

From Ruins to Heritage of Humanity: Interfaces between Preservationist and Tourism Policies in *São Miguel das Missões* (RS)

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Abstract:

This paper aims to discuss the relations established between heritage and tourism policies in the city of *São Miguel das Missões*, in northwestern Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brazil. *São Miguel* developed on the sidelines of the 20th century, in the surroundings of the architectural remains of the Jesuit-Guarani village of *São Miguel Arcanjo* – ruins dating back to the 17th century and recognised as a World Heritage site in 1983. In the city, heritage policies were introduced since the decade of 1920, with Rio Grande do Sul government taking preservation actions, and also in the 1930s, with the National Department for Historical and National Artistic Heritage working within nationalist political contexts. Broadening the understanding on cultural heritage influenced the heritage policies adopted in the region. It resulted both in the recognition of the site as intangible Brazilian heritage, due to its ancestral importance to *M'byá-Guarani* indigenous groups, and in the development of the Project for the Enhancement of the Cultural Landscape of *Missões* National Park, bringing an integrative notion of cultural landscape to the framework of heritage policies. Such policies would also outline initiatives in favor of tourism. In this regard, the *Missões* ruins became the main attraction not only because of the materiality of its reductions (considering its historical and architectural aspects), but also because of the tourist and imaginary senses recreated in actions like the show *Som e Luz (Sound and Light)* and other recent projects intended to be discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Tourism; Cultural Heritage; Public Policies; *São Miguel das Missões* (RS)

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Resumo:

O presente artigo visa debater articulações estabelecidas entre as políticas patrimoniais e turísticas no município de São Miguel das Missões, no noroeste do Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brasil. São Miguel desenvolveu-se ao largo do século XX, no entorno dos remanescentes arquitetônicos do povoado jesuítico-guarani de São Miguel Arcanjo, ruínas datadas do século XVII e reconhecidas como patrimônio mundial em 1983. Em São Miguel as políticas patrimoniais iniciaram-se ainda na década de 1920, com ações de preservação do governo do Rio Grande do Sul e na década de 1930, com o Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional dentro de contextos políticos nacionalistas. O alargamento do entendimento de patrimônio cultural refletiu nas políticas patrimoniais adotadas na região, com o reconhecimento do sítio como patrimônio imaterial brasileiro pela sua importância ancestral para os indígenas *M'byá-Guarani*; e com o desenvolvimento de um Projeto para a Valorização da Paisagem Cultural do Parque Nacional das Missões, inserindo no quadro das políticas patrimoniais a noção integradora de paisagem cultural. Tais políticas delinearão, também, iniciativas em favor do turismo, tendo nas ruínas missioneiras o principal eixo de atratividade tanto pela materialidade das reduções, em seus aspectos históricos e arquitetônicos, quanto pelos sentidos e imaginários turísticos recriados em ações como o espetáculo *Som e Luz* e outros projetos recentes, ações que este artigo pretende discutir.

Palavras-chave: Turismo; Patrimônio Cultural; Políticas Públicas; São Miguel das Missões (RS)

Resumen:

Este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir articulaciones establecidas entre las políticas patrimoniales y de turismo del municipio de *São Miguel das Missões*, en el noroeste del Estado de Rio Grande do Sul (RS), Brasil. São Miguel se desarrolló durante el siglo XX, en el entorno de los restos arquitectónicos del pueblo jesuitico-guaraní de San Miguel Arcángel, posee ruinas del siglo XVII que fueron reconocidas como Patrimonio Mundial en el año 1983. En *São Miguel* las políticas de patrimonio se iniciaron en la década de 1920, por medio de acciones de preservación llevadas a cabo por el gobierno de Rio Grande do Sul. En la década de 1930, le siguió el Servicio de Patrimonio Histórico y Artístico Nacional dentro de contextos políticos nacionalistas. La ampliación del concepto de patrimonio cultural se refleja en las políticas patrimoniales adoptadas en la región, con el reconocimiento del lugar como patrimonio inmaterial brasileño por su importancia ancestral para los indígenas *M'bya-guaraní*; y el desarrollo de un Proyecto para la Apreciación del Paisaje Cultural del Parque Nacional de las Misiones, que inscribe en el

marco de las políticas patrimoniales la noción integradora de paisaje cultural. Estas políticas esbozarían, también, iniciativas para el turismo, teniendo en las ruinas misioneras el eje principal del atractivo, tanto por la materialidad de las reducciones en sus aspectos históricos y arquitectónicos, como por los sentidos e imaginarios turísticos recreados en acciones como el espectáculo de *Som e Luz* (Sonido y Luz) y entre otros proyectos recientes, acciones que en este artículo se pretende discutir.

Palabras Clave: Turismo; Patrimonio Cultural; Políticas Públicas; São Miguel das Missões (RS)

1. Introduction

The relation between tourism and cultural heritage is not recent and there are many forms of its manifestations and consequences. Although it has continuously changed, it has always kept at its core the knowledge of the other and their cultural references, be they material or intangible. Tourism is understood as a social practice based on the "strangeness", establishing dislocations to different times and spaces of everyday life of which can be both concrete and symbolic in nature (Gastal and Moesch, 2007: 11). It is, therefore, a leisure activity that contrasts with the everyday experience, and part of this experience is based on the matter of difference, of knowing and visiting new places, other cultures, other landscapes. This experience is mediated by the senses in general, though sight is the one to be highlighted.

As stated by Urry (1996), the tourist's gaze is attracted to the features of the place visited that separate him from everyday experiences, with greater emphasis on the visual landscape elements that contrast with our everyday lives. This same point of view is built through a series of non-tourist activities, such as film, television, literature, magazines, in addition to the symbolic constructions made around cultural heritage. This is because the issue of heritage engenders the notion of identity, and the difference sought by the tourist experience is manifested in the forms of assimilating places. In this regard, assets take great importance as tourist attractions by becoming elements that participate in both the past and present (even being reframed according to the very dynamics that make up cultural heritage).

The recognition of an asset as cultural heritage engenders a set of knowledge, values and meaning systems that guide the discourse built around certain institutionalised cultural references legitimised as heritage (Poulot, 2009). Such assets undergo a number of heritage activation processes that sacralise discourses around national, regional and local identities based on referents that, in turn, go through a selection, sorting and interpretation process, leading to

the formation of heritage discourses traditionally intended to sustain and sacralise ideological versions of identities that promote emotional adhesions in the face of the referents' symbolic effectiveness (Prats, 2003).

The ruins of *São Miguel Arcanjo* (Figure 1), located in downtown of *São Miguel das Missões* in the northwestern part of the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul, are the object of this discursive construction around identities. The contemporary city developed on the sidelines of the 20th century, in the surroundings of the architectural remains of the Jesuit-Guaraní village of *São Miguel Arcanjo*. It received both national and international importance when it became a Heritage-Listed Site in 1938, within the nationalist political context of the New State, and a World Heritage Site, in 1983.

São Miguel dates back to the first catechising experiences of native peoples in the South American continent, resulting from the formation of small urban centres. In the 17th and 18th centuries, religious leaders belonging to the Society of Jesus undertook a project to evangelise the indigenous people in that area under the consent of the Spanish Crown, which saw the establishment of these settlements as a way to ensure their domain against the Portuguese advance (Bruxel, 1987). *São Miguel Arcanjo* was one of the 30 missionary peoples of the former Province of Paraguay, seven of them located in the eastern territory of Uruguay River, today part of Brazilian territory. The town, founded in 1687 by the Jesuit religious order, managed to bring together about 6 thousand indigenous people (Sepp, 1980: 198), specially from the *Guarani* ethnic group, which demonstrates the extent of their representation among the other reductions in the Eastern side of the Uruguay River.

The Treaty of Boundaries or Treaty of Madrid, signed in 1750, established the boundaries of the Portuguese and Spanish territories over the lands of the New World. Among the clauses of the agreement was the trading of the Spanish region known as Seven Peoples for the Colony of Sacramento, a territory further south that belonged to Portugal. The refusal of the *Guarani* indigenous people and the Jesuit to leave the territory to migrate to the western side of the Uruguay River led to the Guarani War (a confrontation between indigenous people and the officers sent by Portugal and Spain to draw the borders), since the crowns believed the Jesuit intended to create an autonomous state (Golin, 2010).

With the war and subsequent expulsion of the Jesuit, the Society of Jesus project was over. The attempt to bring other religious orders to the reductions and the poor management of the administrators sent by the crowns caused the settlements to suffer demographic decline and abandonment during the second half of the 18th century (Santos, 2009), which extended throughout the 19th century. In the 150 years during which the mission experience developed,

the intercultural encounter that took place through conflicts and the coexistence negotiated between the European and the indigenous, as well as the war process and border establishment, are the basis of the history that now gives meaning to the heritage preserved in the region. The narratives related to this period are those that populated the collective imagination and brought myths and legends to life.

Nowadays, *São Miguel das Missões* has a population of 7,742 and an economy based on agriculture (grains production) and cattle farming⁸¹. The intense immigration of Europeans and European descendants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries promoted the development of an agricultural economic matrix mainly centred in grain crops. The tourism sector was the subject of some initiatives in the field between 1960-1970, benefiting from the inclusion of the site on the UNESCO list, in view of what such recognition as a World Heritage site symbolises. New tourist pathways are to be expected, due to the favorable conjuncture of valuing cultural landscapes and based on a territorial approach that promotes and manages the territory along with its cultural references. However, the activity is still considered underdeveloped in a local economy context, specially when compared to the financial weight of agribusiness.

Taking into account the historical and social aspects of the place, this paper aims to discuss the relations established between heritage and tourism policies in the city of *São Miguel das Missões* (RS). To this end, this paper is based on a case study from the convergence of two ongoing research works carried out in the Graduate Programme in Social Memory and Cultural Heritage at the Federal University of Pelotas (Brazil): the first work analyses the processes of heritage protection developed in *São Miguel das Missões* and the uses of the missionary past in each recognition period; the second aims to discuss the asset category Cultural Landscape and how it has been discussed and implemented in Brazil. The convergence point lies in the adoption of the concept to propose the study and management of the Jesuit Missions National Park and Cultural Landscape. Literature on heritage, history and tourism supports the discussion. Documentary research, backed by official documents collected in local archives collections and at IPHAN (National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute), is the main methodological tool employed.

⁸¹ Population data refer to a 2016 IBGE estimate (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics). According to the Institute, in 2014 the city had an area of 1229,620 km², of which 102,995 hectares are rural properties. Of this total, 69,500 hectares were planted with soybeans and 27,000 hectares with wheat, in addition to a herd of 52,000 head of cattle. (Data available at: <<http://cidades.ibge.gov.br/painel/painel.php?codmun=431915>> (consulted on: 09.07.2016).

2. History of heritage policies in *São Miguel das Missões*

São Miguel das Missões became the object of the first heritage preservation policies at state and federal levels, due to its conservation status and also for still having, in its interior, decayed but important ruins to the understanding of the missionary experience, and, consequently, to its representation in the national identity narrative built upon its physical cultural assets.

The urban mesh of a Jesuit reduction consisted of a pre-established plan, but that could vary depending on the location and demands of each village. There was a central square with a church in front and that was the main building of the village. The square was a place of movement and harmony and the place where processions and religious and military festivals took place. The indigenous population's houses would border the square. A cloister was beside the church, where one would also find some teaching and workshop spaces as well as the cemetery and the *cotiguaçu* (from the Guarani language: big house): the building where widows and orphan girls lived. On the other side of the square was the *cabildo*, the office for administration and public threat prevention. In addition, behind the church there was a farm where vegetables and fruit trees were grown. This was the structure of the urban area in a reduction. However, each village had extensive ranches with fields for cattle breeding and plantations, the so-called dairy and crop places that stretched over a wide territory of what is now the state of Rio Grande do Sul (Kern, 1994).

The architectural vestiges of the structures from the seven villages were the assets preserved by heritage policies in the 20th century in Rio Grande do Sul, particularly *São Miguel das Missões*. In the second half of the 19th century, with the territory already under the Brazilian imperial government, the lands were occupied by an elite group of Lusitanian origin, who later went on to organise the towns surrounding these reduction remains. The slow development of *São Miguel* (which continued to be a district of Santo Ângelo until 1988) allowed maintaining the integrity of the architectural remains, specially of the former missionary temple structure. In the cities of *São Nicolau*, *São Borja*, *Santo Ângelo* and *São Luiz Gonzaga*, stones and demolition waste from ruined buildings were reused to build new homes in the late 19th century and early 20th century⁸².

The ruins of *São Miguel Arcanjo* earned the title of National Heritage in 1938 by the former National Historical and Artistic Heritage Department (SPHAN), and in 1983 they were included

⁸² The ruins of *São João Batista* and *São Lourenço*, located in the rural areas of the cities *Entre-Ijuís* and *São Luiz Gonzaga*, and the ruins of *São Nicolau*, nowadays located in the central square of the city, have national protection provided by IPHAN (Meira, 2008).

on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The town has become emblematic in the heritage field of Rio Grande do Sul as it is one of the first assets recognised as a National Heritage site and the only cultural asset recognised by UNESCO in southern Brazil to date.



Figure 1. São Miguel Arcanjo site

Source: IPHAN⁸³



Figure 2. Building of the current São Miguel das Missões Tourism Office.

Picture taken in the 1980s, when it housed a restaurant

Source: São Miguel das Missões Tourism Office Collection

⁸³ Available at: <<http://portal.iphan.gov.br/pagina/detalhes/39>> (consulted on: 23.12.2015).



Figure 3. Indigenous *Ocas* (typical indigenous housing)

Source: Collection *Noronha Santos* file. IPHAN. Rio de Janeiro



Figure 4. *Show Som e Luz* (Sound and Light Show)

Source: São Miguel das Missões City Hall⁸⁴

Notwithstanding, the actions taken by public authorities to preserve the heritage of *São Miguel das Missões* began in 1920 on the initiative of the state government⁸⁵. The republican governor Antônio Borges de Medeiros promoted some changes in land regulations in Rio Grande do Sul, in 1922. Among them, registered by Decree No. 3004 of August 10th of that year, the

⁸⁴ Available at: < <http://www.saomiguel-rs.com.br/VisualizaNoticia.aspx?ID=9221>> (consulted on: 23.12.2015)

⁸⁵ Report by the Regional Department of Public Works in September 1926 (regarding the period of 1925). Memorial da Assembleia Legislativa do Rio Grande do Sul, 448.

section “Historical Places” in chapter VII defined, in article 24, that “the places known by facts marking the evolution of the state should be kept under public domain”.

Also in 1925, the Board of Land was “authorised to provide custody and conservation of the ruins of the majestic Temple of *São Miguel*, one of the Seven Peoples of the Missions⁸⁶”. In the Land Commission's reports that followed between 1926 and 1928, one can find images and descriptions recording the restoration work undertaken to rebuild the frontage, the portico, the tower and inner parts of the temple. Such registered intervention shows that it was possible to reassemble the walls by using stanches and railway tracks to consolidate the structures. Furthermore, both the temple and ruins were fenced and had a guard hired for preservation purposes. According to Stello (2005), at that time there were no international prerogatives recommending restoration activities yet (the first document in this regard would be the Letter of Atenas, in 1931), but the restoration work performed in *São Miguel* met many of the requirements that would later come to be defined.

The ruins of *São Miguel* witnessed the first preservation actions promoted by SPHAN, which were registered in the Fine Arts Book of Heritage Listed Buildings⁸⁷. A survey and inventory made by the modernist writer Augusto Meyer at the request of Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, another modernist scholar who headed heritage policies in the New State period, included *São Miguel* in the institutionalization process of a discourse asserting national values born from the representative assets of a colonial past.

In this sense, such remains take on a second degree speech, since a specific heritage value is added to the functions and meanings of certain assets, causing them to be resignified and changed in their value system (Fonseca, 2005).

The listing does more than assisting in the physical preservation of the asset itself. As a preserving instrument, it also connects to its very immaterial aspect. It is precisely here that one will find the values that link such immateriality to the community: the values that are either invested or attributed to the cultural asset (Sant'Ana, 2001).

The technical visit performed by the architect Lúcio Costa in 1937 gave rise to a report that provided a record of the situation regarding the remaining assets of the Seven Peoples of the Missions. The modernist architect proposed a number of measures to be taken in order to

⁸⁶ Idem.

⁸⁷ Registration mechanism for Brazilian cultural material assets. Through Law Decree No. 25 of 1937, which established the conservation law of Brazilian heritage, four heritage-listing books were created to register cultural assets. In addition to the Book of Fine Arts, the Archaeological, Ethnographic and Landscape, History and Applied Arts Book also came into existence.

preserve the ruins and build a museum for the safekeeping of the images carved in wood by the indigenous people and that had been kept in private homes in the area (Meira, 2008).

The Missions Museum, as designed by Lúcio Costa and built under the supervision of the architect Lucas Mayerhofer, was opened in 1940, housing the *Guarani* statues collection that was gathered in the region by the museum caretaker Hugo Machado. In the survey report to the Missions, the architect listed a series of measures to be taken. In what concerned the museum itself, he also advised how objects, map exhibitions and plants should be displayed" (...) so that visitors, usually little or poorly informed, could better 'understand' the deep meaning behind the ruins, sensing that there had been life within them once." (Costa, 1937, 13-14).

There was, at the time the museum was being structured, some concern with the information to be provided to visitors. The information was not aimed specifically to increase the flow of tourists to the place, but instead the understanding of the site in the relation between museum and monument. To Chuva,

the creation of museums linked to SPHAN in the New State period had a structural purpose with regards to the concepts and practices that were being developed. It was sought to define a museological dimension for Sphan that could combine the spatial representations that would be attributed to the museum headquarters with the collections that would be exhibited there. (Chuva, 2009: 181)

Thus, the former Jesuit-Guarani village's ruins established themselves in the local landscape as representative official monuments of the Brazilian nation. The ruins were then considered as a remembering device used symbolically to reinforce the speech of race integration on the formation of the national scenery. The Missions were neither the typical representation of the Portuguese baroque nor the style of the colonial society chosen by the modernists, but somehow they referred to this period of cultural confluences that depicted such an affirming official identity. According to Pereira (2013), including the Jesuit missions in the list of cultural assets to be preserved, fit the dominant context of the first working decades of SPHAN, since the projected image of the Brazilian nation was based on the recognition of the value of sacred art (missionary and Minas Gerais Baroque). Also according to the author, the image of a modern Brazil linked to its colonial past prevailed in the initial period of the preservation policies, giving centrality to the movable and immovable assets, to the historical monuments and the remaining architectural manifestations of the Iberian colonization period in the country.

In 1983, *São Miguel's* architectural remains were declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO, along with other sites of the Jesuit-Guarani missions in Argentina. The application documents highlight the church ruins and the consolidation work done, emphasising the integrity of the façade in comparison to the other missionary villages in Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay⁸⁸. To Bo (2003: 127-128), "the prestige of belonging to the World Heritage list produces political and economic dividends, besides strengthening the self-esteem of the population." The UNESCO recognition was celebrated by the people from *Santo Ângelo*, the city that called itself the "Capital of the Missions." However, the title was equally important in strengthening the emancipation ideals of the town of *São Miguel*, which became independent from *Santo Ângelo* some years later, in 1988⁸⁹.

In the 19th century, travelers like Saint-Hilaire (2002) and Hail Lallemand (1980), for example, emphasised the monumentality of *São Miguel temple* in ruins amid the vegetation. The appreciation of the cultural asset within the romantic aspect of thought can be observed in the pictorial and written records of these travelers. Thus, the genius, the history and nature are the factors highlighted by Prats (1998) as elements of a triangulation that influences the patrimonial activation of a cultural element. Prats discusses other factors needed to the understanding of the processes that result from such activation: the political and scientific construction of the asset as well as its commercial and tourism uses. The next section of the article will focus on the latter factor.

3. History of tourism initiatives in the Missions region and its interface with the unfolding of contemporary heritage policies

As we have seen, the first actions towards assets preservation address issues regarding the affirmation of nationality, and the development of tourism occurring in the second half of the 20th century onwards. Based on official documents exchanged between local and national authorities, this chapter highlights the initiatives portraying the attempts to consolidate tourism activities in the Missions region. Among these, we stress the places to host and receive tourists constructed around the ruins by the government of *Santo Ângelo*, which was then responsible

⁸⁸ Dossier UNESCO (1982), Application of *São Miguel das Missões*, Available at: http://portal.iphan.gov.br/uploads/ckfinder/arquivos/Dossie%20MISSOES%20Sao%20Miguel%20rev%20js%20janeiro%202014_pt.pdf. (consulted on: 04.05.2015).

⁸⁹ Interview with Mário Simon, Secretary of *Santo Ângelo's* Tourism Office at the time of UNESCO'S recognition, given to the author on 15th February 2015.

for the locale, and also the creation of the show *Som e Luz* (Sound and Light) by the state government of Rio Grande do Sul.

Since 1962, correspondence exchanged between the mayor of Santo Ângelo at the time and Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, director of SPHAN, reported the need to establish some infrastructure to host visitors in *São Miguel*. However, it was in correspondence addressed to the Superintendent of the West Frontier that the mayor Odão Felipe Pippi requested the body to intervene in tandem with SPHAN to put such a project into practice. In that document, the local representative stressed that the administration was "deeply interested in carrying out a tourism plan to take full advantage of *São Miguel ruins* and the Federal Museum of the Missions" because, even though these two attractions were "semi-abandoned", they "received a surprising and high public visitation from different and distant parts of the state and the country, sometimes even from abroad (Argentina and Uruguay)." Also according to the letter, the local hotel chain would not be able to provide for a "major increase in tourists". Other challenges to be faced would be the distance between São Miguel and major centres, access roads, as well as "the tourists' preference for the mountains (...) or the water stations." In short, São Miguel did not offer visitors "the least comfort" in view of its financial resources lack. Therefore, it would be necessary to request funds from the Superintendence to build roadside bars "that would make it dramatically easier to encourage tourism activities in the area that has some of the last missionary architecture and art from that period"⁹⁰.

Another significant correspondence about tourism is a letter of 17th July 1962, addressed to the President of the Republic João Goulart, through which the mayor called for the release of funds by appealing to the missionary origins of the president:

(...) *That said, Mr President and honorable fellow countryman, we ask Your Excellency, as a gaucho and son of these lands, to determine with the competent bodies the release of funds provisioned for such an important, cultural and artistic improvement for this region of our state*⁹¹.

The financial support was only granted in 1965, possibly due to the political-institutional framework of instability that comprised the period and that led to the military coup. The political actions towards the lodge construction in the surroundings of São Miguel ruins followed along

⁹⁰ Correspondence from the Mayor of *Santo Ângelo*, Odão F. Pippi, to Emilio Laydanar Zuñeda, an officer from the Southwest Frontier Superintendency. *Santo Ângelo*, June 28, 1962. *Santo Ângelo's Historical Archive - Tourism Section*.

⁹¹ Correspondence from the Mayor of *Santo Ângelo*, Odão F. Pippi, to the President of the Republic João Goulart. *Santo Ângelo*, July 17, 1962. *Santo Ângelo's Historical Archive - Tourism Section*.

with the new municipal administration, which was in line with the military government. Soon after that, SPHAN sent to *Santo Ângelo* an architect to take responsibility for the project.

Construction started on the building that was to serve as lodge between 1966 and 1967. However, after visiting the site in person, SPHAN's architect Sabino Barroso could not help expressing his annoyance when he sent to Rodrigo M. F. de Andrade a technical inspection report informing him of his dissatisfaction with the "errors committed by the city hall" and "the regrettable aspect of the work."⁹² Aware of the lack of funds to keep the work in progress, he then suggests that the department should only allow the City Hall to profit from the built part of the lodge after committing to the constructed project. The building that was constructed turned out to be signed, over by contract, to private owners for the opening of a restaurant, and it is currently used as the headquarters of São Miguel Tourism Office and tourist information centre (Figure 2).

Another project carried out by *Santo Ângelo* City Hall to face resistance from IPHAN occurred in the 1970s, when structures made of reinforced concrete and shaped like the typical housing of indigenous people (Figure 3) were built at the entrance gate that leads to the ruins to host visitors. IPHAN requested the halt of the works and the demolition of those that had already been built. Mayor José de Oliveira Alcibiades then appealed to Senator Jarbas Passarinho, who, in turn, wrote to IPHAN's architect Renato Soeiro, questioning: "Why interrupt the construction works if they are happening on land that is not listed? The mayor thinks that the indigenous-shaped housing design will help make money and do not conflict with the landscape setting."⁹³ It can often be seen, as in this case, that this matter of difference that encourages tourist dislocation and that is built from signs reproduced in pictures, television, literature (Urry, 1996), and even upon heritage activation, leads to initiatives that exacerbate the representation of identity as a way to reinforce certain consolidated tourist gaze by exploring the image of "typical" or stereotype.

After the 1960s, the tourism demand and economic use of heritage began to be felt in *São Miguel das Missões*. This is also the time in which the public institutional tourism structure begins to form in Brazil. With the creation of Embratur through Decree-Law No. 55 of 18th November, 1966, a National Tourism Policy is defined. And the tourism, hitherto considered marginal, is perceived as part of the production system (Beni, 2006). However, the conciliation of nationalist

⁹² Architect Sabino Barroso's report to Rodrigo M. F. de Andrade - SPHAN. Rio de Janeiro, December 20, 1967. *Noronha Santos* file. Rio de Janeiro.

⁹³ Correspondence from the Senator Jarbas Passarinho to the architect Renato Soeiro IPHAN. Brasília, 07th August 1975. *Noronha Santos* file. Rio de Janeiro.

and heritage interest with economic interest didn't occur without conflicts of interest. This process occurs in a period that heritage repertoires and assets were activated due to the development of this symbolic consumption of heritage, "when identity adhesions were blended with tourist interests in a remarkably tangled way", according to Prats (1998: 71).

Similarly, these conflicts in *São Miguel* are examples that demonstrate some of the political and bureaucratic obstacles relating to the local tourism during a time of ongoing changes in regards to the handling of National Heritage. Along with IPHAN, Rodrigo M. F. Andrade's modernist era was over, and "the ideology of developmentalism coupled with nationalism to the values of modernization", corresponding to the industrial growth and intense occupation of urban places, which brought major social and economic challenges to the field of heritage (Fonseca, 2005: 141). In this new time, Aloisio Magalhães would take over, in the late 1980s, SPHAN's national presidency. From this moment on, he started to include cultural heritage into the context of economic development, also linked to the conception of expansion that began to encompass the assets of immaterial nature⁹⁴.

Another tourist initiative of great impact was the realization of a sound and light event next to the ruins at the end of the 1970s. The project was conceived by the State Tourism Department and sought to create a tourist attraction that could boost the local economy. *São Miguel's Som e Luz* show revolves around the use of space (architectural remains and natural resources such as trees, lawn, starry sky), sound (with a poetic text recorded in the voice of national renowned actors), and light (which moves through space changing colours according to the sound and character (Figure 4). The land and the ruins, converted into narrating characters of the show, tell the present spectators (tourists) the drama lived in the Missions.

In this regard, the materiality of the ruins draws near its representation through a narrative form, consolidating the tourist experience linked to heritage. As shown by Mantero (2003), proposing the heritage experience implies a process of "let the stones speak," giving rise to sensations, stimulating concerns and, from this point onwards, transmitting the desired message through the communication option deemed most appropriate, which, in this case, focuses on the sound and light show. The projection made is not solely that of an audiovisual

⁹⁴ Aloisio Magalhães promoted the creation of the National Pro-Memory Foundation, incorporating the Historical Cities Programme (PCH) and the National Centre for Cultural references (CNRC), where he was the general coordinator. Aloisio took the office at SPHAN calling attention to the Brazilian cultural diversity and stressing the importance of everyday production. The traditional knowledge, popular culture and various social groups' everyday practices that make up the country, until then not seen as Brazilian cultural references, start to be recognised as cultural heritage, that is, as cultural assets. In this sense, the need of a direct contact between technical workers and the local population begins to be stressed in the official discourse, establishing new guidelines for the cultural policy in the country (Fonseca, 2005).

narrative on the architectural remains, but also the one of imagined things that evoke a version of historical facts related to the construction, peak and decline of the Jesuit-Guarani missions period, going back to the tourist experience of displacement that is not only physical but also symbolic - a time shift stimulated by immersion in the show.

Presented every day since its opening, the show has been established as a landmark of tourism in the region, and turned out to be incorporated into the environment of the historic park and into the community's surrounding life. People living in *São Miguel* have heard the same sound every night for 38 years, just like the regional community has learned to see the show as an element that is already part of the region's heritage which goes much beyond its tourist attraction character. It has become a mechanism to show the material assets through a dramatised version of the story, a story that began to make sense of the place and heritage, strengthening the ties of identity.

Since 2014, the show has been undergoing a requalification process thanks to a federal investment coming from the National Development Bank (BNDES). The project, presented by the Institute *Iguassu Misiones* and formed by entrepreneurs and bodies linked to the tourism sector covering the missionary region in Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay, sought to modernise the sound and lighting system as well as translate the text of the show into other languages. In April 2016, the show was reopened, but maintaining the integrity of the original narration, widely recognised and narrated by the voices of great names from the national dramaturgy and that represent the characters of the past: the Jesuits, the Portuguese, the Spanish and the indigenous people, with special emphasis on *Sepé Tiaraju*⁹⁵, the local hero and symbol of resistance.

Over the last decades, there have been initiatives coming from MERCOSUR and the missionary's countries governments to combine tourism and development with the preservation of the missionary cultural heritage. Some of them are the International Circuit of the Jesuit Missions, created in 1995 and covering Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay⁹⁶; the Road to the Missions, created in 2001 and named after the *Road to Santiago de Compostela*, which

⁹⁵ *Sepé Tiaraju* was the indigenous chief who, in 1750, led the uprising of the Indians against the Portuguese and Spanish officers sent to draw the boundaries. The event is known as the Guarani War and *Sepé* was killed in battle in 1756. Before he died, *Sepé* would have said "This land has an owner", sentence that became a symbol and that is heard in the show *Som e Luz*, marking the climax of the show. *Sepé Tiaraju* became a mythical figure, a popular hero, who, connected to the missionary past, has become a "kaleidoscope" of meaning and an element of reflection to local identities in the present. (BRUM, 2006: 85). The Indian was also recognised as a national hero, written in the book of the Homeland Heroes by Federal Law No. 12,032 / 2009.

⁹⁶ Uruguay was brought into the circuit with the site of *Colonia do Sacramento* as an attempt to include countries belonging to MERCOSUR.

features the ancient Seven Peoples of the Missions and the walking trails that connected the ancient reductions, houses, missionary mills and the quarry where the stones to build São Miguel church were taken from; and the Route to the Missions, created in 2003 to become the axis of integration of the Missions region in Rio Grande do Sul in the sectors of tourism, crafts and agribusiness through the promotion of local production systems (Nogueira and Burkhard, 2008).

While a regional perspective on tourism was adopted taking into account the missionary heritage, new meanings and scales began to be attributed to the cultural heritage of *São Miguel das Missões*, which may complement and add value to tourism at local and regional levels. Within this context, new initiatives have become effective in expanding the concept of cultural heritage. One of them was the inclusion, in 2014, of the *Tava* (a place of reference for the Guarani Indians) in the Recording Places Book (*Livro de Registro dos Lugares*). According to IPHAN⁹⁷, "its asset value lies in its feature to inform on temporality, spatiality, identities and elements of the indigenous culture spiked in Brazilian history." This initiative came from a study conducted in 2009 that sought to raise other possible meanings associated to the missionary heritage, specially the *Guarani-Mbyá*, as a result of the changes seen in the discourse on heritage policies that had always left them behind when dealing with their relevance in the reductions, with the Jesuit being much more valued. For the *Guarani-Mbyá*, the value of the ruins is experienced in the present, and its importance is explained by the fact that they have the bodies of their ancestors, who became immortal (IPHAN, 2007). In addition, through the *Tava*, the historical event *Missions* is interpreted, as it has been incorporated into their reports reworked according to the logic of their cosmology, thus triggering feelings of belonging and identity.

Another local and regional reaching initiative refers to the creation of the Missions National Historical Park in 2009 through Decree No. 6.844, connecting the archaeological sites of *São Miguel Arcanjo*, *São Lourenço Mártir* (in *São Luiz Gonzaga*), *São Nicolau* (in *São Nicolau*), and *São João Batista* (in *Entre-Ijuís*). Created in 2014, the project *Valorização da Paisagem Cultural e do Parque Histórico Nacional das Missões Jesuíticas dos Guaranis* (Cultural Landscape and the Guarani's Jesuit Missions National Historic Park Appreciation project) is a result from this experience. Funded by IPHAN, it had the technical partnership of UNESCO Office in Brazil and monitoring of the Brazilian Agency Cooperation (ABC), with assistance from the Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage (IAPH).

⁹⁷ More information about the site and the recognition of its intangible heritage are available at IPHAN page at: <<http://portal.iphan.gov.br/pagina/detalhes/507/>> (consulted on: 14.10.2015).

The project aims to promote knowledge on the cultural landscape of the *Guaranis'* Missions and provide support for the development of management tools that can aid in the process of installation of the Missions Historical Park. It seeks to popularise its value as a national and world asset by promulgating its social, cultural and environmental diversity as well as its potential to boost sustainable development in local and regional levels.

The notion of cultural landscape takes a territorial management approach, covering the cultural references associated to the missionary cultural universe based on its materiality and immateriality. It also covers its cultural and environmental dimensions, in an integrated approach with the other sites that make up the region, based on the cultural elements from the Jesuit-Guaraní period and its subsequent developments. The concept of cultural landscape was adopted by UNESCO in 1992 as a good asset typology and by IPHAN in 2009. In general terms, it is understood as sites that represent the process of interaction between groups and the environment by means of their physical traits and the value associated to them (Ribeiro, 2007). Such understanding promoted a diversification of the assets represented as world and Brazilian heritage. It is seen as a land management tool with great potential to combine preservation and development, implying some concern with the quality of life and sustainability since it is bound to the affective and identity dimensions within the landscape. Moreover, it involves traditional practices of land use (UNESCO, 2009).

According to Fowler (2003: 17), by recognising cultural landscapes, we have the opportunity to recognise sites that create monuments to the "faceless ones" (i.e., anonymous or underrepresented within the heritage perspective value system), people who lived and died with no records except that of the landscape that subconsciously and collectively changed their work. The landscape, thus, is changed into a memorial. This new concept attributed to São Miguel's heritage solidifies as a way of conceiving the heritage's dynamic character, being widely reported in tourism. To Gastal (2002: 125), it is "through action and the cultural assets that make it concrete that visitors and visited assets will build their exchanges." It is therefore necessary that the culture cease to be presented exclusively as something finished, as a product to be consumed, but rather as a process, so that even the monuments and architectural settings can be visited and enjoyed as symbols of a certain time in a given community, continuing to be alive for them.

In this regard, it is clear that there is an ongoing attempt to make *São Miguel das Missões* advance towards higher goals in terms of cultural heritage. The activation of cultural assets continues to evolve based on new discourses and external actions of political, economic,

scientific and social nature that are the result of the current time and the latest concepts around heritage.

4. Final Conclusions

As pointed by Mantero (2003), traveling implies not only a dislocation in space, but also a metaphorical dislocation in time, an access to the past, where the trace or testimony of another time can be socially valued and become touristically interesting. In *São Miguel das Missões*, the heritage policies that consolidated the ruins of the reductional period influenced their touristic use. Such policies envisaged tourism as a way to trade those assets and add economic value to the place, sought for a historic representation that was built discursively in the process of patrimonial activation established back in the 1920s.

Over time, the preservation actions met with projects born from the interest of exploring the heritage touristically, however not always in agreement. One example was during the construction of the *ocas* (typical indigenous housing), approaching the dangerous sphere of stereotyping and spectacularization that sometimes characterises initiatives of tourist development based on the heightened emphasis of the "typical" but which, at other times, were complementary in the foundation of the discourse and representativeness of the missionary heritage. That was the case with the show *Som e Luz* (Sound and Light). Despite keeping an essentially dramatic line of this missionary identity representation, following a romanticised version of events, the show still manages to stimulate an affective understanding based on the narrative, stimulating a symbolic interaction between visitors and the ruins in a new presentation of the local heritage.

The new approaches adopted in relation to *São Miguel*, such as the stronger recognition of the *Guaranis'* intangible references and the territorial management approach offered by the notion of a cultural landscape, can, in a long run, be established as new and complementary to tourism fostering elements in the narrative constructions linked to the site. They focus back on the community and its recognition, going beyond the ruins and the official heritage themselves. The reason for this, in Meneses's view (2006), thinking the cultural heritage of a society is to think the society itself, questioning its existence and form of participation in life.

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