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**“PAISAJE DESÉRTICO, AUTENTICIDAD Y AISLAMIENTO COMO TEATRALIDAD TURÍSTICA. EL CASO DE LA PUNA JUJEÑA (ARGENTINA).”**

***“*BARREN LANDSCAPE, AUTHENTICITY AND ISOLATION AS TOURIST THEATRICALITY. THE CASE OF PUNA JUJEÑA (ARGENTINA)*”***

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**Desert landscape, AUTHENTICITY AND ISOLATION as tourist theatricality. The case of LA Puna of JuJEÑA (Argentina).**

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**resumen**

El presente artículo tiene como objetivos establecer las condiciones materiales y simbólicas sobre las que se desarrolla turísticamente la Puna jujeña y construye su atractividad, y analizar la situación paradojal que supone el estímulo a la economía turística en una región marginal, con escasas redes de comunicación y con servicios e infraestructuras turísticas exiguas e informales. Para tal fin, se partió de un enfoque teórico que consiste en entender el paisaje turístico como escenario y escena que es consumido visualmente. A nivel metodológico, se realizaron trabajos de campo, entrevistas, y relevamientos estadísticosy fotográficos. Se destaca la confección de un mapa temático que contribuye al estudio de la problemática abordada.

**Palabras clave: desarrollo turístico, teatralidad turística, paisaje,aislamiento, Puna, Argentina.**

**abstract**

The present article has as aims establish the material and symbolic conditions on which the Puna jujeña develops turísticamente and constructs his atractividad, and analyze the paradoxical situation that supposes the stimulus to the tourist economy in a marginal region, with scanty networks of communication and with services and tourist exiguous and informal infrastructures. For such an end, it split of a theoretical approach that consists of understanding the tourist landscape as scene and scene that is consumed visually. To methodological level, there were realized fieldworks, interviews, and statistical and photographic reports. Is outlined the confection of a thematic map that he contributes to the study of the approached problematics.

**Keys Words: tourist development, landscape, isolation, Puna, Argentina**

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1. **introduction**

This article considerstourist territory on two planes. The first of these refers to its bidimensionality that, relying on the definition of territory of Haesbaert (2004), is constituted by a material dimension that relates to the adoption and physical organization of a space by the social body that is involved in the practice of tourismto build, functionalise and use service infrastructures, networks of communication and information, panoramic points, etc. with the aim of guiding the movements and consumption of the tourist. The other dimension is the symbolic, which expresses the redefinition of the territorial identity through the management of tourism in a destination and its impact on the practices of sociability, customs, cultural expressions, etc; including those valued as tourist resources. It should be remembered that the material and the symbolic work together inthe development of territories, their separation being possible only in the field of abstract analysis.

The second plane interprets tourist territory as a territorial network, i.e., as a place of origin, transit and a destination; all of them joined and connected by various networks in which circulate flows of different natures (information, tourists, workers, capital, etc.). All three places are inherent in the realization of the practice of tourism and in all of them is expressed, and combined, material symbolic circumstances. In the place of origin the ideas and representations that underpin the practice are created and the economic players that structure the business take action(Bertoncello, 2002), having commercial offices (private sector) or promotional (public sector); in the transit space is the experienceof the trip asa movementthrough transport networks; and in the destination place we raise the conceptof what we call "tourist theatricality", as a metaphor for the territorial and tourist experience, that implies the existence of a scenario - the tourist attraction materialized in the territory - and the scene – that enlivens the first and in which the tourist participates as an observer or as a player in scenic playback.

Based on this theoretical-conceptual frame, the objective of this work is to establish the material-symbolic circumstances in which tourism develops in the Puna Jujeña (Argentina) and developsits attractiveness, and analyses the paradoxical situation ofstimulatingthe tourist economy in a region characterized by poor marginal communication networks and with meagre and informal tourist service infrastructures.

1. **methodology**

Firstly, we emphasize the exploratory nature of thispaper as there are no previousstudies on tourism development in the Puna of Jujuy (map 1). To meet the stated objective, we rely on a quali-quantitative social science methodology, with emphasis on the geographical perspective of the phenomenon, in which we carried out both office based activities and fieldwork during the seasonsof 2011, 2013 and 2014, making a total stay of 75 days in the region. We emphasize that the research was conducted on three axes that correspond to: (1) a general diagnosis of the region and the peoples and villagesstudied; (2) the material and symbolic forms of the development of tourism practice in the Puna; and (3) fieldwork in communities of the Puna.

Methodologically, firstly, available regional statistics were compiled and analysedin order to assess the socio-economic radiography of the Puna. We also took into account surveys carried out bymunicipal governments and other institutions, private and public. Secondly, to take account of the state of tourism development,relevant statistics available at national, regional and local level were collected. It should be noted that in the specific case of the Puna of Jujuy the available information is limited to the amount of tourist beds in four (La Quiaca, Abra Pampa, Susques, Santa Catalina and Yavi) of the nine locations that offer some type of accommodation. An aspect to highlight is that an obstacle to overcome in any tourist research on tourism in this region is the scarce statistical data. In the absence of institutional information we conducted a survey of basic data on tourist movements in Yavi (Department of Yavi) and Santa Catalina (Department of Santa Catalina), updating the information provided by the provincial Secretariat of Tourism. In the case of Yavi, we usedthe registration of tourists that enter the main village tourist attraction, the"San Francisco" Chapel**,** together with data fromthe municipal tourist office, located at the entrance of the town, which details if tourists stay overnight in the locality, and their place of origin. Although it is a survey carried out by the municipality, the information is gathered without being analysed or developed into statistics. In the case of Santa Catalina, we reviewed the guest books of the only two lodgingsin the village, in which were detailed age, occupation and place of origin. In this study we incorporated only the information on the variable "place of origin", with the analysis of the other variables for future work. In the case of Yavi, total tourists listed in the register of the municipal office of tourism from January 2011 until November 2014 are 714, while in Santa Catalina 285 tourists registered in the guest books of the two lodgingsin the locality.We reviewed the Santa Catalina records only over the same time frame as for Yavi[[1]](#footnote-2).

In the three fieldworks, as part of the methodological process, we conducted surveys and interviews with tourists staying in Yavi and Santa Catalina. The surveys conducted were of the descriptive type. Subsequently, short complementary interviews were carried out which enabled broader responses and further development. In order to avoid implementation difficultiesin the case of the survey, a concise questionnaire was designed so as not to demand too much time from the tourist,inorder to ensure afterwards a successful interviewand to contribute to the positive predisposition of the respondent. It should be noted that these were made in English, French and Spanish. In the case of the surveys, responses in this article are: (1) place of origin (nationality in the case of foreigners, province and region in the case of residents); (2) if it is considered that the Puna as a destination warrants specific tours and experience,or can it be an excursion that can be made from otherQuebrada de Humahuaca locations, that is, be a complementary destination; (3) the motivations and interests that led to the visit to the Puna;(4) the impressions that the place gives rise to(sensory, social, cultural, psychological); (5) cultural and natural sites visited; (6) the assessmentgiven to the degree of isolation and communication difficulties; (7) criticismsof the limitations of tourist services. In the event that the responses to points 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 coincided in more than 50% of the surveys and interviews, these were incorporated as trends and treated as overall results. In contrast, those responses with more dispersed measures were not incorporated intothe analysis in this phase of the work. In the case of Yavi, in the three trips made, sampling was 68[[2]](#footnote-3) (representing 9.5% of the tourists registered in the office of tourism); while in Santa Catalina this was 33[[3]](#footnote-4) (representing 11.5% per cent of the tourists registered in the guest books of the two lodgings).

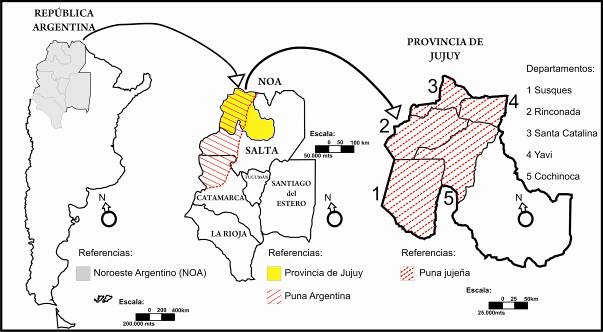
The interviews require a separate mention. As has already been pointed out, these were undertaken in talks with tourists after the surveys. The interviews were semi-structured and focused on knowledge of the geography and culture of the Puna before the trip was made.[[4]](#footnote-5)

As part of the fieldwork, we reviewed the entire offer of accommodation in the different villages in the Puna of Jujuy, both those registered and the informal. In eachof the localities we visited and photographed the various attractions that are advertised by the offices of tourism, to which were added attractions mentioned by locals which did not have official promotion. We also studied the connectivity of the region through a study of the transport network. Frequency data and destinations were obtained at the bus terminal in La Quiaca. In turn, all travel throughout the Puna of Jujuy was made using existing services, so that the type of transport used by the local population and the tourist could be observed and evaluated. The local lodgings, the attractions and connectivity of the villages through the system of public transport are represented cartographically, contributing to an overview of the regional socio-territorial integration that enables a diagnosisof the situation of isolation.

With regard to the reviews of the providers of tourist accommodation, one was carried out in La Quiaca, in 10 of the 18 establishments, with the purpose of consulting the managementas to the approximate percentage of tourists who lodge (since the lodgings welcome transitory workers, temporary workers, and even farm workers who come to the city to conduct personal business or attend the hospital), as to what was the average stay and the percentage, in case of this being recorded in the guide books, of the tourists who entered Bolivia. This characterizes the city as a passage place and not as a tourist destination. In contrast, in the lodgings of Santa Catalina (the two were reviewed) and those of Yavi (the five were reviewed), the consultations with the operators coveredtheir origin, their assessment of the destination and their view of the tourist.

In a complementary way, in order to study the production of tourism imaginaries**,**analyses were undertaken of the images and advertising- verbal and non-verbal–oftourism in the Puna, and contrastedwith the accounts given by tourists, obtained from the short interviews and blogs. It should be noted that while the work is supported by tourism imaginaries, its aim is not to deepen the conceptual debate on the subject, for a deeper literature we suggest the texts of Urry (2007), Salazar (2012), Doering (2015), Beeton (2015a and 2015b) Kock, et al (2016), among others. The purpose is to establish a comparative study between the persuasivenessof the advertising discourse and photography designed by the promoters, thatinfluences the "gaze" of the tourist (Urry, 2004); and that of the tourist related experience, as a self-referential form of interpreting the landscape - his own story or thinking on the landscape (Berque, 2009). The importance of the experience described by the tourist is that one can transmute this into information directed to an "other" that is interested in knowing the tourist destination, being also a persuasive or non-persuasive discourse built on the basis of the subjectivity of the tourist, as an individual, which in turn is crossed (to some extent) by advertising strategies. As regards thecommercial discourse, the tourist interprets the experience of others, either as an affirmation, reinforcement, denial or complementarity tothat which is "publicly" said.

**Map 1. Study area.**



*Source: own design*

Finally, we wish to emphasize that in the fieldworkwe reviewed the material content of the Puna landscape, through visual study and the geo-photographic method - equivalent to a geographic information system applied to the landscape. In the peoples study, we worked with "participant observation". Guber (2001) defines this method as the way in which the investigator enters the surroundings of the subject and participates in his environment, delineatingthe relationship between the two components of the term at issue: the participation and the observation. The objective of this participant observation is to study situations in which are expressed and generated social and cultural universes in complex, variedinteractions; this basically consists of two major activities: systematic and controlled observation encompassing everything that happens around the researcher, and participating in one or several of the activities of the population (Guber, 2001). In the fieldwork in the Puna of Jujuy, participant observation was consistently applied during the festivities, where tourists and locals congregate. It also inquired into the problems derived from tourism or fears that its practice generates in the population, affected through interviews (in Yavi 19 interviews were conducted which represents 7% of the population; and in Santa Catalina 17, 5.1% of the population). An interview was also carried out with the official responsible for tourism planning in the province in the year 2015.

**3. Short review of tourism in Argentina and the Northwest of Argentina (NOA)**

In order to define our study objective, we start from the recognition that in Argentina, in recent decades, all of the following regions have been put into tourist operation(Patagonia, the Pampas, Cuyo, Sierras Pamperas, Northeast and Northwest), transforming the country with a multiplicity of tourist territories (socio-cultural and environmental) with diverse habitats. After the social crisis that erupted at the end of 2001, arrivals for international tourism, which had been depressed, rose notably from 2003, growing in the period 2001-2011 by 149.3% (Table 1). This growth created a tourist income that went from $2,534 million in 2001 to $4,627 million in 2014 (Chart 1). This situation led to a greater investment by the state in infrastructure to support and ensure (directly or indirectly[[5]](#footnote-6)) the matching of the private tourist capital investmentand, corollary, increased private sector investment. For example, in the year 2006, with expanding tourism, construction began on more than 200 hotels in Argentina with an investment of more than $400 million, of which 65 per cent was foreign capital, according to the National Tourism Secretariat.

The contribution of tourism to economic development, principally in the service sector and construction, has led to various provincial and municipal governments promoting their territories as tourist destinations, in order to capture part of the income generated by the level of tourist expenditure and of private and public investment aimed, directly or indirectly, at the sector. As a result, some local economies have been reoriented toward tourism and, in some cases, to be redefined as tourist destinationshas put their traditional activities into a crisis situation**.** Faced with this repositioning, it is necessary to develop innovative sectoral policies of planning and management adapted to territorial needs and capacities.

The tourist map of Argentina of the twenty-first century shows a major diversification and flexibility of destination supply and demand (Bertoncello, 2006), de-standardization and innovation in tourist infrastructures and services, less dependent on the massification process; this circumstance does not imply the disappearance of traditional models. However, in both models are noted processes of accumulation, concentration and exclusion, as tourism is not developed evenly in the various destinations. This is because the destinations which are more selected by tourists are those with the ability to promote themselves, an issue that will depend on their attractiveness and in the way in which this is disseminated through advertising mechanisms. This differing capacity of the tourist destinations can be framed within what Santos (2000) referred to as "place competitivity". This author notes that destinations are distinguished by their differential capacity to offer investments returns, in virtue of the local technical and organizational conditions (Santos, 2000). From this interpretation, the regions and tourist locations, their places and images, are competing to be more representative and attractive in the tourism market. This is reiterated within the different territorial scales, for example, the different tourist destinations that are part of a region will strive to be the image that represents the dominant position, this is, in terms of Chadefaud (1987), to be the most recognised "tourist myth".

One of the regions with the most tourism growth in Argentina is the northwest[[6]](#footnote-7) (NOA) - maps 1 and 2, table 1. Although its tourist functionality has a long history, with summer villas in various localities being used by the regional elites from the dawn of the twentieth century (Karasik, 1994), it is in the last two decades that the region has entered the market on a global scale through the transformation of its cultural and natural heritage into a tourist attraction. In graphic 2 can be seen the growth in tourist income in the province of Jujuy (with Salta showing the most tourist development in the NOA) which rose from less than 100,000 in 1993 to nearly 800,000 in 2013. In turn, Figure 3 shows the annual variation is higher in Jujuy that the national average. This tourism growth in the region lies in the organizational and structural improvements that facilitate the development of tourist capitaland enable territorial transformation processes in those places promoted as destinations. The data that supports this quali-quantitative leap is that in one decade (1993-2013) hotel beds quadrupled from 2,500+ to approximately 9,280 (Tourism Secretariat of the Province of Jujuy, 2014). Another indication of the development of tourist productive forces is that in the province, at the beginning of the decade of 1990, jobs linked to tourism represented less than 1% of the labour force, while in 2013 they represented 5.6%, employing 15,600 workers, almost at the same level as the national average of 5.8% (Federal Council of Tourism, 2014).

Within the NOA there are four types of tourist destinations: (1) those that occupy a preponderant place, due to the privileged position of their image in the tourist market and, as a corollary, by their level of infrastructure and tourist services investment; (2) those with a complementary position with respect to the first; (3) the emergent destinations, those that are seen as novel and, for this reason, acquire a certain activity growth, although they face limitations and obstacles fully to develop; and (4) the marginal, defined as those which have scanty tourist infrastructure, are little promoted and have poor communication and information networks. All these types are present in the Jujuy province (map 2): Of those destinations established in the Quebrada de Humahuaca, the sector registered in the decade 2003 - 2013 an accelerated growth of 251.1% in their hotel places and, in turn, are those that contributed most to increase the rate of employability in the sector;complementary destinations are more concentrated in the Valles area with a more stagnant growth (35.2% in tourist places); thirdly, the emerging destinations are in the Yungas (jungle) zone, registering a significant place growth (115.4%); finally, the marginal destinations, combined with some emerging destinations, are dispersed across the Puna, registering a growth of 106,2% (graphic 4).

**Table 1. Growth in overnight stays in the different tourist regions of the country in the period 2005-2014.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tourist region** | **Stays**  **2005** | **Stays**  **2014** | **Absolute variation** | **Growth**  **2005-14 (%)** |
| Autonomous City of Buenos Aires | 9.547.187 | 11.895.806 | 2.348.619 | **24,6** |
| Province of Buenos Aires | 7.164.918 | 7.062.290 | -102.628 | **-1,43** |
| Patagonia | 7.183.132 | 8.975.426 | 1.792.294 | **24,9** |
| Central | 3.775.205 | 4.911.208 | 1.136.003 | **30,1** |
| Cuyo | 3.550.572 | 4.177.778 | 627.206 | **17,6** |
| North East | 3.311.779 | 5.211.240 | 1.899.462 | **57,3** |
| **North West** | **3.076.963** | **4.160.891** | **1.083.928** | **35,2** |

*Source: National Tourism Ministry*

**Graphic 1. Non-resident tourists arrivals and receipts for international tourism in Argentina(1990 – 2014)**.

Income from non-resident tourists

Income from international tourists (in millions of $US)

*Source: National Tourism Ministry*

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**Graphic 2. Tourist arrivals in the Provincia de Jujuy (1993 – 2013).**



*Source: Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Jujuy*

**Graphic 3. Comparative annual percentage growth between Argentina and Juyuy (1993 -2013).**



*Source: own design based on statistics retrieved from the Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Jujuy and the Ministry of National Tourism*

**Graphic 4. Growth in hotel and parahotel beds in the different tourist regions of Juyuy (2003 -2013).**



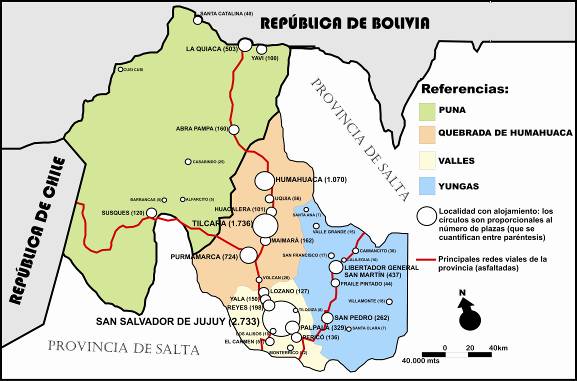
*. Source: own design based on statistics retrieved from the Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Jujuy*

**4. General radiography of the Puna and the expectation of tourism**

In the region, the Puna represents a particular study on tourism development. This is a desert plateau located in the northwest corner of Argentina, with variable altitudes between 3,500 and 4,500 mts that hinder human settlement, with the addition of a dry climate, with large daily thermal variations, with little rainfall which is concentrated in the summer season. Its territory covers three provinces: Catamarca, Salta and Jujuy and is, with the mountainous zones and the Patagonian steppe, one of the most depopulated regions of the country. The total population is 43,099 (2010 census), which results in a population density of 0.51 inhab/km². Most of the villages, scattered across its 83.078 km², do not exceed 500 inhabitants (only 6.2% of the 159 localities exceeding 500 inhabitants).

The majority of the inhabitants are descended from the indigenous cultures that populated the area (Atacamas, Cochinocas and Casabindos). These were conquered by the Inca empire, annexed as part of the Tahuantinsuyo in the XV century, and subsequently by the Spanish crown, robbing the indigenous peoples of their lands, freedom and beliefs through the Encomienda system and evangelization. The economy of these cultures was a combination of agricultural and pastoral activities, using terraces for cultivation with corn and potatoes as their main products, with the breeding of llamas and vicuña hunting (Echazú, 2012). Currently, some of the traditional activities persist, especially those linked to the management of the camelids of the region.

**Map 2. Tourist regionsof the Provincia de Jujuy, number of beds per locality and principal road networks**



Locations with lodging. The size of the circles is proportional to the number of beds (which are quantified in parentheses)

Principal road networks of the province (asphalted)

*Source: own design basedon statistics retrieved from the Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Juyoy.*

The predominant economic activities today are mining, cross-border trade and in some areas wool production from llamas and vicuñas. More isolated activities are the cultivation of Andean crops such as maize, Andean potatoes or quinoa. Notable is craft production in pottery and weaving. The greater part of the population subsists with the sale of handicraft products, mining, livestock breeding or through trading, another part works in the public sector or has some form of plan or social assistance that complements their income from informal work.

The scarcity of work, joined with the casualization of labour, gives the region a historic socio-economic identity linked to these labour problems producing, in conjunction with the housing situation, a high level of population impoverishment. For these reasons, the Puna is characterized, in the framework of the regionaldivision of labour, as an exporter and provider of cheap labour for the industrial centres of the country.

Within this socio-economicframework, public administrations, in the last decade, have installed tourism as a strategic sector, attributing to it positive development qualities: employment generation, increased municipal revenue, low environmental impact, revivification of the indigenous culture, etc. The Puna is an emerging tourist centre, with two locations as tourist destinations of the twenty-first century, according to national and international journals specializing in tourist travel. However, the current situation shows that the majority of Puna villages with tourist services remain marginal destinations, with poor information and communication linkswith the sending centres, due to theirinfrastructural and operational conditionsand the few tourist services offered. Of the 18 locations surveyed in the Puna with some type of hosting service, only five (27.7%) operate in a formal and sustained fashion throughout the year. This tells us that state management of tourism operates in the Puna in a promotional aspect, but it is insufficient in other technical and operational respects**.** Basically, while advertising is a tourismstrategy coreactivity, by itself it does not contribute todevelopment if it is not producing concrete policies to finance and support entrepreneurship and local or foreign initiatives.

The development of the attractiveness of the Puna villages, through promotion, is supported by a particular scenario, which is the desert landscape and the altitude, qualities that limithuman settlement but that generate tourist interest: the idea and image of the "solitude". The first paradox is that to make tourist investments, in this type of little inhabited region, would contribute to population increase. Solitude and the desert are associated concepts in the tourists imagination: the Puna suffers a regional negative water imbalance, with the dryness of the environment accentuated by strong solar radiation (Paoli, 2002), the qualities that create difficulties for human settlement being the same that nourishes the attractiveness. To this are addedphysio-biological components of the desert landscape, typical flora of the western xerofítico mountain formation.Of the fauna we highlight the presence of numerous camelids, which have now become a tourist resource to be photographed by visitors as icons of the NOA and the Puna. MacCannell (2003) states that these are symbolic markers that tourists "must" experience with some visual support, to make the stay in the region, in the eyes of others and of themselves, substantial, real or complete.

The features of the dominant landscape (plains bordered and crossed by mountain formations)are also appreciated by the tourist, including landforms valued for their rarity or uniqueness. The predominant topography is seen to be interrupted by narrow valleys formed by endorheic sub-basins of low and intermittent flow, isolated from each other by mountain ranges and rocky massifs that enclose the depressions where water courses converge forming salt lakes and/or lagoons - the majority of them dry fora good part of the year (Paoli, 2002). The majority ofPuna Jujeña villages are located in the valleys among the salt lakes and bodies of water in the middle of the aridity**,** which summons the photographic interest of the tourist. Cabrera (1976) distinguishes two Puna phytogeographicsub-regions, one named "desert" or "rubble desert", with a predominance of rocky soil and high aridity (50mm annual), being a characteristic feature of the salt deposits; the other known as the "dry" or "thorny" and, unlike the first, this enjoys a regime of greater precipitation (350 mm annual) and a uniform plant cover. Both have a territorial presence in the Jujuy province, the first in the southwest sector and the second in the southeastand the two have resources and conditions for tourism development. Indeed, the Secretariat of Tourism of the Jujuy province has established, through its public statements, that the symbolic marker of tourism in the Puna is located in the sub-desert region in Salinas Grandes.

**5. Puna of Jujuy: characteristics and conditions for its tourism development**

The Puna sector of the Jujuy province (map 1), is of significant interest to tourist studies by the factthat it is located next to one of the Argentine tourist destinations of major visibility on the international level: the Quebrada de Humahuaca.In addition, the territory is crossed by the road networks that communicate the NOA with the Bolivian altiplano and the Atacama Desert (Chile).Because of this particular geographical location, tourist traffic is substantial**,** but only a tiny part of thetourist stream that crosses the region sees the Puna as a tourist attraction, such that the greater part only transits. In addition, of the three provinces that make up the Puna, Jujuy has the nucleus of the greater part of the population (82.4%), of localities (69.2%) and of those which offer touristservices (55.5%).

The study area extendsto 29.345km² and is formed by five departments: Yavi, Santa Catalina, Rinconada, Cochinoca and Susques. These contain, according to data from the 2010 Census, 35,513 inhabitants, which gives a density of 1.21 inhab/km², giving it the quality of a sparsely populated region, but it is more densely populated than the average of the region (0.51). It should be made clear that the Puna of Jujuy excludes the main localities which are found on the National Route 9 (RN9) road axis: La Quiaca and Abra Pampa; and National Route 52 (RN52): Susques, since these settlements have a socio-economic complexity different to the rest of the Puna villages. This is because they form part of the commercial cross border transit area (formal and informal) which has developed an economy based on the traffic of goods and in mining, in the case of Abra Pampa, as well as providingpassage places toward other tourist destinations located in Bolivia (Tupiza, Uyuni, Potosí, La Paz) and Chile (San Pedro de Atacama, Antofagasta and Iquique). On these, some localities offer transit route services (hotels and restaurants, mainly) which meet core tourist circuit functions, but this does not imply that, by this, they can be characterized as tourist destinations or attractions.

**5.1tourist offer of the Puna of Jujuy**

The tourist who selects the Puna of Jujuy as his destination travels toward its interior, in search of greater authenticity. This implies deviating from the road networks (RN 9 and 52) which flow into the rest of the Argentine territory, over national borders or toward places with greater tourist organization (Quebrada de Humahuaca). Proof of this is the type of use made of hotel accommodation in the cities of La Quiaca and Abra Pampa on the axis of the RN 9, and Susques in the case of the RN 52. In the case of La Quiaca, itsposition as a border city makes it an obligatory stop for every tourist who intends to travel to Bolivia and/or Peru. According to the data recorded in the eighteen authorised lodgings in the city (503 beds) over 90% of those who stay, for tourist purposes, do so for only one night and then continue their trip to Bolivia. In the case of Abra Pampa, the five lodgings (160 beds) are used mostly by personnel linked to the intense mining activity or to families who come to visit their relatives working in the mining camps. Finally, the 120 beds available in the six accommodations in Susques meet the typical role of en route hotels, since the town is located on a strategic point near the border with Chile (124 km from the Paso de Jama) and 278km from San Pedro de Atacama, the most important and dynamic tourist centre of the cross-bordertourist region(Guyot, 2012) composed of the Puna Argentina, the Atacama Desert (Chile) and the Bolivian altiplano.

The remote villages of the two highlighted road networks are part of what is described as"Profound Puna", understood to have lesser communications,a greater isolation, contributingthe sustainability of traditional activities, a non-modernised economy, aweakness of service networks and with the conservation of secular traditions. Five Profound Puna villages have some type of formal or informal housing: Santa Catalina (40 beds), Yavi (100 beds), Alfarcito (5 beds), Casabindo (25 beds), Cusi-Cusi (5 beds) and Barrancas (5 beds), totalling, on the whole, 180 beds distributed over 13 establishments. Therefore, it should be noted that the biggest contribution toward the hotel beds in the region registered up to 2014are those localities that have transit functions(81.4%). However**,** outsidethe lack of infrastructure, the lodgings in the Profound Puna are of recent operation in comparison to those of the Quiaca and Abra Pampa, i.e. they made an important contribution to the growth registered in the decade 2003 - 2013.

**6. Puna scenario and scenery**

The attractive landscape of the Puna consists not simply of thegeophysicalqualities of the desert and mountains: the aridity, the landforms, lagoons, saltpans, oasesand tonal quality. It also derives tourist value from the socio-cultural representation image expressing the "bleak", the "infinity", the "immensity" or the "purity" (image 1), attributes used in its tourist promotion.Similarly, in the Atacama Desert (Chile) and in the altiplano (Bolivia), bordering the Puna and forming with it a cross-border tourist region, one uses the same visual descriptions to develop attractiveness and to redefine the economic functions of the villages selected as destinations, redirecting the socio-productive and cultural lattice toward the tourist services economy.In bestowing the landscape with a series of meanings, we can give an account of what Duncan (2006) underlines as a property of the same: the fact that it can be read as a text and, at the same time, in the specific case of tourism as a resource that isperceived as an object of visual consumption(Zuluaga, 2006**).** For example, the slogan of the Secretariat of Tourism of Jujuy Puna region in the year 2011 was "The immensity that captures" and the two selected images were: 1- Salinas Grandes - Image 2- (scene), one of the most singular landforms of extreme dryness in the region, with six people dancing playfullyin the landscape (scene); and 2 –El Valle de la Luna(next to Cusi Cusi), a site promoted for its spectacular nature, although little visited because of difficultyof access and the irregular nature of the scarce tourism services offered there.In the image of theEl Valle de La Luna, the human presence is tacit, the panoramic photograph invites the observer tojoin with the lens of the photographer, that captures the landscape without the presence of an "other" referencedin the advertising photography (image 3).

**Image 1. Tourist brochure of the Puna Jujeña.**



*Source: Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Juyuy*

The Puna portrays an image that is adapted to the recent trends in tourism, to the innovationsexpected by the consumer, not limited to the nature of the desert as spectacle, but suggests that its originality lies in the cultural interpretation of the Puñeda landscape. It should be remembered that the landscape has not become attractive by the mediatisation of modes of thinking and collective feeling, through the filter of individual and social imagination(Chadefaud, 1987). The Puna landscape, for tourism, has not been developed as a text antagonistic to the "culture", as an uninhabitablescene. In a certain way, the idea is incorporated that the landscape is at the same time a matrix and imprint of the culture of those who inhabit it (Claval, 1996). Indeed, the Puna peoples**,** their culture, are of interest to the tourist, those that are moved to recognize them as part of the scenario and the tourist scene. The Puna is incorporated into the tourist scene as a story and authentic image through its peoples, for its circumstance as a populated desert landscape. It is striking that, in the national imagination, this region is consideredas "uninhabited". This contrasts with the impression of the visiting tourist, since he is moved to know the Puna villages and their people. In this way, using all kinds of promotional schemes, the attention of the tourist is oriented, making use of what Polakowski (1987:202) reminds us: "The perception of the beauty of the landscape is a creative act of interpretation on the part of the observer". This, transferred to this case study, enables us to note that in a region such as the Punait is the perception of the tourist which is more important than what the market offers, as happens in popular destinations or thoseexisting in the popular imagination as typical tourist landscapes (such as a tropical beach). Non-conventional tourist destinations require a compromise on the part of the visitorto break with normal tourist scenario expectations.

The Puna scenario, for the tourist, consists of the experience of being in an isolated place, which is supposedly "fossilized" in time. This fantasy, promoted publicly, is made from a techno centric perspective that defines "current" time as time energised by technological development, which participates in the automation of landscapes (Santos, 2000). Relying on the interpretation of Saints (2000), we note that as there are "luminous" landscapes, fully integrated in the technological networks of globalization, there are landscapes "empty" of this technological level. For those people who live immersed in the first type of landscape,the second ones are "testimony" of times past, of ancient techniques, a quality that motivates the tourist trip. Within this parameter, the Puna is of tourist interest because it is homologous with its indigenous "past" and, at the same time, it is stripped of its present as a marginalized region by the processes of regional development. It is an alternative space-time that represents an "otherness" and the folkloric perspective (Karasik, 1994), promoted by the media and reinforced by the tourist, that drives the reconfiguration of the Puna as a tourist destination and its potential to be placed in the tourism market, and not its socio-economic problems, its degree of conflict with its isolation and exclusion.

**Image 2. Promotional brochure for the Puna Jujeña: Salinas Grandes.**



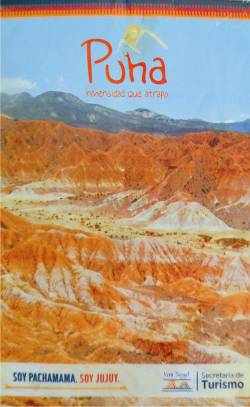
*Source: Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Juyuy*

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The lack of fluid networks of communication and services, that cause to a certainextent the geographical isolation, are a material reality reflecting the historical absence of territorial policies to incentivise the development of the regional economy, added to which are the difficulties presented by the altitude and the mountain ranges that must be crossed.[[7]](#footnote-8) These critical regional circumstances create on a tourist level an experience based on “uncertainty". This lastconsists of the weakness of the organized forms and objects commonly associated with tourism, since necessary services are not guaranteed or their existence is haphazard. Limited services are offered by a few local families who, in their daily lives, engage in other activities not subject to the attention of the visitor and, in some cases, that present a certain incompatibility, for example: the seasonal livestock drives. This is one of the reasons that, when the locals have to choose between providing tourist services and carrying out traditional activities, they will stop the support of the tourist e.g. in accommodation, because of the intermittent character of the tourist trade. Nevertheless, this "uncertainty" is seen as matching the expectation of the traveller as "adventurer" or "initiator", who involveshimselfwith the local community to have an authentic experience. This is different to conventional tourism that moves through well-defined networks, systematizing the experience, such that there is nothing left to chance, managing the tourists´movements and stays in a territory.

The search for authenticity in the Puna villagesis partially satisfied by their degree of isolation. Tourists generally found the experience of not having internet or cell phone signals satisfactory;in all of the villages studiedthere is usually only one public telephone that, normally, is in the communal building and its availability depends on municipal staff to operate or receive calls that are then communicated to the neighbours. The desert landscape of the Puna, as a visual expression of the physical conditions, contributes to the strengthening of the discourse on its isolation. Its aridity is seen interrupted by narrow valleys with villages dominated by constructions in adobe, dry stonewalls and straw, with groupsof tree species adapted to the environment. This scene, in itself, is attractive, but a landscape is not complete without the life that animates it, the movement, although the idea to commercialisetourism is to represent the place as fossilized or a land lost in time.

**Image 3. Promotional brochure of la Puna jujeña: Valle de la Luna**



*Source: Tourism Secretariat of the Provincia de Jujuy.*

To the desert landscape and its isolation are added the cultural expressions of the peoples who currently inhabit the region and are descendants of indigenous Andean cultures. It is striking for the tourist to see the tangible and intangible heritage of these peoples: crafts, customs, festivals, beliefs, resulting from a process of religious syncretism that represents one of the strongest local attractions, as is also seen in the rest of the NOA. This tourist scene varies seasonally, the most intense or livelycycles are connected to the dates of the festivals. All the tourist guides, such as these brochures, display the festive calendar of the villages indicating what is to be celebrated. The celebrations and rituals that are common throughout the region and/or country, in each village acquiresome peculiarity that distinguishes them from the others (shows, music, clothing, the food, the drinks, the colours, etc.), in the case of the carnivals, Holy Week, The Pachamama, the Day of the Faithful and the Day of the Saints Departed (image 4), among others. Participant observation provides knowledgeof the Puñeda cultural expression, customs and practices that break the homogenous image of the interior of theterritory. Patron saint festivities reinforce this observation, to which are added emblematic festivities such as the "Toreo de la Vincha”/“Bullfighting of the Headband" in Casabindo; the “Festival de la Sal”/ "Salt Festival" in Salinas Grandes; the “Competencia de lavadores de oro”/"The Gold Washer Competition" in Rinconada; The "Donasa Election" in San Francisco de Alfarcito; the "Disinterment of the Demons" in Yavi; among the most notable. These festivities mobilize hundreds of the inhabitants of neighbouring villages, natives who have emigrated and, recently, groups of tourists.

**Image 4. Day of the Faithful and the Day of the Saints Departed (scene) in Yavi cemetery with the Cordón Ocho Hermanos (Eight Brothersrange)in the background (scene)**



*Source: personal archive*

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On the whole, the Puna, as a stage and tourist scene,responds to a selective tourist profile,although thisadjective derives not fromthe costs of services but for its qualities linked to a certain type of concern, sensitivity and preparation.In fact, tourist selectivity that follows from the restriction of access to services driven solely by high costs, we call "exclusive"**.** In the majority of cases, this exclusive tourism is offered by tourist enterpriseswith the capacity to make large investments to attract the tourist withgreater purchasing power. In effect, in the Puna, this "selectivity" is a circumstance more oriented to the cultural interest, worldview, curiosity, etc. of the tourist, who has a predisposition to visit a little developed destination and welcomes the uncertainty and his ability to overcome it. For this reason, it is a place without a large tourist flow, an unfrequented and untypical destination, with an improvised tourist economy,due to the different villages being transformed into service areas managed by local communities, a form of "spontaneous" social economy applied to tourism that arises because of the context (the absence of services), the opportunity (tourists spending as occasional income) and necessity (the crisis of the local economies).

In synthesis, to maintain its isolated region status in the twenty-first century is the real potential of the Puna as anexceptional tourist destination. For this reason, a territorial intervention to build new networks, or significantly improve existing ones, would weaken this quality to create a rupture with the tourist experience based on scarce communications. However, this predisposition would hamper the development possibilitiesof breaking the historic isolation and puttingregional products intomarkets with higher values than the local, to the immediate, where the sale possibilities are logically limited by the small size of the population.This is, then, the paradox of tourism development in the Puna: isolation is anattribute valued by the (low) flow of tourists that tour the region. But this attribute is an obstacle to development, to achieving a higher tourist income resulting from an increase in visitor numbers, higher investment and the associated job generation.

**7. Results and discussions on the preliminary study.Resources, limitations, contradictions and potential**

From the tourists consulted, it was possible to corroborate that the “Profound Puna” of Jujuy is valued as a destination dissimilar to the adjacent Quebrada de Humahuaca, this latterbeing the dominant place and image in the tourist representation in the NOA. This is reflected in that the majority of the respondents (82.3%) who choose to have a tourist experience in the Punavillages don´t see themasacomplementary destination to the Quebrada or asan excursion that can be made from the main provincial tourist towns, or, simply, as a passing place toward Bolivia and Chile (89.7%). However, none of the respondents (100%) had travelled to the Puna with the sole objective of going there. Generally, the trip formed part of a comprehensive journey plan to include other places in the NOA (43.4%) or in neighbouring countries (56.6%). While the tourist respondersdenied that the Puna was only a passing place, what is certain is that none incorporatedit as the principal purpose of their trip. This can be explained by the fact that to get to this region one must travel great distances from the major urban centres from where come the bulk of tourists: the Metropolitan Region of Buenos Aires – RMBA - (more than 1,770 km[[8]](#footnote-9)), the interior of the province of Buenos Aires (Mar del Plata 2,186 km, La Plata 1,831), Province of Cordoba (Capital 1,181 km) and the Province of Santa Fe (Rosario 1,481 km). This group of tourists represents 63.9%. It should be noted that a large part of the foreign tourists who lodge in the Profound Puna arrive in the country by air (Buenos Aires), at a distance of 1,800 km. This latter group represent 11.9%, of which 59.7% are European or American. Among tourists from neighbouring countries,only those coming from Chile (8.2%) and Bolivia (15.5%)can enter by the neighbouring road network into the Puna of Jujuy. In short, the predominant transfer time demands and associated costs encourage the tourist to visit more than just one place(the Puna), in fact, only the Quebrada de Humahuaca, by its degree of attractiveness and as "the" bookmark symbol of the NOA, acquires certain destination uniqueness.

In order to give an account of the motivations (causes of tourist trip to the Puna), impressions (sensory experiences in situ and post facto), site tours and criticisms of tourists who travelled to the Profound Puna,Table 2 was produced. Other data collected in the interviews gradedthe degree of prior knowledge of the tourist with respect to the region. This frames the degree of cosmopolitanism of the subject that visitsa particular place that, a priori, contains a different culture. Based on the assumptions of Harvey (2011) on cosmopolitanism and geography, we say that if the tourist lacks geographical knowledge it is more likely that his presence and activities will generate socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Generally, geographic information (climate, vegetation, culture, populations) is provided, synthetically, by tourist offices and those offering tourist services through brochures. These are limited to identifying and locating in thematic maps the main sites of interest. In one produced by the Secretariat of Tourism - of the reviewed, the most comprehensive - there are 25 places highlighted and referenced in a specific map of the region. General data is added on the geography of the region, tips (with focus on the problems that can be caused by altitude) and the obligations of the tourist (not to light fires in places indicated, not to damage the flora and the fauna and to take care of the water resource). It is highlightedthat there are no warnings on cultural impact and related themes. In addition to existing brochures, an important sector of tourists - mostly foreigners –illuminated and supplementedtheir knowledge of the place and its culture with guides that are based on information supplied by travellers who have experienced and explored these places that are off of the well known mass marketed tourist circuits. In fact, taking as an indicator the answers on basic knowledge ofgeography and culture it is noted that the tourists of European origin had a better understanding than tourists and residents from North America (although Canadians have a similar orientation to the Europeans). Although it is difficult to quantify the degree of knowledge, more than 75% of the interviewees of European origin "knew" the Puna. In the case of the resident tourist, knowledge was weaker and it was notable that the learning process was more intuitive, spontaneous, in situ, i.e. without majorprevious knowledge prior to the trip. Of this type interviewed, we estimate that more than 50% had a more basic knowledge than European tourists, without details on the culture and geography of the place.

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**Table 2. Population, distance from the principal road networks, attractions visited by the tourists and their valued experiences. References: Pop: population. Dist: distancein kilometresfrom a principal road network(Number of road network in parentheses)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Village** | **Pop** | **Dist**  **Km.** | **Motivations** | **Impressions** | **Cultural Sites** | **Natural Sites** | **Criticisms** |
| **Yavi** | 271 | 17 | Indigenous-Spanish culture,architecture, history, Puna landscape. Festivity andtradition | Silence, tranquillity, oasis, beauty, different, nature | Adobe houses, San Francisco Chapel, House-Museumof the Marqués de Yavi, cave paintings, Architectural Site “Laguna Colorada”, Yavi Chico (museum, church and the Altigal**)** | Ocho Hermanos (Eight Brothers) Mountains (Image 4), Laguna Colorada, Cascada (waterfall) de Yavi, Cueva del Diablo (Cave of the Devil) | Scarcity of guides, lack of means of transport to neighbouring locations (with the exception of La Quiaca), lack of food services in the low season |
| **Santa Catalina** | 332 | 67 | Indigenous-Spanish culture,architecture, history, Puna landscape and mountains. Festivity and tradition. | Peace, solitude, beauty, picturesque, uniqueness, tastes, colour. | Streets and houses,Iglesia de Santa Catalina (Church of Santa Catalina),village in relief, El Angosto, La Ciénaga village, Alfarería de Casimira. | Río (River) Santa Catalina, El Filo (Edge) de El Angosto, Cerros coloridos (Coloured Hills) de La Ciénaga, Río (River) San Juan del Oro (gold). | Scarcity of guides  Absence of a fluid transport network and lack and cost of transport services to places of interest.  Outside of high season or highlighted dates the decrease in part of the lodging offer |

*Source: own design*

Graphic 5 describes the origin of tourists enrolled in municipal registers (Yavi) and hotels (Santa Catalina) in the years 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. Through their analysis we can corroborate similarities and differences between both Puna destinations:

1- on the similarities, we highlight thatboth villages have high numbers of foreign tourists, in the case of Yavi reaching 11.2% and in Santa Catalina 13.5%, predominantly European tourists: 60.7% and 62.9% respectively of the total number of non-resident tourists. This statistic, well above the national average of tourists of European origin, which in 2013was 12% (Ministry of National Tourism, 2014), in contrary to the tourists of Latin American origin thatrepresent 78.5% of the national averageand, in Yavi and Santa Catalina, represent only 29.5% and 23.8% respectively.On the qualitative level, we highlight that the majority of the suppliers of tourism services interviewed emphasize that the European tourist is the most sympathetic inthe treatment of and his interest in the culture of the place.

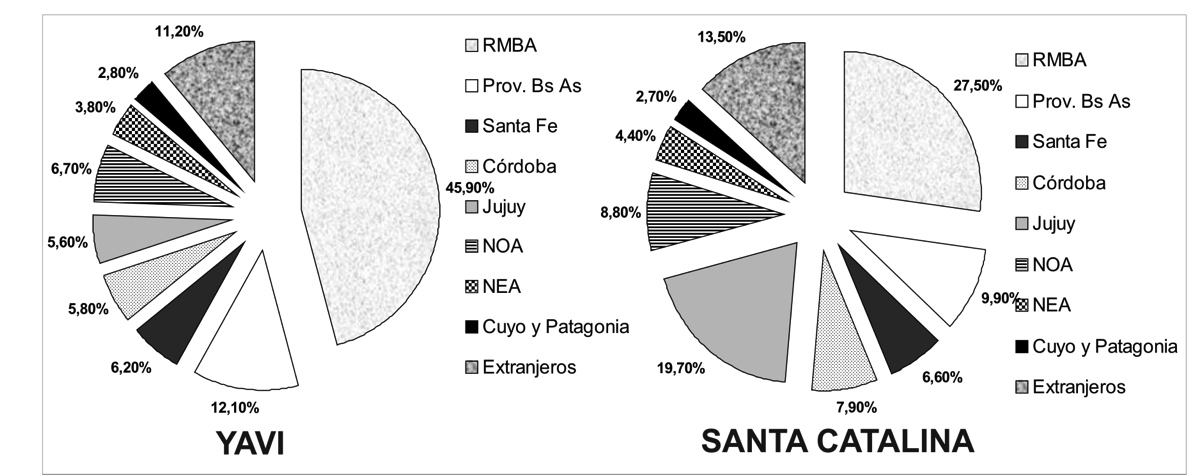
2- on the differences, Yavi resembles more the model of dominant flows in the main tourist destinations in Argentina, in which the RMBA predominates in regard to the origin of the tourists (residents and non-residents). In effect,45.9% came from theprincipal urban region of the country, and if one adds the rest of the province of Buenos Aires and the provinces of Santa Fe and Cordoba the value reaches 70%. In contrast, in Santa Catalina, more isolated that Yavi, only 27.5% of the tourists came from the RMBA.The percentage of tourists residing in Jujeñas localities at over 200km distant from the villagereached 19.7% of the total, unlikethe 5.6% that stayed overnight in Yavi. If both are added to the rest of the NOA provinces, in the case of Santa Catalina this reaches 28.5%, in contrast Yavi is 12.3%, barely exceeding the percentage of foreign tourists. One of the main causes may lie in the fact that Yavi has more fluid communications with the rest of the country due to its proximity to La Quiaca (17km) and the asphalting of Provincial Route 5 that communicates with that city, in addition to having a bus service with four daily departures, with an active taxi service (shared by up to four passengers from the La Quiaca central market to Yavi). In contrast, Santa Catalina is in a semi-isolation situation, since the route that connects with La Quiaca (67km) - the west route on the RP5 –which, while it has been improved in some sections, presents difficulties during heavy rains, especially due to the amount of fords - where the route crosses rivers and streams that during the summer rains carry a fast flow of water and mud - and poor road safety infrastructure (bridges, guardrails on the cornices, signals). This is in addition to the strong Puñeda winds which erode the gravel, exposing rocky outcropson the mountainous road base**.** Moreover,the dust caused by the gusts hinders sight. This contributes to the diagnosis that the only public transport company which operates on the Quiaca - Santa Catalina route is not able so to do on a daily basis at certain times of the year due to the transit difficulties described. This difference in terms of road infrastructure and transport services between Yavi and Santa Catalinameans that the first can be visited as part of a circuit or tour made from other more equipped tourist locations. However, on the other hand, the time demands and the transport difficulties means that tourists who travel there have to stay at least one night. In the specific case of the Jujes who live more than 200km from each one of these places it can be said that in the case of Yavi it is more feasible to make a day trip, while for Santa Catalina this possibility is more limited as described above.

Another point to highlight for the development of the tourist territory of the Profound Puna is the lack ordeprivation for the practice of tourismof certain communication channels and services (such as cellular phone network, internet, TV signal, power).This stimulates the marketing of the “exotic”, assigning to this circumstance anattractiveness value based on the experience of the authentic "something". In effect, of tourists interviewed 84.5% said they did not suffer due to the absence of cellular and Wi-Fi signals, with even a smaller percentage (57.8%) reinforcing the concept that being incommunicado was part of the tourism experience. However, these shortcomings or privations are part of the socio-territorial exclusion status of the region. The rupture with this diagnosis involves investment in infrastructure and services that will integrate the Puna with the rest of the national territory to contribute to its development possibilities and modernization. This, in turn,will affect the Puñeda "authenticity" with its tourism value. However, while still representing the destination as "isolated", there are infrastructure services which are necessary in the development of any tourism territory, accommodation services and means of transportation. If the aim is to establish or plan tourism as a valid resource to contribute to the regional economy, transport and accommodation have to achieve a degree of functionality proportional to projected tourist volume. This is to break with the isolation, increasing the contradiction in weakening the supposed authenticity of the place caused by the difficulty of access. However, in the tourism case, it is likely that the networks used to reach the isolated place from the tourist emission centres will develop selectively and will only contribute to improve the access for visitors and not for the locals or of their products. This currently happens in some regions developed as tourist destinations, such as, for example, the villages of the Bolivian altiplano, bounded by the Puna of Jujuy, mainly those located in the west of the Department of Potosi, which can be reached only through costly excursions in all-terrain vehicles.

Map 3 cartographically sets out the following: 1) localities where there is formal accommodation (hotels, cabins, camping) and informal (houses that occasionally rent rooms); 2) localities that have no tourist services and havethe circumstances to develop tourism because they have, orare close to,established or potential attractions; 3) the location of tourist attractions - the most promoted and recognized as such - and the potential - those who have little or no promotion and are little visited - and 4) the existence or absence of public passengertransport systems and their frequency.

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**Graphic 5.Origin of the tourists in the villages of Yavi and Santa Catalina (%), between March 2011 and December 2014**



*Source: own design basedon data retrieved from the Yavi Office of Tourism and the Lodgingsof Santa Catalina*

The resulting map shows the sparse tourist development in the region, in addition to the spatial trend to concentrate the few resources used and services deployed into the northern sector, which forms part, following the classification of Cabrera (1976), of the "Dry or Thorny Puna”. The proximity to La Quiaca and RN 9 contributes to this uneven development of the Puna of Jujuy as a tourist territory, since the tourist who comes from Bolivia or is heading away fromArgentina toward the Andean country must go through this border city and use the aforementioned road. This allows localities such as Yavi, with a transport system sufficiently fluid for its scale of development, to attract part of this border tourist flow. In contrast, in the mountainous sectors (western border with Bolivia and Chile) and the salt lakes and lagoons of the southern zone (which form part of the "desert of rubble"), although its landscapes are spectacular and could be exploited by the tourist economy, tourist services in nearby villages are scarce, as are public transport systems. The exception to this observation is the Salinas Grandes; nevertheless, these, as a tourist attraction, are connected with the Quebrada de Humahuaca, since one can take from there a half-day tour. Besides, RN 52 crosses the Salinas; therefore, the fact that these are so frequented is directly linked to the existence of a road network integrated in fluid form with the rest of the national territory. Another aspect to be considered is the intermittenceof the tourist services offered in some localities, which adds to the difficulty in communicating with those responsible for lodging. This is one of the greatest limitations - the informality of the tourist services - highlighted, opportunely, by the Sub-secretariat of Tourism Planning and Development of Jujuy[[9]](#footnote-10)Province in articulating tourism policies in the Puna villages.

Provincial state policy on tourism in the Puna of Jujuy consists in supporting enterprises linked to the tourism community. Well worth clarification is the responsibility for the area of Planning and Development in the year 2015, noting that most of the undertakings are in reality tourist developments in "community

environments", since the true essence of a community economy implies that the whole of the communityshares the benefit. But this does not happen in the case of this study because these are local private, family enterprises that operate as cooperatives only for organizationalpurposes. The fact that the majority of the families that operate in tourism carry out another activities is seen as a weakness. This is a point of discussion because of the risks implied in specializing in an economy as volatile as tourism and also because certain activities are complementary to the community tourism experience (for example, all the activities carried out around fabric production). However, the situation is paradoxical because of the fact that the hosts may not be available for the tourist, and thus creating informality, shown by the intermittenceof the services offered, which blocksefforts to develop tourism. If we accept the tourism development diagnosis then "neglect" by the tourist enterprises is one of the points to be given more attention, as is the training and education of the suppliers of tourism services.

The public transport network in the Puna of Jujuy deserves a separate paragraph. On the one hand, Map 3corroborates that only the road axis formed by the RN9 allows the fluid circulation of automotive passenger transport companies (only means of transport**),** a situation responding to the demands of trans-border transport, a result of the migratory movements from Bolivia to Argentina and the movement of goods in both directions that are transported in truck trunks. To this is added, as already pointed out, that the route used by tourists to pass through the NOA to the Bolivian altiplano, and vice versa, is predominatedby the automotive transport of passengers. RN 52, since its asphalting was completed in the year 2005, has dramatically increased in traffic, and now forms part of the Initiative for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA). Its current operationsare geared more to border trade. For this reason the tourist usage is restricted to connecting the two internationally established tourist centres: The Quebrada de Humahuaca with San Pedro de Atacama (north of Chile). Passenger transport (Argentinean and Chilean) using this route passes through the Puna of Jujuy, without any stop.

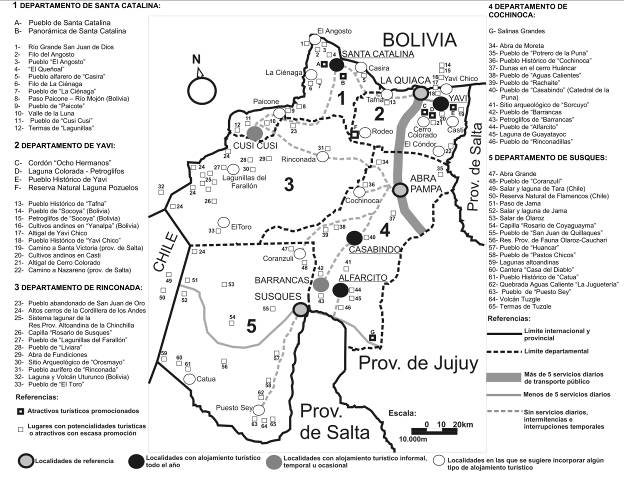
The rest of the Puna territory is completely isolated from the public transport network and some areas are worked by precarious companies with vehicles without minimum securityconditions. Taking into account current laws regulating transport companies, we are in a position to say that at present public transport in the Profound Punaoperates in an illegal manner. Although it is imperative to convert the transport system from informal to formal, it is clear that with the current tourist flow that no company could operate profitably without statesupport (subsidies for fuelandvehicle refitting etc.). In fact, the current subsidies are not effectingthe necessary change, and this position points toward the creation of state-community owned enterprises as a possible solution to the problem.

Finally, a relevant piece of information is that in Yavi, of the six establishments that offer accommodation, only one belongs to a family of the town, three of them to owners from other localities of the province (La Quiaca and San Salvador de Jujuy), while of the two remaining, one is owned by a family from Buenos Aires and the other by foreigners (Belgian), the latter being the more modern and best equipped. In Santa Catalina, of the two lodges, one belongs to a local and the other by a citizen of Salta. Nor is the Casabindo lodging owned by localsor that of San Salvador de Jujuy, while the peasant´s experiences of tourism, in Alfarcito, Barranqueras, and Cusi-Cusi, are of local family undertakings with external advice and financing. What emerges from this survey is that tourism has opened up investment opportunities in those growth destinations (Yavi and Santa Catalina) butthese opportunities have not been taken by locals, the focus being on external agencies incorporating the local community as workers in dependency relationships carrying out tasks of care and cleaning, in which informal labour and low wages dominate.

**8. Notes for the proposed model**

The findings of the propositional model focus on strengthening the supply of accommodation services in the two administrative units with greatest tourist development: Santa Catalina and Yavi, taking advantage of those localities that have an established or potential attraction or are close to the same. In the Department of Susques, the only tourist offer is providedby the administrative head of the same name, and as it is a passing place toward the border with Chile, its function is limited to transit. For this reason, taking into account the number of potential attractions south of Susques, it is proposed to incorporate these new locations into the network of Puna destinations.

**Map 3. Review of tourist development indicators in the Puna jujeña.**



*Source: own design based on fieldwork in 2011, 2012 and 2014.*

In the case of the department of La Rinconada, where no kind of tourist service is found, the start point should be the “zero” hour, that is to say, to deploy a tourism policy in a place where there is no tourist development model, even although within its boundaries are some of the most striking regional landscapes: the lagoon systems at the foot of the Andes mountains. Finally, the Department of Cochinoca contains three locations with some type of accommodation offer, for which, it is proposed, in accordance with its tourism development possibilities, to make this a single addition to the network. Two of the localities that have some type of accommodation are close to the road axis of the RN52, and are organized around the community tourism network "Mirror of Salt", assisted by the Inter-American Development Bank through the Multilateral Investment Fund[[10]](#footnote-11) and the Association Warmi Sayajsunqo[[11]](#footnote-12).

To close, it should be clarified that it would be expected that tourism development will be the result of co-operation between the state and community sectors, limiting private sector investment; being an exception the stages in thetourist marketing chainwhich require a high initial investment. The aim is to ensure tourist income is shared across the whole of the Puna communities. It is advisable, for the general diagnosis of the regionand for tourism development, that measures be taken to incentivise micro-scale investment,thereby capitalizing Puna families who are interested in hosting tourists and to tackle the problems of the subsistence economy. One of the keys to these processes is to promote interest free lines of credit and provide state subsidised community transport systems so that one can differentiate the price for the local people from the higher price for the tourist who, in turn, will subsidise the former.

Also, it is advisable that the tourist offer is developed on a low scale, it being desirable that the tourist capacity of the towns at no time exceedsthat of the stable population and that the profits generated will stimulate the traditional economy through reinvestment. It is proposed, in order to harmonize tourism in the region, to develop the tourist business and economy through consensus. This is, to employ a tourism policy that, in the first place, provides public explanations, consults during its formative stages**,** and adopts and guides the implementation of a community model of tourism development. It is essential to work on the fears of the majority of the population regarding tourism development, especially those that have seen the factual experience of the exogenous model predominating in the neighbouring Quebrada de Humahuaca and the villagers know by having experienced the transformations arising from the tourist economy and the declaration of that locality as World Humanity Heritage by UNESCO in 2003.

**9. conclusions**

The poor development of fluid networks that integrate the Puna with the rest of the national territory and the dominance ofthe desert landscape, as part of the cultural and natural scenery of the Puna villages, are reinterpreted by the tourist market as qualities that define an exotic or alternate destination. The degree of geographic isolation, the spacial otherness and the supposed authenticity of the indigenous peoples inhabiting the region, have been positioning the Puna as an emerging21st century destination. That is, the growth of tourism rests on an image that results from its isolation. However, its marginal situation with respect to the integrated projects for territorial development, which at the same time contributes to the reinforcement of the imaginaries and tourist views that arousethe interest of a specific profile of tourist, hampers its possibilities for entry and integration to inclusive development policies, including those that could be based on the tourist economy and would allow a break from the intermittent tourist flows and improve expectations. Thus, it is necessary to overcome this paradoxical aspect of tourism in the Puna, to break its isolationto achieve social and economical integrationwith the rest of the national territory and to be able to validate new economic activities that can be complemented by the traditional. For this purpose**,** it is necessary to develop integrationnetworks that thepractice of tourismwill help to develop**,** and to encourage local production initiatives aimed at touriststo subsidize the traditional ones. It is essential that the local communities control the circumstances, both material and symbolic, through which they would develop local tourism, in order to ensure that the business does not act as a deculturturising or deagraculturising force or be economically exogenous.

One last concluding point is that in the interviews with local people, it often appears that tourism generates a fear in the Puna of a socio-environmental impact similar to that of the Quebrada de Humahuaca. This is especially so with regard to the changes in daily routine, the commodification of beliefs and customs, the abrupt increase in land values and the profit obtained by outsiders who seem better able to exploit the tourism business[[12]](#footnote-13). However, paradoxically, the need for work, the problems of depopulation through the emigration of young people and the possibility of obtaining additional income to their subsistence economies or welfare leads to rethinkingon the tourist alternative. There are experiences, such as the "Mirror of Salt" Cooperative, organized in community settings in Barrancas, Alfarcito and surrounding towns, through a network of services provided by the local community, which allows one to think that it is possible to build other tourist territories with wider distributive benefits, greater authenticity, participation and solidarity.

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1. The choice of the timeframe is not random, in the case of Yavi older tourists are registered, while the same is not true in Santa Catalina because it is a destination at an early stage of development and tourist records exist only from the beginning of 2011. In addition, it was taken into account that the first fieldwork was carried out in January 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. In the case of the surveys conducted in Yavi, sampling error is 6.8%, with a confidence interval of 95%. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. In the case of the surveys conducted in Santa Catalina, sampling error is 9.6%, with a confidence interval of 95%. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. It should be noted that the questions asked in the interviews differed from those in the surveys, as they looked at the level of tourist cosmopolitanism, inquired about knowledge of the Puna prior to the trip, delved into the details of the stay in the region (unforeseen difficulties, social relations with the locals), asking comparisons with their place of origin (analysis of the Otherness) or consulting on what impressions their personal links in their places of origin had with regard to their travel to a region considered "inhospitable". [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. We separate the "direct" and the "indirect" contribution to recognise that the various public works that benefit tourism are not necessarily designed and implemented for the sector. Of the latter, we define as “indirect”, an example: the surfacing of a road network that communicates with a tourist destination. This is a general improvement for the population and production can be better integrated with the rest of the territory due to easier access to markets, but it also benefits tourism by making the destination more accessible. In contrast, when works are are undertaken with the sole purpose of strengthening tourism development we call these "direct", for example, the construction of a tourist view point, the provision of infographics at sites of interest or an information office. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The NOA region is integrated with the provinces of Santiago del Estero, La Rioja, Catamarca, Tucumán, Salta and Jujuy. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. The consolidation of scarce fluid networks responds to a pattern of hiperlocalizacion in function of the cross-border movement of goods and people - road routes - or extractive activities (mining) - pipelines. Both the transit of goods and people and the mining has historically configured the territorial identity of the Puna. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. In all cases we take as a reference point the distance from La Quiaca, but 16 kilometres should be added in the specific case of Yavi and 63 kilometers in the case of Santa Catalina. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. For this study, we conducted an interview with Lic. Maria Sofia van Balen Brandish, sub-director of Planning and Development at the Secretariat of Tourism of the Province of Jujuy in the year 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. The main aim of the IDB-MIF is to develop, finance, and execute innovative business models that benefit poor and low-income households, entrepreneurs and other partners from private, public and not-for-profit organizations. Available at: http://www.fomin.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. An association that "develops different entrepreneurships on the basis of the formation of indigenous social enterprises with the aim of creating job opportunities, discouraging the exodus of men from the Puna and preserving its cultural identity". Available at: http://ibitineris.blogspot.com.ar/ [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. In the case of the providers of tourist services interviewed, all of them expressed concern with regard to the tourism development model that dominates the Quebrada de Humahuaca. In addition to this, indifferent conversations (which have not been quantified) with the villagers, the same position was reiterated, above all the idea that the Quebradenos "lost" their place because foreigners appropriated it for "their" tourism business. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)