

**GEOTURISMO E ECOTURISMO: REFLEXÕES COM RELAÇÃO AO
GEOPARQUE SERTÃO MONUMENTAL-CE E O MUNICÍPIO DE BONITO-MS**

**GEOTURISM AND ECOTOURISM: REFLECTIONS IN RELATION TO
GEOPARQUE SERTÃO MONUMENTAL-CE AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF
BONITO-MS**

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ABSTRACT

What distinctions can be observed between Geotourism and Ecotourism? In the relationship between tourism and the environment, especially associated with nature, these expressions have stood out in recent decades. We present this brief essay, with the aim of increasing this discussion, from the perspective of otherness (contrasts) in the theater of real life, between the scenarios of Geoparque Sertão Monumental-CE and the municipality of Bonito-MS.

Keywords: Sertão Monumental; Geotourism; Geopark

RESUMO

Que distinções pode se observar entre o Geoturismo e o Ecoturismo? Na relação do turismo com o meio ambiente, especialmente associado a natureza, essas expressões têm se destacado nas últimas

décadas. Apresentamos este breve ensaio, com o objetivo de incrementar essa discussão, sob o prisma da alteridade (contrastes) no teatro da vida real, entre os cenários do Geoparque Sertão Monumental-CE e do município de Bonito-MS.

Palavra-chaves: Sertão Monumental; Geoturismo; Geoparque

INTRODUCTION

Tourism, considered a strategic area for generating economic resources for private enterprises and governmental administrations, has become increasingly diversified, attracting audiences from different social sectors with varied interests. Within this context, Ecotourism and Geotourism have emerged as prominent segments. Thus, as a means to present new perspectives on these tourism segments, this essay aims to explore reflections regarding the Geopark Sertão Monumental, a new UNESCO Global Geopark project in the state of Ceará, and the municipality of Bonito in Mato Grosso do Sul, considered the "capital of ecotourism" in Brazil

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

This essay proposal is based on the experiences, discussions, and activities carried out in the course "Dynamics of Symbolic Places: Imagination and Planning," part of the Graduate Program in Geography (PPGGEO) at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC). As an activity within the aforementioned course, an experiment was conducted applying a methodological proposal presented by the instructor, referred to as the "XYZ Triangular Methodology." Following the guidelines of the methodological essay project, the identification of a specific "X" (initial recognition of the preliminary research object) was proposed, followed by the selection of a "Y" (the "mirror" object, as an alternative "sign"), and through triangular analysis, a subsequent "Z" (rectified object) was derived. As illustrated in Figure 1 below, the initial use of the "XYZ Triangular Methodology" is depicted.

Among the various topics discussed during the classes, the text by Pavis (2003) was chosen for analysis. In his book "The Analysis of Performance," Pavis adopts a theatrical approach to the issues of space, time, and action. In it, the author emphasizes that one might expect space, action, and time to be the most tangible elements of a performance, but the difficulty lies not in describing them separately, but in observing their interaction (PAVIS, 2003).

Figure 1 - Initial use of the “XYZ” Triangular Methodology



Source: Monteiro (2020).

This time, inspired by Pavis (2003) and the reflection exercises promoted by the discipline, we took advantage of the opportunity of this essay to dare to present the application of the “XYZ Triangular Methodology”, using as a backdrop a “theatrical” approach, drawing parallels with scenarios, actors, scripts and others, to better illustrate the study developed in this analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the preliminary discussions, the research object "X" is now presented, titled "SERTÃO MONUMENTAL: a new Geopark Project, from Ceará to UNESCO." In this dramatized approach proposal, the following composition is presented: Geodiversity as the main star; the Geopark Project as the director; among the attractions are the geosites and local culture; the scenery comprises inselbergs, caves, the Caatinga biome, archaeology, paleontology, among others; the production scope involves geoconservation, geoeducation, and geotourism; maintenance is achieved through sustainable territorial development; the structure includes the Global Geoparks Network and national, state, and municipal intergovernmental coordination; the cast includes scientists, local populations, and sectors of education, culture, tourism, businesses, landowners, and governments; the target audience includes scientific, educational, nature, and adventure tourism; and in script development, emphasis is placed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO, universities, populations, and governments (Figure 2A).

For a better understanding of the plot described above, it is essential to understand what various authors in this field say about these themes. Regarding Geodiversity, Gray (2013) defines it as "the natural variety (diversity) of geological characteristics (rocks, minerals, fossils), geomorphological features (landforms, topography, physical processes), soils, and

hydrology. It includes their assemblages, structures, systems, and contributions to landscapes."

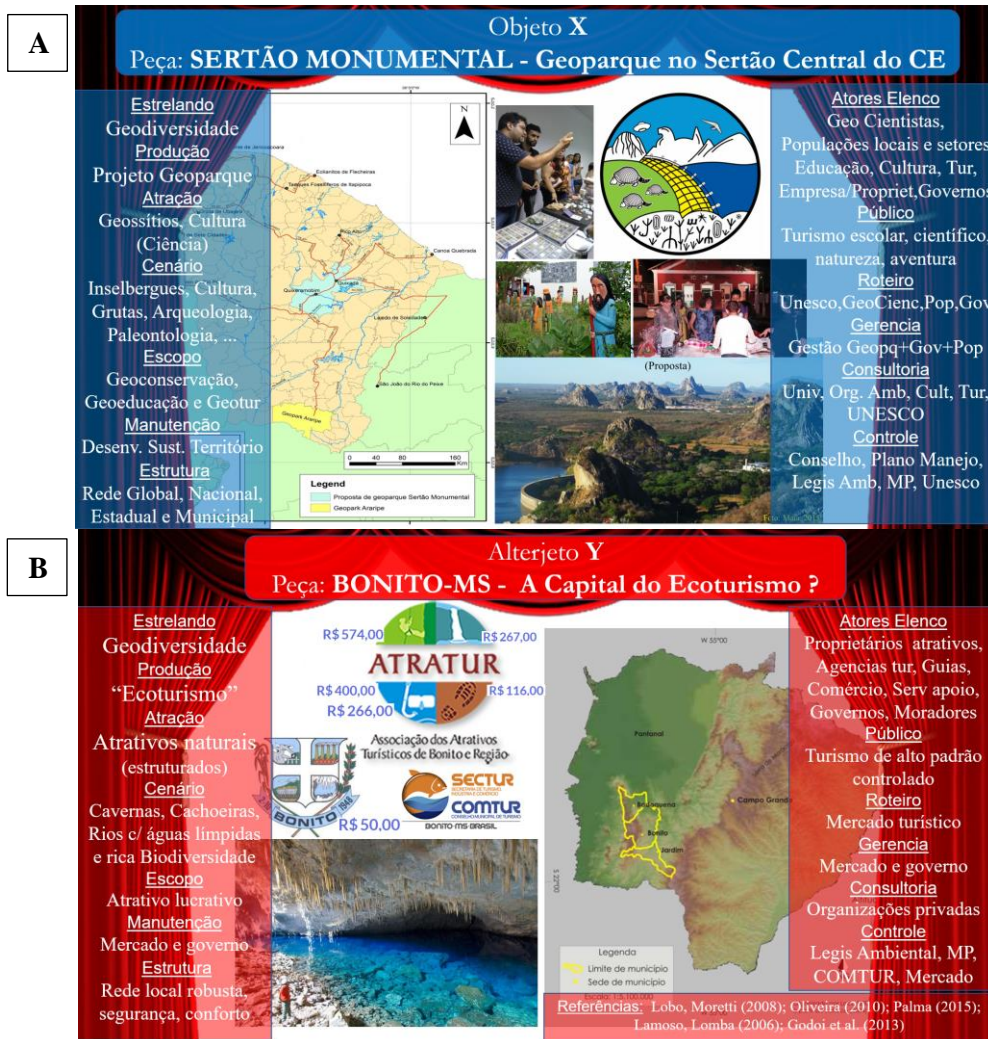
Regarding Geoparks, the UNESCO, the main sponsor of the Global Geoparks Network, defines them as unique and unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education, and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2021). Thus, the Geopark proposal combines nature conservation with the promotion of science and culture, encompassing local communities in the development of means to improve individuals' lives.

In the perspective of recognizing and leveraging the diverse natural potentials for scientific, touristic, and cultural uses of the Central Ceará Sertão region, the Proposal of the Monumental Sertão Geopark emerges (FREITAS et al., 2019). The proposal stands out for presenting a natural landscape of singular beauty, forming genuine inselberg fields, nestled in the extensive semi-arid backcountry (MONTEIRO et al., 2023). Regarding the term Geotourism, it can be understood as "tourism that sustains and enhances the identity of a territory, considering its geology, environment, culture, aesthetic values, heritage, and the well-being of its residents" (AROUCA, 2011).

On the other hand, in the aforementioned methodology, the "Object Y" (referred to by the instructor as "alterject," "mirror," or "alternative sign") was chosen as the theme of the piece: "BONITO (municipality in Mato Grosso do Sul): the capital of Ecotourism?" Similar to the previous dramatized approach proposal, geodiversity emerges as one of the main stars, but the similarities end there. We can observe that: Ecotourism serves as the direction; the main entertainment consists of well-structured natural attractions on properties; the scenery is composed of caves, waterfalls, rivers with clear waters, and rich biodiversity; the production scope involves the profitability of natural attractions; maintenance is achieved through the tourism market alongside the government; the structure includes a robust local business network, offering comfort and security; the cast includes attraction owners, tourism agencies, commerce, governments, tour guides, support services, and other local residents; the target audience focuses on controlled high-end tourism; and script development is dominated by the tourism market hegemony.

In Figure 2 below, the application of the "XYZ Triangular Methodology" is demonstrated for "Object X" based on Freitas et al. (2020) and Monteiro et al. (2023), and for "Object Y," according to the information from Lobo and Moretti (2008) and Oliveira (2010).

Figure 2 - Demonstration of the application of "Object X" and Object Y" of the "XYZ Triangular Methodology"



Bonito has been promoted through advertisements by tour operators and in the media as an ecotourism destination. The growth of this tourism product over the last 20 years, the improvement of access routes, the expansion of accommodation options, and the recent construction of an airport all point to a mass influx of tourists, which exacerbates a concerning situation that may escalate existing conflicts between conservationists and tourism stakeholders.

As per "Diretrizes para uma política nacional de ecoturismo" by the Brazilian Agency for International Tourism Promotion - EMBRATUR, ecotourism needs to be developed in a way that leads tourists to behave as a link between the use and conservation of the environment, with respect towards local communities (EMBRATUR, 1994). However, Lobo and Moretti (2008, p. 53) assert that "the destination of Bonito is marketed as ecotourism. It also proclaims itself as sustainable tourism. However, it could not be called so if existing theories on such forms of tourism were observed."

As a result of the proposed "Triangular XYZ Methodology," a subsequent "Rectified Object Z" is derived, which presents significant considerations for enhancing the analysis of the study object, such as: the issue of the appropriation of geodiversity and its sustainable use; the protection of geodiversity heritage (Geopatrimony); the importance of knowledge, appreciation, and awareness of the relevance of local geodiversity through Geoeducation work with the community; further research into the region's geopatrmony; the promotion of horizontal integration of various stakeholders in building a geopark project; and the purpose of implementing geotourism that promotes territorial sustainable development (environmental, economic, and social) with accessibility and inclusion for the general public.

Finally, it should be noted that there are academic disagreements about the conceptual relationship between Geotourism and Ecotourism, whether they are distinct segments or one is a subset of the other (JORGE; GUERRA, 2016). We can observe distinctions in their predominant approaches, while Ecotourism focuses on biodiversity (fauna and flora) in rural areas, Geotourism seeks geodiversity in both rural and urban areas.

CONCLUSIONS

In this summarized essay, we dared to present pertinent observations on Geotourism and Ecotourism, based on reflections regarding the Geoparque Sertão Monumental-CE and the municipality of Bonito-MS, exposing the development of an experience applying the "Triangular XYZ Methodology" proposal and using a theatrical approach as a backdrop. Initially, the aim was to understand which elements act and how the composition of the Geoparque Sertão Monumental is constituted, which as a UNESCO World Geopark Project seeks to materialize the preconceived ideas of Geotourism (AROUCA, 2011) - a tourism based on its territory and geodiversity, for the well-being of its residents. Following the application of the methodology, the initial procedure was replicated for the case of the municipality of Bonito-MS, considered as the "capital of Ecotourism." However, upon analyzing the whole work, it can be observed that despite also having geodiversity as one

of the main attractions, there are predominating differences with the former. Furthermore, it is highlighted that researchers point out some contradictions with the concept of Ecotourism. As a result of this "Triangular XYZ Methodology," important observations can be obtained for the rectification of the initial research object, which is the Geoparque Sertão Monumental Project, thus promoting its improvement. Ultimately, Geotourism and Ecotourism, with their distinctions and similarities, should fulfill the main objective of contributing to sustainable development, both locally and globally

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