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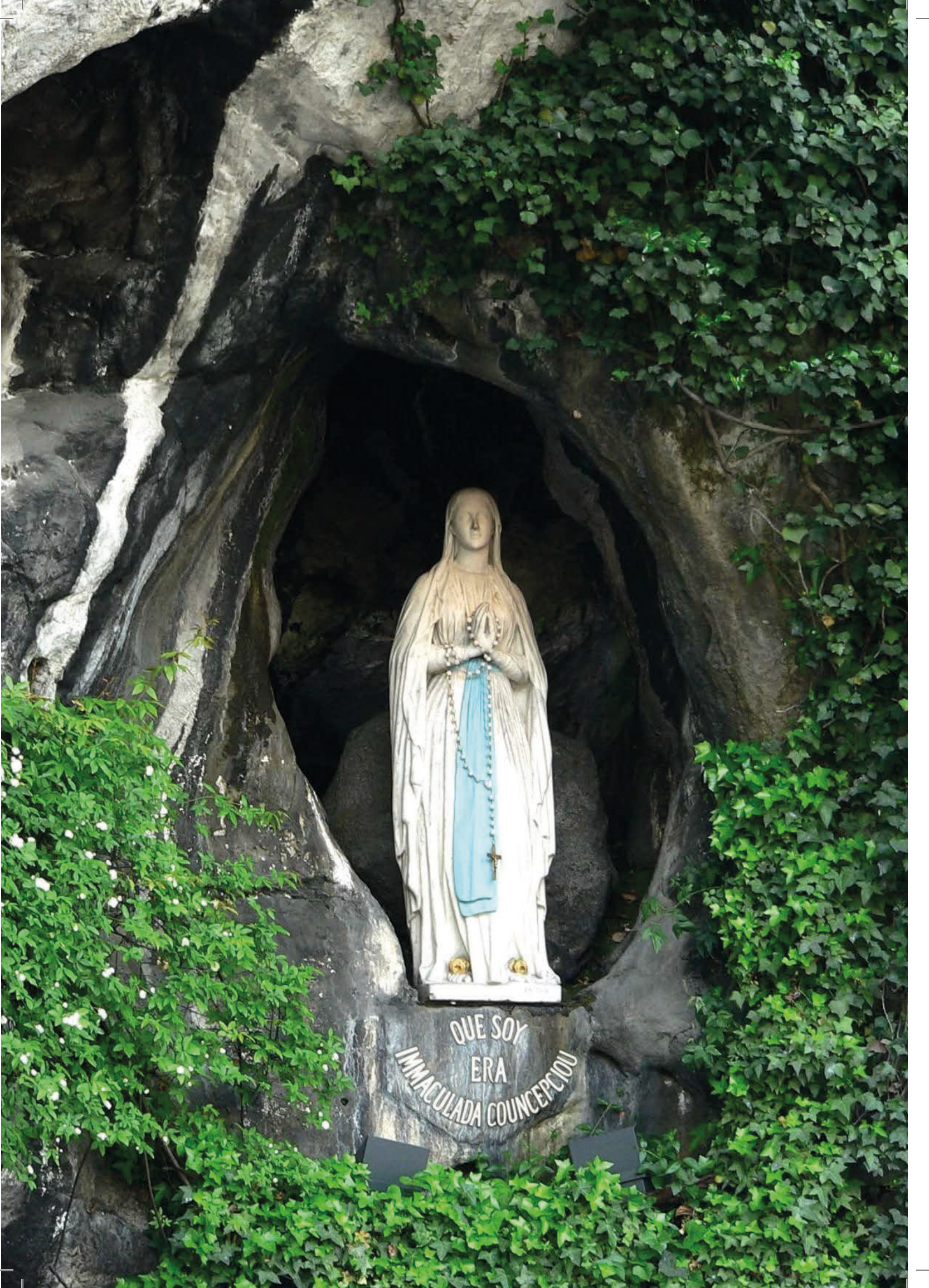
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**PILGRIMAGES, SACRED PLACES AND  
PATHWAY TO RWYC**

**Vol. 1**





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# SACRED PLACES, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

## THE GREAT PILGRIMAGE OF THE DANCES

### TLATELOLCO-LA VILLA (MÉXICO)

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#### ABSTRACT

The Villa of Guadalupe, located on the Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City, is considered a sacred place since pre-Hispanic times, which was magnified with the construction of the first Catholic temples dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe in the 16th century, during the Viceroyalty in New Spain, and it is until today, with the Insigne and National Basilica of Santa María de Guadalupe, the most visited Marian shrine in the world with nearly 20 million pilgrims annually, having as its main object of worship the Mantle of the Virgin of Guadalupe dated from the apparition of 1531.

Due to its relevance in cultural, religious, and symbolic dimensions, the main objective of this work is to understand the existing interaction between culture, tangible and intangible heritage, and syncretic processes of which this historic urban landscape is a stage. It receives over a hundred pilgrimages per year, among which stands out the pilgrimage carried out by various groups promoting the tradition of dance in the Valley of Mexico. These diverse "currents," such as the "concheros," have endeavored to safeguard through the preservation of the ritual legacy that the complex cultural fabric of their practices represents.

With a history dating back 75 years and under the slogan "Union, conformity, and conquest," the second Sunday of November witnesses the so-called "Great Pilgrimage of the Dances." This event exalts the sense of spirituality inherent in Mexican culture, and its route connects the first Catholic temple founded in the ancient pre-Hispanic city of Tenochtitlan (Santiago Tlatelolco on the outskirts of the Historic Center of Mexico City) with the "sacred little house" of the "Perfect Ever Virgin Saint Mary of Guadalupe".

*Keywords:* Great Pilgrimage of the Dances, Sacred Place, Historic Urban Landscape, Tlatelolco, Villa de Guadalupe.

#### INTRODUCTION

Since becoming conscious of their own existence, humans have sought explanations for their being and their surroundings in divinity. From this idea arose religions, which evolved from simple forms of spirituality into the complex belief systems that exist today and have led to the construction and recognition of sacred places, rites, and activities that are significant to the culture and heritage of human societies throughout history.

Among the activities with high relevance in religious symbolism are pilgrimages, which take on different meanings and purposes for those who practice them. On one hand, they represent an expression of faith and devotion, where individuals seek to approach the sacred through a physical and spiritual journey. They also symbolize the search for purification and spiritual renewal, as pilgrims seek to atone for their sins or simply gain a closer connection to the object of their fervent devotion within their religious context.

In general, it is plausible to affirm that many people who undertake pilgrimages to places considered sacred do so in search of a connection with the divine. Visiting these sites allows the faithful to directly experience a fragment of the sacred within their religious tradition. Occasionally, pilgrims make these journeys to request favours or to give thanks for blessings received. They are often carried out as the fulfilment of promises made to