

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

PROCESSES OF TRANSFORMATION OF THE URBAN TRACE BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AT A LOCAL LEVEL. VILLA DE LEYVA, COLOMBIA

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Tourism in Villa de Leyva as the main economic activity has influenced public management focused on tourism development where the local community perceives this activity to the benefit of the preservation of cultural heritage as the way to strengthen local investment and greater land value in a process of urban and suburban expansion. The present investigation is geared by the development of the general objective that consists of explaining the socio-space transformations caused by tourism in Villa de Leyva.

The analysis of the socio-space transformations was carried out from the geography of tourism in a dynamic activity in which it is necessary to conceive the geographical space as a social product, in the micro-scale of study “place”, in which integrality and interrelations meet with the external environment. The theoretical framework led to the understanding of cultural tourism and second-home tourism from geography, as analytical perspectives that reveal new social practices.

The results of the research contribute to local and regional public management by spatially presenting the dynamics that tourism has caused, in terms of changes in economic activities and land subdivision.

Villa de Leyva, municipality located in the northeast of Bogotá, Colombia, only 175 km away. This villa is immersed in a valley of mountains, with the appearance of having been in the past, at the time of the colony, it has a characteristic architecture, which responds to a villaleyvano style in particular (Alcaldía de Villa de Leyva, 2017), where the epochs of the colony and republican are conjugated: it has ceilings in mud tile, adobe walls, brick, stone or polished wood, stepped wall, or barbeque, of smooth texture. It also has large windows and balconies that allows you to observe the landscape. Doors with carved stone doors, arches or stone columns at the entrance. Walls painted white with windows and wooden doors painted green or the natural color of wood.

Architectural style that is complemented with other traits left by the Spanish culture, to find there the Mediterranean triad: the olive tree, the vine and the wheat. Courtyards of old houses with aged olive trees or farms destined for their cultivation, as if it were still a gastronomic need of the population. In turn, the gathering with the sowing and harvesting of wheat and flour processing mills, today suitable as hostels, museums and cultural

centers. Without being able to stop mentioning the vine crops, which recreate meeting spaces between tourists and visitors.

Under this scenario, the Villa has consolidated cultural tourism as its main activity based on a tourism policy that has evidenced a public management oriented towards its development. Although, most of the projects and programs are destined to the recovery and conservation of the heritage (Alcaldía de Villa de Leyva, 2016), its purpose is aimed at the patrimonialization of the territory (Martínez, 2008). Mainly of all for the design of cultural products related to the colonial period, for the historical events that took place in the Villa and for the colonial architecture that gathers its historic center.

Next, the arrival of new residents attracted by cultural tourism has led to the introduction of a new typology, tourism of second homes. Motivation that arises initially in the big houses of the historical center, vacant during most of the year and belonging to the high political elites of the country, used for the leisure of this social class of the country. Today, some of these mansions have been set up in cultural spaces such as museums or art galleries. Without avoiding considering those that have been suitable for hostels or are an institutional part of the municipality. Now the second residences are part of the urban expansion of the city, with the construction of country houses in suburban and rural areas.

This is how cultural tourism and second home tourism have marked the transformation of the Villa and have oriented its urban expansion and changed in land use and economic activities in urban and rural areas.

The urban expansion from a multi-time study projects the urban growth from 1954 to 2018 on which an expansion model is evidenced from a central point, in this case the Plaza Mayor. As can be seen in figure 4, the polygon that counts as the historical center is visualized, which deduces an orthogonal and regular scheme. Moreover, from where there is a progressive residential growth mainly towards the south and west of the Plaza Mayor of the municipality. The polygon that counts as the historical center is seen, which deduces an orthogonal and regular scheme. There we can also observe a progressive residential growth mainly towards the south and west of the Plaza Mayor of the municipality. What induces a spontaneous urban growth, when referring that the majority of the constructions that are not within the polygon of the historical center, occurred in an irregular way, insofar as they do not respond to a pre-established order and the initial grid structure is lost.

On the other hand, urban growth is oriented by two aspects, access roads and the presence of water sources that cross the municipality. The access roads have had a great incidence when evidencing a greater number of constructions towards the urban periphery; the most representative road is the one that connects Villa de Leyva with Tunja, capital of the department of Boyacá, and with Bogotá, the country's capital. The water sources from West to East have allowed the urban area to grow with certain determinations and the division of some properties.

Likewise, this expansion is due to maintaining the functionality of the Villa, in the colonial context, in the conservation of heritage and in the development of tourism, inevitably favors the implantation of a greater number of commercial and service establishments (accommodation establishments, restaurants, craft stores, supermarkets), to serve an internal (national) tourism. However, with an orientation directed by interdepartmental and intraregional access routes.

Furthermore, with the aim of promoting internal mobility, local access roads to the historic center are adapted and improved. Complemented, with the destination of streets for exclusive pedestrian use, restriction of vehicles in certain urban areas and improvement of furniture with a use intended mainly for tourists. The division of urban land is becoming more evident and the expansion of the place is focused towards the north, south and north-west. It is clarified that the expansion is limited to the east by the presence of the natural reserve, Iguaque Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, which covers 6750 ha.

Undoubtedly, tourism and the decrease in the agricultural vocation of the municipality have promoted other sectors such as construction and real estate, which in the last 10 years have had accelerated growth. These activities have projected the construction and adaptation of large houses in the urban area, but singularly the implantation of country houses and rural condominiums in the rural area (Alcaldía de Villa de Leyva, 2016), which proliferate because of market deregulation real estate.

And it is precisely as the country houses border the Villa, like a great viewpoint, from where you can foretaste its old town, without wanting to get rid of it. The accelerated change in land use has created socio-spatial transformations, both in urban and rural areas, which are expressed in new rural areas such as second homes or in new functionalities of urban space in response to tourist flows or new residents. An expansion that extends into new cultural styles, ways of life and social interaction.