

TOURISM MANAGEMENT AT UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES: THE CASE OF ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO

GESTÃO TURÍSTICA EM DESTINOS CLASSIFICADOS COMO PATRIMÓNIO MUNDIAL DA UNESCO: O CASO DE ANGRA DO HEROÍSMO

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Abstract

The Autonomous Region of the Azores is characterized by strong insularity, small size, territorial dispersion, and limited accessibilities, which hinder its economic development. Due to its classification as a UNESCO World Heritage city (UWH), Angra do Heroísmo brings together opportunities for the development of cultural tourism at the regional level. This investigation aims to contribute to the analysis and understanding of the current management model of this classification, to guarantee the effective valuation of the heritage to be enhanced as a WHS, and to generate a greater qualification of its supply. For this purpose, in addition to contextual theoretical analysis, interviews were applied to stakeholders associated with the themes under study, which resulted in proposals for the effective valorization of the destination. It is concluded that the valuation of Angra do Heroísmo as a tourist destination requires a thorough understanding between entities, in particular, those operating within the classified area. Also, the development of a management and planning model seems crucial, so that strategic priorities on this particular WHS development are defined. In turn, these actions would be reflected throughout the region, reinforcing the identity and notoriety of the destination.

Keywords

UNESCO World Heritage, Cultural tourism, Tourism planning, Angra do Heroísmo, Azores

1. Introduction

In an era of accelerated paradigm shifts, tourism is assumed as one of the most dynamic and complex sectors on a global scale. Endowed with a characteristic structure and high flexibility, the sector has the capacity of enhancing sustainable development on destinations (UNWTO, 2018). As a multidisciplinary network, tourism shows a preponderant ability to promote the construction of wider ecosystems for society, fostering dialogues with many related sectors, such as culture, education, the environment, the economy or science.

We are witnessing a growing demand for active, emotional, engaging, close, transformative and creative experiences in the visited territories (Coelho, Gosling, & de Almeida, 2018; Sheldon, 2020; Richards, 2019). In this context, the association between tourism and cultural elements has been strengthened in recent decades, either due to tourism growth or by cultural experiences which are widely valued among tourism supply. These experiences perpetuate cultural heritage as a source of local identity within a globalized world (Van Oers & Haraguchi, 2010).

The economy of the Autonomous Region of the Azores (ARA) is predominantly associated with the service sector, but the primary sector continues to have a very significant weight, rooted in agriculture and fishing. Factors such as its outermost condition, small scale and high territorial dispersion are still important conditioning factors for development (Silva, 2017). However, improvements in accessibility and strong growth of tourist demand past 2014 have led tourism towards a strategic position in ARA's economic and social development (IPDT, 2019; TP, 2018).

With a relatively limited supply of sun, beaches and warm temperatures' sea, the Azores seek to sustain its strategy in its natural and cultural resources. Regarding the cultural offer, the heritage classified by UNESCO can play a prominent role, both for its uniqueness and its notoriety. Thus, the interest of the UWH of Angra do Heroísmo for the preservation of its past and historical legacy is understood, while it plans and models its strategies for the enhancement of tourism.

This paper assumes the importance of tourist activity in the ARA as a useful element for the development of regional economy, with emphasis on the case study of this research, Angra do Heroísmo, and its cultural tourism supply. The conducted research aims to analyze how the classification of UNESCO World Heritage city in Angra do Heroísmo has been managed and whether it has been contributing to the development of tourism. A qualitative study of the territory was carried out, conducting semi-structured interviews (n=13) with different entities on Terceira Island and their tourist stakeholders.

2. Cultural tourism and UNESCO World Heritage

The link between the tourism sector and cultural heritage is triggering new identities capable of mobilizing both tourism supply and demand, which encourages destinations to develop new tourist models (Oliveira, 2000). According to Carvalho (2017), cultural

tourism has its origins on the motivations and perceptions of tourists which include their influx to sites whose historical legacy of Man, represented by heritage, cultural collection or others, at different times, turns out to be the main product.

One of the foundations of cultural tourism is heritage, namely built and tangible assets (Van Oers & Haraguchi, 2010). However, the concept of heritage is broad and encompasses contemporaneity and tradition, natural and built environments. According to UNESCO (2019b) "heritage" is "the legacy of our past with which we live and which we pass on to future generations". The uniqueness of the people's cultural identity highlights the importance of safeguarding their collective memories, their cultural manifestations, and their values. It also reinforces the importance of legitimizing that this legacy, as well as what is created in the present moment and the future, is effectively transmitted to the posteriority (UNESCO, 2019a).

Concentration of heritage resources turns out to be an attraction factor for tourist destinations (UNWTO, 2012). By paving the way for tourism development, heritage benefits from the former due to its ability to generate revenue that may be reinvested in safeguarding, creating jobs, sensitizing, among other different uses (Pedersen, 2005). However, high tourist density may also lead to negative effects in terms of experience, working conditions, cost of living, as well as degradation of the heritage itself as a tourism resource (Martins, 2017).

If the media and globalization tend to stimulate tourism growth adding new threats on human legacy, an integrated vision of cultural heritage value is capable of favoring several aspects of society. The promotion of collective values, quality of life and self-esteem, the active participation of citizens and their intervention, may awaken visitor's interest, curiosity and responsibility (ICOMOS, 1999; Lopes, 2018).

Regarding heritage, local communities play an important role as their enjoyment, participation and involvement is crucial to effective governance (García-Hernández, Calle-Vaquero, & Yubero, 2017). In this sense, the creation of environments that encourage public and private connections and promote cooperation and co-creation between academic, business or municipal entities is essential for tourism development (TP, 2017).

Cultural heritage is an opportunity for the development of places and their populations, although it poses some challenges in terms of its management (Pérez & Salinas, 2015). Thus, an holistic vision of heritage is required, duly accompanied by a strategic plan, as fundamental tools for efficient management (Silva & Umbelino, 2017).

3. Angra do Heroísmo as an UNESCO World Heritage City

The ARA comprises an archipelago of nine islands, located in the North Atlantic and organized, due to their geographical proximity, in three groups: the Eastern Group (Santa Maria and São Miguel), the Central Group (Terceira, Graciosa, São Jorge, Pico and Faial) and the Western Group (Flores and Corvo). Ultraperipheral condition and high geographical dispersion are presented as specific features that characterize the Azores

archipelago, whose total area occupies about 2333 km², approximately 1500 km from Europe's western coast and 3900 km from North America (Maduro-Dias, 1997; SREA, 2021). In 2019, the Azores received 971 794 tourists, representing just over 3 million overnight stays, mainly concentrated in São Miguel (2 073 282 overnight stays), Terceira (391 980), Faial (193 250) and Pico (170 301) islands (SREA, 2021). These results indicate a high propensity for tourist concentration particularly on the island of São Miguel (68.9% of all overnight stays).

Despite this high concentration of tourist activity, the Strategic and Marketing Plan of the Azores considers that tourism development in the Azores must be based on a true policy of territorial cohesion that involves the maximization of the “archipelago” element (IPDT, 2016). This plan presupposes that the ARA's rich identity, together with its cultural, landscape and heritage specificities, legitimize the differentiation of the territory and, at the same time, the complementarity between the nine islands of the Azores.

Hence, Azorean islands specificities justify the investment in tourist products of reference, either through its natural heritage, or the exploration of other segments and market niches where the strengths of cultural heritage are evident (Silva, 2017). This investment can thus be adopted as a paradigm in terms of cultural heritage for greater participation of local society, as well as in the development of family economic structures (Cunha, 2017). However, the Azores strategic model is nowadays focused on its central products - nature tourism and nautical tourism, needing a greater articulation with its cultural heritage.

In 1983 Angra do Heroísmo was classified as a UWH city. According to Pedersen (2005), this classification may contribute to the promotion of tourist attractions and greater notoriety in destinations, leading to growth in tourist demand. The Historical Center of Angra do Heroísmo includes an area of properties with an exceptional value of approximately 212.40 hectares (additional 223.85 hectares may be added, corresponding to the buffer zone) that includes “the port, the defensive fortifications system, the urban plan, the monumental religious architecture and the characteristic vernacular architecture” (UNESCO, 2019c).

Maintaining these exceptional values requires the conservation of urban fabric and an administration (management plan) that preserves existing attributes and that guarantees the legacy for future generations (Decreto Legislativo Regional No 15/84/A de 13 de Abril, 1984). To answer the need of establishing an effective legal basis that considers the historic centre of Angra do Heroísmo as a Regional Monument and UWH city, in 1984, Regional Legislative Decree No. 15/84 / A, of April 13 was published. This diploma determined, in its article 37, the creation of the Angra do Heroísmo Classified Zone Office, which is part of the Heritage Services Directorate under the jurisdiction of the Regional Secretariat for Education and Culture (Decreto Regulamentar Regional No 26/1987/A de 26 de Agosto, 1987; Maduro-Dias, 1997).

However, the aforementioned Cabinet would be extinguished by the Directorate of Property and Cultural Action Services, considering the independence of the administrative, financial and operational systems of the historical centre of Angra do

Heroísmo in charge. The deliberations related to the patrimony started to be directed by the Regional Directorate of Culture (DRC) and the technical studies were, in turn, in charge of the Architectural Heritage Division of this entity (Decreto Regulamentar Regional No 3/2006/A de 10 de Janeiro, 2006).

The classified area, categorized as National Monument, Regional Monument and Asset of Public Interest, the Regime for the Cultural Heritage Protection and Enhancement was placed in force, by Law No. 107/2001, of September 8 (UNESCO, 2019c). These conditions gave the city authority, responsibility and commitment to complete and implement all the instruments of a management plan whose goal was to preserve and improve UWH attributes. The city is also responsible for direct supervision of the state of preservation of each building and its reconstruction. This plan establishes rules for heritage safeguarding and the development of traditional commerce, services and tourism, which promote quality of life, both for visitors and residents (CMAH, 2014; UNESCO, 2019c).

In 2004, the Municipal Master Plan came into force, which, in its genesis, works as an instrument of spatial planning and management. This plan intended to i) guarantee a stable socio-economic development; ii) ensure quality and balanced use of natural resources; iii) value local heritage through well-being conditions, generating attractiveness to the territory in an integrated way (CMAH, 2004; Gonçalves, 2016). In general, and by observing territory's reality, the aims of the instrument are being met, although there are no available documents regarding carried actions (Valadao, 2017).

The Integrated Plan for Sustainable Urban Regeneration is currently underway, as a result of the Azores 2020 Operational Program. This program presents strategic references that pursue ARA development, following government policies for the 2014-2020 period (Governo dos Açores, 2020). These guidelines seek an innovative, inclusive and balanced region, and the supply of unique experiences focused on the natural and cultural heritage of the Azorean islands (Governo dos Açores, 2020). It is an integrated operational strategy for Angra do Heroísmo, which aims to develop an action plan for the period from 2014 to 2020 and materialize a set of actions that promote the quality of the urban environment through improvements at an economic, social, cultural and environmental level. Also, it reinforces local identity as a factor of attractiveness and differentiation for the destination (CMAH, 2014). The program, which adds other existing plans, such as the Terceira Island Economic Revitalization Plan, the Detailed Safeguard Plan of the Municipality of Angra do Heroísmo, among others, characterizes the territory and presents a set of priority objectives and actions concerning tourism, urban regeneration, the environment and quality of life, and public infrastructures. However, it doesn't specify any guidelines to obtain these results (CMAH, 2014).

These plans recognize the relevance of Angra do Heroísmo historical past, its identity elements and the importance of its inherited cultural assets. These and other elements can be reinterpreted in contemporary cultural models, for a no less transatlantic future that integrates this city in a contemporary world.

3. Methodology

To achieve the goals of this research, in addition to literature review, the study relied on the application of interviews with a set of reference tourism stakeholders, following a qualitative approach. Considering the importance of contacting different agents in the tourism sector (given their heterogeneity of roles, experiences and perceptions), and the main objectives of the investigation, the study has the purpose to develop new syntheses based on the analysis of the carried out interviews.

Thus, four groups of interviewees were established (table 1), and the structure of the interview scripts was adapted to each set of entities. The first group, composed of the personalities who were directly and indirectly involved in the UNESCO's application process for World Heritage City, intends to know the impact of the classification for local tourism at the time of its attribution. The second group, representing tourist agents and local entities under this study subjects, intends to investigate issues related to tourism development within the scope of cultural tourism and UNESCO World Heritage, namely concerning its potential and challenges that may arise. The third group is addressed to local leaders, whose knowledge of the strategic and tourist reality promotes the continuous exploration of the destination and its appreciation by the UWH. The last group of interviewees was present at the VII Iberian Meeting of World Heritage Managers, held in Angra do Heroísmo between October 28 and 29, 2019, related to heritage management. With this model authors intended to identify local needs and respective management, as well as their critical success factors in valuing the destination based on the UWH classification.

Table 1. Identification of interviewees groups that comprise the study universe

Group / Sample	Study universe
Group 1 - PA (PA1, PA2, PA3, PA4) 4 interviews	Directly and indirectly personalities involved in the application process of Angra do Heroísmo to UWH city.
Group 2 – AET (AET5, AET6, AET7) 3 interviews	Tourist agents and local entities under study subjects.
Group 3 – LL (LL8, LL9, LL10) 3 interviews	Local leaders.
Group 4 – ES (ES11, ES12, ES13) 3 interviews	External Specialists from ARA.

The methodological approach was based on a non-probabilistic sample consisting of twenty-two entities with direct or indirect influence on the territorial, cultural and tourist development strategies associated with the planning and management of the UWH city of Angra do Heroísmo. As shown in Table 2, 13 interviews were developed and validated.

These interviews were recorded and later transcribed, with the informed consent of all interested parties.

The application of the interviews was held mostly in person and, exceptionally, by videoconference, between May 26 and September 3, 2020.

In 2020, Terceira Island registered, in terms of tourism recreation supply, 40 companies with land activities, 14 companies with nautical activities and 31 official interpreter guides (DRT, 2019). Regarding cultural and landscape touring, 9 companies were counted to carry out cultural tours whose supply included thematic urban itineraries, contact with artisanal techniques, and other equally rich and diverse experiences (ART, 2020).

Table 2. Identification of entities associated with the study universe

Group / Sample	Study universe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Former President of the Azores Regional Legislative Assembly - Former Mayor of Angra do Heroísmo - Former Regional Director of “Cultural Affairs” - Former Regional Secretary for Education and Culture 	PA1, PA2, PA3, PA4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guide-interpreters (n = 3) - Tourism recreation companies with cultural supply (n = 6) - Ex-Coordinator of the development of the cultural product 	AET5, AET6, AET7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current Mayor of Angra do Heroísmo - Current President of Angra do Heroísmo Chamber of Commerce and Industry - Former Regional Director of Culture - Former President of the Classified Zone of Angra do Heroísmo Office 	LL8, LL9, LL10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current President of the Board of Directors of the Cõa Parque Foundation - Park Güell Technical Secretary - Casa Batlló World Heritage Responsible - Founder & CEO of Spira, patrimonial revitalization agency 	ES11, ES12, ES13

4. Analysis and Discussion of Results

After acknowledging the particularities of the territory, assessing the state of cultural tourism as well as the region's tourist supply and consulting other management models, such as the case of the city of Regensburg with Stadtamhof, or Park Güell, the interviews were carried out. Considering the range of obtained answers, collected information was structured into ten thematic areas (TA), which correspond to the sum of the questions in the interview guides. Different categories were also identified for each TA and, finally, the information resulting from data analysis was crossed with three main dimensions of analysis (D1, D2 and D3).

Thematic areas TA1 (evaluation of the impact of classification on the city, heritage and community), TA2 (analysis of the impact of classification on the development and

reputation of the destination to date) and TA3 (use of the classification in tourism positioning and promotion) are the areas that best reflect the importance of the UWH classification in the tourist development of Angra do Heroísmo (D1).

To understand the current tourism context in Angra do Heroísmo (D2), TA2 (analysis on the impact of the classification on the destination's development and its notoriety so far) and TA5 (measures to enhance Angra do Heroísmo as a tourist destination) were crossed.

The third dimension (D3) seeks to cross UNESCO World Heritage classification with this specific destination tourism development potential. For this purpose, chosen thematic areas were TA4 (knowing the developed initiatives following the classification up to the present day), TA6 (understanding whether or not there is a management and planning model for the “cultural tourism” product), and TA7 (realize which proposals can effectively contribute to the valuation of the destination through the UWH classification). These TA comprise, in general, the finding of valorization solutions that enhance the tourist development of Angra do Heroísmo, represented in table 3.

Table 3. Connection of thematic areas (TA) with the main dimensions of analysis (DA)

Dimensions	TA1	TA2	TA3	TA4	TA5	TA6	TA7	TA8	TA9	TA10
D1 Tourism development of AH	X	X	X							
D2 Current tourism context in AH		X			X					
D3 Tourism development potential associated to the classification				X		X	X	X	X	X

Importance of the UWH classification in the tourism development of Angra do Heroísmo (D1)

The classification of Angra do Heroísmo as a UWH city brought the benefit of “raising people's awareness for the importance of cultural heritage”, as mentioned by interviewee PC2. In fact, this UWH classification supports a common and irreplaceable heritage, which links the past and the future of human traditions, so it is fundamental to preserve it (Pérez & Salinas, 2015).

With the development of regional legislation for the classified area, the issues of heritage preservation and integration, as well as the importance of the city's historical heritage would be assured for posterity. Interviewee PC3 reinforces this idea when he mentions that it is important to “call the attention of what had been lost, but also to call the attention of what eventually was not lost and may be taken advantage of”.

As this classification was the result of a natural disaster, the process of elevating the city to UWH emerged as an urgent opportunity. It is assumed, therefore, that due to the occasion, the population has not been properly consulted for this purpose. As interviewee AET5 stated, “unfortunately, I think that people do not have this idea of where they are, and the wealth that we have around us”. It thus seems natural that, not knowing the

inherent value of its heritage, the population lives with some indifference, as mentioned by interviewee PC3. This indifference makes it difficult to assume the heritage as an asset in the short, medium, and long term. In other words, openness to community participation and involvement is essential to ensure their level of participation and cultural enjoyment (García-Hernández, Calle-Vaquero & Yubero, 2017).

As some interviewees pointed out, among the population, there was an idea that heritage impeded modernity and progress. Interviewee EE12 states: “the truly lived heritage is the heritage that is inscribed in the present and that has a dimension of the future”.

Another widely mentioned aspect was the lack of use of the UWH title to value and promote the city. Respondents argue that the city has not developed tourism as a result of the UWH classification, as mentioned by interviewee AET5: “the fact that the city is a World Heritage Site is, unfortunately something that many times, for tourists, is unknown”.

In other words, the positive impact that the UWH classification has on other cities or classified goods is not verified in the case of this city. UWH classification did not have a significant impact on the city's reputation as a tourism destination; and Angra do Heroísmo seems to make little use of this title to position and promote the destination and to value the territory.

Perception of the current tourism context in Angra do Heroísmo (D2)

The tourism sector in the Azores has shown significant growth, as demonstrated by the number of overnight stays. (INE, 2018). According to interviewee AET7, the Azores are a relatively recent destination, whose core product is nature, and “it is normal that all the recent work has been focused on nature tourism, contact with nature or active tourism”.

Cultural heritage and the UWH classification, according to interviewee AET7, end up bypassing the communication of the destination - “we have not yet been able to communicate the fact that we have a UNESCO World Heritage city”. The strength of this inscription on the UWH list must be accompanied by a strategy that activates the value of the city through its identity and image, requiring the implementation of a communication campaign at national and international levels (Regensburg, 2012).

We can also verify that the valorization of Angra do Heroísmo, in terms of preservation of the built heritage, was successful, as mentioned by interviewee PC4, who points out that “the city became undeniably interesting, respecting a homogeneous design”. However, half of the interviewees stated that they were not aware of defined measures to enhance the city in terms of tourism development. According to interviewee EE12, the classification ends up being “static, in the sense that what is recognized is the value of the buildings and not exactly the value of the cultural activity currently resulting those structures”.

It is possible to verify that the city has dynamized and supported cultural animation programs, organized both by the municipality and its citizens. These programs have been

developed in several municipal spaces, opened for both community and the tourists. Interviewee AET6 states that “the city is participating in several meetings, but it was not able to join them with an integrated plan”. And he specifically criticizes the passive attitude in some encounters: “when you go to the meeting, you should listen and understand the discussed topics - it can't result in anything every time”. In other words, participation in these events must subsequently ensure the activation and coordination of collective or individual actions that, based on shared knowledge, are synonymous of profitable work in terms of city management.

According to interviewee EE13, “networking with other heritage management institutions is crucial so that the entity that manages the heritage can understand what the best management practices are”. He adds that this work proves to be essential “for us to understand what are the common problems and solutions in a combined way”.

It is concluded that the tourism sector in the Azores is strategically based on its main product – nature, which has been significantly developed with an increase in demand. Angra do Heroísmo successfully managed to preserve its buildings, although half of the interviewees are unaware of the defined measures for valuing the city as a tourist destination. It is believed that tourism development depends on local valuation and its opening to foreigners, supported by integrated networks such as UWH.

Tourism development potential associated with the UNESCO World Heritage classification (D3)

It is concluded that Angra do Heroísmo lacks a more focused and adequate management model, and it appears that many of the actions that have been developed end up not having an adequate impact on the tourist destination. When asked about a management plan, the answers only reflect a few management initiatives and scheduling of cultural events. As interviewee AET5 states: “I think that the City Council has several projects, which in essence go through cultural management of the city”. Interviewee AET7, on the other hand, reacts to the question stating that: “in Angra, specifically, no. We are working on the development of cultural tourism and, in this case, cultural and scenic touring (e.g. creating thematic routes)”.

The development of content and routes emerges as a necessity to stimulate tourism growth. Interviewee AET5 suggests: “take what exists and use the imagination. And put people in a relationship with this imaginary”. He also adds that “what is important in the background, and in these cultural products, mainly, is to convey this emotion, of people being able to look at things and to imagine history”.

Nevertheless, measures should be framed in a strategic reference, integrated into a management plan. All the questioned interviewees considered that the implementation of a management model is very important. As interviewee EE13 explains, the management of a classified property must “define in a very specific way what is the strategy to be followed by the managing institution”.

The relevance of the community, previously mentioned, appears as a proposal that gathers the consensus of nine of the interviewees, as a measure that contributes to the

appreciation of the destination under study. According to interviewee EE13 “the first heritage defence line should be the communities that are closest to the heritage. And that can only be achieved by carrying out a systematic action to raise awareness and towards preservation”. Interviewee AET5 asserts that “it involves a lot of training for the local population. So if we can get those who live here to understand what they have, we will be able to sell this product in a different way”. One of the possible approaches, as mentioned by interviewee AET5, would be “if we were able to convey all these historical events and the form of the narrative to people from a very early age, we would be able to have affection. Because what is often lacking in history is affection”.

The target audience was another guideline presented by six interviewees. As interviewee PC2 says, “if we are going to promote the World Heritage city, we have to look for market segments?” For instance, working with knowledge networks, such as universities, teachers and students, “a market segment where the city may be greatly promoted as a World Heritage Site”, mentions interviewee PC2. Basically, cultural tourism also offers opportunities at the level of the target audience, with a strategic focus on market niches to develop the visitation of destinations (ETC & WTO, 2005).

The promotion was highlighted by four of the surveyed entities. As interviewee LL10 mentions, about a specific project in which he was involved, “we had panels in all those corners explaining what was being done, why it was being done, and what they could see resulting from what was being done”. In this context, interviewee EE12 also highlighted the differentiation of the destination, that is, “how it differs from the rest of the competition”.

When asked about the advantages and disadvantages associated with the UWH classification, as mentioned by interviewee EE13, there are “positive consequences, so to speak, at the level of notoriety that this heritage asset gains and also at the level of accountability for the safeguarding, preservation and enhancement of this heritage”.

The main disadvantage is related to the massification of tourism which, according to EE11, ends up generating “a series of negative externalities”. The interviewee also adds that “when we attract tourism in a massified way, it excludes those who had a closer feeling to the heritage and promotes a generational change, towards visitors who are increasingly disconnected from this heritage”.

For interviewee EE13, the priority “is to ensure that this heritage remains in ideal conditions for the future. (...) I think that we should always privilege the preservation of the heritage to the detriment of this other component”.

To adopt a strategic positioning, it is necessary to find an identity, create a narrative and define a vision. According to interviewee EE12, “the first step towards a destination like Angra do Heroísmo is to have an idea of what you want the destination to be”. Interviewee LL9 reinforces this idea, stating that “only with vocation does one know what one wants”.

For interviewee EE11, one of the great challenges for the next decade is to get citizens to connect and reconnect with their UWH without having to give up tourism. In other

words, how to maintain the evolution of sustainable tourism for heritage assets, for communities and for the cities themselves is the question.

Numerous advantages associated with the UWH are confirmed including international notoriety; the mandatory nature of a management plan; the study and dissemination of the heritage asset; the creation of educational programs aimed at raising awareness for the importance of this heritage and its preservation; and the qualification and management of internal resources.

Regarding proposals likely to contribute to the valorization of Angra do Heroísmo as a tourist destination, through the UWH classification, different suggestions were presented by the interviewees, such as: community participation; the importance of a strategic framework; product development; the target audience; the vision; the promotion; the need to define and manage its carrying capacity; heritage safeguard; and the differentiation of the destination.

5. Proposals for the Valuation of Angra do Heroísmo as a Tourist Destination

The research results suggest that the valorization of Angra do Heroísmo as a UWH city should be based on a management and strategic planning model, supported by the vectors of citizenship, business fabric, governance and services, under the following dimensions: i) Valorization and knowledge; ii) Valorization and community; and iii) Valorization and culture.

i) Valorization and knowledge

Sustainability is presented as a necessary requirement for greater efficiency in the use of local resources (Gustavo, 2012). As such, it is crucial to “know how to get out”: inventory resources, map usage and regeneration rates, and define local carrying capacity.

The training of human resources must, above all, prioritize the need for and importance of children's heritage education. The development of policies and a plan within the scope of heritage education allows younger age groups to play, live and interact with heritage resources and knowledge in a consistent and structured way throughout their school and personal development. Such knowledge enables future consumers, producers, professionals and owners of this heritage to create an affection with their identity and cultural legacy.

The development of skills, in the public, private and community sectors, related to their identity, historical and cultural legacy, reinforces individual and collective self-esteem, improves the understanding of the environment in which they operate, stimulates and adds confidence in the performance of their actions and guidelines for obtaining results.

It is also necessary to promote training and qualification of local artisans, knowledge and techniques, networked so that in the future it will be possible to have people working on the local heritage. Such measures must be supported by a true policy that promotes

and dignifies these skills from childhood, which ultimately contributes to local economic development and competitiveness.

At the same time, strengthen the territory as a place for the study and dissemination of cultural heritage. The integration of the University Campus of Angra do Heroísmo in national and international knowledge networks should foster exchanges between students, professors and universities with a focus on the UWH and cultural tourism. The association of these agents in the working groups for the management of the historic center it is also proposed.

ii) Valorization and community

The valuation of UWH cities suggests the motto “transmit and feel to engage and participate”. The management of cultural heritage must follow a bottom-up logic that encourages the active participation of the community in valuing their city, as part of a process in which the population is invited to co-create new narratives and meanings, in a true exercise of culture democratization (Nakano, 2013).

Such participation leads to new environments for dialogue that benefit local well-being and quality of life, as well as a positive relationship of preservation and promotion of its heritage. It also drives the long-term implementation of the established management model regardless of the current political orientation.

An informed society, with the possibility of being heard, that sees in governance practical results and objectives, is an empowered community available to forge a strengthened identity. As such, it is necessary to boost local and regional cooperation between municipalities and parish councils, through the development of a network system. It is necessary to encourage the development of projects / thematic studies that connect Angra do Heroísmo with the networks of which the city is part.

iii) Valorization and culture

Culture harmoniously adapts to modern life providing a broader and more complete vision of society. The integration and promotion of creativity in the tourist atmosphere encourages the appreciation, consumption and production of cultural, artistic and creative content, according to a logic associated with experience and other events (Richards, 2011).

Thus, it is proposed that Angra do Heroísmo should be reinterpreted as a port of creation of cultural activity, discussion and sharing. This approach promotes synergies linked to art, dance, music, and other artistic manifestations in articulation with cities that integrate the same networks, as a way to promote and spread these cultural practices. Being Angra do Heroísmo inserted in a particular historical, social and political context, cultural and artistic productions bring to citizenship problems such as the population aging, or the garbage production, among others, which can be observed, explored and promoted the dialogue, volunteering and collaboration.

According to Pereira, Baptista and Martins (2017), cultural heritage consists of a social and cultural construction where the particular characteristics of the place result in a

structured product, with value and meaning, which follows a very similar reasoning to the construction of a brand. A brand generates value and culture, and cultural heritage can be expressed as an alternative model of management, economic and social development.

With the evolution of the global tourist market and within the current information environment, the active use of communication channels reduces geographical distance, encourages interaction and favors its attractiveness, as well as the permanent updating of content and, above all, promotes the destination next to the public, even in specific niches.

The identity of the Azores is being strategically highlighted as a whole, but the parts that make up this whole have particularities that must be highlighted individually, in order to enhance the local character. As such, it is essential to define and develop an identity and a narrative integrated in a communication strategy for the first Portuguese city classified as UWH. Communication should focus on promoting seminars and conferences, also events (for example, cultural weeks about the main source markets, to enable the community to get to know its visitors).

Ultimately, tourism management in UWH cities must, above all, define a vision for the destination, present an integrated management model and a strategic plan articulated with other sectors, such as culture, environment, education and employment. From the relationship established between tourism, community and visitors, it seeks to obtain pleasant and satisfying experiences for all parties involved and, above all, attract and involve the resident population through the enjoyment of the spaces and equipment of their heritage and historical Center.

5. Conclusions

Safeguarding and respecting heritage that carries memories and values from the past requires an integrated vision at political, economic, social, cultural and environmental levels. In addition to encompassing a logic of protection of the local identity, stakeholders must encourage the continuous and effective growth of their community through knowledge and education, diverse and creative contents that encourage their citizens to relate to the goods and understand it (Carvalho, 2012; Martins, 2017).

However, in the case of Angra do Heroísmo, the classification has not been significantly reflected in the development of the city as a tourist destination. The immediate external validation from UWH classification, which linked its local identity to the globalized world, revealed itself to be little effective. Empirical research suggests the absence of strategic planning in an integrated model for sustainable development (Hill & Jones, 2005; Teixeira, 2011). As interviewee AET6 mentioned “(...) the city is participating in several meetings (...), but it has not been able to join them in an integrated plan”. According to interviewee EE13 “(...) networking with other heritage management institutions (...) is crucial for the managing entity to better understand what the best management practices are, so that it can get involved, in fact, in integrated management

programs (...)"'. He adds that this work is essential "(...) to understand what the common problems are [and] what solutions we can find in a combined way (...)".

Thus, several gaps are noted, especially at the level of management and planning strategies carried out by the responsible bodies, suggesting the need for a vision that values and projects it as a UWH city at its maximum potential, capable of promoting development and integration of the territory at a social, economic and cultural level (Dutra, 2020). For this, the government's involvement with the community plays an extremely important role in terms of cultural enjoyment and citizen participation, which ends up influencing the local quality of life and the tourist experience (García-Hernández, Calle-Vaquero, & Yubero, 2017). Through the commodification of culture, cultural heritage today positively affects the mission of different cultural entities in terms of employment, educational service, public service, dissemination, access, research and other aspects (Lopes, 2017). There is even a transformation in the way culture is consumed, how tourism is presented and in the way tourism consumption itself drives its production, with an impact on the growth of cultural tourism (Richards, 2011).

The valorization of Angra do Heroísmo as a UNESCO World Heritage city brings conditions and opportunities for the development of cultural tourism at a regional level. Such elevation implies the development of a management and planning model that defines strategic priorities associated with cultural tourism, interpretation and reinterpretation of the UWH.

The optimization of a management system allows generating data that ensure the protection of heritage as stipulated by UNESCO, as well as monitoring the status of implementation and updating of a management plan (Richards, 2014). It is concluded that the valorization of Angra do Heroísmo as a tourist destination requires in-depth knowledge among various entities, particularly those that operate in the classified area, and the development of a management and planning model that define strategic priorities involving trends associated with the cultural tourism, interpretation and reinterpretation of the UWH. In turn, this appreciation will be reflected throughout the region, reinforcing the identity and reputation of the destination.

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