

Disputed Territories and Social Subjects.

Conflicts, Resistance, and Indigenous and Peasant Struggles

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Since the last century and to date, in Mexico, as in other places in Latin America, the State and agribusiness and natural resource extraction companies (national and transnational) have played a preponderant role in the construction of territories in rural contexts. Not infrequently, these rural territories are structured according to governmental and commercial logics and rationalities, to the detriment of rural ethnic populations.

From different disciplines of the Social Sciences, these processes have been approached, as well as the way in which other social groups (such as peasants and indigenous people) have been relegated and their life projects excluded and marginalized. In this context, the book *Procesos territoriales en México: Conflictos y actores sociales en contextos étnico-rurales* [1] [Territorial Processes in Mexico: Conflicts and Social Actors in Ethnic-Rural Contexts] (2022) was recently published. This text, from a multidisciplinary conceptualization exercise on the concept of territory, addresses various processes. From the resistance and opposition to mining projects in Morelos and the official dynamics of channeling a river in Guerrero, to the production of counter space in practices of autonomy in ejidos in Michoacán and the processes of sociocultural and political reproduction of indigenous and peasant communities in Chiapas and Puebla.

The book is located within a specific framework, regarding the role of the State, power relations and the social subjects involved.

First, although there is substantive production from Political Geography and Political Science on the territory from the perspectives of the Nation State, this text proposes a different view, both due to the approach from Geography, and due to the issues addressed. In this framework, the local approach to rural ethnic subjects stands out, with different practices of appropriation and use of space, in contexts of unequal power relations.

Second, territories are conceived as historical constructions, the result of different social relationships and with multi-scalar expressions (micro, medium, macro), and with an eminent political dimension (on who, how and to what intensity control the access and control of certain spaces and natural resources).

Finally, there is a commitment to the centrality of social subjects (peasants, indigenous people, opponents of megaprojects), and their practices of resistance, agency and production and reproduction of their communities, in terms of their collective projects of life and common good.

Considering the previous features and the themes it addresses, the book has a precise location in the production of social knowledge. On the one hand, it is located in the area of rural and political Geography (of non-urban contexts), and in lines of research on peasants and indigenous people in processes of change and from local scales. On the other hand, it is a contribution in terms of, through the approach of different cases, thinking about the relationships between territories, local political orders, and ethnicity (in its sociocultural and political dimension). And, finally, it is an exercise to think about the territory beyond and in tension with the State.

Footnotes

[1] The book *Procesos territoriales en México: Conflictos y actores sociales en contextos étnico-rurales* (2022) can be downloaded through the following link:
<http://www.publicaciones.igg.unam.mx/index.php/ig/catalog/view/191/164/961-1>.