Journal of Borderlands Studies

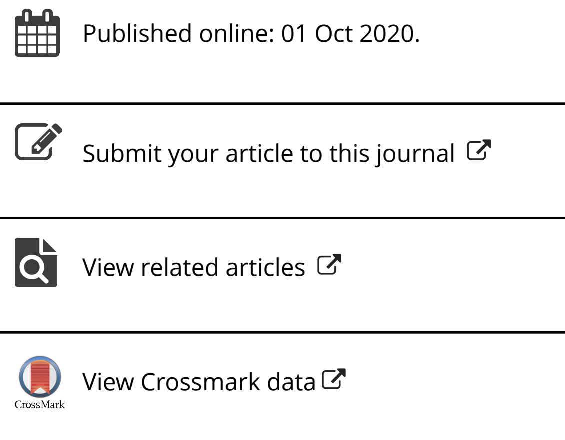
ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjbs20

Two Welded into One: The Experiences of Mexican Americans Who Have Dual Citizenship and Live a Transborder Life

Yunuen Ysela Mandujano-Salazar

To cite this article: Yunuen Ysela Mandujano-Salazar (2020): Two Welded into One: The Experiences of Mexican Americans Who Have Dual Citizenship and Live a Transborder Life, Journal of Borderlands Studies, DOI: 10.1080/08865655.2020.1824682

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2020.1824682



Published online: 01 Oct 2020.

Submit your article to this journal

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=rjbs20

JOURNAL OF BORDERLANDS STUDIES
https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2020.1824682

Two Welded into One: The Experiences of Mexican Americans Who Have Dual Citizenship and Live a Transborder Life

Yunuen Ysela Mandujano-Salazar

Department of Social Sciences, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

ABSTRACT
The objective of this study is to add to the discussion of the diverse faces of border life between Mexico and the United States. Focusing on transborder binational Mexican Americans living in the region of Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces, the study is based on in-depth interviews and discussion groups with 27 informants. The analysis of their narratives showed that they consider themselves different from Chicanos and Mexican Americans who live in other parts of the country. It seems that the transborder element, which gives residents a full understanding of contemporary Juarez culture, is what they recognize as particular for their identity. They consider themselves Mexican in principle, but they have learned to integrate elements of American culture and ideology and to defend their dual citizenship and their binational identity. Although they developed a legal consciousness after their first transition to the United States, their Mexican identity makes them vulnerable to discrimination or racist attitudes from other ethnic and cultural groups. Hence, binational transborder Mexican Americans are a category that is imperative to visibilize in their daily efforts to defend their identity, culture, and rights.

KEYWORDS
Mexico-USA border; binational; transborder; national identity; migration; Mexican American

Introduction

For decades, Mexican American communities and Mexican illegal immigrants in the United States have attracted wide attention from academia and official institutions in both countries (Blank 1998; Boehm 2008; Paw Research Center 2009; Jiménez 2010; Migration Policy Institute 2015; Douglass and Umaña-Taylor 2017; Zong, Batalova, and Hallock 2019). Border regions between Mexico and the United States have also been studied for their rich social, cultural, and economic dynamics (Alegría 2000; Coubés 2000; Rocha Romero and Ocegueda Hernández 2014; Velasco Ortiz and Contreras 2014; Vila 2000). However, as it is highlighted by the Website *Forgotten Histories of the U.S.-Mexico Border* (Forgotten Histories of the U.S.-Mexico Border 2015), the daily experiences of Mexican people who are born in the United States, have dual citizenship, and move regularly in a transborder context have not been deeply studied until recently.

CONTACT Yunuen Ysela Mandujano-Salazar yunuen.mandujano@uacj.mx Department of Social Sciences, Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, Av. Universidad y Heroico Colegio Militar s/n, Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua, C.P. 32270, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico

© 2020 Association for Borderlands Studies

The presence of binational people in Ciudad Juárez (Mexico), El Paso (U.S.A.), and Las Cruces (U.S.A.), their experiences, and the ways they confront social interactions on both sides of the border are part of the daily sociocultural dynamic specific to this region. People who are ethnically Mexican, were born in the United States, grew up on the border within two national ideologies and cultures, and move regularly – and legally – between national contexts have a very complex identity construction process. Therefore, it is important to explore their experiences and how they express their national identity – as taught mainly through formal education – and cultural identity – as constructed by experience as a self-perception of belonging – to visibilize their efforts to integrate into both cultural contexts, as well as to recognize the possible aspects of vulnerability they face as a social category.

On the other hand, the recent political and legal context in the United States and the anti-Mexican discourse that has been promoted in recent years reinforce the stigmatization and encourage discrimination against those who are perceived as Mexican, regardless of the legitimacy of their immigration status or their ability to integrate into American society. Media and political discourses have been continuously relating Mexican people to illegal migration and delinquency, there is a stigma that has instigated hatred among some people against those who *look* Mexican. The most dramatic example happened on August 3, 2019, in El Paso, Texas, when an Anglo-American man, after publishing online a racist and xenophobic manifesto against Mexicans, went to a supermarket and attacked those who looked Hispanic, killing twenty-two people (Helsel 2019; Campbell 2019). In this context, the factor that makes someone vulnerable to discrimination it is not – only – being an illegal immigrant, but to be identified as someone of Mexican origin.

Thus, this research intends to add to the comprehension of the border regions between Mexico and the United States by presenting the experiences and giving voice to Mexican Americans who have dual citizenship and live a transborder life. From the cultural studies, following an ethnographic approach, the objective is to expand the understanding on how Mexican Americans of the border region of Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces, who have had formal education in both countries, identify themselves, as well as how they feel and manage their social identity in different contexts. Also, it is indented to find the recurrent experiences they face as binational transborder Mexican Americans.

Binational Transborder Mexican Americans

Formed by three cities, three states, and two countries, Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces is a metropolitan region in the central area of the border between Mexico and the United States. The cities are economically interdependent, particularly Juárez-El Paso, which are divided only by the Rio Bravo or Rio Grande; El Paso, Texas, and Las Cruces, New Mexico are less than 50 miles apart and connected by the Interstate 10 Highway. The close distance among these cities and their easy access to inner parts of Mexico and the United States have made them an important region for the manufacture industry since the 1960s; in the 1990s, with the ratification of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), it took a new impulse, attracting thousands of workers, mostly from southern Mexico and Central America, some whose intention was to work in Juárez, some who wanted to cross the border (Breceda Pérez and Nava Gonzalez 2013;

Peach and Williams 1994). Juárez is the largest of these cities with an estimated population of 1.4 million and around 95% of those people under 65 years old in 2019, which highlights the concentration of economically active population (Plan Estratégico de Juárez A. C. 2020). On the other hand, according to the estimates of 2019, El Paso had 681,728 residents with 87% under 65 years old and 80.9% of Hispanics or Latinos; while Las Cruces had 103,432 inhabitants with 84% under 65 years old and 60.2% Hispanics or Latinos (United States Census Bureau 2020).

Perhaps, these percentages reflect to some degree an interesting phenomenon that has been presenting for decades in the region. Among middle- and upper-class Mexican women who live on the border and have a visa to enter the United States, the practice of crossing to the American side to give birth is relatively common, even if they do not have the intention to stay there at that moment. They cross the border with a tourist visa – Border Crossing Card – that allows them to seek medical services (Embajada y consulados de Estados Unidos en México n.d.) and after they deliver, they go back to the Mexican side with their baby, who has become a U.S. citizen by birth.

This practice became particularly common and pursued since 1996 when Mexico approved a reform in the Constitution to recognize dual citizenship (Yasar 2017; Mateos 2019). The new Mexican Nationality Law entered in force in 1998, allowing children of Mexican parents born outside the territory and holding another citizenship – for example, the U.S. nationality by birth – to be legally recognized also as Mexicans. As the United States does not require an individual to renounce U.S. nationality if he acquires another one, Mexico-U.S. border residents have been taking advantage of giving their children dual citizenship, aspiring to make the best of the transborder life. According to the informants in the present study, the main goal of their mothers when seeking to give them dual citizenship was to offer them the possibility to legally live in the United States if they wished to do so in the future; about twenty percent stated that moving to the American side of the border was a family plan, and giving birth to the children in the United States was one step towards achieving it.

Regardless of the plans of families, in most cases, these children, who are American citizens by birth and Mexican citizens by ancestry – thus, having dual citizenship – grow up and begin their formal education on the Mexican side, because their parents have their employments and home there. Nevertheless, once they grow up, and according to their family network and economic resources, they usually make the transition to American schools to continue or finish their formal education. Typically, if the family has not moved, they continue living in Mexico and cross the border daily, or they live intermittently on both sides; thus, becoming *transborder* Mexican Americans. The term transborder or *transfronterizo* implies the binational, bicultural, fluid, and unstable character of the identity of these individuals whose interactions develop on both sides of the border region, sharing cultural features with Mexican *fronterizos* (those living essentially only on the Mexican side of the border), Anglo-American border residents (living and interacting mostly on the American side), and Mexican illegal immigrants residing on the American side, but also differentiating to all of them (Martínez 1990; Ojeda 2005).

In the studies focused on the migration from Mexico to the United States, legal or illegal residents of Mexican origin are recognized as a vulnerable group, either for their migratory status or for their belonging to an ethnic minority (Knight et al. 2012;

Galindo, Medina, and Chavez 2005; Valenzuela 2004; Hernández Morales and Velasco Ortiz 2015). However, perhaps because there are no reliable statistics about them or because it is expected that their legal and socioeconomic status protects them from discrimination, binational transborder people of Mexican origin have been scarcely analyzed by academia with a notorious exception of the studies centered on the Tijuana-San Diego region. The studies of Relaño Pastor (2007) and Falcón Orta and Falcón (2018) focused on analyzing Tijuana youngsters studying in San Diego and their identity construction, finding that they define themselves against other social groups in the transborder region. On the other hand, Ojeda (2005; 2009) and Utley García (2010) have analyzed transborder Mexican families, their impact in the region, and how they recreate their identity from the meanings they give to their sociocultural practices and interactions in both sides of the border.

Border cultures are systems with unique identities that have diverse characteristics in each subregion; in this sense, their actors and their identities present fluid differentiations that are exalted according to the context and the analyzed phenomenon (Ojeda 2009). Martínez (1990), speaking of *transnational fronterizos,* proposed different categories of Mexican Americans living on the border, observing that their geographic position allowed them to maintain a high degree of interaction with both societies, making them distinct from those living inside the United States. He emphasized how factors such as language ability, cultural understanding, social class, and level of interaction with both cultures changed drastically their experiences on both sides of the border. Nevertheless, he did not make a distinction about those who had dual citizenship, formal education in both countries, or whose daily life was divided among both sides of the border. Chávez (2015), on another hand, made a deep and historic analysis of the strategies used by people living in Tijuana, who try to cross to the United States. He distinguished the category of *commuters* as those border people who, in the process to obtain a work or residence permit in the United States, spend periods living on the Mexican side and periods living on the American side.

In her analysis of cultures and identities of the border between Mexico and the United States, Rodríguez Ortiz (2010) defines *transborder* people as those residents who live on the border, regardless of their origin and their immigration status, who assimilate one or more foreign cultures and build one of their own as they interact in both countries regularly. The relevance of analyzing the category of transborder people is that they disrupt physical and symbolic borders with their free and regular movement (Rodríguez Ortiz 2010; Pum 2018). Sarabia (2016) made another advancement in the study of transborder people. Focused on the region of Mexicali-Calexico, she distinguished the category of middle-class Mexicans who, having a tourist permit that allows them to legally cross the border and develop transborder practices while remaining rooted in Mexico.

Yet, in the present study, my interest is on *binational transborder Mexican Americans* who live on the border region of Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces: people who identify themselves as ethnically Mexican, have legal citizenship of Mexico and the United States, and move regularly between both countries because they have their school, job, and house in different sides of the border. By including the ethnic, cultural, and legal aspects of binational transborder people, I aim to draw attention to the constant situation of otherness they face. They are ethnic and legally Mexicans, legally Americans, but neither Mexicans,

Americans nor Mexican Americans as the broadest categories, but in a unique way that only appears in the border context.

Smith (1991) defines national identity as the sense of belonging to a community identified as *homeland* or *nation*, where ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic, and legal aspects are involved. This identity is typically linked to citizenship – legal recognition as part of a specific homeland where people have certain rights and obligations that are limited to them as members. Because national identity has the essential function of being an imaginary link among members of the nation, it requires the implantation of an ideological basis and common culture; this is achieved mainly through the educational system and the media. The cultural and ideological basis of national identity is built on values, symbols, and traditions that give individuals the means to define and locate themselves in the world. The idea of historical territory, culture, and ideology have been key elements in the modeling of national identities. Thus, immigrant communities tend to have difficulties integrating completely to their new nations of residency.

In this sense, the construction of the national identity of binational transborder Mexican Americans of Ciudad Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces is even more complex. They have legal rights and obligations that link them to two nations; they have a culture that is different to that of other ethnic groups in the United States; as they have received formal education and lived in both sides of the border, they are exposed to two official identity discourses; and, because they stay permanently neither in Mexico nor in the United States, they keep cultural, emotional and ideological links in Mexico, while developing a sense of belonging also to the United States.

Methodology

This study followed Hammack's (2008) ideas about studying personal narratives in interaction with hegemonic discourses and social practices to find keys to personal identity construction. In order to be able to triangulate information to enhance the interpretations, three methods – in-depth interviews, discussion groups, and observant participation – were followed to gather information in the three cities of interest – Juárez, El Paso, Las Cruces.

First, between January and September 2019, in-depth interviews were performed to obtain the personal narratives of binational transborder Mexican Americans. Because this research was exploratory and performed within financial and time limitations, a critical case sample was used. This type of sampling aims to select a small number of cases that are likely to produce the most information about the phenomenon of interest (Patton 2001). To find the critical cases, the dimensions that were relevant to the study were defined as Mexicans from Juárez, who were born in the United States and held dual citizenship, residents of the border region Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces, who had scholar experiences in both countries, and at the time of the interviews had at least 3 years living intermittently between both sides of the border because they had their school or job and house on different sides. Once these were defined, they were circulated on Facebook and through contacts to find possible informants. A time limit of 3 weeks was set to recruit them. By that time, 27 informants between 16 and 60 years old – 14 women and 13 men – were selected to provide relevant information. All of them made their first transition to fully or partially living in the United States before they were 19

years old. Most of them spent their years of elementary school in Juárez, before making the transition to an American school; some lived for some time inside the United States, before coming back to the border region (Tables 1 and 2).

Besides in-depth interviews – during the same period – six discussion groups were organized. Each had an average duration of ninety minutes and had the participation of five to ten of the same informers from the interviews, according to their schedule convenience. In-depth interviews and discussion groups, both recorded digitally, were designed to explore national identity construction of binational transborder people, putting attention on their shared experiences and how these impacted their identification as Mexican or American. First, it was analyzed how informers remembered their life in each country, particularly their interactions in family and scholar contexts; this was aimed to understand the cultural and social elements and experiences they related to Mexican or American society. Then, their narratives about their present preferences and opinions regarding symbolic, cultural, and ideological elements of both nations were explored to recognize with which nationality they felt more affinity. Finally, they were questioned about their plans for the next ten years, in terms of family, career, and residency; this was aimed at identifying their sense of belonging, loyalty, and preference for either society. All extracts of interviews used in the next sections are translated by the author trying to respect the expression style and sense of the original communication in Spanish.

Lastly, between October 2018 and October 2019, participant observation was performed in places where binational transborder people usually interact with Americans and Mexicans on the border, such as shopping malls, restaurants, coffee houses. During this stage, informal conversations were established with people, and observations were registered in a field diary. These observations were particularly useful to contrast the narratives of informers with social practices.

To be Mexican in Juárez

Over the years, many scholars and intellectuals have tried to find what defines a Mexican. By the time the post-revolutionary State was trying to build the national identity of twentieth-century Mexico, Vasconcelos (2007) defended the *cosmic race* and the qualities of mestizo people in Latin America. By the mid-twentieth century, when Mexican society had a decade of accelerated urbanization and the socioeconomic inequality left wide sectors of the population marginalized from the benefits of industrialization, Paz (2015) talked about the *children of Malinche* and justified the pessimistic and submissive mentality of Mexicans saying they were due to the violent historical processes of the nation. A few years before the end of the twentieth century, after many economic and political crisis, Bartra (1987) used the metaphor of the *ajolote* to highlight the mixed,

Table 1. Age Range and Place of First Transition from Schools in Juárez.

Age 6–11		Age 12–14	Age 15–18		
El Paso	Somewhere else in the United States	El Paso	El Paso	Las Cruces	Somewhere else in the United States
1	4	3	14	3	2

Table 2. Occupation and City of Main Residence.

Work in El Paso live mostly in Juarez	Study in El Paso live mostly in Juarez	Study in Las Cruces live mostly in Las Cruces	Work in El Paso live mostly in El Paso	Work in Juarez live mostly in El Paso	Study in Juarez live mostly in El Paso
8	10	3	2	3	1

inconclusive, and contradictory elements of Mexican society and questioned the myths and stereotypes that intellectual and official elites had been promoted about Mexican people.

Recent studies show that among Mexicans who live in urban regions of Mexico there is a tendency to reproduce the discourse about the ethnic element that identifies them as *mestizo* with a dominant indigenous element that is related to a prideful pre-Hispanic ancestry (Juárez Romero 2004; Lara 2018; Pérez Rodríguez 2012). Regarding values and mindset, it seems to be a rejection of the vision of Paz about Mexicans as lazy and submissive; instead, there is the image of Mexicans as stressing family love, solidarity, and communal life as their main values, and social apathy and corruption as main anti-values (Robles and Salmón 2018; Arizpe 2011; Lara 2018; Pérez Rodríguez 2012). The present study does not have the objective of debating the validity of such characteristics, but to understand the ideas that binational transborder Mexican Americans have about the traditions, values, and other ideological and cultural aspects that they believe to share with Mexicans and that they consider to be different to those of American people.

First, ethnically, all informants said they were Mexicans, identifying their parents as Mexicans as well. When they were questioned about the characteristics of the ethnically Mexican, their responses were related to mestizo qualities, following the post-revolutionary discourse that takes pride in an indigenous ancestry, but, at the same time, differentiates from it and seems to forget or ignore the European, African and Asian heritage.

> Well, in terms of race, I'm Mexican. […] Well, we have indigenous and Spanish blood. Of course, I'm proud of my roots, of the Aztecs, and that. (Luis, 29 years old, employed in El Paso)

> I'm Mexican […] Ethnically? Mestizo, that's how it is called, right? […] Well, the family that I have met, like my grandparents and great-grandparents, they are not indigenous that I know of. They are like us. (Liliana, 17 years old, studying in El Paso)

> Mexican, I'm Mexican. Look at me. […] A few years ago, when the DNA test became popular, I took it. It turns out, I have like half indigenous blood, another half like Spanish or Portuguese blood, and even a little African blood. This one was weird. (Rodrigo, 40 years old, employed in Juárez)

In terms of cultural elements and socialization during their childhood in Juárez, informants had common positive memories. Some level of idealization regarding their relationship with their parents or other family members was common when they talked about how these people were the ones who taught them the values and traditions that they identify as Mexican – which also have a close link with traditional gender roles.

> My childhood was very good. It's just that my family is a typical Mexican family. You know, mom, dad, daughter, son. Everyone together, not like in the United States that each goes their own way. […] My dad works in a *maquila*, he works a lot […] I think that he began as a supervisor or something and when he got his Engineer degree he got a better

> position and so on. […] My mom is a housewife. […] My brother is a year younger than me. We both were born in El Paso, but we live in Juárez and studied here until we finished high school. My mom drove us to school and back, she helped us with our homework, she had our food ready when we came back, she made us our costumes and stuff like that. […] They always taught us to be close to family, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins … that family is everything and that they are the ones who are with you at the end, in good and bad times. (Fernanda, 21 years old, studying in El Paso)

Another informant said:

> I remember fondly when I was a kid. My parents worked, so I stayed with my maternal grandmother. She took me to school and prepared me food, all real Mexican food, no fast food at all. I really appreciated this and, still, my favorite food is Mexican. […] During the evenings, I used to watch old Mexican movies with her. That's why I knew about Pedro Infante, Jorge Negrete. […] I grew up with those traditional values that you see in those movies. […] That's why I learned to be a gentleman. When I came to El Paso, you can imagine how girls were with me; they were not used to old-fashion gentlemen. (Marcos, 39 years old, employed in El Paso)

In the same tone, all said to have positive memories of their early education in Juárez. They stressed their memories of their first friends, their first love, or some professor they admired.

> I believe that the kindergarten and elementary schools in Mexico are very special. It is not as here in the United States. There you can make friends and play, and it is like very innocent. Here, I feel that from a very early age everyone is competing, like you must have an enemy or you are competing with someone. […] It is not that I liked the classes there, but I liked to go and play with my friends, to go and see my teacher who was very nice. Not here, I don't like the classes, and I don't like my classmates. […] I had many friends there; I still meet with them. Here, I only talk to two or three people at school. (Erick, 19 years old, studying in El Paso)

Regarding the official discourse of national identity in Mexico, there was a persistent reference to national symbols and public holidays that were related to memories of school festivals. Informants also remembered that they had learned about national heroes in their classes.

> What I remember the most from school in Juárez are the festivals. […] There was a party for everything. […] Then, every year, we had the same homework for national holidays. […] But now I think that it is good because you learn about national heroes and this is important for *us as Mexicans*. (Jessica, 32 years old, employed in El Paso)

During their years growing up in Juárez, informants said not to be conscious of their dual citizenship as something that differentiated from the rest of the people – Mexicans – in their schools or with their families.

> I knew that I had been born in El Paso, but it was not as if I was talking about that with my friends at school. I felt the same, Mexican. (Andrea, 24 years old, studying in El Paso)

> The truth is that I didn't think about the meaning of it until I was sent to study high school there. While I was studying here as a child, I was Mexican, I was normal. (Juan, 41 years old, employed in Juárez)

Thus, in terms of their recognition of their ethnic identity and their awareness of their heritage as Mexicans, there was no significant difference between female and male

informants, neither regarding when they first experienced the transition to an American school. This is almost certainly because, in their quality of *transborder* residents, they are recipients of the official and traditional discourses of Mexican identity through media and society, almost as much as other Mexicans in Juárez.

To be Mexican – Legally – American in the United States

The United States, as a nation built by immigrant people of diverse origins, does not base its official identity discourse on an ethnic or cultural aspect or a common historical heritage, but on diversity, a liberal ideology with pragmatic values – freedom, progress, work, effort, democracy – and a love for the nation that is supposed to be voluntary (Huynh, Devos, and Altman 2015; Huntington 2017; Owen 2005; Pachter 2005). However, even though the American discourse on national identity supposedly accepts ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity – as long as certain universal values are respected – in practice, there is recurrent discrimination against minority groups and recently, with particular animosity, against people of Mexican origin (Calleja Fernández 2005; Pérez-Soria 2017). In this context, it can be expected that being ethnically Mexican is the main risk factor for discrimination in daily life, regardless of a person's immigration status, which is not as visible as someone's looks.

I explored the experiences of informants during their first time living partially or completely in the United States. Their narratives about these episodes of transition were mostly related to school. There was no significant difference between genders; rather, it was whether the transition was to El Paso or another city far from Juárez, and their age at that moment, the facts that impacted how they perceived those episodes (see Table 1).

Almost 70 percent of the informants made their first transition to a school in El Paso and kept living in Juárez or lived in El Paso with family and went back to Juárez during the weekends, holidays, and vacations, a fact that allowed them to continue their linkage to their previous life. In these cases, their narratives focused on the difficulties to adapt to the school routine in El Paso and the hardships of having to cross almost daily the border. In terms of socialization, they said it was not a problem to make new friends because they found numerous people *from Juárez*. They expressed that the cultural shock was minimized because people in El Paso are very used to people from Juárez and there are shared cultural elements; also, the fact that they went back to Juárez daily or many times a week, allowed them to maintain their social connections there. Nevertheless, something that most of these informants stressed was the fact that at that time they developed close friendships in these new contexts only with people of Mexican origin and limited their interactions with other ethnic groups. When asked about the reasons, they argued that the socialization and communication were natural with *Mexicans*. Nevertheless, among those people that they identified as Mexicans, there were Mexican Americans that had never lived in Mexico.

On the other hand, for informants whose first experience was in a city far from Juárez, this meant a complete transition into American society. In all cases, those who had this kind of experience said they moved with their parents and siblings for diverse reasons. Another common characteristic was that they did not remember their family having economic troubles when arriving at their new home and, when they moved, all

members of the family had a legal permit to live in the United States. This is relevant because, contrary to typical immigrant Mexican families, these people were legal and had financial resources. Still, the common factor in their narratives was the feeling of being different among diversity.

> The school was very different, classes were different, people in classrooms and teachers were different. […] Of course, I was used to going to El Paso and see people of all colors, but I had never interacted with them, so I arrived and wanted to befriend those who I saw like me, the Mexicans. […] But no, it turned out that they had never been in Mexico and spoke a very weird *Spanglish* and were like bad boys. […] For a few months, I didn't speak with anyone because I felt different from everyone. (Daniel, 23 years old, studying in Las Cruces)

Their difference with Chicanos, who they perceived as Mexicans but were not like the Mexicans they knew, was the most shocking experience they remembered. In their narrative, informants talked about elements that they considered *essential* in Mexican identity and that were more than ethnicity. For instance, to have lived in Mexico, to speak like people in Mexico, to understand and know the references of current Mexican culture, and so on.

> I began to feel irritated when other kids, like the *gringos* or those of color, asked me why I didn't get along with the Mexicans. […] It was just that those *were not Mexicans*, they were Chicanos. If they had never been in Mexico, if they didn't want to speak Spanish, if they thought that the most important holiday of *our country* was 5 de mayo […] They were not Mexicans! (Raul, 17 years old, studying in El Paso)

By this reasoning, they said to have felt as the ambassadors of authentic Mexico in those contexts.

> It was weird because they made me questions about things that I didn't know but they thought I did. […] Like very old soap operas and food that I had never tried. […] Now I think that it was what their parents taught them about Mexico, but their families had been living in Los Angeles for a long time. […] Yes, I made friends with a group of them and I taught them how true Mexicans were. […] For example, I taught them words that we used, games that I used to play in elementary school in Juárez, I invited them home so they could eat authentic burritos and tacos, and the hot salsa prepared by my mom, and things like that. (Ana, 30 years old, employed in El Paso)

In this regard, it is significant that the informants who made the transition as children and stated to have found problematic the Spanish spoken by Chicanos also expressed to have been in classes with other Hispanic children where they were taught some topics in English and some in Spanish. Although all had received English classes in Juárez, previous to their transition, they were not proficient enough to be in all-English groups. This may be one of the factors that made their integration more difficult, as they felt more comfortable speaking Spanish. On the contrary, the two informants who made their transition being 15 or older said they were confident in their ability with the language, as they had studied all their previous grades in a bilingual school in Juárez. Consistent with those who made the transition as children, these informants also had the perception that Chicanos were not like them, but their experiences were completely different and their narratives emphasized the multicultural factor they found in their schools.

> I loved the year I lived in San Diego. It is a very beautiful place. I got there to begin high school and it was the first time that I met people from other races, you know. My best

> friend during that year was Taiwanese and I dated a guy whose family was Italian. […] Actually, I didn't interact much with other Latinos, there were many Chicanos, but I didn't feel like them. I felt better with people from other cultures. (Jennifer, 25 years old, studying in El Paso)

Their ability to communicate in English was, certainly, a key factor for their integration into a multicultural environment.

> I was eighteen and I had never had trouble speaking or reading in English. […] During my first day of classes, I tried to make friends with people who looked White. It's not that I'm racist or anything, I just wanted to practice my English and I felt that Latinos there are different from *us*. […] Us, like people from Juárez-El Paso. (Alan, 28 years old, working in El Paso)

However, it is important to note that all informants, at the time of the interview, and after years of living a transborder life, considered themselves fluent in English. When talking about their language of preference in their daily life and activities when they were in El Paso or Las Cruces, almost 90 percent said to use both English and Spanish. Those who were studying or working on the American side said that they had no problems using English as required. But they also remarked that, when interacting with other Mexican Americans, a mix of both languages was more common; and, when communicating with people from Juárez or other Mexicans, they spoke only Spanish.

A perception that was relatively common among all informants, regardless of their age when making their first transition and the time had living on both sides of the border was that people of other ethnic groups, particularly Anglo-Americans, showed some condescending or racist attitudes.

> It is just that here there are a lot of Mexicans. Some grew up in El Paso, others are like us and move from one side to the other, but they are like us. […] *Gringos* get along with themselves and they like other things, other food, other music. […] Also, I have found that they think a lot of themselves, and they think that you want to be with them just because they are *gringos*. (Joselyn, 20 years old, studying in Las Cruces)

Regarding discrimination from classmates or workers, none of the informers said to have suffered a direct verbal or physical attack. Nonetheless, it was recurrent the comment of *feeling* like they were perceived as not belonging there.

> It is more like gazes and implicit comments. […] Like we shouldn't receive an education in public schools because we didn't grow up here or because we are not living here. (Manuel, 22 years old, studying in El Paso)

During discussion groups, informants shared many similar anecdotes about episodes in which they had been questioned about their migratory status or their *right* to study or work in the United States. In recalling these memories, they expressed anger and agreed that it is very common to face this kind of veiled discrimination mostly in work environments, and not only from Anglo-Americans but also from African Americans.

> The episode that I remember the most was when I went to look for a job for the first time when I began studying here. When I got the job, I heard some other workers, people of color, saying that another Mexican had arrived and that they shouldn't give us work to Mexicans, even if we were born here. […] It's like they think that we are competing for their jobs. (Marina, 21 years old, studying in El Paso)

> Of course, it has happened to me. Even more when I lived in Michigan, but also here in El Paso when I had asked for a job. […] They make a lot of questions, even if I give them my social security number and everything; like they know that I live also in Juárez and they begin to doubt me. (Antonio, 26 years old, employed in El Paso)

It is important to say that, when experiencing what they perceived as discrimination or some kind of stigma, all informants narratively built themselves as Mexicans. When questioned if, after studying, working, or living partially in the United States, they felt American, their quick answer was that they did not; yet, after further development, they acknowledged that they had acquired some values and practices that they identified as American.

> It's just that you don't stop being what you have ever been just like that. […] But yes, after so many years studying and working here, I have learned the good things about *them*. […] I believe that I have become more responsible, I don't invent reasons for not doing things. Here, there is a lot of competition and they look for quality in the job. So, you must live up to the expectations. (Marcos, 39 years old, employed in El Paso)

Consistent with the findings of Abrego (2011) and Coutin (Coutin, Mallin, and Sally 2014) regarding legal consciousness as a personal sense and cultural assumptions about the rights and privileges that some have or not depending on their legal status, even when informants said not to *feel* Americans, they stated they *were* Americans. They defended the legitimacy of their citizenship and their rights, and said to value the benefits that came with being an American citizen.

> To feel? I keep feeling Mexican. But I know that I am. […] I mean, I know that I have the right to be studying and working and living here if I want. […] When you are here, you begin to see that there really is more security, that you live more comfortably, and so on. (Nancy, 21 years old, studying in Las Cruces)

After the analysis of the narratives of informants vis-à-vis other ethnic and cultural categories in the United States, it is clear that, in their imaginary, people of Mexican descent who live in El Paso-Las Cruces are all like them, regardless if they have or not lived in the Mexican side, or if they are legal or illegal immigrants. According to their perception, it is the shared culture of the region and their closeness to Juárez what makes them *the same kind* of Mexican Americans. In contrast, Mexican Americans of other parts of the United States – legal or illegal – are perceived as different. Thus, the transborder and regional factors of identity are dominant when constructing themselves as a social category.

To Be Binational Transborder Mexican Americans

According to the experiences shared by informants, being binational and living in the region Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces had not been something that made them feel *different* before they made their first transition into the United States. Until that moment, living in Juárez and regardless of having a paper that validated their American citizenship, they felt Mexican and were perceived as such by the people they interacted with. Besides the fact that they were also legal Mexican citizens, this perception is most probably because they were children or teenagers who had not developed a legal consciousness. However, once they went to study or to live intermittently in the United States, they faced *otherness* in the form of ethnic and cultural distinctions; they

began to *recognize* themselves as Mexican Americans but different from Chicanos. And, after years of living intermittently on both sides of the border, informants have become binational transborder Mexican Americans *de facto*.

In their narratives, the dominant inclination among informants, regardless of gender or age, was to identify themselves as Mexicans when referring to traditional and ethnic aspects, making references such as "we the Mexicans," "us from Juárez," and frequently stressing differences with "gringos," "Americans," "Blacks," and "Chicanos." Nevertheless, in terms of current cultural identification with symbols and values, and perspectives about their lives, they are located closer to the American side.

Informants who made their first transition to the United States being teenagers identified strongly with Mexican national symbols. Still, they stressed their attachment to American national symbols in any context that did not refer to a confrontation with Mexican ones. Also, they were inclined to stress as an ideal the values that they considered essential in traditional Mexican families – such as closeness among family members, protection towards family, an economic and social development thought in terms of the family and not as an individual and a strong belief and practice of religious rituals.

On the other hand, those who transitioned before 12 years old, put more emphasis on individualism and seemed to have acquired some liberal pragmatic values, stating that people should be responsible for their success or defeat in life, and should not blame all on the government, the society, the family, God, or luck. Also, they identified equally with national symbols of both countries, presenting a resistance to choose one. Some talked about preference only in certain contexts:

> Ok, well, in soccer, I put on the t-shirt of El Tri [nickname of Mexican national team]. But, I don't even like soccer that much, I prefer American football and basketball, and in those sports, I only care about the American leagues. (Raul, 17 years old, studying in El Paso)

It was interesting that when questioned about their opinions on topics that are still taboo in Mexican society, such as abortion and the death penalty, the difference was not related to the age of transition, but their current age. Informants younger than 40 years old were more neutral than older informants. Younger informants were in favor of abortion in cases of rape, but most were more reluctant to agree it should be legalized in all circumstances; older informants opposed to abortion in all cases. Nonetheless, only 5 out of 27 of the total – who also were younger than 40 years old – said to be in favor of the death penalty. One of them related her change of opinion as a result of her experience in the United States:

> I had never actually thought about it before studying here. But in one of my classes at college, we had a debate comparing violence in Mexico and the United States and, one of the recurrent topics was the death penalty. […] I consider Mexico should apply it for some crimes. I think it would help. (Andrea, 24 years old, studying in El Paso)

In terms of traditions and customs, all informers expressed that they followed some from both countries, something that is common among people living on the border, regardless of their citizenship. Most said that they usually celebrated January 6th (Day of Epiphany), September 16th (Mexico's Independence Day), November 2nd (Day of the Death), and December 25th (Christmas) in Juárez; and, May 5th (Battle of Puebla),[1] July 4th (United

States' Independence Day), October 31st (Halloween), and Thanksgiving Day in El Paso, Las Cruces or some other city nearby in the United States.

Talking about their plans, 10 male and 9 female informants – of different ages – said that they planned on continuing to live a transborder life. They stressed the socio-economic situation in each country when arguing why they did not want to move completely to one side or the other. They expressed that violence in Mexico and the better employment opportunities in the United States were their reasons for studying, working, or living on the American side. But, recent anti-Mexican discourses and anti-Mexican movements and policies in American society were given as main reasons to remain close to Mexico.

> When I lived in Los Angeles, even if there were many Chicanos, I didn't feel integrated. I felt different and I didn't like how they were either. […] Now, also here in Texas there is the feeling that there is this idea against Mexicans, but at least we are many and, in the worst-case scenario, I just put up with them a while during the day and then I can go back to Juárez to my people. (Ana, 30 years old, employed in El Paso)

> As are things in Juárez, I prefer to keep studying here. If it goes on like this, I will look for a job and maybe an apartment here in El Paso. […] No, I don't want to go more into the United States. I don't like American culture and my family is in Juárez and I like our food. […] Bars and parties are much better in Juárez. (Diego, 19 years old, studying in El Paso)

> The truth is, in El Paso I usually don't feel it [to be in danger for discrimination], but when it was the shooting at Walmart, I was very scared. […] I have family living in other parts of the United States and they say that it is more notorious that some groups don't want Mexicans. […] I feel that racism is growing, that's why I prefer to stay here. At least, we are more Mexicans and I can go back if I feel that I'm discriminated against. (Leslie, 33 years old, employed in El Paso)

From the rest of the informants, 4 female and 3 male – all younger than 25 years old – said they wished to move inside the United States at some point, but they did not have specific plans. Their preference was mostly due to liking cold weather or bigger cities. Only a 21 years old female informant expressed her plan to move to France in the next years for professional reasons.

Conclusion

The objective of this study, with all its limitations, was not to find generalizations but to add to the discussion about the diverse faces of border life. Focusing on a mostly neglected category – transborder *legally* binational Mexican Americans – and on a region that is typically studied rather for its violence and *maquiladoras* – Juárez-El Paso-Las Cruces – I sought to give voice to some Mexican Americans who do not identify themselves as Chicanos, who defend their Mexican heritage as well as their legal American identity, and who have built themselves living within two cultures and ideologies with one foot on each side of the border.

The analysis of the narratives of the informants showed no significant difference between men and women. The experiences explored in this study – centered on national and cultural identity – seem not to be significantly crossed by gender. Language ability was an important factor for those whose first transition was not to El Paso-Las Cruces,

but other places in the United States. Nevertheless, all the informants were middle-class and this seemed to be related to their previous study of English in Juárez. So, even if some were not proficient enough at their arrival at an American school, they were not completely unfamiliar with the language. Currently, they all said to use English and Spanish according to the context.

In their identity construction as part of a social category in the United States, they considered themselves *the same kind* of Mexican Americans that live in the region, regardless of their experience living in Mexico, but no of those who live in other parts of the country. It seems that the transborder element, which gives residents a full understanding of contemporary Juarez culture – not so much Mexican in general – is what they recognize as common.

It was also clear that their transborder status – the fact that they move almost daily between both sides of the border – prevents the nostalgia that makes Mexican American communities in other parts of the United States to emphasize Mexican stereotypes and obsolete customs that are not coherent with today's Mexican – Juárez – society; also, their legal status in the United States prevents them to idealize this country and risk their lives trying to stay there – as other nonlegal citizens do.

Nevertheless, and although they developed a legal consciousness after their first transition to an American school, this duality – being Mexican and American – makes them vulnerable to discrimination or racist attitudes from other ethnic and cultural groups in the United States. They consider themselves Mexican in principle but they do not dismiss any of their two national identities; they do not consider them exclusive. They have learned to integrate elements of American culture and ideology and to defend their dual citizenship and their binational identity.

Hence, binational transborder Mexican Americans are a category that experiences two cultures and is exposed to two ideologies and lifestyles daily. They are legal citizens in both countries but are not excluded from discrimination or from being vulnerable amid discourses that constantly attack Mexicans. Thus, it is important to consider them as part of the migration between Mexico and the United States and analyze all the different inputs they have in both countries. Also, it is imperative to visibilize their daily efforts to defend their identities, culture, and rights.

Note

1. This is an official holiday of Mexico that commemorates a battle won by Mexican army against French army in 1862. Although it is commemorated, it is not particularly celebrated by people in Mexico. However, recently, in the United States they have adopted as a day to celebrate Mexicans there.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by Secretaría de Educación Pública: [Grant Number 511-6/18-9518].

ORCID

Yunuen Ysela Mandujano-Salazar http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4794-6584

References

Abrego, Leisy J. 2011. Legal Consciousness of Undocumented Latinos: Fear and Stigma as Barriers to ClaimsMaking for First- and 1.5-Generation Immigrants. *Law & Society Review* 45, no. 2: 337–69. www.jstor.org/stable/23012045.

Alegría, Tito. 2000. Juntos Pero No Revueltos: Ciudades En La Frontera México-Estados Unidos. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 62, no. 2: 89–107.

Arizpe, Lourdes. 2011. Cultura e Identidad. Mexicanos En La Era Global. *Revista de La Universidad de México* 92: 70–81. http://132.247.1.5/revista/revistaum/ojs_rum/index.php/rum/article/view/3524.

Bartra, Roger. 1987. *La Jaula de La Melancolía. Identidad y Metamorfosis Del Mexicano*. México: Editorial Grijalbo.

Blank, Susan. 1998. Hearth and Home: The Living Arrangements of Mexican Immigrants and U. S.-Born Mexican Americans. *Sociological Forum* 13, no. 1: 35–59. http://www.jstor.org/stable/684924.

Boehm, Deborah A. 2008. "For My Children:": Constructing Family and Navigating the State in the U.S.-Mexico Transnation. *Anthropological Quarterly* 81, no. 4: 777–802. https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.0.0037.

Breceda Pérez, Jorge Antonio, and Wendolyne Nava Gonzalez. 2013. Contexto y Flujos Migratorios En Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua-El Paso, Texas / Context and Migration Flows in Juárez, Chihuahua-El Paso, Texas. *Nóesis. Revista de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades* 22, no. 43–1: 254–80. https://doi.org/10.20983/noesis.2013.1.8.

Calleja Fernández, Abigail. 2005. La Discriminación a Los Mexicanos En Estados Unidos. *El Cotidiano* 134: 89–94.

Campbell, Alexia Fernandez. 2019. The El Paso Shooter Told Police That He Was Targeting Mexicans. Vox. 2019. https://www.vox.com/2019/8/6/20756750/el-paso-shooter-targeted-latinx-walmart.

Chávez, Sergio. 2015. *Border Lives: Fronterizos, Transnational Migrants, and Commuters in Tijuana*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Coubés, Marie-Laure. 2000. Demografía Fronteriza: Cambio En Las Perspectivas de Análisis de La Población de La Frontera México-Estados Unidos. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 62, no. 2: 109–23.

Coutin, Susan Bibler, Sean Mallin, and Engle Merry Sally. 2014. Technologies of Truth, Law, and Inequalities. Interview. PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review Online. 2014. http://polarjournal.org/2014/06/12/interview-with-susan-bibler-coutin-and-sally-engle-merry.

Douglass, Sara, and Adriana J. Umaña-Taylor. 2017. Examining Discrimination, Ethnic-Racial Identity Status, and Youth Public Regard Among Black, Latino, and White Adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 27, no. 1: 155–72. https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12262.

Embajada y consulados de Estados Unidos en México. n.d. Negocios & Turismo (B1/B2). Visas. Accessed November 14, 2019. https://mx.usembassy.gov/es/visas-es/turismo-y-visitantes/.

Falcón Orta, Vannesa, and Alicia Orta Falcón. 2018. The Transborder Identity Formation Process: An Exploratory Grounded Theory Study of Transfronterizo College Students From the San Diego-Tijuana Border Region. *Journal of Transborder Studies – Research and Practice*, 1–26. http://www.fronterismo.org/transfronterizos/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/The-Transborder-Identity-Formation-Process.pdf.

Forgotten Histories of the U.S.-Mexico Border. 2015. Transfronterizo Students. Forgotten Histories of the U.S.-Mexico Border. 2015. http://blogs.brown.edu/amst-1700d-s01-fall-2015/transfronterizo-students-2/.

Galindo, Rene, Christina Medina, and Xochitl Chavez. 2005. Dual Sources of Influence on Latino Political Identity: Mexico's Dual Nationality Policy and the DREAM Act. *Texas Hispanic Journal of Law & Policy* 11, no. 75: 75–98.

Hammack, Phillip L. 2008. Narrative and the Cultural Psychology of Identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 12, no. 3: 222–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868308316892.
Helsel, Phil. 2019. GUNS IN AMERICA Suspected Gunman in El Paso Walmart Shooting Pleads Not Guilty to Attack That Killed 22. NBC News. 2019. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/suspected-gunman-el-paso-walmart-shooting-pleads-not-guilty-attack-n1064876.
Hernández Morales, María Eugenia, and Laura Velasco Ortiz. 2015. La Etnicidad Cuestionada: Ancestralidad En Las Hijas e Hijos de Inmigrantes Indígenas Oaxaqueños En Estados Unidos. *Migraciones Internacionales* 8, no. 2: 133–63.
Huntington, Samuel P. 2017. La Crisis de Identidad Nacional. *Military Review2*, no. Primer trimestre: 37–51. https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/military-review/Archives/Spanish/MilitaryReview_20170331_art007SPA.pdf.
Huynh, Que Lam, T. Devos, and H. Altman. 2015. Boundaries of American Identity: Relations Between Ethnic Group Prototypicality and Policy Attitudes. *Political Psychology* 36: 449–68. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12189.
Jiménez, Tomás R. 2010. *Replenished Ethnicity: Mexican Americans, Immigration, and Identity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Juárez Romero, Juana. 2004. The Moral and the Mundane in Nazi Concentration Camps. *Athenea Digital. Revista de Pensamiento e Investigación Social* 1, no. 6: 1–14. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/athenead/v1n6.160.
Knight, George P, Sandra Losoya, Young Il Cho, Laurie Chassin, Joanna Lee Williams, and Sonia Cota-Robles. 2012. Ethnic Identity and Offending Trajectories Among Mexican American Juvenile Offenders: Gang Membership and Psychosocial Maturity. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 22, no. 4: 782–96.
Lara, Guido. 2018. Luces y Sombras Del Ser Mexicano. Nexos. 2018. https://biblat.unam.mx/es/revista/nexos-mexico-d-f/articulo/luces-y-sombras-del-ser-mexicano.
Martínez, Oscar J. 1990. Transnational Fronterizos: Cross-Border Linkages in Mexican Border Society. *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 5, no. 1: 79–94. https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.1990.9695388.
Mateos, Pablo. 2019. The Mestizo Nation Unbound: Dual Citizenship of Euro-Mexicans and U.S.-Mexicans. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45: 917–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1440487.
Migration Policy Institute. 2015. The Mexican Diaspora in the United States. Migration Policy Institute. 2015. http://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/RAD-Mexico.pdf.
Ojeda, Norma. 2005. Familias Transfronterizas y Familias Transnacionales: Algunas Reflexiones. *Migraciones Internacionales* 3, no. 2: 167–73. http://ref.scielo.org/kpm5vx.
Ojeda, Norma. 2009. Reflexiones Acerca de Las Familias Transfronterizas y Las Familias Transnacionales Entre México y Estados Unidos/ Reflections on Mexico-U.S. Transborder and Transnational Families. *Frontera Norte* 21, no. 42: 7–30.
Owen, Diana. 2005. American Identity, Citizenship, and Multiculturalism. Washington, D.C. https://www.civiced.org/pdfs/germanPaper0905/DianaOwen2005.pdf.
Pachter, Marc. 2005. La Identidad Estadounidense. Clayton. https://photos.state.gov/libraries/panama/11567/2005/ausa.pdf.
Patton, Michael Quinn. 2001. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Paw Research Center. 2009. Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America. Paw Research Center. 2009. http://www.pewhispanic.org/2009/12/11/between-two-worlds-how-young-latinos-come-of-age-in-america.
Paz, Octavio. 2015. *El Laberinto de La Soledad*. México: Cátedra.
Peach, James, and James Williams. 1994. Demographic Changes in the El Paso-Juarez-Las Cruces Region. *Estudios Fronterizos* 34: 117–37. https://doi.org/10.21670/ref.1994.34.a05.
Pérez-Soria, Judith. 2017. Migrantes Mexicanos En Los Estados Unidos: Una Revisión de La Literatura Sobre Integración, Segregación y Discriminación. *Estudios Fronterizos* 18, no. 37, https://doi.org/10.21670/ref.2017.37.a01.

Pérez Rodríguez, Irma Leticia. 2012. Identidad Nacional y Sentidos de Los Jóvenes Sobre Su Nación. *Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales* 10, no. 2: 871–82. http://www.umanizales.edu.co/publicaciones/campos/cinde/index.html.

Plan Estratégico de Juárez A. C. 2020. Así Estamos Juárez 2020. Ciudad Juárez, México. https://planjuarez.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/AEJ2020.pdf.

Pum, Khan Pau. 2018. Transborder People, Connected History: Border and Relationships in the Indo-Burma Borderlands. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2018.1438914.

Relaño Pastor and Ana María. 2007. On Border Identities. 'Transfronterizo' Students in San Diego. *Diskurs Kindheits- Und Jugendforschung* 2, no. 3: 263–77. https://www.budrich-journals.de/index.php/diskurs/article/view/224.

Robles, Marco, and Benjamín Salmón. 2018. El Mexicano Hoy. Igual de Liberal, Pero Más Salvaje. Nexos. 2018. https://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=37432.

Rocha Romero, David, and Marco Tulio Ocegueda Hernández. 2014. La Educación No Cruza La Frontera. Universitarios de La UABC Tijuana y Su Relación Académica Con Universidades de California. *Frontera Norte* 26, no. 52: 25–53.

Rodríguez Ortiz, Roxana. 2010. Cultura e Identidad Migratoria En La Frontera México- Estados Unidos. Inmediaciones Entre La Comunidad Mexicoamericana y La Comunidad Transfronteriza. *Antíteses* 3, no. 5: 125–43.

Sarabia, Heidy. 2016. Borderland Attachments: Citizenship and Belonging Along the U.S.–Mexico Border. *Citizenship Studies* 20, no. 3–4: 342–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2016.1158352.

Smith, Anthony D. 1991. *National Identity*. New York: Penguin.

United States Census Bureau. 2020. QuickFacts. Las Cruces City, New Mexico; El Paso City, Texas; United States. United States Census Bureau. 2020. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lascrucescitynewmexico,elpasocitytexas,US/PST045219.

Utley García, Nancy Gabriela. 2010. FAMILIAS TRANSFRONTERIZAS DE LA REGIÓN TIJUANA- SAN DIEGO Identidades e Interacciones Sociales. El Colegio de la Frontera Norte. https://www.colef.mx/posgrado/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/TESIS-Utley-García-Nancy-Gabriela-MESC.pdf.

Valenzuela, M. 2004. Frontera y Representaciones Sociales: La Figura Del Pocho Como Estereotipo Del Chicano. *Aztlan A Journal of Chicano Studies* 29, no. 1: 125–33.

Vasconcelos, José. 2007. *La Raza Cósmica*, 4th ed. México: Editorial Porrúa.

Velasco Ortiz, Laura, and Oscar Contreras. 2014. The Border as a Life Experience: Identities, Asymmetry and Border Crossing Between Mexico and the United States. *Frontera Norte* 26, no. 0: 8. https://doi.org/10.17428/rfn.v26i3e.1680.

Vila, Pablo. 2000. *Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders: Social Categories,Metaphors, and Narrative Identities on the U.S.-Mexico Frontier*. Austin: Texas University Press.

Yasar, Rusen. 2017. Trajectories of Emigrant Quasi-Citizenship: A Comparative Study of Mexico and Turkey. *Comparative Migration Studies* 5, no. 1: 18. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-017-0061-3.

Zong, Jie, Jeanne Batalova, and Jeffrey Hallock. 2019. Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States. Migration Policy Institute. 2019. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states.