

Transborderings in South America Some Examples of Recent Researches

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with transbordering scenarios in South America, seen as one geopolitical region. Transborder regions and transbordering processes can be understood in various aspects such as reordering of economic flows, people migrations, new connections of infrastructure and information that tend to produce new territorial interactions and territorial networks. It presents multinational South American cartographies in great detail of data. It is proposed the regional delimitation of Iguazu Transborder Region where there are intense cross-border flows of different kinds, legal and illegal. Finally it adds to the analysis of transbordering processes recent international migration transcontinental flows to Brazil.

KEYWORDS

South America, Transborder regions, Transbordering processes, International migrations

RÉSUMÉ

L'article examine des scénarii transfrontaliers en Amérique du Sud, comprise comme une région géopolitique. Des régions frontalières et des processus transfrontaliers peuvent être examinés sous de nombreux aspects tels que la réorganisation des flux économiques et de personnes, de nouvelles connexions de l'infrastructure et de l'information qui ont tendance à produire de nouvelles interactions territoriales et réseaux territoriaux. Dans cet article, nous présentons des cartographies multinationales d'Amérique du Sud avec des données très détaillées et proposons une délimitation régionale de la région transfrontalière d'Iguazu, dans laquelle les flux transfrontaliers sont intenses et divers, à la fois légaux et illégaux. Nous contribuons enfin à l'analyse des processus transfrontaliers des flux récents de la migration transcontinentale internationale au Brésil.

MOTS CLÉS

Amérique du Sud, régions transfrontalières, processus transfrontaliers, migrations internationales

INTRODUCTION

The article examines transbordering scenarios in South America, seen as a geopolitical region. The continent is under various transformation scenarios with both political and economic integration, including defense and security, where processes of *bordering*, *debordering* and *rebordering* are very clear. Border regions and transbordering processes can be understood in the geopolitical region of South America (Costa, 2009) in many aspects such as reordering economic flows of legal and illegal merchandises and flows of people and information, promoting changes of infrastructures that tend to produce new *territorial interactions* and *territorial networks*.

Analytical attention is given in this article to the necessity of constructing South American multinational cartographies in great detail. Besides, we provide a regional delimitation of the *Iguaçu Transborder Region* –as an international region in the macro transborder region of the La Plata River Basin– where there are intense cross-border flows of different kinds, whether legal or illegal. Finally, we deal with the analysis of transbordering processes in South America, through very recent international transcontinental immigration flows into Brazil.

1. TRANSBORDER REGIONS AND TRANSBORDERING PROCESSES IN SOUTH AMERICA

Transborder regions and transbordering processes are related to the creation of a new South American regional order –a *geopolitical multinational region*. The recent creation of UNASUL (Union of South American Nations, in 2008) drives regional territorial cohesion policies along with the creation of the Council of South American Defense. The reordering of economic flows and people relates, in turn, to the new territorial interactions consolidating a *new territorial order* in which transnational territorial networks are one of the defining conditions of globalisation and regional integration (Roseira, 2011). Cross-border flows in this new context give new dynamics to territorial networks in this geopolitical region where it is obvious that the growing process of territories becomes more internationalised.

Multinational cartographies

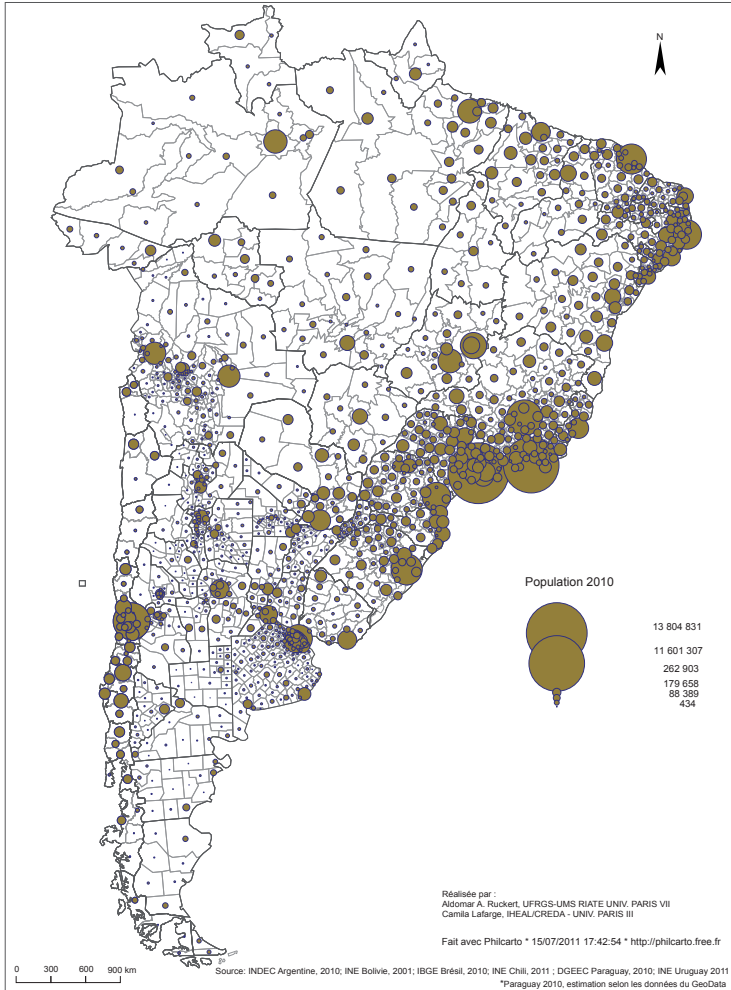
An important aspect in examining transborderings is concerned with the technical deficiencies of the multinational character mapping. A test using European NUTS classifications was held for MERCOSUL (Southern Common Market) + Bolivia and Chile (without Venezuela in this representation) with a view to organize multinational cartography without representing boundary lines between States (Rückert and Lafargue, 2011), on the basis of table 1 data provided by national institutes of statistics.

Table 1. Levels of spatial divisions and number of statistical units by countries

Country	Level II	Level III
Argentina	Provinces (24)	Departments or partidos (501)
Brazil	States (27)	Micro-geographical regions (558)
Paraguay	East and West (2)	Departments (18)
Uruguay	-	Departments (9)
Bolivia	Departments (9)	Provinces (112)
Chile	Regions (13)	Provinces (51)

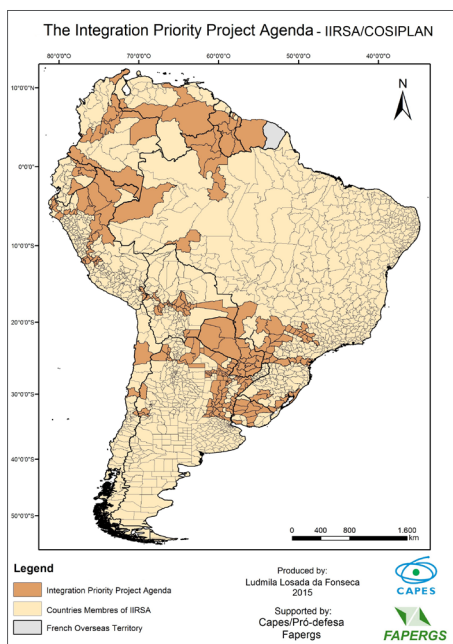
This multinational cartography (map 1) underlines the evident concentration of population in each country, and especially in the micro-regions on the coasts of Brazil, in the Plata River Basin and the Andes line, as well as the multinational region called MERCOSUL Geoeconomic Core located in the macro-region of the Plata Basin, e.g. the diagonal area that goes from Belo Horizonte-Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) to Buenos Aires, Cordoba (Argentina) and Santiago do Chile.

Map 1. MERCOSUL total population, plus Bolivia and Chile, by country, levels II and III, 2010



Scheibe (2013) and Fonseca (2015) examined the relationship between demographic concentrations in level 3 statistical units in South America and the corresponding location of priority projects of IIRSA (Initiative for South American Regional Infrastructure Integration Initiative)/COSIPLAN (South American Council of Infrastructure and Planning) of UNASUL (Union of South American Nations). It was demonstrated that the Agenda of Priority Projects of Integration suits geographic micro-regions or departments where there is greater population concentration, although jobs are not always located in those regions. This finding is even more evident in three axis: MERCOSUL-Chile, Paraguay-Paraná and Capricorn (see map 2).

Map 2. Location of the IIRSA/COSIPLAN Integration Priority Project Agenda



Some regions benefit while others are excluded from this competitive integration in an *internationalisation process of transnational territorial networks* and by the re-concentration of industrial activities in the already most competitive regions, such as those located in the geo-economic core of MERCOSUL. Transborderings intensify the internationalisation process of just a few parts of the territories, mainly those regarded as competitive.

2. INTENSE TRANSBORDERINGS IN THE TRIPLE BORDER BRAZIL-ARGENTINA-PARAGUAY

The triple border Brazil-Argentina-Paraguay, located in the macro-region of the La Plata River Basin (map 4) is a good example of an international region with intense transborderings (Schweitzer, 2000; Rückert et Dietz, 2013). This macro-region covers the south-central South American continent (a probable cross-border macro-region), almost matching the geo-economic core of MERCOSUL. The area formed by the triple-twin cities of Foz do Iguaçu/BRA, Ciudad del Este/PAR and Puerto Iguazú/ARG, along with the adjacent municipalities from the Iguaçu Transborder Region (Cameiro Filho, 2013). This, in turn, tends to concentrate multinational nodosities, centrality flows, and to strongly interact through border trade, international tourism, power generation as well as the cross-border coexistence of various ethnic groups.

The Iguaçu Transborder Region

The Iguaçu Transborder Region (map 4) we provide is composed of the Iguaçu micro-geographic region in Brazil, the departments of Iguazú in Argentina and Alto Paraná in

Paraguay. This territorial delimitation explains why these political-administrative units have economic, cultural and social ties, and their main economic activities in tourism, power generation and trade. The linkages between the three sides of the border are often more interconnected than with their respective countries.

Map 3. The macro-region of the Plata River Basin



Map 4. The Iguazu Transborder Region



Transborder flows: the legal and illegal trade in the Brazil-Paraguay border

In the Iguazu Transborder Region, the most intense cross-border flows occur along the dyad that separates Brazil and Paraguay. The largest contingents are trading workers from Ciudad del Este living on the Brazilian side; individuals who develop smuggling and embezzlement activities; Brazilian students in Paraguayan education institutions (medical schools, above all); *brasiguaios*¹ migrants; Paraguayan students studying in Foz do Iguazu universities (UNILA-Latin America Integration University) and Paraguayans who seek jobs in Brazil.

3. TRANSCONTINENTAL INTERNATIONAL FLOWS: RECENT IMMIGRATION FOR CENTRAL SOUTH BRAZIL

In recent research, Uebel (2015) sought to identify not only the migratory routes after the three immigration booms experienced by Brazil (at the beginning of the century, in 2010 and in 2013-2014), but also to check networks and transbordering processes that carry out these flows, especially of Haitians and Senegalese, the more noticeable by society, media and researchers.

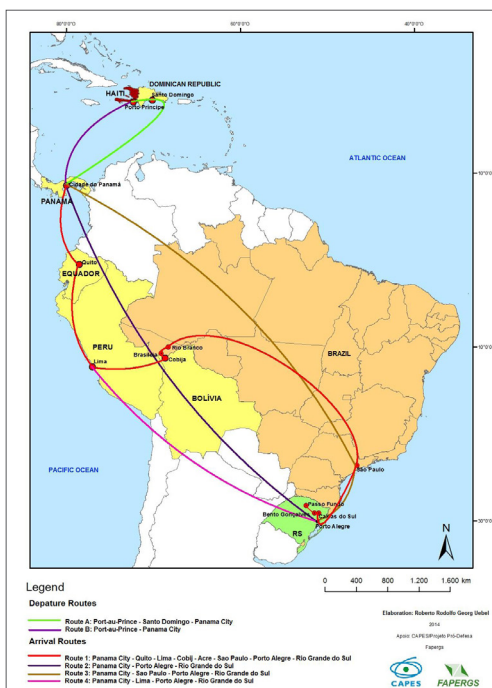
In total computation of the immigration stock in Brazil, the data show that there were about 1,900,000 immigrants from 2007 to 2014 –overcoming the total estimated by the government and the press in approximately 600,000 immigrant citizens.

1 *Brasiguaios* is a combination of the Portuguese words *Brasi(leiro)* and *(Para)guaio* for Brazilian small farmers and peasants that have been going to Paraguay since the 1970s looking for new lands for agriculture.

The immigration of Haitians and their routes

According to the data being consulted, there were 2,503 immigrants from Haiti in the state of Rio Grande do Sul (Southern Brazil) in October 2014. They have mostly arrived after a long process of migration through domestic routes in Brazil, presented in map 5, following reports obtained from immigrants themselves during field research conducted in July 2014 in the states of Acre and Rio Grande do Sul.

Map 5. Routes of Haitian immigrants into Brazil

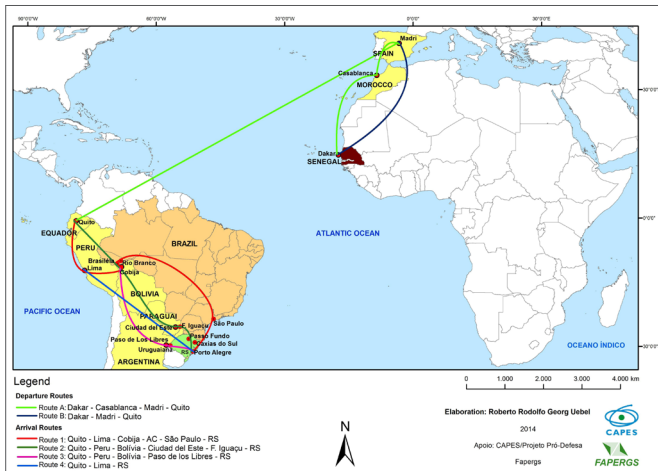


The immigration of Senegaleses and their routes

On the contrary, it was observed that the concentration of flows and characteristics of Senegalese immigrants were distinct (see map 6). Although they have earned a remarkable prominence in the media, academic and governmental debates from 2013 on, the Senegalese immigration group (in stock) only ranks 22nd in immigration levels in Rio Grande do Sul (Southern Brazil) from 2007 to 2014.

New aspects of transbordering processes have been emerging: illegal immigration has been strong in border regions, mainly in the macro transborder region of the La Plata River Basin. Illegal flows between Uruguai, Argentina, Paraguai and Bolivia have been providing illegal handwork to industrial regions, mainly São Paulo. Recent transcontinental flows of Haitians, and from the West coast of Africa more generally underline another kind of *porosity* to the Amazon region, through which these immigrants have come into Brazil.

Map 6. Routes of Senegalese immigrants into Brazil



FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Analysing the South America geopolitical region with focus on transborder regions and transbordering processes electing various types of cross-border flows as possible indicators of these dynamics it was aimed to point out numerous research possibilities in the South American scale. Looking to avoid the excesses of local and micro-regional researches it was sought to articulate some research results at national and international levels, without neglecting the local and regional, although in multinational contexts.

In the specific case of changing borders nowadays it is recognised that scenarios are much more complex than those of the post-Cold War, because they are marked by constant openings and closings, *borderings and reborderings* movements that mark currently processes of transbordering. In constant motions challenging paradigms, South America points to several competing directions with respect to territorial transformations. The infrastructure connections, the construction of roads, and the various flows that connect the several territorial networks, including the above-mentioned transcontinental migrations, are some indicators of new directions being given by the political uses of the territory in this continental region.

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