Nossa Senhora da Penha: Origins and procession of the Community viewpoint

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ABSTRACT

The Penha neighborhood in the city of Joao Pessoa, is formed by a community of fishermen and small traders. It has as highlight the Santuário de Nossa Senhora da Penha. The attractive of the town is the Party of Nossa Senhora da Penha, whose procession is held on the last Sunday of November. In this context, in the period from 2004 to 2009 interviews were held with residents and merchants, having as objectives: know the history of the neighborhood, their myths of origin and the respondents' opinions about the festival. Among the results we have: the knowledge about the origins of the community, the perception of respondents about the modifications of the traditions and the detachment of the residents in the event participation.

Keywords: Nossa Senhora da Penha, tradition, the procession.

1. Introduction

Tourism activity in localities may be inserted as an instrument of growth and income generation. But for this to occur, the relationship between tourism and local development must first be examined from the standpoint of community participation in discussions relating to the impacts of economic activity in the nature and in the local society. The northeastern region of Brazil, known for its huge tourism potential, thanks to its beautiful beaches, stunning scenery and a climate very favorable to the sun and sea tourism has undergone major socio-environmental impacts due to tourism development. In the case of Paraíba State, belonging to the Brazilian Northeast, tourism still has a moderate growth, but it demonstrates some impacts caused by the disordering of tourism. From this understanding, namely the need for active community participation in tourism, was developed, an extension project through PROBEX-Fellowship Program Extension, Federal University of Paraíba. The choice of the district of Penha was due to this coastal town in the city of João Pessoa, capital of Paraíba state, presenting a predatory tourism and the lack of community preparedness to receive visitor. During the project it was noted the importance of religion in community life and its connection to the origin of the neighborhood and way of life. Religion is a major tourist attraction and an income opportunity, with the high point of the Procession of Nossa Senhora da Penha. This being the focus of this article.

The methodological procedures were bibliographical and documentary, interviews, participant observation, observation, teamwork, workshops, lectures and continuous assessment.
2. The District of Penha

The district of Penha, according to municipal law of Joao Pessoa, 1574 to September 4, 1998, is located south of the capital of Paraiba. The neighborhood is limited to the north by Seixas Beach, to the south, with the Beach Camp, east to the Atlantic Ocean and the West, with the Plateau Cap Blanc.

Based on site (www.igeo.uerj.br):

Praia da Penha is a continuation to the south of Pebble Beach is so named because of the existence of a Catholic church dedicated to a saint Nossa Senhora da Penha. Situated on the edge of tray which lies to the west. Is formed in a narrow plain at the mouth of the Rio Hair therein form a Maceió. This narrow plain, now, is completely occupied by human activities, with fishing shacks and homes built on the backshore. (2006)

Coastal areas now have problems related to disordered occupation, high population density, water pollution and air. On these questions Coriolano (1998) states that "the coastal zone becomes a contact zone not only of movement on the national economy, but global logistics circuits, ie, becomes an integral and locus of overhead, land , under global sea ".

According to Britto (2005) Bairro da Penha, by 1900, was formed by a fishing village, whose lands were dominated exclusively by the landowner Santos Coelho. After his death, the lands were divided among theirs who subsequently sold their shares and new residents begin to sit in every region of the Penha, forming three population groups that are: Seaside Particleboard, Particleboard Oswaldo Person Square and Village fishermen. The cluster Seaside has a population of approximately two hundred forty inhabitants distributed in small and poor households, and twenty-four are listed by IPHAEP (Historical and Artistic Patrimony of the State of Paraiba). Oswaldo Person Square is where the bars, schools and the Sanctuary of the Penha. The fishing village is situated between the banks of the river and cliff hair. Penha has natural, social, cultural, historical and religious points to possibilities for tourism development. It’s heritage is much admired by tourists, but the location is characterized by disorderly occupation of its coastline, where the predominant masonry bars and a large quantity of wooden barracks. It is an area without any organization or infrastructure for residents and tourists. Tourism has transformed the town, producing some changes: the rooms in front of the house, living room and terrace, are used for trade and bars, and the back, serves as the family residence.

The neighborhood is located a few miles of the coast's most visited of Joao Pessoa, comprising the beaches of Cabo Branco, Tambaú and Manaira, but is an area little visited, except the time of the party (which is discussed in Chapter 3). Often, the tour
buses pass by the beach of the Penha, but the tourists never go down to meet, it is a nuisance for residents, once feel slighted. In questioning of some travel agents, we were told that this occurs due to lack of infrastructure and the image of insecurity in the region. Therefore, the finding of LIMA-SILVA (2007) reflects the reality of the neighborhood: an area that requires public policies that will somehow improve the living conditions of the community, mostly fishermen, or ex-fishermen and small traders

However, interest in the area is already perceived, due to its proximity to new tourism facilities, such as Station Science, Culture and Art and the Convention Center of João Pessoa (under construction). The municipal government has already presented a project for the planning of the tents located along the shore of the Penha. But this development is cause for concern in an area with structural deficiencies and socio-economic, so despite Ruschmann highlight the positive features of tourism:

As a growing economic activities in Brazil has key role in reducing regional inequalities and social. The industry involves thousands of small businesses across the country - taxi drivers, shopkeepers, tourist guides, lodges, restaurants, lodging facilities, artisans, among others (...). (2004, p. 7)

It is essential first of all the preparation, planning and community inclusion mainly to avoid mass tourism, urbanization, and that does not take into account the impacts in the region, whether environmental or social. The lack of a tourism planning has caused major damage to localities, leading to destruction of their natural resources and the disposal of the local population, who are often totally excluded.

2.1 The origins of the Shrine of Nossa Senhora da Penha

Among the attractions of the district, deserves the Sanctuary of the Penha, listed by the IPHAEP on August 26, 1980. The stories and legends about the origin of the Sanctuary and of devotion to Nossa Senhora da Penha contribute to increased interest in the place. Through research on the traditions of the community, it is observed that there are three versions that are told by the people for generations, about the origin of the Sanctuary and how there arose the image of Nossa Senhora da Penha (SILVA, 2006).

In one version, the most widely accepted among the community and researchers, is that the Shrine was built in 1763 by a Portuguese commander, Silvio Siqueira, who commanded a vessel proceeding from the north towards Europe, in facing great storm, the crew met in a fervent prayer to the Virgin Mary under the title Nossa Senhora da Penha, promising to erect a chapel in her honor at the site who come in peace. Past the hour the commander landed on the beach in Aratú, now called the Penha. Repaired the damage of the boat and completed the construction work of the master continued the trip to Portugal, returning after ten months, bringing the image of the Virgin Mary who is venerated at the shrine until the 22th day of December 1978.

Another version is the "Santa and the Cashew." It is said that a girl went to look for cashew in the place where today stands the chapel of the Penha, found a statue of Nossa
Senhora da Penha. Upon returning home, she tells the parents, who sought and the priests went to the place indicated by the girl and took the holy image of a church. At dawn the image was not in place, returning to the cashew priests found the image and led to the church, but the image returned to cashew several times. Thus, it was believed that the image of the saint was alive, because they always move to the place where she was found, then took her to Rome, bringing back one for which the chapel was erected.

The third version says that a gentleman came in his horse fell off a cliff. To save himself, relied on Nossa Senhora da Penha and could fall into the ground without any injury. They add that the fall, still a huge snake appeared, and to ask once again aid the Nossa Senhora da Penha, came a crocodile that has swallowed the snake. As a way of thanks, he erected a chapel. The traditional legend about the figures of man, snake and crocodile at the foot of the statue of Nossa Senhora da Penha stems from the ancient parish of Irajá, allotment of the Jesuits in Rio de Janeiro. Captain Baltazar de Abreu Cardoso going toward the farm when he was attacked by a large snake. Inert, alone and unable to defend itself refers to the protection of Our Lady: "Save me, Penha". Then came a crocodile, extreme enemy of snakes being waged a fight to the death between them, while the passenger escaped unhurt. In gratitude the second chapel was erected in honor of Nossa Senhora da Penha on the orders of Captain Baltazar Abreu Cardoso in the year 1635. (SILVA, 2006)

Although the first version is the best known and accepted by the residents, we can consider that the other two also attract the curiosity of visitors and researchers. In the Community of the Penha there is also room for ex-votos that is where the faithful promise keepers deposit their expressions of gratitude for having achieved some grace.

3 The Procession of Nossa Senhora da Penha and tourism

Bairro da Penha has among its tourist attractions the Procession of Nossa Senhora da Penha that generates a stream of visitors with positive and negative impacts in the locality.

To better explain it was considered interesting to present some definitions of Tourism, Culture and Heritage.

Machado (2007, p.73 e 74) defines tourism as:

... A phenomenon of nature that is the socio-spatial displacement, temporary and voluntary, performed individually or collectively, that has the key motivating factor otherness, achieved in the quest for personal satisfaction, which may be motivated by leisure, recreation, relaxation, culture and health in specific cases. To enjoy this is a location that has space in its entirety able to satisfy personal desires and achieve the desired otherness, while not being paid nor any lucrative activity, generating multiple interrelations in the social, economic, cultural and
In this sense, the visit to the Shrine and the procession of Nossa Senhora da Penha can be seen as cultural heritage, based on DIAS (2006) that considers the cultural heritage are composed by material and immaterial aspects and also proposes that the forms of tourism recreational pursuits both a heritage property, either natural or cultural, are classified as cultural tourism.

The idea of preservation began in England and France, with the industrial revolution, when they saw that the buildings were being replaced by new architectural forms and society began to be contaminated with the idea of a country without a past (Choay, 2001, p. 139).

During the nineteenth century it was considered worth only attractive material, especially the monuments. Gradually, the idea of a "minor architecture" is spread by the Italian architect Gustavo Giovannoni which contributes to modify the idea that only the architecture of luxury should be preserved and considered a patrimony of all (Choay 2001, p. 143).

Both from the history of anthropology as we started to understand that humans produce not only art but also science, technology, knowledge, machinery, medicine, history, customs, cooking recipes, ways of relating with neighbors and that all this is the cultural legacy. (www.furb.br). As a result, the equity is no longer defined by the buildings where they lived kings, dukes and marquis, and graced by the sculptors and became defined as the set of all utensils, habits, habits and customs, beliefs and ways of everyday life of all segments that were part of the past and are part of this company.

Dias (2006) making the relationship between tourism and heritage, said that cultural tourism has benefits such as preservation of cultural heritage, economic development locally, regionally and nationally. The author sees cultural tourism as participation in new and profound cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional or psychological.

But this relationship not only brings benefits, since the relationship between visitors and core receiver can generate tensions, exclusions and dissatisfactions. Tourists do not always understand the customs and traditions of the inhabitants, or rather, before the search for tradition eventually invading the privacy of the visit, forgetting that the people who live there are not "products on display." One way to alleviate these
grievances is to include community participation in tourism organization, but not as guests but as active agents of this process. Not like the audience who attends a seminar on the multiplier effects of tourism or as the location will profit, but as effective participants in decision making that will affect their lives.

The Ministry of Culture (www.cultura.gov.br) includes cultural tourism is a set of tourism activities related to the experiences of significant elements of cultural heritage, promoting and enhancing the material and immaterial culture, so we can say that this tourism sector, involves the exchange of experiences between visitors and the recipient population, making it important to emphasize the word "experience". The more the community participates in the planning process, will be more enriching the knowledge acquired during visitation by tourists, because it involves actually looking for that place and know the history and the symbols expressed in tangible and intangible assets, when this doesn’t occur, as stated Ruschmann (1997), community participation in decision making about management policies, the impacts produced by tourism may be irreversible.

Cultural tourism is the access to this cultural heritage, ie, history, culture and lifestyle of a community. Therefore, cultural tourism seeks not only leisure, rest and good living. It is characterized also by the motivation of the tourist regions in knowing where his foundation is based on the story of a people, their traditions and their cultural, historical and religious (Moletta, 1998, 9)

Cultural heritage is the essence of cultural tourism, "is a great motivation for the movement of tourists and cultural capital valuable to the community ..." (DIAS, 2006, p. 46). The cultural heritage, continues, symbolizes the cultural identity of a community, since it is the most explicit expression of the identity of a community. Tourism while influencing cultural change in the pole destination, it also allows the retrieval and maintenance of culture. In this sense, is seen as a way of enhancing local identities.

Culture can be currently regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional traits that characterize a society and a social group. It encompasses, in addition to arts and literature, ways of life, fundamental rights of human beings, value systems, traditions and beliefs "(MUNDIACULT, 1982 apud DIAS, 2006)

Getz (apud DIAS, 2006) notes that the parties and events developed with the intention tourism can destroy the authenticity sought by tourists, but while these are activities that provide the means to expand and sustain these events and cultivate traditions. In this context, we have the festival of Nossa Senhora da Penha with a distance of 14 kilometers, where he leads a motorcade up the image of the holy church of Nossa Senhora da Lourdes, in the center of the city of Joao Pessoa. The festival closed the
Feast of Our Penha, on the beach of the same name. The cortege leaves the church at Lourdes, in the center of the capital. The feast of the patroness Nossa Senhora da Penha occurs on the last weekend of November and is included in the tour schedule of the city of Joao Pessoa as a religious event. (www.joaopessoa.pb.gov.br)

In the days before the procession, there is the secular part of the party. In Praça Oswaldo Person is mounted a structure that receives popular artists and groups from the locality, and attractions with other musical genres. Regarding the party can be seen, according to the views of residents during the fieldwork, many changes occurred in the holiday traditions over time, a factor that displeases. One example cited is that the image of Our Lady was carried in the arms of the pilgrims, but with the growth of religious celebration, this has to be taken on an open vehicle (The North Online: 26/11/2005). Currently, there are two images: one driven by population and one that follows the car. This paradox between satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the party with the changes is explained by Ferreira (2001,p.16):

Partying is putting himself before the mirror, looking for himself and his identity, is seeking re-discover the historical and cultural safeguards, and reaffirmed them in the power of representation, the act of communication and community. This action to recover their identity is crucial to find himself and regain a balance that can be threatened. This rescue, however, is a contentious act, because it means to incorporate new values to those traditions. This change creates insecurity to the community that recognizes their traditions, in their costumes, and that with these changes it feels threatened. In addition, respondents also questioned their participation in organizing the party. Consider that the party should be organized with their presence, respecting the customs and without many innovations, moreover, consider that the economic effects generated are often absorbed by traders and hawkers from outside the community, even outside the city and state. For residents and local merchants the party could be reverted to the local population. Another statement made during research is that these vendors for coming out of irregular spaces end up covering for the marketing of goods, in addition to leaving garbage in public places and leisure activities. Regarding visitors, respondents complain about the dirt on the beach, the noise and local traffic. It is noteworthy that in the neighborhood there is no means of accommodation which ultimately reduces the multiplier effects of tourism. An observation made by the residents is that visitors come from, but are not many even leaving the bus, just go and go. When interviewed those responsible for tourism agencies, explain that the place is gorgeous, but has no reception service tourist information or a tour, no means of lodging and food to the tents have no infrastructure. According Coriolano (2002, p.59), "speaking of coastal culture and cultural impacts of tourism means to understand cultural differences and social practices among tourists
The relationship between culture and tourism stands out, when tourism appropriates the cultural manifestations of a place such as handicrafts, festivals, folklore, typical food, turning them into objects of consumption. In turn, the culture of tourism also appropriate in respect to formatting of cultural expressions to the development of tourism. Appears there, then, a special tourism oriented culture. (SILVA, 2006)

Tourist activity causes local people reinvent their daily lives and this reinvention, the logic of tourism overlaps with local traditions and the very identity of the community impacted by new values, symbols, references. Thus, tourism re-invents and creates new functions, retrieves past practices and folklore through cultural attractions and rides for the post. (SILVA, 2006)

Tourism, above all, must be planned, designed, and inserted into the reality of the community. Infrastructure and skills are essential, but to respect traditions, local customs are paramount. It does not develop a tourism without these pillars, and religion is an important factor, especially when people put her in your life, when it is related to their lives.

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