

Actions implanted to promote the restoration of emperor D. Pedro II's Palace in the city of Itapura - S.P. - Brazil

Jorge Luís Akasaki

UNESP, State University of São Paulo State, Faculty of Engineering of Ilha Solteira, Department of Civil Engineering, Ilha Solteira – São Paulo – Brazil.

Sandro Garcia

Secretary of Tourism - Itapura – São Paulo - Brazil

ABSTRACT: Anyone arriving in the small city of Itapura - S.P. - Brazil, soon learns that its main tourism attraction, the impressive Emperor D. Pedro II's Palace, last ruin of the Military Colony of Itapura, that was built in 1858, is in a terrible state and lacking the least conditions of being visited, which is very sad since it just confirms that in the last years no effort has been employed towards the preservation of a historical place of incalculable value.

However, the building still stands up as if in a mute protest against the omission and negligence of those that should preserve it, because the building has already been officially considered as a Historical Monument since 1969, by CONDEPHAAT, the Brazilian Agency responsible for that sort of things.

According to the "Protocol of Intentions" between the Government of the State of São Paulo and the City-Hall of Itapura, both signers should strive to attract private funds, in order to use the resources provided through several laws of incentives to cultural development, as well as along public or private International Institutions, through solid and sincere partnerships.

It is well known that it is necessary to implement projects that look for the development of a culture conscience, historical and, because the tourism collaborates in the citizen's common, in a conscious and responsible person, that participates actively in the resolution of your community's problems and it looks for an improvement in the quality of life of your city.

We propose in this work, to present the actions that are being implanted for the recovery of D. Pedro II Emperor's Palace.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Historical

The fighting located in the south of Brazil that had started long ago between Spanish and Portuguese, elapsed intermittently among their descendants as well, involving Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina, and representing a constant threat to the harmony of the south American people.

A conflict along the western border was everything that Emperor D. Pedro II the Statesmen of the Brazilian Empire most feared due to the isolation of the Province of Mato Grosso that could be strategic for potential foes. The only free access to it was through the Paraguay and Paraná Rivers and the sole road was already secured under foreign domain. Therefore, it had been very important for the national security the installation of a line of fortified communications by the Tietê River. In fact the two colonies founded by the margins of the largest waterfalls along the Tietê River were erected in order to hamper the progress of enemy ships and to force the enemy to have no choice but set march on foot.

Just a year after the installation of the Naval Establishment, the Tamandaty warship had her festively commemorated maiden voyage on March 18th 1860. Her first commander, in his

Journal, had once described the Military Colony of Itapura as composed by streets along which the personnel of the naval establishment and their families lived in straw-covered houses. In due course of time better and better houses appeared, prevailing the houses of bricks covered with tiles and as a sign of progress the main avenue ended up covered with stones as well.

The main interest of Military Cologne of Itapura, as well as the one of Avandava, of serving the war operations would never be fulfilled, since the only military occupation of Itapura in the conflict with Paraguay was the creation of a mail service. Nevertheless, a lot of official correspondence and first-necessity merchandise have been through that mail service.

Then the great military event of Itapura would have been just the trips of the *Tamandahy*, supposedly in war mission. The elegant warship, after many years patrolling the Tietê and Paraná Rivers carrying merchandise, supplies, passengers, cattle, health supplies and medicines, took her last voyage on April 20th 1883, sadly condemned due to a corrosion hole in her cask. In spite of the end of the war, the Colony had remained during the rest of the Empire time, to be totally abandoned by the end of the XIX Century.

In 1865, the construction of the Administration Square and residence of the Commanding Officer of the Military Colony began. A standing legend was born, according to which, D. Pedro II himself, as well as Conde D'Eu would have stayed for a while there to speak to the soldiers by occasion of the War of Paraguay. Although those facts have never been proven, that impressive residence received the popular denomination of "Emperor D. Pedro II's Palace".

Located near the encounter of Tietê and Paraná Rivers, Emperor D. Pedro II's Palace has been part of a group of properties built during the War of Paraguay, which served as Military Colony.

Occupying an area of 4356 hectares, the Colony was formed by ninety buildings, almost all with the sides in wood and the central body of brick masonry. The roofing was covered by earthenware tiles. The colony existed until the beginning of the XX Century, being abandoned many years ago, in function of the unsoundness of the whole place, in such a pace that the constructions were disappearing little by little, remaining only the Emperor's Palace.

This building was consecrated by CONDEPHAAT as a historical monument, according to the December/4th 1969 Resolution.

The primitive city of Itapura was totally submerged by the filling of the Jupia Dam, built in the end of the decade of 1960 by CESP (Energy Company of São Paulo State), which was forced to erect a new town several meters from the original place.

In fact, the Emperor's Palace, besides its evident historical importance, happens to be the only remaining sample of the old city, bringing a special and affective meaning for the community, a true reference and link to a past that doesn't exist more.

On the other hand, the city of Itapura possesses today about 3000 inhabitants, living mostly of cattle breeding.

Notwithstanding the city tourism potential thanks to beauty of the landscape formed by the Tietê River, Itapura doesn't offer any leisure equipment or culture whatsoever.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

2.1 *The building*

The actual situation of the building headquarters of the old Military Colony is typical representative of the colonial architecture, totally built in masonry of bricks and covered with earthenware tiles.

The building occupies 307,35 m² of built area, being implanted right in the center of a land of 6400 m² located about 300 meters from on the Tietê River margins.

It was refurbished in the end of the decade of 1970 in order to accommodate the City Hall, which stayed there until 1989. After the City Hall left, the building was totally abandoned, becoming the favorite target of local vandalism.

2.2 *Implantation of the Museum*

Following the restoration of the Emperor's Palace, a Museum is going to be implanted, with all the historical collections on the Military Colony of Itapura, the Tietê River, the natives and settlers, the Tamandatahy warship, the Hydroelectric Power Plant and before that the Itapura Waterfall, and the installation and maintenance of facilities for cultural and educational activities, among them, a Historical and Ecological Library, a Video Room and a Department of Culture and Communication, suitable for elaboration of historical, ecological and educational projects, newspapers and leaflets.

2.3 *Implanted actions*

All the collection activities should happen with intense community participation, in order to allow the people's access to the processes of cultural production and to the creation of a cultural space destined to artists' exhibitions and the promotion of cultural contests about photography, video, writing and painting, using the material resulting of elaboration of the collection.

In the plan of popularization of the project newspapers, radio stations and regional TV will be employed, as well as informative pamphlets, folders, historical lectures at the schools of the neighboring cities, cultural contests of picture, video, writing and painting (Theme: history of Itapura), lectures in cultural entities of the region and events on the history of Itapura and region.

2.4 *The public*

Children, youths and adults of Itapura and cities of the region will be reached directly by the Museum, through the Historical and Ecological Library, the Video Room and the cultural projects that will be developed in the Department of Culture and Communication.

3 RESTORATION AND REFORM OF "THE EMPEROR'S PALACE"

3.1 *Location*

Located in the block formed by Tiradentes and João Soares Streets with Dom Pedro II Avenue and Estélio M. de Loureiro Street, in the district of Itapura - SP - Brazil, the Emperor's Palace, was once the administration house and commandant of the old Naval Establishments Home of the Military Colony of Itapura.

Established in June of 1858 through an Imperial Decree, the old Military Colony, entrusted to defend the Tietê River banks, constituted a defensive system along the lines of the rivers that take to Mato Grosso and the Prata, and was built by the first lieutenant engineer of the armada, Antônio Mariano de Azevedo, founder of the colony. In the beginning of the XX Century, in function of malaria epidemics, the colony was extinguished. In 1968, with the construction of the Jupia Dam, a number of constructions of the Colony were submerged, remaining just the administration house and the commandant's home. As for the popular name "Emperor's Palace" seems to be erroneous as it would have been attributed to the building in function of having supposedly belonged to D. Pedro II, an unproven fact.

Nowadays the building is completely abandoned and, consequently, victim of repetitive acts of vandalism even though supposedly protected by CONDEPHAAT.

The Emperor's Palace is a two-store building formed by a central block and two smaller lateral blocks, in solid earthenware bricks with structural function.



Figure 1: Front Facade.

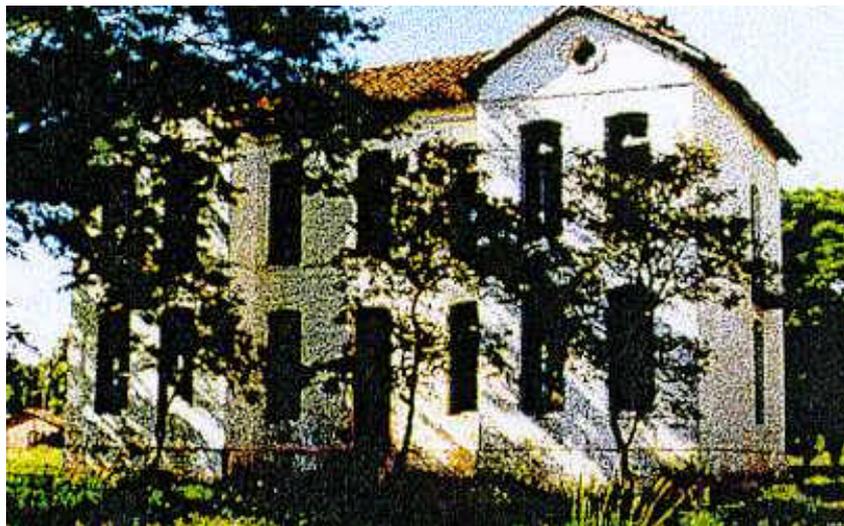


Figure 2: Lateral Facade.

3.2 Roofing

The roofing is constituted of tiles of earthenware and wood structure. It is quite damaged presenting several points without roofing, exposing the woodwork and compromising the whole structure.

The whole woodwork of the existent roofing should be repaired or substituted, with the purpose of eliminating current problems of the action of insects and the deterioration by humidity.

About 80% of the roofing tiles should be substituted, for another of same type, material and dimensions and the remaining tiles will be submitted to a cleaning process.



Figure 3: Detail of the Roof

3.3 *Stairways*

The existent stairway inside the building is made of wood and it will be totally disassembled in order to check for the stability and resistance of the structural parts, as well as the rigidity of the settings, a partial substitution of the pieces being already anticipated. The damaged floors will be replaced and for a piece to be considered reusable it's necessary that it is entire and don't present visible amendments.

All the pieces of the stairway will be undergone through a process of cleaning and prepared against the action of insects as well as adequately repainted. The external stairways of granite after having damaged parts substituted by pieces of same dimension, color and texture, will be cleaned and polished.

3.4 *Internal coating*

In general, the internal coating seems to be in good state, but they will suffer a localized removal of the mortars damaged by humidity.

3.5 *Painting*

Not founding vestiges of ornamental paintings, the internal walls will be sanded and repainted with latex-based paint.

3.6 *Internal floors and Skirting board*

The floors of the two pavements are compromised, implicating the replacement of the elements that it will not be reutilized. After the substitution, the floors will be sanded, caulked and later all the floors should receive application of protecting resin.

The wood skirting board will totally be substituted, due to the high deterioration degree. The removed pieces will serve as templates to determine the old colors prevailing old colors.



Figure 4: Detail of the compromising of the floor and of their supports.

3.7 Ceiling

The building possesses internally as well as over the balcony wood ceiling installed in a simple way. Due to very bad conservation state, it will be completely substituted by equivalent material or following specifications resulting of research.

The edges of a roof will have the ceiling recomposed according to the original. Afterwards the ceiling and the edges of the roof will receive coatings with appropriate varnish paint.



Figure 5: Detail of the ceiling.



Figure 6: Detail of the roofing.

3.8 *The wood window-sashes*

The window-sashes in general are in reasonable state, seeming to have been recently fixed. However, due to the continuous vandalism and the inadequate finishing, they are in need of urgent repairing. Therefore, they should have the movable parts replaced and the static parts treated with appropriate varnish.



Figure 7: Window-sashes.



Figure 8: Detail of the window-sashes

3.9 *Electric and Hydraulic Installation*

Although the electric installation seems to have recently been revised, there is a lack of equipments, forcing to a new revision and substitution where necessary. A set of light reflectors will be installed around the whole building with the intention of illuminating it.

Along the same way, the hydraulic installation will also be revised, fixed and complemented.

3.10 *Facades*

The damage to the facades seems to be restricted to some small repairing and superficial fissures covering, besides the walls whitewash wearing.

As a general guide to the restoration of the building, there exists a serious concern in the attempt to returning the facades to their original conception. For that, an effective cleaning and subsequent rebuilding of parts will be performed, followed by whitewash application in color defined after careful research.

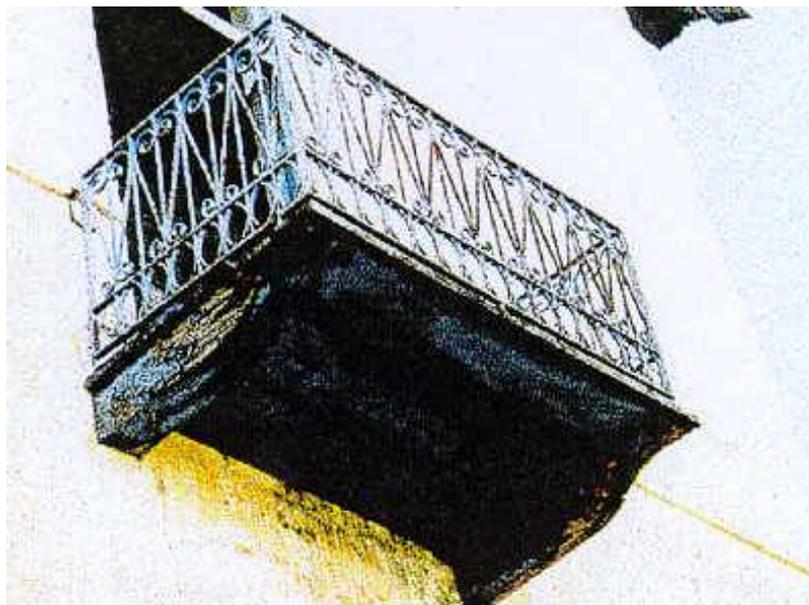


Figure 9 : Detail of the balcony of in superior pavement



Figure 10 : Detail of the balcony in the facade

3.11 Bathrooms

The existent bathrooms inside the building will be maintained, but they will be fully reequipped.

3.12 Termites

In spite of apparent termites absence, a preventive action will be accomplished in the building.

The treatments are scheduled to:

- The soil nearby areas close to the foundations and in the internal and external walls of the building;
- The linings and floors;
- The tile walls of the bathrooms;
- The walls with painting;
- The electric, hydraulic and telephony installations;
- The windows, doors and stairways.

3.13 Garden

As a complementation of the building restoration, there should be the development of a garden as well as of a public sidewalk, around the building.

The whole block will be surrounded by a proper fence with pair of opposite located gates, capable of being serviced by small trucks.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The community of Itapura is culturally and materially very poor, due to the difficulties of a faced by a small city and without any cultural programs, nor formation projects installed, what generates an unhappy perspective. Because of that, children, youths and adults can be noticed lacking cultural life and any information, at least to the history of their own city, let alone farther than that.

In fact, it is necessary and urgent to implement projects that look for the development of a historical and cultural conscience and the enrichment of artistic languages.

The Emperor's Palace, in spite of the problems, possesses all the conditions of being restored with relative easiness, since it doesn't need a very skilled labor for most of the services and even

for its transformation in cultural center, according to the wishes of the current municipal administration.

REFERENCES

Itapura, 2000. Prefeitura Municipal. Palácio do Imperador. Itapura: Prefeitura Municipal, 2000 (Documentos).