

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

IDENTITY AND CULTURAL MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF QUINDÍO IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COFFEE CULTURE LANDSCAPE OF COLOMBIA

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The coffee culture that has characterized the department of Quindío, Colombia, throughout history includes a set of cultural, artistic and heritage manifestations, which are an attraction for domestic and foreign tourists and have become a differentiating factor. Nevertheless, a number of factors have emerged, which would account for the gradual loss of the so-called “Quindio identity”, among which the lack of social appropriation of heritage stands out; however, there is a lack of studies on the current situation of cultural identity and cultural manifestations of the department.

With the inclusion of the Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia (PCCC) in the World Heritage List by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2011, an opportunity arises for the department. and the region in general, to analyze the possibilities of development and make it possible to integrate its heritage into the economic and social dynamics of the territory so that it is possible to achieve sustainability of the cultural values (exceptional and universal) that have brought about international recognition.

The objective of this research is to recognize the current situation of the identity of the department of Quindío and the set of cultural manifestations that characterize it, a subject that is of special interest to governmental entities in charge of public policies oriented to territorial development, for social actors who make up the tourism and cultural sector, and also for academics and scholars on issues related to the strengthening of productive chains.

To analyze the concepts of identity and cultural manifestations, it is necessary to investigate the origin and evolution of culture, which has been associated with the arts,

religion and customs; however, different approaches link it to economic progress and human development. There are many definitions of culture but it essentially incorporates a set of features that characterize a society and reflects values, traditions and beliefs, which change continuously and generate various manifestations with which an identity is created.

Expressions are manifested in various forms, some with greater intensity such as dancing, music and festivals; others arise from the cultural heritage in which people identify characteristic features and traditional symbols that are directly related to their physical and social environment. With the universe of cultural expressions of the different nations and localities, it becomes evident that there is no single universal classification to characterize and standardize them. Per Paulhiac, Alfaro, Mendoza and Ortega (2016), the characterization of cultural manifestations should be based on the observation and practice of the trade and not on obsolete criteria of what is useful or sublime in art.

On June 25, 2011, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee entered the Coffee Cultural Landscape of Colombia (PCCC) to the World Heritage List, a recognition of 47 municipalities in four Colombian departments that make up the Coffee Axis (Caldas, Risaralda, Quindío and northern Valle del Cauca), a region characterized by coffee production wherefrom a set of attributes, relationships between its inhabitants and cultural heritage is derived (CONPES, 2014).

The Colombian Ministry of Culture defined 15 attributes that represent the material expressions of coffee culture and reflect the exceptional and universal values of the PCCC. Its inclusion as a UNESCO World Heritage Site becomes a very important reference that expresses the cultural identity of the region in the production of coffee and highlights the tradition and effort of generations around this economic activity. Quindío is the smallest department in Colombia, with an area of 1,845 km², made up of 12 municipalities, of which 11 are included in the Declaration of the PCCC.

Colombia's worldwide recognition is largely due to its coffee tradition, which has generated rich tangible and intangible manifestations with a unique legacy, which have been preserved especially by owners and local communities, who have a high sense of social appropriation of their cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2011). According to CONPES (2014), the most representative cultural manifestations of the PCCC are: characters or objects associated with coffee, culinary knowledge or gastronomy, traditional sites as an economic, social and recreational meeting point, costumes, crafts, festivals associated with coffee culture, myths or legends that persist in the rural areas of the region, and, among others, music and paintings inspired by coffee.

With regards to cultural heritage, the General Act on Culture (Congress of Colombia, 1997) states that it is made up of all cultural assets such as tradition, customs and habits, material and intangible goods of several kinds, and manifestations, products and representations of popular culture. Nonetheless, the differences between those who look after the conservation of heritage and those engaged in tourism activities have been a matter of concern for specialists.

For decades, tourism as an economic activity regarded the territory as a mere physical space to offer goods and services, ignoring the existence of a natural and cultural heritage of interest to visitors. However, today it is recognized as a space of civic coexistence and container of history (Rodríguez, 2010, quoted by Duis, 2011). From this perspective, the

territory is understood as human construction (Saturday, 2011) and resembles the definition of cultural landscape as a “record of man on the territory” (Duis, 2011:84).

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines cultural tourism as the “Immersion in natural history, human and cultural heritage, arts and philosophy, and institutions of other countries or regions” (Pastor, 2016:24), includes visiting heritage sites and therefore depends on the conservation and preservation of these features and cultural elements. According to Anato, Rivas and González (2010) the touristic offer, in addition to attributes or attractions of the natural landscape, must reflect those aspects that culturally identify the population such as history, gastronomy and handicrafts, among others.

From this perspective, the capitalization of cultural and natural resources (Duis, 2013) and the territory (Myttenaere and Rozo, 2010) for the strengthening of tourism, sheds light on the need to link cultural actors and tourism for the growth and development of the regions. Currently, the sustainability of heritage and culture, within the framework of economic and social development, relate to tourism through a dynamic interaction that generates both opportunities and challenges (Sánchez, 2010). The capitalization of cultural identity requires territorial development strategies generated from the use of natural and cultural resources such as the Coffee Axis, especially Quindío (Soto and Vargas, 2007).

As to the methodology, this research is exploratory and descriptive, primary information was obtained through surveys and interviews on aspects related to the current state of identity and cultural manifestations in the department of Quindío, the perception of its inhabitants and the management of government entities concerning the promotion and preservation of the same.

To select the sample of inhabitants, the database of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) was taken with the census of households and the composition of families according to a stratified random sampling and simple average distribution by municipalities. Regarding government bodies, the sample was represented by bodies responsible for the protection and conservation of culture in Quindío. In order to collect the information, a fieldwork was carried out, which consisted of visiting each municipality of Quindío to apply the surveys to the community, and representatives of local agencies to conduct the interviews.

Some of the main findings assert that the most recognized cultural manifestations by the community fall into different categories, as follows: in terms of the characters and objects associated with the coffee growing activity, the construction of houses in Bahareque (mixture of wet earth, wood and natural fibers), coffee bags (bags of natural fiber), Jeep Willys, coffee and corn grinding machines and baskets (containers made of natural fibers, long and flexible, to collect coffee) stand out; in relation to culinary knowledge or gastronomy, the beans with ripe plantain slice (yellow plantain, fried and sweet), white rice, chicharrón (bacon) and arepa (corn tortilla) are highlighted; as for the traditional sites that are or were meeting points, the arepas post is recognized.

In terms of the garments, the most identified outfits are the chapolera (coffee picker woman) and the carriel (small leather briefcase); the most outstanding crafts are works made in bejuco (long stem, thin and flexible plant) and objects made in guadua (bamboo); the most well-known festivals associated with the coffee culture are the National Coffee Party and Parade, the Yipao Parade (tour of Jeeps Willys loaded in excess with people and

different objects typical of coffee culture), the The Guadua Party in the municipality of Córdoba (Quindío) and the Chapolera Parade; among the myths and legends stands out the Legend of Cacique Calarcá; in the musical folklore stands out the Game of Macheteros, string music, guitar and tiple (small guitar); and in the visual and graphic arts, the most recognized cultural expression is historical photography.

The study concludes that culture in the department of Quindío is derived from the fusion of several factors created throughout history, with which it was possible to build a cultural identity, composed of a set of expressions with a unique legacy. On the other hand, government agencies have been concerned about the protection and promotion of culture through the development of various activities.