

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 main objective of this paper is to examine different factors that compose and redefine the geo-political borders within a specific region. For that purpose, the author uses the case of two adjacent locations in the state of Puebla, in central Mexico, using different methods and data, including official documents, newspaper excerpts, and geospatial data, which are the bases for the elaboration of several maps to support the displayed argument. By doing so, the author aims to disaggregate the existing borders between these locations, showing how they can be redefined, as well as the possible impacts for their inhabitants, and how this focus on the delimitation of these borders can be a useful instrument for urban planners and decision-makers regarding the design of a community.

While the proposed main idea of this article is very suggestive, I also found several problems and limitations in it, which I'd like to point out in order to improve it. These points are the following:

1. On page 2, on Figure 1, it says "Location of the State of Puebla in the Mexico", the last "the" must be deleted.
2. On page 2, I'm not entirely sure the assertion "In the 1990s, the city of Puebla began its transformation from a textile city into an automotive industry city" is accurate, I suggest to revise it. To my knowledge, for example, the Volkswagen factory began working in the state of Puebla ever since the mid-1960s. Thus, this transformation took place in an earlier period.
3. On page 3, while the historical background of this process is necessary and very interesting, there's a huge leap in its presentation, the author is examining what's going on in the region during the seventeenth century, and then he suddenly moves to the 1990s. I guess several important things happened in between that should be included.
4. On page 3, on the third paragraph, I find the argument of this paragraph somewhat confusing, it states that despite the different transformations occurred during the 1990s, both locations were not perceived as different or separated, and one of the reasons was "the big distance -7.3 km in straight line" between them. This seems somewhat contradictory. If there's a big distance between these locations, I guess this would contribute to perceive them as different and separated, wouldn't it?
5. On pages 7 and 8, I had some problems interpreting Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 points out the relationship between the lack of access to service and vulnerable populations, by comparing the first map on the upper row with the following five maps. Figure 3 is supposed to compare the lack of infrastructure and vulnerable populations, and in the previous paragraph the former aspect is defined as the blocks that do not have access to three basic services (basic education, a health-care center, and food markets). However, in this figure, the first map on the upper row points out the regions in both locations with no access to water, electricity, and sewage, just like in the previous figure. I wonder if I'm not

interpreting them correctly, or this is a mistake in the definition of the first map on Figure 3.

6. On pages 7 and 8, in both pages there's an argument referring to Figure 3, on page 8, regarding "the centre" of both locations, but we cannot appreciate where these centres are in this figure. I suggest this should be visible in it.
7. On pages 9 and 10, when presenting the method used in the section regarding public policies, the author points out that one of the purposes of his revision is "the citizens' opinion". I found this somewhat confusing: While this would've been a necessary and suggestive element to include, it is not really explored. Instead, the author carried out an examination based on news excerpts from several local newspapers, but the fact is that this is not necessarily equivalent to "the citizens' opinion". I guess that this element could've been examined, for example, through several interviews with the inhabitants of both localities, especially because the author points out that he "verified our findings with visits to the studied area" (page 6). Or at the very least, the author should've pointed out he's assuming these news from the local newspapers somewhat capture the opinions of the region's inhabitants.
8. On page 12, on tables 1a and 1b, the author compares several points of the Development Plans of each location with "the reality of both municipalities". Here my concern is similar to the previous point, regarding "the citizens' opinion": the author is assuming that this reality is equivalent to the selected news excerpts, and as I mentioned on the previous point, I find this somewhat problematic. I suggest the inclusion of a more elaborated discussion on this, in order to justify this assertion.
9. On page 14, while the map on Figure 6 is suggestive, in the sense that it summarizes and illustrates the three examined categories, it is somewhat misleading. Given that the main purpose of the article is to examine the blurred condition and redefinition of the borders between both localities, I guess that this map should illustrate the presence of these categories within the border region between both Cholulas.
10. Finally, on pages 14 and 15, in regards to the last section of the paper, on the importance of the borders as a strategic planning tool, I'm not entirely convinced by the argument there presented. According to the author, his research made possible to highlight the importance of borders in order to visualize "the possible spatial injustices" (page 15), and thus showing its usefulness for planners and decision-makers in order to achieve "an improvement of people's living conditions" (page 15). But I guess that if we take the borders factor out of the equation and use the available socio-demographic data (for example, from INEGI), my guess is that these "spatial injustices" could be visualized in these locations. Therefore, my suggestion is to make a stronger case in order to justify the importance of these borders and their possible usefulness.
11. In addition, there are several typos, missing or repeated words, as well as some other problems with the writing in the article that should be fixed.