

Faial Building: Formal analysis of a modern heritage in the Historic Center of the city of Porto Alegre-RS

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Edifício Faial: Análise formal sobre um patrimônio moderno no Centro Histórico da cidade de Porto Alegre-RS

RESUMO

Objetivo - Este artigo tem por objetivo realizar uma investigação projetual sobre o Edifício Faial (1962), uma das obras de Emil Bered, localizada no Centro Histórico de Porto Alegre-RS.

Metodologia - A investigação foi realizada com base em análises do local de implantação, considerando o entorno imediato, análises formais que compreendem o partido arquitetônico e as soluções projetuais, além de uma breve reflexão sobre possíveis inspirações que nortearam algumas das soluções presentes no Edifício Faial.

Originalidade/relevância - O estudo insere-se dentro de linhas de pesquisa enfocadas na arquitetura patrimonial e contribui na disseminação de um conhecimento que luta por reconhecimento e preservação dentro dos grandes centros urbanos, a preservação do patrimônio moderno construído.

Resultados - A pesquisa permitiu compreender as principais soluções exploradas por Emil Bered nesta obra, assim como a forma que a edificação se integra ao seu entorno.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas - Os métodos aplicados contribuem para pesquisas futuras, uma vez que podem ser de fácil reprodução em outros exemplares de arquitetura moderna.

Contribuições sociais e ambientais - O estudo se apresenta relevante ao apresentar a comunidade acadêmica e a sociedade, um importante exemplar da arquitetura moderna gaúcha, visando a conservação de um patrimônio e preservação de uma edificação habitada, porém, em estado de atenção de conservação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Edifício Faial. Arquitetura moderna. Patrimônio histórico. Arquiteto Emil Bered.

Faial Building: Formal analysis of a modern heritage in the Historic Center of the city of Porto Alegre-RS

ABSTRACT

Objective - This article aims to conduct a design investigation on the Faial Building (1962), one of Emil Bered's works, located in the Historic Center of Porto Alegre-RS.

Methodology - The investigation was conducted based on analyses of the site, considering the immediate surroundings, formal analyses that include the architectural concept and design solutions, in addition to a brief reflection on possible inspirations that guided some of the solutions present in the Faial Building.

Originality/relevance - The study is part of research lines focused on heritage architecture and contributes to the dissemination of knowledge that fights for recognition and preservation within large urban centers, the preservation of modern built heritage.

Results - The research allowed us to understand the main solutions explored by Emil Bered in this work, as well as the way in which the building integrates with its surroundings.

Theoretical/methodological contributions - The methods applied contribute to future research, since they can be easily reproduced in other examples of modern architecture.

Social and environmental contributions - The study is relevant in presenting to the academic community and society an important example of modern architecture in Rio Grande do Sul, aiming at the conservation of a heritage site and preservation of an inhabited building, but in a state of poor conservation.

KEYWORDS: Faial Building. Modern architecture. Historical heritage. Architect Emil Bered.

Edificio Faial: Análisis formal de un patrimonio moderno en el Centro Histórico de la ciudad de Porto Alegre-RS

RESUMEN

Objetivo - Este artículo tiene como objetivo realizar una investigación proyectual sobre el Edificio Faial (1962), una de las obras de Emil Bered, ubicado en el Centro Histórico de Porto Alegre-RS.

Metodología - La investigación se realizó con base en análisis del sitio, considerando el entorno inmediato, análisis formales que incluyen el concepto arquitectónico y soluciones de diseño, además de una breve reflexión sobre posibles inspiraciones que guiaron algunas de las soluciones presentes en el Edificio Faial.

Originalidad/relevancia – El estudio se enmarca en líneas de investigación centradas en la arquitectura patrimonial y contribuye a la difusión del conocimiento que lucha por el reconocimiento y la preservación dentro de los grandes centros urbanos, la preservación del patrimonio construido moderno.

Resultados - La investigación permitió comprender las principales soluciones exploradas por Emil Bered en esta obra, así como la forma en que el edificio se integra con su entorno.

Aportaciones teóricas/metodológicas – Los métodos aplicados contribuyen a futuras investigaciones, ya que pueden reproducirse fácilmente en otros ejemplos de arquitectura moderna.

Contribuciones sociales y ambientales – El estudio es relevante al presentar a la comunidad académica y a la sociedad un importante ejemplo de arquitectura gauchesca moderna, visando la conservación de un patrimonio y la preservación de un edificio habitado, pero en estado de atención de conservación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Edificio Faial. Arquitectura moderna. Patrimonio histórico. Arquitecto Emil Bered.

1. INTRODUCTION

Brazilian modern architecture was a movement that developed in the first half of the 20th century, with one of its main focuses being multifamily housing. Several architects dedicated themselves to finding solutions that, through "new architecture", addressed the housing issue that was widely discussed on the international scene, but with local characteristics that, in turn, differentiated what was being produced in Brazil from what was presented in other countries (Domingues, 2024).

Although the first experiments related to modern architecture in Brazil began timidly in 1925 with the contributions of Russian architect Gregori Warchavchik (Domingues; Souto, 2024), the modern movement went through an "incubation" phase in Brazil from the 1930s onwards. The Brazilian political scenario in the 1930s marked an important transition from the power model of the Old Republic, a regime established since 1889 after the Proclamation of the Republic, to the rise of Getúlio Vargas after the Revolution of 1930, which removed President Washington Luís from the presidency through a military coup. From that moment on, political discourse encouraged new economic directions for Brazil, which, in turn, outlined a sense of progress, and architecture had the mission of representing this new national phase (Souto, 2023).

With the consolidation of the Estado Novo, changes in the teaching of architecture and the commissioning of a building that would convey national identity were the driving forces behind the strengthening of modern architecture in Tupiniquim lands. With the creation of the Ministry of Health and Education in 1930, the new government wanted to show the world the country's new economic direction, and the construction of the Ministry's headquarters in Rio de Janeiro represented an opportunity to do so. In 1935, a design competition was launched for the construction of the headquarters of the Ministry of Health and Education. However, the judging panel was made up of professionals aligned with traditionalist architecture, who chose Archimedes Memória's proposal as the winner. However, the chosen project presented an architecture that did not correspond to the message that the government wanted to convey. For this reason, Lúcio Costa and his team were invited to design the MEC Headquarters Building, which would become a milestone in the implementation of modern architecture in Brazil and in the consolidation of a school that represented the new Brazilian architecture (Mendes, Veríssimo, Bittar, 2010; Segawa, 2018).

Although the first steps of Brazilian modern architecture took place between 1925 and 1930, the development of this trend in Rio Grande do Sul is considered to have been delayed in relation to the Rio-São Paulo axis. In the southern regions, modern architecture began to develop more significantly from the second half of the 20th century. According to Ribeiro (1987), the dissemination of modern architecture in Rio Grande do Sul was motivated by three crucial factors: the first factor is related to the proposals of architects from the national modernist movement for public building projects in the state, such as Jorge Moreira's proposal for the Hospital de Clínicas building of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (1942), Oscar Niemeyer's proposal for the IPE headquarters building (1943) and Affonso Reidy and Jorge Moreira's proposal for the Viação Férrea do Rio Grande do Sul headquarters building (1944). The

second factor refers to the implementation of the architecture course by the Instituto de Belas Artes de Porto Alegre (IBA), which was a branch of the course already existing in Rio de Janeiro and aligned with the concepts of modern architecture and Corbusian ideas. Finally, the third factor was the creation of professional bodies in the state, which, in turn, contributed significantly to the discussion about the role of the architect both in civil construction and in society in general, in addition to strengthening the position of professionals in the job market (Domingues, 2024).

Among these three factors, Marques (2002) highlights the creation of the IBA architecture course as a fundamental milestone in the development of a group of architects who promoted a modern architectural expression in the region. According to Marques, Vieira and Ströher (2022), the education offered at IBA was aligned with the Corbusian trend, but also presented influences from Cisplatina architecture, which gave Rio Grande do Sul an architecture considered by Marques (2002) as a unique example, which, although greatly influenced by the Rio de Janeiro school, presented particularities that differentiated it from what was then the developed economic and cultural center of the country.

In this context, the figure of Emil Bered (1926-2024) stands out. Born in Santa Maria, in the interior of Rio Grande do Sul, Emil Bered played a significant role in the expansion of modern architecture in the South of Brazil, in addition to his work in academia and professional bodies, which were fundamental to strengthening the profession in Rio Grande do Sul (Marques, Vieira and Ströher, 2022; Souto, 2023). The architect graduated from the first class of the IBA Architecture course and immediately began his professional and academic career. Professionally, Emil Bered's career assumes notable relevance in the context of modern architecture in Rio Grande do Sul, as evidenced by the expressive presence of his works in the Inventory of Modern Architecture of Porto Alegre, which covers buildings erected between 1945 and 1965. Although this time frame begins four years before the beginning of Bered's career, his name is associated with eight of the thirty-four buildings that make up the inventory, making him the most mentioned architect in the document (PROCEMPA, 2023).

Emil Bered's works are cited in important documents and literary works that aim to catalog and preserve modern buildings in Rio Grande do Sul. Examples of this are the municipal inventory, which aims to protect the Cultural Heritage of Real Estate in Porto Alegre; the book "Guia da Arquitetura Moderna de Porto Alegre", by Almeida, Almeida e Bueno (2010); the "Inventário da Arquitetura Moderna em Porto Alegre (1945-1965)", by Comas e Piñon (2013); and, more recently, in 2022, in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Faculty of Architecture at UFRGS, a biographical book about his life and work was released, entitled "Emil Bered Arquiteto", organized by Marques, Vieira and Ströher (2022), important researchers of modern architecture in Rio Grande do Sul.

From his graduation in 1949 until 1958, Bered worked in partnership with the architect and college colleague Salomão Kruchin, with whom he designed more than 35 works. From 1959 onwards, Emil Bered began to manage his projects independently. During this period, most of the buildings listed in the main bibliographies on modern architecture in Rio Grande do Sul were designed by Emil Bered, such as the Faial Building (1962), the Cristofell Building (1962) and the CRT Headquarters Building (1964), among others.

The article aims to carry out a design analysis of the Faial Building (1962), one of the main works of architect Emil Bered, which highlights an important period of his independent architectural production. The investigation is carried out based on observations and studies of the location and implementation of the work, formal analyses of the object of study and the architectural design, in addition to a brief reflection on the precedents that may have been the inspiration for the solutions adopted in the building.

2 RESULTS

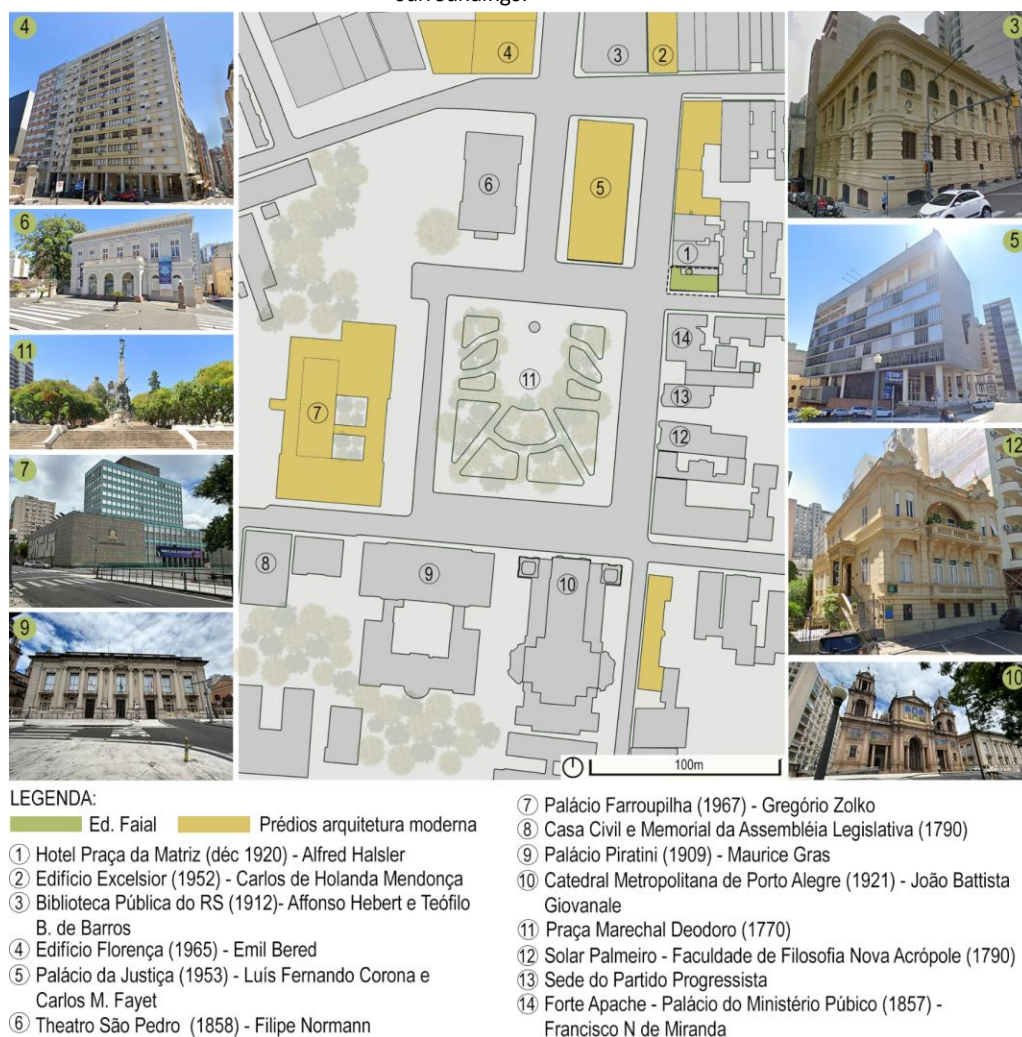
This section will present the results obtained based on the analysis methods applied to the investigation. The following topics will discuss the influence of the urban context in which the work is located, the formal analysis of the construction and the analysis of the precedents that influence the architectural design of the building.

2.1 The urban context of insertion

The building is located on an important corner of the city of Porto Alegre, at the intersection of Rua Jerônimo Coelho and Largo João Amorim de Albuquerque. The main characteristic of the surroundings of the Faial Building is the character of the space in which the building is located. Located in a historic neighborhood, the immediate surroundings of the building have a significant collection of buildings that define the local landscape and represent various construction periods in the city. In addition, the different uses of these buildings also contribute to the characterization of the surrounding environment.

Regarding the uses of the surrounding area, the predominance of buildings of an institutional nature stands out, including several buildings intended for the state public administration and judicial bodies, which generate frequent flows of movement of political interest. In addition to these, there are also buildings with cultural, residential, mixed and educational uses. Figure 01 shows the general conditions of the surrounding area, as well as the main buildings that characterize the study area.

Figure 01 – Surroundings of the Faial Building and the main buildings located in the immediate surroundings.



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2024.

Figure 01 presents several works in the surroundings that represent different architectural styles, such as the Renaissance style of the Metropolitan Cathedral of Porto Alegre (1921), the neoclassical style of the Theatro São Pedro (1858), the Palácio do Piratini (1909) and the building of the Public Library of the State of Rio Grande do Sul (1922). Modern architecture is represented by the Palace of Justice (1953), designed by Luís Fernando Corona and Carlos Maximiliano Fayet, considered by scholars such as Almeida, Almeida and Bueno (2010), Comas and Piñon (2013), Luccas (2016), among others, as one of the main icons of modern architecture of the Rio de Janeiro school in Porto Alegre. In addition to the Palace of Justice, there are residential buildings with characteristics of modern architecture, such as the Excelsior Building (1952), designed by architect Carlos Alberto de Holanda Mendonça, the Florença Building (1965), also designed by Emil Bered, and the Farroupilha Palace (1967), established as the State Legislative Assembly, designed by Gregório Zolko, which represents the concepts of modern architecture of the São Paulo school.

The historical importance of the buildings neighboring the Faial Building is evidenced by the fact that many of these buildings have been listed as heritage sites. In addition to the Praça Matriz Historic Site, the State Public Library, and the São Pedro Theater, which are listed by the Federal Government, there are other levels of heritage sites. In this sense, the Metropolitan Cathedral, listed at the municipal level, the Memorial do Legislativo do Rio Grande do Sul (1790), considered the oldest building in Porto Alegre (Legislative Assembly of Rio Grande do Sul, 2024), and the Palácio Piratini, listed at the state level, stand out. There is also the Palácio Farroupilha, which is listed by the National Institute of Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN, 2024).

In addition to identifying the historical character of the building's surroundings, other physical characteristics were observed along the section, such as densification. Figure 2 shows the different configurations of the blocks present in the section. The eastern portion, characterized by residential use, has little or no space between buildings, with the core of the block almost entirely built. This causes difficulties in the circulation of cross ventilation in the buildings in this portion, in addition to compromising natural lighting. In the western portion of the section, where the institutional buildings are located, the buildings are arranged in isolation on the lots, in addition to having free areas between one building and another, providing better conditions for wind permeability and lighting.

Figure 02 – Mapping of full and empty spaces of the study section.



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2024.

Despite the high rate of densification and verticalization surrounding the Faial Building, there is an important difference that benefits the building's implementation. Next door, in the northern portion, is the Hotel da Praça Matriz (figure 03), built in the 1920s in an eclectic style

for residential use, and transformed into a hotel from 1978 onwards (Hotel Praça da Matriz, 2024).

Figure 03 – Hotel Praça Matriz next to the Faial Building, forming a breathing space between the object of study and the other tall buildings that make up the block.



Source: Authors' personal collection, 2024.

The Praça Matriz Hotel is a low-rise building with three floors, a result of its residential character at the time of its construction. In addition, it belongs to the set of buildings listed as an asset of interest for the preservation of the city of Porto Alegre, which in turn protects the building from future demolition. This provides the Faial Building with an important breathing space that provides the building with comfortable conditions for the tower's housing units, thus ensuring natural lighting and ventilation for the rooms facing the building's north façade.

2.2 The architectural project

The Faial Building (Figure 04) consists of a ground floor, which houses the entrance to the building, service areas and a small common area for a playground. In addition, it has 12 standard floors, each configured with a housing unit of approximately 208 m². Thus, the building has a total of 12 housing units distributed throughout its tower.

Figure 04– Faial Building.



Source: Authors' personal collection, 2024.

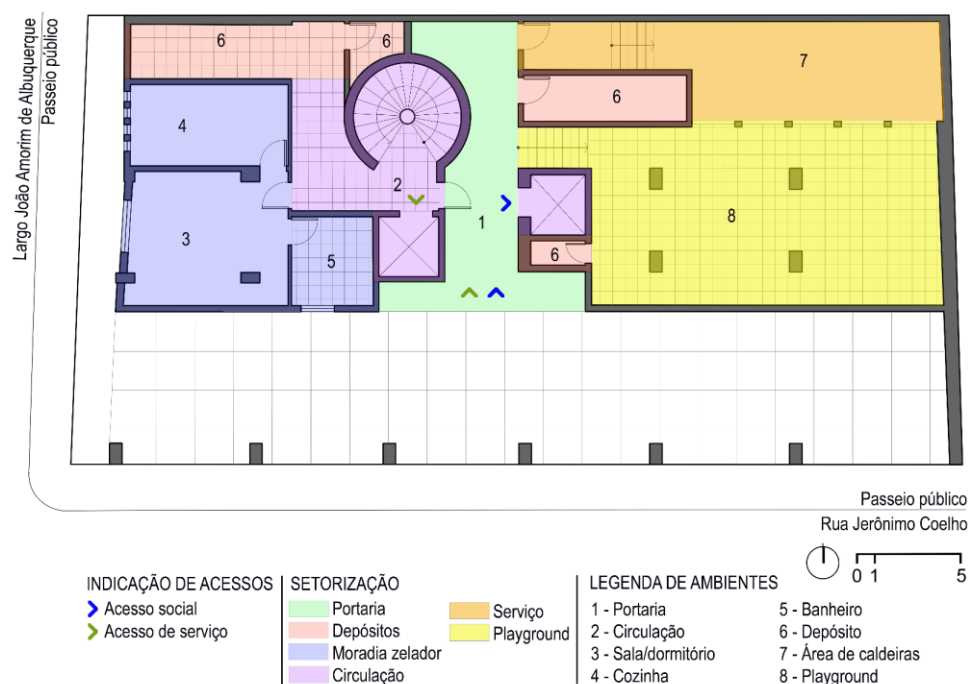
The building's shape features a prismatic, semi-recessed base, where the service and living areas are located, as well as an open area marked by exposed pillars. This configuration favors natural ventilation on the ground floor and provides a more welcoming urban environment, by integrating private and public spaces and smoothing the transition between the two. This solution also respects the important historical heritage site nearby, the Palace of Justice. The presence of the open gallery allows an early view of the ground floor on stilts of the Palace of Justice for those accessing it from Rua Jerônimo Coelho.

The upper floors are L-shaped, which allows for the development of a compact layout and a linear layout, facilitating the division of spaces. The choice of an L-shaped volume is related to the fact that it is located on a corner lot, with one of the smaller facades facing Largo João Amorim de Albuquerque and the other, larger facade facing Rua Jerônimo Coelho, thus favoring the best use of the facades and providing lighting and ventilation to all the rooms. Along the floors, the Faial Building has a cylindrical volume extruded from the body of the building, which stands out on the north facade, where the building's staircase is located.

The ground floor (figure 05) has a single entrance used for both service and social access. The entrance and the reception are located centrally in the building on its façade facing Jerônimo Coelho Street, a strategy widely used by Bered to emphasize the centrality of the building. To the right of the reception, there is a social elevator and a space for the playground, a collective living space for residents. Also on the right side, there are storage areas and a space

where the boilers used in the water heating system are located. To the left of the reception, there are storage areas, an apartment for the use of a doorman or caretaker, and vertical circulations (staircases and service elevator).

Figure 05 – Ground floor plan of the Faial Building.



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2024.

Along the façade facing Jerônimo Coelho Street, one can see the presence of an open linear space composed of exposed pillars supporting the building (figure 06). This strategy is used to create a transition between public and private spaces, in addition to promoting adequate ventilation on the ground floor, making the space comfortable for users. Although the initial project envisaged an open space, with no barriers between the public sidewalk and the lot, the area is currently enclosed with glass panels and planters. It is believed that this measure was adopted to provide greater security for residents.

Figure 06 – Ground floor of the current Faial Building, after modifications.



Source: Google Street View, 2024.

The standard floor plan (Figure 07) is configured in an L-shaped plan, which allows for an orderly sectorization of the internal spaces of each housing unit. From the access, which can be made either by the social elevator or the service elevator, the user is led to a hall that opens onto a large integrated space, where the living room and dining room are located. This space has an interesting relationship with the surroundings due to the glass planes that make up the corner of the building, which frame the different landscapes that emerge as the floors rise. According to reports from residents of the building in a video made available on the YouTube platform about the Faial Building, residents have the opportunity to watch the show *Tangos e Tragédias*, promoted by the Teatro São Pedro, a neighbor of the building, from the windows of their homes, thus showing the different connections that users maintain with the surroundings (AsBEA-RS, 2020).

Figure 07 – Floor plan of the typical floor of the Faial Building.



Source: Prepared by the authors, 2024.

Although the southern orientation is unfavorable due to the lack of direct solar radiation, the decision to keep important spaces in this location was not made arbitrarily. According to reports by Bered (2022), the bedrooms were positioned facing the south facade due to the forecast of possible urban growth in the region. This growth would result in the construction of buildings of a similar height to the Faial Building, which would compromise the privacy and natural lighting of private spaces if they were located on the north facade, facing the center of the block. Another issue mentioned by Bered is the planning of the building to receive central air conditioning equipment, which would help minimize humidity problems associated with spaces facing the south facade (Bered, 2022).

The service areas (kitchen, servants' quarters and utility area) are located at the smaller end of the L-shaped structure, with openings to the west and east facades. In the case of the kitchen and service bathroom, which face the west facade, the space has a layer of external cobogós that contributes to shading these spaces as a barrier to solar radiation.

In addition to the treatment of the openings on the west façade using blue clay cobogós, the openings on the south façade also receive external protection. In the case of the south façade, the highlight of the openings in the bedrooms are wooden shutter panels, which help to block the entry of natural light when desired and also bring dynamism to the façade. This system is mobile and gives the building different façade designs, both in the play of light at night and in the shutter panels, which can be either completely closed, open or partially open, giving the façade a certain dynamism, since the façade assumes different configurations that may or may not be repeated daily.

An interesting aspect to be analyzed in the Faial Building is the possibility of understanding the internal environments based on the facade treatment used in each section. As illustrated in Figure 08, both the west and south facades use glass panels to delineate the social sector, while the wooden shutters on the south facade define the intimate spaces. The cobogós and masonry walls on the west facade are intended for service areas.

Figure 08 – Mapping of the different façade treatments present in the Faial building that make it possible to identify the internal zoning of the environments.



LEGENDA:

— Setor de serviços — Setor social — Setor privado

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2024.

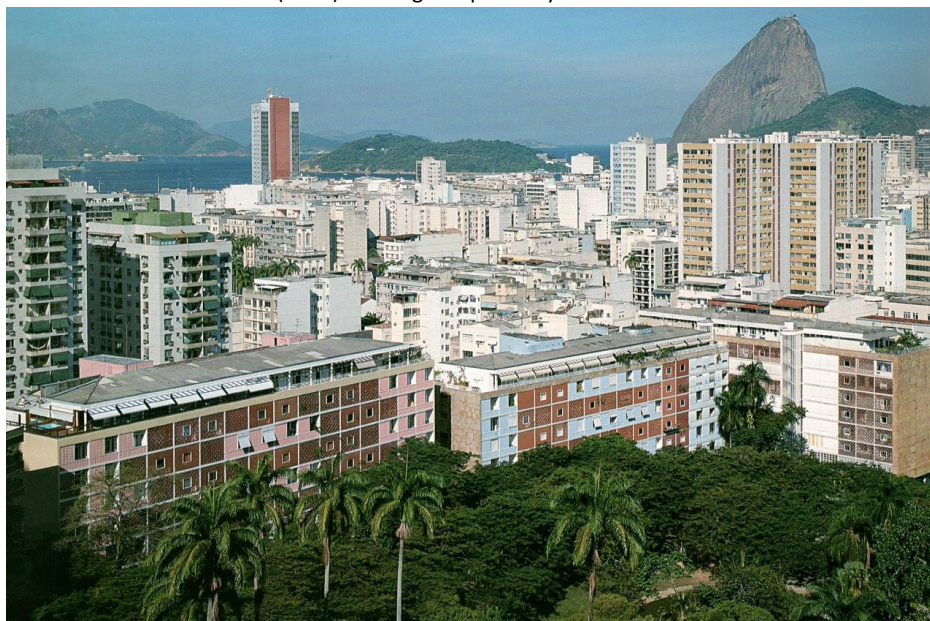
Another interesting consideration is the material used in the building's masonry walls, which follow a common pattern in many modern architectural works in Brazil, the use of ceramic tiles. In the Faial Building, the masonry walls are covered with tiles that alternate between white on the ground floor and in the demarcation of the slabs of each floor. Light blue is used in the areas close to the glass facades, while beige is applied to the end of the west facade, where the maid's bedroom is located, and also in the masonry strip of each floor of the south facade, where the bedrooms are located.

As for the roof, a traditional system is used, consisting of a gable roof with fiber cement tiles supported on a concrete slab. Above the roof, there is an additional volume, where it is believed that the elevator machine room and the attic are located. In this volume, a different sealing material is used, and, based on the color visible in aerial images, it is understood that this volume is covered with ceramic tiles.

2.3 The precedents of the work

Based on the design and formal analysis of the building, it is possible to identify strategies and solutions in the Faial Building that are also present in emblematic works of modern Brazilian architecture, especially in the Rio de Janeiro school. In this project, similarities can be observed with the work of Lúcio Costa, an architect who, according to Bered (2022), was a source of architectural inspiration since his time as a student. In the case of the Faial Building, it is notable the use of elements similar to those found in the projects of Lúcio Costa's Parque Guinle buildings, such as the Nova Cintra (1948), Bristol (1950) and Caledônia (1954) buildings (Figure 09).

Figure 09 – Complex of buildings that make up the Guinle Park project. Nova Cintra (1948), Bristol (1950) and Caledônia (1954) buildings respectively. Architect: Lúcio Costa.

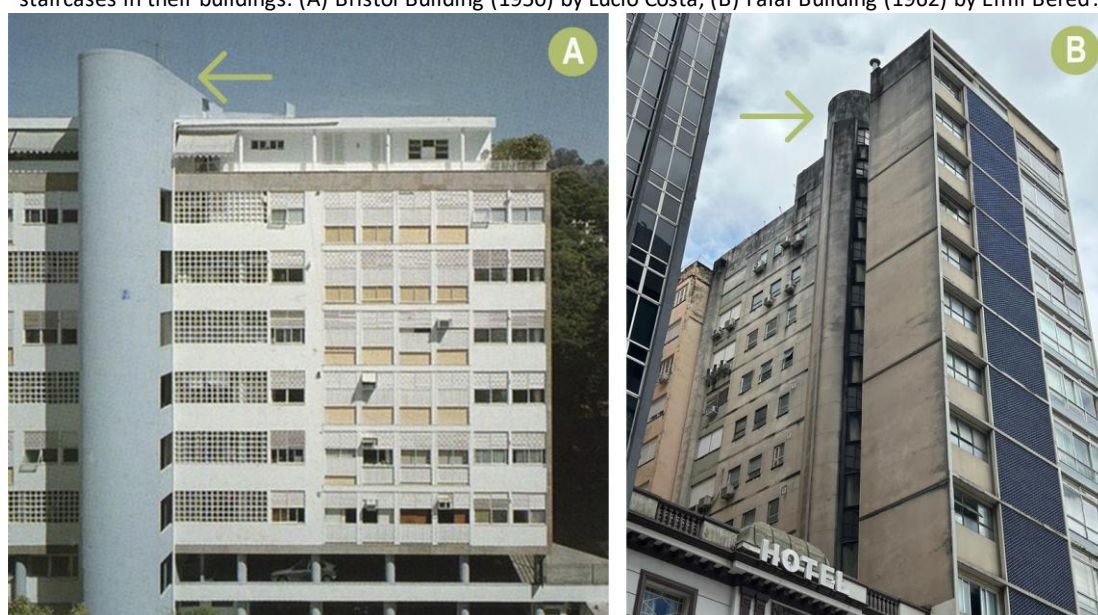


Source: Fracassoli (2011).

In the three projects that make up the complex, cobogós are used on the facades most exposed to the sun as a solar protection element, a strategy also adopted by Bered to protect the service areas on the west facade of the Faial Building. However, in the Faial Building, the cobogós are made of blue earthenware, unlike the three buildings by Lúcio Costa, where the same element is made of ceramic material, the same raw material used in the manufacture of conventional bricks in civil construction.

Another issue that highlights the similarity between Bered's work and that of Lúcio Costa is the treatment given to vertical circulation. In both cases, the volume that makes up the building's vertical line is presented as a volume separate from the main body of the buildings, creating a visually prominent element that contributes to the building's aesthetics and serves as a differentiator (Figure 10-a). In the Faial Building, although this element is located inside the lot (Figure 10-b), currently with low visibility from Largo João Amorim de Albuquerque, it is believed that, at the time of its construction, when the neighboring buildings were lower, this element could have had greater relevance and prominence in the building's aesthetic context.

Figure 10 – Comparison between the solutions adopted by Lúcio Costa and Emil Bered in the volume of staircases in their buildings. (A) Bristol Building (1950) by Lúcio Costa; (B) Faial Building (1962) by Emil Bered.



Source: (A) Fracassoli (2011); (B) Author's personal collection (2024).

In addition to the elements already mentioned, one can also observe the presence of a linear and compact design, which is adopted in both works. The spaces are organized along a strip, which allows for the presence of openings facing two facades, thus contributing to the presence of cross ventilation, an issue addressed by both Lúcio Costa and Emil Bered. In the case of the Faial Building, in contrast to Lúcio Costa's buildings, in addition to the linearity, there was an adaptation of the volumetry, conforming the building into an "L" shape due to the building's location on a corner lot, thus occupying the facades facing the streets in their entirety.

3 CONCLUSION

Upon concluding the investigation, it is possible to reflect on the architectural approach adopted in the Faial Building project. Based on prior knowledge of Emil Bered's work, it is observed that concepts applied in previous projects continue to be part of his repertoire. The use of pilotis, solar protection on openings and ribbon windows were solutions widely used throughout his career and remain present in the Faial Building.

The adoption of a compact layout is another relevant aspect. This configuration contributes to the internal organization of environments, promoting solutions that guarantee environmental comfort to users, such as natural lighting and ventilation.

Another notable feature is the variation in the cladding or treatment of the façade, which follows the change in the internal functions of the social, intimate and service sectors. Each sector has a specific materiality and treatment, reflecting a design approach widely used in the modern architecture of Rio Grande do Sul. Many works in Rio Grande do Sul present similar solutions for the façades, which can be considered a local characteristic.

Regarding the surroundings, when analyzing the building's layout, one can see the architect's intention to create spaces that favor integration with the external environment. The glazed facades on the corners of the building offer different views and perceptions of the surroundings to users, in addition to allowing active participation in the various urban, cultural and political activities that characterize the region.

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DECLARAÇÕES

CONTRIBUIÇÃO DE CADA AUTOR

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DECLARAÇÃO DE CONFLITOS DE INTERESSE

Nós, **Quétilan Rodrigues Domingues e Ana Elisa Moraes**, declaro(amos) que o manuscrito intitulado "[Edifício Faial: Análise formal sobre um patrimônio moderno no Centro Histórico da cidade de Porto Alegre]":

1. **Vínculos Financeiros:** Não possui vínculos financeiros que possam influenciar os resultados ou interpretação do trabalho.
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