

# Review of: "Redefining borders in the contested territory between San Pedro and San Andres Cholula"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper presents a relevant topic, which is of interest not only for the Mexican context, but also for the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean. However, several elements should be reworked. Overall, it would be advisable to review the writing, not only in terms of the translation into English, but also in terms of conciseness and clarity of the message, especially when results are presented and discussed. It is highly recommended that the methodological approach is summarized in a figure, so the reader does not have to navigate the paper while putting the pieces together of how the research was conducted.

The following comments are divided according to the structure of the paper:

The contested territory of Cholula	
Paragraph	Comment
In the case of the Cholulas, this phenomena is older than the above-mentioned background. This dates to the establishment of two important pre-Hispanic groups in the area: the Olmec - Xicalancas and later the Toltec – Chichimecs. The latter were ...	It is unclear to what phenomenon / phenomena the author is referring to.
Another two events took place between 1985 and 1994 that had a significant impact on the Cholulas. In 1985, an "earthquake compelled migratory movement from Mexico City...	There is a huge gap between the paragraph about the 17th century and this one about the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century, which leaves the reader with several questions: Did nothing happen in three centuries? What are the author's criteria to select historical landmarks? Why are these worth mentioning ?
...Therefore, it was considered that by looking at some demographics and infrastructural differences and similarities in the barrios of both municipalities, as well as the municipal differences, especially regarding the public policies and urban planning, it would be easier to identify some significant borders.	The author makes clear that he intends to identify significant borders, thereby clarifying the goal of the paper. However, the preceding paragraphs lack of a stronger narrative about why borders are problem worth studying.

## *The socio-spatial phenomenon*

<p>... In terms of a lack of services, we identified five borders in our study area, being the largest and most critical in the west part of both municipalities, where most of the vulnerable populations live. The barrios are San Gregorio Zacapechpan and San Luis Tehiloyocan. These are followed by a polygon in the north part of San Pedro, in San Gabriel Ometoxtla</p>	<p>The presentation of the results would benefit from more elaborated maps, where the reader could identify the places mentioned by the author such as San Antonio Cacalotepec or San Gregorio Zacapechpan.</p>
<p>Figure 1, 2, 3, 4.</p>	<p>Legends are missing, containing a full explanation of colours used in the maps.</p> <p>The names in Fig. 1 are written in Spanish. They should be translated to English.</p> <p>For Fig. 4, it is crucial to explain what is the reader supposed to see/understand by looking at the unified map, that is, what information is that map actually transmitting.</p>

### Inconsistency between the Urban Development plans and reality

<p>...a comparative table was made for each of the Development Plans. Each Plan is divided into the following axes: public safety and value, territorial development...</p>	<p>The comparative tables are an interesting approach. However, the lack of a structured comparison between both municipal plans results in an incomplete analytical exercise.</p>
<p>Within the comparative table it can be seen how each of the observed differences between what the Development Plan states and reality relates to the main border.</p>	<p>I recommend changing the term 'reality' for a denomination that explains how this information was obtained, such as 'empirical findings', 'citizen's perspectives' or 'author's assessment'. Since the paper does not inform how the statements about 'reality' were produced, it is advisable to be cautious about these claims.</p>

### The borders as a strategic planning tool

<p>After doing all this spatial analysis, we looked at the possibility of an application of the concept of spatial justice in the context of the just city.</p>	<p>The concept of spatial justice is appropriate for discussing the study. Nevertheless, the author should deepen the discussion, going beyond quoting what spatial justice means. The author should include works that share the spatial justice theoretical underpinnings and see how they support or debate the findings of the study.</p>
<p>When this represented on a map, it is possible for decision-makers and planners to delimit more precisely which people or socioeconomic groups are the most affected and how the identified borders can be removed.. And because of this removal, the expected result is an improvement of people's living conditions.</p>	<p>The author signals as crucial the fact that <i>ejidos</i> were incorporated into the land market; then it is mentioned again concerning the category 'privatisation of resources'. However, this is left aside when referring to strategic planning. If the width or complexity of the topic is a limitation for the study, it should be at least stated as such.</p>
<p>For the lack of basic urban facilities, such as markets, basic education schools and health centres, one could think about co-designing with the inhabitants, alternative educational, health and economic systems that...</p>	<p>The recommendations put forward by the author should be backed by relevant literature, making reference to other works that have shown how co-designing or co-management do improve the situations identified as problematic.</p>

