



# “I think I saw a ghost”: The potential for fright tourism in the city of João Pessoa - PB

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**ABSTRACT:** Historic centers are plural spaces with memories of great importance to the cultural identity of a people. Besides their cultural and heritage importance, these spaces are ideal for entertainment, specifically, for the development of fright tourism, due to their dark narratives. Fright tourism can be understood as a process in which elements of local tradition are mixed with transnational aesthetics, coming from cinema, pop culture, horror, and cultural industries, promoting feelings of fear for tourists. In this context, this study aims to analyze the potential for the promotion of fright tourism, based on stories of hauntings at historical attractions in the city of João Pessoa-PB. This study is characterized as descriptive and exploratory, based on the collection of bibliographic and documentary data and a field visit. The results show that the Sólón de Lucena Park, the Santa Roza Theater and the Boa Sentença Cemetery have stories such as the ghost woman of the Lagoa, the vigilante spirit, the woman in white, the bride who walks among the tombs and the Boa Sentença employee, which permeate the popular imagination and can be used to promote fright tourism.

**Keywords:** Historical Heritage;  
Tourist Attraction;  
Dark Tourism;  
Fright Tourism.

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## INTRODUCTION

Historic centers are plural spaces full of memories, as they carry historical facts that eternalize and serve as heritage for understanding the cultural identity of a people. For Bristow & Jenkins (2019), besides the cultural and heritage importance for residents, these spaces have opportunities for entertainment, specifically for tourism, as abandoned buildings and empty spaces can be appropriated for the establishment of haunted tourist attractions based on the dark heritage of these areas.

Fright tourism is inserted within this reconfiguration of city spaces. Fright tourism can be understood as a less gloomy spectrum of dark tourism, in which tourists look for spooky opportunities that provide pleasure, in a destination that has sinister stories or can be promoted as having them. People see these tours as a chance to be scared, and to socialize with other travelers who have the same interest (Bristow & Newman, 2004).

In Brazil, this practice is still incipient, but it is possible to find so-called haunted and macabre tours in some regions of the country. One such example is the city of Recife, the capital of Pernambuco, which has developed haunted tourist circuits in which people are invited to visit places in the historical center and get to know a little bit of the past of the locality through haunted narratives (Recife Mal-Assombrado, 2022). In the state of São Paulo, there is the "SP Haunted Tour", which is a night tour taken by bus that visits the historical center to contemplate the city's heritage buildings, such as the Consolação cemetery, the municipal theater, and the Sé cathedral. Another case that can be cited is the tour that takes place in the capital of Rio de Janeiro, the "Ghost Tour", which consists of a guided tour through the historical buildings of the National Library, the City Council Chamber and the National Museum of Fine Arts and (Nascimento & Oliveira, 2021).

It is in this process of redefinition of urban spaces that this study is inserted, since its locus is the historic center of the city of João Pessoa, capital of Paraíba, which was identified as a possible vector for the practice of dark tourism by the authors Freitas, Endres & Kiotani (2021), who identified twenty-two attractions linked to dark aspects. Although the authors have created an inventory of the historical center for this tourist segment, it was found that the focus of that work was limited to some typologies of dark tourism, such as cemetery tourism, with little exploration of the haunted stories connected to these spaces, which can be used to promote the Fright Tourism niche. It is hoped that the present article will contribute to filling this gap.

Based on the above, the general objective of this study was to analyze the potential for the promotion of fright Tourism, based on stories of hauntings, or ghost stories, related to the historical attractions of the city of João Pessoa-PB. Its specific objectives are: a) to conduct a survey of ghost stories related to the historical assets that are part of the protected heritage of the city of João Pessoa, in the state of Paraíba (PB) and b) to propose a haunted tourism itinerary for the city of João Pessoa-PB.

This study is justified by the importance of encouraging new trends in tourism segments, and fostering practical projects that can help boost the sector in the city of João Pessoa-PB, being an instrument for public management and private power. It should also be noted that fright Tourism is a typology of dark tourism, which has been little studied, and it is hoped that this work will contribute to a better theoretical understanding of the theme, in the Brazilian context.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### The notion of dark tourism and its relationship with fright tourism

Traveling to places that have an appeal related to death and suffering has permeated people's imaginations since ancient times. According to Stone (2006), a clear example of this type of travel is seen in the stories of the ancient Roman Empire, when people traveled to watch gladiatorial battles at the Roman Coliseum. The spectators at these events were eager to watch the bloody spectacles, which invariably ended in the death of one of the dueling contestants in the arena. Another reference that can be cited are the public executions that took place in public squares during the medieval period, with the purpose of dissuasion and retribution of the people.

Despite these practical examples of this tourist segment going back to ancient times, in the academic field, this phenomenon only began to be studied in the 1990s, with several concepts being attributed in order to understand this practice, such as Black Spots, Rojek (1993), Thanatourism (Seaton, 1996), and Dark Tourism (Malcolm & Lennon, 1996). The latter term was consolidated in 2000, with the publication of the book *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster*, and it is now the most widely recognized term in the area (Prezzi, 2009).

But what is dark tourism? According to Lennon & Malcolm (2000), it can be understood as trips that focus on visiting real places that are reminiscent of death, suffering, or disaster. Being considered as intrinsic fruit of the relations of the post-modern world, driven by the forces of technological advancement and the wide media dissemination of events in real time, arousing

curiosity in individuals to visit these spaces. This thought is reinforced by Dantas, (2008, p.58):

"Although Dark Tourism has been around for a long time, one of the factors that can explain the current interest in the regions that make up this tourism segment, is the media. Nowadays it is possible to follow live funereal events, even being thousands of miles away from them. During "9/11" people were seen on television throwing themselves off buildings in an attempt to save themselves from the flames, and it was also possible to watch the preparations for the arrival of Hurricane Katrina and its consequences in the city of New Orleans. With that, people become witnesses to something that didn't even happen in their cities or countries."

Stone (2012), states that dark tourism is the link between the tourism phenomenon and aspects of mortality. It is an effective tool in the process of understanding and interpretation of current social events, leading individuals to create higher levels of respect for others. This fact is connected to the dark attractions, as many of them are established in environments where some tragic/problematic episodes occurred, and which are explored with the purpose of perpetuating the memory and preventing the same events from happening again in society.

According to Freire-Medeiros (2006, p.5), the tourist assumes a crucial role in the promotion of this new segment:

"[...] More and more tourists are seeking unusual, interactive, adventurous, and authentic experiences in destinations whose appeal lies in the antithesis of what is conventionally called "tourism. Marketed as rememorative, educational, and/or entertainment, this type of tourism attracts people eager to consume spectacularized death, disaster, and misery".

As we have seen, the tourist is one of the main drivers of this new tourist offer; the tourist is looking for authentic experiences that will provide unforgettable and memorable moments, and finds in dark tourism the possibility of having these needs met. The author Sharpley (2009) states that this practice has also grown due to the social status that this type of experience can promote for the individual, because tourists want to have a story to tell when they return from their trips, so they need packages that go beyond the traditional visitation, arousing emotions. Thus, trips to dark places can not only give the tourist unusual experiences, but also raise the status of the person who engages in them.

In Brazil, this segment has been emerging gradually, with the main experiences being in the cemetery typology, e.g., the guided tours through the Consolação Cemetery in São Paulo-SP. In the theoretical field, there has been an increase in the number of works on this subject, showing an interest on the part of researchers (Nascimento, et. al, 2021).

Dark Tourism is divided into several typologies, Stone (2006) outlines seven typologies: Dark Fun Factories, Dark Exhibitions, Dark Dungeons, Dark Resting Places, Dark Shrines, Dark conflict sites, and Dark genocide camps. In addition to these categories, in 2004, Bristow & Newman, identified another possible category within dark tourism, called "fright tourism", which was related to the consumption of aspects of fright/fear. This is the category that is the focus of this work, as it seeks to relate stories of hauntings linked to sites of the historic center of João Pessoa.

In the literature, so-called "Fright Tourism" can be understood as the search for opportunities that provide excitement because they are frightening, at a destination that has a sinister history or that can be promoted as having one. People see these opportunities to be scared, while socializing with other travelers who have the same interest (Bristow & Newman, 2004). The author adds that this practice is directly linked to dark tourism, providing a lighter aspect for tourists, in which consumption is based on the interest in macabre facts. This same idea is proposed by Bristow and Keenan (2018, p.66), who state that "visitors attend haunted attractions to be scared, but they want a pleasurable encounter, and the artificial experience of haunted attractions offers that opportunity." At the same time, companies know that the market demands a safe and secure experience for guests, therefore, it is necessary to ensure that no problems will occur during the experiences.

Fright tourism is directly linked to the spectrum of Dark fun factories, proposed by Stone (2006), since these environments seek to provide frightening experiences for their customers. For this, they use actors, lighting, scenography, and other tools that make the experiences more realistic and frightening. These categories are therefore similar in their execution, with the main aspect of fright tourism being the use of stories that have developed in the place of origin, and are recounted by the local residents.

Based on the above statements, it is important to emphasize that this study will adopt the term fright tourism, using a terminology more appropriate to the language, and because we understand that it is directly related to the concept of dark tourism, albeit on a less macabre scale. It is also noteworthy that there is a lack of literature on this theme, both nationally and internationally, a fact that makes further theoretical study impossible.

Internationally, it is possible to find places that use this segment for tourism promotion, For example, in the USA, there are Halloween events and attractions; in Salem, Massachusetts, the city's tourism capitalized on the historical facts surrounding the witch trials, and started developing tours to various part of



the city, especially during the Halloween season. There are six museums in the city dedicated to the history of witches, and ghost tours are offered all year round (Bristow & Jenkins, 2019). Similarly, Romania, in south-eastern Europe, was home to the folkloric figure of Vlad the Impaler, the nickname that influenced the myth of Dracula so well known in the popular imagination. Dracula was a mythical vampire created by Irish writer Bram Stoker whose famous work, the 1897 gothic novel entitled *Dracula*, still prompts people to visit the place today (Bristow & Newman, 2004).

In Brazil, the activity focused on this typology is still in its infancy, but it is already possible to see haunted tours dotted around the country. An example is the haunted tours offered by the tourism agency Recife Mal Assombrado, in the city of Recife-PE. The agency offers a series of attractions, such as the ghost walk, where tourists are taken through the streets of the city, visiting specific locations in the urban center and getting to know the dark stories, ending at the local cemetery. It also offers a fully interactive tour, in which visitors are invited to take part in games, held inside a museum, with several frightening moments (Recife Mal Assombrado, 2022). The set of narratives used to carry out these activities is the fruit of urban legends such as those of perna cabelda, papa-figo and galega de Santo Amaro, which evoke Recife's dark imagination based on the works of Gilberto Freyre and Roberto Beltrão (Lins, 2021).

Another tour is the Dark Tourism Cultural Route, developed in the Fortaleza de Santa Catarina, located in the municipality of Cabedelo/PB. The Fortress is a cultural heritage site built in the 16th century, and is inserted in a context of great historical importance, as it was the scene of many battles during the Colonial Brazil. There are many legends and beliefs surrounding the site, told by the local population (Prefeitura de Cabedelo, 2019). It was in this scenario that the Dark Tourism Cultural Route was created, which features a guided nighttime tour of the fort, with a dramatic theatrical performance (Serviço Brasileiro de Apoio às Micro e Pequenas Empresas [SEBRAE], 2019).

### **Historic and cultural heritage of the city of João Pessoa designed around dark tourism**

Heritage can be understood as "a sign of memory", which enables the preservation of the heritage and gives the local citizens a sense of self-affirmation, as "participants of a society and a culture" (Rolim, 2013, p. 7-8).

For Dantas (2015, p. 32), the word heritage refers to the "idea of appropriation by individuals", inserting "individual and social" value in relation to the historical assets of a particular place. The author also emphasizes that cultural heritage is a process of construction car-

ried out by society, considered by a particular group of people "worthy of being bequeathed to future generations".

In this scenario, Lopis, 2017, p.12, states that:

"The heritage is the symbol of an experience that is temporary, but that becomes eternal through its assets/monuments; it carries in itself a very strong identity element, building a set of imaginary that tells us who we are, where we come from, and where we want to go. It is necessary to realize that heritage is not only an asset in itself, but also, the use that this asset has for perpetuating the memory of a collectivity, because the historical heritage is not only something concrete; it is also something subjective, full of meaning".

Thus, it can be stated that the historical cultural heritage presents the idea of belonging among people, through the material and immaterial assets, linked to a peoples' symbolic identity, and to affective memories arising from the history of the place, as Lopis (2017) explains. The historical cultural heritage ensures local development, as it describes a common identity to all who live in that locality, through the daily life of that community, in order to conserve it (Silva, 2011). This includes the historical buildings, the traditions, and the cultural manifestations (Melo & Cardozo, 2015).

It is in this context that the locus of this research is inserted, given that the capital of Paraíba is the third oldest city in the country, and has a rich historical cultural heritage listed by the Instituto de Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN). This ensures that the history and culture of Paraíba will be protected in the future, bringing a sense of identity and belonging to a group of individuals, as one of the most representative forms of the place (Instituto de Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional [IPHAN], s.d).

João Pessoa, the capital of Paraíba, is located in the northeast region. It is one of the most cities in the country with the most trees, and is known as the city where the sun rises first (Brambilla, Vanzella and Baptista, 2013). It covers an area of 210,044 km<sup>2</sup>, with a characteristic biome of Atlantic forest. It was given a Municipal Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.763 in 2010, and its population is estimated at 809,015 thousand inhabitants (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [IBGE], 2022).

The city was founded on August 5, 1585. It sits on the banks of the Sanhauá River, extending towards the coast. Initially, the city was called Nossa Senhora das Neves, in honor of the saint celebrated on the day of its foundation. Later it received the name of Filipéia de Nossa Senhora das Neves, and then Frederica, as a tribute to Prince Orange, who was in the region during the Dutch occupation in Paraíba. It was later given the name of Parahyba. Then, in 1930, its name was changed to João Pessoa, in honor of the state president at the time, who was assassinated during the political campaign in the city of Recife/PE (Cavalcante,



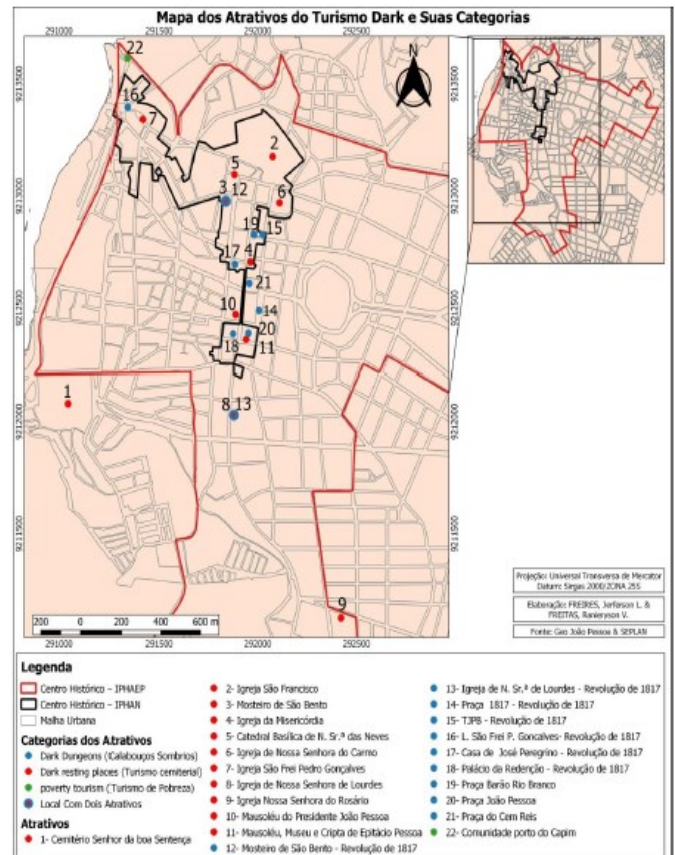
2009; Universidade Federal da Paraíba [UFPB], 2020). In terms of the city's economy, the secondary sector stands out, specifically in the areas of food and drink, textiles and footwear in the manufacturing industry. There is a notable presence of service companies as one of the main sources of revenue in the municipality (Paraíba, 2009). In the tourism sector, the municipality presents a very diversified product composed of nature, events, monuments, gastronomy, handicrafts, and a rich and vast cultural historical archive, situated in the historic center of the city (Paraíba, 2020).

The central area of João Pessoa has a well-preserved history and culture, which are used by the tourism sector, considering that cultural tourism in the city has been rising. There are beautiful mansions, squares, churches and many other monuments dating back to the early colonization and development of the city. According to Dantas (2014), when passing through the Historical Center, one can relive, in the present, moments of the past, since through these historical monuments, the memory and the feeling of belonging to the place are present, both for the local population and for tourists who visit the city in search of knowledge about its history and culture.

In this scenario, according to the same author, "tourism finds fertile ground for the development of its activities" (Dantas, p. 20), boosting the local economy. The historic center of João Pessoa is important for historical and cultural tourism in Paraíba, besides these two segments, dark tourism is pointed out as another possibility worth exploring.

In 2019, Freitas conducted a study aimed at showing the potential of the municipality of João Pessoa for dark tourism. The results showed that the city has such potential, and that there are twenty-two possible sites that can be used for this practice. All of them were listed and categorized, being divided into: Dark Dungeons, Dark Resting Places and Poverty Tourism" (Freitas, 2019, p.62). (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Map of dark tourism attractions and their categories in João Pessoa-PB



Source: Freitas, 2019.

As can be seen, this is a pioneering work, and sheds light on the process of making the city's tourism more dynamic. Even with this presentation of the possible typologies that exist in the historic center, there have been few studies to explore the stories of hauntings that are linked to these heritage sites. This is the gap that the present study seeks to fill.

Bristown and Kenan (2018) point out that urban centers have become a likely destination for haunted attractions, since these places have abandoned spaces, such as factories and warehouses, that can be used by entertainment developers to promote tourist attractions. These stories are often rooted in dark, strange facts surrounding popular events that have become eternalized in this space.

## METHODOLOGY

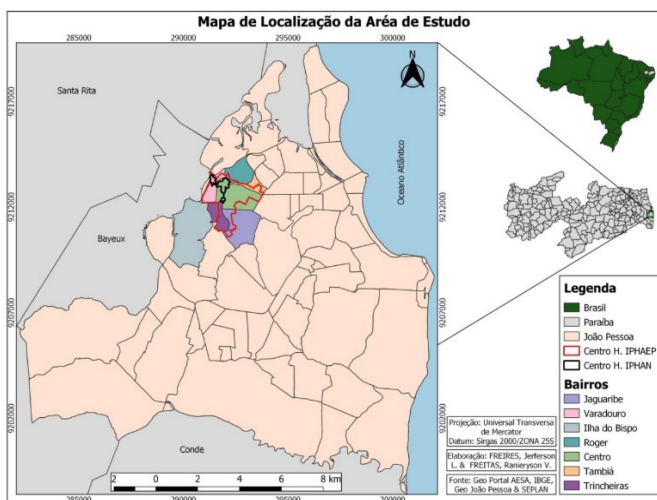
This study is characterized as descriptive and exploratory, given its investigative nature, as it proposes to analyze the potentiality for the promotion of fright tourism, based on ghost stories related to the historical attractions of the city of João Pessoa-PB.

We began this study by collecting bibliographic data, retrieved through searches on Google Scholar. This da-

tabase was chosen, especially, for the review of scientific articles, theses, and academic dissertations on the topics dark tourism, fright tourism and historical and cultural heritage.

For the data collection stage, a survey was carried out of the main historical and cultural heritage sites listed by IPHAN and IPHAEP, in order to find out more about the field of study. The purpose of this step was to give overview of the attractions, and map the next steps (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Map of the Historic Center of João Pessoa-PB



Sources: Freitas, 2019

To complement the first step, a survey was conducted of stories of hauntings related to the listed, protected historical assets in the city of João Pessoa, based on historiographic research, newspaper reports and electronic magazines.

After these two steps, it was seen that the attractions Parque Sólón de Lucena, Teatro Santa Roza and Cemitério da Boa Sentença have, in their narratives, stories that permeate the imaginations of the people who visit them, as well as the employees of these places, who confirm the existence of apparitions and urban legends.

In order to get closer to the fact under study, participant observation was carried out in July 2022, at the attractions previously presented. This phase consisted of visiting the historical attractions in the center of João Pessoa-PB. At this stage, we chose to collect the stories told by employees of these environments, which were recorded by writing notes in a field diary.

For analytical purposes, among the stories collected, the following were chosen: the fantasma de Lagoa [ghostly woman of the Lagoon], the espírito justiceiro [vigilante spirit], the mulher de branco [woman in white], the noiva que passeia entre os túmulos [bride who walks among the tombs], and the funcionária do Boa Sentença [employee of the Boa Sentença]. It is

worth mentioning that other stories were identified, but they were directly related to real-life tragedies, so they were not considered suitable for this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the data collection it was found that some stories permeate the imagery and historicity of the historic center of João Pessoa, and can be used to promote fright tourism. The stories were organized, and will be discussed in this section. We also propose a new look at the attractions. Later, a ghost tour itinerary will be proposed, based on the stories.

### Manifestations of possible fright tourism attractions in the city of João Pessoa-PB

#### *Parque Sólón de Lucena - Ghost Woman of the Lagoon*

The Parque Sólón de Lucena, also known as Parque da Lagoa, was originally called Lagoa Sólón de Lucena and Lagoa dos Irerês. It was declared a listed heritage site by Decree 8653 of August 26, 1980 by the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico da Paraíba (IPHAEP). The park has flower beds designed by Burle Marx, and is frequently used for commerce, sports, and tourism. It is a living space for the population, with various leisure and entertainment options (Evangelista, et al., 2018).

There is an account of a supernatural being in the region of João Pessoa that is held in the collective imagination and has been passed down through generations since the 1960s, known as the ghost woman of the Lagoa do Parque Sólón de Lucena (Souto, 2019; Clickpb, 2015).

The story goes that on a night of a full moon, a couple were admiring the landscape of the lagoon, but after having a disagreement, a terrible drowning occurred, with the death of the woman. From that time on, a ghost would appear, in the form of a perfumed, elegantly dressed woman in white, walking quietly around the lagoon of Parque Solon de Lucena. Naturally, men would offer the lady a ride, which she accepted, though discreetly, without showing her face, asking them to take her home to São Miguel (Souto, 2019; Clickpb, 2015).

But on the way to her house, the driver, intoxicated by her scent, would try and stop somewhere for a moment of intimacy. This was always met with rebuttal, but the lady would arrange to meet the man at the lake the next day. Taking the route described by the woman, the man, to his surprise, would end up in front of the Boa Sentença Cemetery. The woman would hastily thank him for the ride, kiss him, enter the gate, then after taking a few steps, would disappear (Souto, 2019; Clickpb, 2015).

Reports of men who have been found inside their cars, submerged in the river, and another in the dam at Cabo Branco beach, are propagated after this experience. The legend remains to this day, with men being afraid to give rides to strange women, especially after midnight (Souto, 2019; Clickpb, 2015).

Figure 3: Parque Sólón de Lucena - João Pessoa-PB



Sources: survey data, 2022

### *Theater Santa Roza - The Woman in White*

The Santa Roza Theater was inaugurated on November 3, 1889, and is the fifth oldest theater in Brazil. It is located in the central district of the capital of Paraíba, and was built in neoclassicist architectural style with influences of Greek-Roman lines. It can hold 412, and is the scene of several supernatural tales (Funesc, 2016).

It has been the scene of some supernatural mysteries that surround the imagination for decades in the city of João Pessoa. It is said that before the construction of the building, some people were murdered and buried in the ground, causing their spirits to be trapped in this space. As a result, it is common to hear doors and windows opening and closing by themselves, or whispered voices in the corridors (ClickPB, 2015).

According to employees of the theater, some of the performers have been surprised by some unusual situations, such as the actress who heard the tap being turned on in her dressing room, went to look, and turned it off; but when she returned to the stage, the tap turned itself back on (Alexandre, 2012).

Among all the stories told, the most emblematic is that of the woman dressed in white, with long curly hair, sitting in the theater boxes. This is probably the best known from the afterlife in the city of João Pessoa. The woman simply sits and watches the employees, only appearing when there are no shows (Jornal da Paraíba, 2011; Alexandre, 2012).

Figure 4: Theater Santa Roza



Sources: survey data, 2022

*Senhor da Boa Sentença Cemetery – the espírito justiceiro [vigilante spirit], a noiva que passeia entre os túmulos [bride who walks among the tombs] and the funcionária do Boa Sentença [employee of the Boa Sentença Cemetery].*

Protected by the IPHAEP, the Senhor da Boa Sentença Cemetery is the oldest cemetery in the city. It was founded in 1930, and is a historical asset and an architectural and intangible cultural heritage of the city of João Pessoa, with more than seven thousand graves, including those of five governors, and tombs that are objects of pilgrimage, such as that of a thirteen-year-old girl who died in the 1960s, killed at the hands of the patrons of the house where she worked (Freitas, 2019). One of the legends that surrounds the imagination of the population is that of the espírito justiceiro [vigilante spirit] that lives in an empty tomb and comes out at dawn to torment graves of buried dead who have done bad deeds during their lifetimes, as well as the living who go to the cemetery with evil intent (Barbosa, 2016).

Another story is that of a former employee of the cemetery who, in the 1970s, died just a few months after starting the job. Estela, an active smoker, was buried in the cemetery but at night, after the gates are shut, she goes out asking for cigarettes (Marconi, 2016).

Finally, the story of the bride who walks among the graves is told by the residents. The story goes that a woman got married in the church of the São José neighborhood, which is located in the same neighborhood as the cemetery, but she died soon after the wedding, and was buried in her wedding. On the night of the wedding celebration, the spirit of the bride wanders among the graves in the cemetery (Marconi, 2016).



Figure 5: Senhor da Boa Sentença Cemetery



Sources: survey data, 2022

### Proposal for a ghost tour itinerary for the historic center of João Pessoa-PB

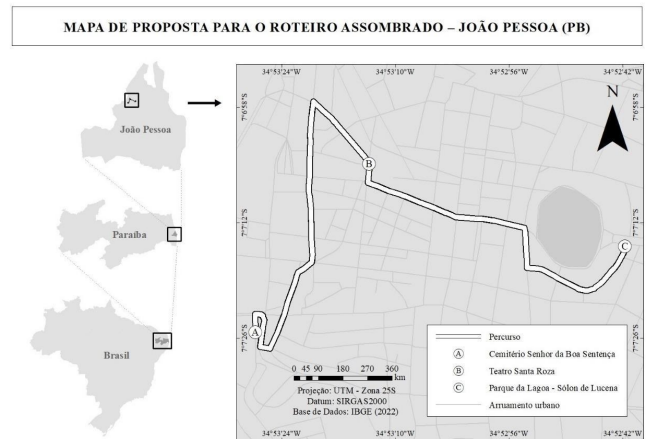
After collecting data from the field research and bibliographic research, a ghost tour itinerary was proposed for the historic center of the city of João Pessoa-PB. The goal of this tour is to encourage people to visit the sites of the ghost stories, enabling them to delve into the dark aspects of the chapters of the city's history. It is believed that this tour has the potential to dynamize the city center, offering a new attraction for the local economy.

It is suggested that the tour be conducted at night, using transport that can accommodate teams, such as coaches or minibuses. Nighttime is the most suitable time for the use of atmospheric lighting and more scenographic aspects, in order to provide a more frightening ambience. Considering that this tour is aimed at visitors in general, the explanation about each stop should be informative, but not too extensive. For better development of the tour, actors could be placed at each point, dressed in character, telling the stories and providing a more realistic background to the events.

It is also recommended that the whole tour be accompanied by a specialized security team, in order to avoid tourists being exposed to crime or urban violence. All the participants should be asked to wear black, to raise the expectations of those present.

To facilitate understanding, the route has been divided into three specific points, the first is the Boa Sentença Cemetery, the second is the Santa Roza Theater, and the third is the Solon De Lucena Park.

Figure 6: Proposed route of the Haunted Roadmap - João Pessoa-PB



Sources: survey data, 2022

### First point: Senhor da Boa Sentença Cemetery

The starting point of this ghost tour will be the square at the main entrance to the Senhor da Boa Sentença Cemetery. Entering the cemetery, along its main route, visitors can be asked to look at the tombs, pointing out architecture and cultural heritage, the buried remains of various historical characters, some of them renowned names of the capital of the first republic and the second half of the Twentieth century.

This is followed by the story of the bride who wanders among the tombs of the cemetery. The tour ends in an area of fifty-six thousand square meters, with fifteen blocks and more than seven thousand tombs; visitors are encouraged to search for an uncovered, and empty tomb; that of the famous spirit of the vigilante.

### Second point: Theater Santa Roza

The next stop is the Teatro Santa Roza, a reference in João Pessoa. Although relatively small in size, the building is of great historical imposing and scenic beauty. First, the tour begins with the historical explanations of the space, then the dressing rooms are visited, while listening carefully for whispers through the corridors, and finally visitors are taken to the large central stage, where they are invited to settle in their seats for a brief presentation of the woman in white.

### Third point: Parque Sólón de Lucena

The frightening tour ends at Parque Solon de Lucena, where the tale is told of the ghostly blonde woman from the lagoon. Afterwards, the tour leaders bid farewell to the group, inviting them to enjoy the services available in this space.





## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Historic centers are rich places with great opportunities for the development of entertainment focused on fright tourism. This tourism modality is still not much studied in the literature, but it is possible to find several places that use these devices to propose customized and unusual tours for their customers. Thus, the aim of this work was to analyze the potential for promoting fright tourism, based on ghost stories linked to the historical attractions of the city of João Pessoa-PB. To reach the proposed objective, a bibliographic and documentary survey were carried out, as well as participant observation.

The results showed that the Sólón de Lucena Park, the Santa Roza Theater and the Boa Sentença Cemetery, have stories such as: the ghost woman of Lagoa, the vigilante spirit, the woman in white, the bride who walks among the tombs and the Boa Sentença employee, which permeate the popular imagination and can be used to promote fright tourism.

The stories presented have plots and are related to the attractions of the cultural heritage of João Pessoa, so their use can diversify the existing tourist offer and provide more experiences for tourists, making use of the historical center at night.

It is worth mentioning that in this process of conducting a field survey, other stories emerged, but these were not considered in this study, because they permeate other typologies of dark tourism, and require a different perspective, as they are linked to stories of real-life tragedies, going beyond merely provoking fear.

It is hoped that the ghost tour itinerary proposed in this article will encourage public managers and private initiative to create new tourist proposals that will the urban center of João Pessoa more dynamic.

Finally, it is suggested that new studies be carried out, categorizing the other stories that exist within dark tourism, in order to promote a more extended route that includes other stories, promoting education and awareness of environmental preservation. It is also necessary to study the intentions of visitors to this route, providing more knowledge about possible demand for this tourist attraction.

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