

# 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.

## Review of the article «Redefining borders in the contested territory between San Pedro and San Andres Cholula»

The article is a substantial piece of work, striving to lay the groundwork to decrease spatial and social inequalities in the two neighbourhood municipalities of San Pedro Cholula and San Andres Cholula, Mexico, from a specific point of view: that of architects and urbanists, a planning perspective.

It is ambitious in scope as to its disciplinary range, as it encompasses human geography, sociology and aspects of legal, economic, and historical context, and makes use of philosophical and phenomenological conceptualizations; as well as media retrieval.

It is perhaps this multitude of approaches that is responsible for the somewhat blurred narrative. The article tries to touch into too many methods, using too many angles, without ever stating what the heart of the matter definitively is. Would the issue of 'frontiers' demarcation between the two municipalities be the crux of the matter, as the title suggests, or would it be the identification of a 'critical map' made up of the unprivileged areas which are also mostly inhabited by the more vulnerable population?

Be it as it may, the text raises some powerful levers to acknowledge, analyse and comprehend the spatial injustice that is so prevalent in these territories - and ultimately attempt to amend it, using urban planning means. To my view, it would be the latter hypothesis: the most significant outcome of the paper is the careful outline of the underprivileged territories as maps, using official statistics and indexes as sources. As no course of action, including planning policy, is possible without a clear perception of the problem; drawings, maps, visual representations are powerful tools to make manifest what beforehand had been only subjectively apprehended.

Suggestions of minor changes are as follows:

- in Figure 1, the actual city centre of Puebla could be drawn in the metropolitan area core, as it is explicitly referred in the text – 'due to their proximity to the central urban area of Puebla'. (Plus, in the caption included in the drawing itself, the 'Location of San Andres and San Pedro Cholula within the Metropolitan Area of Puebla' lacks an 'o' in the word 'Metropolitan'. )

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- in footnote 2, 'San Pedro and San Andres are the most contested ones' could use a qualifier next to the word 'contested', as there are many kinds of 'contests'
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- 'In the case of the Cholulas, this phenomena is older than the above-mentioned background'. Does this phenomena mean the tendency of larger settlements to absorb smaller ones? Or, the mere growth in area and population of older settlements? Or, the disproportion of the two types of growth? Or yet, as the next paragraph implies, the difference in ethnic/historical origin of the two municipalities?
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- in Figures 2 and 3, the captions are not completely explicit.
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- between the paragraphs starting by 'In 1519,' and 'Another two events took place between 1985 and 1994', there should be a summary, however brief, of what happened meanwhile.
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- when the expression ejido is used for the first time, the mention of 'communal agricultural land' is perhaps too succinct for across the globe readers; even adding a link, as the footnote 3 does, to an article where the topic is more developed, is correct but inconvenient.
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- 'The latterwere under the domination' – should be 'The latter were under the domination'
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- in the phrase 'However, San Pedro and San Andres remained small, but dependent socially and economically (being agriculture their most important activity), because the former included most of the urban, religious, and commercial activities, whilst the latter had most of the agricultural space to work', perhaps it would be 'but interdependent socially and economically''
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- 'and veryclose to the area' should be 'and very close to the area'
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- 'where there is noof access to basic urban services' should be 'where there is no access to basic urban services'
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- in Figure 4, the five areas of polygons and 'barrios' should be identified.
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- in 'Due to the contiguity of the urban area and the lack of signage or landmarks, the administrative boundary between the two municipalities is quite blurred in the territory, which causes the perpetuation of political and historical conflicts between municipalities', the nexus of causality is unclear. Perhaps it could be made more apparent?

As a closing note, the fact that the author has motivated the cooperation of students and colleagues to develop the



research is a plus in this article.