



Santiago Arau

South border.

Our Voice

The first border is inside us, in the split between our psyche and our soma. Although connected, the mind and the body do not always operate in harmony, so this first division exists in each one of us. The next frontier extends to the skin that contains us; that is the first boundary that separates us from others. It offers different responses to aggression, fear, love; it is the basis on which we define and identify ourselves.

However, very probably, when we hear the word “borders,” we think of the national spaces contained by them, territories; the times we live in make this obvious. I referred elsewhere to the paradox of North America today when products flow freely while many, many human beings are detained at the edges of the countries of the region, making border crossings a kind of limbo.

Racist and anti-immigrant discourses that divide one population from another have been built around the border, around its hundreds-of-years’ old history. But strategies have also been devised that allow the human beings separated by them to meet again, even if only by voice or virtually. The threat of continuing Trump’s wall has prompted creative responses by inhabitants of one and the other side, artists, and civil society.

The articles in this issue of *Voices of Mexico* explore all these details: from the individual to the communities, from the past to the urgency of today, from academic reflection to artistic expression, the multiple meanings of the border are posited here by researchers, writers, and creators.

I want to thank all those who have allowed us to disseminate their conclusions about what borders mean today, where mottos like “Build Bridges, Not Walls” take on special importance. They help us become aware that, very often, the barriers exist in our minds in the form of prejudices and contribute to the concrete walls becoming promises sustaining the discourse that, in turn, reinforces political power. In the end, that political power affects all of us, both individuals and communities.

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