ANALYSIS OF THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO SHRINKING CITIES IN MÉXICO

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INTRODUCTION

- The topic of deurbanization occurring throughout mayor cities around the world, hits the developmental countries as a fallacy, a non warrant problem to be study or acted on swiftly. In Mexico’s particular case the lack of study on the matter is due to:
  - Insufficient Theoretical Fundaments
  - Insufficient Theoretical work
A CASE OF DIALETHEISM

While the more advanced and post-industrial economies of the world are thinking in how to turn around city shrinkage into a steady growth, less developed economies are worrying in the implications of the urban fast growing rate of population and its territorial redistribution to stabilize development.
ANALYZING MEXICO’S SITUATION

Keep in mind the following:

A. Mexico’s industrialization still ongoing.
B. The situation of deurbanization in México does not follow the same patterns of well developed countries (Oswalt, 2005)

- Determining factors affecting deurbanization:
  - Economic liberalization and structural adjustment programs, increasing capital mobility etc..
A MACROECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

- Macroeconomics and neo-classical models explain the shrinkage decision as a cost-benefit calculation (Davis, Stecklov y Winters, 2002, p. 292).
- The classical model of sector equilibrium (Yúñez, 1978; Renis y Fei, 1961) tries to explain rural shrinkage due to movements of labor force to the urban industrial sector of high productivity and better wages.
MODELS
THEORY OF SOCIAL PROCESSES AND PUBLIC ACTION

- Theory of social processes:
  - Means to ends, means to values, traditional or routine, charismatic (Weber, 1992)
  - Shrinking and decline of cities can be understood as a process or decisions determined by public action or inaction
SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEXICAN POPULATION

- México ranks in the top ten countries on population density (Banco Mundial, 1994).
- In population density Mexico occupies the number 8 spot with 46.7 inhabitants per square kilometer.
URBANIZATION PROCESS AND RURAL SHRINKAGE

- In 1940 35.1% of the total population lived in localities larger than 2,500 per inhabitants.
- The development model of Industrialization by import substitution, from 1940 to 1982, had profound demographic, territorial and economic impact derived from its economic, political and sociocultural urban locus.
Fig. 1. Rates of population growth for some Mexican cities. Chihuahua, León, Tijuana and Torreón are medium cities, México City is large.
EVIDENCES OF A NEW RURAL: LOW GROWTH AND DEPOPULATION

- Empirical evidences suggest that the advance of urbanization is a general tendency linked to rural depopulation or does it?

- The exchange dynamics of rural - urban population explains the fast growing of some cities in Mexico (Rodríguez y Villa, 1998; Rodríguez y Villa, 1996).
- 1980’s economic crisis.
- Economic liberalization centered on the neoliberal economic policy
- Social dissemblance
- Export oriented strategy
- NAFTA
New rural and urban spatial distribution

- Strong negative correlation between the urban percentage and rural percent of growth population.

- In Mexico’s case more than 10 million people lived in almost 185 thousand localities with less than 500 inhabitants (CONAPO, 1999: 91 y 93; Ruvalcaba, 2001: 8) in 1995.

- Population displacement in large cities e.g. Mexico City, Guadalajara, Monterrey, Puebla, León.
Annual % population change in Mexico
Internal conflicts and natural disasters

- Internal conflicts/ Natural disasters e.g. 1985 earthquake- Mexico City
- Population displacements from Mexico City to the suburban areas, was incremented from 9 percent between 1950-1960 to 22 percent in 1990-1995 (CONAPO, 1998).
- Gap between rich/poor
EQ3.2. Income difficulties are positively related to income inequality

EQ3.3. Income difficulties are more strongly inversely related to household income
Insufficiency of policies

- Lack of research on the subject
- The dispersion of rural locations and communities had increased in terms of poverty and internal exodus
- Population pressure over the scarce and not renewable natural resources such as water, forest, soil, etc.,
- Implementation of supporting programs such as Progresa-opportunidades
Progresa-Oportunidades


O´Connor (2001) sustains that economic growth since the industrial revolution has been achieved at expensive costs for the autonomy of human communities and for the natural environment.
Resource based theory

- It preaches a sustainable competitive advantages.
- Enterprises as potential creators of value-added capabilities.
- Grover Grover, Teng, and Cheon (1998:84) explain that given resource heterogeneity and resource immobility and satisfaction of the requirement of value, rareness, imperfect immimitability, and non substitutability, firms’ resources can be a source of sustained competitive advantage.”
The historic roots of the urban profile

- The conquerors that valued urban localization for the achievement of economic, political and ideological objectives.
- During the colonial period in México, mining was the gravitational social economic development.
- The discovery of silver deposits in Zacatecas in 1546 started a demographic change. (settlements near mines).
- Vargas-Hernández (2008) analyzes the post effect of the mining towns in Mexico after having an enormous impact in economic development due to deurbanization.
The evidence of the mining towns’ shrinkage in México

- Economic indicator during the colonial times in Mexico.
- Nueva Espana 1532
- 1536 discovery of precious medals in Zacatecas
- The demographic catastrophe of the XVI and XVII
- Introduction of Afro-caribbean slave force
- The exploitation represented more than 80% of total exports from the Nueva España (Estrada, 2001).
Decline of mining towns in Mexico

- Originated in 1810 with the start of independence movement.
- Lack of stable social and political institutions.
Relic of the past: San Sebastian

- San Sebastian in the State of Jalisco is one of the oldest mining towns in Mexico founded in 1605.
- More than 20,000 inhabitants populated the town at its peak.
- Nowadays, it has only 600 inhabitants retaining the colonial heritage in public buildings and houses.
San Sebastian
Analysis of case studies on resource based firms related to shrinking cities

- Corporative city/Corporative town
- The town of Atenquique/Industrial Company of Atenquique
- Privatization/Union conflict
- Environmental/economic impact
An agenda for future research

- Future research should include:
  - “New economic geography” (Fujita, Krugman y Venables, 2000, p. 3).
  - Conceptual frameworks for the analysis of relocation processes of economic activities: spatial redistribution of population

- A multidisciplinary approach to differentiate winners and losers areas (Benko y Lipietz, 2000; Caravaca, 1998)

- Research on rural labor market and urban labor