

# LANDSCAPE TOURISM - AN INTERVENTION PROPOSAL TO BEMPOSTA

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this article is to show how the development of landscape tourism activities and environmental education in a rural location with a lower population density, in order to use their natural and cultural resources, and its heritage and landscape.

The geographical area, located in the *Planalto Mirandês*, a region in Trás-os-Montes, is characterized by being a very rich territory in natural and cultural resources as well as it has a strong touristic potentiality, presenting a diversity of landscapes and native species, privileged by their location, DINP, with also a vast tangible and intangible heritage.

This article was elaborated from a wider research that coincided with my master's thesis, held at Lusíada University of Porto, under the theme "Arquitectura e Paisagem - O Cais de Bemposta", under the guidance of Professor Alexandra Maria Saraiva, in 2013|2014.

This strategy is supported by the organization of various programs and activities of Landscape Tourism and environmental education, such as the design and planning of a landscape observation route, as well as the proposal of building a pier, in order to support the local fishermen and to promote sporting activities, like nature tours that will be focused on the exploration of its natural, cultural and human resources thus seeking to transform and enhance the site.

The proposed project has validated the importance of the intervention in the present architectural heritage and landscape, with the objective of keeping its identity, building up a strategic scenario that maintains the intervention plan. It will be created a network of services and platforms, supported by landscape tourism and its relationship with the Douro River as it still presents itself as a strong enhancer of local attraction

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**Keywords:** Nature, landscape tourism, pier

## **Introduction**

The study area was limited to Mogadouro, specifically Bemposta, a territory with natural, cultural, historical and social, wealth and varied, and it's also inserted at the PNDI. This is a region of the *Planalto Mirandês*, enriched by its landscape, which highlights it's river system and its strengths and cliffs, natural elements of exception that whittle them.

Interest in the study of the place landscape, and it's relationship with the Nature Tourism, precedes the socio-economic difficulties currently experienced in Portugal, and the undervaluing of the most remote areas in this territory, and parallel in the twentieth century, where has seen a strong rural exodus, because people were leaving in search of better living conditions in urban centers within and outside its borders.

The wealth of vernacular and cultural heritage, architecture and landscapes present in this territory are factors with great impact to consider in innovative rural development strategies, contemplating the landscape tourism (LT) and a range of complementary activities themselves contiguous, like hunting, fishing, hiking, climbing and canoeing. The result shows the desire to value the tangible and intangible heritage, so that the memories and experiences are not lost. The lack of interest on existing resources like the river and it's relationship with nature and the surrounding landscape, are also the focus of attention.

Thus, we studied and built a strategic scenario, which maintains the intervention plan, in order to create a network of services and platforms, supported in LT, which will be the protagonists paths / trails that snake through the landscape and the its relation to the Douro River, strong enhancer element of the local attraction.

To do this, comes a proposal from a Pier and the development of a program of an "Observatory of Landscape," a "Shelter", a "House of Boats" Showers and "Casa das Canoas" and / Coffee Terrace.

Reset, recover and / or rehabilitate spaces and / or place objects, enabling a new occupation and / or use, exploring its potential, it is the strong point for the theme.

## **Landscape Tourism, an intervention proposal to Bemposta**

### **Landscape Tourism**

Academically and according to the World Tourism Organization, United Nations, Tourism is defined by a set of activities that people make during their travels and when they stay in different places than where they

live, for a period of time less than one year, for leisure and business, among others.

In the Portugal context, this is shown as an activity that currently has a truly strategic importance to the domestic economy, having its ability to generate wealth and employment (PENT, 2007).

The LT shows an activity that requires a natural and cultural physical space to develop. Its implementation should be based on sustainability and thus be part of a set of international and national policy guidelines aimed at sustainable development of these areas. It is therefore proposed, recovery and conservation of natural and cultural heritage supported by four main sectors: the conservation of nature, local development, the qualification of tourism, diversification of tourism. So, this is considered a tourist activity that occurs in hazardous areas or other with natural values that are recognized.

Through an analysis of the large international demand trends, PENT defines ten products selected according to their market share and growth potential, and the ability and competitive potential of Portugal, which they should lay the development and training policies of our tourist offer. So with and support the study by THR for *Turismo de Portugal*, the LT sector falls into two markets:

- Soft: the experiences are based on the practice of low-intensity outdoor activities (hiking, excursions, hiking, wildlife watching, etc.), and representing about 80% of all trips (IGESPAR, 2000);

- Hard: the experiences relate to the practice of sports in nature, such as rafting, kayaking, canoeing, climbing, among others, and / or activities that require a high degree of concentration or knowledge, such as bird watching , accounting for about 20% of all trips (IGESPAR, 2000).

As a rural development tool, the LT carries other risks and perversions, that may result in conflicts of representations and practices that arise over the territory and the environment (FIGUEIREDO, 2003). Thus, we see an inevitable diversification of cultural codes, as well as representations of the countryside. On the one hand there is the temptation to work the product on the tourist perspective, this usually urban and tend to enshrine the nature and environmental values, looking at the countryside as a store of memories and traditions, or a consumption of space, strategy resulting from the initiative of outsiders, with minimal economic impact on indigenous peoples, exposing the rural dependence on expectations that are external. On the other hand, an economic benefit perspective of rural populations, linking rural areas to their productive skills, and a resource that remain (FIGUEIREDO, 2003).

With this, we note that although there were criticisms about the evolution process of *Landscape Tourism in rural areas* in Portugal, checked that policies present in your source achieved some success and can hold up a positive balance of old attempts, particularly with regard to the rehabilitation of built heritage. This review led to the development of policies for the current phase as a phase of deepening more and more strict, linked to the constraints of the management of environmental and heritage values of the landscape.

### **The Place**

According to Aristotles, the concept of *place* (topos) is understood as one, where a place of belonging, proper positioning corresponding to any physical element (VEM, 1977), referring that *the place* is not simply a something but a something who exercised some influence, that is, which affects the body that is in it, introducing a new greatness on the essential elements of the classical theory of the place where this is neither the body nor something entirely alien to the body (MORA, 1978), defending that *the place*, is something distinct from the body, and the whole body is in a sensitive place.

Here is elementary refer Norberg-Schulz (1984), in the way it comprises *the place* and its essence. This is so clear, that actions occur in places with more specific environments, do not require the idealization of an event without any reference to a place. The place then part of existence, so when we talk about place, we speak of something more than a "simple" immaterial location because attach materials, shapes, textures and colors that are close to them. Thus, this unit is determining and characterizing the environment essential to the place where it is characterized as a quantum phenomenon can not be restricted with respect to their properties as well as the spatial relationship so as not to lose the intrinsic nature herself .

Kevin Lynch (1972) concludes this idea, referring to the usefulness and interest of protecting the history of cities in relation to human feeling, enlivening it is so important coexistence of today and history, as the way occurs and the paths to be adopted, and which are necessary for this relationship to reach a result. The creation of a place presupposes the existence of a set of physical characteristics with its own identity. (PIRES, 2011: 5).

In addition to all these factors, we have also, memory, and the many ways this is expressed either in formal terms, as well as the participation and influence on the identity of a place.

Thus analyzing the place, the village of Bemposta, we intend to address here, the phenomena of territorial occupation as expressed in its topography and geography, highlighted by its physical space.

The Place, Bemposta, is thus, in the northeastern, translating this into a limitation because it puts this small village in a remote location in relation to the structural axes in the north, as well as the Spanish territory, creating some difficulties in mobility and accessibility. Over time, these conditions have improved, due to the structuring of new avenues of accessibility infrastructure, and in particular IC5 (Mogadouro) and the N221-7 (Zamora and Salamanca).

This small and characteristic border village of the northeast, where the native flora is characterized by the abundance of olive and almond trees, but also by the oaks and vineyards. This is a region characterized by its culture and religion, where the Douro river plays an important and relevant role, with all its paths / trails / paths and spiked cliffs. Its roots go further back to the Neolithic era, and the shelters and Castros, and abundant in its territory. It is also a place marked by a spatial organization that grew organically and spontaneously, establishing a link between the topography and the installment of the territory. These physical aspects were decisive in irregular shapes that mark the village, not forgetting also that their social structure was crucial in your organization. The fact that an area be linked to traditions and customs, including fishing and hunting, led us to reflect on this legacy and to understand how it could be revived.

The historical and cultural heritage of this small village transmontana covered by the PNDI, offers a vast cultural wealth, such as mirandese language, one of the business cards of this region and territory and with the pilgrimages, which in addition to being part of the everyday experiences this people, are also a strong local attraction element.

The architectural level, Bemposta as the region to which it belongs, is characterized by its religious architecture (church and chapels), popular (isolated buildings or band) and traditional (mansions). It is also important to point out a vast archaeological heritage here present, demonstrated in the rock art and forts, as well as the testimony of the Roman occupation, the medieval castles and even the Iron examples of architecture, the late nineteenth century (in stations and train lines ), where part of this heritage is already ranked.

It should be remembered that the parish Bemposta has an enormous ecological importance, equity, strategic and economic in the county, Mogadouro, marked by a hydrographic channel of extreme importance, the Douro river.

In this place, the Douro river is assumed as extremely important element, partially delineating the border between Portugal and Spain, once strategic place over 112 km, and consecutively, 213 km in the country, and has been classified by UNESCO as Heritage in 2001. This is also recognized

worldwide for his famous port wine, and its strong natural and cultural landscape.

In addition to its extensive river system, the village of Bemposta, is thus set in a territory of unique features such as the history, customs, traditions, among many others already cited above. All this, coupled with its climate, topography, occupation and use of land, designed and draws the entire physical structure of the place, Bemposta.

### **The Landscape**

Now directing attention to the landscape, it should be noted that the attitudes assumed by the company in relation to the territory and its values from their perception as mental and collective construction of landscape, which is likely to widen. This is a concept that emerged in the West, as a representation of nature associated with art, where painting was the field that contributes to define aesthetic codes of assessment and appreciation to you implied. The landscape is assumed as an object of contemplation and aesthetic appreciation, being associated with very notion of beautiful (BARATA, 2010).

As for the landscape of the place, Bemposta, observe here, some ecological, historical and cultural buildings, past legacies. Today, these buildings are advertised as the product of the new dynamics externalized by this diversity, where objects of production, land tenure, the inheritance systems, production structures, logic and production strategies as well as the degrees and insertion conditions in the markets, balance.

So, as characteristic elements of this small rural areas, we have the vernacular architecture, "abandoned" and degraded, which persisted due to the weak development of the economy, and the migration of its people, allowing the "salvation" of this characteristic architectural legacy, which in other cases and other regions.

We can not fail to mention the lofts, characteristic of this region and the landscape of this transmontano territory. These, when they are building, were livelihood of these populations, their intended functions for meat production (pigeons and doves), the production of manure, as well as the display of power / wealth, or the aesthetic improvement of the properties, and / or entertainment.

As the main defining characteristic of this landscape here, we have already mentioned above, PNDI, created based on the unique combination that exists in the area of the International Douro and in order to value and conserve the natural heritage through sustainable use, promote quality of living and enhance the architectural, historical and cultural heritage. The unique combination, and the importance of "guns" river valleys, cliffs strong, the Mirandese plateau, fauna, flora and habitat, led to the limitation

of the place of Community relevance. A single set in which agriculture contributes to shaping the landscape, the PNDI is part of the Douro Region, which features unique cultural elements, such as festivals, among others.

### **Proposal, the Pier**

Addressing the case study, now an approximate scale, direccionamo us for the relationship of place and landscape with LT, as well as their practices and customs, with the architectural object as a means of communication and transmission of knowledge. Thus, it was necessary to define the process of analysis and recognition of the place to intervene, which is a small bay near the Bemposta dam in full PNDI and paired with the village, figured by their morphological and natural characteristics.

Thus, for a better understanding of the place in reflection, it is essential we address the following questions: What is the place? And what sets?

The place then occupies a small bay downstream of the Bemposta dam, where the hits, except by sea to a little harbor, they are in poor or inactive conditions. This factor also contributed to this place of PNDI, it acts on the most restricted form of landscape, especially for its environmental value. This small bay is well established, at first, the man action, with the dam, changed radically the landscape, through higher and retention of the river water level. Combining this factor and adding the morphology and topography, established the place, as if by natural reasons, an application for use or restructuring of this.

The proposal has the objective to transform Bemposta a diffuser and a remote rural transmitter. It searches thus promote the continuation of a traditional technique combined with new and innovative existing materials and design, making the connection with the current rural world and future. The relationship between architecture and landscape, together with the LT in order to promote this small transmontana parish, full of history, culture and traditions.

The aim of this, stimulate and promote the LT this parish and also in this territory, seeking the support of local people, through the interest of the passage of these concepts for future generations, which together with the landscape and architecture of the place, transmit the communication, revisiting stories and memories of the past. Thus, the focus of this strategy focuses on nature tourism segment, without forgetting the heritage and cultural tourism, which invites a reflection on the real reasons that lead tourists to visit this type of territory, which stand out for their resources historical, heritage, cultural and geographical, where we emphasize its characteristic landscape.

There was thus seek to develop new tourist flows Bemposta both as to the surrounding area in order to achieve the LT international market. Task to be performed through a demanding route and where everything will depend on how Bemposta, in its plurality, wishes to project its architecture and landscape and culture, history and customs.

The proposal for the Bemposta Pier and routes Bordering arises aggregate to the characteristic landscape of the Douro that surrounds it. So if assigned to the Bemposta Pier, a program for the practice of nature sports, but focused on water sports not motorized, such as canoeing, among others, as well as other activities associated with them, such as fishing; without neglecting the contemplation and observation of landscape / nature. This unit will thus fulfill a functional program that includes a comprehensive social dimension, encompassing viewing areas and landscape contemplation, living and leisure, competition, among others.

The pier is a proactive proposal, which basically tends to benefit the territory, and the place as the people who interact with him and in him, directly or indirectly. Composed of a care program, which comprises: a nature observatory, strategically deployed in the path; a cafe / terrace; a ski for canoes or other, with a whiff of support; a workshop to assist small vessels, storage and a multipurpose space; and a shelter up to eight people, strategically deployed, integrated and inserted into the landscape. All these spaces in addition to the landscape, assume also a strong relationship and interaction with water.

Thus, the implemented model is capable of generating sustainable development, through proper horizontal integration throughout the local productive system, leveraging more effectively the existing resources and capabilities, complementing and extending an offer of differentiated services in the territorial framework where are resources to maximize.

## **Conclusion**

The pier was the starting point for this research work, materialized in the intervention proposed for the area of Bemposta, Mogadouro, developed in the discipline of Project III, in the 5th year of architecture at Lusíada University of Porto, in academic year 2013/2014.

To establish the importance of the pier in the context of Bemposta, was relevant to understand how important and the character of this unique space as an integral part of nature and landscape surrounding it, as well as their relationship with the local communities, relating and applying these to LT and this tourism sector, as the means promoter place.

The LT, arises from the intention of building a "tool" of development and dissemination of this region transmontana "forgotten" that assigned to it, discloses and diversifies the region, relying on the characteristics and



potential of the territory in which it operates, setting alternative tourism products.

The potential of this place, Bemposta, is based in the variety and peculiarities of its resources, such as in image quality that has managed to disclose, weighing the obvious limitations of qualification of human resources which support the work of the units. Bemposta, shows up as an aggregator countryside of an entire business universe, that by sharing their resources can sustain their community. Its architectural richness, its cuisine, its traditions and its culture as well as the characteristic landscape are also a reality and an undeniable mark of their identity.

Under the intervention proposal is intended to create an intervention model that brings together up the landscape, the place and the building (object). Beyond that belongs to its people, this articulate between them and the world, through an innovative and quality program retrains the surrounding in terms of defining new paths. We tried to thus characterize, define and frame the place, a small bay, next to the dam, almost in its pure state. Despite the primitive forest paths and the poor use of the place, the pier, there deployed as a precarious solution, are the topomorfológico characteristics that define it.

The recovery of the spirit of the place is decisive, looking up with this, rescue principles of the past, as their relationship with the river, now almost nonexistent. Thus, the spatial and functional structure of the proposal for the small bay, the Bemposta pier, includes an implemented and capable of generating sustainable development model, with proper horizontal integration throughout the local productive system, with bases on existing capabilities and resources, extending the offer of services in the territory where are the resources to maximize.

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