



**La gran frontera. Zona de guerra.  
Franjas fronterizas México-Estados Unidos**

(The Great Border. War Zone. Mexico-U.S. Border Areas)

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In 1990 the Institute for Economic Research (IIE) began its project “Mexico-U.S. Border Areas” to commemorate the approaching 150th anniversary of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo through which Mexico lost 1.4 million square kilometers of territory to the United States and because for 500 years, conflicts have been a constant along the great border.

The research project, which lasted 10 years and is dedicated to the memory of those who have given their lives and talent in the quest for justice in this area, bore fruit in the form of two volumes dealing with the social and economic problems of the two border areas: the states of the United States that used to be part of Mexico and which maintain close economic and social ties to our country, and the northern, northeastern and northwestern states of Mexico today.

The books' objective is to contribute to the defense of Mexico's national interests and sovereignty along the border with the United States. It also aims to encourage our country's young academics and social leaders to familiarize themselves with the region's economic, social and geopolitical situation and illustrate the need to deepen our knowledge of the history of relations with our neighbor to the north, particularly in the framework of the transactions derived from NAFTA.

Many sources in both Mexican and U.S. libraries were consulted to elucidate central questions in this study like the settlement of the border areas. The first volume, *Territorial Domination, Conflicts and Disintegration* presents an overview of the different processes of colonization as the Europeans (Spaniards, French, English and Russians) arrived in North America in the sixteenth century, the "struggle for social space" between those immigrants (and, after 1800, also the citizens of the new United States) and the original, indigenous inhabitants. This was the beginning of sharp contradictions and attempts at greater expansion by these new citizens.

It also presents a comparative graph of the Greater Mexico of 1821 and the Mexico of today. After the signing of the Adams-Onís Treaty, which cost Spain the northern part of California, as well as Utah, Nevada and Colorado, U.S. expansion westward intensified. This led to the loss of Texas (1836-1845), war between the two countries (1846-1848) and the loss of La Mesilla in 1853.

A new wave of violence and harassment against U.S. citizens of Mexican origin broke out after the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The attempts to conquer and/or buy new Mexican lands continued well into the 1880s when Porfirio Díaz consolidated his dictatorship. He was the one who set Mexico firmly on the road to capitalist underdevelopment with his concessions to the United States' blossoming industrial capitalism.

The last part of this volume deals with the wars of expulsion and/or extermination against the indigenous peoples of the U.S. North and Southwest.

The second volume *Transformations and Problems, Yesterday and Today*, covers the period from 1880 to the end of the twentieth century. In addition to emphasizing the importance of regional studies, it also deals with particularities of the border region, among them a sketch of the power groups at play, the situation of Mexican workers who emigrate to the United States and some well-known figures in recent history.

Numerous tables, graphs and maps illustrate and reinforce the thinking in both volumes, as well as the didactic objective of this study, which unravels the different conflicts in the area that tend to intensify with globalization and economic integration. The book finishes on the note of pointing out the insufficiency of the measures taken to resolve the differences and contradictions.

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