



INTERVENTIONS AND TOURISTIC USES OF HISTORICAL HERITAGE SITES: Portugal street in São Luís (Maranhão, Brazil)

Intervenções e usos turísticos do patrimônio histórico: o caso da rua Portugal em São Luís (Maranhão, Brasil)

Saulo Ribeiro dos Santos¹
Matheus Andrade Marques²
Angela Roberta Lucas Leite³

ABSTRACT: This study has as an empirical research reference the historic center of São Luís (MA, Brazil), in the sense of bringing up a discussion despite its current sociospatial configuration. In this context, we highlighted the area's relevance for the local population, a factor that was expanded with its recognition by the United Nations of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which gave the title of world heritage site to this area. In this way, the historic center was valued and new dynamics, uses and activities emerged, including tourism, a factor that is at the heart of this research. Therefore, the objective was to analyze the variation in the use of this space from the realization of tourist interventions, taking into account how the heritage transformed into a tourist attraction resulted in new uses of the street. A qualitative, exploratory approach was

1 PhD in Urban Management at the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUCPR). PhD candidate in Geography at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR). Adjunct Professor at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA) working in the Postgraduate Program in Geography, Nature and Spatial Dynamics (UFMA). E-mail: saulosantosma@uol.com.br

2 PhD candidate in Geography at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC). Master's degree in Geography at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA). E-mail: marquesm93@hotmail.com

3 PhD candidate in Public Policy at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR). Master's in Public Policy. Professor at the Federal University of Maranhão (UFMA). E-mail: angelarobertalucas@gmail.com

adopted, using bibliographic survey and fieldwork techniques. The results obtained demonstrate new features of this public place, which over time has become an important tourist space in the city.

Keywords: Tourism; Landscape; Heritage; São Luís; Portugal Street.

RESUMO: Este artigo tem como referencial empírico de investigação o centro histórico de São Luís, Maranhão, Brasil, no sentido de trazer à baila uma discussão a despeito de sua atual configuração socioespacial. Nesse contexto, destaca-se a relevância que a área possui para a população local, fator que foi ampliado com o seu reconhecimento por parte da Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura (UNESCO), que concebeu a titulação de patrimônio mundial ao local. Objetivava-se analisar a variação do uso desse espaço a partir da realização de intervenções turísticas, levando-se em consideração como o patrimônio transformado em atrativo turístico resultou em novos usos da rua Portugal. Adotou-se uma abordagem qualitativa, de caráter exploratório, com uso das técnicas de levantamento bibliográfico e trabalho de campo. Os resultados obtidos demonstram novas funcionalidades do logradouro, que ao longo do tempo tornou-se um importante espaço turístico da cidade.

Palavras-chave: Turismo; Paisagem; São Luís; Rua Portugal.

1 INTRODUCTION

The urban space is the result of a complex set of elements that arise from the relationships established between society and space over time. This process results in the landscape composition of cities according to their cultural/historical identity, thus, the elements that make up the urban landscape are a set of different historical moments, of different societies, of different cultures (CARLOS, 2008). These subjects and dynamics compose and transform the city landscape.

Due to this diversity, one finds in the contemporary urban space (21st century), landscape components that reflect the moment of the current society, which is postmodern, and lives in the light of technological advancement. But also, aspects corresponding to other historical moments of that same place, which concern another period of society, of the city. It is through this contrast of elements that make up the urban space that we chose in this article to carry out an analytical exercise from the historic center of São Luís, capital of the state of Maranhão, having as a spatial cutout Rua Portugal, an important tourist street in this region of the city.

According to the State Secretariat of Tourism of Maranhão (SETURMA) (2016) the historic center of São Luís, in which Portugal Street is located, stands out for the uniformity and simple and regular beauty of its properties, forming one of the largest sets of Portuguese architecture, still preserved in Latin America. These factors led the set to compose the list of the United Nations for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) of world heritage sites in 1997.

According to the Brazilian National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) (2014), the construction of what is now the historic center accelerated in the period of urban expansion of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, following the original layout of the year 1615. Thus, it is in this important sector of the city that Portugal Street is located, the empirical cutout of the research. Regarding its nomenclature, Lima (2002) states that the name of the street arises due to the visits of the Portuguese navy corvette in São Luís, therefore, the current name was adopted in honor of the Portuguese crown. This street is part of the UNESCO protection area, at the international level; IPHAN, at the national level; and the Government of the State of Maranhão, at the state level (SANTOS, 2015), which demonstrates its relevance in the center of the capital of Maranhão.

In spite of the patrimonialization, Paes (2009) states that the purpose of actions such as the one carried out in the historic center of São Luís is primarily to safeguard the set of elements existing in that space. The phenomenon of tourist use of these places is a practice that dates back to the 1970s, especially in European cities.

Carvalho and Simões (2012) point out that this titling of historic centers as world cultural heritage brought with it a new demand for social use of these sites, due to a growing trend in recent decades in Brazilian cities to use these spaces as tourist attractions, cultural and other services.

In this sense, it is hypothesized that the transformation of the site into a historical, cultural and tourist attraction is the result of a spatial valorization of these spaces (historical centers) due to the obtaining of their titles as world cultural heritage sites.

It is after the achievement of such titles, that the places undergo an intense process of requalification of their mansions and other areas integrating the historic centers. After the completion of these stages, the process of (re)occupation and (re)valorization of places begins, also highlighting the establishment of the phenomenon of consummation of these types of spaces as a tourist attraction, it is the consolidation of the consummation of historical heritage (PAES, 2009).

Thus, it is assumed that the urban landscape can be dynamic and contradictory and that its dynamism concerns its changes, uses, functionalities that change over time, this explains the insertion of tourist use in Portugal Street today.

Thus, by questioning which tourist interventions are found in the heritage landscape on Portugal Street, the objective of this article is to analyze the variation in the use of this heritage landscape from the realization of interventions that contributed to its tourist use, taking into account how the heritage transformed into an element of tourist consumption resulted in new uses of the street.

To achieve this goal, we listed the use of some mansions contained in the street, which over time have become shops, bars, restaurants, and museums. All these segments are related to tourism. Added to this, there are also interventions by the public authorities that contributed to the effectiveness of the street in having a tourist purpose, such as the promotion of cultural activities during the June festival, carnival, and others.

Thus, the research sharpens a reflection on the use of contemporary urban space, observing its configuration and use, thus proving to be valuable for the city of São Luís in order to analyze the dynamics of use of an important street in the city, exposing its current characterization, positive points of the establishment of a tourist bias in the place and possible problems.

2 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

The research is characterized by a qualitative bias, as it analyzes Portugal Street from interventions that are related to its tourist use, and therefore also involves objective and subjective social relations. In this sense, Godoy (1995) states that studies based on the qualitative current are relevant for the analysis of social relations, as they deal with concrete aspects, as well as providing the researcher with analytical possibilities regarding subjectivities.

Thus, we highlight the steps performed for the success of the central objective, where the methodological procedures adopted are characterized under the exploratory bias, because they contribute to the expansion of knowledge about the object of study developed (GIL, 2006). With regard to the analysis of the dynamics of the street, it was observed throughout the execution of fieldwork, the identification of the main

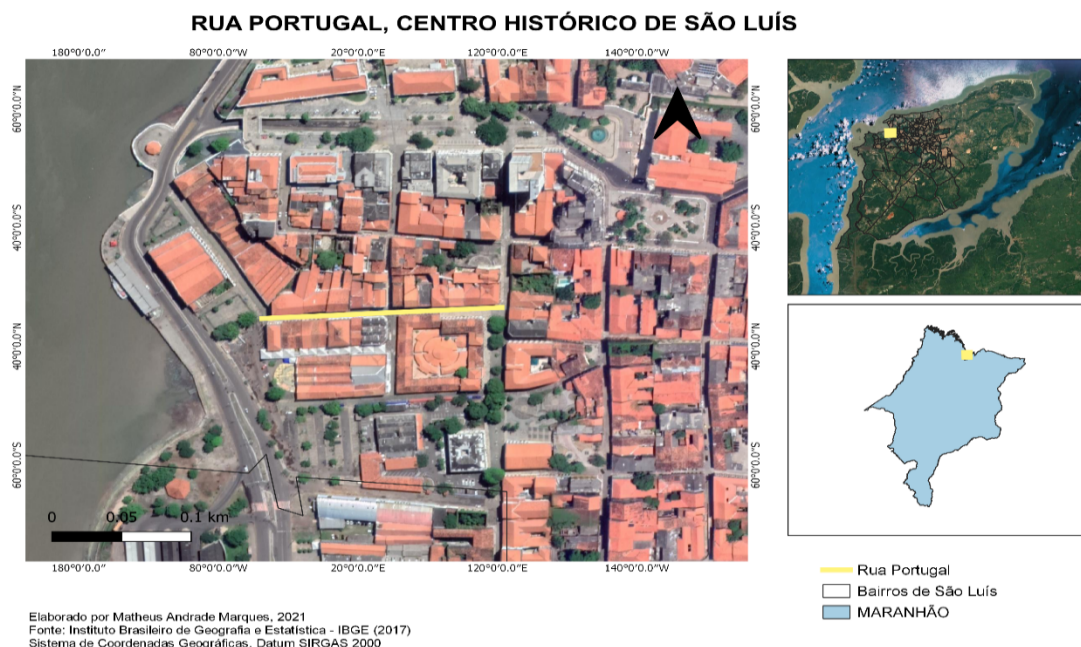
existing activities, visitors, and others. The finding of sociospatial relations was also contemplated at that time, among these, we point out the commercial, work and leisure.

It is pointed out that the present study was built in the period from September 2020 to May 2021. As methodological steps in order to build the present study, bibliographic research was carried out in order to obtain greater theoretical depth, as well as documentary research on the street, in relation to its formation and its uses over time.

Ratifying the choice of the use of Portugal Street as an object of analysis, the selection of this street was also due to the understanding that it satisfactorily represents the problem of transformation of the use of the urban heritage landscape from interventions that transformed the space into a tourist spot.

Then, after the conclusion of the stage of delimitation of the empirical reference from the theoretical deepening, a map (Figure 1) was elaborated to locate the spatial cut of research, that is, Portugal Street. The option of using the cartographic contribution was due to better characterize the street, in order to demonstrate its location in the historical center of the city.

FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF THE STREET IN SÃO LUÍS – MA



Source: The authors (2020)

Subsequently, field activities were carried out, mainly aiming to make photographic records of the landscape configuration of Portugal Street, as well as to identify the network of services and activities along the street that are related to the tourist use of the place. Regarding the importance of conducting field activity in geographic research, Suertegaray (2002) states that going to the field becomes a complement to the theoretical contribution, because research is to recognize (in the plane of the real) to intervene.

Regarding photographic records, Lacoste (1995) states that the use of photographs by Geography demonstrates the relevance of the objects contained therein for the construction of that study, the landscape record also provides a historical characterization of that particular space. Steinke et al. (2014) complement that this step provides better foundation and possibilities to the researcher regarding his object of study.

Still regarding the use of the photographic contribution during the construction of the investigation, it is noteworthy that this stage provided the records of the current uses of the historic mansions present on Portugal Street. In addition, this moment provides the reader with possibilities for a visual identification of the local landscape, thus showing that despite the preservation of the colonial structure of its mansions, they currently acquire new functionalities.

Thus, in addition to the conclusion of this stage of photographic records during the execution of field activities, it should be emphasized that this moment was also idealized for the identification of establishments present in the area that are related to tourism, observation of the dynamics of use and occupation of the street, as well as the other elements that make up the landscape configuration of the place.

Regarding the role played by the government in relation to interventions and contributions to the realization of the street as a tourist spot in the capital of Maranhão, we highlight the analysis of actions of this sphere that came to collaborate with the establishment of this scenario, such as the roles of public policies such as the REVIVER Project, REVIVA, which were examined during the execution of the documentary research. At this point of investigation, the contributions of the Northeast Tourism Development Action Program (PRODETUR) were also observed; in addition to news on the researched topic in local newspapers.

After completing this survey, the information was organized and classified in order to enable an analytical exercise on the place, thus arriving from the characterization of Portugal Street, an analysis of the variation of the use of this space from the realization of interventions.

3 THE TOURIST USE OF THE SITE AND ITS POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

Initially, as this is a study on heritage, it is worth making a brief effort to define the term. According to Di Meó (2014), this step is justified due to some clarifications regarding the word that must be punctuated, because,

[...] if we look at the etymology of the word patrimony, if we turn to the first written mentions of its appearance in our language, we will find it in several texts from the 12th century. It designates 'family property', a set of private assets belonging to the pater families. (DI MEÓ, 2014, p. 4).

Still according to Di Meó (2014), this sense of definition is historically linked to traditional families, who inherited the assets of their patriarchs, but over time, especially from the 18th century onwards, another sense of heritage is developed, this one in the public sphere, of the assets left by public social organizations. A collective notion of heritage emerges, so that these types of goods are left from generation to generation.

It is these heritages, being material or immaterial goods that are part of the composition of the identity of societies, which tell the story of certain peoples and places (DI MEÓ, 2014). It is also important to consider the agents involved in the choice of what is currently understood as heritage, especially the material ones, because "throughout the 19th century, the cultural heritage of many European urban centers symbolized the consolidation of nations that elected the heritage of the elites to represent the collectivity, under the tutelage of the State" (PAES LUCHIARI, 2006, p. 2).

Also according to Paes-Luchiari (2006), this practice reaches the Brazilian territory around the twentieth century, and similar to the European pattern, the choice of areas that are considered cultural heritage are defined based on the interests of the hegemonic groups of that time. On the relevance of heritage, Paes (2009, p. 163) points out that "[...] heritage is not only the expression of society, it moves, enlivens, highlights the passages, the access routes between the material and the symbolic, between the subject and his environment, between a practical reason and a symbolic reason. Cultural heritage becomes a social fact".

It should be emphasized that at the national level, after the promulgation of the 1988 Constitution, which provides for the importance of material and material cultural heritage, with this, throughout the 1990s and also in the 2000s, public policies aimed at national heritage ensembles emerged, in order to preserve and restore structures (VIANA, 2004).

Resuming the debate regarding the tourist consumption of these types of spaces, it is worth emphasizing the role of public agents as facilitators of the implementation of this trend through a series of interventions that are carried out in these places. In some cases, favoring the interests of the private sector operating in these environments and thus bringing some problems to society in general, such as social segregation (FONSECA; JANOSCHKA, 2018).

Based on this trend of tourist use of historic centers exposed by Paes-Luchiari (2006) in the last decades of the 20th century and the possible consequences of this trend presented by Fonseca and Janoschka (2018), the insertion of the historic center of São Luís in the UNESCO World Heritage List (1997) stands out. Due to these characteristics, this region of the city currently attracts a considerable number

of visitors to get to know the architectural ensemble that is a world heritage site as shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2: HISTORICAL CENTER OF SÃO LUÍS



Source: The authors (2021)

This practice of visiting the historic center of São Luís is mainly related to the Reviver Project, which, through interventions by the government, resulted in a process of valorization of the space. Regarding this measure, IPHAN (2014, p. 3) states that “in the 1980s, the Maranhão government restored about 200 mansions in the Praia Grande neighborhood through the Reviver Project”. In addition to these, other urban equipment was reformed, with emphasis on sidewalks and lighting. “In the following years, new specific interventions were carried out, such as the restoration of buildings, the renovation of the Arthur Azevedo Theater and others” (BOTELHO, 2005, p. 67).

Another important factor to be highlighted concerns the fact that these interventions mostly have the state sphere as an exponent of execution or to seek resources/partnerships for their realization. About this practice, Botelho (2005, p. 67) emphasizes:

The decision to create a technical team (maintained almost entirely from the late 1970s to the present day), to make their own investments and to seek resources from other governmental and international bodies was taken and carried out by the state bodies involved in the issue. The documentation produced throughout the period shows a personal commitment by

some governors, who made revitalization works a central aspect of their governments. (BOTELHO, 2005, p. 67).

At the municipal level, the creation of the REVIVA program in 2018 stands out, which is also relevant to the process of valorization, occupation and tourist use of the historic center of São Luís, about this action, Batalha (2019, p. 5) states:

[...] organized by the São Luís City Hall, which aims to highlight the history of the capital of Maranhão through theatrical performances, regional music and tourist information with the promotion of events such as the Serenade Walk, the Historical Sarau, the Reggae Route, Art in the Square and the São Luís Fair. During the events, singers, musicians, actors, interpreters, tour guides and various other professionals from the city itself are invited to share knowledge about culture and, at the same time, value local labor, thus contributing to the expansion of tourism demand in the city. (BATALHA, 2019, p. 5).

The Municipality of São Luís (2020), through the Municipal Tourism Secretariat, highlights on its website that the program aims to bring life to the historic center of the capital of Maranhão, having as main actions:

- *Serenade Tour*: contributes significantly to tourists getting to know the city. Not only the sights, but also the artists, culture and local history. Escaping from the conventional, the event offers visitors a more playful São Luís, through regional songs and the national popular songbook, and characters from the history of Ludovic, in insertions during the tour;
- *Historical Sarau*: it is a cultural mix of literature, theater, music and history that has attracted the attention of the local public and tourists. Characterized actors in period costumes evoke the city's golden past, conveying a sense of nostalgia while learning about history;
- *Reggae Route*: a walk through the streets of São Luís passes by places in the Historic Center that have identification with the musical style that gave São Luís the title of "Brazilian Jamaica". A specialized guide leads visitors to places that were representative for the history of reggae, with a presentation of a dance group of the rhythm.

Thus, this action is very helpful in attracting visitors to the center, consequently, it is related to tourism, since it is managed by the city's Tourism Department. On the practice of tourist use of this type of space, Sotratti (2016, p. 304) states that "cultural tourism now proposed by official tourism agencies is presented as a central strategy of processes of re-functionalization and gentrification of traditional areas and cultural assets with strong symbolic and cultural appeal". In this sense, the implementation of these models of tourist interventions in these places, brings with it a new use to the spaces, as well as can gentrify these places, since the phenomenon of valorization is also present, thus raising the prices of numerous services, transforming the area into an important commercial segment of the city to the detriment of housing use.

Therefore, the dual relationship between tourism and heritage stands out, as it generates a series of consequences for spaces. Pignaton (2016, p. 323) points out that “the use of heritage as a tourist product can lead to its conservation, while the isolation and abandonment of historical heritage can lead to its degradation”. Thus, there are two aspects to be observed, on the one hand the valorization that as positive points has the recovery of real estate and other historical structures; on the other hand, there are the implications of the process of valorization of these spaces, which tend to be constituted as commercial, political, administrative, cultural, and leisure environments.

Regarding the change in social uses, Castro and Tavares (2016) state that this occurs mainly in places that have undergone this process of heritagization, and tourism as a recurring activity in these places further aggravates this phenomenon, because “[...] this process not only occurs ‘in’ space, but also produces it, through (re)valorization (economic, symbolic), (re)signification and, in many cases, physical (re)structuring or immaterial (re)elaboration” (CASTRO; TAVARES, 2016, p. 127-128).

In the case of the historic center of São Luís, since its heritage status by UNESCO in 1997, the space has been valued due to the title, becoming an important tourist attraction of the capital of Maranhão. Therefore, changes in social uses concern aspects such as this example, prior to this moment of being recognized as heritage, the center was already a place of great relevance for local society, much because it was the epicenter of the city’s formation, but after its inclusion in the list of cultural heritage of humanity, its prominent role is enhanced, numerous commercial enterprises and services are installed, aiming to meet the new demand of visitors who come to know the place.

For Santos (2001), these new functionalities of places are mainly due to factors such as globalization, which reorganizes the social relations of the world, according to the demands of the current society, which is structured under the tutelage of the capitalist system. Therefore, spaces such as our research are also used for the purpose of collection. Despite this new demand for land use, it should be emphasized that the landscape configuration of the site has not undergone considerable changes, due to being a historical heritage area.

4 ANALYSIS OF INTERVENTIONS ON PORTUGAL STREET IN SÃO LUÍS

The historic center of São Luís, where Portugal Street is located, is made up of a cultural and historical tangle, where there are marks of the capital of Maranhão from the most diverse eras. In this way, it becomes a place of immeasurable relevance for the people of the city. Regarding Portugal Street, the object of our analysis in this study, its landscape composition stands out, Zago Filho (2018) states that it is part of the complex of the historic center of São Luís, located in the Praia Grande neighborhood, full of secular houses with their viewpoints and their tile facades (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: HOUSE IN PORTUGAL STREET



Source: The authors (2021)

Santos (2015) points out that a considerable part of the tiles covering the facades of buildings in the historic center comes from Portugal, more specifically from Lisbon and Porto, as well as France, Belgium, and Germany. However, as Alcântara (1980) points out, in São Luís a new model of use for such tiles emerges, since the use leaves the interior of the buildings and also appears in the coating outside the houses of the city. This practice was due to the climatic conditions of the capital of Maranhão, with high humidity rates, the tiles on the outside of the buildings were an alternative protection against local humidity.

According to Andrès (2006), the characteristics of the streets of the historic center of São Luís in general, which are paved with granite stones and framed by stonework sidewalks become the differential and the attraction of the place. Still on the structure of the street, the author points out that there is also a complex system of underground galleries that serve for the process of dredging rainwater, as well as a sewage network that uses ceramic pipes.

Regarding its historical importance for the population of São Luís, Andrès (2006) points out that Portugal Street, as well as the other adjacent streets that make up the complex of the historic center of the capital of Maranhão, served as homes of countless families of the local elite, this since the period of Portuguese colonization in Maranhão. Therefore, the mansions that are found throughout the length of Portugal Street had their primary uses focused on housing only after the process of development of society is that the place has new functionalities.

Complementing the information on the use of housing on Portugal Street in past centuries, Zago Filho (2018) points out that in addition to part of the society residing in the existing mansions there, they also functioned as trades, this characteristic is related to the location of the street, which is located near the port of the capital, located in the Praia Grande neighborhood, which is also part of that road, thus facilitating the receipt and shipment of goods.

Over the years, after the establishment of postmodern society, and the implementation of actions already mentioned as the Reviver Project, which contributed to the requalification of mansions that were abandoned after the urban expansion of São Luís and greater exploration of other sectors of the city, the process of changing the use of the historic center begins due to its considerable appreciation (CARVALHO; SIMÕES, 2012).

The realization of the renovation of mansions, together with the UNESCO title, made the space be inserted in a phenomenon that was already in force in several other historic centers that became heritage sites throughout the world, which after being renovated, were transformed into tourist attractions, the center of Barcelona stands out as a representation of this logic (ZAAR; FONSECA, 2019). Thus, Zaar and Fonseca (2019) complement that the process of requalification of the historic center of the Catalan city culminated in a tourist boom in the place, which was valued and made other spaces outside the center of Barcelona also have a boost in the scope of tourist activities, making the place consolidate itself as one of the most important points of world tourism.

It is through this logic of use of the heritage landscape that the process of change in the dynamics of use of Portugal Street follows, having its tourist use established, this mainly after the acquisition of the heritage title. In addition to this functionality, other uses are identified in the street, of which Santos (2015) highlights the occupation of mansions by government agencies, museums, and handicraft shops. Thus, it is clear that the housing aspect, once existing on the street, has been changed.

It is through this phenomenon of change in the residential use of the street that gentrification can be highlighted as an element resulting from the phenomenon of territorial valorization that Portugal Street has undergone. Bataller (2012, p. 10) defines as “fundamentally urban phenomenon known as gentrification consists of a series of physical or material improvements and immaterial changes—economic, social and cultural—that occur in some old urban centers, which experience an appreciable rise in their status”.

As a result of gentrification, Mendes (2011) points out the execution of a reorganization of the territory, which is prepared for the implementation of new demands, in addition to the establishment of new social relations that arise due to the increase of new audiences and services in that space. It should be noted that gentrified areas tend to appreciate considerably, thus causing prices in these places to rise, so in some cases, the most vulnerable social strata present in these places tend to migrate to other sectors of the city because they do not fit into the new socioeconomic standards.

Regarding this process of reuse of Portugal Street due to its valorization, in the tourist scope, the Museum of Visual Arts, inaugurated in 1989, is located in “an old 19th century townhouse that arose from the need of the Historical and Artistic Museum of Maranhão to have where to place the works of regional and national artists in another place for a better distribution and organization of the collection of the house, and from the demand of the artistic class for a space in which they could exhibit and at the same time preserve these works” (CASTRO, 2018, p. 34).

It is worth mentioning that prior to this use of the mansion as a museum, it was home to traditional families in the city of São Luís, regarding this practice, it is contained on the IPHAN website that “originally, the first floor had commercial purposes, while the first floor was residential and the second served as a hostel for traveling salesmen. From 1987, the building was requalified, becoming the museum in December 1989, under the responsibility of the State Government”.

As the museum is located in one of the mansions on Portugal Street, it provides the visitor with the opportunity to not only learn a little about the history of the city, but also to enter one of the secular buildings that make up the landscape of the street and be able to explore the enterprise in more detail. In this way, the space has become an important tourist attraction for those who visit Portugal Street.

Still on new uses in the street, the commercial network now stands out, which although already existing in previous periods, currently shows itself to be mostly focused on local crafts, these spaces being another important attraction for tourists who visit the place and can purchase local products. Items related to reggae, the *bumba meu boi* tradition, tiles, accessories, clothing, and others that are part of the Maranhão culture were identified. Figure 4 demonstrates these trades.

FIGURE 4: SHOPS IN PORTUGAL STREET



Source: the authors (2021)

Still on the commercial network and other services identified in Portugal Street, other segments stand out as: bank branch, restaurant, cafe, teaching institute and others. To better detail these entities, an information table was created:

TABLE 1: ESTABLISHMENTS IN PORTUGAL STREET

MUSEUM	RESTAURANT, BAR, OR CAFE	HANDICRAFTS SHOP	OTHERS
Museum of Visual Arts	Buriteco Café	Catirina Artes	Caixa Econômica Federal Agency
Casa de Nhozinho	Cozinha da Terra	Emaranhartes	State Institute of Maranhão(IEMA)
		O Buriti	Municipal Foundation for Historical Heritage (FUMPH)
		Praia Grande Artesanato	Cururupu Repórter
		Bacuri Artesanato	Catarina Mina Cultural Space
		Ilha Bela Artesanato	
		Palmeirart	
		Caminho do Artesanato	

Source: the authors (2021)

Therefore, as verified through the cataloging of information contained in the table, it is clear that the residential function is currently non-existent on Portugal Street. In this way, all the establishments present in the place are relevant to this new moment of the place, which is consolidated as a tourist spot in São Luís.

On the other hand, it is noticed that the handicraft businesses are currently the majority on the street, in addition to other services, as shown in Table 1. This new configuration of the place demonstrates that the current uses are consistent with the new demands of Portugal Street, which are focused on tourism. Another example of this reality is the Buriteco Café, an enterprise that appears in this space of the city and offers another service option to visitors of the historic center.

Contributing to this tourist use of the street, the State Government, also through the encouragement and realization of cultural activities on the site, proved to be an important agent in this process, among these actions, the decoration of Portugal Street during the June festival period in 2019 stands out (Figure 5).

FIGURE 5: JUNE FESTIVAL DECORATION ON PORTUGAL STREET



Source: Secretary of Culture of Maranhão (2019)

About this period, Batalha (2019) argues that due to the intervention exported in Figure 5, with the ornamentation of streets in the historic center, such as Portugal, it allowed the local population to be attracted to the area, thus resulting in visits also by these agents, as well as tourists. In this context, the relevance of the execution of interventions in public spaces for the maintenance of uses, visitations, and preservation of these areas is perceived.

Still regarding the results of the decoration in the historic center, some local press vehicles highlighted the results of the State intervention. *Jornal Pequeno* (2019) stated that “never has a June decoration attracted so much attention in São Luís. A mosaic adorning the entire length of Portugal Street, in the Historic Center of the capital, and a series of flags at the top of the streets have attracted hundreds of people to the place daily”.

The newspaper *O Imparcial* (2019) complements the information on the success of the decoration, highlighting the good results for local commerce, since the “São João flags increase sales by 150% in the Historic Center”. The June decoration began to attract a large audience to the Center of São Luís, increasing sales in local commerce.

Thus, it was found that over time the uses of Portugal Street have been changed, reaching the present moment, where the tourist bias has been established due to its valorization after its titling as heritage, in this way, some interventions, especially by the public authorities, contributed to leverage the status of the street as an important tourist spot in the city.

5 FINAL REMARKS

Through the analysis carried out during the construction of the study, it was identified that Portugal Street was transformed into one of the main tourist attractions of the historic center of São Luís. Thus, the place currently attracts a considerable number of external and local visitors, thus evidencing its character as a tourist space in the city.

This new panorama identified in Portugal Street is the result of numerous interventions by public authorities in different spheres (Federal, State, Municipal) during the last five decades. In the sense of carrying out reforms and improvements in existing structures throughout the historic center. In this sense, the tourist use of spaces such as Portugal Street was not a phenomenon designed by public managers, this practice emerged after dissemination in other parts of the world, where the possibility of using this landscape model as a tourist attraction was envisioned.

Thus, in the case of Portugal Street, it is understood that due to the emergence of new social practices over time, some features have been changed, such as the option of people to reside in this street. We can relate this practice to the process of valorization of urban land in this region of the city, a factor that resulted in high prices in the central area of the city; but also with the urban expansion of São Luís during the 1970s, which began to provide people with the exploration of new areas to be used as living spaces.

Thus, with urban expansion and population deconcentration consolidated in the center, Portugal Street and the other streets of the historic center lost residents, resulting in a significant number of abandoned mansions in the area. Only in the mid-1980s with the Revive Project, and already in the late 1990s, where the area had already received the title of world heritage, the scenario is reversed. This factor boosted the development of tourism in the area, resulting in a readjustment of Portugal Street to better receive visitors. In this context, actions such as ornamentation, improved lighting, public safety, accessibility works and others contributed to this practice.

On the other hand, the insertion of Portugal Street in the tourist routes of the capital of Maranhão, also awakened in the local population the interest or the resumption of this, towards the city center. Together with the titling of heritage, this aspect contributes to the return of the people of São Luís to the central area. In addition to the commercial scope, visits were driven by leisure, due to the concentration of squares, museums, cultural centers, theaters, restaurants, bars, and others.

Regarding the dynamics of the street, it was identified that currently predominates the commercial and cultural aspect, having along its entire length commercial network, in addition to aspects that contribute to the preservation of local culture, such as buildings, crafts, museum, and others. Thus, the street expresses to the visitor, whether tourist or local resident, a range of possibilities to know and praise the historicity of São Luís. As negative results of the phenomenon presented, we highlight the housing factor, there are no residents in the mansions present in Portugal Street and in the other streets of the center, were identified during the fieldwork, properties with sale

signs, thus evidencing the majority transformation of the center as a commercial, tourism and leisure area.

Therefore, tourism on Portugal Street established not only a new panorama in the primary sense of the activity, which is related to the growth in the number of external visitors to the site. This phenomenon has helped the local population to resume their historical relations with the city core, experiencing the open-air nuances that Portugal Street and the other streets of the historic center offer, thus preserving the local historical heritage for future generations.

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