

Physical transformation and social appropriations of the *Tiradentes square in Ouro Preto-MG*⁽¹⁾

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ABSTRACT

Tiradentes Square, an *Ouro Preto's* importante place, has importance in the regional and national scenery. There are studies about its surroundings but no information concerning its historical evolution. In prospect to know its evolutionary process and identifying its landscape representation in the collective unconscious of the inhabitants from *Ouro Preto-MG*, it was analyzed the city's urban development and the transformations undergone by this square. The applied method had an interface between inventive and subjective analyzes. This study focused its interest on its morphological transformations and its social representation. It was possible to identify the physical evolution processes and the place's practices using inventive analysis, and esthetic and symbolic values using the subjective analysis. *Tiradentes Square* showed his vocation to represent the government, reaching its peak when it received the monument to *Tiradentes*, becoming a national symbol during the twentieth century.

Keywords: historical garden, heritage, landscaping.

RESUMO

Transformações físicas e apropriações sociais da Praça Tiradentes em Ouro Preto-MG

A Praça Tiradentes, um dos locais de destaque de Ouro Preto, é um lugar de importância no cenário regional e nacional. Existem estudos sobre seu entorno, mas não há informações sobre sua evolução histórica. Na perspectiva de conhecer seu processo evolutivo e identificar suas representações paisagísticas no inconsciente coletivo dos habitantes de Ouro Preto-MG, analisaram-se o desenvolvimento urbano da cidade e as transformações sofridas por esta praça. O método aplicado foi uma interface entre as análises inventiva e subjetiva. Este estudo centrou seu interesse em suas transformações morfológicas e na sua representação social. Com a análise inventiva, foi possível identificar os processos de evolução física e as práticas do lugar e, com a subjetiva, os valores estéticos e simbólicos. A Praça Tiradentes evidenciou sua vocação para representar o poder público, atingindo seu auge quando acolheu o monumento a Tiradentes, tornando-se símbolo nacional no decorrer do século XX.

Palavras-chave: jardins históricos, patrimônio, paisagismo.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tiradentes Square is considered an icon of the Brazilian historical city *Ouro Preto* locate in urban landscape and it is one of the most visited tourist attractions. Many historical buildings of great cultural value there are in its surroundings. However, it has not yet been studied and wrote the history of this so significant square.

The public square in Europe in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance was the convergence point of everything that was not official. In the squares there were no labels or rules of politeness, in them formed a familiar language, clearly differentiated from that used by the ruling classes, the aristocracy, clergy, nobility (SEGAWA, 1996). The Italian *piazze* housed religious rituals and other secular varied in nature: weddings, funerals, executions, celebrations, tournaments, races and theatrical performances. In Spain, the *Plaza Mayor* presented as meaning "large place within the village" and where "they sell groceries and there are

the trade of locals with regional neighbors, and where they celebrate the fairs, markets and public festivals" (BONET CORREA, 1978 cited by SEGAWA, 1996). The squares in the medieval cities were not independent places in the street, but an extension form of the same, place where the public and the private united in a complex and unitary common space (ALONSO PEREIRA, 2010). The square is an ancient space that is intertwined with own origin from the Western concept of urban, which can not be affirm of the gardens, effectively materialized creations, very considered by tourism (CLUZEAU, 2011).

Tiradentes Square, despite, throughout its history present changes in its structure and its use has always been an area of significant proportions within the *Ouro Preto's* urban context. Located at the top of the *Santa Quitéria* hill, where it dominates the landscape surrounding this city, *Tiradentes Square* presents in its history as the scene of major events and symbol of power. The importance of historic and scenic dimension of *Tiradentes Square* in the

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Ouro Preto's context shows this space as a representation of local power, state and national, mixing in some ways the Country history (ALVES et al., 2010).

The finding in the *Tiradentes* Square history, in its morphological context and as a reflection of social movements imposed by administrative power has its important in fact to insert it in history of Brazil's gardens, that would not be evident without a scientific knowledge.

In this perspective to know its historical evolution identifying its landscape representation in the collective unconscious of *Ouro Preto* residents, it was analyzed the city's urban development and the morphological changes of this square. This unleashed the need to deepen the knowledge of its meaning over time, making possible to identify its evolution as a public space and knowing how the *Ouro Preto's* population appropriates from this square nowadays.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research of the historical evolution of *Tiradentes* Square centered its interest in morphological changes of occupied space and in its social representations. For this, the applied method was an interface among the inventive analysis (LASSUS, 1994), the subjective analysis method (LUGINBHUL, 2006) and the apprehensions cited by Delphin (2005), which refer to the intrinsic and extrinsic values from the physical point of view and authenticity. The first refers to the values of the physical point of view, the second one to those which are associated with them, can be both as historical as commercial, and the third considers the way it was built and changes occurred over time.

Through the inventive analysis, it is possible to identify the processes of physical evolution and practices of the place, interpreting the natural, heritage and social data. This implies discern the specific relation between the place and its social practices.

Subjective analysis does not lead to a quantitative assessment but reveals aesthetic, phenomenological or symbolic values. This method is based on the assumption that the landscapes and their representations have values that are assigned by their population, artists or even by writers who marked their aesthetic or symbolic attributes in their works.

To compliance with the objective of this research stage, it was held literary review of the city's history aiming to correlate the morphological transformations of *Tiradentes* Square with the historical moment where the local society was inserted. This literature review consisted of primary and secondary sources. Visits were made to the *Ouro Preto's* Municipal Public Archives, Municipal Public Library, files of the Main Church *Nossa Senhora do Pilar*, in addition to the libraries of the Federal University of *Ouro Preto*, *Mariana*, and *Belo Horizonte-MG*. Secondary sources consulted encompassed theses, books and newspapers,

and the primary is restricted to the City Council's Minutes which are in the *Ouro Preto's* Municipal Public Archive.

Concomitantly with the literature review, the iconographic survey of *Tiradentes* Square was done by analyzing the photographic collection of the IFAC (Institute of Philosophy, Art and Culture), in addition to images acquired in the research of books, newspapers and postal cards.

Tiradentes Square was also visited several times, in order to observe its movement and identify the social groups who frequent this space. Visits were also made in the office of *Monumenta Project*⁽⁴⁾ and in the IPHAN (Historical Heritage Institute and National Artistic) of *Ouro Preto*.

The third source of information with extreme importance consisted of the interviews with knowledgeable people of events that marked this space evolution, as Father *Simões*, parish priest of the Main Church *Nossa Senhora do Pilar*, with *Helenice Afonso de Oliveira*, an official of the *Ouro Preto's* Municipal Public Archives, in addition to informal questioning of the historical evolution of *Tiradentes* Square, towards its residents, intellectuals, students and visitors.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Upon *Vila Rica* creation, the genesis of the square

The first record of the city's history dates back to the seventeenth century. There was a mulatto who accompanied the people from São Paulo in search of Indians; when he arrived in a hill called *Serro do Tripuí*, so he came down with a bin to draw water from the river, place called at that time of *Ribeiro do Ouro Preto*. On that occasion, the mulatto found some boulders with steel color in the river, collected them and, only later, already back to *São Paulo*, found that those boulders were purest gold. A half a league of *Ribeiro do Ouro Preto* found another mine called *Antônio Dias* founded around 1698. Serving the interests of the Brazilian government (Monarchy), "to be the main part of these mines," on July 11, 1711, Captain General *Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho*, considering the Royal Letter (*Carta Régia*) on May 20 of that year, raised the two camps of gold exploration, the camp of *Nossa Senhora do Pilar* and *Antonio Dias*, to the category of Village. It is curious to note that the creation of *Vila Rica*, the Brazilian government did not require to the residents building Church, City Council and Jail, as was common in the creation of other villages in that time (ANTONIL, 1967; VASCONCELOS, 2011).

Thus, the new village called *Vila Rica of Nossa Senhora do Pilar* was founded raking the two gold exploration areas, *Antonio Dias* and *Ouro Preto*, and by intercepting these two areas, there was the top of *Morro de Santa Quitéria*, where today is the *Tiradentes* Square. At the top of that hill exist a Chapel dedicated to *Santa*

⁽⁴⁾ Monumenta is a recovery program Brazilian urban cultural heritage, run by the Ministry of Culture and funded by the BID - Inter-American Development Bank.

Quitéria, saint of miners. This chapel was in the place where now stands the Church *Nossa Senhora do Carmo*, and in one of its altars there is the image of *Santa Quitéria*⁽⁵⁾. In 1712, on the top of this hill, settled the power represented by the presence of the City Council and pillory.

Symbol of union and separation, the Square is the center of the villa, behaving in its genesis the dualism of the physical union of two distinct camps in their

ideologies and rivals in their old political struggles of steeple.

The monument *Saldanha Marinho* and the Independence Square

In 1867 occurred in the square, today known as *Tiradentes Square*, the laying of the foundation stone of the monument designed in the martyrs' honor of the *Inconfidência* of *Minas Gerais*.



Figure 1. *Ouro Preto's Inconfidência Square.* Unknown author. Date: 1870. Source: Collection of *Inconfidência* Museum.

Figura 1. *Praça da Inconfidência de Ouro Preto.* Autor desconhecido. Data: 1870. Fonte: Acervo do Museu da Inconfidência

In the center of the photography (Figure 1), it's possible to see the presence of *Coluna Saldanha Marinho*, Brazil's first monument to *Inconfidentes*. Registered in the *Ouro Preto's* City Council Minutes on 3 April, 1867 which the foundation stone of this monument designed by chief engineer of the Province, *Henrique Gerber*. This monument was located in the same place that was exposed the head of *Tiradentes* at the end of eighteenth century (MATOSO et al., 1999).

The building *Saldanha Marinho* column was financed by popular subscription and constructed by Minas Gerais' Governor in 1867 which justifies its name *Joaquim Saldanha Marinho* (SILVA and RIODOURO, 2012). In description of the Square, Burton (2001) criticizes this monument, saying:

(...) It looks somewhat unpleasant, reminiscent of the pillory of the old days makes you lack the figure of Liberty, poetry or Indian, Brazil, or another beautiful idol because, however bad it is a column supporting a statue, a column that does not hold anything is even worse. (...)

Until 1876, even with the presence of the Column in honor of the *Inconfidentes*, the Square had not yet an official name. In the reports of some foreign travelers, it is noticed that it was simply called Square or Public Square. The French naturalist Saint-Hilaire (1975) stated that this

square was distinguished from wide place which performed as a simple extension of streets and were called "Places", in the English sense. But other travelers' reports such as Burmeister (1952), this Square was called *Largo do Paço* and *Palácio do Governo* Square. In the Book *Tombo* found in *Ouro Preto's* Public Archives, have been the Minutes of the City Council meetings and, back the page 387 on April 20, 1876, the Book *Tombo* from 1830 to 1887, registration 0282, Book 3 Box 3, has the resolution of the official name of this Square: "*(...) the square in which flows the same street to be called "Of the Independence" to have erected the post where it was placed the head of the first martyr of Brazilian independence (...)*." Thus, from 1887, this square was renamed by municipal records "*Inconfidentes* Square".

In the photograph of the commemorative postcard of the *Villa Rica's* bi-centenary (Figure 2), dated two years before the inauguration of the *Tiradentes* monument, in 1892, there is the presence of two monuments in this Square: one honoring to *Inconfidentes* and other, *Tiradentes*. Although these two monuments are present side by side in this image, never officially shared the same space, because, according Matoso et al. (1999), the Column honoring the *Inconfidentes* was demolished four days before inaugurating the Great monument to *Tiradentes*, i.e., on April 17, 1894.

⁽⁵⁾ Father SIMÕES (Parish House of the Church *Nossa Senhora do Pilar* - *Ouro Preto*), Personal communication, 2007.

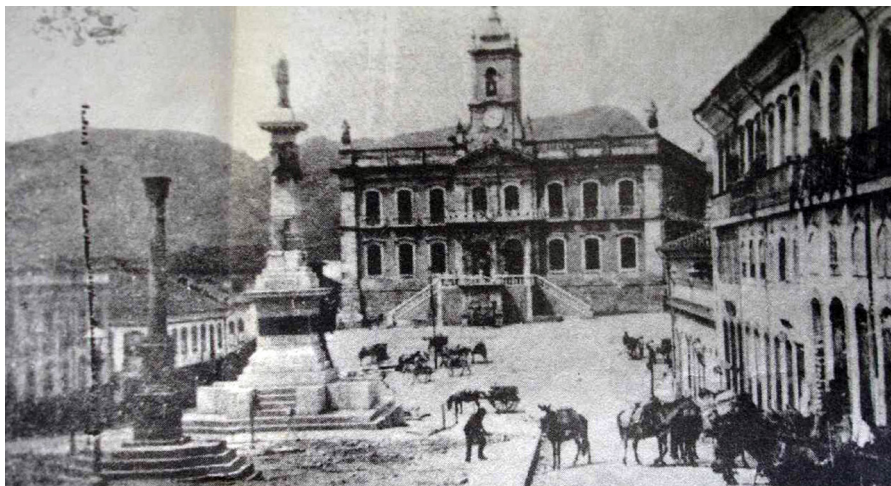


Figure 2. Tiradentes Square in 1892. Photography: Honório Esteves. Date: 1892.

Source: Collection of Luiz Augusto de Lima

Figura 2. Praça Tiradentes em 1892. Fotografia: Honório Esteves. Data: 1892.

Fonte: Coleção de Luiz Augusto de Lima

After reconstituted in the *Largo da Barra* (Figure 3), on April 21, 1980, the Column *Saldanha Marinho* was reinaugurated in solemn commemoration. The event had

the presence of *Francelino Pereira dos Santos* - Minas Gerais Governor - and *João Batista de Oliveira Figueiredo* - the President.



Figure 3. Coluna Saldanha Marinho. Photography: Schirley F. N. S. C. Alves. Date: 2007

Figura 3. Coluna Saldanha Marinho. Fotografia: Schirley F. N. S. C. Alves. Data: 2007

As inscriptions found in the column itself, the monument had remained in the possession of *Belo Horizonte* city by that date, when the Mayor of the capital, *Mauricio Campos*, gave it back to *Ouro Preto* city in the administration of

the mayor *Alberto Caram*. Already in the management of *Angelo Oswaldo de Araujo Santos*, in April 21, 2009, this column was transferred to central traffic of the Station Square or *Cesario Alvim*.

The Independence Square Garden

In iconographic survey of the Square the pictures that show the presence of a Garden were found, located in Tiradentes Square in 1881, the Government Palace in the

background (Figure 4) and the *Paço Municipal* on the other side (Figure 5).

However, it found no record of the garden design nor the landscape design who designed it.



Figure 4. Independence Square Garden with the Government Palace. Photography: *Guilherme Libeneau*. Playback: *Rogério Vicente da Costa*. Date: 1881. Source: Collection of the National Library
Figura 4. Jardim da Praça da Independência com o Palácio do Governo. Fotografia: *Guilherme Libeneau*. Reprodução: *Rogério Vicente da Costa*. Data: 188. Fonte: *Acervo da Biblioteca Nacional*



Figure 5. Independence Square Garden with the *Paço Municipal*. Photography: *Guilherme Libeneau*. Playback: *Rogério Vicente da Costa*. Date: 1881. Source: Collection of the National Library
Figura 5. Jardim da Praça da Independência com o *Paço Municipal*. Fotografia: *Guilherme Libeneau*. Reprodução: *Rogério Vicente da Costa*. Data: 1881. Fonte: *Acervo da Biblioteca Nacional*

Note the garden surrounding was all protected by railings (Figure 4), and also the presence of a fountain and *Saldanha Marinho* column. The fountains were common in gardens from that time, and despite not having full details, this fountain is very similar to what is today in the premises of the Pharmacy College of UFOP in *Ouro Preto*, but nothing can be said about it. What has been observed, and it is common in the history of many monuments in Brazil, is that the records have been lost with the time, resulting from the small historical and cultural value that permeates the country.

In the *Ouro Preto's* City Council Minutes on September 13, 1880, found some clues about Independence Square Garden. These Minutes have records of a project and budget of the Square decorated for the festivities at the reception of His Majesty The Emperor:

(...) The Lords Aldergaria, Cesário and Quintães Junior members of the committee by the City Council to formulate the draft program for the celebration and reception the Majesty Emperor present the project, plan and budget also see the opinion making possible the commission budget of Venetian masts mentioned in that Square decorating project for the materials and labor have increased tract. But it seems to the committee that the plan is entrusted to honest citizens the public purse will not be wronged. The President said he was in discussion the Project. Sir. Matta offered some amendments that once read were approved, getting the bill and the amendments postponed to be taken into account in due course. (...).

As the information about this project restricted to this text, the question is whether it was really the garden or if it was some other kind of decoration that should be performed as

reception to Emperor. As is mentioned the term “decorating project”, which this is a very contemporary terminology, it can be inferred and raise hypothesis that it was about the ornamentation with plants for this space. It also reinforces the fact that it is still quite common the act of building and reform squares for special occasions as inaugurations and illustrious visitors. But the lack of more information and detailed descriptions gives doubt about the fact. As for the Venetian masts also described in these minutes, these were under the possession of the Father *Simões*⁽⁶⁾. But it seems that this cited project has been of the garden, because early next year as in *Ouro Preto* City Council Minutes on April 28, 1881, there was an indication of the administrator from Public Garden of the Independence Square:

(...) Indicate that nominate Amanouense of the City Council Secretariat to citizens Ovídio Ferreira da Costa and equally to José Rodrigues Neves as administrator of Public Slaughterhouse and Public Garden of the Independence Square. (...)

Also in these records, it is information that, since that date, the conservation of Independence Square Garden would be the Province responsibility.

(...) It was read a letter from the secretary of the division Public Works stating that the Independence Square Garden had been sent to the expense of the Province and by order of the Presidency was its conservation in the responsibility of respective administrator of works capital. (...)

Everything indicates that this garden has been created

for the festivities on April 21, 1881, but despite this information are not as accurate, they were helpful to establish under which circumstances was created the garden, addition to serving as official references about the existing Garden in the *Tiradentes* Square. But, a lot of information ended up losing over time, making it difficult to elucidate all the historical facts relating to this garden.

The proclamation of the Republic on November 15, 1889 overthrew the parliamentary constitutional monarchy of the Brazil Empire, ending the sovereignty of the Emperor *D. Pedro II*. At that time, it is known many of the *D. Pedro II* works were destroyed and looted. Little is known about end of this garden, but everything indicates that it existed until the end of *D. Pedro II* Empire, which has possibly motivated both its creation as destruction.

The Monument to *Tiradentes*

In 1892, after three years of proclamation of the Republic in Brazil, took place the official ceremony of laying the foundation stone (Figure 6) for the construction of the Monument to *Tiradentes* in the Independence Square - *Ouro Preto*. In solemn ceremony, the laying of the foundation stone of the monument was attended by Vice-President of the State - *Dr. Eduardo Ernesto da Gama Cerqueira* - as well as senators, deputies, senior officials and popular. The 31st Infantry Battalion gave military honors playing the music band of the police (MATOSO et al., 1999).



Figure 6. Monument to *Tiradentes* under construction. Source: Journal *O Vila Rica, Ouro Preto*. Date: July 1992

Figura 6. Monumento a *Tiradentes* em construção. Fonte: *Jornal O Vila Rica, Ouro Preto*. Data: julho de 1992

⁽⁶⁾Father SIMÕES (Parish House of the Church Nossa Senhora do Pilar - Ouro Preto), Personal communication, 2007

With the proclamation of the Republic in 1889 and the adoption of *Tiradentes* as the great emblem of the republic, there was a political decision to create in that Square a monument to *Tiradentes*, the materialization of the public authorities in that place and thus, the history of the Square is mistaken with Brazil's history.

In 1894 has occurred the inauguration of the monument

dedicated to *Tiradentes* located in the center of *Ouro Preto's* Independence Square. This inauguration had a solemn ceremony and the presence of families and people of every social class (Figure 7). Sir. *Dr. Afonso Augusto Moreira Penna* - State President was who directed the act. The event included speeches, applause, lighting in the Square and across the city (MATOSO et al., 1999).

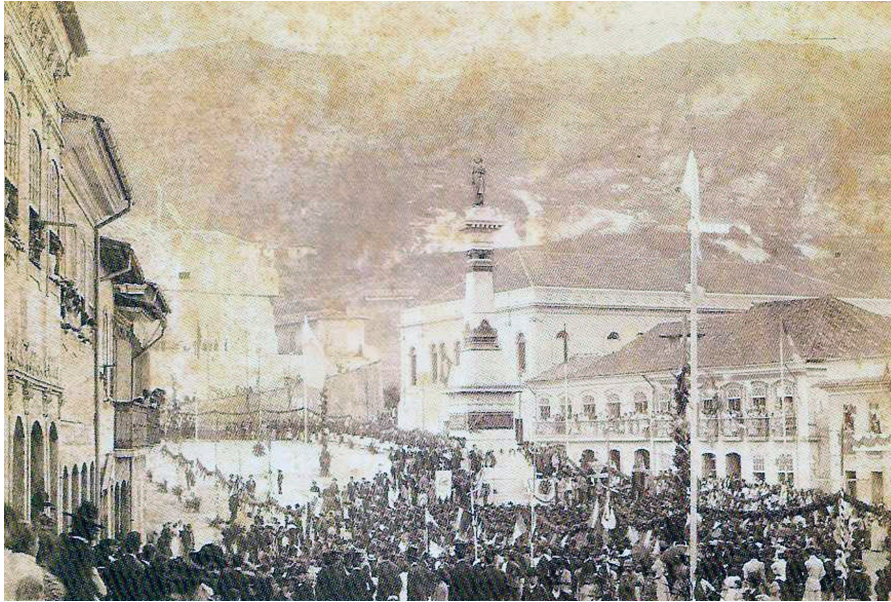


Figure 7. Inauguration of the monument to *Tiradentes* on April 21, 1894. Photography: Unknown author. Source: Public Archives of *Minas Gerais*
Figura 7. Inauguração do monumento a *Tiradentes* em 21/04/1894. Fotografia: Autor desconhecido. Fonte: Arquivo Público Mineiro

An opening so solemn shows the political interest of praise *Tiradentes* as a martyr and reinforces its role as patron of the Republic, as well as demonstrating the *Ouro Preto* importance, the capital of *Minas Gerais*, in Brazilian politics. In that event, the Square plays its role of communication media of the Government ideals.

The afforestation Square

It is known that, in the late nineteenth century, there was a worldwide movement of gardens and boulevards deployment in urban areas. This can be explained by the fact that the landscape until then only existed outside the urban context (DANTEC, 1996). It was also in the nineteenth century, with this worldwide movement that urban parks have been created and there was a great change meaning from the word "landscape", appearing for the first time in England, the term "townscape", translated later as landscape urban.

Ouro Preto in the late nineteenth century was in a delicate situation because there was a great interest in transferring the state capital to another location, a fact that occurred on December 12, 1897, when the state capital was moved to *Belo Horizonte*. But despite this, after its garden's destruction, *Tiradentes* Square participated again in the movement to create the landscape urban, but in a much more timid way, because it did not create a beautiful garden with fountains, but just trees in its surroundings. Despite not having found any documents about the decision to afforest *Ouro Preto*, the iconography of that moment confirms this fact, because in 1920 the *Tiradentes* Square was all surrounded by trees that were already well developed (Figure 8). Apparently, by the trees development, that were subject to quite radical pruning, style of that time, they were planted at the time of *Belo Horizonte* construction, in the 1890s. And at that time of this photograph, in 1920, they were already well developed and would be over 20 years old.

It is observed that afforestation emphasized the Square delimitation, keeping the same rectangular shape of the *Inconfidência* Square Garden, and involving the monuments *Saldanha Marinho* and *Tiradentes*. This afforestation was not restricted only to the Square surroundings, but extended to the ramp to the School of Minas (ancient Governor's Palace). Everything indicates that the species used in this afforestation was the *privet* (*Ligustrum vulgare*), exotic species widely used in afforestation of Brazilian cities late nineteenth century, including *Belo Horizonte*.

In another image (Figure 9) from the Square overlooking for the museum, 1911, date prior to the Figure 8, it can see a bilateral vegetation alignment, creating a sort of mall opening their perspective towards to the museum.

The image of Figure 10, decade 1922, photograph taken at that time in the tour of Sir President of the Republic - *Dr. Epitácio Pessoa* – to the *Minas Gerais* State, in the company of Lords - *Dr. Arthur Bernardes* and *Raul Soares* – note with clarity this vegetable alignment present in Figure 9 it is also trees.



Figure 8. Afforestation of *Tiradentes* Square. Photographer: Luís Fontana. Probable date of the photography: 1920. Source: Collection of the IFAC

Figura 8. Arborização da Praça Tiradentes. Fotografia: Luís Fontana. Data provável da fotografia: 1920. Fonte: Acervo do IFAC



Figure 9. *Tiradentes* Square with trees in front of the Museum. Author: Unknown. Source: Book Tricentenary of *Ouro Preto*. Date: 1911

Figura 9. Praça Tiradentes com árvores na frente do Museu. Fotografia desconhecido. Fonte: Livro do tricentenário de *Ouro Preto*. Data: 1911

The equity legislation and the disappearance of trees and palm trees from the Square

Ouro Preto city begins to mobilize in the direction with Federal Decree creation of historical heritage protection on November 11, 1930. Thus, on September 19, 1931, the *Ouro Preto* Mayor - *João Baptista Ferreira Velloso* - establishing the Decree nº 13 with some rules to the conservation of colonial buildings aspect, buildings, streets and squares of *Ouro Preto*.

However, it found no legal decision to remove the

trees in *Ouro Preto*, but when analyzing the *Tiradentes* Square photograph of 1931 (Figure 11), it is clear that the trees which before delimited the rectangle that surrounded the Square, are no longer present, leaving only openings devoid floors and earth mounds where once were their trunks. Note also that trees going up the ramp to the School of Minas were not cut at that time. The fact that the image show earth mounds where there were trees indicates that these were cut short time before the photograph date, in 1931.



Figure 10. *Tiradentes* Square with palms and trees. Unknown author. Date: 1922. Source: Collection of the Public Archives of *Minas Gerais*

Figura 10, *Praça Tiradentes com palmeiras e árvores.* Autor desconhecido. Data: 1922. Fonte: Acervo do Arquivo Público Mineiro

Another curious fact about the photography (Figure 11) is the presence of a bandstand in the place where before there was the *Saldanha Marinho* column. At that time, the Bands concert was common in the squares, becoming also common the presence of bandstand in public squares and in the *Tiradentes* Square case, it can suppose that in this period when the square was afforested, its environment has changed and its appropriation became popular, indicating that its use was not restricted only to solemn moments of great political or religious decisions, but also to moments of relaxation and joy of the population.

In Square image also dated 1931 (Figure 12), note that the bandstand was no longer present in the Square. Everything indicates that removed the vegetation, again imposed its old appropriation type, the scene of major civil ceremonies and religious, such as the Steps Procession of *Corpus Christ* and the meeting in Holy Week⁽⁷⁾.

Contemporary appropriations of the Square

Currently, *Tiradentes* Square presents completely pavement in a single plane, with difference level just on the sidewalks along the building from its surroundings. The Square is devoid of vegetation and shows as structures the monument to *Tiradentes* in the center and a fountain on the stair wall of the *Inconfidência* Museum.

In addition to religious events, the *Tiradentes* Square, for a long time, was a place of great concerts presentation from Brazilian popular music. But since 2001, this type of event was restricted on site, because the shows were counting on increasingly large audience and left the Square in a deplorable way, endangering the maintenance of this heritage.

Nowadays, *Tiradentes* Square, still welcomes great political solemnities, state and federal level, such as the celebration of April 21 by delivering to *Tiradentes* medal. Other popular festivals take place in this Square, for example, Carnival, Winter Festival and the celebration of the October 12th.

⁽⁷⁾Father SIMÕES (Parish House of the Church *Nossa Senhora do Pilar - Ouro Preto*), Personal communication, 2007



Figure 11. *Tiradentes Square with freshly cut trees.* Photographer: Luís Fontana. Probable date: 1931.

Source: Collection of the IFAC

Figura 11. *Praça Tiradentes, com árvores recém-cortadas.* Fotografia: Luís Fontana. Data provável: 1931. Fonte: Acervo do IFAC

Tiradentes Square hosts the *Inconfidência Museum*⁽⁸⁾, Science and Technology Museum⁽⁹⁾, *Set Alpoim*⁽¹⁰⁾, Baroness House⁽¹¹⁾, City Council, Tourist Information, Student Restaurant⁽¹²⁾, as well as restaurants, bars, jewelers, craft shops and souvenirs. To welcome so many activities

surrounding the *Tiradentes Square* lived in its daily lives, from the 1990s to March 2014, with the fact to present as a large parking (Figure 13). Because of traffic problems and the annoyance of local residents with the Square use in March 2014 it was banned parking in the *Tiradentes Square*.



Figure 12. *Steps Procession.* Photographer: Luís Fontana. Date: 1931. Source: Collection of the IFAC

Figura 12. *Procissão dos Passos.* Fotografia: Luís Fontana. Data: 1931. Fonte: Acervo do IFAC

⁽⁸⁾ Old City Council and Jail - 1784

⁽⁹⁾ Old Governors Palace

⁽¹⁰⁾ Several houses have been designed by Brigadier José Fernandes Pinto Alpoim, ranging from number 52-70.

⁽¹¹⁾ Presently, it is situated the local office of IPHAN

⁽¹²⁾ REMOP. There, in the eighteenth century, there was a Hospital Santa Casa de Misericórdia, and in the early twentieth century worked the Forum.

⁽¹³⁾ Term used in the city to designate a place of casual encounter



Figure 13. Tiradentes Square in the 1990s. Source: Journal *Galilé Notícias, Ouro Preto*. Date: July 4, 1995

Figura 13. Praça Tiradentes na década de 1990. Fonte: *Jornal Galilé Notícias, Ouro Preto*. Data: 4 de julho de 1995

The Square has an intense movement during the day, when all these establishments are operating. But during the night it is deserted, because it is not a footing or meetings place⁽¹³⁾.

Historical synthesis

The model used as a parameter to analyze the Tiradentes Square evolution through the portrait of the medieval square and the qualification of Renaissance squares, showing a singular evolution in relation to European squares. The Tiradentes Square has started its history as a landmark of *Villa Rica* design, through by symbol of the independence and after the Republic. Despite having a singular history, this square also shows European influence in its historical trajectory, as evidenced by the garden creation, into the square, in the late nineteenth century, practice of sociability in public places, common in Europe at that time. Another common element was planting trees in urban areas, common trend in Europe, in that time.

After Brazil's independence, Tiradentes Square hosted Saldanha Marinho column, designed monument in honor of the martyrs of the *Inconfidência* of Minas Gerais, the first Brazilian monument dedicated to the *Inconfidentes*. And after the Republic proclamation, the Square hosted Tiradentes monument, martyr of the Brazilian Republic.

With the transfer of the capital of Minas Gerais to Belo Horizonte, Ouro Preto city lost its identity through a decay period. At that time, one of the major anchors of this city was Tiradentes Square, as host the monument to Tiradentes, which demonstrated great importance of Ouro Preto, in the Brazil historical context, thus resulting in its tourist potential while historic city. In this context, it becomes evident that the history of this Square, from its beginning to the mid-twentieth century, it mixes both with

the Ouro Preto city's history, as with the Minas Gerais State and Brazil.

This Tiradentes Square's historical evolution study showed its great capacity to represent the government, whose peak was reached with taking the Republic, when that Square hosted the monument to Tiradentes, becoming one of its great symbols.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The research revealed the importance of Tiradentes Square in the history of Ouro Preto's city since its formation. In the colonial period, its space marked the genesis of *Villa Rica*, conglomerate the buildings that housed the Captaincy power.

This Square's study is unpublished, because what were in on it until then were issues relating to the architecture of its surroundings. No work treating this aspect of their physical transformations and social appropriations had been made.

The Square, stage of power demonstration in the collective unconscious of the Ouro Preto's population, still has many questions to be answered, particularly regarding the stage where it housed the *Inconfidência* Garden, because even the project author was not identified. Also it was not get the garden project even identify its composition through the analyzed images. Nevertheless, this study was able to structure its history and raise some hypotheses that could contribute to further research on this square history, the Ouro Preto's heart, place where always pulsed the power.

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