

## Evanescent landscapes. Resignification of the notion of non-place

Paisajes evanescentes. Resignificación de la noción del no-lugar

### Carolina Serrano-Barquín

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Toluca (México)  
Facultad de Ciencias de la Conducta. Centro de Investigación y Posgrado

### Fernando Nava-La Corte

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Toluca (México)  
Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño. Posgrado

### Héctor Serrano-Barquín

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Toluca (México)  
Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño. Centro de Investigación y Posgrado

### Patricia Zarza Delgado

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Toluca (México)  
Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño. Directora

### Carolina Serrano-Barquín

Dental surgeon, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEMéx), (México)

Master in Education, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEMéx), (México)

Doctor in Social Sciences, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEMéx), (México)

Member of the Sistema Nacional de Investigadores [National System of Researchers]

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4671-2436>

<https://scholar.google.com.mx/scholar?hl=es&q=serrano-barqu%C3%ADn+carolina&btnG=&lr=>

[carolinasb@hotmail.com](mailto:carolinasb@hotmail.com)

### Fernando Nava-La Corte

Graphic Designer, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEMéx), (México)

Master in Design, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEMéx), Toluca, (México)

Doctor in Design, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEMéx), Toluca, (México)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7968-8722>

[https://scholar.google.com.mx/scholar?hl=es&as\\_sdt=0%2C5&q=navala+corte+Fernando&btnG=](https://scholar.google.com.mx/scholar?hl=es&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=navala+corte+Fernando&btnG=)

[fercho\\_0042@hotmail.com](mailto:fercho_0042@hotmail.com)

### Héctor Serrano-Barquín

Architect. Master, Doctor in History of Art, UAEM (México)

Member of the Sistema Nacional de Investigadores [National System of Researchers]

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0601-1830>

<https://scholar.google.com.mx/citations?user=NEd0gm4AAAAJ&hl=es>

[hectorsb2012@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:hectorsb2012@yahoo.com.mx)

### Patricia Zarza Delgado

Industrial Designer. Master in Design. Doctor in Social Sciences, UAEMéx. (México)

Member of the Sistema Nacional de Investigadores [National System of Researchers].

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5750-5849>

<https://scholar.google.com.mx/citations?user=ZbtQpf8AAAAJ&hl=es>

[zardel44@gmail.com](mailto:zardel44@gmail.com)

Serrano-Barquín, C., Nava-La Corte, F., Serrano-Barquín, H., & Zarza Delgado, P. (2021). Evanescence landscapes. Resignification of the notion of non-place. *Revista de Arquitectura (Bogotá)*, 24(1), 16-23. <https://doi.org/10.14718/RevArq.2022.24.1.3211>



<https://doi.org/10.14718/RevArq.2022.24.1.3211>

### Abstract

The evanescent landscapes are marked by spatial imprints where metaphors serve to imagine the heterogeneous and ritualized narratives that make them understandable. This process requires opening the game between the homogeneous and the fragmentation. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to make visible and analyze how the current reality - multifactorial, technological and fluid - has caused a negative entropy of places, reflected in a culturally and socially “de-spatialized” society, with a tendency to emancipate the individual from his relationship with space; a condition that leads to the lack of care, deterrence, and disagreement of some actors with their places of origin, reducing them to non-contemporary places. After a review of geo-socio-anthropological literature, a model of identity and relational integration of the non-place was designed based on interviews that allow explaining what makes a place familiar and for whom that place is familiar, its connection or disconnection with the space and its identity.

**Keywords:** habitat; identity; place-ness; town; urban space; village

### Resumen

Los paisajes evanescentes están marcados por improntas espaciales, donde las metáforas sirven para imaginar lo heterogéneo, y las narraciones ritualizadas, para concretarlas, y requieren apertura del juego entre lo homogéneo y la fragmentación. El propósito es visibilizar y analizar cómo la realidad actual, multifactorial, tecnológica y fluida, ha provocado una entropía negativa de lugares, reflejada en una sociedad cultural y socialmente “desespacializada”, con tendencia a enajenar al individuo respecto a su relación con el espacio; una condición que lleva a la desprolijidad, la disuasión y el desencuentro de algunos actores con sus lugares de origen, que así se reducen a *no-lugares* contemporáneos. Después de una revisión de literatura social y geográfica, se diseñó un modelo de integración identitaria y relacional del no-lugar a partir de herramientas metodológicas y se aplicaron entrevistas para explicar qué hace familiar a un lugar y para quién es familiar ese lugar, su vinculación o su desvinculación con el espacio y su identidad.

**Palabras clave:** espacio urbano; hábitat; identidad; lugaridad; poblado

Received: 20 February/2020

Evaluated: 24 November/202

Approved: 25 August/2021

## Introduction

Some geographical sites are called spontaneous, because they are marked by events that, despite themselves, become paradigms of the vices and virtues of a region or a people, sites whose underlying memory is more significant than the physical place itself, and where both the present and any future action are conditioned by certain abstract traces embedded in everyday life.

Postmodern places are increasingly spectral, in the sense that there is a tendency to alienate the individual, the market, the culture, from their relationship with space, and to impose a more intangible power, which weakens the affective and symbolic rootedness concerning the place where the individual lives and performs. According to Nava (2019), this produces a change in the way of conceiving identities, which are increasingly organized by participation in communities with a diasporic effect, and much less, around local loyalties and intentions. Muntañola (2001) comments that place is time deposited in space, which implies *placeness*, a term that represents familiarity and assembly with the environment, a connection that is achieved through experience and the assignment of meaning.

Due to the above, and as part of the transdisciplinary scientific work aimed at the production and study of spaces and territories, both geographical and social, some results of this research are presented<sup>1</sup>, which aim to discuss human practices as a foundation of place—in its various scales, identities, and significant deconstructions—, based on local-global tension and academic, civil and institutional dialogue.

An investigation with these difficult intentions raises questions that seek to cross the threshold of the assumed and the obvious; therefore, approaching this complex process of society and its places requires an openness to the game of homogeneity and fragmentation, as well as to the combinations and disunions of evanescent landscapes<sup>2</sup>. This, in turn, sends us to places with

other spatialities; perhaps, to a temporal-spatial-cultural dimension, where territoriality and terroir are evanescent, which can only be, simply, a sensation, both individual and collective. The anthropological concept of *place*, as explained by Marc Augé (2000), is characterized by a certain number of specific elements that make up its personality. The construction and transformation of space, in addition to being material and social, are also symbolic, in the sense that society assigns meanings to the place as it produces and appropriates it (Augé, 2000); however, now, in a cyberculture, de-spatialization has changed the concept: there are evanescent landscapes, there are denied places.

The purpose of this article is to make visible and analyze how the multifactorial and technological reality and the current fluidity have provoked a negative entropy (Morin, 1988) of places, reflected in a culturally and socially *de-spatialized society*, with a tendency to distance the individual from his relationship with space; a condition that has led to the disorder, dissuasion and disagreement of some actors with their places of origin, which are thus reduced to contemporary *non-places*<sup>3</sup> (Augé, 2000). This vicissitude hinders and prevents the recognition of society with its spaces, as these *non-places*, due to prejudices surrounding their “condition”, are perceived as inaccessible spaces.

In urban space, diverse sensations are experienced, which for men are a place of mobility and exhibition of power in many senses. As stated by César Fuentes, a specialist in urban violence: “public space continues to be masculine, [...] men make greater use of public spaces both in the city and at the neighborhood level” (2011, p. 98). In contrast, for women it represents an ambivalence: on the one hand, it embodies an unfavorable condition, because they are often omitted and excluded, and on the other hand, it represents freedom; hence the importance of vividly walking the urban space. According to Solnit (2015), the different variants of pedestrian displacement involve a political, aesthetic action of enormous social significance.

Likewise, “integrating the gendered gaze has been a slow and late process in urban research,

1 Doctoral thesis by Fernando Nava La Corte, whose title is *Resignificación de la noción del no-lugar. Apuntes para un modelo de integración identitaria y relacional en Toluca, México* [Notes for a model of identity and relational integration in Toluca, Mexico] Faculty of Architecture and Design of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (2019).

2 Gutiérrez Lloret (2017) refers to the evanescent landscape as one that is somewhat hidden, as well as a place in the collective memory recreated based on topics that are sometimes incomprehensible; they are common places that allude to a lost sensory memory, populated by mythical evocations. Meanwhile, Andermann (2013) poses a critical analysis of

the landscape as a significant form in modernity, as a crisis in the relations between space and place.

3 According to Marc Augé's (2000) renowned analysis, they are non-places insofar as their main vocation is not territorial; they do not consist of creating singular identities, symbolic relations, and common heritages, but rather of facilitating circulation. For the purposes of this research, this notion is re-conceptualized as a denied place.



This article is available in Spanish on the website *Revista de Arquitectura (Bogotá)*  
<https://doi.org/10.14718/RevArq.2022.24.1.3211>

**Evanescent landscapes. Resignification of the notion of non-place**



which, in practice, has failed to consolidate a set of cores and problems that define an object" (Duhau, in Soto, 2018, p. 15). That is, in the words of Falú (2009), in the cities of the globalized world, life is not equal for all people: thus, metropolises, megalopolises, and networked cities are the places where inequalities, criminality, and violence grow.

For centuries, human beings have modified the environment for their benefit, to take shelter from adverse climates, to develop their vital activities in more adequate and comfortable spaces; in short, to take advantage of nature. However, the macroclimatic changes and the severe alterations that the environment has suffered revert their effects to different groups of society, which seem more defenseless before the events of nature, such as the disasters that we are currently experiencing. Perhaps nature takes the toll on pollution abuses.

In particular, architecture, urban planning, engineering, and disciplines related to economic and industrial activities have contributed to environmental degradation as a result of the historical alteration of the environment. For Canter, "a place is the result of relationships between actions, conceptions and physical attributes" (1987, p. 205). This raises the following questions: *How do we represent place in our minds? How is the sense of place created?*

The city, as an urban expression, allows us to find our civic and cultural identity; it is a manifestation of civilization and culture and has been transformed through time and space: now, even the climate has changed, which is strongly conditioned by human beings and their activities; according to Esther Higuera (2006), cities constitute complex ecosystems, unparalleled with any other existing structure:

The differences between the ancient city and today's city, concerning its ecosystem, are completely radical. In today's city, its connections and interactions extend over the entire planet, restructuring and interfering with remote spaces. Modern cities have a large-scale linear metabolism. This is one of the main causes of the high demand for resources in cities. The alternative to linear metabolism is circular metabolism (Girardet, 2001), which includes the reuse of resources introduced to the urban ecosystem, a circumstance that appears better resolved in the old city, mainly due to the reduced technological capacities in the extraction of materials, transportation, and energy. (p.55)

The concept of *city* is, for Borja, a complex physical, political, and cultural product, as a concentration of population and activities, a social and functional mix, a capacity for self-government, and a sphere of symbolic identification and civic participation. City as a place of meeting and exchange, equal to culture and commerce. City of places -spaces with meaning-, and not mere space of flows. Collective heritage in which plots, buildings, and monuments are combined with memories, feelings, and community moments. "To discover

the territory and the diversity of its people, to conquer the possibilities offered by the city, to become a citizen: this is the urban challenge for everyone" (Borja, in Alderoqui & Pompei, 2002, p. 22) so that the city is always in constant transformation.

The human being is a social entity characterized by group life, to seek forms of protection or cultural or ideological construction. From the appearance of the first settlements to the creation of large cities, the idea of belonging is closely linked to active participation motivated by the interest in the welfare and development of the group of which one is a part. Nowadays, social interrelationships have been replaced in urban places and spaces; in particular, with the current contingency, the aforementioned, the aforementioned interrelationships are consolidated through virtual communication<sup>4</sup>:

The concept of citizenship is very broad and complex; in this sense, if citizenship implies getting involved within the different spheres in which people develop, cybernauts should be committed to participating in political, social, and cultural actions through the virtual environment, not only as spectators but as digital citizens. (Mendoza et al., 2019, p. 89).

Due to globalization, teleworking, and other recent virtual activities, it seems that we are facing a deterritorialization; however, urban referents, such as the center, the periphery, the neighborhood, and the street, among others, are still for people, for their awareness of reality in this world, for their safety and their health. "For all these reasons, the territory is vital; because in the present time, the psychological dysfunctions that cause the evasion of the real corporeal existence in the virtual world of the internet network to link both realities... are still not clear." (Salazar, 2011, p. 19). Thus, in the terroir -which has connotations of the land that belongs to someone or where one has lived- the physical and the virtual reality -both concepts- settle diverse actors and material and immaterial objects, where the fact of appropriation has become essential for the constant transformation of their identity.

Additional analysis to that of placeness are the concepts of *habitation*, *dwelling*, and *habitat*. The first is that of Rafael Faleiros de Pádua (2019), who presents habitation as a philosophical notion that illuminates the contents of urban life and reveals its contradictions:

This notion is considered as a fundamental element of the philosophical production of man, where there is a radical need to appropriate space for the reproduction of life. In capitalism, space becomes a commodity and the object of economic strategies, which reduces habitation to a function, the habitat. In this context, the practical and theoretical challenge is to replace habitation as a uto-

<sup>4</sup> In recent years, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been an efficient way to be close to possible refined destinations, where the network or technology is usually one of the tools that people must know, value, or stick to a certain place.



pian possibility based on the functionalized reality of habitat. (p. 454).

For his part, Saldarriaga (2019) establishes that the modes of inhabiting endow each fraction of the human habitat<sup>5</sup> with a special character and derive from the concept of inhabiting, which is “a material action and is also a cultural phenomenon loaded with meaning. A territory, a city and a building are the main supports of specific ways of inhabiting” (Saldarriaga, 2019, p. 23).

Complementing the above, Sulbarán and Rangel (2018, p. 28) comment that “To inhabit is to affirm the presence of life in the territory, it is to have spaces and buildings built specifically to house human beings and solve their needs”. Thus, concepts such as *territory*, *city*, and *habitat*, among others related to space, are becoming more complex until they reach placeness and non-place, or denied place; or perhaps, even de-spatiality itself.

Addressing issues such as spatiality and placeness requires a more contemporary view, since, according to Elinbaum and Galland (2019), the new transdisciplinary approach challenges the universal assumptions of the previously produced theory, in contrast - and confrontation - with knowledge situated in more conventional contexts. It is thus a matter of fostering more alternative conceptual approaches, which recognize deep social and economic differences through contemporary concepts, to better understand current urban and territorial planning practices.

To these considerations are added those of Moreno (2017b) who offers a particular definition of the *labyrinthine city*, which “suggests a space in which we have a confusing experience of the city due to the complexity of the places of passage that transform it into a network of paths that leads to movements back and forth, backward and forward” (Moreno, 2017b, p.4). And within these definitions, the author finds that the physical and social mobility of the actors is a blurred, winding, and complex panorama since he defines certain approaches related to space, understanding that this is lived, not in its positivity, but with all those partialities offered by the imagination. Likewise, he analyzes the concepts of *social space of the city-placeness-alterity*.

Based on the above, and as part of the transdisciplinary scientific work aimed at the production and study of geographical and social spaces and territories, this article is presented, with the additional purpose to discuss human practices as the basis of placeness<sup>6</sup>—in its various scales—,

identities and significant deconstructions, from the local-global tension and the academic, civil, and institutional dialogue.

To give context to this collaboration, it is pertinent to mention that the State of Mexico is the most populated in the Mexican Republic. Its high growth levels originate, mainly, in the massive arrival of the immigrant population, and it is so that during the following years it will grow from 16.7 million inhabitants in 2016 to 19.9 million in 2050 (*Consejo Nacional de Población* [CONAPO, for its Spanish acronym], 2018). It is an entity that surrounds Mexico City. It is home to ten magical towns, 22 charming towns, and the most visited archaeological zone in the country: Teotihuacán. Formerly, this territory was inhabited by Mazahua, Otomi, and Matlatzincas, and shortly before the arrival of the Spaniards, it was dominated by the Aztecs (Mexico). The colony left some of the most beautiful convents, temples, and palaces of the period; today, according to the *Ministerio de Turismo* (SECTUR, for its Spanish acronym, 2019), this dynamic and industrious province offers its visitors historical monuments, nature, culture, and recreation sites.

The municipality of Toluca is one of the 125 municipalities into which the State of Mexico is divided. Its capital is the city of Toluca de Lerdo, which is also the state capital. According to the population and housing count (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática* [INEGI, for its Spanish acronym], 2015), it is the fourth most populated municipality in the entity, after Ecatepec, Netzahualcōyotl and Naucalpan, respectively.

These municipalities constitute part of the metropolitan area of the Valley of Mexico. In this regard, it is necessary to understand that the latter three head the list of municipalities with the highest crime incidence (*Encuesta nacional de victimización y percepción sobre seguridad pública* [National Survey of Victimization and Perception of Public Safety - ENVIPE, for its Spanish acronym], 2017). The purpose of highlighting this scenario is not to address the insecurity inherent to some of them, since that is another macro-scale problem; what is of interest here is to know how the collective seeks familiarity with certain places. Thus, two towns were chosen for this study: Metepec and San Lucas Tepemajalco.

## Methodology

The biographical-narrative method was applied within a qualitative approach, which is close to Rodrigo Moreno's proposal (2017 a and b), to inquire about the *lived space-place* of the selected towns and the perception generated by their actors, through the applied interviews, so that a recognition of the spatial experience of their environment is propitiated.

5 Habitat, for Saldarriaga (2019), means the set of natural conditions that affect a species, and the place itself in which the species develops. It is used to define the ways and places where human dwellings are grouped, and which become the urban and rural habitat, or the dispersed and concentrated habitat.

6 This term refers to a trait shared by all social subjects, and therefore it is a basic component of identity. Some important sources of these meanings come from concrete practices and

the physical context or the effect of place (Bourdieu, 1999, p. 123).

According to this author, recent approaches focus on transdisciplinarity, as to how the concepts of *city*, *placeness*, *otherness*, and *hermeneutic pedagogy of place* are understood. Therefore, it is based on a “phenomenological-hermeneutic methodology and the points of the method, which allow us to interpret the results” (Moreno, 2017a, p. 3), that is, to be able to examine the results of the field research -including the physical tours before the interviews- in the light of diverse optics, to defragment them. This, so that the observer simultaneously analyzes urban phenomena from different disciplines.

Likewise, it was proposed to identify and analyze some characteristics of current urban spaces, not only within a given social and territorial categorization but also as multidimensional places with diverse needs and characteristics, which, as a whole, become the main engine of spatial, economic, cultural, and social transformation of each region, as in this case is the proximity to the capital of the State of Mexico.

Two communities gravitating around Toluca were selected for the sample: one, which corresponds to one of the Magical Towns: Metepec, proposed as a purified place, and the other, very close to Metepec, that is, the artisan town of San Lucas Tepemajalco, to be considered a denied place. Both towns presented characteristics that allowed their confrontation and contrast for the comparative analysis.

This article needs to disseminate knowledge of the values, mechanisms, and interests of non-places since this type of phenomenon is frequently overlooked. It is sought, then, and from the contrast between perceptions and opinions, to offer a broad epistemological association to decode the various means of verbal communication, such as the narratives of the actors that materialize in the field research, through the appropriation and discernment of the spaces consumed by the locals.

These perceptions received by the villagers tend to transmit prejudices against certain places, thus leading to a false appreciation or simple indifference. From this perspective, it began with a model of identity and relational integration of the non-place, with the challenge of explaining what makes a place familiar and for whom that place is familiar, which leads, in turn, to reveal the degrees of integration or deterrence that exist in the space.

The selection of the sample in this research obeys, then, to a comparative method supported by the notion of a *non-probabilistic sample* (Hernández et al., 2006), since in this sample the choice of the objects of study, or units of analysis, does not depend on probability, but on causes related to the researchers. In this way, an identification is made within the region of study, on the notions of a dichotomy that is, on the one hand, the non-place, and that in this research is taken as an inference to a possible *denied* and *ascetic* place; that is, of irrelevance or indifference, in

contrast to the category of non-place, or *purified place*, so it is singular and peculiar.

This notion leads us to reflect and relate identity with culture beyond the condition that the subjects move or not within their territory, but rather to a level of denial that places it within a framework of oblivion or apathy with its direct actors and, on the other hand, the purified place, a term proposed in this research for the possibility of enjoying a place without fear. In addition to offering belonging and rootedness, this proposal formulates an apology of the aesthetics of spaces associated with the demands of the market and in contrasting contexts. Two cases were selected to describe or learn about the perceptions of appropriation of geographic spaces in the community.

Thus, interviews were applied to twelve adults, to gather data from the actors belonging to the perceived and lived space, concerning their linkage or dissociation with the urban space, their identity, and their daily practices; no one was better than the actors involved to talk about a particular social and territorial space. Based on Saucedo et al. (2009), semi-structured interview models were applied to have the freedom to question the interviewee, in such a way that, despite having an interview script, it was easy to talk about topics of interest or to omit some topics, according to the dialogue that arose.

The interviews were conducted after the participant observation of the sample, where different subsystems that make up the object of study were evaluated; that is, those about the perceived and lived space, interpreted by the participants who were willing to talk about the subject of identity, historicity, and place, as well as their traditions, to recognize:

- a) The socio-spatial practices that support identity (accepted or denied).
- b) The territorial location of borders and aspects that promote segregation.
- c) The identity narrative of continuity or rupture.
- d) The historicity of the people and the memory of the actors.

The purpose of this comparison and integration of information was to show how certain places are marked by a lack of empathy, which leads to not listening to others and acting on conjectures that cast doubt on the intentions of the other actors. In short, the task was to elucidate whether there was a disdain for certain places and to recognize whether this effect of disdain or prejudice necessarily turns them into spaces of conflict, which become places of non-encounter.

## Results

The contrasts and comparisons resulting from the interviews show a clear alternation between the answers given in one village and the other regarding their definition of their local identities,

as well as their conceptualization of place and belonging.

The answer to the dichotomy analyzed was that the category of purified non-place—that is, unique and distinctive—is the Magical Town of Metepec and, in contrast, the non-place, denied and ascetic place, of irrelevance or inappetence, was San Lucas Tepemajalco.

The lack of identification and detachment seen from relational integration, as well as a lack of historicity for both populations, are palpable. There is little clarity regarding the denial of place as a form contrary to the non-place.

Some of the interviewees' very significant phrases were divided into two groups. The first corresponds to the image and attachment to the place. Secondly, there are those related to identity and customs.

In terms of image and attachment to urban space, people responded:

[...] It is obvious that people go to magical towns, since they are the ones that attract more attention for tourism, although I do not like that, they all seem to have the same theme, with large colored letters, the houses painted with bright colors, it is an imposition [...].

[...] well, in other towns (he refers to those that are not magic towns) there is neglect in the streets, as well as in public services, this because they are associated with a flow of people who do not have civic culture or who do not care about their town [...].

[...] of the towns, I like that the people are warm, that things are inexpensive, that the food has a peculiar flavor, that their festivals include the entire population and that these are places with a lot of history, the carnivals and their ability to learn about community problems through gossip [...].

Regarding traditions and identity, they commented:

[...] I like their traditions and ways of life, which are different, to which one gladly adapts and falls in love, since in the city they have been lost or devalued [...].

[...] sometimes we also refer to the customs and crafts that are made in the towns, I know that the craft of carving wood and making wooden toys began in San Lucas, but now the current recognition of these crafts only comes from San Antonio, they even have their own museum [...].

[...] Yes, because it motivates me to know the traditions and customs of that place, a getaway to this kind of small-town is always good to get out of the routine or simply to know other places different from yours; when I retire, I will go to live with my wife to one of these picturesque towns.

It is worth mentioning that the observation tour and the field notes significantly surpassed the towns studied. Thus, when interviewing Toluca residents, there were recurring comments such as: "Well, here the situation is so difficult that downtown is the last place I would choose to go out with my family"; "It is not for any specific reason but downtown makes me lazy, first because there are many people and second, because of the

insecurity"... It is unfortunate to know that natives of the city of Toluca also express displeasure for walking the portals of the city for meeting important figures in academic forums, always alluding to the recurrent phrase of "living the city" and never seeing them live it.

Thus, a diverse and complex scenario was formed, where an opalescent character of spaces was perceived, preventing the study from being standardized under a single and determining classification in terms of daily living. For this reason, three sections are proposed, which allow clearer visualization of the synthesis of the study:

- Thinking places beyond the tourist plasticity.
- The non-place as a complex mosaic and its interference in the organization of identity symbols.
- Living places as an act of faith.

## Discussion

From refined and consensual notions of place, is how places maintain their survival; however, a finding relevant to this research was that there is -and it is possible to imagine- the socio-spatial reality with disagreements and denials. According to the testimonies and data collection, it was found that when there are more experiences of purified places, it is easier to find non-places in any of their variants. In this way, it is possible to think of a consensual starting point and, at the same time, of disagreement. The presence of rejection in non-places opens the door to conflict, which is not essentially negative.

Based on the above, the struggle is to discard the *perceptual condemnation* of certain places; the untidiness operates metaphorically as a border and, despite its imaginary and fleeting character, perception penetrates the body and the emotions, and thus disdain or detachment, as a result of this condemnatory perception -either phonetic or of discouragement-, begin to be a distinctive mark, speaking of the space of life and, at the same time, of the habituation to the disdain of own and strangers, which, in turn, leads to a politics of emotions -referring to magical and non-magical towns- that "anesthetize". The image of places *lato sensu* is relative; that is, it is no good or bad, it is only what it is.

In parallel to that idea of a purified place, and as a complement, another discourse was observed to appear frequently, centered almost on that same concept of the habitability of space; but this one, in a spectral or ghostly manner. We speak of non-places, of the wide imaginary spectrum, and with an involuntary way of transgressing the attitudes and ideas of strangers -even of some of our own but with notions of placeness equal to those of refined spaces, or much more ambitious still.

In this case, non-places come to be conceived as the construction of an ideological value in which, at the same time, various abstract conditions such as



civility, coexistence, interaction, consensus, and other political values, perhaps already outdated, but central, are materialized. A scenario in which we see the flow of an almost ordered mass of equal beings who make use of space to go to and from work, perhaps in the field, selling crafts, or simply wasting time in the street in their free time, carefree people in a paradise of civility. It is taken for granted that in this territory it is not appropriate to expel or deny access to anyone capable of daring to interact with strangers and not so strangers.

In an apparent contradiction, such supposed abandonment of non-places by local administrations and governments—which are supposed to have the responsibility to provide order and security—the common good, for the locals, is being incompatible with the interests of the people.

Living places is, then, an act of faith; in Spinozian language, a construct in which each human being is recognized in a natural and affable environment concerning others, regardless of their symbolic or political charge; they are a kind of people who are linked by reflexive pacts that are permanently re-signified.

That place, then, is the very basis on which the possibility of a democratic experience is based, which refers to constant notions of place that must be fulfilled, because when a person comes to witness a place physically and symbolically, he tries, by common sense, to acquire information about it, he is interested in what it offers culturally, or if there are accessible places to spend the night, its competence, its identity, among others.

Some of this information helps to define a context allowing one to know in advance what is expected of a place. Finally, the non-place is not a concept, but rather a reason that makes it possible to experience places far from misrepresentations; the essence of the non-place is the ability to interact with others, with migrants, with strangers, as a mere act of faith.

## Conclusions

The comparison between a purified town and an ascetic town generated great premises and questions that continue to motivate the research. On the one hand, the idea that the purified places represent a hegemonic effort of inhabiting with high potentialities to promote culture and tradition; on the other hand, the ascetic place, invisibilized, seems to be a non-existent space and territorially dimensioned by remoteness.

These dissertations gave rise to the assumption that some towns in the State of Mexico, possibly, have an identity of a denied place, due to the conditions of ignorance and discouragement, in such a way that the integration of the holistic view of the collective made possible its visibilization to reflect on the denial and the architecture of distance.

Specifically, Nava (2019) explains that considering these place identities as “apocryphal” entails accepting that the complex processes of relationality in places make possible the social acceptance to recognize them. In addition, it allows thinking that some specific or singular characteristics of some populations are unveiled in a significant way to make it clear that they are also part of the culture and traditions of the native peoples in the State of Mexico.

The memories of the way of inhabiting are intersubjective constructions associated with processes of appropriation or expulsion of the lived space that the subject reconstructs, resignifies, and identifies in the present as part of his history of placeness. This research intertwined sensibilities that imply knowing the world by and through the body<sup>7</sup>: what we remember and how we remember it, differentiation, experiences, impressions, ways of looking and smelling that operate as sensitive knowledge tracing the warp of the past, the present, and the future.

The uprooting of the different actors to a certain place was notorious since it appeared as a sensitive bridge, which allowed giving a theoretical twist to this idea of non-place, of transit, Augean; placeness is a physical-biological as well as a social-historical practice. The discouragement recalled by the interviewees as substantive components of a way of inhabiting segregation would point out that the habit of living in the periphery is part of a political economy of morality linked to the reproduction of the denied bodies of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, thinking that the political economy of morality is a concept that imposes on us adequate and inadequate ways of feeling.

On the other hand, it was reflected that to analyze places, non-places, and other notions of spatiality, it must first be considered that public spaces have been and continue to be, privileged, for male activity. The perception of urban space is very different for men and women, regardless of whether they work outside the home or not (Soto, 2011); that is, women are blurred within cities.

With the phenomenon of globalization, the conditions of coexistence and citizen security are not always improving to constitute the so-called multicultural citizenship, according to Serrano and Rojas (2012), which becomes a reference where issues about the ecological, racial, labor, cultural, and gender, among others, are discussed; however, gender violence continues, as aggressions, harassment, and sexual crimes, among other types of urban violence, continue to increase.

7 The non-belonging condition of bodies and the spaces they inhabit can be understood, then, as a symptom; but also, as a message of the scaffolding of domination on which the policies of sensibilities that are configured in places are based, thus understanding places as a total sensitive landscape

These emotional geographies of fear, according to Soto (2018, p. 21), “require paying attention to the different affective experiences of women in urban environments; the physical and subjective spatial dimensions would be inseparable.” Bauman (2004) points out that liquid modernity is an era of des-territoriality, where everything is unstable, such as love, society, fear, and human bonds; and where the concept of home for men and women today is increasingly closer to a motel; perhaps, a place denied.

Cities constitute a complicated material and symbolic fabric in permanent construction. Feminist geographers have considered spatial references as the basis of the new reconceptualizations of identity, placing cities as strategic scenarios

for thinking about otherness, and have proposed an opening to the symbolic-cultural processes of social life (Bondi & McDowell, in Soto, 2011), thus warning of the complexity and urban heterogeneity, in such a way that they reveal the need to understand the perception, valuation, and action of the historically situated subject.

## Contributions

The theoretical framework was contributed by Carolina Serrano Barquín, the field research by Fernando Nava La Corte, the methodological framework by Héctor Serrano Barquín, and the integration and revision of the article by Patricia Zarza Delgado.

## Referencias

- Alderoqui, S., & Pompei, P. (Comp.) (2002). *Ciudad y ciudadanos: aportes para la enseñanza del mundo urbano*. Paidós.
- Andermann, J. (2013). Reverón. El paisaje evanescente. *Tópicos del Seminario* (29), 33-52. <http://www.scielo.org.mx/pdf/tods/n29/n29a3.pdf>
- Augé, M. (2000) *Los no lugares. Espacios del anonimato. Una antropología de la sobre-modernidad*. Gedisa.
- Bauman, Z. (2004). *Modernidad líquida*. Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Bourdieu, P. (1999). *La miseria del mundo*. Akal.
- Canter, D. (1987). *Psicología de lugar*. Concepto.
- Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO). (2018). *Nuevas proyecciones sobre la población mexicana 2005-2050*. [www.conapo.gob.mx](http://www.conapo.gob.mx)
- Encuesta nacional de victimización y percepción sobre seguridad pública (ENVIPE). (2017). Listado de municipios con mayor incidencia delictiva. <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/envipe/2018/>
- Einbaum, P., & Galland, D. (2019). El Giro hacia el Sur del planeamiento urbano y territorial, apuntes para una nueva agenda de investigación. En A. Orellana, C. Miralles-Guasch, & L. Fuentes (Eds.), *Las escalas de la Metrópoli. Lejanía versus Proximidad*. [https://www.academia.edu/41092068/El\\_Giro\\_hacia\\_el\\_Sur\\_del\\_planeamiento\\_urbano\\_y\\_territorial\\_apuntes\\_para\\_una\\_nueva\\_agenda\\_de\\_investigaci%C3%B3n](https://www.academia.edu/41092068/El_Giro_hacia_el_Sur_del_planeamiento_urbano_y_territorial_apuntes_para_una_nueva_agenda_de_investigaci%C3%B3n)
- Faleiros de Pádua, R. (2019). Habitar como horizonte utópico, O Dossiê Henri Lefebvre e a problemática urbana na Geosp. *GEOUSP Espaço E Tempo*, 23(3), 453-457. doi: <https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2179-0892.geosp.2019.164015>
- Falú, A. (2009). *Mujeres en la ciudad. De violencias y derechos*. Red Mujer y Hábitat de América Latina. Ediciones SUR.
- Fuentes Flores, C. (2011). *Espacio público y género en Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua: accesibilidad, sociabilidad, participación y seguridad*. El Colegio de la Frontera Norte; Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez.
- Gutiérrez Lloret, S. (2017). Un paisaje evanescente: El origen de la antigua Horta d'Alacant. En E. Aragonés i Francés, & J. López Sala (Coords.), *Las torres de L'Horta d'Alacant* (pp. 27-37). Repositorio Institucional de la Universidad Alicante (RUA). <http://hdl.handle.net/10045/97948>
- Hernández Sampieri, R., Fernández Collado, C., & Baptista Lucio, P. (2006). *Metodología de la investigación*. Mc Graw Hill.
- Higeras, E. (2006). *Urbanismo bioclimático*. Gustavo Gilli.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI). (2015). *Conteo de población y vivienda*. <https://www.inegi.org.mx/>
- Mendoza-González, B., Morales-Reynoso, T., & Serrano-Barquín, C. (2019). ¿Los jóvenes son ciudadanos digitales?: estudio descriptivo en estudiantes de bachillerato. *Revista de Psicología de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México*, 8(15), 86-100. <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11799/105389>
- Moreno Aponte, R. (2017a). Pedagogía hermenéutica del lugar: estudio narrativo sobre la relación entre lugaridad, alteridad, ciudad y escuela. *Actualidades Investigativas en Educación*, 17(2), 1-34. [https://www.scielo.sa.cr/scielo.php?script=sci\\_abstract&pid=S1409-47032017000200321&lng=es](https://www.scielo.sa.cr/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=S1409-47032017000200321&lng=es)
- Moreno Aponte, R. (2017b). Pedagogía hermenéutica del lugar. Narrativas del exterior de la escuela urbana en su vínculo con la alteridad en la acción educativa. *Repositorio Institucional Universidad de Málaga (RIUMA)*. <http://hdl.handle.net/10630/14325>
- Moreno Aponte, R. (2017b). Pedagogía hermenéutica del lugar: estudio narrativo sobre la relación entre lugaridad, alteridad, ciudad y escuela. *Actualidades Investigativas en Educación*, 17(2), 1-34. [https://www.scielo.sa.cr/scielo.php?script=sci\\_abstract&pid=S1409-47032017000200321&lng=es](https://www.scielo.sa.cr/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=S1409-47032017000200321&lng=es)
- Morin, E. (1988). *El método: El conocimiento del conocimiento*. Madrid.
- Muntañola, J. (2001). *La arquitectura como lugar*. Ediciones UPC.
- Nava-La Corte, F. (2019). Resignificación de la noción del no-lugar. Apuntes para un modelo de integración identitaria y relacional en Toluca, México [tesis de doctorado, Facultad de Arquitectura y Diseño, Toluca: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México].
- Salazar-González, G. (2011). Hábitat, territorio y territorialidad. En *Lecturas del espacio habitable* (pp. 19-55). Universidad Autónoma de San Luis Potosí.
- Saldarriaga Roa, A. (2019). ¿Cómo se habita el hábitat? Los modos de habitar. *Revista Procesos Urbanos*, 6, 22-33. doi: <https://revistas.cecar.edu.co/index.php/procesos-urbanos/article/view/454>
- Sulbarán Sandoval, J., & Rangel Rojas, R. (2018). Importancia del habitar en el pensamiento arquitectónico. *Procesos Urbanos*, 5, 26-33. <https://doi.org/10.21892/2422085X.405>
- Saucedo, C., Galindo, H., & Colín, M. (2009). *Introducción a la entrevista psicológica*. Trillas.
- Secretaría de Turismo (SECTUR). (2019). *Secretaría de Turismo. Gobierno de México*. <https://www.gob.mx/sectur/>
- Serrano-Barquín, C., & Rojas-García, A. (2012). Ciudadanía y violencia de género. *Regiones, Suplemento de Antropología*, 8(47), 1-9.
- Soto-Villagrán, P. (2011). La ciudad pensada, la ciudad vivida, la ciudad imaginada. Reflexiones teóricas y empíricas. *Revista de Estudios de Género. La ventana* (34), 7-38. <http://revistalaventana.cucsh.udg.mx/index.php/LV/article/view/742>
- Soto-Villagrán, P. (2018). Hacia la construcción de unas geografías de género de la ciudad. Formas plurales de habitar y significar los espacios urbanos en Latinoamérica. *Revista Perspectiva Geográfica*, 23(2), 13-31. <https://revistas.uptc.edu.co/index.php/perspectiva/article/view/7382>
- Solnit, R. (2015). *Wanderlust, una historia del caminar*. Editorial Hueders.

