

PROJECT OF IMPLANTATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK OF THE MORRO DA QUEIMADA IN OURO PRETO, MG-BRAZIL

B. T.Oliveira

Director of the National Institute of The Historical and Artistic Heritage, Ouro Preto, MG, Brazil

Description On April 18, 1881, during one of his many visits to Ouro Preto, Dom Pedro II identified at Morro da Queimada (“Burnt” Hill) an important archaeological site. The illustrious Emperor jotted down on his journal that the ruins at the site made him remember Pompéia. He meant the Italian town buried over by the Vesúvio Volcano in 79 d.C., discovered in 1748 and nowadays it is a famous archaeological park, visited by experts and tourists from all over the world. The archaeological site of Morro da Queimada has a tragic origin as well. Also known as “Morro do Paschoal” or “Small Village of Ouro Preto”, it was one of the first ones in Ouro Preto and was destroyed in 1720, right after the revolt headed by Felipe dos Santos, opposing the taxes raised by the Portuguese Crown. After it was set on fire by the Conde of Assumar, it was named Morro da Queimada and the population was transferred to the nearby “Arraiais”. Felipe dos Santos was the first one to be hung and then tied by the legs to a horse’s tail, so his body would get torn into pieces. The main consequences of the “Sedição de Vila Rica” in 1720 were the adjournment in the installation of the casting houses and the division of the Capitania of São Paulo and Minas Gerais in two administrative unities. Morro da Queimada shelters nowadays a priceless archaeological site, being a concrete witness of the first architectural typologies in town, for keeping registers of the gold exploitation in the beginning of the 18th century, and remaining vestiges of one of the most dramatic moments in the History of Brazil – Colony.



Figure 1

View over part of the ruins at Morro da Queimada

Developments Morro da Queimada is going through an embezzlement process in the last decades due to the disordered growth of the town. In April, 2003 UNESCO identified the preservation of the archaeological site at Morro da Queimada as being one of the necessary measures to stop the alarming break-

down of this cultural and enviromental heritage in Ouro Preto.

Results After this warning, IPHAN put work groups together which were necessary for the preparation of the introduction project for an Archeological Park in the area, which would bring an impressive positive impact in town through the following means:

- enlargement of the historical researches and of the creation of programs for archaeological hollowings, making possible a wider knowledge about the mining history and the material culture of its time;
- protection and ordering of the ruins from the first constructions in Ouro Preto;
- preservation of the memory of Felipe dos Santos and of the Sedição de Vila Rica in 1720;
- creation of an ecological and an archeological museums for the towns which emerged during the “Gold Cicle”;
- creation of a singular option from the traditional tourist circuit, making possible a longer staying of the vistors in town;
- protection of a meaningful part of the landscape, including urban and archictetural collection of Ouro Preto;
- improvement of the quality of life and social inclusion of the nearby communities, making new jobs and profit chances, as well as economic sustainability of the undertaking.

Conclusion This project is kept by several NGO’s, public and religious institutions, and has as a proponent the “Museu de Arte Sacra do Carmo” based at “Paróquia de Nossa Senhora do Pilar”, was approved during the last meeting of the National Committee for the Inctive of Culture, carried out by MinC – Culture Federal Ministry, and has as sponsors “Programa Petrobras Cultural” and “Caixa Econômica Federal” Morro da Queimada is a site provided by rare natural beauty, from where it is possible an unique view over the historical area of Ouro Preto and Itacolomi Peak, which guided the first “bandeirantes” and still nowadays is a symbol of the town. It is important for Ouro Preto as well as Acropolis is for Athens and the Palatino, together with the ancient foruns, are for Rome.



Figure 2

View over Ouro Preto from Morro da Queimada