

BRASILIAS

4. Background

Brasilia – the capital city of Brazil, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2010. Inaugurated in 1960, it is a masterpiece of modernist architecture. It is the only city in the world built in the 20th century to be awarded (in 1987) the status of Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.

Behind the construction of Brasília lay a monumental campaign to construct an entire new Capital City for Brazil. In 1956, Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira is elected President and ordered the construction of Brasília, fulfilling an article of the country's constitution dating back to 1891 stating that the capital should be moved from Rio de Janeiro to a place close to the center of the country. Kubitschek invites a young architect, Oscar Niemeyer, to command the project.

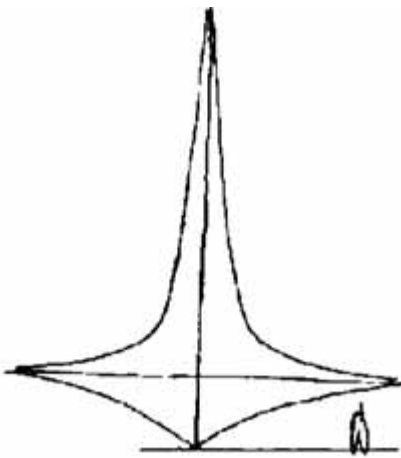
In the same year, the work on site starts.

Modernists: Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer

The city was planned and developed with Lúcio Costa as the principal urban planner and Oscar Niemeyer as the principal architect. Brasília was planned to be a city where transit flows smoothly. Lúcio Costa planned the streets in such a way that even traffic lights would not be necessary: cars and buses would take thoroughfares to travel long distances, then would use one of several loops to gain access to local streets to reach specific destinations. Much of the original planning had to be changed, mostly because of the growth of Brasília and many other factors.

Other Contributors and Assets

The city also hosts a varied assortment of art works from artists like Bruno Giorgi, Alfredo Ceschiatti, Athos Bulcão, Marianne Peretti, Alfredo Volpi, Di Cavalcanti, Dyllan Taxman, Victor Brecheret and Burle Marx, whose works have been integrated into the city's architecture, making it a unique landscape.



Croquis by Oscar Niemeyer

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The Great Challenge: Demographic Explosion

Planned for only 500,000 inhabitants, Brasília has seen its population grow much more than expected. According to the original plans, Brasília would be a city for government authorities and staff. However, during the construction period, many Brazilians from all over the country migrated to Brasília, attracted by opportunities of job and public and private services.

Brasília has one of the highest growth rates in Brazil, with its population increasing by 2.82% each year, mostly because of internal migration.

In the 1960 census there were almost 140,000 residents in the new Federal District. By 1970 this figure had grown to more than 537,000. It has now a population of about 2,557,000 (as of the 2008 IBGE estimate), making it the fourth largest city in Brazil, after passing up Belo Horizonte and Fortaleza.

This fact makes it the largest city (by population) in the world at the close of the 20th century that didn't exist at the beginning of the century.

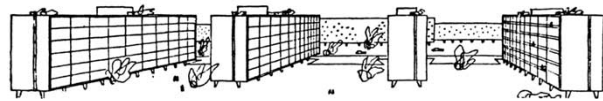
Other Challenges

The recent records of traffic jams over the Federal District and its cities are recognized by public authorities as one of the main challenges for Brasília. Due to the country's economic bonanza, the automobile fleets have almost doubled in several of Brazilian cities from 2000 to 2008. According to the Traffic Department for 2008 there are over 1,000,000 registered vehicles in Brasília's Federal District.

According to The Modernism at Risk initiative of the World Monument Fund, among other key challenges facing many Modern buildings are: demolition, inappropriate alteration, perceived obsolescence, and public apathy, as well as the technical problems associated with conserving innovative designs and materials.

Many Brasílias

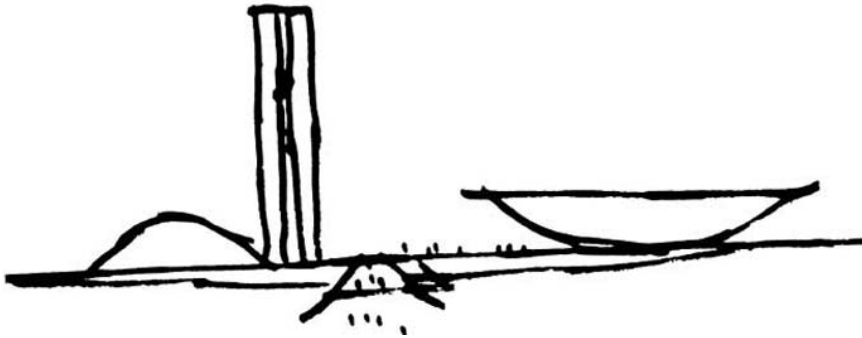
As more and more migrants were attracted by the opportunities of the growing capital, several suburban "satellite cities" have been created over the years to house the extra inhabitants. Set well apart from the city, these areas were not planned as permanent settlements and thus offer stark contrasts to the symmetry and spacing of Brasília.



Croquis by Oscar Niemeyer

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5. Problem and Justification



Croquis by Oscar Niemeyer

Despite being the fifth most populous country in the world, very few part of the Brazilian population can actually visit their Capital City – Brasília – an its Cultural Heritage of Humanity assets.

Part of the difficulty is the great distance of the Capital from the rest of the country. Brazil, with over 8 million km², is the fifth largest country by geographical area, occupying nearly half of South America.

Brazil remains a society with great social disparities and inequalities, like many other poor and developing countries. One of the many major factors separating the poor Brazilians is their access to basic social and cultural activities, in particular their right to gain access to tourism. For those low-income citizens therefore, the lack of access to tourism can be an isolating factor, making many feel socially excluded and deprived of basic yet important experiences.

Recent survey showed that the majority of public schools students in the great Brasilia area (“satellite cities”) never had the chance to visit Brasilia’s monuments, palaces and public buildings.

In the real world sustainable development for our cultural heritage cannot be achieved while there are big divides between the three different segments of the society - the gap between the rich and the poor, between the government and the people and between those who know and those who don't. Knowledge and power are the two sides of the same coin... Whether it is about our history, cultural heritage or who we are, information from the past moulds our future and if we forget our past, the future will only bring a generation that will have no link with their past or information on what is their true identity.

Source: Bridging the Gap. Fouad Riaz Bajwa - Pakistan

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritages are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. They are our touchstones, our points of reference, our identity.

What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application. World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located.

Source: World Heritage Information Kit, 2008, UNESCO World Heritage Centre

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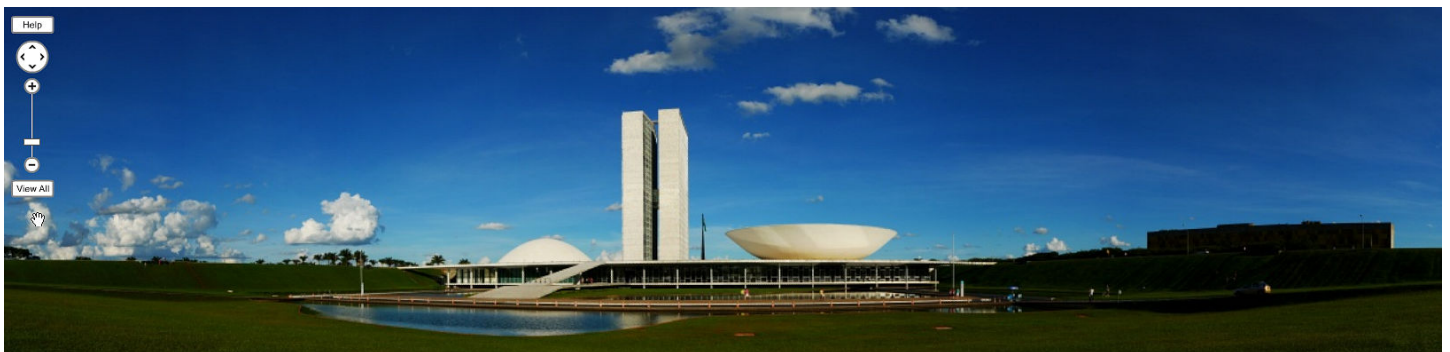
6. Overall Goals

The overall goal of Brasiliias Project is to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Brasilia (2010), promoting its cultural heritage, people, architecture monuments, art and culture.

The project aims to help Brazilians learn about their own Capital City as well as promote Brasilia across the globe. Thanks to the Internet, the Project will have the opportunity to serve audiences (local, national and international) that do not have easy access to travel. Brasiliias Project aims to make information, including interactive and immersive gigapixels photographs, available and accessible, in the electronic format, on the cultural heritage of Brasilia and its particular way of life.

The number of residential internet users in Brazil in January 2009 increased by 16 percent to 24.5 million compared with the same month in 2008, according to research company Ibope//NetRatings. The survey indicates that the average Brazilian internet user spent in January 24h49m, a time which is 6.9 percent higher than in the same month of 2008 and 8.7 percent more than registered in December. The research company claims that the number of Brazilians with home internet access reached 38.2 million, and if access outside the home is included, the figure grows to 43.1 million. Source: telecompaper.com (20 February 2009)

The Brasilia Project will help to raise public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage, the protection and conservation of World Heritage Properties, such as Brasilia - the only city in the world built in the 20th century to be awarded (in 1987) the status of Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO.



GigaPan by Adonai Rocha – Brasiliias Project

7. General Objectives

As World Heritage is our shared heritage, the responsibility to protect it also needs to be shared between the States Parties, the international community and the civil society. We will do our share: Brasiliias Project is committed to the use of the Internet and other latest information and communication technologies as the tools for disseminating Brasilia and its cultural heritage information to strengthen:

- safeguarding the irreplaceable heritage that Brasilia assets constitute;
- encourage participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage;
- encourage international cooperation in the conservation of our world's cultural and natural heritage;
- promote World Heritage education.