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## Research Article

### IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

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Santa Ana de Guadalupe is located at latitude 21.1076581, and longitude -102.415672777, with an altitude 1,819 meters above sea level in the municipality of Jalostotitlán, in the State of Jalisco.

#### ABSTRACT

This research was carried out in a town in the State of Jalisco, Mexico, which thanks to the canonization of Santo Toribio Romo has been known by thousands of people who visit this place every day that houses their remains.

Santa Ana de Guadalupe is located at latitude 21.1076581, and longitude -102.415672777, with an altitude 1,819 meters above sea level in the municipality of Jalostotitlán, in the State of Jalisco. According to data from the 2010 Population and Housing Census, the community has 311 inhabitants (INEGI, 2016).

Santa Ana de Guadalupe is located in the region called Altos de Jalisco, an area where several armed confrontations took place during the conflict between State and Church, which provoked the uprising by the Catholic population in the second half of the decade of the twenties of the twentieth century (Meyer, 1994). As a result of this process, several decades later the Catholic Church declared martyrs and saints to several of the priests and faithful who died in defense of their faith; one of them is Santo Toribio Romo.

Toribio Romo was originally from Santa Ana de Guadalupe, was born on April 16, 1900 within a Catholic family and engaged in agricultural work. At the age of 9 years he moved to the municipal seat of Jalostotitlán to attend school and, three years later, he entered the seminary of San Juan de los Lagos. As a seminarian, he begins to participate in different Catholic movements in defense of religious freedom. In 1922, he received the priestly order. His pastoral work and the conflicts of the time led him to serve different parishes, being his last destination Tequila, Jalisco, at the end of the year 1926. For that year there was already the prohibition of worship, so it was not possible to celebrate mass in such a way public. Toribio decides to continue exercising his work as a priest assisting his parishioners clandestinely. Two years later, on February 25, 1928, he was murdered by a troop of soldiers from the federal government.

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#### INTRODUCTION

After his death, the priest Román Romo, younger brother of Toribio, was in charge of keeping his cult alive and promoting his beatification. During the pontificate of John Paul II, on May 21, 2010 he was canonized along with 24 more martyrs. The fame of this saint was increasing in a very short time, his small town became the scene of frequent visits from followers who came with the intention of knowing the place where the remains of this saint were found. Years after his canonization, he was granted the patronage of migrants, which generated an increase in fame and therefore in visits to this place (De la Torre Castellanos & Levitt, 2017).

##### **Review of the Literature**

Religious tourism arises because of the mobility of a sector of the population that, motivated by faith, moves from one place to another in order to enter a space that is considered sacred.

(Cohen, 1992, 1998, Lanquar & World Tourism Organization, 2007, Timothy & Olsen, 2006, Turner, 1973)

The emergence of a religious tourism site "has an important discrepancy with that of other tourist sites, since the decision to visit a particular faith site is not influenced by the services offered in that place, but rather by devotion to the image that is venerated in said site "(Martínez Cárdenas, 2015). In the traditional tourist sites the tourists

"They have many more possibilities to choose and demand more about all the variables of the tourism product, before deciding to visit a place for the first time or repeat their stay in it, so tourism development must be based on sustainability criteria, benefiting to all the actors involved, being economically viable, ecologically sustainable, socioculturally acceptable and providing a high degree of satisfaction "(Alvarez García & Espinosa Garcés, 2008)

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The large-scale tourism effect can completely alter the character of a community, affecting the natural, cultural and economic environment (Toselli, 2003)

Authors such as Bhardwaj, (1997); Collins-Kreiner, (2010); R. Stoddard, (1997), are those who in the 80's began with the interest to study the phenomenon of religious tourism, and basically do so through directing their efforts in understanding the spatial dimension of pilgrimages. The focus of their studies was on the total distance traveled by the pilgrims; later, they modified their perspective on the phenomenon and now they place greater emphasis on the routes traveled by the pilgrims, the pilgrimage-receiving populations, the size of these and the scale of the pilgrimage -international, national, regional-, as well as the hierarchical relations between sanctuaries, that is, sanctuaries of greater or lesser importance depending on the number of visitors they receive, the location and distribution of the sacred places throughout a territory.

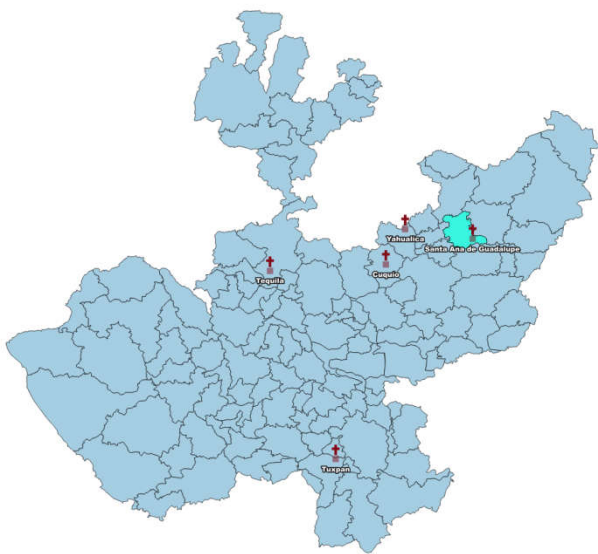


Image 1 Sites of pastoral work of Santo Toribio Romo

Source: Rogelio Martínez Cárdenas

Currently, religious tourism is considered a polyhedral phenomenon that needs to be analyzed and studied by different disciplines. We can highlight the works of Bowers & Cheer, (2017); Gesler & Pierce, (2000); Hsu, Cai, & Mimi Li, (2010); Hussin, (2017); Kang, (2009); Khaksari, Lee, & Lee, (2014), authors who have studied religious tourism in Eastern countries; likewise, we can mention the works of Gusmán, Lopez, Lois González, & Santos, (2010); Rubén C. Lois González, (2013); Rubén Camilo Lois González, Santos-Solla, & Taboada-de-Zuñiga, (2014); Lopez, Lois González, & Fernández, (2017); Saayman, Saayman, & Gyekye, (2014); Steil & Marques, (2008); Triantafillidou, Koritos, Chatzipanagiotou, & Vassilikopoulou, (2010), focusing on the phenomenon of pilgrimage and its current trends.

In the particular case of Spain, we can mention the studies of Cánoves, Blanco-Romero, & Prat, (2017); Cánoves Valiente, (2006) Cánoves Valiente, Romagosa, Blanco, & Priestley, (2012), who review the cases of Monserrat, the Way of Saint James and the Holy Week in Granada, the one of Millán Vázquez de la Torre, Morales Fernández, & Pérez Naranjo, (2010), on the Camino de Santiago, that of Sarasa & Espejo

Marín, (2006), who study the case of Caravaca de la Cruz in Murcia, the publication of the Studies and Statistics Unit, (2003), that was elaborated on the occasion of the Holy Jubilee Year in the city of Caravaca de la Cruz; in the case of Mexico, the works of Martínez Cárdenas stand out (2011b, 2011a, 2013); Martínez Cárdenas et al., (2019); Medina Gallo, (2013, 2015), about the region of Los Altos de Jalisco, and those of Mercado López & Hiriart Pardo, (2014); Propin Frejomil & Sánchez Crispín, (2015), about sanctuaries and religious uses of heritage.

From the point of view of the economy, the book *Dimensioning Spiritual Tourism in Mexico*, Martínez Cárdenas, (2009), which is a diagnosis of the situation held by the main religious tourism sites in Mexico, stands out. On the other hand, De la Torre Castellanos & Zúñiga, (2005), analyze the commodification of the sacred through the different offers of religious creeds that have each time to look more like a market structure assuming from their language.

We should also mention the work of Martínez Cárdenas & Mínguez García, (2014), regarding a proposal of typologies for the study of the management of religious tourism sites.

## OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of the article is to show what have been some of the impacts that the religious tourism that goes to the community of Santa Ana de Guadalupe has generated in this population.

In the first part of the present article, a bibliographical review has been made about the works on religious tourism in different regions of the world, emphasizing the Spanish case and particularly the Mexican case. To carry out the second part, field visits were made at different times of the year using the non-participant observation method in order to evaluate the seasonality of tourism in the town of Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Information was also collected through the unstructured interview method with various social actors in the locality. The software QGIS 2.18 and Excel version 16 were used to process the information.

## RESULTS

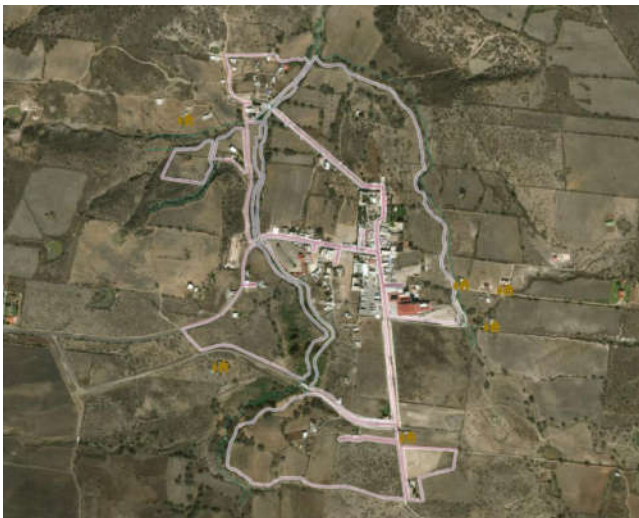
Santa Ana de Guadalupe is located in the municipality of Jalostotitlán, Jalisco, Mexico. It has a resident population that has practically not grown during the last 100 years, going from 272 inhabitants in the year 1900 to only 311 in the year 2010. This fact has generated a decrease in the relative importance of this community within the municipality; in 1900, it was classified as "ranch", and the ratio "Santa Ana de Guadalupe / Jalostotitlan City" represented 10% of the inhabitants that inhabited the municipal seat. For 1930 it stopped being considered "ranch" and it was cataloged to him like "congregation", had already descended the ratio to 6%. In 2010, its category is classified as "indefinite" since it only represents 1% of the municipal seat (see table 1).

**Table 1** Population of Santa Ana de Guadalupe

| Census year | Jalostotitlán City (JC) | Total population Santa Ana de Guadalupe (SAG) | Men (H) | Women (M) | Ratio H/M | Ratio SAG/JC |
|-------------|-------------------------|---|---------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| 1900        | 2,863                   | 272   | 150     | 122       | 123%      | 10%          |
| 1910        | 2,533                   | 237   | 144     | 93        | 155%      | 9%           |
| 1921        | 3,393                   | 274   | 150     | 124       | 121%      | 8%           |
| 1930        | 4,001                   | 238   | 130     | 108       | 120%      | 6%           |
| 1940        | 6,467                   | 195   | 105     | 90        | 117%      | 3%           |
| 1950        | 8,151                   | 255   | 134     | 121       | 111%      | 3%           |
| 1960        | 13,675                  | 266   | 127     | 139       | 91%       | 2%           |
| 1970        | 11,719                  | 385   | -       | -         | N.D.      | 3%           |
| 1980        | 13,031                  | 247   | 127     | 120       | 106%      | 2%           |
| 1990        | 18,089                  | 229   | 99      | 130       | 76%       | 1%           |
| 1995        | 20,201                  | 193   | 74      | 119       | 62%       | 1%           |
| 2000        | 21,291                  | 264   | 121     | 143       | 85%       | 1%           |
| 2005        | 21,656                  | 284   | 125     | 159       | 79%       | 1%           |
| 2010        | 24,423                  | 311   | 151     | 160       | 94%       | 1%           |

Source: Prepared with data from (INEGI, 2018)

Another noteworthy fact is the decrease in male residents, a phenomenon that can be seen from the 1921 census and reached its peak in 1995 when only 62% of the inhabitants were male (see table 1). In part, this reduction in the "Male / Female" ratio is explained by the migration of males to the United States in search of better economic income, given that the primary economic activity of this community has been that of the primary sector, with work associated with agriculture and livestock; and because they are small landowners, the benefits obtained from agricultural work are precarious due to the lack of technology in the productive processes and the variation in the cultivation cycles, since the crops were irrigated with rainwater.



**Image 2** Land use in Santa Ana de Guadalupe

Source: Rogelio Martínez Cárdenas

Due to the popularity that devotion to Santo Toribio Romo has taken among devout Catholics, the community has seen religious tourism and commercial activities begin to take on increasing importance in the locality, especially on weekends. Giving rise to the emergence of a commercial sector that did not exist twenty years ago dedicated to the commercialization of products for the religious tourist that arrives to the population. The main products that are sold are: t-shirts, bags for women, sweets and an endless number of souvenirs with the image of Santo Toribio, medicinal plants, hats, music discs, etc. It is noteworthy that most businesses are not owned by the inhabitants of this population. Since they are mostly market-

type stalls, they only pay a minimum fee to the municipality, so the economic benefit of this religious trade is not being left to the benefit of the local community.



**Image 3** Román Romo Street, Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Jalisco. April 2019



**Image 4** Román Romo Street, Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Jalisco. April 2019

Source: Carolina Elizabeth Madrigal Loza

The pilgrims arrive at this site seeking to know the emblematic places in the life of the saint in that town, which is why one of the most popular places for religious tourists is La Mesita Church, whose construction was initiated by Toribio Romo himself when he was seminarian, site that houses and shows the visitor the clothes that the saint wore when he was shot. This church was the first built in this community, being inaugurated on January 5, 1923, the day Toribio Romo officiated his Cantamisa (Diocese of San Juan de los Lagos, n.d.)



**Image 5** La Mesita Church

Source: Rogelio Martínez Cárdenas

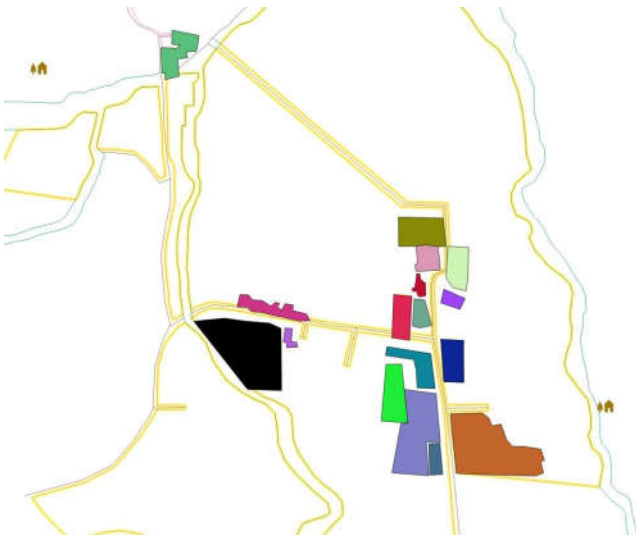
Even when the total population of Santa Ana de Guadalupe recognizes itself as Catholic, the locality only counted on the temple built by Toribio Romo until its canonization modified the dynamics of the population.

The local clergy, seeing the interest of the faithful to know the place where the saint spent his early childhood, appointed a parish priest in the community, which marks a turning point in the evolution of Santa Ana de Guadalupe, mainly, manifested by the construction of infrastructure with the intention of developing the minimum services for tourists.



Source: Rogelio Martínez Cárdenas

**Image 6** Urban growth of Santa Ana de Guadalupe year 2000

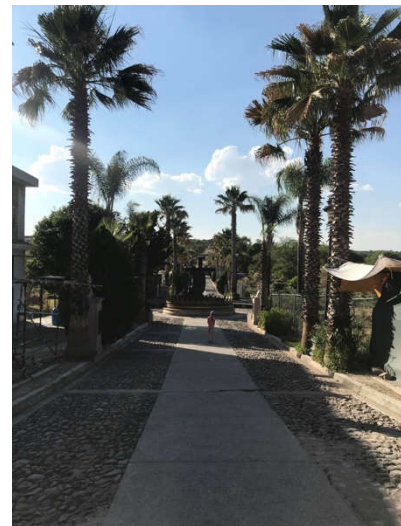


**Image 7** Urban growth of Santa Ana de Guadalupe year 2018

Source: Rogelio Martínez Cárdenas

In this way, step by step has been configured a visiting space for tourists that goes beyond the Church La Mesita, replacing land for agricultural use on urbanized land for tourist religious use. A roadway was built that joins at one end a building that is a replica of the house where Santo Toribio Romo was born, and the temple erected in the exact place where his house was located, and on the other side, the Church La Mesita; this road has been given the name of Calzada de los Mártires because on its sides the busts of all the Cristero martyrs who were raised to

the altars in the same process of canonization as Santo Toribio have been placed.



**Image 9** Calzada de los Mártires, Santa Ana de Guadalupe Jalisco 2019

Source: Carolina Elizabeth Madrigal Loza

Along this road, which is widely visited by visitors, several commercial stalls have been placed that offer a variety of items to visitors, ranging from medicinal plants to music records, hats, huaraches, sweets, etc.

According to the Municipal Tourism Board (Enriquez, 2018), the greatest number of visitors is during Holy Week or Week, Christmas and the end of the year, as well as the anniversaries of the birth and death of Santo Toribio Romo, as well as holiday periods and long weekends. In these dates, they usually arrive between 1,300 and 1,500 daily buses, representing between 52,000 and 60,000 tourists. During the other weekends of the year, the average number of buses that arrive is from 300 to 500 per day, which means between 12,000 and 20,000 people per day, still a very significant amount considering that it is a population of 311 inhabitants.



**Image 10** Parking in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, June 2017

Source: Carolina Elizabeth Madrigal Loza

The continuous flow of pilgrims and their high number demanded the construction of a new sanctuary capable of granting the religious services required by visitors. The design of this work was in charge of the architect and Benedictine monk Fray Gabriel Chávez de la Mora. The result was a temple with a modernist design with capacity for 2,500 seated people, which allows the narthex and the atrium to be used as an extension in case of having a higher capacity. An annex building was also erected to carry out different pastoral activities such as retreats, talks, etc.



**Image 11, 12, 13, 14.** New Sanctuary of Santo Toribio Romo, Santa Ana de Guadalupe. Jan. 2019

Source: Carolina Elizabeth Madrigal Loza

With the purpose of informing visitors about relevant data of the life of Santo Toribio, a museum was built that exhibits some belongings and photographs referring to the saint. The building is equipped with an auditorium for conferences, in addition to housing the site where as a seminarian Santo Toribio taught catechism classes, which gives a unique touch to this space. The parking lot at the entrance of the museum serves to house a large number of buses that transport pilgrims on weekends to Santa Ana de Guadalupe.





Imagen 15, 16, 17, 18. Museum

Source: Carolina Elizabeth Madrigal Loza

Urban development is not the only impact the population has had. The environment has also been affected. On weekends there is a high demand for water discharge due to the continuous use of the baths by the pilgrims. If only 10% of visitors make use of the bathrooms, the estimated daily water expenditure is 6 to 10 thousand liters in days of lower influx of tourists, which has forced the construction of a water treatment plant residuals by the municipality of Jalostotitlán, where most of the water used in the population is being purified.

Despite the advances in infrastructure for visitor attention, the average stay in the population by tourists is only two hours. During this time, in addition to touring the tourist sites, they consume different food items, generating a large amount of waste that ends up as garbage, becoming tons that are transported to a municipal sanitary landfill.



Image 19, 20 Parking in Santa Ana de Guadalupe, Jalisco.

Source: Carolina Elizabeth Madrigal Loza

## CONCLUSIONS

Santa Ana de Guadalupe is a population that has stagnated in population growth during the last hundred years. However, it has become a site of tourist interest since the canonization of Santo Toribio Romo; Due to the popularity achieved, this population has had several changes in its social and territorial dynamics.

One of the main changes has to do with the appearance of a commercial sector nonexistent twenty years ago. The main products that are sold are: t-shirts, bags for women, sweets and an endless number of souvenirs with the image of Santo Toribio, medicinal plants, hats, music discs, etc. It is relevant that most businesses are owned by people outside this population. It is mostly informal commerce that does not pay tax, they only pay a minimum fee to the municipality, which means that the economic flow of this religious trade is not being left to the benefit of the local community.

The growth in infrastructure that Santa Ana de Guadalupe has had is important. The Catholic clergy, seeing the rapid increase of visitors to the sanctuary where the remains of Santo Toribio Romo are located, began to take measures in relation to physical spaces for the attention of the pilgrim; a replica of the house where the saint was born was built, a chapel on the site where his parents' house was located, a museum in honor of the saint and a restaurant, as well as several stores for the sale of religious items and souvenirs, strategically distributed in the circuit that tourists travel. A new sanctuary was also built, which is a complex that includes the new temple, a chapel with the remains of the saint, a building for catechetical activities and a store for the sale of souvenirs. It is a construction that already incorporates in its design the criteria of universal

accessibility to facilitate the visit to people with some type of disability. This urban growth has modified the use of land so that the land that was previously used for agricultural production, has now been urbanized and built for the benefit of visitors who come to this population; this has had repercussions in the consumption of water, since the demand for this liquid has increased due to the intensive use of sanitary services due to the large number of visitors that come to the site; This has forced the municipality to build a water treatment plant with the intention of reducing the impact on the extraction of water from the water table and the discharge of contaminated water. The devotion to Santo Toribio Romo has been an important factor for the tourist-religious promotion of the community of Santa Ana de Guadalupe, and the main trigger in the recent urban growth of the population. However, the incipient religious tourism development is still not reflected economically for the benefit of the local population, since there are very few inhabitants who have some business related to tourism and in relation to the environmental aspect are taking few measures to prevent and control the excessive use of water and the generation of garbage.

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