



Tourism and traditional communities: a reflection on Ilha do Mel, Paraná, Brazil

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ABSTRACT: Tourism is part of the global consumption that responds to the economic and social dynamics of world capitalism. This activity is gaining more and more space and notoriety, mainly due to its potential in cultural, economic, geographic and social aspects. Thus, tourist activity can be considered an important factor for the socioeconomic development of traditional communities. Its understanding is more and more in the search for quality of life of a certain community, with the individuals that compose it having an effective participation in the whole process. That way, the study aimed to understand how tourism impacts on the socio-cultural development of the Caiçaras Communities of Ilha do Mel, Paraná (PR), Brazil. In this regard, the concept of traditional caiçaras communities was discussed, emphasizing the relationship between protected natural areas and the promotion of tourism. The methodological procedure was based on bibliographic research and individual interviews. As a result, it was identified that at the same time that tourism contributed to the establishment of new social relationships and subsequent cultural transformations, it has also encouraged communities to resignify cultural traits that define their members as Caiçaras, as Natives from Ilha do

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Mel. Finally, it appears that this stimulus through tourism materializes with proposals for cultural workshops, fishing culture and the practice of religious festivities.

Keywords: Tourism; Sociocultural Development; Traditional Community; Ilha do Mel.

1. INTRODUCTION

Defining the term tourism has become a complex task, due to the different faces it has. Currently, the approaches around tourism go through economics, geography, law, sociology and anthropology (PEREIRO; FERNANDEZ, 2018). Considering this diverse scenario, tourism is interpreted here as a complex and plural socioeconomic process, which reproduces life philosophies through social interactions. An activity, primarily social, which, in addition to promoting the displacement and consumption of the offer, promotes cultural, environmental and social knowledge, enabling interculturality and reflection on the world we inhabit (IRVING, 2015).

Just like its conceptualization, its development is complex, because tourism can occur from different methodologies and segments, offering a diversified offer, besides working as a diverse demand. The tourist activity goes from mass tourism to alternative tourism, from the conventional model to community tourism, from the sun and beach segment to health tourism, from basic infrastructure to super-infrastructure, from simple to luxurious offer, and from natural/rural attractions to urban ones. These are some characteristics that demonstrate the diversity and complexity that the development of tourism can present. It is a circumstance that suggests great reflections around the activity, that its development can generate positive and negative implications.

“Tourism is able to produce delimited spaces and destined spatially to a certain type of consumption” (RODRIGUES, 1996, p. 55), that way, it creates or transforms spaces according to its needs. Such transformations occur through touristification, a process in which the tourist activity appropriates geographical spaces, as well as their resources. It changes their primary configurations to meet market interests. The touristification transforms spaces and their resources through spatial (re)ordering or functional (re)adequacy due to tourist interests (VASCONCELOS, 2005; YOUNG; MARKHAM, 2019). Touristification can occur throughout the process of tourism development.

In this way, the tourist development process appropriates the existing resources in certain geographic spaces, whether local cultures or scenic beauties. Thus, it transforms them into tourist attractions with infrastructure capable of receiving a diversified tourist demand (MENDES, 2004; TAVARES, 2009).

According to Irving (2015), this scenario would not be problematic if it presented only positive results, but there are negative implications. Some of the negative impacts are: the commodification of natural and cultural resources; cultural transformations and staging; coercion and peripheralization of traditional communities; depletion of

natural resources; and among others that often occur when tourism is developed without planning (IRVING, 2015).

In the context of traditional communities, this discussion becomes even more emblematic. Such communities are often in a state of social vulnerability, since at times they have been deprived of their rights (ACSELRAD, 2010). This circumstance can facilitate the introduction of tourism, which can be a threat to communities and their cultural and environmental resources if not planned in the light of sustainability.

In order to understand these issues in more depth, we observed the traditional communities of Ilha do Mel, an important tourist attraction in the state of Paraná. It consists of two Full Protection Conservation Units and traditional caiçara communities, characteristics that make Ilha do Mel a complex territory. In face of this scenario, one might ask: how does tourism impact the socio-cultural development of the traditional communities of Ilha do Mel?

Therefore, this article seeks to understand how tourism impacts on the socio-cultural development of the caiçara communities on Ilha do Mel. For this purpose, it uses bibliographical research and individual interviews as methodological procedures. The text is presented in three moments, namely: 1) the term traditional caiçara community is conceptualized; 2) the concept of traditional caiçara communities is discussed, emphasizing the relationship between protected natural areas and the promotion of tourism; and 3) the tourism development in traditional communities of Ilha do Mel is discussed.

2. TRADITIONAL CAIÇARA COMMUNITIES

Brazil has a wide ethnic diversity, making it a multicultural country. Among the groups that make up this multiculturalism are the traditional communities. According to the National Decree 6040 of 2007, they are culturally differentiated groups that recognize themselves as such, have their own forms of social organization, and occupy and use territories and natural resources as a condition for their cultural, social, religious, ancestral, and economic reproduction. They also use knowledge, innovations, and practices generated and transmitted by tradition (BRASIL, 2007).

According to the Department of Human Rights and Citizenship of the state of Paraná, Brazil (DEDIHC, s/d), traditional peoples and communities are defined as Quilombolas, gypsies, African descendants, rubber tappers, Brazil nut gatherers, Babassu coconut breakers, Fundo de Pasto communities, faxinalenses, artisanal fishermen, shellfish collectors, ribeirinhos, varjeiros, caiçaras, beachgoer, ranchers, jangadeiros (fishers), Azoreans, campeiro (pampas person), tidewater settlers, pantaneiros, and caatingueiros, among others.

According to Almeida and Euzébio (2021), the concept of traditional community encompasses more than 20 different types of groups in Brazil, many of which are invisible in socio-political processes. Public policies directed at these communities often take little account of their particularities. This is due in part to the distance

between the policy makers and the traditional communities. Also, this circumstance can lead to public policies that are disconnected from the daily realities of these communities. Despite this, Brazil has two main legal instruments for the recognition and protection of these communities: Decree No. 6040/2007 and Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO). Both of them do not have their guidelines fully implemented, a situation that favors the reproduction of the peripheralization of these communities (ALMEIDA; EUZEBIO, 2021).

Among the various traditional peoples and communities, *caiçara* communities were chosen as the central focus of this research. The term *caiçara* comes from the Tupi-Guarani *caá-içara*, which was used to name the stakes placed around the villages and also the corral built of staked branches in the river to catch fish (ADAMS, 2000). Afterwards, the term came to denote the huts built on the beaches to store fishing gear and canoes, and then to characterize the residents of Cananéia. After that, it started to name the people who lived on the coast of the states of Paraná, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro (SAMPAIO, 1987; FUNDAÇÃO SOS MATA ATLÂNTICA, 1992; DIEGUES, 1994; ADAMS, 2000).

Adams (2000) claims that it is necessary to understand the context of occupation of the southern coast of Brazil, as well as its economic cycles, to understand the formation of *caiçara* communities. According to the aforementioned author, agricultural characteristics predominated during Brazilian colonization. They cause a high level of occupation in fertile, humid, and hot coastal lands.

According to Ribeiro (2013), the ease inherent to the coastal region to send products to different Brazilian regions and to other countries also intensified the occupation of the coast. This context favored the miscegenation between indigenous people who occupied these regions and the Europeans who arrived attracted by such characteristics. Furthermore, this was the conjuncture that gave origin to the first *caiçaras*, who gradually spread out along the Brazilian coast - South and Southeast. According to the economic activities and ecological characteristics of each region, it constituted diverse socio-cultural groups.

Therefore, a *caiçara* culture emerges, characterized by a lifestyle of its own, a unique way of seeing the world, and the transmission of its knowledge from generation to generation. This way, Diegues (1994, p. 87) says that traditional culture, especially the *caiçara* culture, is composed of “socially transmitted behavior patterns, mental models used to perceive, report and interpret the world, symbols and socially shared meanings, besides its material products”.

“The economy of these communities was characterized by opposition to the primitive indigenous economy and to the industrial economy” (ADAMS, 2000. p. 149). The author states the production system was structured to meet primarily domestic demands, with part of the inputs produced in their territories and part coming from outside. The labor activities usually carried out by these communities were based on artisanal fishing and subsistence agriculture (ADAMS, 2000). Diegues (1994) claims the *caiçara* way of life has an intimate relationship with the sea, through subsistence fishing, and the land, through family farming. Accordingly, the cultural representation

of these resources was given through the cuisine, expressed by fish and subsistence agriculture (DIEGUES, 1994).

The caiçara communities have incorporated different subsistence strategies to their socioeconomic organization, such as shipbuilding, mining, commercial banana cultivation, indigo and tobacco plantation, commercial whale fishing, and work in sawmills and ceramic ovens (ALMEIDA, 1946; MOURÃO, 1971; SILVA, 1975; ADAMS, 2000). According to Adams (2002), this diversity of subsistence strategies demonstrates the historical ability of these communities to adapt to a dynamic economic context.

It is important to emphasize that these adaptations are the result of a historical process of invisibilization and, to understand this, it is necessary to go back over the trajectory of these communities. Historically, the caiçaras were susceptible to the political-economic power of the capitalist society, being taken to occupy peripheral areas of which they never had legal rights of possession. Moreover, this situation further highlighted the condition of “excluded” that was imposed on them (ADAMS, 2002).

However, around 1950, the areas occupied by caiçaras, until then considered peripheral, became interesting to certain social groups after the urbanization and the re-signification of the Atlantic Forest. This circumstance promoted the loss of traditional territories of caiçara communities, either for economic purposes or for environmental conservation (OLIVEIRA, 1999; ADAMS, 2002).

In the midst of this process, tourism and urbanization resignify the interests related to economic activities in coastal regions, presenting a labor alternative for caiçara communities (ADAMS, 2002).

3. TOURISM, CAIÇARA COMMUNITIES AND NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS

In the last few years, the development of tourism has stood out in the economy of several countries, due to its potential to generate employment, income, and move people and financial resources. It has also been indicated by official agencies and experts as one of the fastest growing economic activities in the world. That way, tourism has assumed a prominent role in public policies, for being considered an important strategy for minimizing social problems (SANCHO, 2007).

In the context of traditional communities, this discussion of tourism as a development alternative becomes, in some cases, even stronger, since they may be socially, economically, and politically vulnerable. Furthermore, many communities reside in protected areas. This type of circumstance enhances the interpretation of tourism as a viable economic alternative due to the restrictions imposed in favor of environmental protection (JULIANO; RABINOVICI, 2010). Such limitations directly interfere with the productive activities of traditional communities, because these activities are considered generators of environmental degradation. For this reason, they are limited or prohibited, a circumstance that promotes the total or partial

abandonment of some traditional productive activities, such as farming and fishing. In this way, the tourist activity can become attractive to these communities, which see tourism as an opportunity for income (DENKEWICZ, 2020).

Therefore, tourism is interpreted as a compatible economic activity when considering the environmental fragility of the protected areas and the socioeconomic fragility of the communities that inhabit them. Thus, the objectives outlined for these places of environmental protection are the low environmental impacts when compared with other economic activities (DENKEWICZ, 2020).

However, tourism development has been discussed under two central approaches: as a generator of socio-environmental degradation and as a sustainable socioeconomic alternative (RIBEIRO; STIGLIANO, 2010). These discussions come into play due to the dualism of tourism, which can generate positive impacts or negative impacts on natural and cultural resources (CORIOLANO; VASCONCELOS, 2014). It is because of this fact that tourism planning and the adherence to the premises of sustainability are desired. They are considered essential elements to minimize the impacts generated and to contribute to the reduction of exclusive processes, commonly observed in the receiving communities (SANCHO, 2007; 2010).

In general, the development of tourism in protected areas can present a series of socio-environmental impacts due to the excessive use of the spaces and their resources. These impacts directly affect the territories and their traditional communities, which makes it essential to discuss a more sustainable development of the sector. In this regard, the discussion of sustainable tourism becomes, besides a challenge to the standards already established by the activity, a prerequisite for projects that aim to promote local development through tourism (SANCHO, 2010).

In this context, tourism planning is a tool to mitigate the impacts of the activity. However, it is important to think of plans that involve the communities. According to Irving (2009), even today the way of life, the natural, historical and cultural heritage of traditional communities are little known for planning purposes. This way, the lack of understanding about the different realities experienced can generate divergences between the interests of tourism development in these areas. This ends up creating deadlocks that can later become socio environmental conflicts.

Furthermore, the process of tourism development can establish market relations with the resources it uses, such as local cultures and scenic beauties, through touristification. Touristification is understood here as the process that transforms these resources into tourist commodities. From this perspective, tourism appropriates local/traditional cultures and natural resources, turning them into tourist attractions. It is a condition that, in the course of the process, interferes with local development (ARAÚJO et al., 2017).

According to Camilo and Bahl (2017), tourism interferes in the daily life of local communities. However, it is recommended to plan tourism in a sustainable way based on local identity, respecting the cultural references of the place. Tourism enters a field of tension when not planned in a balanced way, since culture can be transformed

into a tourist attraction without following the premises of tourism sustainability. In this case, it becomes a problem because processes, such as spectacularization, mischaracterization, loss of cultural identity, among others, can develop without hesitation (SANTOS; CARVALHO; TRICÁRIO 2019; CORBARI; BAHL; SOUZA, 2017).

On the other hand, it is possible to promote appreciation, rescue, cultural dissemination, sense of belonging and cultural identity, within the community itself when appropriating the culture of traditional communities and when it is based on sustainable planning (CAMILO; BAHL, 2017; CORBARI; BAHL; SOUZA, 2017). However, it is important to note that this process should also consider practices of otherness and interculturality. Thus, cultural exchanges may be effectively beneficial, based on respect for diversities.

Working with this perspective, authors such as Juliano and Rabinovici (2010) point to ethnodevelopment and ethnoconservation as important concepts to think about tourism development in traditional and environmentally protected territories. Silva and Carvalho (2008) consider that ethnodevelopment can exercise the capacity for social action of traditional actors. They will be able to get involved in projects that consider the real and potential resources of their territories, based on their daily reality, culture, values and desires to autonomously guide the development of these subjects. Furthermore, the concept of ethnodevelopment must also relate to the management of development itself (BATALLA, 1985) and to the maintenance of the ethnic differential (STAVENHAGEN, 1985).

According to Diegues (2000), ethnoconservation derived from the need to rethink environmental protection, especially the preservationist strand. For a long time, it disregarded or repudiated the presence of traditional communities in areas designated for environmental conservation, claiming that it would be necessary to separate nature from man in order to actually protect natural resources, because man would only destroy it. It is necessary to “build a new alliance between man and nature, based, among other points, on the importance of traditional communities in the conservation of forests and other ecosystems present in the territories they inhabit” (DIEGUES, 2000, p.41). Combining ethnodevelopment, ethnoconservation, and sustainable tourism practices, such as community-based tourism, can be a compatible alternative to the sociocultural organization and socioeconomic development of traditional communities.

4. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This research followed a qualitative approach (GERHARDT; SILVEIRA, 2009) and used as a study area the traditional communities of Ilha do Mel, in the state of Paraná. The semi-structured interview and systematic observation were chosen as techniques for data collection, which occurred between June and July 2019.

The interviews were conducted with native residents, using the snowball method to select them. This method is characterized as a form of non-probabilistic sampling, which uses chains of references, in other words, the interviewees themselves indicate

future interview participants (MINUTO, 2014). Regarding the sample size, it was not determined by means of a fixed number, but by means of the saturation method. This method consists of suspending the inclusion of new interviewees at the moment the answers start to repeat themselves (FONTANELLA, 2008). Therefore, 28 natives were interviewed and the questions addressed three main themes: the guarantee of recognition, appreciation, and cultural strengthening; the opportunity for cultural exchange and sense of belonging and strengthening as a social group.

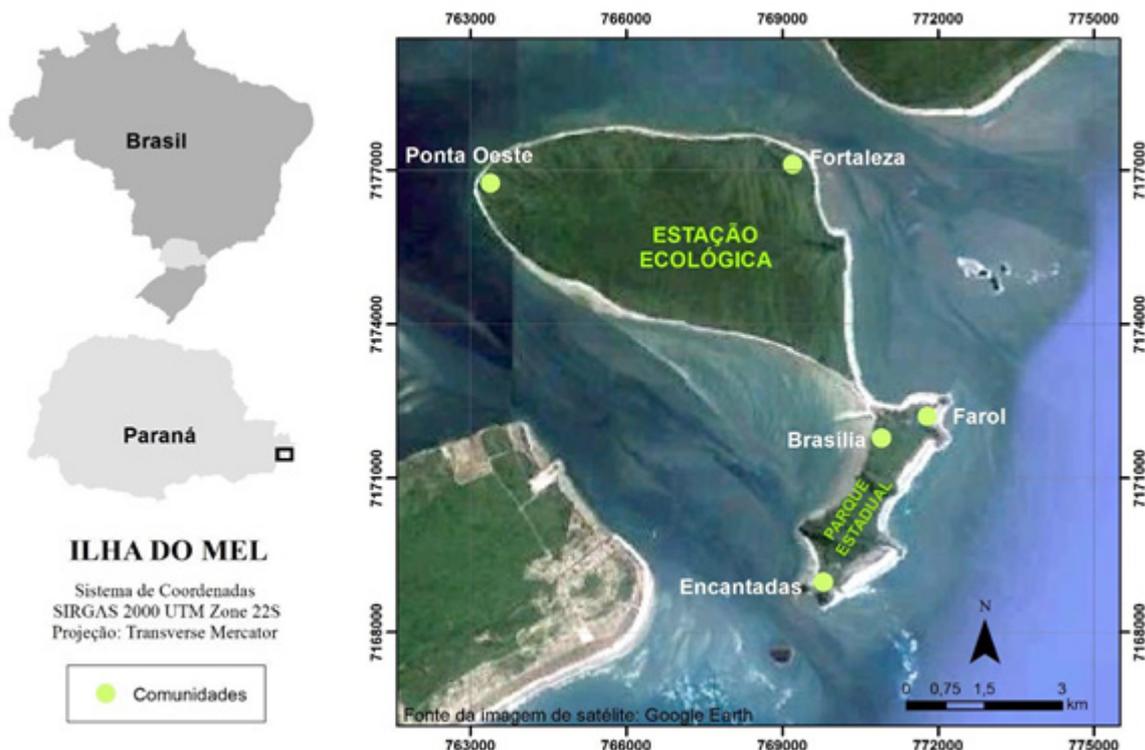
The observations were made through the appreciation of the daily life of the local communities in their leisure and work moments and through the participation in local events, such as the baptism of native children, the São Pedro Party, the Tainha Festival, and the traditional moment of the Tainha Fishing. At this point of data collection, we used the field diary tool to record the observed information. Observing daily life and local events gave us the opportunity to know and understand the local culture more precisely.

The data obtained through the interviews were analyzed using content analysis. It consists of a methodological technique applicable to all forms of communication, verbal or written, to understand the characteristics, structures or models that lie behind the data collected. In this form of analysis, the researcher needs to understand the meaning and objectives of the data collected, seeking other meanings that are between the lines (BARDIN, 1977; GODOY, 1995).

5. TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TRADITIONAL COMMUNITIES ON ILHA DO MEL-PR

Ilha do Mel, as mentioned, is a prominent tourist attraction in the state of Paraná. It is located in the municipality of Paranaguá, at the mouth of the bay. Its territorial organization, as shown in Figure 1, consists of two full-protection Conservation Units - the Honey Island Ecological Station and the Honey Island State Park. This arrangement reproduces the scenario of the Paraná coast, which has 92% of its territory formed by protected areas (HARDER, 2014; GONZAGA; DENKEWICZ; PRADO, 2014).

FIGURE 01 - LOCATION AND TERRITORIAL ARRANGEMENT OF ILHA DO MEL



SOURCE: Denkewicz (2020).

According to Harder (2014), until the mid-1980s, the economic structure of the island was sustained by fishing and subsistence agriculture. However, the establishment of UCs resulted in the restriction of productive activities based on the exploitation of natural resources. This way, the traditional subjects adopted tourism as the main productive activity in face of the difficulties in the fishing activity and the ease that tourism offered, compared to fishing and agriculture. In addition, this left artisanal fishing in the background and extinguished agriculture (DENKEWICZ, 2016).

In Ilha do Mel, the culture comes from the caiçaras people, who, in short, lived on fishing and subsistence agriculture in the coastal regions of Paraná, São Paulo and Santa Catarina. These people had their own way of building, using straw, clay and wood as a base. Their diet was based on manioc flour and fish (ADAMS, 2000).

However, in the course of time, these cultural elements have changed. The replacement of fishing by tourism as a productive activity was one of these changes, but it was not the only one. The food and buildings, for example, have also changed, either by the interference of external factors or by the dynamics of culture itself (DENKEWICZ, 2016). The reports of the natives showed that, currently, there are few cultural elements that portray the old beliefs, customs, and traditions. Besides

that, there are few actions that encourage cultural recovery, both of tangible and intangible heritage, besides the few existing actions that do not count on community participation.

However, some interventions with cultural recovery purposes were reported by the natives. The first of these is the Fandango Workshop, which emerges from a community initiative (Brasília and Encantadas) that proposes the formation of Fandango groups. The purpose of these groups is to involve the natives with this typical dance, to remember some cultural traits, and to make presentations at local festivals.

Another intervention is related to the restoration actions of Fortaleza de Nossa Senhora dos Prazeres, by the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN). It seeks, besides restoring the material heritage, to facilitate tourists' access to it. Currently, this IPHAN action is being discussed with the native communities. Furthermore, two activities were started in 2019, the Photography and Biodiversity Workshop and the Photography and Social Networks Workshop. They aim to encourage young people to look for outstanding cultural traits and portray them. Subsequently, the goal would be to share them in order to awaken cultural interest in native communities.

In general, although there are actions in favor of cultural rescue, the locals were apprehensive about the loss and cultural transformation that occur on the island. Thus, they understand that culture is also an attraction and can become an alternative to mitigate the negative effects of seasonal tourism when stimulated:

In winter we don't have tourism. The movement comes from the festivals, like the Tainha Festival. Besides these festivals, we are also thinking about other things, like the Jazz Festival. We need to invent things to sustain us in the winter and the main idea to attract more tourists in the low season is to show our culture (INTERVIEWED 01).

Under a more theoretical aspect, cultural transformation is interpreted by many as something negative. This happens to the extent that it allows the loss of cultural elements considered important for contemporary societies. However, Cohn (2001), Barth (1969), and Carneiro (1986) present a different perspective, in which culture is perceived from the delimitation of boundaries that establish the differences between the various cultural groups. This way, what matters is not the maintenance of cultural traits itself, but the differences that generate identity and that are contextually determined through flexible cultural traits. According to the authors, it is not necessary to maintain culture in a supposed integrity. It is necessary, however, to preserve its differentiation in relation to others, which are established by cultural traits, that is, determined in contexts. Therefore, from this perspective, cultural transformation "ceases to be perceived as a ghost that haunts natives around the world and starts to be understood as a means of social reproduction that is also guided by history" (COHN, 2001, p. 37).

Thus, when we analyze the context of Ilha do Mel from this perspective, what

occurs is not a cultural loss. There is a transformation from the social reproduction of the native communities, which naturally suffer influences from external factors, as well as from their own history.

Despite the cultural loss reported by the natives interviewed, elements were identified that demonstrate the feeling of belonging and cultural recognition in the native communities: “I am caiçara, my son, my grandfather was. Here all the natives are caiçaras” (INTERVIEWED 02). “We are caiçaras, fishermen from Ilha do Mel. Here we are natives” (INTERVIEWED 03).

The feelings of belonging, recognition and even cultural identity are evident when the natives differentiate themselves from the external residents, placing themselves as caiçaras, as originally from that place. Another context that shows these feelings are the moments of decisions, in which these social actors take advantage of their native condition to defend themselves and place themselves as subjects of rights. It is noticeable that the feelings of belonging, recognition, and cultural identity are present in the most diverse community discourses, regardless of the situation. The native communities really feel like caiçaras from Ilha do Mel: a union between territory and social actors. Such a conjuncture relates to Santos’ reflection (2003, p.174): “[...] the territory is the ground plus the population, that is, an identity, the fact and the feeling of belonging to what belongs to us”.

Still from the perspective of belonging, recognition and cultural identity, it was observed that the native communities showed that they feel culturally represented by fishing and religious festivities, such as: the Nossa Senhora dos Navegantes Festival, the Tainha Festival, the São Pedro Festival, and the Tainha fishing. The São Pedro Festival is a religious celebration of the community held in periods of low tourist flow, being characterized as a community festival. In relation to the Nossa Senhora dos Navegantes and Tainha festivals, these have tourist purposes. In addition, the Tainha Festival is directly linked to the Tainha fishing, which provides the fish needed for the festival. According to the natives interviewed, such religious festivals, along with fishing, represent the culture of Ilha do Mel, because they show “a little of the essence, the root of the people” (INTERVIEWED 02).

Moreover, it was observed that the development of tourism acts as a promoter of interculturality, because it has enabled the meeting and cultural exchange between native communities and tourists. Generally, the contact of the natives with the tourist demand during the execution of tourist services is based on the supply of tourist information about the locality. Therefore, it is known that it does not enter into deeper conversations that enable cultural exchange. In the case of the study area, it was identified that the natives interviewed maintain a closer relationship with the tourist demand. The limits that generally exist between supply and demand are overcome, and an exchange of knowledge and experiences takes place through dialogues.

It is important to note that the processes of interculturality, associated with processes of alterity, are also linked to cultural transformation. This is because they present the receiving communities with new cultural elements that can be incorporated into their daily lives. When these processes occur concomitantly, they result in the

benefits expected in the development of sustainable tourism. These benefits are related to the cultural appreciation of all those involved and to the cultural exchange based on respect.

According to the statements of the locals, the development of tourism on Ilha do Mel, besides promoting interculturality, is stimulating cultural protection and appreciation. This is because, as mentioned before, the native communities are currently associating the need to preserve and recover cultural traits with the creation of new attractions for the locality, aiming to mitigate the effects of seasonal tourism. However, these purposes are linked to the commodification of culture. They pursue its commercialization as a tourist attraction (DEVINE, 2017), enabling new perspectives to the local culture.

In general, the relationship between tourism and culture has been established in a definitive way (SILVA, 2000). In Ilha do Mel, this relationship is still incipient. This allows the opening of precedents for the realization of a sustainable planning of this relationship, which seeks to establish a perspective of economic profitability, local development and cultural appreciation. The challenge that tourism faces is to use these cultural resources in a sustainable way. It would be based on quality criteria, so that its benefits effectively generate an improvement in the quality of life of the receiving communities (SILVA, 2000).

From the above, we conclude that tourism has contributed to the establishment of new social relationships and subsequent cultural transformations. At the same time, it has also stimulated native communities to strengthen cultural traits that define their members as *caiçaras* and natives of Ilha do Mel. This stimulus is materialized through the proposals of cultural workshops, by the practice of fishing, and by the accomplishment of religious festivals.

One does not ignore the economic aspirations involved in these actions and the commodification of culture coming from the creation of cultural attractions. However, agreeing with Silva's (2000) statement, this seems to be a path with no return that the relationship between tourism and culture has settled definitely, regardless of the place. What can be done is to plan the activity. Thus, besides the mercantilization, it promotes socioeconomic benefits and helps in the process of valorization and cultural rescue.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Tourism has been consolidated as an important way for interculturality. It is also seen as a possibility of income for traditional communities (or not) that inhabit the interior or the surroundings of protected natural areas. Tourism activity has shown that it can generate numerous benefits when planned in the light of sustainability. However, it has also shown that it can cause irreversible environmental, social and cultural damage.

Reflecting on the trinomial traditional communities, protected natural areas, and tourism is a task that requires care, since these categories are complex in essence. The context of traditional communities involves reflections about cultural recognition and appreciation, sustainable use of natural resources, the social problems they face, and the right to territory, among many other issues. These topics demand deep discussions, which intensify when they are joined with considerations about natural protected areas. In this context, tourism development must appear as a tool capable of alleviating the problems or difficulties that involve cultural, social, economic, and even environmental issues in traditional communities, as well as in protected natural areas.

The central idea of the research was to understand how tourism impacts the socio-cultural development of the caçara communities on Ilha do Mel, Paraná (PR). The results of the analysis showed that tourism in Ilha do Mel is installed as an economic alternative for local communities facing environmental restrictions from the UCs. It is understood that this circumstance was what facilitated the acceptance of tourism by the native community. Therefore, the socio-cultural implications generated by tourism are currently presented as positive, since the development of tourism is contributing to the process of interculturality.

It is also understood that the development of tourism has stimulated the strengthening of cultural traits. This occurs through proposals for cultural workshops and the encouragement of fishing and religious festivals. In the case of religious festivals, they had been, until then, disregarded by the managing bodies and the native communities in tourism development. Moreover, it was observed that the native communities of Ilha do Mel recognize themselves as a sociocultural group, called “natives of Ilha do Mel”.

Tourism development, in this context, promotes activities related to cultural tourism. They reinforce, through memory and cultural identity, the sense of recognition of this group as natives and the sense of belonging to the island. It is important to highlight that the economic aspirations and the commodification of culture involved in these actions were not denied. It is understood that cultural rescue is also related to the seasonality of tourism.

In order for the identity, memory, recognition, and cultural appreciation of traditional communities to be supported on a more solid basis, it is necessary that such proposals be based on public incentive and cultural rescue policies. They must consider programs for the conservation and sustainable use of cultural elements as a tourist attraction. In addition, the social participation of traditional subjects should occur throughout the planning process, decision-making, and sharing of results (CAMILO; BAHL, 2017). It is also important to conduct a careful and in-depth analysis of the cultural specificities of the communities. The intention is not to promote the decharacterization and spectacularization of the cultural attraction.

This way, the development of studies directed to cultural tourism is suggested for further research. The aim is to identify and analyze the strategies adopted for

the protection, valorization, and strengthening of local culture. This occurs because communities have started to develop tourism activities related to local culture.

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