

# Tourism as an Effect of Transculturation in the Municipality of San Martín de las Pirámides, A Perspective of Cultural Shock

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this research is to show the changes that the local community of the municipality of San Martín de las Pirámides has presented in the face of the circumstances generated by the implementation of tourist activity as a development strategy, through a documentary study of cultural diversity in Mexico, the value of cultural heritage and transculturation as an effect of tourist activity, as well as offering a perspective of cultural shock about the change that tourism has brought about, contributing to the awareness of the population about the importance of conserving their cultural heritage. The development of the research has been oriented from a hypothetical deductive approach in relation to the effects of transculturation that have occurred in the municipality of San Martín de las Pirámides where tourism activity has been implemented, with the purpose of promoting the adoption of cultural roots by the local community as part of their identity.*

**Keywords:** cultural heritage, transculturation, tourism, culture shock and identity

## 1. Introduction

Tourism, by its nature is characterized by having a wide diversity of public, private and social actors who participate directly or indirectly in the design, implementation and management of tourism activity, perhaps one of the most outstanding points is the accompaniment provided by local communities and that also manage to be of great importance for the incorporation of new projects that contribute to a better development of tourism; However, the constant interaction between these actors generates a cluster of changes related to the economic dynamics in the interaction of two fundamental agents within the development of tourist activity, the local community and the tourist, which are linked to the cultural shock of both parties, giving rise to a transculturation for one of these cultures. For this reason, the transformation in the political and social life of the host community is proposed, that is to say, it is common to see the change in activities such as agriculture, fishing, commerce and livestock, among others; and the tourist activity is adopted, in the same way the fact that the actors constantly exchange resources and interests generates a substantial modification in their behavior, way of life, clothing, food, customs and even language. This series of events forces us to recognize an exponential scenario on the modification and / or impact that tourist activity can generate not only on local communities but also on neighboring communities and even on the behavior of the people who live in them.

In this sense, this research aims to carry out an analysis on the importance of culture, as well as the role of tourism within the impact on the valorization of cultural heritage as the basis of an identity, an approach to Mexican culture is presented Likewise, the importance of cultural heritage for society, in addition to the effects that the integration of tourist activity has brought with it without adequate

planning.

In the first place, an approach to the cultural diversity that Mexico has and its importance as a historical legacy will be exposed, on the other hand, it shows the importance of cultural heritage as a strategy for the development of tourism within the Teotihuacán Valley, in the second instance, the effect of transculturation is exposed after the implementation of the tourist activity within the case study, San Martín de las Pirámides, finally the results of the research are presented, creating awareness in the local community about the value of cultural heritage, in addition of the importance of transmitting said heritage to future generations, so that they take their heritage as the basis of their identity, with the intention of preventing the arrival of tourists from contributing to a transculturation within the community of San Martín de las Pirámides.

## 2. Diversity of ancestral cultures, a historical legacy for Mexico

Mexico is a country that is characterized by its wide diversity of cultures, as well as by its multiplicity and interaction of languages, religious beliefs, art, music, gastronomy and various social structures, among other aspects that characterize its society, so that the constant interaction between them has managed to increase the cultural legacy of the country in this sense Baños (2010), establishes that the most important cultures are:

**Olmec culture** (1200 to 400 BC), considered as the mother culture, with settlements in the states of Tabasco and southern Veracruz, as well as in other regions of Mesoamerica and Central America, this culture was characterized by having the first sculptors of all America and elaborate colossal heads and gladiators, in the same way they discovered and used the number zero. Their religion

was polytheistic, they had various deities such as the "Jaguar", therefore, they made figures and vessels of this god. Its main ceremonial centers were San Lorenzo, Tres Zapotes, Manatí, Laguna de los cerros, in Veracruz and in

Tabasco is La Venta; On the other hand, the *Mixtec culture* (1500 BC-1521 AD) in Oaxaca, the Mixtecs were considered the best artisans in Pre-Hispanic Mexico, they developed the emblematic pictography (codices and murals), as well as metallurgy, making decorations with gold and silver. The word Mixtec means inhabitants of the country of the clouds. This civilization assumed the deities of the Zapotecs, Mayans, Olmecs, Teotihuacanos and Toltecs. Its main ceremonial centers are: Monte Albán, Yagul and Mitla.

In turn, there is the *Zapotec culture* (1500 BC - 1551 AD) which developed within the central valley of Oaxaca; Distinctive culture for its elegant architecture, in which they made use of columns, practiced ceramic art and fine goldsmithing, in the same way they carried out hydraulic works, as well as bajareque houses. For the Zapotecs, the Mayan culture had great influence by making use of their numbers and within their deities, for this civilization the main god was Cosijo, god of water. Its main ceremonial cities are Monte Albán, Yagul, Teotitlán and Zaachila. On the other hand, the Mayan culture (1000 BC - 1697 AD), was located in the states of Chiapas, Campeche, Tabasco, Yucatán and Quintana Roo, the Mayans had knowledge of engineering and mathematics, using a vigesimal system; in the same way, they were characterized by making measurements of the stars, months and days, through this observation they manifested predictions of equinoxes, lunar and solar eclipses, as well as solstices. Two works of great importance for the *Mayan culture* were "El Popol-Vuhh" and "Chilam Balam" where all the knowledge, stories, myths of the creation of the world and man, as well as their beliefs, are found. Among its main deities are Chaac god of rain, Itzanma god of wind, Ixchel (pregnancy) and Kukulcán god of wisdom. Its ceremonial centers are Chichen Itzá, Uxmal, Yaxchilán, Tulum, Comalcalco, Copal, Mayapán, Palenque and TiK'al, in each of them we can find pyramidal structures and murals full of color.

On the other hand, the *Teotihuacan culture* (200 BC to 700 AD) had its origins within the Valley of Mexico. Being the first great city of Mesoamerica, with planned constructions that came to house more than 200 thousand inhabitants, within its constructions they made use of terraces for planting, irrigation channels and aqueducts. Teotihuacán means "place where the gods were made." With them, respect- worship of specific divinities such as water, fertility, death, fire and war is defined. Its main buildings are: the pyramid of the sun and the moon, the temple of Quetzalpapalotl, the road of the dead, in them the use of slopes (inclinations) and boards is present. Simultaneously there was the *Chichimeca culture* (200 BC to 1500 AD), which had a heyday in the northern part of Mexico. First people to create a miscegenation, most of them were nomads and semi- nomads. The word in Nahuatl means "those of the lineage of dogs." They were important manors in central Mexico. They were characterized by the making of map paintings of Tlotzin and Quinantzin as well as cave paintings. The Chichimecas only worshiped the father sun

and the mother earth, they had no other deity. Its ceremonial centers have been classified into two categories Chichimeca Semisedentario and Chichimeca Aculturizado, in the first one are Paquimé, la quemada and Casa Grandes; in the second are Azcapotzalco, Texcoco, Huexotla, Coatlinchan.

Regarding the *Totonaca culture* (300 to 1520 AD) in the states of Puebla and Veracruz Recognized for their peculiar Pyramid of niches, other of their structures had stepped platforms, as well as stone block reliefs. Another aspect of great relevance is that they performed rituals such as the ball game and the dance that we know today as "Voladores de Papantla". Within their beliefs, the Totonacs made human sacrifices for their deities, mainly to Quetzalcóatl and Xichipilli. Its ceremonial centers are Tajín, Zempoala, Papantla, Yohualichan (Puebla) and the Island of sacrifices. Similarly, the *Toltec culture* (900 to 1200 AD), whose meaning is "master builder", a culture recognized due to its monuments known as the Atlantes of Tula, originated in the states of Zacatecas, Hidalgo and Jalisco. They consolidated a huge and vast network of commercial systems with other peoples practicing plumbate (bright lead-based) pottery and the elaboration of the Chac Mooles, figure in the shape of people, who had a type of container in the center, which was used to place offerings. One of its sacred monuments of importance was the pyramid of Tlahuizcalpantecuhtli or of the star, its main deities were, Quetzalcóatl, Tonatiuh, Tláloc, Huehuetéotl and Centéotl. Its ceremonial centers are Tula, in Hidalgo and Chichen Itzá in Yucatán.

As Vela (2010) mentions, the *Huasteca culture* (900 to 1521 AD). Being the Huastecos the only group speaking a language of Mayan filiation without being within the Mayan region, they settled in the state of San Luis Potosí and part of Tamaulipas. Characterized by using semicircular head ornaments as well as hooked bent earrings. The Huastecs practiced rituals, they did not have a particular deity, for them the cosmos was considered as a universal entity. Its main ceremonial center is in San Luis Potosí which is Tamuín and in Tamaulipas, Tanok.

Another important culture was the *Purépecha* (1200 to 1600 AD) or also known as Tarasca, as Castillo (2018) mentions it, is located in Pátzcuaro Michoacán, Querétaro, Guanajuato, Colima, Jalisco, Guerrero and the State of Mexico; they were erected as an empire of the West of Mexico, they were considered as the rival to defeat of the Aztecs. The Purépechas worked ornamental precious metals, goldsmithing, sculpture, ceramics, and feather art. They practiced human sacrifices to their deities and one of them was Curicaueri, god of fire, sun and war. Its main ceremonial centers are: Pátzcuaro, Ihuatzio, Tzintzunzan, Tingambato and Carapan. Meanwhile the *Mexica culture* (1325 AD to 1521 AD) or also known as Azteca (Baños, 2010). It was developed in the valley of Mexico and Texcoco. The only culture with a supreme ruler, in which the throne could be inherited through the election of the nobles. They founded two outstanding schools: Calmecac and Tepochcalli, the Mexica developed astronomy and medicine being the first to perform heart operations. For religious purposes they performed human sacrifice and cannibalism; They had a pessimistic and fatalistic

perception, as the main deities they had Huitzilopochtli, Tláloc, Quetzalcóatl, Texcatlipoca, Tonathiu and Tonantzin.



**Image 1:** Map of the pre-Hispanic cultures of México. Own elaboration. Based on the ancient cultures of México (Baños, 2010).

In this sense, it is important to highlight that the wide diversity of cultures that inhabit Mexico to date, have undoubtedly been the fundamental pillar to consolidate the cultural legacy of our country, thanks to the constant change and movement that they have had throughout. Over the years, a process of interdependence between cultures has been achieved, creating new ways of thinking; In this sense, culture has been defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2020); as a set of distinctive, spiritual and material, intellectual and affective traits that characterize a particular society or social group, which are transmitted from generation to generation for its preservation, although UNESCO establishes that culture has been defined for the arts and letters, ways of life, fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions, beliefs, as well as gastronomy, handicrafts, rituals, festivities, architectural monuments, among others.

### 3. Cultural Heritage, a cultural legacy for the Teotihuacán Valley region

The need to conserve, protect, as well as strengthen the image of cultural heritage in Mexico has led to the establishment of a cultural policy focused on tangible and intangible assets, products of the interaction of ancient civilizations, in this sense UNESCO (2021), establishes that the cultural legacy is everything that we receive from the past, we live in the present and we will transmit to future generations. It should be noted that, within the convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, UNESCO established that it is the community that lives in a special destination that gives it an exceptional universal value, so that the cultural heritage goes back more beyond monuments and collections of historical objects, but also the expressions inherited from our ancestors such as oral traditions are involved; performing arts; social uses; rituals; festive events; knowledge; practices related to nature, the universe, knowledge and techniques linked to traditional crafts (UNESCO, 2021).

UNESCO (2021) establishes the elements that make up the concept of heritage:

- **Monuments:** architectural works, monumental sculpture or painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, caves and groups of elements, which have an exceptional universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.
- **Sets:** groups of buildings, isolated or united, whose architecture, unity and integration into the landscape give them an exceptional universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.
- **Places:** works of man or joint works of man and nature, as well as areas, including archaeological sites, that have exceptional universal value from a historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

The expressions, uses, representations, knowledge and traditional techniques inherited from a society are classified by UNESCO (2021) as Intangible Cultural Heritage, which are manifested in the following areas:

- A) Oral traditions and expressions, including language.
- B) Performing arts.
- C) Social uses, rituals and festive events.
- D) Knowledge and uses related to nature and the universe. and.
- E) Traditional craft techniques.

From the above, we can infer that cultural heritage is all those expressions, material and intellectual manifestations (artistic, cultural, religious, ideological, among others) that characterize a community, said cultural features are related to the ways in which the community It has faced transformations, which have become part of its history, being more than a fashion that is established for a short period of time passing into oblivion and without becoming a way of life (Alfonso, 2003) of such Thus, they build a significant value in their identity, because they are recognized as their own and that over time will be transmitted through techniques and processes, generation after generation until becoming a legacy for the community.

In relation to the confrontation that a community goes through to make its heritage prevail, it has resulted in the work of conservation of cultural heritage, through strategies that involve the local community, the government, as well as some private companies, which lead to compliance with said objective. As is the case with the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) as well as the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA), as their name says, they are institutions in charge of the protection, conservation and safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, so that, in the case of natural deterioration of the heritage, it requires the corresponding institutions, as well as the entities, to guide maintenance, restoration and conservation processes. It should be noted that part of this conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage, the generation of storage spaces and files suitable for the classification of said heritage that have the appropriate technical conditions has been carried out (Chaparro, 2018).

Another of these strategies takes communication as a fundamental basis since, according to the research carried out by Dávila and Lorenzo (2019), it is a recognized

instrument to promote the rescue of heritage values and the comprehensive rehabilitation of historic centers. Because awareness-raising work is carried out, being debates, talks, circles of interest in schools, spots on radio and television, publication of articles and notes in newspapers, actions that respond to the objectives of UNESCO in relation to the promotion and citizen education of cultural heritage in Latin American countries. Regarding society as the main protector of cultural heritage, the participation of educational institutions stands out, thanks to the promotion of professionals focused on the preservation, conservation, dissemination and promotion of cultural assets as part of our personal identity, as well as social. Indeed, as established by Dávila and Lorenzo (2019), it is important to offer information in relation to cultural heritage, since it is true that what is not known is not valued, and what is not valued is not taken care of and what is not care is not preserved and is used for present and future generations.

Tourism is an activity that includes various guidelines focused on very particular characteristics of a destination, be it culture, nature, activities that can be carried out for adventure or business, but without a doubt one of the most important has been cultural tourism, due to the motivation of people for the knowledge of history, art and all those aspects related to the tangible or intangible cultural heritage (artistic, architectural, gastronomic, among others) that characterizes a society or as mentioned by Iriarte (cited in Kravets and De Camargo, 2008) "cultural tourism occurs when the attraction that attracts the tourist is some type of human production, a work of art or a group of them, a culinary tradition, a construction or an architectural set of very specific characteristics. peculiar, a ceremony, unique in its kind, a dance, but coexistence with indigenous communities or fishermen is also cultural tourism. or example ". It should be noted that, as mentioned above, tourism brings with it a series of repercussions encompassed in three categories established by Santana (cited in Kravets and De Camargo, 2008), these being a) economic, b) physical, c) social and cultural impacts. , being that within the economic ones we find the monetary income, the physical ones refer to the affectations of the space where the tourist activity takes place, alterations in the environment, carrying capacity among others and as a last resort the social and cultural impacts alterations in the ways of life of the community receiving tourism intervene.

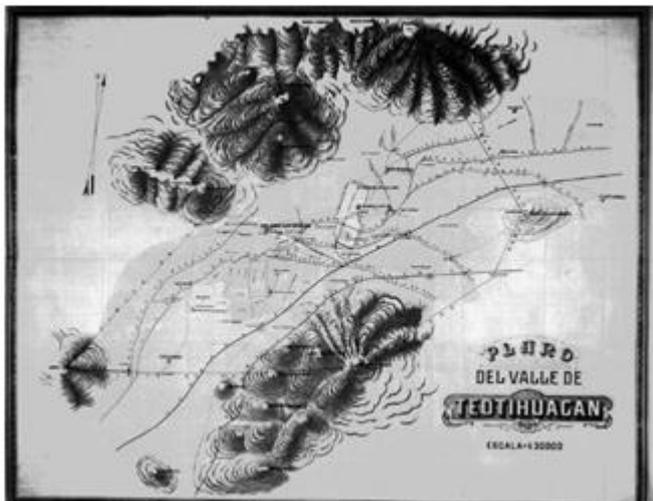
Thus, people's interest in cultural elements and the growth of tourist activity has brought three fundamental actors in contact, which are tourists, the local community and tourist products (Velasco, 2009). with a significant cultural value granted by the members of the community that live in the destination, however, due to the constant interaction of different cultures, principles, as well as values, it influences the way of perceiving cultural heritage as a commercial product instead of an identity leaving behind group ties.

While on the other hand, cultural heritage has reached a certain importance within the economy of the tourism sector within the Teotihuacán Valley, as well as in many other regions of the country and the entire world. Tourism has contributed to bringing people from outside the Teotihuacán Valley community closer to their culture, offering the

opportunity to learn about its tangible cultural heritage (Teotihuacán Archaeological Zone, Ex convents, museums, churches, obsidian crafts) and intangible ( patron saint festivals of the communities of the region, cultural events, music, dance, traditional cuisine), it also provides new knowledge, teachings and education, definitely culture carries human values such as respect, tolerance, appreciation and appreciation, which leads us to generate an awareness of the value of cultural heritage (Kravets and De Camargo, 2008) and in such a way that cultural tourism highlights how essential it is for the host community to know and recover aspects related to its past, history and culture being tourism a fundamental factor for raising awareness of the identity of the population.

Regarding the importance that cultural heritage represents for the identity of the current community, the tourist value that it has possessed over time is undoubtedly evident, so it is essential to value Teotihuacán as a cultural legacy that the Pre- Hispanic community contribute to the culture of the region, therefore it is important to know the cultural legacy that the Teotihuacán Valley has to make it known to the local community and they are the main interested in keeping their culture existing, leading them to adopt strategies that allow its conservation and with them to be able to transmit it to other people outside their culture.

The Teotihuacán Valley covers an area of 10,500 hectares, resembling the shape of an irregular pentagon, which politically belongs to the State of Mexico. In relation to the study carried out by Gamio (1979), as well as Leyte and Navarro (2020), the Teotihuacán Valley is comprised of the municipalities of Acolman, Axapusco, Nopaltepec, Otumba, Texcoco, Teotihuacán and San Martín de la Pirámides. It is important to mention that within the municipalities of San Juan and San Martín de las Pirámides is located one of the most important archaeological sites in the country, the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán. However, San Martín de las Pirámides is the municipality that has the highest percentage of tourist service providers such as restaurants, hotels, tourist agencies, it also has very important cultural representations within the Teotihuacan culture, these being the elaboration of pieces with obsidian, production of artisan sweets of prickly pear and nopal, as well as cultural representations characteristic of the region, patron saint festivals, typical dances of the Alchileos as well as the dance of the Moors and Christians. Since all the elements mentioned are part of the motivation of the tourist who visits San Martín de las Pirámides.



**Image 2:** Plan of the Teotihuacán Valley  
Source: INAH Media Library (2021).

Teotihuacán is a culture that continues to transcend even with the passing of time within the Valley in which they settled. Its name as established by the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH, 2020) comes from Nahuatl, which means place where the gods were made; city of the gods, this appointment was granted by the Mexica upon reaching this great city. The Teotihuacanos were polytheists, being Tláloc the god of water and rain their main deity, other of their primordial deities were Huehuetéotl, god of fire, Chalchiuhtlicue, goddess of terrestrial waters, Xipe, god of crops (Civilización Teotihuacán, 2020).

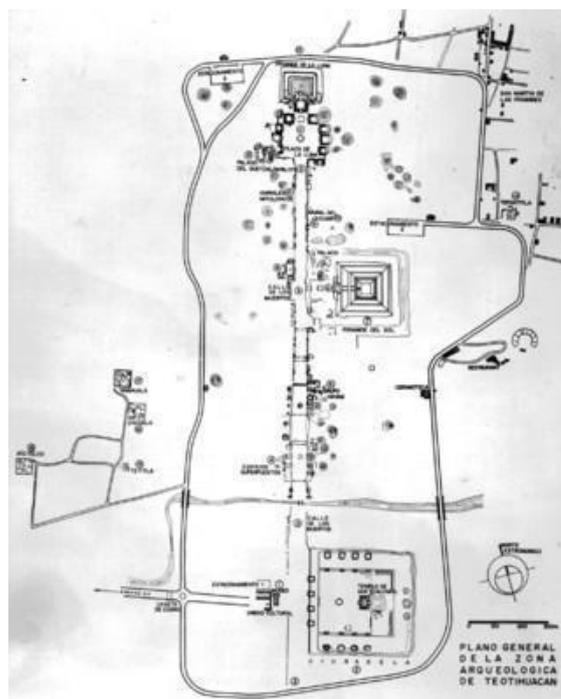
This culture had its settlements within the Central Valley of Mexico (López, 2019), therefore, it had a wide vegetation of pines, oaks, grasslands, bushes, nopales and magueys, the latter two being the most representative of the region. These environmental conditions allowed the Teotihuacanos to carry out agriculture as the basis of their economy, allowing them to cultivate corn, beans, squash, chili, tomatoes, among other plants through milpas. In the same way, the valley had a mineral resource characteristic of the region, obsidian, a volcanic crystal that allowed the Teotihuacanos to make an immense variety of cutting tools, ornaments for warriors, among other utilitarian objects. Another material that the settlers took advantage of was clay, this material was ideal for pottery, basalt, tezontle, tuff and andesite.

On the other hand, the location of this large city favored the start of commercial activity, Teotihuacán being the direct route between the Gulf and the basin of Mexico, said activity contributed to the urban development of the city. Cocoa, quetzal feathers, jade, cotton, rubber, and snails arrived to Teotihuacán from far away places, among many other products (Civilización Teotihuacana, 2020). In particular Pachuca, Veracruz, Oaxaca and Guatemala were the main merchants of the Teotihuacanos, being the ceremonial centers of El Tajín, Monte Albán and Kaminaljuyú, the key points for trade, which was carried out within the merchant neighborhoods, better known as tianguis. The main products that were marketed between these sites were goods considered luxury, such as obsidian carved in the shape of knives or spears, likewise vessels of and amphorae of thin orange clay were marketed, since these

products were used to store water, beans and corn. Other areas of commerce for the Teotihuacanos were Guerrero: granular ceramics; Querétaro: cinnabar, a funerary and ritual pigment, green calcite, silver, and lead; Tula: lime, consumed for construction and food preparation, among other sites (Rodríguez, 2003).

As determined in *Civilización Teotihuacán* (2020) within their social organization, they were divided by artisan and peasant priests, the priests being the most important since they were the people who possessed knowledge and knowledge, who exercised religious, commercial control and political. Likewise, within the political organization of Teotihuacán, it is considered that there was no personalized and dynastic form of power, since no evidence of cult of the king's personality has been found, as in some other cultures.

Gamio (1979) establishes that the organization of Teotihuacán through two perpendicular axes that organized the space, as the main one is directed from north to south, represented by the road of the dead linked to the Plaza de la Luna, on the other hand, the axis from east to west are the axes of the Pyramid of the Sun, the citadel and the modified channel of the San Juan River. These axes divided the settlement into quadrants, making the urban image correspond with the land surface, which had the four-petalled flower as a sacred symbol (López, 2019).



**Image 3:** General Plan of the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán.

Source: INAH Media Library

Within Teotihuacan architecture, the use of the talus and board is present, the sum of a lower sloping face with a rectangular frame in projection that borders a flat canvas. This combination could be repeated endlessly, superimposing the talud-deck modules to thus form multi-body buildings with an appearance of solidity and a high plastic value. The horizontal lines on the sky were interrupted by vertical stone battlements - of an ornamental

and symbolic nature - that crowned the buildings (López, 2019). Inside its built temples and palaces they were decorated by means of colorful murals, in which gods, ceremonies, water, seeds, fertility, time, political power, animals, among others, were represented.

This gigantic metropolis, particularly dense and multi-ethnic, owed its rise both to its status as an artisanal and commercial emporium and to its military power. However, the end of the Teotihuacan culture is somewhat uncertain, although as established by the Teotihuacan Culture (s.f.) at the end of the Classic period, the city was looted, burned and destroyed. The causes of the decline of this culture are not exactly known, but some researchers consider that it succumbed to the overexploitation of natural resources, invasions by other peoples and internal conflicts.

#### 4. Transculturation and its effects on the culture of San Martín de las Pirámides

Today and since ancient times, the whole world has faced various changes caused by various external and internal factors, causing a change within societies, increasing demands, changing their way of thinking and adopting new behaviors within their culture. Although, as Kravets and De Camargo (2008) specify, the repercussions that the communities have suffered, have been cited mostly within the cultural sphere, highlighting the commercialization of their culture, cases of information falsification, change in the interpretation of history. In addition to the changes in the use of language by the community due to the interaction it has with tourists and the transformation of popular crafts to ones that are more commercial, as well as these examples there are more alluding to a process of transculturation, defined by Pérez (2016) as the process that a society goes through when appropriating the culture and customs of another society. This process is characterized by the interaction of two different cultures, one regularly has a higher tendency than the other, the higher being the one that has repercussions within the lower one, causing havoc on it.

As established by the author Lipschutz (cited in Chiappe, 2015). Transculturation is a transition that could be constituted in various scenarios:

- 1) The abandonment of a social group of certain constituent elements of its own cultural heritage.
- 2) The adaptation to the cultural heritage that had been imposed on it.
- 3) The incorporation of elements of the foreign cultural group without modifying them or transforming them according to their needs

Referring to scenario number three of transculturation according to Lipschutz, in Mexico transculturation has been present since the conquest of Tenochtitlán, a historical event that occurred between the years 1519 and 1521, after the arrival of the Spanish in the great city of Tenochtitlán. and the drastic imposition of their culture, this through the prescription of new beliefs being Augustinians, Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits in charge of evangelization; They promoted the use of a new language, ways of life, transformations in the forms of commerce, in the same way they brought new products for their trade such as precious

stones, gold, fabrics, plants and natural ingredients. This cultural exchange generated strong changes in meanings, destroying the traditional social structures of the indigenous community of the Mexica.

After the conquest, as time has passed, society went through a civilization, then a modernization, continuing with urbanization and so on. Likewise, there have been a series of events that have marked the presence of transculturation, such is the case of the taste of cockfights that were transmitted from Malaysia to the Philippines, and from there to New Spain, giving way to the origin of the palenques. On the other hand, the use of the rebozo, as part of the traditional attire of Mexican women, seems to have been derived from the so-called "chalets of India" or the "shawl of Manila".

Now, globalization and the implementation of new markets, thereby causing a process of miscegenation, this due to the fact that most of the companies that have come to settle in our country are of foreign origin, therefore, the need on the part of the local community to adapt to have good communication and a good relationship with people from other countries. However, current social and economic dynamics have generated changes, in addition to modifications in the thinking and actions of communities, thus causing instability or deterioration of traditional practices within populations, giving way to globalization, external influences of cultures. as well as new markets, thereby generating stereotypes that have been reproduced over time, which has meant a loss of identity, as Chamorro and Maldonado (2018) put it, all that degeneration of the values that are rooted in its culture, changes in the traditional lifestyles that a community has and even the devaluation of the culture itself.

As established by the author Chiappe (2015), transculturation is related to a selective process of assimilation of the cultural traits that best adapt to the receiving culture, and that this reception includes a functional transformation to better adapt to the new social environment. Said social phenomenon had a lesser or greater impact within the beliefs and behaviors that have been inherited by the other cultures of Mexico and that today have influenced throughout our lives.

#### San Martín de las Pirámides

San Martín de las Pirámides region categorized as a municipality on November 29, 1917, shortly after 79 years it received the appointment of Villa on October 8, 1996 and which until today is part of the Teotihuacán Valley and is located at 2 550 m above sea level, between the parallels 19 ° 37' 40" and 19 ° 46' 20" north latitude and 98 ° 45' 40" and 98 ° 53' 27" west longitude of the Greenwich meridian. It limits to the north with the municipalities of Temascalapa and Axapusco, to the south with Teotihuacán, to the east with Axapusco and Otumba; to the west with Teotihuacán and Temascalapa (Martínez, 2017). This municipality is made up of the following towns, Álvaro Obregón, Ixtlahuaca, Tezompa, El Saltillo Caltepec, El Berrinche, Tlachinolpa, El pedregal, Los Chopos, San Antonio de las Palmas, San Pablo Ixquitlan, Santiago Tepetitlan, Santa María Palapa, San José Cerro Gordo, San Marcos Cerro

Gordo, as well as the Ex Hacienda de Tlacatecpán and Las RR or Club Campestre Teotihuacán, it should be noted that some of these localities still retain their name in the Nahuatl

language, the predominant language within the Teotihuacán Valley.

CABECERA MUNICIPAL	PUEBLOS	BARRIOS	COLONIAS	RANCHOS	EXHACIENDA: TLACATECPAN
* San Martín de las Pirámides	* San Pablo Ixquiltlán * Santiago Tepetitlán * Ejido de San Martín	* San Antonio de las Palmas * Santa María Palapa	* Álvaro Obregón * San José Cerro Gordo	* Ixtlahuaca * Tezompa * El Saltito * Caltepec * El Berrinche * Tlachinolpa * El Pedregal * Los Chopos	* Las RR o Club Campestre Teotihuacan

**Image 4:** Political Division of San Martín de las Pirámides  
Source: Martínez, 1999, cited in López, 2014.

Given its geographical location San Martín de las Pirámides and its territorial extension of little more than 71 square kilometers (Martínez, 2017), which is surrounded by an extensive number of hills such as Cerro Gordo, Cerros Citlaltépetl (Cerro de the star), wheat in the eastern descent of La Soledad, Texuca, hill of the Tulancingo highway, to the southeast the Sierra de Patlachique. In Santiago Tepetitlán, the La Cruz, El Cuajió, El Bateas, El Chiconquiaco hills, continue with the Malinal hill, La Cueva Tezompan, El Tepetzáyotl, until reaching the depressions with the western skirt of the Gordo hill (INAFED, 1999) . The predominant climate within the region is temperate semi-dry, so that the vegetation that abounds is the pirul tree, the maguey, the nopal and cacti, which are representative of the region. It should be noted that part of this vegetation is used to make natural products such as sweets, liqueurs, and typical dishes. Within its wild fauna there are skunks, gophers, rabbits; as domestic animals are bulls, sheep, pigs, horses, dogs, cats, roosters, chickens, turkeys, among others. As part of the gastronomy, basic ingredients are used such as: beef, pork, chicken, quail, mutton, rabbit, fish, vegetables, lettuce, watercress, beets, tomato, seasonal fruits, as well as the preparation of dishes based on de nopal, xoconostle as they are typical ingredients of the region (INAFED, 1999).

Regarding the cultural heritage that San Martín de las Pirámides has, we can highlight the celebration of traditional festivals where artistic manifestations such as dances, music, and handicraft sales are carried out, among others. Among the most outstanding festivals of the municipality we can find the celebration of Mr. Ecce-Homo (May 8); San Martín Obispo de Tours (November 11) the patron saint of the region; feast of the faithful departed (November 2); Anniversary of the Sacred Deposit, Canonical Erection of the Parish and nocturnal Adoration (September 8), likewise the communities have specific celebrations (López, 2014), as is the Tuna Fair, this is one of the most prominent and nationally recognized festivals because it promotes the

artisan products that the tenants make based on this resource, which was inaugurated in 1973. With regard to the dances that are presented within the popular festivals of the municipalities, the Danza de los Alchileos stands out, which represents the dramatization of a religious theme (struggle between Christians and heretics); Dance of the Moors and Christians, representation of the battle between Moors and Christians after the invasion of the Moors and the declaration of war by the Christians; Dance of the Sun and the Moon, which is based on 4 elements that give life, being the dialogues of some of these dances transcribed from the Nahuatl language into Spanish. Within the territory of San Martín, as mentioned above, is one of the most outstanding archaeological sites and tourist attraction in Mexico, which is the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán, being the biggest attraction for tourists, hence part of the population local dedicated to the elaboration of crafts based on obsidian, clay, alpaca, silver, quartz, onyx, precious and semi-precious stones, wood carving.

Although San Martín de las Pirámides has a large part of the Teotihuacan culture in its roots, which over time has been affected and transformed, its name being one of the main elements that suffered modifications as mentioned by Martínez (2017), The pre-Hispanic name of the town was Neteotiloyan, a name that comes from Nahuatl origin, which according to Javier Clavijero's translation means "place of worship of latria or worship", as time passed, the arrival of evangelization and colonization of the territory, It was from 1545 to 1905 the town of San Martín de la Pirámides had different names according to the time and events that took place, it should be noted that the San Martín de las Pirámides receives this name due to the fact that the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán is located in a part of its territory (Martínez, 2017). As well as this change, there have been a series of affectations within elements that are part of the culture of San Martín de las Pirámides, in particular the adoption of new behaviors by society, such as stopping carving obsidian pieces. As a family tradition for

the simple fact of making this practice something purely commercial, another clear example is to provide a gourmet food service to satisfy the tastes of a foreign tourist, in the same way another point of importance is that a large part of the economy of The region is derived from tourist activity, leaving in the second instance the cultivation of the prickly pear as one of its main economic activities, since it has seen the destruction of the prickly pear cultivation fields, to give space to tourist companies (flight in hot air balloon) to develop their activities and work space, which implies a destruction of a fundamental element within the cultural legacy of San Mart End of the Pyramids.

## 5. Methodology

The methodological proposal for the development of this research has been oriented from a hypothetical deductive approach in relation to the effects of a transculturation that have occurred in the regions where tourist activity has been implemented within the Teotihuacán Valley, this with the aim to verify the importance of preserving the cultural roots of a population, as well as the value it has for the construction of our identity.

Although the importance of the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Teotihuacán Valley region allows the awareness of the community of the region about the value that its roots have in the construction of an identity, being able to use tourism as a strategy for the dissemination of its culture, making it prevail against the various changes in which society in general is immersed with the arrival of new cultures.

In this sense, the research had as a first instance, the impulse of a documentary study about previous investigations related to cultural diversity in Mexico, the value of cultural heritage and transculturation as an effect of tourist activity, among others, in media such as journals tourism research, scientific articles, as well as official pages of organizations such as UNESCO.

In the second instance, the area of analysis was delimited for the investigation of the effects of transculturation due to the implementation of tourist activity in the Valley of Teotihuacán, a specific case in the municipality of San Martín de las Pirámides.

As a last resort, the problem was addressed through a covert scientific observation, which will allow the direct perception of the community in the face of tourist activity.

## 6. Results and discussion

It is due to the great cultural legacy that San Martín de las Pirámides has the incentive for the development of cultural tourism within the region, this type of tourism is defined by the Ministry of Tourism (SECTUR, 2015) as that tourist trip motivated by know, understand and enjoy the set of distinctive, spiritual and material, intellectual and affective features and elements that characterize a society or social group of a specific destination. It should be noted that cultural tourism has contributed to the maintenance of the Archaeological Zone, this being the most important cultural

heritage within the region and called World Heritage of Humanity in 1987 by UNESCO (INA, 2021), it contributed to the preservation of history, customs and popular festivals for the municipality, likewise this preservation influences creating a positive image of the destination towards tourists, leading to an increase in the tourist influx of the destination in the same way that it allows a development in tourism infrastructure within the municipality.

It is thanks to the name of Pueblo Mágico that was jointly granted to San Juan Teotihuacán and San Martín de las Pirámides in 2015, this date being an important boom for the development of tourism in the municipality. Thus, the growing influx of tourists after the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán has become a tourist attraction, which according to Datatur statistics (2019), the pre-Hispanic city of Teotihuacán received 3 145 384 visitors in 2019, which has contributed to generating changes in the social, economic and cultural life of society. It should be noted that other outstanding attractions within the municipality in addition to the archaeological zone stand out, the Parroquia de San Martín Obispo de Tours, built in 1638 and located in Plaza 24 de Mayo, Cerro Gordo National Park, a protected natural area that I obtained the park category in 1977, and in the same way the church in honor of the lord of Ecce-Homo built in 1979 (Pueblos México, 2018) is another of the important tourist attractions of San Martín de las Pirámides In addition to these attractions, events have been implemented that have led to the promotion of tourist activity, such as the light and sound show within the archaeological zone; Massive pre-Hispanic dances and catrina contests (Hernández, Jiménez, Martínez and Herrera, 2019). The obsidian crafts made by artisans belonging to the region also play an extremely important role within the cultural heritage, as well as for the attention of tourists who come to the municipality, these pieces that over time have taken different forms as figures of Pre-Hispanic idols, animals, geometric shapes and even healing or relaxation instruments have been designed (México Desconocido, 2019), attractive figures in view of the visitor.

San Martín de las Pirámides has undergone a process of transculturation that has undoubtedly affected its cultural heritage, taking into account that said transculturation has not been completely the result of tourist activity, but rather is the product of historical events that have changed the ways of life, beliefs and religions of ancient society, being a clear example of the constant change of the naming of the place, which due to the passage of illustrious people who came to the region had different ways of thinking, ideologies, knowledge to the inhabitants of the place, likewise the learning of a new language from Nahuatl (abundant language within the region) to Spanish; the integration of the region to the urban area of Mexico City (Hernández, Jiménez, Martínez and Herrera, 2019), the implementation of pharmaceutical medicine as a complement to traditional medicine (use of medicinal plants) and temazcal baths; the opening of new transportation routes (Carretera Federal México-Tulancingo, toll highway México-Pirámides), as well as the implementation of new means of transportation such as taxis, combis and bus terminals that give the local community the opportunity to move to neighboring communities as well as to more distant

destinations (Almanza, 2019); new employment opportunities moving from the trade of resources such as prickly pear, nopal and xoconostle to integration into business activities linked to tourism, due to the low profitability of crops and the stagnation of the pressure of field products (Almanza, 2019); The emergence of new tourist segments as well as the arrival of globalization has contributed to a transculturation within San Martín de las Pirámides. However, it should be noted that due to the great importance and popularity that the archaeological site that is the Archaeological Zone of Teotihuacán has obtained thanks to the implementation of tourist activity, many of the tenants have seen in tourism an opportunity to trade their culture, being more important to attract the attention of a market than to make prevail and make known its cultural heritage, where it is more important to create handicrafts in greater quantities, adapting traditional techniques with the implementation of tools that speed up the cutting, carving and manufacturing of the pieces, such as the use of emery boards, rotating brushes as well as motors, in the same way the implementation of new sculptural techniques with stone inlay or silver details; practicing pre-Hispanic dances as a spectacle rather than as a spiritual ritual, the adoption of idioms of the English language that would allow them to communicate with foreign visitors, among other actions, since these changes are derived from a lack of activity management tourism within the region, requiring the generation of programs that encourage the community to preserve and consolidate a tourism model based on local culture, which identifies them as the community of San Martín de las Pirámides, leading to the preservation of their cultural heritage.

## 7. Conclusion

Tourism is not only an opportunity for economic growth, employment and local development for the region where a tourist destination is located, but it is also an excellent strategy that leads to the conservation as well as the dissemination of the cultural heritage of a community, allowing transmit new ways of life, thoughts, traditions as well as customs to countless numbers of individuals who arrive at a destination, however, proper management is necessary that leads above all to the resident community to create awareness of the great cultural value they have, being they the main spokespersons to convey this value of everything that characterizes and makes their region unique, its crafts, gastronomy, dances, monuments, historical events among others, leading to an awareness of the importance of its roots as part of your identity. So that for there to be a conservation of the cultural heritage of San Martín de las Pirámides, it is essential to raise awareness about the importance of taking its cultural roots as part of its identity since it is they who will be in charge of making culture prevail to the generations to come, in addition, it is important that there is a balance between the cultural and commercial value of the heritage since, although it is a means that contributes to the generation of income, it is essential to impregnate the identity of the culture of the community, see beyond money, more than a handicraft or a typical dish, but through these elements you can appreciate the true history of what was and still is San Martín de las Pirámides.

Thus, it is necessary to implement processes and strategies that lead the local community of San Martín de las Pirámides to integrate as part of their identity, so that they feel proud of their culture, roots, heritage, and the heritage of their ancestors that makes them unique and that attracts the attention of tourism so much.

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