



## IMPLEMENTATION OF SUPERVISED INTERNSHIP PRACTICE: EXPRESSION OF POPULAR FAITH AT THE SÃO FRANCISCO CULTURAL CENTER

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### ABSTRACT

This article is the result of a study conducted at the São Francisco Cultural Center to analyze the importance of the professional in Religious Sciences in the sociocultural environment of popular art exhibition. The work was developed as an activity for students of the undergraduate course in Religious Sciences at the Federal University of Paraíba in João Pessoa - PB. The general objective of the research was to analyze the contribution of Religious Sciences students to the exhibition project focused on the theme 'Sacred and the Expression of Popular Faith, the Ex-Voto.' Through a literary review of authors such as Emile Durkheim, Goldenberg, Auguste Comte, among others, it was possible to establish a qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory approach, analyzing the importance of the intern's participation in the institution. For this, the study included a literature review in books, articles, specialized websites, as well as reports of scientific research, seeking to broaden the reality evidenced in the field. The technique used to describe the results was based on the analysis of field activity reports, establishing a cross-reference with the literature review. The analyzes carried out significantly contributed to the improvement and practical experience of the students, allowing them to understand that the internship is a way of learning by doing, developing skills, and refining practice with theory. It was observed that, throughout the academic period, there was a need to make some adaptations to the institution's schedule. It was stipulated that, to meet the deadline for the release of financial resources by the Federal Government, the Technical Descriptive Memorial of the Project would be passed to the team of Cultural Center staff. As a suggestion, if the institution wishes to maintain the exhibition of ex-votos periodically, it could align the intern's workload with the exhibition practice, optimizing the intern's time and allowing future students to follow exhibition activities and data collection, based on research forms with information about the satisfaction level of the involved audience.

**Keywords:** Popular art; Ex-votos; Sacred Art; Fulfilling a Promise.

### INTRODUCTION

This work aims to analyze the importance and contribution of students in the Religious Sciences program to the realization of the exhibition project

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focused on the theme: Sacred and the Expression of Popular Faith, the Ex-voto. This project is part of the activities developed during the internship at the São Francisco Cultural Center (CCSF). Initially, practical internships were non-existent in the Religious Sciences program. The prevailing model was theory-oriented. After some academic changes, interns began to experience practical work, opening up to the job market. This highlights the importance of the religious scientist in advancing the establishment of this workspace. As a problem statement, the research intends to investigate the following question: What is the contribution of students in the Religious Sciences program to the realization of the exhibition project focused on the theme: Sacred and the Expression of Popular Faith, the Ex-voto?

To address this problem statement, a planning process was carried out to explore theoretical and practical aspects related to the art exhibition theme, from conception to installation. The goal was to understand what an ex-voto is, its various typologies, and its role in the popular religious practices of Paraíba, particularly those observed during the Penha Pilgrimage. The research direction was focused on analyzing the creation, cultural preservation, and artistic aspects of popular art recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Paraíba. Another considered aspect was the description of ex-votos, their origin, the most common location for this type of art, classifications, cultural use, and preservation at the CCSF.

As the Cultural Center is a secular institution, to make the development of this work possible, a specific period in popular art was selected. Initially, the proposal involved organizing an art exhibition featuring ex-voto pieces from the institution's technical reserve, originating from various popular movements and parochial sources.

The research was conducted at the São Francisco Cultural Center, located in the Historic Center of João Pessoa, Paraíba. It began in August 2023 and concluded in November 2023, with a duration of 4 hours per weekly session. There was a flexibility in the schedule to conduct interviews and gather information.



Next, we present considerations about the experiences gained during the research, as well as the development of the study, its conclusions, and the references used for the completion of the work.

### **CONSIDERATIONS ON THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

The development of this project involved the participation of six students from the Undergraduate Program in Religious Sciences at the Federal University of Paraíba. Therefore, the internship practice aligns with the higher education institution.

Regarding the experiences gained both in the internship practice and in the process of constructing this article, it is important to emphasize that the established analyses significantly contributed to the improvement and practical experience of the involved students. The internship serves as a hands-on learning experience, developing skills in students and enhancing their knowledge through practical application. Concerning the theoretical aspects addressed in the work, their contribution to the development of the practical process is noteworthy. In this regard, it is important to highlight the teachings received from the faculty during the course, with these learnings being aligned with the guidance of Dr. Kelly Thaysy Lopes, the course instructor. Her contributions throughout the process were invaluable.

It was observed that throughout the academic period, the curatorial thinking was developed, and there was also a need to make some changes in the institution's schedule - CCSF. Regarding financial support, it was mandatory to submit the Technical Descriptive Memorial of the Project within the stipulated deadline for the release of funds from the Federal Government related to the Rouanet Law. As the interns were not informed in advance, it was not possible to do so. Thus, the Technical Descriptive Memorial of the exhibition was handed over to the Cultural Center's staff.

As a suggestion for future internship classes, if the institution wishes to maintain the exhibition of ex-votos in its annual routine, it could align the



intern's workload with practical aspects and allow students to participate in the exhibition activities.

## **METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES**

The methodological procedures are the means adopted to conduct scientific research. In this case, the study involved a field, exploratory, and descriptive research as it originated from the description of an internship experience, inspired primarily by the teachings of Goldenberg (2004) in the work "The Art of Research - The Scientific Perspective." This work illustrates how research goes beyond certain methodological procedures. According to the author, scientific research demands creativity, discipline, organization, and humility, relying on the constant confrontation between the possible and the impossible, between knowledge and ignorance.

Thus, the research was carried out through a literature review, including works by Emile Durkheim, Goldenberg, Augusto Comte, among others. This allowed for a qualitative approach, analyzing the importance of the intern's participation in the institution. To achieve the research objective, data collection methods included consulting books, articles, specialized websites, among other sources, aiming to broaden the understanding of the reality observed in the field. The technique used to describe the results was based on the analysis of the reports of experiences obtained during field activities. This involved cross-referencing these accounts with the literature surveyed in the study, ultimately concluding the research.

### ***Scientific Approach of the Research***

According to Goldenberg (2004), no research is entirely controllable, with a predictable beginning, middle, and end. Research is a process where it is impossible to foresee all the stages. The researcher is always in a state of tension because they know that their knowledge is partial and limited, limited to what is possible for the researcher. Thus, the author suggests that methodology is the possible path for scientific research. Consequently, what



determines a piece of work is the problem one aims to address: the path is chosen only when one knows where they want to go.

In this context, two research models stand out: **quantitative** and **qualitative**. As quantitative research is based on a numerical model, many researchers question its representativeness and objectivity, considering the presence of the researcher's subjectivity. In the choice of the theme, the interviewees, the question script, the consulted bibliography, and the analysis of the collected material, there is an author, a subject who decides the steps to be taken.

Therefore, due to the existence of various factors mentioned above, we opted for qualitative research, where the researcher's concern is not with numerical representativeness but with the depth of understanding of a social group, an organization, an institution, a historical trajectory, etc.

According to Comte (1798-1857), the founder of positivism, he advocated for the unity of all sciences and the application of a scientific approach to human social reality. Based on criteria of abstraction, complexity, and practical relevance, Comte established a hierarchy of sciences. Hence, each science depended on the development of the one that preceded it. Therefore, the science of religions could not exist without sociology, psychology, philosophy, just as biology could not exist without chemistry, physics without mathematics, and so forth, as mentioned by Pinheiros.

In this perspective, where the object of religious and social sciences should be studied just like that of physical sciences, research is considered a neutral and objective activity that seeks to discover regularities or laws. In this approach, the researcher cannot make judgments or allow their biases and beliefs to contaminate the research.

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) aligned with this view, supporting the unity of the sciences. He argued that the social is real and external to the individual, meaning that social phenomena, like physical phenomena, are independent of human consciousness and verifiable through sensory



experience and observation. He believed that social facts could only be explained by other social facts, not by psychological or biological facts. Durkheim advocated for the view of science as neutral and objective, where the subject and object of knowledge are radically separated, adopting the scientific method of the natural sciences.

In the second half of the last century, some researchers, influenced by Kant, criticized the positivist model of knowledge applied to the social sciences. They believed that studying social reality through methods borrowed from other sciences could undermine the very essence of this reality, as it overlooked the dimension of freedom and individuality of the human being.

For Weber (1864-1920), in his book "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," the primary interest of social science lies in the meaningful behavior of individuals engaged in social action. This refers to behavior to which individuals attach significance, considering the actions of other individuals. Social scientists, studying the meanings of social actions of both others and themselves, are subjects and objects of their research.

This more general philosophical discussion that distinguishes the social sciences from other sciences contextualizes the emergence and development of qualitative techniques and methods in social research. In this perspective, we refer to the study of Folk Art, focused on individual gratitude within the popular movement of giving thanks, expressed through ex-votos, more precisely, in the procession of Nossa Senhora da Penha.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***History of the São Francisco Cultural Center***

The Franciscan convent, historically, was founded in 1589 with the arrival of Friar Melchior de Santa Catarina, who was tasked with establishing a Franciscan mission. As described on the institution's website, the Franciscan mission came to be known over time as the São Francisco Cultural Center - CCSF.



“...Its origins date back to the arrival in 1588 of Friar Melchior de Santa Catarina, tasked with establishing a Franciscan mission. The convent was founded in 1589, designed by Friar Francisco dos Santos, four years after the Portuguese occupation of the region, and was completed in 1591 by Guardian Friar Antônio do Campo Maior. However, its present configuration is the result of several renovations carried out in the 17th and 18th centuries. Initially, it was just a small wattle and daub building with 12 cells and a cloister, later expanded in the following years, now in limestone masonry. In 1634, it was occupied by Dutch invaders and turned into a fortress. After being recovered by the Franciscans, it was renovated, with the works concluding in 1661. Over the next two centuries, it underwent further interventions until the church's facade was completed in 1779, a date engraved on the frontispiece. The interiors were richly decorated, featuring exquisite tilework, gilded woodwork, and paintings. The convent became the largest Franciscan center north of Pernambuco, playing a decisive role in the exploration and occupation of the region through the missionary and cultural work of the friars. Its internal decoration includes various allegories related to this role....”

“...The buildings were once again modified in the 19th century, resulting in the loss of the church's original main altar. Between 1885 and 1894, the government used it, establishing a school for apprentice sailors and a military hospital in the convent. Ownership returned to the church through the intervention of the 1st Bishop of Paraíba, Dom Aduino de Miranda Henriques, who transformed the complex into a seminary. It remained in this function until 1964, after which the government once again utilized it to house several institutions: the Museum of the State of Paraíba, the State School of Róger, and the Piollin School of Theater. In 1979, it was closed for restoration, and on March 6, 1990, it was reopened as the Cultural Center....”.

The CCSF is considered a perfect representation of the Franciscan architectural style in northeastern Brazil. In the Baroque-Rococo style, the church's ceiling is adorned with one of the most important examples of illusionist architecture paintings from the Baroque era. Currently, the cloister is the oldest part, completed in 1730, revealing Moorish influence. It consists of a square courtyard surrounded by a covering, opening into the cells. The cloister features various tile panels depicting historical events such as the story of the Israelites and the Passion of Christ. The facade, in a stepped triangular style, includes a gallery of five-arch arcades. The church's pulpit has been considered by UNESCO as unique in the world due to its splendid carved design.

According to Wikipedia, the Cultural Center includes a gallery-museum of folk art, a Museum of Sacred Art featuring pieces from various origins, the Stone Gallery dedicated to the monument's archaeology, exhibition and event



spaces, a restoration center, and a library, in addition to regular musical performances.

### ***Medieval Sacred Art and its Influence on Social Movements***

To understand the pilgrim movements, we turn to the understanding of Medieval Sacred Art, which has directly influenced social classes up to the present day. According to the Austrian Ernst Gombrich (2013), as cited by Pinheiro (2019) in his book "The Story of Art," he emphasizes that there are no reasons that explain the preference for one art over another, except for positive or negative emotions.

For the Italian Giulio C. Argan (1992), the concept of art is not necessarily linked to a category of things but rather to a type of value made evident in the work itself, in the object that then becomes a work of art. Both Gombrich (2013) and Argan (1992) argue that the relationships established by art form the basis of its history. The history of art is developed and grounded in the relationships of art with social production, from which the meaning of the artistic object is extracted. Art can only be understood as the "history of art," within its historical context, according to Pinheiro (2019).

According to Sartorelli (2016), as cited by Pinheiro (2019), attention is drawn to the fact that not all religious art is sacred, but all sacred art is inherently religious. Moreover, all art, whether religious or sacred, carries the subjectivity of both the executing artist and the environment in which it developed or was conceived. In this sense, iconography and iconology provide a valuable service in guiding us in the interpretation of these representations. It is necessary to be attentive when looking at an image, symbol, or sign represented through art, in this case, sacred art.

Sacred Art was an artistic style that developed during the Middle Ages, between the 5th and 15th centuries, and was widely used by the Catholic Church in its constructions, paintings, and sculptures. The primary objective of this art style was to represent the religiosity and spirituality of the period, depicting biblical characters, saints, and scenes from the life of Christ. Its





main characteristic is the use of symbols such as the cross, dove, crown of thorns, lamb, chalice, and religious expressions as a whole. It also includes sculptures, made of stones or wood, and stained-glass windows, which aimed to teach the faithful about religion and convey sacred messages such as repentance and the afterlife. These objects were used to decorate the churches and the cathedrals.

Thus, Medieval Sacred Art was an important symbol of artistic expression that propelled and underpinned the religious message during the Middle Ages and has persisted to the present day, enchanting and captivating audiences in Catholic temples. Therefore, with the annual exhibition of 'iconographies' through pilgrimages, the Catholic Church "taught" the faithful that religiosity and spirituality had a "physical form," and this form could be expressed through gratitude. The materialization of this gratitude, our object of study, is expressed through the exhibition of ex-votos. To carry out the exhibition activities of the ex-votos, the interns were divided into two groups, with each group responsible for cultural production and curation activities.

### **ACTIVITIES OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION AND CURATORSHIP**

Ex-votos are part of the realm of religious folk art, inspired by Sacred Art. This type of folk art is based on the reflection of the artist's religious life. It comprises works of a religious nature, reflecting the doctrine of a particular religion that tends to evoke virtues or values in humans, such as hope, love, submission, faith, physical and spiritual healing, gratitude, worship, devotion to God, etc.

On the other hand, sacred art is intended for the liturgical context, one that arouses devotion. All sacred art is inherently religious, but the reverse is not true. Sacred art involves ritual and ceremonial practices, as well as the practical and operative aspects of the path to spiritual realization within the religious tradition of the artist. Religious art and sacred art are grounded in the purpose of the artistic work, as both possess intrinsic characteristics forged in religious, divine, or supernatural inspiration. However, religious art



is subordinated to the purpose of religion, while sacred arts are intended for the liturgical context, which elicits the devotion.

With the purpose of making this style of folk art more visible, the administration of CCSF proposed the organization of an exhibition of ex-votos, lasting for 60 days or more. It will commence during the Penha Pilgrimage week in November 2023, with an expected conclusion in January 2024. The exhibition will take place within the internal facilities of the Cultural Center, in a space adapted for the event, as described later.

After defining the roles of each group member, tasks were divided into Cultural Production and Curatorship. According to Castillo (2021), Cultural Production can be defined as the professional who plans, organizes, and coordinates cultural, artistic, sports, and scientific dissemination projects. They are involved in all stages of an artistic and cultural project, from fundraising to the final presentation and evaluation of results. They bridge the gap between the artistic creation and project management sectors. Depending on the project's profile or needs, this professional may be involved in technical and operational issues or engage in project management activities as a whole.

As for the curator, they are in charge of the administration, as mentioned by Castillo (2021). The curator is responsible for the conception of artworks, installations, and supervision of the exhibition, as well as the execution and review of the exhibition catalog. They can work in art galleries, museums, and foundations. Curatorship plays the role of mentoring, taking care, and preserving an art exhibition from the idea to its management.

The exercise of this activity aimed to determine the content of the exhibition, usually obtained through groupings and articulations of visual or conceptual similarities or differences that the artworks may reveal. For this purpose, a concept or theme is determined, serving as a guiding thread from which the process is elaborated to achieve unity in the exhibition.

As part of the exhibition development, the two groups were challenged to build curatorial thinking, research and select artworks, produce the



curatorial text, develop the visual identity of the exhibition, organize the exhibition layout, set up the exhibition, and document all stages of the process through photographic and written records.

At this moment, each group member brought two proposals for the "theme" of the exhibition. After various discussions, the theme finally took shape: Ex-votos: Promise, Faith, and Gratitude. Once the theme was chosen, it was submitted to the coordination of the Cultural Center and approved.

Activities carried out by the Curatorship and Cultural Production team at CCSF.

- Selection of the Exhibition theme and its guidelines;
- Graphic design for the creation of text for the public invitation;
- Development of promotional text for media – written and electronic;
- Creation of training material for CCSF guides in PowerPoint;
- Quotation for exhibition display cases;
- Participation in the selection of exhibition pieces;
- Choice of exhibition space;
- Development of a satisfaction questionnaire for the audience - digital model;
- Research activity on ex-votos with professionals;
- Photography of the pilgrimage route from the Church of Lourdes to the Church in Penha – 14 km, and;
- Visit to the workshop for the restoration of ex-voto art pieces at CCSF.



### ***Inspiration of Folk Art – Magical Workshop***

Before delving into the formation of the exhibition itself, we were invited to expand our visual knowledge of popular art through a visit to the exhibition held in the entrance hall of the Centro Cultural São Francisco with the artist, painter, and sculptor, Wilson Figueiredo. The exhibition featured sculptures in iron and paintings overlaid with wire technique on canvases, creating images in high relief. The detail of this art lies in the reflection of light on the painting, giving the impression of movement. The visit to the artist's exhibition inspired the group's creativity, sparking ideas with a lot of imagination.

During the same period, we had the opportunity to visit the restoration workshop at the Centro Cultural, where we observed how pieces of popular art, the ex-votos, are carefully cleaned and restored by the professionals present. The restoration process involves a careful procedure, with criteria for identification and photos of each piece. There are approximately 200 pieces in the Centro Cultural's collection. The cataloging of the pieces is essential for organizing information, aiming for a systematic and secure analysis of the works. For this record, the method used follows a routine of cleaning with non-aggressive agents, photographic documentation from six angles, filling out the cataloging spreadsheet, specially designed for the identification of each piece. To finish, the pieces are covered with TNT, which helps preserve them in the collection for a longer time.

### ***The Practice of Ex-votos in the Catholic Church***

To delve into this topic, ex-votos, theoretical and practical research was conducted, including reading texts, data collection, internet research, and reading articles. In practice, six themes were identified, and interviews were conducted with professionals such as priests, restorers, designers, and museologists from CCSF. All professionals involved in the conservation and preservation process of this type of folk art.

Defining ex-votos, according to Barbosa (2020), they are items used in a religious context offered to the deity or spiritual entity as a form of gratitude



for a answered grace. The term "ex-voto" comes from Latin and means a "fulfilled vow," indicating the fulfillment of a promise or vow that a worshiper had established with a higher power or deity. This practice dates back to ancient times and was brought to Brazil along with the colonization process, manifesting itself in various artistic forms.

Other adopted concepts include devotion, faith, testimony, gratitude, etc. The typology of ex-votos can vary depending on the culture, religion, and the nature of the grace received.

Ex-votos can be classified as anthropomorphic (representation of the human body), zoomorphic (representation of animals), special or representative of value (objects and food), and simple (does not fit into the other classifications). They serve as the "materialization of the object" representing the graces received and take various forms, including sculpted parts of the human body, believed to have been healed through specific promises and divine intervention. They can also be paintings, sculptures made from various materials, with wood being the most common, along with wax, leather, etc.

Ex-votos may be related to health or other material needs. The religious structure is formed through symbolic exchanges between the deity and the devotee or worshiper. The offering of ex-votos for the grace received reveals the rich religious culture of various locations where this practice exists. The offering is often intensified during the Penha Pilgrimage in Paraíba. This leads us to write about the importance of these religious movements in strengthening faith, devotion, and the creation of new pieces with this type of belief and folk art.

### ***Catholic Pilgrimage and the Popular Culture of Achieved Grace***

According to Souza (2013), in his book "Festivals, Processions, Pilgrimages, Miracles," pilgrimages have a meaning closely linked to the celebration of renewal.



“...This is the feeling of the rebirth of life, triumphing over evil through Christ. And not only them, but the renewal and victory of light over darkness are common themes in religious festivals. They are symbolically represented in various ways and structure various Christian celebrations. Catholic festivals, however, are characterized by their hybrid nature: they could be promoted both by the church and by the faithful, with the clergy's participation, in this case, varying in intensity. The Church, therefore, plays a role in standardizing and regulating such festivals, defining celebration days, establishing religious holidays...”.

The pilgrimage is indispensable for understanding Brazilian religiosity, according to Sousa (2013), since the colonial period. Social life in Portuguese America revolved around the Church, with religious festivals as central moments. They played a social, cultural, political, and economic role that far transcended their religious origin, although the expression of faith remained the core that sustained them. Thinking about religious festivals during this period allows for establishing connections that illuminate society broadly.

For Veiga (2010), among the various forms of popular religious expression, the pilgrimage holds a prominent place, mainly because it portrays the "face of the people" more faithfully. The people organize and walk with their floats through the streets, offering their prayers. The term "pilgrimage" comes from the Roman Catholic religion, derived from "Romero" or pilgrim, meaning a person who travels to Rome.

There is no religion, effectively, without an extraordinary event linked to the sacred and incomprehensible in the face of nature that justifies it. This event represents the beginning of a new era, the advent of Christ. It is expressed in the pilgrimage through the miracle, which, in popular Catholicism, acts as a means of protection against natural forces whose unleashing is seen as irrational and incomprehensible. This generates a reaction that seeks in the divine sphere, seen as superior to the natural sphere, the valid means to mitigate or nullify the consequences of the action of these forces. Similarly, pre-Christian cults endowed with agricultural symbology seek to exorcise these forces, just as Christian rites act directly on nature as a means of alleviating the insecurity generated by these forces.



However, when divine forces act in this way, the miracle occurs, as mentioned by Viegas (2010).

The way believers materialize their gratitude for the miracle achieved is by offering their "vote of thanks." This is the reflection of an individual's devotion and faith expressing a debt in the existence of a higher power in their religious life. After the pilgrimage and the delivery of objects at the sanctuary, the symbolic act becomes an ex-voto that fulfilled the materialization of the grace obtained.

Each pilgrimage has its own "spiritual icon." The Penha Pilgrimage to be held in 2023 will be one of the largest religious events in Brazil. In 2022, it had the participation of approximately 500,000 people. It brings together believers from various regions of the country in a 14-kilometer walk, from the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in the city center to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Penha in the southern part of the city. Historically, the construction of the Church in Penha is the result of a vow, thus being an ex-voto.

To facilitate the organization of the exhibition, it was suggested to photograph the entire pilgrimage route, highlighting the prayer and intercession points, from the city center to the Penha neighborhood. In other words, from the start at the Church of Lourdes to the end at the Penha Sanctuary. The best photos will be displayed on a mural at the exhibition, depicting the history of the Penha pilgrimage.

### ***The Choice of Space for the Ex-Voto Exhibition***

The exhibition is based on the selection and presentation of objects that can support a narrative about a specific subject. The choices and definitions point to the desired ideas and images and establish, through the senses, dialogues with the public. It also brings up the issue of the conservation and preservation of these objects. It takes place in the encounter between the visitor and the exhibition set or, in a broader and more current conception, between society and its heritage. However, exhibitions can be created and presented in many ways and in numerous forms, using only sounds, images,



lights, etc. Some of these resources will be utilized in the exhibition of the ex-votos.

The Cultural Center has its own structure for the daily exhibition of its secular pieces. It was the responsibility of the interns to assess the feasibility of the exhibition space and the accessibility for the visiting public. The choice was made with the presence of all the interns, supervised by the architect and mentor, with the participation of the museologist from the CCSF, who started interacting with the curatorial team in guiding and optimizing the entire space. Initially, it was suggested that it should be in a single room, measuring 23 square meters, near the auditorium.

However, as the project took shape, the space proved to be inefficient. Therefore, the possibility of adding another room, larger with more visibility of the pieces, was considered. Thus, the room at the beginning of the staircase that gives access to the first floor was suggested as the first room, becoming an extension of the second, resulting in two environments for the exhibition. This change was due to the volume of the pieces, approximately 200 units, already cataloged. The Cultural Center is considering the possibility of keeping the pieces on display for a period longer than 60 days, or on a permanent basis.

### ***The Financial Support for the Exhibition Setup***

After choosing the location, there was a need to specify the source and the available amount to implement the exhibition. During this period, the internship supervisor communicated that the funding would be released by the Federal Government through the Rouanet Law. The administration of the Cultural Center, through its technical staff, urgently and within a limited timeframe, prepared the Technical Descriptive Memorial of the exhibition and submitted it to the Federal Government.

Another change observed was regarding the acquisition of the exhibition design and display cases for the pieces. Since the institution has its own suppliers, it was at the discretion of the Cultural Center to manufacture both.





However, it was agreed that as soon as the display cases and exhibition design were ready, the supervisor would inform the interns so they could participate in setting up the exhibition scheduled for a week before the Penha procession. The internship concluded before the arrival of the mentioned materials, leaving a sense of conclusion. In other words, we planted the seed of the exhibition and await the arrival of the materials mentioned to nurture the ideas and decisions planned during this journey.

## **CONCLUSION**

The internship is a very valuable experience aimed at contributing to the academic development of students in the Religious Studies program offered by the Federal University of Paraíba. According to the researched literature, the benefits for both students and the hiring companies are extremely visible.

From this collaboration, new ideas emerge, presenting fresh concepts and solutions regarding spiritual and sociocultural perspectives. It is worth noting that, in addition to allowing the application of theoretical knowledge, the internship opens opportunities for students to gain professional refinement.

The importance of the internship lies in being a fundamental stage in academic formation, providing an integration of theory with real-time practice. It also optimizes professional development by immersing students in the real world of their profession, helping them deal with actual challenges, learn decision-making, problem-solving, and develop interpersonal skills.

However, some improvements would need to be made if the proposed exhibition during the internship becomes an annual event at the São Francisco Cultural Center. One improvement could be adjusting the intern's schedule to align with the Penha procession. This way, the intern could complete the activities proposed by the curatorial team by the inauguration and subsequently monitor the exhibition activities. This adaptation would



enable the implementation of the project and further enrich the learning experience offered by the course.

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