading of the façade plan.

As reported below in figure 8, the storefronts, usually lettered with vibrant colors, reveal the name of the establishment that refers to the connection between Brazil and the Asian culture and reveal the competition among the establishments for the attention of the passerby consumer. In the figures below, awnings are installed in the storefronts, which covers the sidewalk up to the curb, appropriating public space and, sometimes, incorporating the street as a private merchandise exposition area (Macedo, 2020).



Fig. 8: Façades of the buildings occupied by the logic of Asian commercialization. Source: authors, 2019, adapted from Google Street View and Tourinho, Lôbo, Froes and Cabral, 2019. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354842884_os_asiatcos_e_a_ocupacao_dos_imoveis_do_centro_historico_de_belem_chb_cultura_e_memoria. Accessed 4 Nov. 2022.

In the internal part of the building, the layout introduced by the Asian logic is also configured differently. In the interior, in addition to the ring displays, we observe a very peculiar furniture, as shown below in figure 9, being a type of high stool for the monitoring and total control of the store, a local version of the panopticon studied by Michel Foucault, in his work *Discipline and Punish: the birth of prison*, from 1987 (Tourinho; Lôbo; Froes; Cabral, 2019).

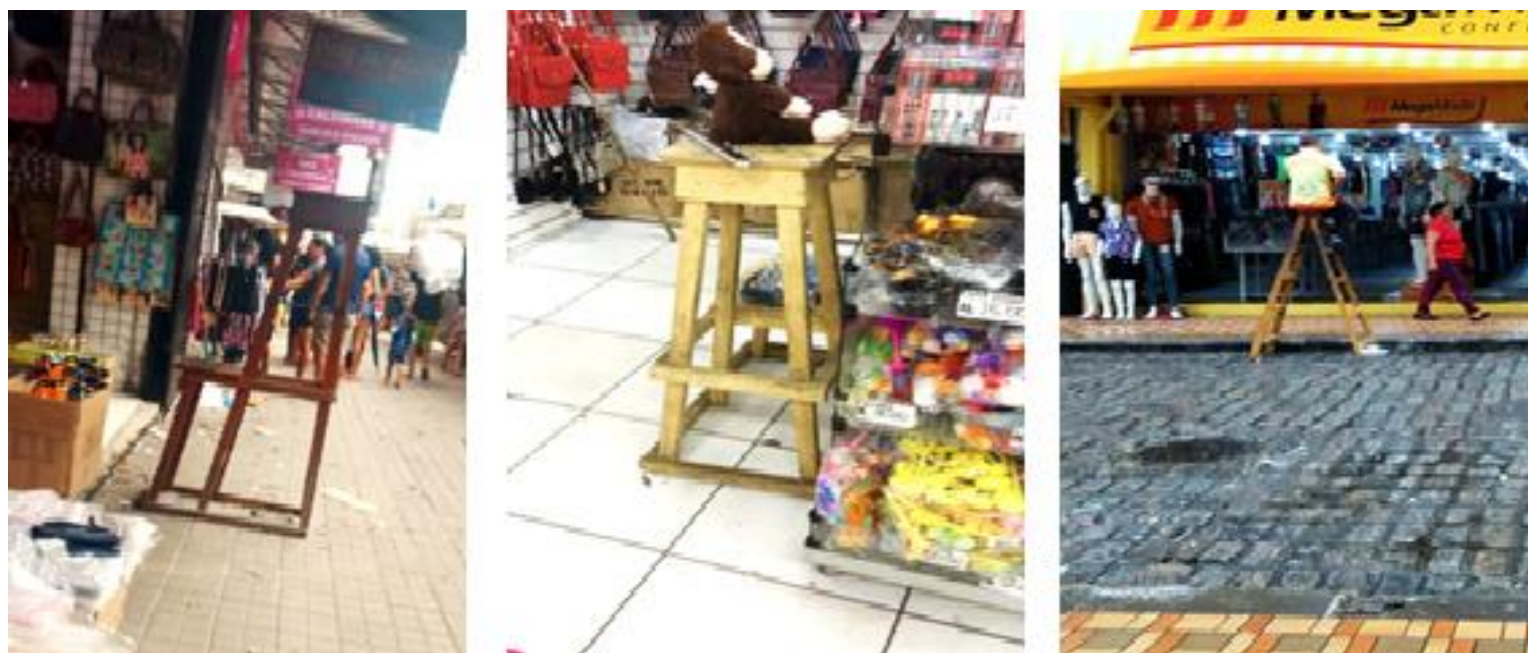


Fig. 9: Buildings occupation regarding the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE). Source: Tourinho, Lobo, Froes, Cabral, 2019. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354842884_os_asiatcos_e_a_ocupacao_dos_imoveis_do_centro_historico_de_belem_chb_cultura_e_memoria. Accessed 4 Nov. 2022.

At the counters, where the cash registers are, small items with higher aggregated value are exposed and, next to those, the watches, glasses and other medium-sized items. The lateral walls serve to expose backpacks, purses, belts and accessories. In the center, there are the larger items, such as: toys, umbrellas, adornments and domestic utility items and, at the back of the store, the access to storage. Figure 10 shows the three types of layout found, evidencing the attention to protection against shoplifting and robbery (Tourinho, et al., 2019).

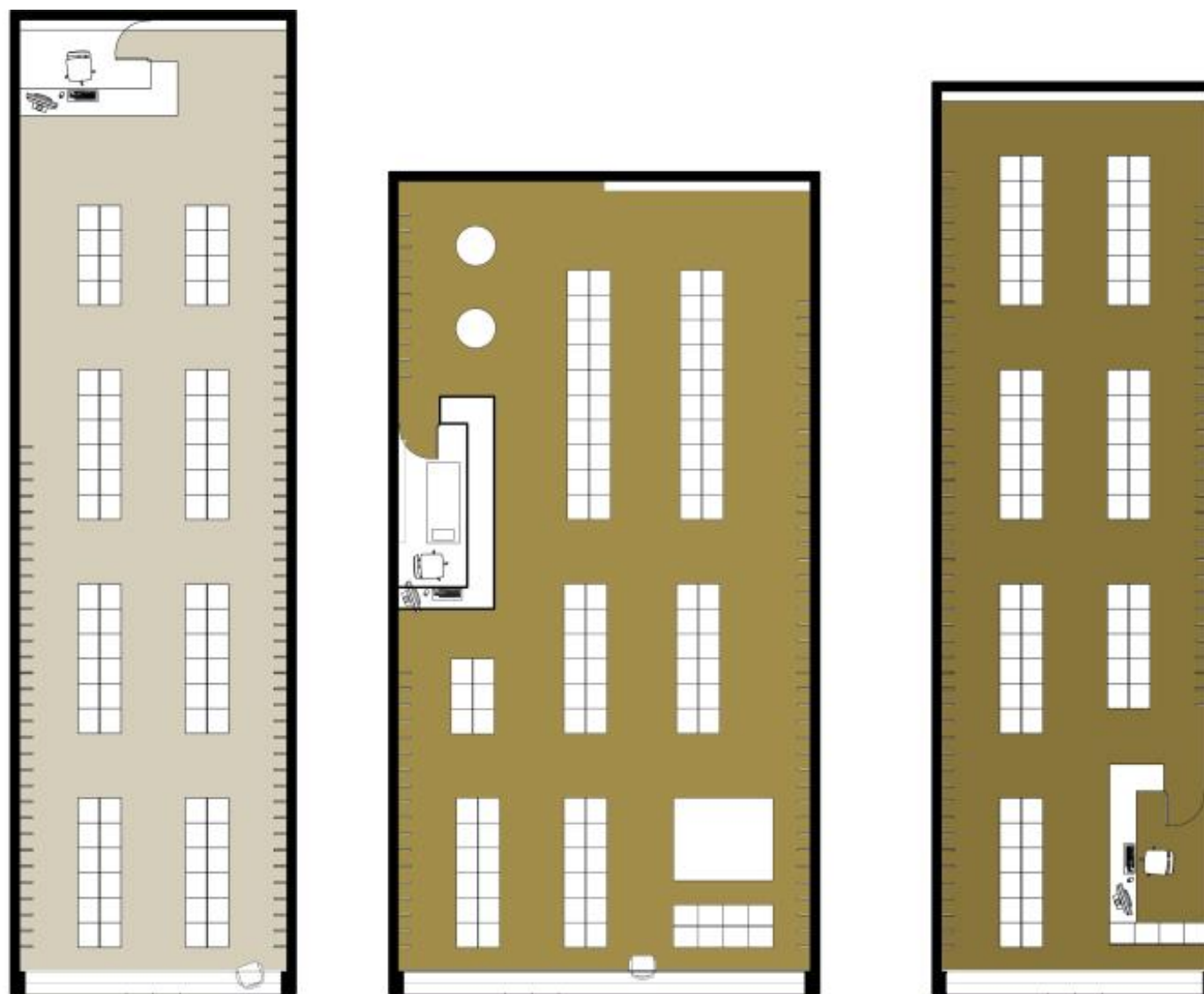


Fig. 10: Types of layout of the establishments that commercialize popular products of Asian origin and are controlled by immigrants. Source: Tourinho, Lôbo, Froes and Cabral, 2019. Available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354842884_os_asiaticos_e_a_ocupacao_dos_imoveis_do_centro_historico_d_e_belem_chb_cultura_e_memoria](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354842884_os_asiaticos_e_a_ocupacao_dos_imoveis_do_centro_historico_de_belem_chb_cultura_e_memoria). Accessed 4 Nov.2022.

We also highlight the intensification of informal commerce in the roadway, through the presence of street vendors, who also commercialize low-cost Asian products, some being supplied by the merchants who work in the buildings tied to commercial activity in the CHB. In 2020, the number of street vendor stalls had tripled in relation to 2006, going from 147 to 422. Figure 11 shows that this concentration occurred mainly on Conselheiro João Alfredo Street, with accentuated spots near the crossroads with the other adjacent streets. This due to the three focuses identified on 7 de Setembro, Campos Salles Crossings and Barão do Guarujá Street, in which the later presents a 'formalized' area with street vendors space, with fixed cover and structure, differently from the other mapped stalls (Macedo, 2020).

These maps denote that, beyond the private spaces, the non-hegemonic globalization pattern studied in this research has reconfigured the form and content of the occupation of public spaces in the Historic Center of Belém.

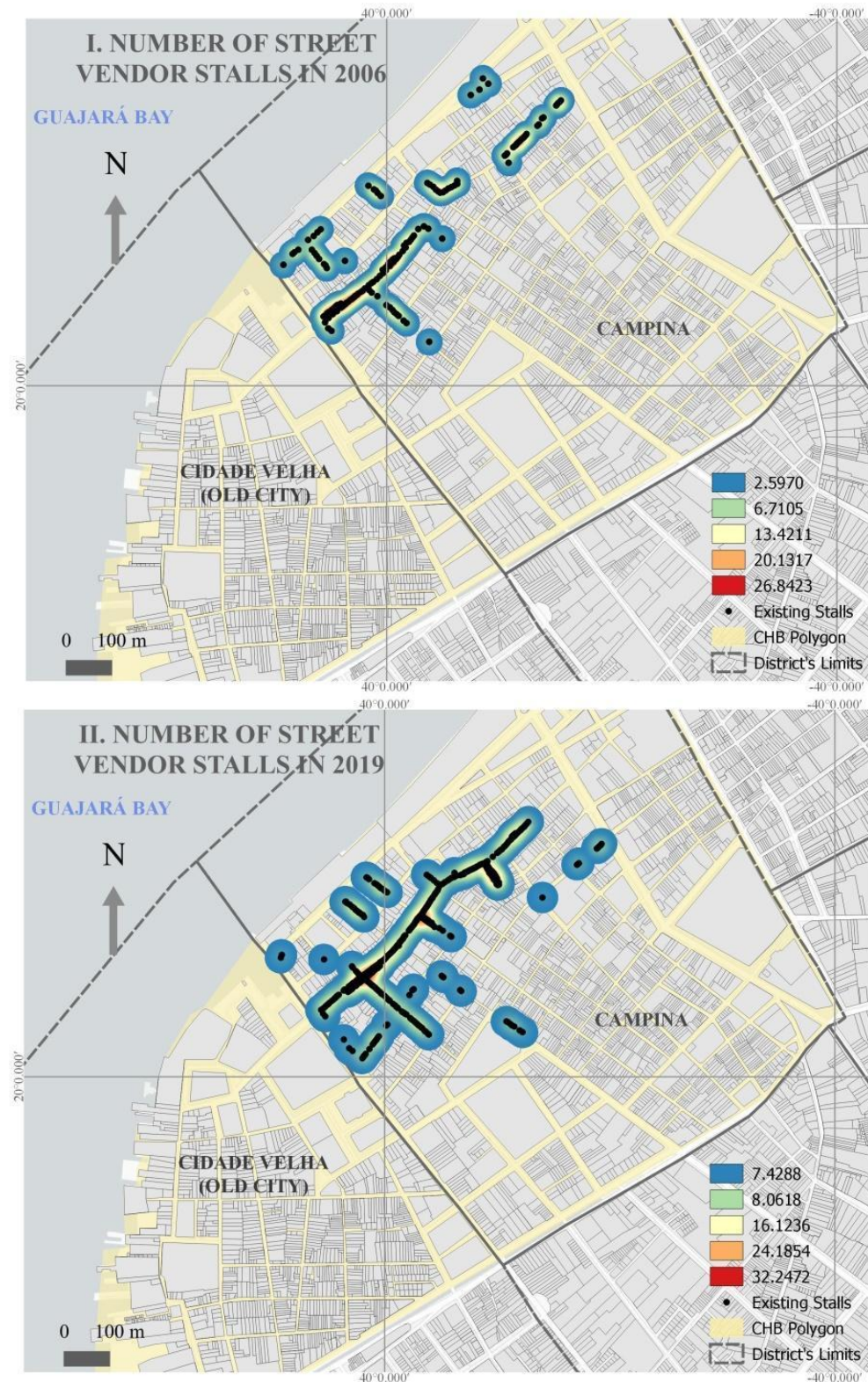


Fig. 11: Street use by informal commerce in 2006 and 2019. Source: MICH Research Database, 2020.

4 Final Considerations

The non-hegemonic globalization, moved by the insertion of the Asian capital with their transmigrants and commercial establishments, is a notable phenomenon in many Brazilian cities, especially in their historic centers. However, their configuration and socio-spatial consequences are still little studied by academia. The data presented on the occupation of the Historic Center of Belém by establishments that commercialize products and services of Asian origin reveal the

speed and intensity of this process. In the CHB, the process was selective and chose the Campina neighborhood, where the main urban Belém centrality was constituted historically.

The present study showed that the insertion of the CHB in this type of non-hegemonic globalization does not occur only through the direct presence of Asian transmigrants, but also articulates the local merchant networks aimed at the popular classes, acting inside the buildings, as well as in the public streets, in the street vendor stalls. According to the surveys, we verified that the portion of local commercial establishments with no condition of competing with the prices practiced by the Asians is significant, and that many have surrendered to their practices and logic and started to commercialize products negotiated by them, inserting themselves in the network.

Thus, the local resistance is sustained: i. by the demands of local popular consumers in acquiring products with low aggregated prices, but similar to those consumed by the elite; ii. by movements of the local merchants to ascend to a capital flow similar to the one developed by hegemonic globalization; and iii. by the maintenance of the CHB as a place that commercializes goods and services aimed to meet the needs of middle- and lower-income classes. Therefore, we understand that these strategies oppose popular exclusion, of the local consumer and merchant, as well as the enjoyment of sophisticated goods and services associated with the capital originated from hegemonic globalization.

By disseminating in the CHB space, the popular commerce of merchandise from Asian countries is redefining the social division of space in this center. Despite not promoting expressive change in the type of building use, it changes the nature of use, including the CHB non-hegemonic globalization circuit and changing the internal organization.

Regarding the spatial organization and distribution of activities, we verify the conformation of a corridor structure, where, in the main street, the establishments managed by Asians are located, around which the establishments managed by non-Asians gravitate. Furthermore, changes were observed in the form and content of the public space use of these streets, which became spaces for selling popular Asian products, commercialized in street vendor stalls, which expand linearly, especially on João Alfredo Street, one of the streets with the largest agglomeration of Asian establishments in the CHB.

In terms of the architectonic form, this study showed that the more expressive transformations have been happening in the internal space of the buildings, through the opening of gaps and/or addition of walls and in the storefronts, through the addition of elements that obscure the physical degradation of the building and prevent the reading of the façade plan and the urban landscape. The timid physical intervention on the buildings can also be explained by the fact that the agents tied to the commercial activities of non-hegemonic globalization seek to avoid facing inspection and patrimony preservation organs.

The fear regarding the demands concerning lawfulness and the legality of the practiced activities and the commercialized products, which can be raised by the building inspection processes, and the need for large investments for building reforms, which can reduce profit margins, can aid in better understanding this behavior.

Therefore, we understand that a counter-hegemonic architecture is configured, jettisoned of the principles of conservation, in which the buildings, by housing commercial uses structured on the logic of non-hegemonic globalization commerce, move away from at the same time as move closer to the popular interests. It is worth emphasizing that, without these uses, the CHB buildings, especially on Campina, could be empty, underused and/or subjected to even higher pressures from real estate speculators who, historically, seek to overturn laws that guarantee the prohibition of the integral destruction of fixed capital from the past, in order to enable the production of new real estate.

Lastly, it is worth noting that, for there being few modifications in the urban form and in the land uses, it does not mean that the spatial contents and the immaterial aspects that are a part of the ambiance of the CHB are not substantially altered. This change can be contributing, on one hand, to the reduction of real estate idleness in the CHB, but, on the other hand, to the decharacterization of the material patrimony or loss of immaterial patrimony of the center, where,

until then, a large part of the history of the Amazon urban occupation could be found. These questions, however, still need to be discussed in-depth.

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