

TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE RE-APPROPRIATION TOWARDS A NEW URBAN CENTRALITY. A CRITICAL CROSSROAD IN SEMI-PERIPHERAL EASTERN RIVERSIDE LISBON

Joao C. Martins

Universidade de Lisboa / Instituto de Ciencias Sociais, Avenida Professor Aníbal Bettencourt, 9, Lisbon, 1600-189

*Corresponding author: joaomartins.cf@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT. The transformation of decayed semi-peripheral riverside areas and its Tangible Culture Heritage is presented today as a contributing factor in urban regeneration by several public preservation bodies and agendas, as well as privately led investment. These practices demand the economic and symbolic valorization of abandoned Tangible Cultural Heritage, where the social coexistence of residents, workers and visitors is seen as a smoother urban integration of these deprived territories and their communities into the surrounding contemporary cities.

We'll focus our approach on socio-spatial changes occurring in Marvila and Beato, presented today as new urban areas in which to financially invest after the 2011 economic crisis occurred in Portugal, discussing public and private re-appropriation of Old Palaces, Convents and Farms and Reconverted Warehouses (industrial and commercial); towards the creation of a new urban centrality in Lisbon. In this case, public ground-field intervention established a culture led regeneration process, with the creation of a municipal library, a crucial point in the cultural use of this space, community participation and gathering. Dealing with private investors, despite the positive effects, such as a reduction in unemployment, economic diversification and re-use of urban voids, there is always the possibility of undesired consequences. This paper argues, and the research experiments in many European cities show us that the ambition to improve the image of these deprived areas, despite some encouraging ground level achievements, has unwanted or unexpected outcomes, starting as urban regeneration practices, often sliding towards gentrification, where local public powers have a determinant role.

KEY WORDS: ROCK project, Urban Regeneration, Gentrification, Lisbon, Tangible Cultural Heritage, Urban Centralities

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INTRODUCTION

After a process of urban decline, resulting from deindustrialization and territorial fragmentation, Marvila and Beato (hereafter M&B), two spatially fragmented territories and administrative civil parishes, located in eastern riverside Lisbon, are experiencing presently to processes of socio-spatial change of its former decaying riversides areas, grounded by vacant Cultural Heritage re-appropriation (van de Kamp 2019) namely on its Old Palaces, Convents and Farms and Reconverted Warehouses (Industrial and Commercial). This re-appropriation promotes new productive activities, consumption, and cultural amusement as regeneration drivers, particularly in significant areas of decayed cities, such as former nobility or post-industrial sites.

Our objective is to map and make sense of the public and private developments in the re-appropriation

of cultural heritage, between urban regeneration and gentrification processes in the Horizon 2020 ROCK project, «Regeneration and Optimization of Cultural Heritage in Creative and Knowledge Cities» (hereafter H2020 ROCK) area, which supports this research. Taking into account the importance of Tangible Cultural Heritage in (M&B), our main research question in this paper is: how the observed re-appropriations in Tangible Cultural Heritage, promoted by public and private bodies, are promoting the creation of a new urban centrality in Lisbon, between an initial sustainable and participative process of urban regeneration ending towards gentrification? To answer these questions, we present the Tangible Cultural Heritage mapping process, the importance of cultural heritage in (M&B), as well as its ground achievements in terms of social and spatial change.

CULTURAL HERITAGE, URBAN REGENERATION AND GENTRIFICATION

The role of cultural heritage in urban transitions towards the creation, innovation and replication of best practices in cities is seen as a crucial determining factor in the achievement of Global North processes of urban sustainability and a driver for the regeneration of urban consolidated areas and communities. This expected urban change summons up the idea of «urban renovation, re-urbanization, revitalization, restructuring, recompositing, renewal, rehabilitation, requalification» (Mendes 2013, 34), using cultural events (Binns 2005), to promote culture-led urban redevelopment (Ferilli et al. 2016), desirous of overcoming a status of social, economic and spatial deprivation (Pratt 2009), going beyond «slum clearance and physical redevelopment, to one that additionally addressed wider social and economic issues» (Couch et al. 2011, 3). When cultural activity is the main driver of urban change, creating a Global North process of urban change with a strong emphasis on community participation (Savini 2011), we are dealing with a Culture-led Regeneration practice: «Evidence of regenerative effects can therefore be sought where culture is a driver, a catalyst or at the very least a 'key player' in the process of regeneration or renewal.» (Evans 2005, 9).

Regardless of the major positive improvements (job creation, economic recovery and diversity, mixed urban uses, positive vision of the area) promoted by practices of urban change aspiring to urban regeneration (Ferilli et al. 2017), we're close to the idea of «positive gentrification», (Lees 2012), making sense of the people's reaction to the positive economic development that had occurred in deprived socioeconomic communities and their spaces, which in reality is just a myth. After these first steps, when capital reproduction is reduced, and new areas appear as desirable for regeneration, the same kind of process is reproduced, but this time in another city area under decay. According to Neil Smith (Smith 2006), the discourse around the idea of urban renaissance was not new, referring to Ruth Glass (Glass 1964) gentrification in the 1960s. However, the author believes that the main drivers of undesired urban changes, are not the early upper-middle-class gentrifiers, but the different bodies of the public administration, who wished to regenerate these urban places without the participation of residents and other local stakeholders. Thereby privatizing urban space, they promote rent gaps, a huge visibility of a certain area, based on upper class consumption groups, encouraging processes of retail gentrification (Hubbard 2019).

Currently, various EU-funded actions as research action projects with municipal, academic, and local organizations are being implemented to carry out participative urban regeneration processes. Its aim is to develop more sustainable, creative (Evans 2009) and inclusive cities, sharing experiences and promoting citizen involvement, such as the H2020 ROCK project. The project shares an ongoing methodology of research and local intervention for 3 Replicator Cities (Bologna, Lisbon and Skopje), based on the experiences of 7 Role Model Cities (Athens, Cluj-Napoca, Eindhoven, Liverpool, Lyon, Turin and Vilnius), which has started in 2017 and will end in December 2020, with an Overall budget of 10 595 440,04 euros. Is funded by the Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge program which has invested around 500 million euros to highlight cultural heritage as a crucial element for urban life and socioeconomic development. Symbolic and heritage-related spaces become a priority in public body agendas, a focus of academic interest for urban researchers, social activists, public funded projects and private investment: «tangible heritage includes artefacts (for example, objects, paintings, archaeological finds etc), buildings, structures, landscapes, cities, and towns including industrial, underwater and archaeological sites.» (JPI, 2014).

As «inherently a spatial phenomenon, all heritage occurs somewhere and the relationship between a heritage object,

building, association or idea may be important in a number of ways.» (Graham et al. 2000, 4). Despite being a process «inseparable from people [...] points and locations can contribute to heritage or even, in themselves, be someone's heritage» (Graham et al. 2000, 4). Heritage sites are not distributed continuously throughout the urban space, some spots will have a stronger relationship with themes of history or identity, others less so, and in some urban territories it is possible that the symbolic importance is not being highlighted or appreciated, particularly in communities with poor social and economic capital. The kind of heritage, whether post-industrial, religious, or migrant may not be equally distributed in the urban space but dispersed on different territorial scales which could be local, regional, or national. The cultural heritage promotion can lead to cultural commodification, being used as a trading good (Chang 1997), appropriated by other urban users without resident participation (MacCarrone-Eaglen 2009), starting as urban regeneration processes, but finally sliding towards gentrification processes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We started our research in September 2018 till present times, by collecting statistical information about the H2020 ROCK project area, using the maps app from the Portuguese National Statistical Board (INE 2011). To map the existing heritage sites and their importance, we participated in a series of regular meetings in the *Marvila* Library, under the initiative *Vidas e Memórias* (Lives and Memories) with elderly people to discuss their long-standing sociability in (M&B). We conducted 18 semi-structured interviews, as well as several informal contacts to residents and local entities responsible, mainly in community assemblies, around the present use of various heritage assets. The next step was to map the Old Palaces, Convents and Farms, and Reconverted Warehouses in the H2020 ROCK area, making sense of its present use, discussing if its contemporary change can be analyzed under urban regeneration, gentrification, or a confluence of both concepts, taking into account different temporalities.

The H2020 ROCK area is a diverse territory, composed of three spatial zones. Firstly, the riverside, along with both (M&B) harbor areas, where most private led culture heritage re-appropriation is happening. Secondly a very fragmented area which we have informally called «island» between *Cintura* and Norte train lines. Thirdly, a social housing area, where major public led cultural heritage re-appropriation is happening in the remains of the Chines Shantytown, creating a new library.

The H2020 ROCK territory is a diverse area that has been shaped by a range of processes of spatial specialization over the past decades. The emergence of (M&B) as a new potential space for urban redevelopment and centrality in Lisbon, has been reinforced with the recent Strategic Plan for Tourism for the region of Lisbon (CML 2020), pointing out *Marvila* as a new space for tourism and leisure development, seen as «young and trendy oriented zone, in harmony with its local traditions, strengthening the offer of contents in these ways – craft beer, show rooms, art galleries, «edgy» shopping and sustainability» (CML 2020). With the creation of a massified tourism area in the historical city center of Lisbon, (M&B) have received a major interested look, as the new trendy area to be renewed, the next place of future urbanistic transformation and consequently of real estate interest. We can see that culture is being promoted as a driver of urban change, but in the future will be the luxury real estate which will occupy and dominate this area.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section of this paper, we will explore the results from the mapping to the existing cultural heritage in the H2020 ROCK area (CML 2019), making sense of the new appropriations as

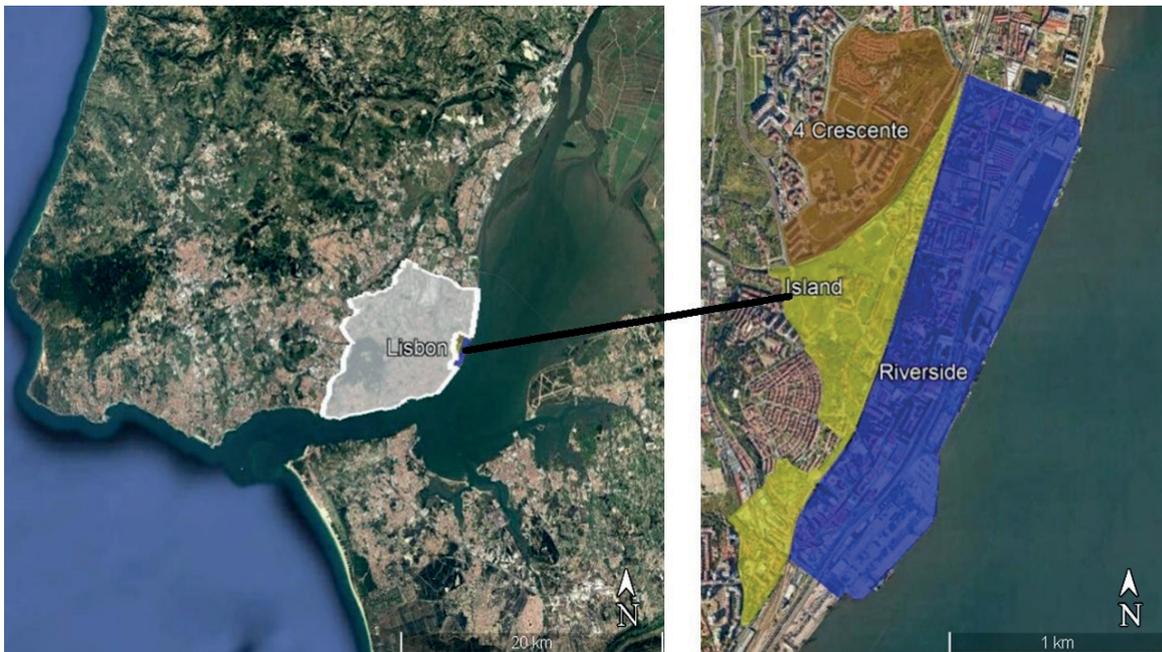


Fig. 1. Lisbon Metropolitan area with the city of Lisbon (in white) and H2020 ROCK area in Lisbon with 3 zones, separated by two train lines (North and Cintura). Font: Creation on Google Earth (2020)

catalysts of urban change, its (public) urban regeneration and (private investors) gentrification, towards a new centrality in the Lisbon waterfront.

Old Palaces, Convents and Farms

These former Tangible Cultural Heritage assets that once belonged to noble or clerical elements of society are important architectural artefacts of this territory. We only presented the ones that are currently in use, and not the abandoned ones, such as the Alfinetes palace or the Padres farm. From the 21 entities occupying the 16 Old Palaces, Convents and Farms mapped, the majority (52.4%) are occupied by Social Assistance, Cultural and Education organizations.

As an example of public re-appropriation of cultural heritage in the area of Culture, Residents engagement and Education, promoting a culture-led regeneration process, we will highlight the transformation that occurred in the old Fontes (Fountains) farm, today being used as a municipal library, being the most successful transformation in the area, particularly related to the optimization of cultural heritage, creating a new cultural point and space for community use.

This library, as a cultural, community and gathering space, has

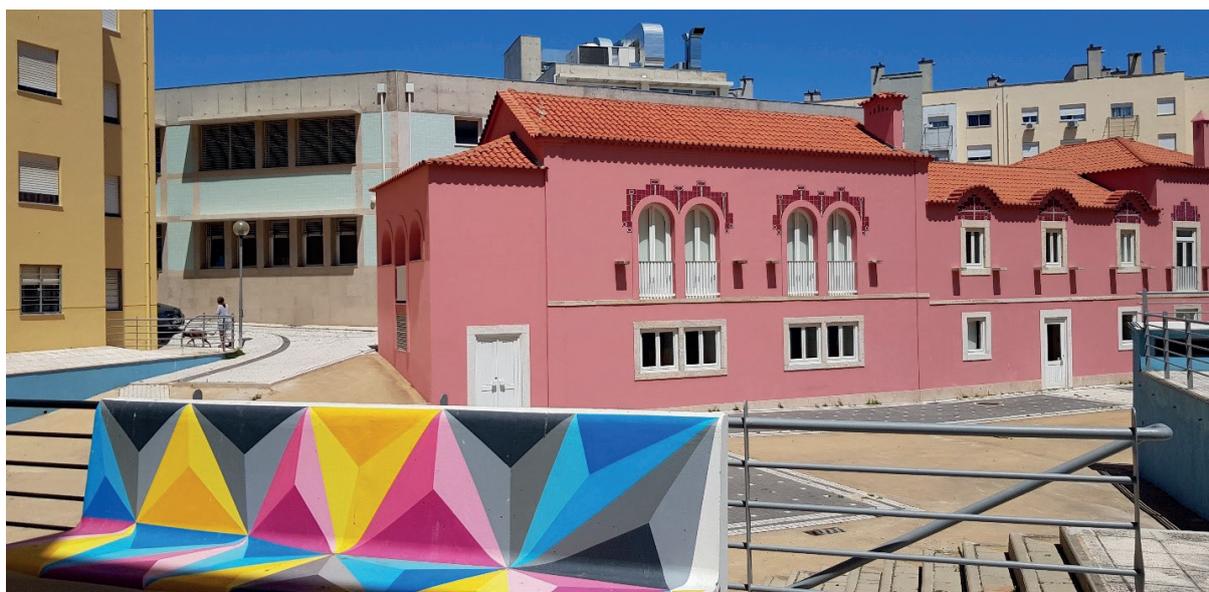
several activities, mostly oriented towards youngsters and their school activities and homework, as well as a new technologies area, that has computers to promote new learning experiences and capacities, and possibly in the future, to create a new IT hub with local promoters. For the elderly residents, the municipal library is working closely with H2020 ROCK project, in order to create the *Centro Interpretativo de Marvila e Beato*, an interpretative center to work with former industrial memories, and to provide a space where it is possible to access some of the historical contents of the area. In addition H2020 ROCK developed, in the *Marvila* library, the events program *Dias de Marvila*, an arts and cultural festival with several events (theatre, music, workshops), opening this territory to other urban users, not only its residents, as we discovered when we evaluated the event. The *Marvila* Library has also been a space for community gatherings and assemblies, for autonomous resident participation with the help of local entities working in the area. Simultaneously, gathers several cultural and social assistance entities operating in this territory, congregating an ecosystem of artists, academics, producers and social actors in the move towards a more sustainable urban area, where several designated urban dysfunctions are discussed, and solutions proposed by residents and local entities. In fact, a space for social



Fig. 2. Old Palaces, Convents and Farms in H2020 ROCK Area. Font: Author on Google (2020)

Table 1. New Name (use) /Former Name (use)

1. Azulejo (Museum) / Madre Deus (Convent)
2. Colegio D. Maria Pia (Technical School) / Marqueses de Nisa (Old Palace)
3.a Iberico (Theatre); 3.b IEPF (Job Centre headquarters); 3.c PSP (Social Assistance) / Sao Francisco de Xabregas (Convent)
4.a Agrovinhos Alveirão (Retail); 4.b Marqueses de Olhão Palace (Events) / Marqueses de Olhão (Palace)
5. Sao Bartolomeu do Beato (Church) / Grilo (Convent)
6. Quinta das Pintoras (Events) / Quinta das Pintoras (Palace)
7.a Grilo Palace (Real Estate), 7.b Oculista Cristal de Ouro (Retail) / Grilo (Palace)
8. Sao Vicente House (Social Assistance) / Sao Vicente (Palace)
9.a ACULMA (Music School); 9.b Rancho Tradicional de Cinfães (Traditional Dances) / Marques de Abrantes (Farm)
10. Marvila (Municipal library) / Fontes (Farm)
11. Marialva Patio (Housing) / Marqueses de Marialva (Palace)
12. Mitra (Events) / Mitra (Palace)
13. Sociedade 3 de Agosto (Cultural Organization) / Marques de Abrantes (Palace)
14. Café com Calma (Gastronomy) / Bettencourt (Palace)
15. Santo Agostinho a Marvila (Church) / Senhora da Conceicao de Marvila (Convent)
16. Parque da Quinta das Flores (Urban Farming) / Quinta das Flores (Farm)

**Fig. 3. Marvila Library with reconverted Quinta das Fontes in pink**

assistance and participation, a municipal structure made for and by the population, as the Marvila library slogan states.

The creation of Lisbon largest library as a cultural center, in an area lacking in cultural activity, is clearly a strong indication for the need to create new spaces for cultural movement and activity in the city of Lisbon. This new cultural center has opened this territory to the rest of the city, as indicated by several municipal officials. A new space for cultural amusement in theatre, music, plastic and performing arts, expositions, and the resident's cultural production, makes this a new place to visit in Lisbon, open to receive cultural newcomers to the area. Public-owned libraries are having a positive effect on socially impoverished communities, promoting knowledge and creativity, new social and cultural gathering areas for the community, raising an awareness of local problems and solutions. (Jochumsen 2013; Mattern 2014; Freeman 2019). Being politically declared as territories marked by recent gentrification, the municipality desires to operate directly on its cultural heritage assets, and by this way, create alternative forms of social and spatial change without being associated directly with gentrification processes.

Reconverted Warehouses (Industrial and Commercial).

The (M&B) riverside is where we find major Tangible Cultural Heritage re-appropriation in the H2020 ROCK area, where traditional industrial and commercial uses are replaced by other economic activities, as non-pollutant innovative and creative industries, particularly in Reconverted Warehouses (Industrial and Commercial) which use significant post-industrial Tangible Cultural Heritage in the H2020 ROCK area. This process started with some pioneers, who had good connections with the municipality (responsible for the commercial authorization) and property owners (some of them already under financial group ownership), who knew about the existence of former industrial buildings that could be bought or rented at a low price. After the initial pioneers, and the creation of a new cultural scene, other entrepreneurs have chosen these areas for the continued urban visibility, as one of the city's major consumption areas oriented towards upper class users, developed by private entities. We mapped 80 companies, occupying 27 Tangible Cultural Heritage assets, as we can see on the next map, detailing below the present uses of these former industrial and commercial assets.

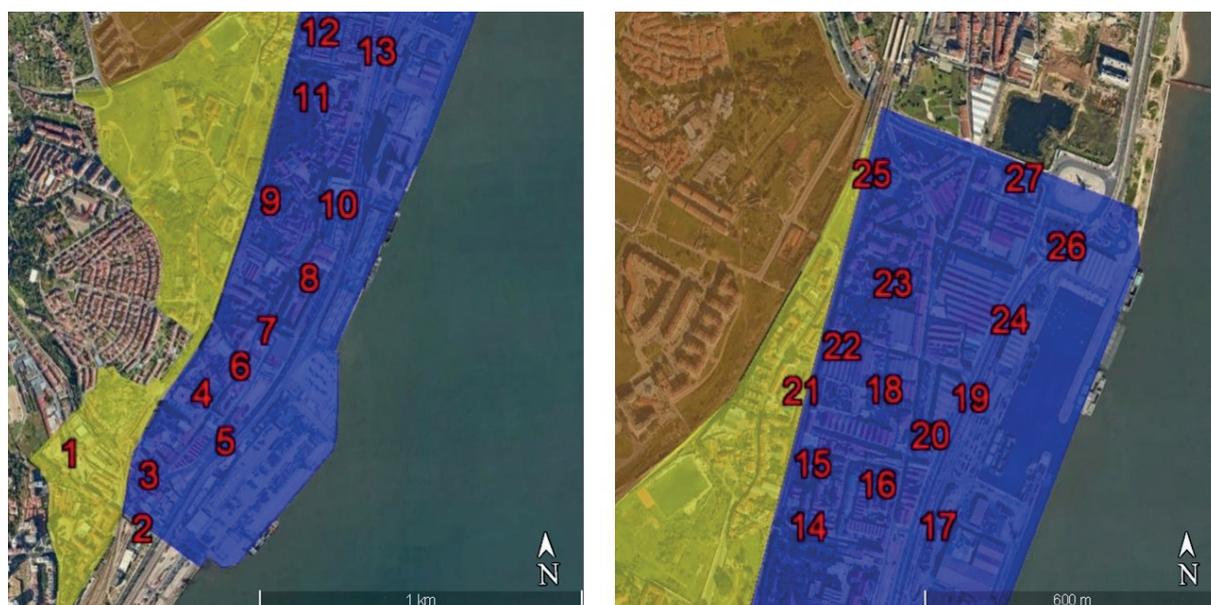


Fig. 4. Reconverted Warehouses (Industrial and Commercial). Font: Author mapping on Google Earth (2020)

Table 2. New Name (use) / Former Name (use)

1. ArCO (Arts School) / Xabregas (Market)
2. Tribo da Terra (Vegetarian Restaurant) / Taberna do Pina (Tavern)
3. Bordalo ii (Artistic Residence) / Cozinha Economica nº4 (Social Assistance)
4. Yoga Spirit (Yoga and Arts Center), 5. Filomena Soares (Art Gallery), 6. Third Base (Artistic Residence), 9.a Ibrapi Contemporanea (Art Gallery), 9.b Ines Lobo (Architect), 14.a Dois Corvos (Craft Beer Bar), 14.b Sociedade Vinicola Lourenço Pinto (wine retailer), 19. Vertigo (sports arena), 20.a Art Kaizen (Yoga and Arts Center), 20.b 7arte Alfacinha (Restaurant), 23.a Instituto do Animal (Dog Training), 23.b Amorim & Torga-Moveis e Decoracoes (Design), 26. PROMONTORIO (Architect) / Unknown
7.a No Office Work (Co-Workspace), Manicomio (Art Gallery) / Beato 1904 (Wine and Olive oil Warehouse)
8. Beato Creative Hub (Co-Workspace) / Military Maintenance Factory (Military rations)
10. Convento do Beato (Real Estate) / Joao de Brito (milling factory)
11.a Ideografo (Architect), 11.b Jornal i (Newspaper); 11.c Sociedade Geral De Projectos Imobiliários E Serviços (Real Estate); 11.d Cenfim (Professional Training) / SOPONATA (Shipping company)
12.a Joana Aranha (Architecture and Design), 12.b Grafe (Advertising) / Sociedade Luso Belga da Borracha (Rubber factory)
13. Entra (Restaurant) / Charcoal Warehouse (Retail)
15.a AR Solido, 15.b Francisco Fino, 15.c Bruno Murias (Art Galleries) / Wine and olive oil Warehouses (Retail)
16.a Helena Botelho (Architect), 16.b Tomas Hipolito Studio (Art Gallery), 16.c HairDesign (Hairdresser) / Wine barrels constructor and storage (Retail)
17.a Phosforeira (Co-Work Management), 17.b C.R.I.M (Media producers), 17.c Clube Capitao Leitao (Music Rehearsal room), 17.d Gavinho (Architecture & Interiors), 17.e Go Factory (Design), 17.f HIPPOtrip (Tourism tours), 17.g INTERPLAY (Importer), 17.h Lince (Beer factory), 17.i My Pitangas (Marketing), 17.j PERIS COSTUMES (Renting costumes), 17.k Pur'ple (Consulting), 17.l RJ Interiors & Custom (Design), 17.m TEMPO VIP (Tourism tours), 17.n Yves Callewaert (Photography), 17.o The Room (Artistic residence), 17.p Walla Collective (Media producers) / Sociedade Nacional dos Fosforos (Matches Factory)
18.a Lisboa Social (Social Assistance), 18.b Meridional (Theatre) / Fabrica Seixas (Cork and wine barrels factory)
21.a TODOS (Co-workspace), 21.b Armazem16@ONE (Events), 21.c Cepa Torta (Theatre) / Train reparation (Garage)
22.a Fabrica Moderna (Co-Work Management), 22.b Barbara Varela (Architect), 22.c DRAMA LISBOA (3d printing), 22.d Prateado Marvila Design Lofts Collectors (Real Estate), 22.e Lucky Basterds (design), 22.f MALGA Ceramic (Design), 22.g REFAZ (Design) / Sugar (factory)
24.a MUSA, (Craft Beer Bar) 24.b YUPIK (Retail), 24.c LAV (Music Arena), 24.d SPOT Real (Sports Arena), 24.e Crossfit Alvalade (Sports Arena), 24.f The Royal Rawness (Bar), 24.g Refeitorio do Senhor Abel (Restaurant), 24.h Heteronimo (Bar), 24.i El Bulu Social Club and Kampai (Restaurant), 24.j Karrus (Car dealership), 24.k Cantinho do Vintage I (design), 24.l Cantinho do Vintage ii (design), 24.m CPBC (Dance School), 24.n Gripman (cinema and video material), 24.o Revivigi (design), 24.p Aquele Lugar Que Não Existe (Restaurant), 24.q Lisbon WorkHub (Co-workspace) / Abel Pereira da Fonseca (Wine Warehouse)
25. Domingos Barreiro (Real Estate) / Domingos Barreiro Fonseca (Wine Warehouse)
27. Fabrica do Braço de Prata (Cultural Association) / Fabrica Militar de Municoes, Armas e Veiculos (Guns and Munitions factory)

Most of the Reconverted Warehouses (60%) have a multiplicity of activities in the fields of Co-Workspaces, Architecture, Real Estate, Design, Marketing, Communication, and other services, promoting major transformations in the urban use of the area, from industrial to services. These companies need large spaces, and some entrepreneurs trying to pull together different small start-up companies in one shared space.

When discussing the importance of culture as a catalyst of urban regeneration, we must highlight the presence of performers, artistic and cultural practices, which in this territory stand for 27.5% of the existing companies. They arrive in these territories for its low initial land prices, creating cultural milieus, and consequently improving the image of this renewed urban area as an exciting place to experience, to socialize, or even to live.

Gastronomy and bars re-appropriations promote the opening of this specific space to other city dwellers, changing (M&B) former urban enclave status, by becoming a new space of urban diversification and economic investment. These buildings will become spaces of consumption, where the re-use of Tangible Cultural Heritage is central, for its post-industrial nostalgia, representing 12.5% of the distribution. As an illustrative case, we must highlight the importance of the *Abel Pereira da Fonseca* warehouse, once a square where industrial workers gathered, today totally reconverted into upper class consumption.

From the year of arrival to the H2020 ROCK area, we have divided our distribution into three main periods. The first one, from 1996 to 2000, we only found nine companies (11.3%). Secondly, between the year of 2001 and 2010, before the Portuguese Financial Crisis, we found 13.8% of our distribution. However, the major change started after 2011, when 74.9% of all Tangible Cultural Heritage re-uses in the H2020 ROCK area were created, particularly in the last three years (36.3%).

While we were mapping new uses of Tangible Cultural Heritage in H2020 ROCK area, we saw that some new companies had arrived at this territory, because of its major urban visibility, but others had left. Today, some of the most dynamic companies in (M&B) area dedicated to new technologies, artistic and cultural practices, upper-class leisure, which brought major visibility to the territory. But some are being evicted from (M&B), due to the end of its contracts with local landlords as Dinastia Tang, Aquele

lugar que não existe restaurants, as well as Musa craft beer bar, which have received the first letters from landowners to leave their businesses. Somewhat unsurprisingly, after the first buzz developed by commercial entities, which brought extensive visibility to this area, these companies have started to leave the territory, even within as short a time as 3/4 years. Now that the area is a point of interest for local upper-class urban users, and the initial low rents can be replaced with major real estate earnings, the evictions of the first pioneers has started to happen.

The research undertaken emphasizes the idea that is exceedingly difficult to have long-term effects, particularly in the re-use of former commercial and industrial warehouses in waterfront areas, and to provide a closed evaluation of its results in the socioeconomic structure. In fact, we can attest to the end of the abandonment of the warehouses, a more frequent use of this area by new urban users, but evidence has shown that this can lead to collateral processes of gentrification, as we have already experienced with the Santos Lima housing evictions and the creation of new upper-class housing, such as the development in the Prata Living Village, Jose Domingos Barreiro or Beato Convent, all current developments, resulting from (M&B) major recent visibility. In result of the selling of the first luxury apartments, around a million euros each, the civil parish of Marvila has increased its selling land price from 2016 (first trimester) to 2019 (first trimester) by 70.1% (INE 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

The re-appropriation of Cultural Heritage in (M&B) promoted a new vision of the Lisbon municipality, responsible for all the political and administrative control of the territory, creating a new cultural gathering space, a new centrality in Lisbon, dedicated to visitors and other city users. So even in the cases that they are not direct promoters of urban change, they have the power to allow or not the territorial developments made by ground field entities. The municipality desired to promote a process of sustainable urban regeneration, but after the increase on visibility of these areas, easily they went in the direction of gentrification.

This change in the urban function of Tangible Cultural Heritage, reproduces some of the initial steps of the



Fig. 5. Abel Pereira da Fonseca warehouse. Font: Author

traditional process of gentrification, when economic promoters, some of them from the artistic and cultural social spheres, try to find socially meaningful territories, with an important symbolic aura, next to the city waterfront, to locate their businesses. As a result, these areas fall under a major urban spotlight, with various news articles highlighting this new urban area to experience. Starting as prepositive urban change next to the concept of Urban Regeneration, where culture is seen as a catalyst of urban change, these processes promote an undesirable major increase in land price and interest from real estate companies, which will inevitably change these areas in terms

of their users. In these cases, being private led investments, the municipality just allowed these changes, without avoiding formally the possible gentrification effects, which are being felt just now.

In the future, will be determinant to detail the relations between the local population from a social housing residential background which until now, has lacked cultural structures such as these and new users, with higher cultural, economic, and social status. Simultaneously, if the present COVID 19 pandemic will change this contemporary change, among the idea of coexistence or conflict between different social and cultural backgrounds. ■

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