

BEYOND THE GEOGRAPHY, THE FORMATION OF CROSS-BORDER REGION BETWEEN GREAT MEXUSA

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ABSTRACT

"... If we look at the merger of Mexican-American as a geographic indicator, we would conclude that the northern border in Mexico is not the Rio Grande, or the barbed wire that separates Arizona from Sonora, but a line winding through the south of California to central Arizona and New Mexico, then to sink in the arid West Texas to San Antonio and the Gulf of Mexico "(Langley, 1994: 18).

In fact, years ago some analysts of the subject of relations between two nations argue that between northern Mexico and the southern United States is forming a kind of third country. This is related to the intensity with which this part of the world have intensified economic, trade, financial, technological, demographic, industrial and cultural relations involving actors and agents from both countries.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze this great transnational space, designed as a region between the two countries, in the light of economic, social and demographic indicators that one hand shows the relevance that has in Mexico and the United States, and on the other hand, allows to configure the profile of this transnational region.

Keywords: Border, economy, migration.

Introduction

Today the border between Mexico and the United States is far from being an area of trade, services and assembly industry, where Mexicans crossed north to go bargain shopping, or the American south in search of fun or souvenir. Or of that border where thousands of Mexicans came in search of a job or hoping to cross into the United States and then return to their places of origin. Now if you come, don't leave, the migration flow isn't longer circular.

Today, in the XXI century, the frontier is much more than this and its synonyms are others: violence, drugs, kidnappings, insecurity and uncertainty in what to do every day. This has led not only new human directional flows, but also a diversification of socioeconomic profiles of

people who move to live in the south, center or North America.

The traditional flow of people crossing using his visa, or nearly 500 thousand fellow Mexicans, despite the walls and the various methods of control of illegal migration, has been to add a displacement of thousands of people upper middle class and people, literally rich fleeing cities across the U.S. border to settle in cities of neighboring states. So thousands of people have left Ciudad Juarez to live in El Paso Texas, others went to Monterrey to take up residency in San Antonio, Houston, Dallas and have made them wealthy in the Isla del Padre, also in the Texas state. This suggests the questionable assumption that beyond the border, the violence does not exist.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the new configuration of the north border of Mexico, in the light of new demographic shifts, and the exodus of middle class people and economic resources higher than before the violence which in some

Brief Review of the Conceptual Border

While the border between countries in the beginning was defined from the legal-geographical separation of nation states, as fact, in practice the relationship between countries was adding new factors that influence on the concept of border does not remain static. This is related to how human groups are changing their relationships with each other. That is, the border cannot be defined once and for all, hence the transformations that have imposed the need to rethink every certain period of history is what is meant by the concept.

As noted, the near part of a legally defined boundary line, which includes a small area perimeter free. This is the experience between Mexico and the United States.

However, this swampy border has given rise to different interpretations of its meaning. In this sense, the border ties overflow beyond the formal boundaries, found their first performances in schools of thought developed countries. Joel Garreau in his book, *The Nine Nations of North America*, published in September 1981, analyzed as indicated by the name of the book, the formation of 9 large spaces in the region extending from Mexico to Canada, which include The Empty Quarter, Ecotopia, Breadbasket, MexAmerica, Quebec, New England, The Foundry, Dixie and The Islands (Garreau, 1981: 427). One of those "nations" is MexAmerica the author defined as "... MexAmerica is the most

states border, have moved their residence to a city of the neighboring country, under the assumption that in these the security and peace, do exist.

prosperous. Going from, The Angeles to Houston. If you drew a circle 60 miles around Los Angeles and declared an independent country for its wealth would be the country number 14 in the world. At the other end of MexAmerica find Houston. A town that was 30 years ago, like Kansas City, a crossroads where even a chamber of commerce could be formed. But like Kansas City, this image has been completely changed, and now Houston is a world capital. It is now the world capital of oil and gas "(Garreau, 1981: 428).

Lester Langley, another American author, in his book *MexAmérica, dos países un futuro* in these terms:

"... If we consider the concentration of Mexican - Americans as a geographic indicator, we conclude that in Mexico's north border is the Rio Grande, or the barbed wire separating Arizona from Sonora, but a squiggly line that passes through the southern California, central Arizona and New Mexico, to sink then into the arid West Texas to San Antonio and the Gulf of Mexico "(Langley 1994:18).

Moreover, Mexican researchers began to theorize about the late eighties, with emphasis on the concepts of "social interaction" and "power ", "asymmetry of power, "internationalism", "nationality ", "otherness" "intensity " and "extension" (Bustamante, 1989: 8-24). Other scholars argue that analysis of the border must be taken into account "the development of bilateral relations between Mexico and the United States"

is also important to analyze the local political relations at a given time, where underlying structural problems which is not decisive, but the political influence. In this regard the concept of "dependency" is replaced by "domination" (Mares, 1982: 33).

Other interpretations emphasize the features "geo-economic" of what they call the northern border of Mexico, which they define as the subset of 14 of the 36 municipalities that border the United States. This demarcation makes in order to explain the phenomenon of border integration in two ways: the consumption of American goods and the development of assembly industry (Tamayo and Fernandez, 1989: 30).

In the nineties of the last century there is a significant advance in the analysis of regional border, but not enough compared to the great complexity of economic, social, political, cultural and environmental experiences that region. One of the central aspects of this complexity are the modes of integration have some boundaries, defined by the relationship with their respective counterparts, and also by specifically and in this great country come together global processes of integration between countries. That is, we witness the deepening and expansion of links between certain areas of the world where new investment impact, especially in capital for high information technology industry, leading to the "emergence of state regions" among which, among others, the Tijuana-San Diego and Silicon Valley / Bay Area of California, Hong Kong / southern China (Ohmae, 1995: 2-5 and 80). This form of connection between two different countries, from where they tend all kinds of economic links with the rest of the world, some call it "combinations regions" or "border", others described as "virtual

regions" which are based the signing of contractual agreements between pivots and associative regions (Bossier, 1996: 66).

Although it is true that the border states interact ever more closely with their U.S. counterparts, yet there is no tradition of research examining the interaction between the states of both sides of the border, which does not that there is no academic work and government agencies in that perspective.

New Coordinates of Border Territory

That the territory is a static structure is a half-truth. The territory as a social space is always in motion. In this sense, the border river by its international nature, more or less intense depending on the countries contacted, twenty-first century experience profound transformations. This is the case of United States-Mexico border, where its formal limits, but also far beyond it live new phenomena that are redefining coordinates which set a new notion of the border.

With the purpose of providing a new framework to study the border between Mexico and the United States, it is important to analyze the border from two kinds of factors: the generals have to do with the way in the space of impact events globalization and individuals that arise from the specific form and two territories "separate" end up being one. In the specific case of the Mexico-United States, imposes consider the evolution of perimeter areas and free up the meaning of the Free Trade, industrial location factors associated with comparative and competitive advantages, the International Economic region determined by the formation of industrial corridors, commercial and infrastructure, the unveiling of serious problems of environmental nature as reflected in the fact

that the Free Trade Agreement, created a parallel agreement in this respect the way they have been redefining relations between capital and labor in the border as well as the observed changes in the economic agents that move in the region, both having to do with the profile of the labor market as employers, who have to rethink their strategies to be kept by the intense competition that exists in that region (Vázquez, 1997: 42 - 50).

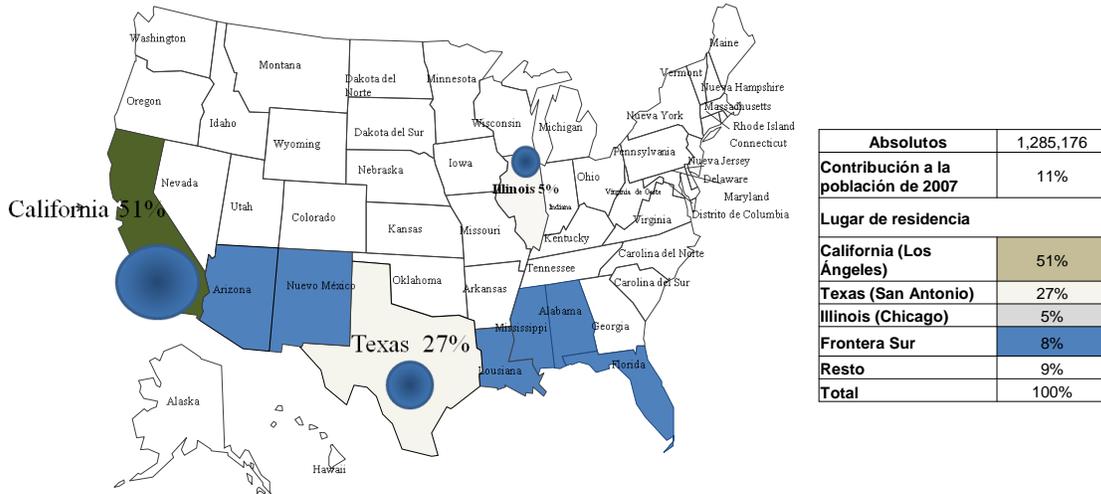
And in transit century events have appeared to force a reinterpretation of what is meant by the border. This relates, first with the logic of displacement and migration settlement and secondly, the social profile of those involved in such movements. And again, beyond the traditional economic and social asymmetries that prevail between Mexico and the United States, with the emergence and exacerbation of violence, a phenomenon which is known to have several reasons: drug use, with crossing them to the United States and the dispute between the spaces of the groups leading the business nationally and internationally.

The issue of traditional Mexican migration to the neighboring country, Huntington (2004), which

reflects thus: "Mexican immigration is leading the demographic reconquista of areas Americans had been taken by force to Mexico in the decades of 1830 and 1840 and Mexicanized now being in a comparable (but different) than the Cubanization that has occurred in southern Florida. Mexicanization is blurring further the border between Mexico and the United States and is introducing a very different culture, while that is encouraging the emergence in some areas of society and culture combined, half American and half Mexican "(Huntington, 2004:259).

Huntington's analysis has to do with "the challenges to American national identity", as "The Mexican population growth from 1990 to 2005 from 4.4 million to 11 million. And since the second half of the nineties, the fate of Mexican migration trend changed its traditional states like California, Texas and Illinois that accounted for more than 74% of the Mexican population, other non-traditional states of migration flows, located in the Southeast region, Middle East, Plains, New England and the Rockies "(Fonseca, 2010). This movement can be seen in the sequences of maps are presented below.

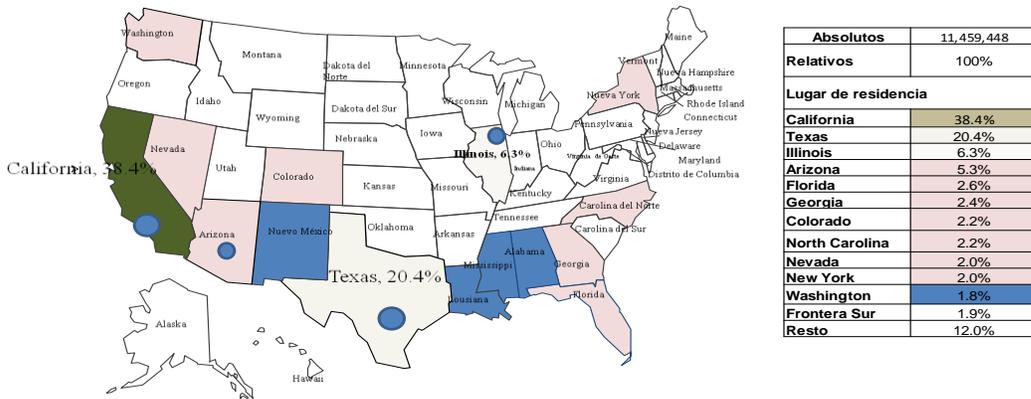
1975



California, Texas e Illinois concentran el 83% de la población de mexicanos. Los estados de la frontera sur concentran un 8%.

Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de Paula Leite y varios autores (2002) y datos del Instituto de Política Migratoria, Censo de los Estados Unidos y de PEW Hispanic, para 1970 a 2007. 24

2007



California, Texas e Illinois concentran el 65% de la población de mexicanos, pero 6 estados concentran el 15.4% y la frontera sur solo el 1.9%.

Fuente: Elaboración propia con datos de Paula Leite y varios autores (2002) y datos del Instituto de Política Migratoria, Censo de los Estados Unidos y de PEW Hispanic, para 1970 a 2007. 27

As can be seen from the comparison between the two maps, the Mexican population who has registration in the U.S. between 1975 and 2007 has declined in states where traditional receivers were concentrated, to new states where there is a great dispersion. Of the first states in 1975 stood California, particularly Los Angeles that was to concentrate a little over 50 percent of the Mexican migrant population, while in the second time in 2007, while California was still important, other states that became attractive to migrant population were Texas, Illinois, Arizona and Florida. These shifts are explained by several reasons, among which the construction of border fences and other measures of ground surveillance area, within the framework of migration policies increasingly racist content.

But demographic shifts are not only the profile of migrants going in search of employment and better lifestyles. Violence and insecurity that entails, pressing other movements and settlements of Mexicans in the United States with his presence pushes the envelope of configuration space-the territory between the two countries. Thus, beyond the traditional migration to the tightening of immigration measures that come with no intention of returning, at present there is an influx whose reasons are not employment, but improve the quality of life from other factors, as is the variable security to live peacefully. From the border environment of insecurity, professionals, middle-class people or entrepreneurs fleeing the country seeking greater security for their families. The fact is increasingly documented, as evidenced by the chairman of the Business Coordinating Council, Mario Sanchez Ruiz:

"We are concerned by the issue of security of all Mexicans, not just employers, but the migration of

business is certain"¹, especially in the states of Nuevo Leon, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas and Coahuila, he said.

Indeed, in city violence in the streets, the clubs and block parties, many people in middle and high income have chosen to leave Mexico and move to live in the United States. "Mexican migration is a selective group of wealthy people. If the neighboring country could choose to elect this migration is fantastic golden. They are people who are building businesses, companies, people who invest, consume, buy or rent homes"², says Séverine Durin, Program Director Northeast Center for Research and Higher Studies in Social Anthropology CIESAS). The population exodus is particularly acute in cities most affected by violence.

In the case of Ciudad Juarez, over 230 thousand people decided to move to El Paso, Texas, and there are about 20 000 abandoned houses, according to a recent study by the Centre for Security and Coexistence.

The flow of people about reconfiguring the space frontier, now populated by golden migration is not new. In recent years hundreds of Monterrey have purchased real estate on South Padre Island, Port Isabel, Texas, constituting an intense flow of people and cars moving monetary resources. People of Monterrey are the owners of 65% of the properties of the place, ie 3.120 properties³.

In this regard, Carlos Fuentes says: "Everything indicates that in the next 40 years, America will cease to be a nation WASP (white Anglo-Saxon Protestants) to be, like most nations,

¹ El Universal Online, February 3, 2011.

² La Jornada, December 26, 2010

³ Expansión, 14-18 of may 2007.

a mestizo country. The advent of miscegenation as a norm rather than exception, not excluding the United States, and this causes febrile reactions such as those in Arizona".⁴

However, the phenomenon is not just from north to south. There is also a movement backwards. According to Mike Davis, the Alta California begins to overflow into Baja California, through the purchase of real estate for retirees. Using information from the University of California at Los Angeles, shows that currently operate more than 57 real estate developments, with over 11 thousand houses in condominium inventory with a value of 3 billion dollars.⁵

Some Conclusions

The territories are no longer to constitute geometric complex spaces, where the border constraints are a function of population movements and the power relations of nation-states themselves. This suggests the need to learn academic and political border as beyond the traditional boundaries imposed by geography and study with the light of the demography and geopolitics. In this sense, the border between Mexico and the United States reached new heights. The Mexican immigrant population moves into the neighboring country with a tendency towards convergence of those who were to sell their labor as a means of survival and those that enjoy capital fleeing because their home country feel threatened in their integrity.

The phenomenon advance beyond law and rejection of the most conservative sectors of

American society, hence it is not free of violence and lack of respect for human rights.

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⁵ Davis, Mike (2006), "Raiders of the Border", *La Jornada*, September 23.

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