



Master Vitalino, Alto do Moura, Caruaru Fair: cultural, social and spatial contradictions

***Mestre Vitalino, Alto do Moura, Feira de Caruaru: contradições
culturais, sociais e espaciais***

***Maestro Vitalino, Alto do Moura, Feria de Caruaru: contradicciones
culturales, sociales y espaciales***

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Abstract

Based on field research, with a qualitative approach, in the Alto do Moura neighborhood, in Caruaru, Pernambuco, Brazil, where Master Vitalino was “discovered”, we seek to problematize how the disputes between vertical and horizontal powers occur in the neighborhood in the face of the contradictions that permeate the and its relations with the artisanal chain. The objective was to analyze verticalities and horizontalities in Alto do Moura, understanding their economic, cultural, social and spatial consequences for the local population, especially those working in the artisanal chain. The management of the artisanal chain and the usufruct of the territory by the artisan community go hand in hand, one having an impact on the other. Inhabiting the city, recognizing oneself in it, representing oneself in artisanal pieces and “giving back” this recognition-representation in the usufruct of space feeds both the artisanal chain of Master Vitalino’s school and life in the city, since one influences the other. Treated in this way, the management of the artisanal chain makes it possible to empower the artisan both in relation to his work and to his urban spaces.

Key-Words: verticalities and horizontalities, artisanal chain, local sociocultural aspects, Alto do Moura, Master Vitalino.

Resumo

A partir de pesquisa de campo, com abordagem qualitativa, no bairro Alto do Moura, em Caruaru, Pernambuco, Brasil, local em que Mestre Vitalino foi “descoberto”, buscamos problematizar como se dão as disputas entre poderes verticais e horizontais no bairro frente as contradições que permeiam o local e suas relações com a cadeia artesanal. O objetivo foi analisar verticalidades e horizontalidades no Alto do Moura, entendendo suas consequências econômicas, culturais, sociais e espaciais para a população local, principalmente a atuante na cadeia artesanal. O manejo da cadeia artesanal e o usufruto do território pela comunidade artesã caminham juntos, um tem rebatimento no outro. Habitar a cidade, se reconhecer nela, se representar nas peças artesanais e “devolver” esse reconhecimento-representação no usufruto do espaço alimenta tanto a cadeia artesanal da escola de Mestre Vitalino como a vida na cidade, visto que um influi no outro. Tratado deste modo, o manejo da cadeia artesanal possibilita empoderar o artesão tanto em relação a seu trabalho quanto a seus espaços citadinos.

Palavras-Chave: verticalidades e horizontalidades, cadeia artesanal, aspectos socioculturais locais, Alto do Moura, Mestre Vitalino.

Resumen

A partir de una investigación de campo, con abordaje cualitativo, en el barrio Alto do Moura, en Caruaru Pernambuco, Brasil, donde fue “descubierto” Maestro Vitalino, buscamos problematizar cómo las disputas entre poderes verticales y horizontales ocurren en el barrio frente a las contradicciones que permean la y sus relaciones con la cadena artesanal. El objetivo fue analizar las verticalidades y horizontalesidades en Alto do Moura, comprendiendo sus consecuencias económicas, culturales, sociales y espaciales para la población local, especialmente para aquellos que trabajan en la cadena artesanal. La gestión de la cadena artesanal y el usufructo del territorio por parte de la comunidad artesanal van de la mano, incidiendo uno en el otro. Habitar la ciudad, reconocerse en ella, representarse en piezas artesanales y “devolver” ese reconocimiento-representación en el usufructo del espacio alimenta tanto la cadena artesanal de la escuela de Maestro Vitalino como la vida en la ciudad, ya que una influye en la otra. Así tratada, la gestión de la cadena artesanal permite empoderar al artesano tanto en relación con su trabajo como con sus espacios urbanos.

Palabras clave: verticalidades y horizontalidades, cadena artesanal, aspectos socioculturales locales, Alto do Moura, Maestro Vitalino.



1. Introduction

Our object of study is Caruaru city, Pernambuco state, Brazil, more precisely the Alto do Moura neighborhood. This was the place where Master Vitalino was “discovered” and, even today, it reaps the fruits of the school left by him. However, not without being permeated with contradictions: 1) at the same time that the artisanal making of the Vitalinian school continues to be followed and valued, since the 1980s, there has been the propagation of an invented tradition (HOBBSAWN, 1984) of madam and African dolls, with consequences for the artisanal chain (covering conception /making, distribution and sale) from Pernambuco. 2) The neighborhood is “recognized” for being the “Biggest center of figurative art in the Americas”, although this title is not registered elsewhere than in the collective memory of the people of Pernambuco. 3) The neighborhood underwent numerous urban interventions that sought to enhance the sociocultural aspects arising from Vitalino's artisanal production. However, many, such as the most current and being implemented by the Municipality of Caruaru, the ReVitalino Project, are only in the name of the project. In addition, the Vitalino family practically does not receive the due financial gains due to the use of the patriarch's name. 4) These urban interventions also lead to a type of tourism that is not sustainable, in addition to not meeting the demands of the artisan population. 5) The locality and its surroundings have been going through a process of intense real estate speculation, tending to gentrification, due to the proximity to the Industrial District of Caruaru and the BR 232 Highway.

In addition to the aspects arising from tourism in the Alto do Moura neighborhood, Caruaru also suffers vertical actions (SANTOS, 2009) because the Feira de Caruaru is localized in the city. It was considered one of the largest popular fairs in the world. In 2006, was registered by the federal government as an immaterial culture heritage site Brazilian; for being a textile-clothing pole, causing intense shopping tourism; and for being recognized as the capital of the Agreste. Title given for being the largest city in the Pernambuco countryside, due to its location and the activities developed: “the most important economic, medical-hospital, academic, cultural and tourist center in the Agreste” (PREFEITURA MUNICIPAL DE CARUARU, 2016).

Analyzing, based on Santos (2009), the dynamics between verticalities and horizontalities in Alto do Moura is justified by the possibility of problematizing the social, cultural, political and spatial reverberations in the daily life of the population, both those involved with the artisanal chain in Pernambuco and the general population. It is important to remember that the debate about culture is also a debate around political dispute. When we talk about territory, identity, memory, the political clash is already implied by the constant struggle between vertical and horizontal forces that are articulated in space.

Even if it is not sold directly, culture is affected by the exacerbated appreciation of capital to the detriment of old or traditional ways of life. This is what the study carried out by Souza (2009) showed. When analyzing the dialectical relations between local forces and the pressure of external agents (SANTOS, 2009) in the production of space in the municipality of Massarandupió and its surroundings, north coast of Bahia, Brazil, the author realized that the occupation of the aforementioned coastal strip was linked and subordinated to external interests, through strategies articulated between the private and state sectors, both at the federal and state levels.

Souza (2009) explains that real estate speculation was the focus of the issue, both for the installation of high-income housing and luxury resorts, as well as for the installation of a pulp mill, which also interfered with ambiental questions of the region. The privatization of vast areas of beach and forest expelled the local population from their former place of residence, in addition to preventing or hindering access to inputs for their livelihood, which had fishing and shellfish as a way of life, handicrafts in piaçava and small agriculture. All these changes generated disruption of the traditional way of life and cultural identity. The local dynamics were manifested from the actions and reactions to these processes, on the part of society, in defense of its interests. However, they had little or no



influence on decision-making processes and implemented changes. In some cases, they were co-opted by external forces, which offered immediate individual benefits to community leaders. There was also the “installation” of various forums by the government and/or businessmen, declaring the intention to expand social participation, which did not happen, seeking only to circumvent conflicts that could create difficulties for the success of the enterprises.

Moraes and Araújo (2020) researched the transformations undergone by the Feira Livre de Três Lagoas, state of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, a traditional public space for commercialization and sociocultural exchanges, whose history is linked to the development of the municipality and its socio-spatial dynamics. When analyzing the vertical and horizontal dynamics, they realized that vertical forces linked to the public power imposed successive changes in the location of the Feira, resulting in sanitation and transformation of consumption patterns in it, “refunctionalizing spaces and adapting them, continuously, to interests that do not always respond to the concrete demands of the local population” (MORAES; ARAÚJO, 2020, p. 195).

Paula, Gomes and Toniolo (2021) analyzed the vertical and horizontal relationships in the Metropolitan Region of Vale do Paraíba and Litoral Norte, in the state of São Paulo, Brazil, to understand the process of constitution of these relationships, based on the scale of a metropolitan region, problematizing the repercussions on the territorial design of the spaces in which they take place. They realized that there is a political and geoeconomic model that generates discrepancies between municipalities. There is “valuation of preferential locations, along the main axes of circulation, in the form of policies and investments. At the other extreme, there is structural neglect of sub-regions and cities that are outside this territorial dynamic” (PAULA; GOMES; TONIOLO, 2021, p. 34). However, they consider the importance of horizontal relationships to locally strengthen civil society around collective interests. They highlight cooperatives as a means to oppose the dominant logic and to foster a broad debate around the demands of the local populations of the territories.

We corroborate the authors' considerations by highlighting that studying verticalities and horizontalities can function as a “beacon of hierarchical relationships - linked to the logic of capital and public power - and solidarity - linked to the political action of civil society, and to public power in the context of public relations. inter-federatives of the same level (whether state or municipal) – for the understanding of the total space” (PAULA; GOMES; TONIOLO, 2021, p. 2).

Therefore, in view of the above, we question: how are disputes between vertical and horizontal powers in the Alto do Moura neighborhood faced with the contradictions that permeate the place and its relations with the artisanal chain?

The objective of this article is to analyze the verticalities and horizontalities in Alto do Moura, understanding their economic, cultural, social and spatial consequences for the local population, especially those active in the artisanal chain in Pernambuco.

To this end, we carried out bibliographic and documentary research, in addition to field research that took place, in a qualitative approach, through unsystematic observations in the Alto do Moura neighborhood and in the Feira de Caruaru, and through semi-structured open interviews with artisans from this neighborhood, both those considered masters -craftsmen, such as those without such seal, and with fairgrounds at the Feira de Caruaru. With the proper authorization of the respondents, the interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed to facilitate the analysis of the data obtained.

This article is an excerpt from our doctoral thesis, defended at the Graduate Program in Urbanism at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Data were obtained from field research carried out from 2015 to 2016.



2. Caruaru: the municipality, the Fair and the Master

Caruaru is a municipality located in the Agreste region of Pernambuco and in the micro-region of Vale do Ipojuca, about 80,77 mi from the state capital, Recife.

Of rural origin, it emerged as a ranch in the 17th Century, later a farm and, over time, became a town, village and municipality (FERREIRA, 2001).

Ferreira (2001) and Condé (1960) explain that the Caruru Farm, which gave rise to the municipality of Caruaru, was sought after by travelers for an overnight stay on the way to Recife and other coastal locations. Over time, it begins to receive travelers, drovers and peddlers, who began to ask for meals and dormitories from the farm's residents. Then, trade on the farm and the development of the future fair began (FERREIRA, 2001).

Linked to the commercial aspects that began on the farm, the construction of a chapel on the same land increases the attractions of the place. In 1782, through the parish of São José dos Bezerros (currently, Bezerros, a neighboring municipality of Caruaru), the Chapel of Nossa Senhora da Conceição of Caruru Farm was inaugurated. Residents of the region and surrounding areas began to share social events based on religious acts and sociocultural exchanges accompanied by commercial activities, as people took advantage of going to celebrations to sell, buy or exchange items with others.

For Ferreira (2001), the geographical location of the farm with its corrals close to the Ipojuca stream and for being the cattle path, taken as a support and overnight stop, contributed to the urbanization process of Caruaru, but it was the construction of the Chapel the main element for such a process. The commercialization of fruits, cattle and handmade utensils attracted more and more sellers and buyers to the chapel, which concentrated people due to the social relations mediated by religious acts and growing commerce. With the development of the farm's free fair, the beginning of what would become a city was formed around the chapel. During this period, the first houses and streets appeared (IPHAN, 2006).

Caruaru, like many other cities in the Northeast of Brazil, appears linked to the Feira de Caruaru, which over time has grown, being considered one of the largest in Brazil. Medeiros (2008) explains that the Feira de Caruaru was enacted in 2006 as a Brazilian intangible cultural heritage by the federal government, due to the “web of meanings” it carries. Considered one of the largest popular fairs in the world, currently located in May 18th Park, it is divided into: Handicraft Fair, Sulanca¹ Fair, Fruit and Vegetable Fair, “Paraguay” or imported Fair, Cattle Fair, Exchange Fair, Roots and Medicinal Herbs Fair, Flowers and Ornamental Plants Fair, Leather Fair, Permanent Popular Clothing Fair, Cake Fair, Hardware Fair, Bedding, Table and Bath Articles Fair, Tobacco, Permanent Import Fair, Flour Market, Meat Market, in addition to the Cordel Museum.

Even having contributed to the consolidation of the city, the Feira de Caruaru went through moments of adaptation and readaptation of its products and spaces. Miranda (2009) explains that it went through three moments in terms of the occupation of urban space, from the foundation of the city to contemporary times. First, the fair-city interdependence is clear, growing and remaining for centuries next to the church that gave life to it and, consequently, to the city; this moment lasted until the 1990s. The second moment can be dated back to 1992, when it was transferred to a different location from the original, May 18th Park, occupying an area of 151,440m². Since the 1980s, the growth of the fair

¹ Low-cost, locally produced garments are sold. According to Burnett (2014), Feira da Sulanca is directly related to the customary laws of Agrestine sociability. Supposedly, the word sulanca was formed from the word helanca, synthetic fabric from the patches that came from the South in the 1960s. Thus, sul+helanca = sulanca. These scraps were taken by truck drivers who transported immigrants from the interior of the Northeast to the South and Southeast of Brazil and, on their way back, in order not to travel with an empty truck, they took scraps of textile production and sold them to the rural population, who, seeking to improve their lives and stop depending on the weather, began to invest in the production of clothing.



could no longer accommodate the stalls in it, causing them to spread through the surrounding streets. Once it occupied an area of 22,760m², there were constant conflicts arising from the fair's interference in the city's life, causing the population to demand its removal from the city center. The author characterizes the second moment of the Fair as one of greater expansion. The third moment is characterized by the movement of resumption of the urban fabric. Not having fully adapted to the planned space of the May 18th Park, where the flow of passers-by was smaller and did not contain the characteristics that gave visibility and magnitude to the fair, traders, especially those at Feira da Sulanca, began to empty some stalls inside the park.

The Fair contributes to the urbanization of Caruaru, as well as to the consolidation of people in the region. According to data from the 2010 Census (IBGE, 2014), in that year, Caruaru had a population of 314,912 people, with an estimate of 347,088 people in 2015. It ranks as the fourth largest city in population in the state of Pernambuco, behind only Recife, Jaboatão dos Guararapes and Olinda, in the Metropolitan Region of Recife. The average population density is 342.07 hab/km². The area of the territorial unit is 920,611km².

The stories of Feira de Caruaru and Master Vitalino are intertwined. It was there that he had his work discovered.

Vitalino Pereira dos Santos, later known as Master Vitalino, was born on July 10, 1909, in Sítio Campos, a town close to Caruaru, where the wild ends and the sertão begins. His parents worked in the fields; his mother was also a pottery maker, making ceramic utensils to sell at the fair (MELLO, 1995).

Vitalino's history with handicrafts began when he was a child, playing with the rest of the clay used by his mother. At the age of six, with the leftovers of clay, he made horses, goats and other animals. "They were considered like *loija de brincadeira*. Taken to the fair in Caruaru, they were sold for two hundred réis each, while a vase, made by his mother, reached five hundred réis. (...) Around the age of nine, he started making his first dolls. His first piece of composition (...) [was] the hunter shooting the margays" (MELLO, 1995, p. 3). Vitalino then creates "a new dimension of clay handling: no longer the toy or the utilitarian object, but the commentary and description of regional life, in the form of sculpture" (COIMBRA et al. 1980, p. 42).

From the Feira de Caruaru, Vitalino was "discovered" by Augusto Rodrigues and Joaquim Cardoso, who organized an exhibition in Rio de Janeiro with his works in 1947. The Popular Ceramic Exhibition of Pernambuco made his fame go beyond the regional scope and reach another level of audience, intellectuals, collectors, tourists, shop owners, who went to Caruaru to meet Master and his pieces.

In 1948, encouraged by Augusto Rodrigues, already married and with six children, Vitalino moved to Alto do Moura. The advantages of moving to Alto do Moura are mainly due to the fact that there is already a community dedicated to ceramic production and the greater proximity to the fair and the city of Caruaru than his former home. It also made it easier for others to access him, allowing him to broaden and branch out his experience of transforming clay.

From the neighborhood familiar with clay in Alto do Moura, Vitalino's first followers began to emerge. Disciples of a Master who simply transmitted his experiences and who gladly saw the participation of other ceramists in the activity that made him stand out. And so, Zé Caboclo, Manuel Eudócio, Zé Rodrigues, Ernestina, Manuel Antônio, Heleno Manuel... The relationship between master and disciples, lived in an atmosphere of friendship and solidarity, created the space, made possible the birth of a "school" that would gradually develop around Vitalino, to trigger, with his death in 1962, the affirmation and definitive recognition of the nucleus of popular artists from Caruaru (COIMBRA et al., 1980, p. 42).

The following generations continued the work with clay. Among the most significant artisans working in Alto do Moura, recognized as Masters-Craftsmen, are those from the families of Vitalino and his disciples.

For Martins et al. (2013), there is a deepening of what was planted there, without failing to undergo transformations, with emphasis on: moving the place of commercialization of the fair from Caruaru to Alto do Moura, which starts to concentrate production and sale and attract tourists; and the representativeness of the pieces made, because even though “Vitalino dolls” are still being made, which bring within themselves sociocultural aspects of the locality, there is a proliferation of the manufacture of dolls called madams and Africans, introduced by external order that, through financial compensation for many orders from “middlemen” become an invented tradition (HOBBSAWM, 1984) and dominate production in many workshops/ateliers. They are mainly produced by the new generation, the third generation of Alto do Moura.

Currently, there are those who say that UNESCO gave Alto do Moura the title of “Largest Center for Figurative Arts in the Americas”. Figure 1 shows the entrance portal to the neighborhood, with the words “Welcome to Alto do Moura: The largest Center for Figurative Arts in the Americas”.

Figure 1: Entrance portal to Alto do Moura



Although the title is not registered, the fame of Alto do Moura spreads and helps artisans to empower their works and continue the school left by Vitalino. In addition to the various handicraft stores, most of which share the space with the artisans' homes and ateliers/workshops, the neighborhood has the Master Vitalino House-Museum, Master Galdino Memorial, Association of Craftsmen in Clay and Residents of Alto do Moura (ABMAM), churches and several bars, restaurants and concert halls (some are open only during the month of June, with the June parties, or on other specific commemorative dates. In the rest of the year, they either function as warehouses or are closed waiting for the parties). The local population has a health center, municipal school with basic and elementary education and local establishments (bakeries, grocery stores, convenience stores) that allow a certain autonomy of the neighborhood in relation to the center of Caruaru. Near the entrance to the neighborhood, there is a campus of the Federal Institute of Pernambuco.

3. Methods and techniques

This work is an excerpt from our doctoral thesis. We carried out exploratory and explanatory research (GIL, 2002), based on a qualitative approach. The methodological procedures were based on two main moments, the first of a bibliographic-documentary nature, which gave theoretical support to the conduction of the second, of an empirical nature, investigating the artisanal chain in Pernambuco.

Considering that the artisanal chain involves conception/making, distribution and sale of the pieces, our research started at the end of it, based on the artifacts found in commercial craft spaces in the city of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil. We started from the final axis of the artisanal chain because we were interested in understanding which artifacts were marketed in these places, from which origins, for what



reasons, in addition to recognizing the craft sales spaces as places of rich sociocultural exchanges and where artisans and sellers were important informants. regarding the parts sold and the exchanges carried out in these places.

When analyzing these sales spaces, based on unsystematic observations and semi-structured open interviews with vendors, artisans and visitors to four craft sales spaces in Recife² (Casa da Cultura de Pernambuco, Mercado de São José, Feirinha de Boa Viagem and Centro de Artesanato de Pernambuco, CAPE), we noticed that many handcrafted pieces came from Caruaru, more specifically from the Alto do Moura neighborhood. We then set off for the investigation on the spot.

In Alto do Moura, the target investigation of the research presented in this article, we carried out unsystematic observations in a real situation throughout the neighborhood, seeking to understand the relations of the artisan and non-artisan population with the place and its social, cultural and spatial reverberations. We investigate the processes through which clay passes to become handicrafts, whether from the Vitalinian school or not. We experience artisans *in loco* being approached by middlemen. We also observed the experience of the population in Alto do Moura at different times of the year, with emphasis on the transformations that occurred in the June festivities.

We also conducted semi-structured open interviews with artisans considered Masters-Craftsmen and those who do not hold such a title. Generally, the former are mainly dedicated to Vitalino's school and the latter to the production of madams and African dolls. Merchants from Alto do Moura, employees of the Association of Craftsmen in Clay and Residents of Alto do Moura (ABMAM) and public managers of the Municipality of Caruaru were also interviewed, based on semi-structured open interviews. The voices of institutions that provide courses, technical advice and other support to artisans could not be left out of the scope of the research. Therefore, in Caruaru, the person responsible for the craft area at SEBRAE Caruaru and, in Recife, members of the Laboratory O Imaginário, from UFPE, as well as managers from the Pernambuco Culture Foundation (FUNDARPE), from the Pernambuco Craft Center were interviewed. (CAPE) and museologist at the Northeast Man Museum.

It is worth mentioning that different previous forms were carried out for each group/type of interviewee, which were adapted according to the conversation, as suggested by the methodological approach of semi-structured interviews.

At the Feira de Caruaru, the same methodological procedures were adopted, unsystematic observations in a real situation, seeking to understand the dynamics of the fair vis-à-vis artisan and non-artisan populations, and the fair-city relationship; in addition to conducting semi-structured open interviews with vendors and fair attendees. At the time of the research, we did not find artisans at the Caruaru fair to carry out the interviews, everyone present in the stalls were vendors hired for this service.

With the proper authorization of the respondents, all the interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed to carry out the analysis of the data obtained.

The collected data were analyzed using Canclini's (2015, 1983) contribution, regarding the transformation of handicrafts and the dynamics that it undergoes due to its insertion in the capitalist market and its cultural hybridism. The analysis of actions, activities and inherent contradictions throughout the artisanal chain was carried out from the perspective of meaning in the territory, based on Santos (2009) and Certeau (2008), defenders of the space built by slow and ordinary humans. Discussions about interactions in space, with emphasis on the value of its use by the interface and/or consumption of handicrafts, were based on the teachings of Lefebvre (2010, 2006), also aiming at his

² We identified fifteen spaces for selling handicrafts in the city of Recife. Four locations were selected considering the presence of the commercialization of three aspects of handicrafts (traditional handicrafts, typical cuisine and souvenir), given the possibility of sociocultural exchanges intermediated between them and the people. In addition, it was necessary to select fixed spaces that were frequented by the local population, without neglecting to serve the tourist.



teachings in relation to the space conceived, lived and appropriate. And without losing the focus that the artisanal chain, with its relations of vertical and horizontal forces (SANTOS, 2009), generates commodities, in terms of Harvey (2005), and influences the memory (CANDAU, 2012; HALBWACHS, 2006) of the population where the crafts come from.

In this work, the clipping took place, mainly, around the observations and interviews carried out in Alto do Moura, seeking to analyze the dispute of forces present in the neighborhood and its reverberations in the urban life of the artisan and non-artisan population.

4. Horizontalities and verticalities in the relationship between territory and artisanal chain

We highlight the teachings of Milton Santos regarding horizontalities and verticalities (SANTOS, 2009) present throughout the artisanal dynamics in the capitalist market and in relations with and in the territory, reinforced (or not) by the vitalinian school and the “title” of the Alto do Moura as “the largest center of figurative arts in the Americas”.

For Santos (2009), the relationships between verticality and horizontality are characterized as power disputes. Since the vertical comes from the holders of the domain of capital, the State and other forces acting from top to bottom, aiming to impose their claim in the space of horizontal forces. The latter is characterized by the organization between equals (or similar) who seek to come together to achieve their demands in the daily life of the territory. Santos (2009) considers that horizontalities are characterized and shaped in the daily life of slow men, while verticalities occur in the spheres of power of those who make up the luminous spaces, far from the action of the former.

According to Santos (2009), the pressures arising from internal and external power disputes are permeated by several aspects, encompassing the configurations of the territory, the actions on it and the political forces incident on it.

The author starts from the notion of banal space to link it to the forces acting collectively and jointly in the territory. The banal space is that “of all people, of all companies, of all institutions, capable of being described as a system of objects animated by a system of actions” (SANTOS, 2009, p. 283). The banal space is linked to the concept of horizontalities by not separating aspects related to the territory and the actions carried out in it. On the other hand, top-down impositions relate to commands that are distant from the physical point of view in relation to actions, “assuring the global functioning of society and the economy” (p. 284).

By relating Santos' explanation to the artisanal chain, we can say that the internal forces are guided by interpersonal processes and people with their territory in all axes of the chain. We exemplify the horizontalities from the relationships between the artisans in Alto do Moura, their relationships with the neighborhood, the sociabilities that these interpersonal relationships and the place make possible, the systems of cooperation between them, such as the collective use of ovens to burn pieces, the care of children who play together, when those responsible are busy. These relationships have repercussions on the way artisans perceive the space and how they see themselves in it, which, depending on what is perceived, can reinforce ties and sociocultural exchanges. These perceptions interfere in the understanding made of oneself, of one's people, of space and of representations in handicrafts, with local or global aspects being inserted. Considering that the main characteristic of Vitalino's school is to imprint the everyday scene on handicrafts, the way artisans perceive themselves in the territory has reverberations in their artisanal craftsmanship.

It is worth mentioning that there are cases in which global and external actions can be more powerful than those developed in the relationship of complicity with and in the territory. Although there are local sociocultural exchanges, reinforcement of collective memory through the propagation of these exchanges and the local customs of the population, there are situations in which the aspects coming



from the top down prevail. Examples are: government projects conceived and imposed on the site without listening to the aspirations of the population; external commissions for pieces that escape the sociocultural aspects of the artisans' identity, but which will pay enough for the survival of the artisan and his family for a period of time; the imposition of low prices by middlemen who belittle the work of artisans; spaces for selling handicrafts where the local population, mainly low-income people, is not welcome for not "combining" with the hygiene required by the governmental logic of tourist sites; between others.

The relationship between the various forces of interest is constant in all spaces of the city. No matter how isolated a society is, in some way it is embedded in the global logic. When we think about handicraft and its change in purpose, in which it is no longer made for personal consumption and becomes, primarily, an object of sale, in the need for people to acquire income from this making, we understand that artisans are subjugated to the logic capitalist, like most of the world's population.

Canclini (1983) argues that dealing with handicrafts subsists and grows because it performs functions in the social reproduction and division of labor necessary for the expansion of capitalism. It identifies that in Mexico there is an increase in the number of people involved in artisanal production and who do it, primarily, for external marketing, due to four main factors: "the deficiencies of the agrarian structure, the needs of consumption, the tourist stimulus and state promotion" (p. 62). Although Mexico and Brazil have different characteristics in several aspects, with regard to artisanal treatment, we can say that the reasons for their expansion are basically the same. In Brazil, craft production has even become a government policy in recent decades, given the incentive for idle people to earn their income from crafts, even without a previous relationship with the craft.

Canclini (1983) problematizes that, in societies of peripheral capitalism, sociocultural processes result from the dispute between several forces of different origins. It highlights the one related to the persistence of forms of community organization of the economy or culture, or even of their vestiges, which have a complex relationship with the dominant system. He says that, therefore, it is wrong to simply ask what to do to prevent capitalism from ending handicrafts and other traditional manifestations. For him, the four aspects mentioned above reveal that it is not in the interest of either the State or the ruling class to abolish artisanal production.

In the Brazilian case, we perceive that tourism is the way in which the state power seems to perceive the best possibility of the appropriation of handicrafts by the general public. Whether in the consumption of artifacts that represent a certain location, or in the ordering of parts to be exported to other regions and which at the destination will be sold as if they were made on site. Although tourism makes it possible to promote the place of creation and the sociocultural aspects present in it as a way of valuing the sale of the territory and products derived from it, as the main focus of public policies aimed at crafts is the promotion of employment and income, the appreciation of the experience of the territory ends up being left aside. Other aspects that increase sales enter the artisanal chain, such as design intervention, production of "differentiated" handicrafts to be sold in boutiques and craft fairs. The possibility of increasing tourism by propagating and strengthening the sociocultural habits of the local population is still shallow.

The interest of the vertical power in maintaining the fame of Alto do Moura as the "cradle" of Master Vitalino and "the largest center of figurative arts in the Americas" is still contradictory when there is no incentive to expand tourist experiences linked to culture and to handicrafts on site.

If we consider the recognition that Master Vitalino has around the world, we can see that it would be enough to manage the artisanal chain in order to attribute monopoly/commodity income, in terms of Harvey (2005), when making Altomourense artisanal from the Vitalino school. It is known that "Vitalino's dolls" circulate in various craft sales spaces throughout the Northeast and even in several regions of Brazil. However, the types found outside Alto do Moura are always the same, band of fife,

migrants, three local music singers. But the artisans who continue to propagate the vitalinian school, present in the place, currently, no longer model only these sculptures and those with rural and migrant connotations, but the daily scene more related to cultural traditions and the urban (figure 2) resulting from the transformations through which the neighborhood and the city passed. If the artisanal work of Vitalino's school depends on the daily life of the territory experienced by its population to feed this artisanal work, these territorialized sociocultural aspects need to be managed in order to stay alive, generating commodities and improvements in the population's quality of life. But, the opposite of that is what is perceived today, the artisan population lives in such precarious conditions that they have to make do with madams and African dolls, which de-characterize the locality.

Figure 2: work by Master Luiz Antonio representing workers on a power pole



5. Results and discussions

During our field research, it was possible to notice that most artisans no longer travel to the Feira de Caruaru to sell their pieces. This perception was confirmed by the reports of the artisans interviewed and by the fact that we did not find artisans selling their pieces at the Feira de Caruaru. Salespeople are hired to work in it.

The fame of Alto do Moura spread over time. Known as the Largest Center for Figurative Arts in the Americas, even though the title is untruly attributed as given by UNESCO, it manages, together with the other sociocultural attractions of Caruaru, to attract visitors to the neighborhood, especially during the June festivities. Added to this, the possibility of the pieces breaking when moving to the place of sale, the loss of time in this movement, causing the artisan to stop making the pieces during this period, which would delay the production of orders, and the The entry into the artisanal chain of the figure of the middleman makes the artisan wait for a large part of the demand from buyers in his workshops/shops/homes. Orders increased, however, profitability and quality of life did not keep up with the increase in artisanal production. As we can see from Coimbra et al (1980), this is a reality that has been experienced by artisans from Altomourenses since the 1980s, and which was corroborated by our field research.

In customer motivation, the discovery of a genuine artistic expression, the encounter of a “cordel literature” made of clay – recording events –, or even the growing fad, a festive enthusiasm for folkloric things... All this accelerating the market, the market accelerating the pace, the pace accelerating the artist. One order after another – close work almost always from seven in the morning to eleven at night. Payment, in advance, imposes unavoidable deadlines – all at an unrewarding price. The time for modeling, drying, firing and painting absorbs the part's production deficiently. To meet their basic needs, these artists are led to accept a large number



of requests. Those who can, even hire helpers, in charge of complementary tasks such as kneading the clay, putting the pieces in the oven and even, if necessary, painting the figures. Another alternative is to integrate the whole family into the production process (COIMBRA *et al.*, 1980, p. 43).

We defend the permanence of artisans in their locality so that they can experience the city and, thus, reinforce the feeling of belonging to it and to its collective memory. We could say that the fact that they meet the purchase demands at their locations allows this to happen. However, it's not that simple. Among the comparisons of the perceptions of Coimbra *et al.* (1980) and our field study, some aspects that appear as vertical forces can be highlighted: public projects that disregard the demands of the population, middlemen, real estate speculation and the consequences on the quality of life of the artisans.

The ReVitalino Project, launched in 2012 by the Municipality of Caruaru, sought to “requalify” the Alto do Moura neighborhood (improving the sidewalks, building a parking lot for 500 vehicles and a receptive space for tourists). It was one of the main projects defended during that year's electoral campaign and, according to information collected from interviews carried out with artisans in the neighborhood, garnered a lot of votes for the candidate, making him win the elections. On the other hand, only in 2015, due to intense demands from residents and artisans, through the Association of Craftsmen in Clay and Residents of Alto do Moura (ABMAM), the works began to get off the ground. One of the artisans we interviewed, Helder³, explained: “as the money was going to come back and there were a lot of people complaining, they made a 10-meter sidewalk at the entrance of Alto do Moura to say they were doing something”. Even today, 2022, the ReVitalino Project is not completely finished.

Throughout our field research, artisans constantly reported that those responsible for the project did not listen to the demands of the population involved with crafts. Respondents explained that the project could really offer improvements to artisans and residents of Alto do Moura with the effective appreciation of the local culture. With public investment, the creation of memorials with pieces of recognized Masters, in addition to attracting more tourists to the place, would increase the self-esteem of artisans who were awarded a place of memory, it would encourage other artisans to increase the quality of their work. It could even be a stimulus for the return of the reinforcement of the communicative character defended by Canclini (1983) in the plays as a way of obtaining recognition and the consequent appreciation of local sociocultural aspects. The collective memory would be reinforced in the propagation of sociocultural habits in the pieces with added value, mainly resulting from the vitalinian aesthetics that narrate the everyday scene. In other words, artisans experience their territory, recognize themselves in it, materialize these experiences in artisanal pieces and have their work recognized and valued by selling their pieces with more added value, allowing more time and quality of life to experience the territory and feed this cycle. It would be possible to perceive the transformations in the handcrafted pieces over time, comparing those present in the Masters-Craftsmen's memorials (which would present, for example, the various phases of the Vitalinian style, from the more rural times, when Vitalino was still alive and Caruaru was a rural city, even the most contemporary ones, influenced by the Vitalinian school, but showing more current scenes) and those offered in stores/studios (including madams and African dolls), so that people could understand that transformation is imminent to the culture, but that the sociocultural aspects of the locality are still alive.

Contrary to this real cultural appreciation, the ReVitalino Project prioritizes the tourist. The project was to build a parking lot for 500 vehicles at the entrance to Alto do Moura, a receptive space to serve tourists arriving in the neighborhood and improve physical accessibility in the same, standardizing sidewalks and installing access ramps between sidewalks and streets. Therefore, the exception is the

³ Helder is a craftsman and the grandson of Manoel Eudócio, an important master craftsman in the region, who died in 2016. The interviewee works mainly in the making of dondoca and African dolls. He has his own shop next to his studio and home.



paving of sidewalks and improvements with a view to physical accessibility, which promotes improvements for all. The other aspects are benefits for tourists and visitors who go to Alto do Moura, especially during the June festivities, that is, for one month a year.

In fact, at the time of São João, the neighborhood receives a large number of tourists. Many arrive by car. Vehicle traffic is restricted to the Alto do Moura portal. People park their cars in makeshift parking lots in the open areas near the portal. The installation of parking for 500 vehicles took place in one of these locations. The “big” difference for the community in the São João period is that, instead of the “flanelinhas⁴”, coming from the neighborhood itself and/or from adjacent communities, earning money from car parking, a private company hired by the city profits. For the rest of the year, the “white elephant” will be underutilized.

By observing the urban conditions of Alto do Moura, we realized that the generation of commodities through cultural tourism, valuing the symbolic and cultural aspects of handicrafts, could be a positive way to bring improvements to the neighborhood, increasing the quality of life of the entire local population.

Even today, Alto do Moura lacks good urban infrastructure. Despite being located close to the Industrial District of Caruaru and the Federal Institute of Pernambuco, which makes the demand for public transport passengers high, the service to the neighborhood is precarious. With three bus lines, it is common for people to spend more than 40 minutes waiting for the transport that usually travels full of passengers. It is worth mentioning that of the three lines, one began to circulate due to the upper-class subdivision that was being installed in the vicinity of the neighborhood at the time of the research. To complement the public transport system, displacements are covered in capacity not always regulated by official institutions.

Regarding the paving of the streets, the main streets are paved, many of the secondary streets are still unpaved and, in some, the sewage runs in the open. There is regular electricity supply, however, residents complain about the constant interruption of service, as well as water. According to Vitalino Neto⁵, grandson of the Master and recognized Master-craftsman, at the time of our field research, the supply of piped water was precarious, going for weeks without reaching the taps.

Vitalino Neto attributes the improvements in terms of urban infrastructure to the fame of the local culture obtained from handicrafts:

Look, if it weren't for the culture... [laughs], if it weren't for the strength of the local culture, the craftsmanship of Master Vitalino's history and then his followers, I don't know... I think we it was on a dirt floor, a wooden pole, if there was water... I don't know if there would be water. Because piped water here has twenty... not twenty, it's 30... 32 years that I think we have piped water here. But, well, if it wasn't... then I don't know to what extent this [culture] can bring [quality of life]. Because today they relaxed, right?! When that generation there, these political groups disappear, I hope that those that emerge will be more serious, but, thus, what little there is here is because Alto do Moura has a name, has Master Vitalino and has the most recent artists, Galdino, Manuel Eudócio, the Zé Caboclo family, Zé Caboclo himself and, if it wasn't for that, we

⁴ Flanelinha is the nickname given to a generally unregulated individual, who usually uses coercion to obtain remuneration for services provided in parking, cleaning or protecting a car.

⁵ Vitalino Neto is the grandson of Master Vitalino. He is recognized as an excellent craftsman and also as one of the biggest critics in the region regarding the production of madams and African dolls. His view corroborates that of Hobsbawm (1984), in the sense that an invented tradition is imposed on a given locality and ends up stifling the habits and customs of the region, which would characterize the tradition itself. During our interview, Vitalino Neto searched for the book “New phase of the moon: Popular sculptures of Pernambuco” (MARTINS et al, 2013), which has a chapter for the artisan families of Caruaru. A subchapter talks about him and he insists on showing a photo, on page 114, of a piece he called “Adultério de Lampião”. It is Lampião riding a horse, however, who is on his back is a doll called African, and not Maria Bonita. So, for him, it represents both the adultery of Lampião and the craftsmanship of Alto do Moura. Vitalino Neto, since the beginning of 2015, practically abandoned all activities related to handicrafts and became a businessman. He is dedicating himself to the administration of a variety store in Alto do Moura. Before, in addition to making the handcrafted pieces, he did the distribution work, taking the pieces made in the neighborhood directly to shopkeepers in other locations, mainly in the Southeast of the country.



would be like the surrounding neighborhoods. It's the same there, where she came from [points to his wife] which has a paved street and, even so, the pavement is not even enough for a car to pass. Up here, there's one too, a street only paved there in the [neighborhood] Nossa Senhora das Graças and, like that, things arrive 20 years late, 30... if it weren't for this issue. Alto do Moura only stands out because my grandfather left the banks of the BR and came here! If he's been going up there or if he's been going to Lagoa de Pedra, where she came from, well, Alto do Moura was those places and those places were Alto do Moura. But, as he was there and decided to come here, then it came up, things started to come up, then after... what? I think 48... that's a long time... [he does the math] 67 years, almost 70 years, right?! Then something came up... during all that time, but because of that, if not, we were a place... yeah... anonymous! (...) We were lucky that my grandfather came here and... we: this place, all these people here, all these families here, then he made his story here, right?! Sítio Campos today is a place that practically does not exist, which is where he was born and where he started everything there. And he worked there, still, he came here after he... it was the ease of going to the city, to the fair, it was one of the reasons, because he thought it was better... but otherwise, we were anonymous. So, can... Can you still bring more stuff here? You can and will bring it! And this question of culture... the culture even of our oldest, not recent history, it tends to be valued, perhaps over time, for the relic it will become, that's where it will emerge. (...) I believe that whoever stays in handicrafts will do well in the future, you know? Because? Because there will be few people, there will be few. Now... the same it was, it doesn't come back, appreciation, it doesn't have. And... we'll be like this, living normally...

Vitalino Neto, in other words, talks about commodities obtained from the appreciation of the local culture. In his view, the singularization of pieces that refer to local history and sociocultural aspects can return the added value to local figurative crafts and bring improvements to the neighborhood as a whole.

On the other hand, this singularity and originality, it seems to us, will need to be orchestrated in the horizontalities of the local population, in the perception of their popular power and the strength of their culture through handicrafts. We question to what extent the sociocultural aspects present in traditional figurative crafts are being reinforced or weakened.

Among the interviews that we carried out during our research on the educational and urban conditions of Alto do Moura, we noticed that the actions are mostly aimed at improving the artisan-tourist interface. There are courses to instruct the artisan in financial and commercial organization. Aspects related to the artisan's sociocultural self-worth do not appear among state concerns, nor within the scope of ABMAM.

The ongoing verticalities tend to standardize these pieces even more, as they do not pay attention to the daily needs of artisans and residents of Alto do Moura, making them, indirectly, increasingly subject to the commands of the market, with its intermediaries and unequal disputes.

The action of middlemen, even though in the artisans' speeches it appears as "a necessary evil", tends to standardize handicrafts, among others, by encouraging the making of madams and African dolls. Unlike the traditional figurative craftsmanship of the Vitalinian school, these dolls are made on a production line, using a lathe and molds. The craftsman's "fine" manual work is little explored and there is almost no space for the insertion of local sociocultural aspects. This production on an assembly line enables ample production in terms of modeling in a short period of time. However, as with traditional pieces, it is also necessary to wait for them to dry before taking them to the oven for firing and then painting them.

Since the dolls have little sociocultural identification with the place, they are sold throughout Brazil as being made in the locality where they are marketed. As a result, dealers order large quantities of parts at low prices. The artisans report that without the figure of the middleman and their large quantities of orders, they would not be able to survive. However, they recognize that demand is exhausting and profits are low, in addition to feeling overwhelmed by these people. Some artisans, especially the oldest in the region, report that middlemen even humiliate them because they see themselves as holders of capital and artisans, just cheap labor.



The vertical powers operating in Alto do Moura have not yet realized the sociocultural wealth that is being devalued. If properly managed, profit could be generated for the city without detracting from the local aspects and the quality of life of the people who produce this value.

Capitalists, perceiving great potential for the production of monopoly income/commodities, will support local development, even if this goes beyond the political logic of globalization (HARVEY, 2005).

In this case, it is that the contradictions faced by capitalists when seeking monopoly rent assume a certain structural importance. By seeking to explore values of authenticity, locality, history, culture, collective memories and tradition, they open space for reflection and political action, in which alternatives can be both planned and pursued. This space deserves intense investigation and cultivation by opposition movements. It is one of the key spaces of hope for the construction of an alternative type of globalization, in which progressive forces of culture appropriate the key spaces of capital instead of the other way around (HARVEY, 2005, p. 239).

The question posed by the author is that these places can be built in the collective memory, arising from historicity, or built from aspects that go beyond the sociocultural relations of the locality, such as, for example, by spectacular and designer architectures or, in the case of the Alto do Moura, by “white elephants” that are not spectacular, but that, in general, segregate a large part of the population that contributed to the formation of sociocultural aspects and the collective memory of the place. It questions, then, which collective memory should be celebrated by the city, with which aesthetics, with which values and for whom, which segments of the population should benefit from the valued symbolic capital.

Magalhães (2002) gives clues to the issue by warning that “in a society that is deterritorialized, the city finds its future in its very essence: social exchanges” (MAGALHÃES, 2002, p. 39). It argues that it is necessary to re-singularize cities, as a condition of their defense as heritage. The guarantee of the city as a heritage, with the strengthening of the bond between city-citizens, is found through socially constructed images: the meaning and memory they have for the population.

Alto do Moura and surroundings, however, are in the opposite direction. Real estate speculation reached the neighborhood, transforming its surroundings into large construction sites for several closed condominiums, mainly for the middle and upper classes. The fact that closed condominiums are in progress and not the construction of residences that would be added to the neighborhood already demonstrates the denial of collective experience.

Despite this real estate speculation being propagated as an advance for Alto do Moura, bringing, as we mentioned, an extra bus line and paving of streets that were previously unpaved, urban improvements are aimed at increasing the construction in progress. The paved streets are in the vicinity of the condominiums and residential complexes. Just move a little away from these buildings and the asphalt ends and the street goes back to dirt, with dust in the summer and mud in the winter. Another inconvenience concerns the large flow of heavy vehicles, which disrupts the daily dynamics of the neighborhood.

Driele⁶, one of our interviewees is an artisan who, at the time of our field research, was acting as secretary of ABMAM. She talked about the changes in the neighborhood: “we used to be a small tourist place, it was just the artisans here and now there is this growth so I believe it is even too disordered, it is... it is destroying our characteristic a little bit. small, rustic, traditional place, right?”.

Among the real estate developments, at the time of the research, Alto das Sete Luas stood out, which was already in its second stage. With subdivisions from 160m², “the ideal place for those who want to

⁶ A young artisan, at the time of our research, was not working in artisanal crafts because her job as secretary of ABMAM (Association of Craftsmen in Clay and Residents of Alto do Moura) took up all her time. He reported that he misses working modeling clay and that he makes both traditional pieces from the Vitalino school, as well as African and dondoca pieces.



lead a healthy and peaceful life. Complete infrastructure, paved streets, water and sewage network and green areas. (...) It's the opportunity you were looking for to live in a unique and differentiated place", says the advertising video of one of the people responsible for the sales of the place, which concludes by stating that it is "an excellent opportunity for those who want to make an investment".

This project, as a means of adding value to the site, created the Parque das Esculturas Luísa Maciel within the perimeter of the subdivision, inaugurated in April 2013, through a public-private partnership (PPP) between the Municipality of Caruaru and a construction company.

Driele, talking about permanent and temporary exhibitions on the premises of ABMAM, explains how the "junction", via handicrafts, of the local culture with the real estate development took place.:

and this one is a collection that we have of some projects that have already happened here with the artisan from Alto do Moura through the Association: some projects with the state government, with some private companies that have subdivided some land here, right? For example, Alto das Sete Luas. These are the original [pieces] and the entrepreneurs, the group of entrepreneurs of this subdivision went after these artisans who are considered the Masters of Alto do Moura, and they asked them, they bought a symbol piece of each artisan to have in this park. There's the big cement replica there, right? And here are the originals, they made this donation here, so this one is permanent. (...) [Here are] all [the] originals and there they made all of them 1.60 m in size, depending on the piece, they made (...) of cement, cement and iron to have greater durability in the park, it's rain and sun all the time there, and the originals they donated to the Association, so they're always here.

In other words, in terms of dealing with the artisan, the businessmen profited twice, as they paid the normal price for each artisan's piece and he made a large-scale replica of the piece in the park. By donating the pieces to the Association, they have free advertising of the allotment, permanently. As far as urban aspects are concerned, as a rule, government powers "forget" the needs of the population in order to favor their campaign funders.

What has been happening in Alto do Moura, in relation to real estate speculation, goes through Harvey's concept of structured coherence (2005). At the same time, it is necessary to promote the physical infrastructure, usually carried out by the governmental sphere, as necessary for space-time compression, since better infrastructural conditions allow the flow of production (whether physical circulation, goods; or the movement of people) more easily and pleasantly) more efficiently, this does not presuppose physical and social stability to the space.

Common in the capitalist logic of land exploitation, especially when PPPs are the motto of negotiation, the public power enters with capital to invest in urban improvements in the area in which the private sector will operate and explore. Once the improvements are made, private capital invests the least amount in the area. The older population barely benefits from the improvements. Either it is exploited as cheap labor for civil construction work, or it is left in default of the process of valorization of the surroundings, which tends to increase the cost of living and, depending on the situation of the older residents, they may be forced to look for other cheaper places in the city. This movement of capital inflows and outflows and the permanence or relocation of people interferes with the city's dynamics, especially for older residents. Their neighborhood relationships can be broken, causing them to stop living and enjoying the city, interfering with sociocultural habits and customs, and therefore, their identity. For younger residents, this change of neighborhood tends to transform the place and can take away from it the quality of passivity that was sold to them.

In our understanding, highlighting symbols of local culture in a private park within a closed condominium is configured more in an attempt to add value to the condominium and, in some way, interact with the traditional community to avoid problems with society, than actually exalting identity and benefit artisans. They seek to circumvent possible conflicts with the Altomourense community, which considers itself belonging to the place for much longer. Butler (1980) explained that these conflicts are common in one of the phases of the tourist space's life cycle. We consider that it also fits



in this situation, since the community lives with a flow of heavy vehicles due to the construction of the condominiums.

Driele reported, throughout our interview, that due to so many interventions, Alto do Moura has been losing its characteristic of small space and changing. Among the changes, come the good and the bad. The real estate speculation in the surroundings points to a possible gentrification. For now, the identity and culture of Alto do Moura are serving to raise public investment with the promise of improvements for the community, which do not match reality. Will it stop there? Time will tell to what extent these artisans, especially the way they have organized themselves, little empowered by their social and cultural power, making pieces with low added value and, in some cases, alienated from their work, will have the strength to fight against the powerful, in case they decide to “give a better end” to those lands. We hope that the inclusion of the works of the main Masters-Craftsmen of Alto do Moura in the private park does not indicate the future reality of the neighborhood, in which the artisan sociocultural identity will be remembered only in pieces from “public” museums and monuments.

6. Final considerations

The way the Pernambuco artisanal chain is managed by internal and external forces has several spatial, social and cultural repercussions for the population of Alto do Moura, interfering with their quality of life.

It is necessary to manage the artisanal chain in order to value local identity and culture, either by reinforcing the vitalinian school or by increasing tourism in the territory. It is necessary to increase tourism that is sustainable and consistent with the characteristics of the place. For example, experiential tourism could enhance the visitor's diverse experiences at the site, from fetching clay in the Ipojuca River, treating it to be able to be modeled and experiencing the modeling of the piece together with a Master-craftsman. Experience tourism would provide urban improvements in the neighborhood as a whole, people would spend a few days in the place and would have to stay and have meals there. An entire tourist cycle would gain, from basics to leisure, which could be linked to dealing with handicrafts. But for this it would take time for artisans to experience their territory, the daily dynamics would be the biggest tourist attraction. As is currently done, the extensive orders, mainly for madams and African dolls, take away the city experience of artisans, weakening their sociocultural habits that “feed” the everyday scene modeled on Vitalinian crafts.

In the neighborhood, there are already some museums and memory spaces of some Masters and there are others in progress. With the exception of the Master Vitalino House-Museum, made with resources from the artisans themselves. On the other hand, the House-Museum extols man's poverty and not his genius. Experience tourism, museums and public policies in line with the demands of the population could contribute to the registration of the neighborhood as an important center of figurative arts in the Americas. Even if it wasn't the biggest, a UNESCO seal would help to increase tourism, which could bring quality of life to the population through the maintenance and encouragement of local sociocultural aspects, including the Vitalinian tradition, but not only.

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