THE GAME OF CAPOEIRA FROM BAHIA TO THE WORLD: AN EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINED TOURISM

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Abstract: This is an exploratory approach to the use of Capoeira as a relevant tourist product, and appropriated by the Brazilian national tourism agencies, more particularly in the State of Bahia. The methodology used was a documentary and bibliographic analysis of tourism and capoeira, especially documents from the tourist agencies of Bahia, historical scientific articles, blogs and other information from websites about these subjects. The text provides a brief historical overview of the origins of tourism in the world and in Brazil, highlighting the main bodies created over the years at a national and local level. The second section of this approach highlights the importance of Capoeira for tourism in Brazil, highlighting some of the historical events along the way, especially the recognition of the Roda de Capoeira as a national intangible heritage by IPHAN and by UNESCO as an intangible heritage of humanity. The third section of this analysis highlights concrete initiatives by the State of Bahia to use this Brazilian expression as one of its most important cultural products, highlighting some examples of the use of Capoeira at the state and private level as a use for sustainable tourism, as expressed by official and private groups of this modality in different performance environments. We conclude that data on the use of Capoeira as a fundamental element for sustainable tourism is still incipient, and that future studies should present more relevant results that go beyond the borders of Bahia.

Keywords: Capoeira, Sustainable Tourism, Intangible Heritage, Bahia, Brazil

INTRODUCTORY APPROACH

The approach present in the historical literature on the advent of tourism in the world shows that this phenomenon occurred due to numerous factors, mainly linked to the awakening of the middle class in the context of the Industrial Revolution in England.

Among the many factors, we highlight in principle, the evidence of relatively cheap public transport that allowed the displacement of individuals in their territory, in addition to structural changes in the world of work and of great relevance for the whole world. The most relevant factors were the occurrence of free time for workers, the salary improvement, the implementation of paid holidays, the reduction of distances after the emergence of the commercial airline industry after World War II (Theobald, 2002), shortening the distances between continents and reducing travel time, which associated with the factors mentioned above, contributed to the appearance of the tourism industry, allowing us to conclude that tourism is a phenomenon of the twentieth century (Muller et al., 2011).

Actually, associating recreational or sporting practices with tourist events may initially prove difficult if we do not take into consideration sporting practices, which are contemporarily assumed as attractive expressions for the increase of tourism in some countries, where world championships of different sports, winter or summer Olympic games, are presented as the most relevant expressions to associate them with the promotion of local or national tourism.

However, when it comes to traditional ludic practices, which can be expressed as traditional competitive/non-competitive popular games, or even of a folkloric character, we find some difficulties in associating them with tourism events, in a sustainable tourism perspective, except when linked to national or local festive events. Despite this consideration, we cannot
in any way rule out the existence of practices which allow us to consider their connection in a vision of sustainable tourism, and we can highlight, as examples, in the Spanish context, the expression of the Canary Fight and, in Brazil, the manifestation of the Capoeira Fight/Game.

It is, therefore, on the expression of Capoeira as an element associated with the practice of sustainable tourism that we will develop this approach, as we consider its significance to the Brazilian social context, which, supported by its recognition as an intangible heritage of Brazil and of humanity, has contributed to its absorption by local and national political powers as an element to be associated with national and international tourism.

To demonstrate this association between Capoeira and the practice of tourism with a view to sustainability, we will develop in this approach a historical background of the implementation of tourism in Brazil, and of the incorporation of this multifaceted expression as a product to be exploited by local and national organisms for the dissemination of Brazilian culture, from the perspective of its sustainable promotion with a view to promoting employment and income for participants as tourist agents.

**THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF TOURISM IN BRAZIL**

Considering the affirmation of scholars as to Tourism being a phenomenon of the twentieth century, and following this line of thought, we found through facts analysed in the course of this temporal period, that the course of the institutionalisation of tourism in Brazil starts to occur in the 1930s of the century alluded to, when the Division of Tourism was created (Maranhão, 2017) whose main functions at that time, was the normatisation of tourist actions, the supervision of the activities of travel agencies and the control of the entry of foreigners in Brazil (Dias, 2008).

During this period, the data analysed does not show any great effort by the Brazilian State to elaborate public policies aimed at this sector, as an economic activity in the country. This conjuncture changes between the 30s and 60s of the twentieth century, with a consensus for public managers that tourism in Brazil would be associated with the binomial sun-beach and the Amazon and Pantanal ecosystems (Cruz, 2000), initiating during this time a timid state organisation of national tourism through the creation of official organisms and instruments - National Tourism Council (CNTur), Brazilian Tourism Company (EMBRATUR), National Tourism Plan (PLANTUR).
Through the analysis of scholars who looked into the production of legal diplomas produced from the 1930s to the 1970s, the results were confirmed as to the little state concern regarding the tourism phenomenon, as well as, only from the 1980s onwards, the modification of this situation of lack of interest in this phenomenon is perceived.

It is worth mentioning as relevant initiatives between the 1980s and 1990s, the promotion of a policy of plans and projects for fundamental issues of Competitiveness; Internationalization and Decentralized Management; Innovations, Service Quality and Image of the tourist destination and Sustainability. In the years that followed until today, initiatives in the field of tourism were remarkable, favouring a change of understanding, linking it to the generation of employment and income.

In this period of time and in the perspective of the internationalisation of Tourism, the Brazilian State chose the Northeast region to start this opening for very particular reasons, creating the National Programme for the Development and Structuring of Tourism (PRODETUR) as a landmark for tourism in Brazil. Among the many reasons for choosing the Nordeste region as a tourist destination par excellence to promote this internationalisation, we can highlight its beautiful beaches that are sunny most of the year, its great culinary diversity, its natural beauty, its vast architectural heritage, its different forms of artistic expression of a corporal, musical and festive nature, among others.
In summary, we present in Table 01, the public institutions that sought to regulate the development of tourism in Brazil over 64 years (Maranhão, 2017), deriving from these national institutions the respective regional counterparts.

**TOURISM IN BAHIA**

Among the various States in the Northeast region, Bahia is undoubtedly one of the federative entities that includes a relevant architectural ensemble, an extensive coastline, and a significant number of musical, artistic and corporal expressions, deriving from corporal expressions, the Capoeira, object of interpretation and analysis in this approach as a sustainable tourist product.

Continuing the regulatory processes of Brazilian tourism, the structuring of regional and local organisms followed, being created in Bahia the Tourism Secretary (SETUR) in 1995, with the purpose of planning, coordinating and executing policies to promote and foster tourism, aiming at the pursuit of the fundamental issues already mentioned here. Among the many objectives of SETUR, the following stand out: support culture; preserve memory and cultural heritage; promote and boost the development of tourism; create new tourism products; promote ethnic Afro and religious tourism. This last objective, as a new product that generated employment and income created by SETUR, required actions from this organism aimed at qualifying the human material associated with this segment.

Considering the historical aspects associated with the State of Bahia and the relevant influence of distinct ethnic, indigenous, European and African groups in its human formation, when associated with the objectives mentioned above, SETUR has prioritized the pursuit of certain principles, especially the increase of tourism as a factor in the generation of richness, employment and income and the encouragement of the inclusion of cultural identity and its historical values. Pursuing such principles, this organism has promoted the creation of new tourist products in Bahia, such as religious tourism; sports and recreational tourism; artistic and cultural tourism; ethnic and African tourism (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0aqy0mVHG1Q).

In Bahia, the city of Salvador is the one that has the highest volume of tourism activities (ACT), reaching 49.2% of these activities due to its vast historical and cultural heritage, the beauty of its beaches and its recreational and entertainment options. The volume of ACT registered in 2020, were distributed in 439 establishments offering performing arts, shows and complementary activities, 111 bars and other specialized establishments serving drinks with entertainment.

Many of these ACTs allow at all times of the year, the development of actions involving the practice of Capoeira by distinct groups of
this expression, generating employment and income to its actors, an activity that, along with others related to ethnic-Afro tourism and sports, recreational and cultural tourism, highlighted a gain of 3.5% of the overall tourism revenue in Bahia in the year 2019 (Bahia, 2020).

RODA OF CAPOEIRA: BRAZILIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

Before we begin this topic, we must clarify what Capoeira is as a cultural manifestation, which has been appropriated as a new tourist product associated with ethnic-Afro tourism. According to Araújo (1997), Capoeira is a Brazilian corporal manifestation created between 1490 and 1800. In this continuum, Capoeira developed, assimilated and was assimilated by the Brazilian cultural framework as a traditional fight, which reveals aspects of its ethnomotricity (Parlebas, 2001) and its mixed formation, through a mosaic of indigenous, African, European and oriental cultural expressions (Araújo, 1997).

As a result of the sociocultural impact of Capoeira in Brazil throughout its creation and social adaptations, it generated the emergence of multiple forms of expressions framed today as a fight, game, gymnastics, dance and folkloric expression, as well as its recognition as a sport of cultural identity (Jaqueira, 2010) and its potential for dissemination at home and abroad, and considered from the 80s of the 20th century in Bahia, as a new product of great relevance for Brazilian tourism, and generator of employment and income.

Based on its national and international affirmation and consolidation over the course of the 20th century, and the importance given to the place of development of the ludic game of this national fight, on 08/04/2000 the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN) (http://portal.ihanna.gov.br/pagina/detalhes/66), as recorded in its “Livro das Formas e Expressão” (Book of Forms and Expression), vol. 1º, nº 7, gives the “Roda de Capoeira” as a cultural asset by means of Decree 3.551/2000 (Decreto de Lei nº 3.551 de 04 de agosto de 2000) the title of “Cultural Heritage of Brazil”, whose registration was decided and given in the 57th meeting of the Advisory Council of Cultural Heritage on 15/07/2008 (IPHAN, n.d.) (http://portal.iphan.gov.br/pagina/detalhes/66).

With this conceptual understanding for the recognition of the Roda de Capoeira, the Brazilian Ministry of Culture promoted initiatives with a view to its recognition as intangible cultural heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, for all its representativeness and symbolism. This goal was achieved through the recognition of the “Roda de Capoeira” by UNESCO, at its 9th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage held in Paris on 26/11/2014 (United Nations Brazil [UNESCO], n.d.) (https://brasils.un.org/pt-br/152296-roda-de-capoeira-patrimonio-cultural-imaterial-da-humanidade-unesco).

CAPOEIRA: A PRODUCT OF TOURISM IN BAHIA

The consideration of Capoeira and its multiple facets has its beginnings in the cultural and political discussions that took place in the 1st and 2nd Afro-Brazilian Congresses held in Recife (1934) and Salvador (1937), where the recognition of the cultural manifestations that would constitute a body of culture of Afro-Brazilian origin was discussed, and among them, this fight that would become one of the most representative cultural elements of Brazil.

With the multiple transformations (Araújo, 1997) undergone by Capoeira at the end of the 19th century, and its consequent affirmation in Brazilian society in the 20th century, its consideration as a tourist product by the Brazilian State took shape.

It was through folklore that Capoeira first manifested itself as a tourist product, when in 1962, in Bahia, a para-folkloric group was set up at the Isaias Alves Central Institute (ICEIA) to represent a set of cultural expressions such as Candomblé, Maculelê, Samba de roda, Puxada de rede and also Capoeira, which, by bringing together personalities from these cultural manifestations, led to the creation of the group “Viva Bahia”. With its choreographic presentations in Brazil and abroad, this group was a precursor to the numerous groups that were created in the years that followed, in order to disseminate these and other popular Brazilian traditions.

Still in the 60s, a group of capoeiristas, invited by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, represented Afro-Brazilian popular culture at the 1st World Festival of Black Arts in Dakar, an event that reinforced the export of Capoeira and its recognition as a relevant element of Brazilian culture as a tourist product. This was followed by other events that highlighted the importance of Capoeira, such as the naming of the Roda de Capoeira by IPHAN, and the recognition by UNESCO of its playing space.
As a result of the recognition of the Roda de Capoeira, and equally of the Mestre de Capoeira's occupation, IPHAN and the State of Bahia through its tourism and culture organs, have promoted relevant initiatives for the confirmation of this expression as a new cultural and tourist product, highlighting in 2018 the implementation of a “Plan for the Salvage of Capoeira in Bahia” (IPHAN-BA, 2018), aiming at the preservation of its identity and diversity, sustainability and internationalisation, education, sport and leisure. This Plan sought to strengthen one of the most popular manifestations of Afro-Brazilian origin, moving towards the consumption of the image of Capoeira and the identity aspects of Bahia, which stands out for the trade in products associated with it (audio and video CDs; uniforms, musical instruments; the organisation of shows).

Capoeira as a tourist product, based on Bahia's National Tourism Plan, framed as a newly created ethnic-Afro tourism product, allowed the managers of Setur, Secult and Embratur to promote various initiatives aimed at fulfilling this proposal:

- The registration of Capoeira groups in the State of Bahia;
- The institutional support of Capoeira groups’ initiatives in national and international events;
- The support of the Capoeira at the Fort project, aimed at preserving the architectural heritage and popular culture of Bahia;
- The scheduling of events with capoeiristas;
- Permanent exhibitions on the history of Capoeira and old masters.

In Bahia, following this plan, SETUR (Bahia, 2021b; 2021c) and SECULT launched the “Capoeira at the Fort Project”, aiming to identify it as a reference space for this modality, for the development of innumerous events, in order to meet a greater number of national and international visitors who seek to get to know Capoeira in its most distinct expressive forms.

**CAPOEIRA AN EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

From an identity and image perspective of Capoeira and Bahia with a view to promoting tourism, PRODETUR Bahia began to promote a series of initiatives to strengthen sustainable tourism in the region, considering the ethnic-afro tourism segment as an economic product that allows:

a) generation of employment and income through the commercialisation of their products (benefiting the quilombola communities of Jatimane and Boitaraca);

b) fixation of the populations in their communities of origin;

c) strengthening of identity ties of Bahia’s socio-cultural legacy;

d) professional qualification of tourist agents.

Recognising that in the 2000s there was an increase in the flow of foreign tourists to Brazil in search of the Capoeira product in its most distinct segments (fighting, play, dance, folklore), the “International Capoeira Office” was created in 2009, with the aim of promoting and diffusing Capoeira in Bahia. The main initiatives of this Office include: serving tourists who seek this product linked to the ethno-afro segment; supporting groups of this modality in Bahia and abroad; promoting the qualification of practitioners in courses of artisanal production associated with Capoeira (musical instruments, audio and video CDs, etc.); and also, promoting the linguistic qualification of capoeiristas in English and Spanish.

Considering the ethnic-afro tourism segment and Capoeira as an economic product, we highlight the work developed by the hotel chain UXUA (which means
“wonderful” to the Pataxó Indians), in generating employment and income and fixing people in their communities, with the aim of strengthening local identities. For these initiatives, it has been nominated for three consecutive years for the leadership award in the sustainable tourism plan.

The actions developed by the UXUA chain in the community of Trancoso/Bahia with a view to the development of sustainable tourism, support social projects and take advantage of the knowledge of tourist agents with a view to environmental preservation, besides exploiting local knowledge to promote the preservation of the identities of this community, which are manifested through the activities offered to tourists, being Capoeira, Samba de roda, Maculelê and other folkloric manifestations, expressions that highlight the ethnic-afro tourism segment.

Source: Zarpo.mag – Capoeira

Another example of sustainable tourism related to the ethno-afro programme is developed by the AVIVA group, owner of the resorts located in Costa do Sauípe and Rio Quente, which, following the same principles mentioned in the previous paragraph, promotes artistic and dance shows and different workshops for their clients, as well as holding classes about local expressions.

All these initiatives aim to develop sustainable tourism in the context of these hotel facilities, generating employment and income in these communities and consolidating an economic activity, fixing people in the localities and strengthening elements of identity.

**CAPOEIRA FROM BAHIA TO THE WORLD**

Although the historical background to the advent of tourism in Brazil dates back to the first half of the 20th century, it is evident from the documentation collected that Capoeira was appropriated as a tourist product even before the organisation of normative structures at a national and local level. It was exported through folkloric groups that gave impetus to different expressions of dance, wrestling and social practices in the daily life of Brazilians.

The organisation of Capoeira as an element of artistic expression and appropriated as a tourist product, begins in Bahia in 1963 through the structuring of a para-folkloric group organised by the folklorist and researcher Emília Bianchardi at the ICEIA in the city of Salvador. This para-folkloric group, called “Viva Bahia” by its creator, sought to aggregate various movements from innumerable cultural manifestations present in Bahian society in order to present them during the Music Week, with Candomblé, Maculelê, Puxada de rede and Capoeira movements standing out among them.

After their participation in that event, the “Viva Bahia” Group made countless tours throughout Brazil and abroad, being a presentation model for other folkloric groups that were formed and followed their paths, introducing in their performances other folkloric manifestations of Brazilian regions, but always with Capoeira in their presentations.

Unquestionably, “Viva Bahia” was one of the main factors responsible for the internationalisation of Capoeira and related manifestations, and the vehicle propelling this manifestation as a relevant tourist product. This international exposure of Capoeira led
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to invite a group of capoeiristas from Bahia to represent Brazil at the 1st World Festival of Black Arts in Senegal, with Mestre Pastinha as its main exponent.

With the recognition of the importance and consolidation of tourism in Brazil, and of Capoeira as a product of relevance to the economy and to the dissemination of its cultural manifestations, there have been numerous presentations by groups at various national and international events (Football World Cup 2006; Olympic Games 2016), which for this modality, is affirmed from the tumbling of the Roda de Capoeira by IPHAN in 2008 and by UNESCO in 2014, leading it to recognition as one of the most relevant tourist products associated with ethnic-afro tourism.

Other contemporary facets of Capoeira have also contributed to the consolidation of this expression as a Brazilian national tourist product, more specifically, its sporting and agonistic expressions of fighting, promoted either by the federative entity of this modality or by the numerous groups spread nationally and internationally.

Examples of these manifestations of Capoeira as a sports practice and for learning the fight are the numerous events organised by the Brazilian Confederation of Capoeira, by the International Capoeira Angola Federation, by the World Capoeira Federation and by large groups of this modality in Brazil and abroad. These events promote the sports tourism segment, as there is a large participation of practitioners from various countries in these sporting events.
In the manifestation of the practice of Capoeira as an expression of fighting, and for the same segment of sports tourism, it is visible through the annual meetings promoted by the major Capoeira groups in Brazil, which through their affiliate groups (Jaqueira, 2006) manage to gather in events in Brazilian cities, a relevant number of practitioners of this expression to participate in master classes, baptisms, classes for learning the musical instruments associated with the modality.

These major events clearly generate employment and income for those involved, whether by charging admission fees to graduation ceremonies for practitioners, or by selling musical instruments and their teaching, movies, CDs, t-shirts and abadás, and other handicrafts associated with this sport. In addition to the costs directly associated with the Capoeira product, there are also costs associated with occupancy of the hotel chains, restaurants and leisure facilities during the period of each particular event.

We believe that the use of Capoeira as a tourist product, whether or not associated with ethnic-Afro tourism, has not yet reached its full potential, since greater professionalisation is required of the agents involved in this segment.

REFERENCES


