

# *East and South Nicaragua: How is this region defined from Romero and others` point of view?*

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**T**his essay analyzed the work “*East and South Nicaragua, contributions to the study of its history*”, from the perspective of the regional history with the coordination of the study of PhD Jilma Romero Arrechavala.

This work is particularly interesting because it is part of a big project: “A regional and local study: history and present of the republic of Nicaragua”, which according to the book’s prologue it has as main objectives:

1. Developing local and regional stories of Nicaragua for its dissemination and be known by the population, also, serving as a support to the National Education System, especially teachers in primary and secondary education as a way to transmit the national values to society in general and basically to Nicaraguan youth.
2. Contributing to the rescue of still existent documentary information and reconstructing the history from the contributions of the social actors.
3. Strengthening regional studies and local history, through the creation of a multidisciplinary research team.

Before continuing, there should be a pause to confess, that to choose the book to analyze it was not easy based on the experience of the authors who wrote it in this trend, however, it is hoped that the attempts to answer the question will not be misunderstood, also aware that it is about spaces of knowledge construction.

To continue, it is stated that the project objectives reflect the following premise: *social actors as builders of their own history*.

It is not suitable to continue believing, sharing and teaching:

- That the Nicaraguan is a mestizo (half-blood), the Caribbean ethnic groups or Native people cannot be forgotten.

- That the country's history is reduced to the political and economic activity in the capital city, the contribution of the regions must be considered, too.
- That we are represented by "Güegüense", while we live in a multiethnic and multicultural country.
- That the country was saved by national heroes, Superman style, when with them there was a protagonist people.
- That we eat and drink the same (typical food and drink), though we live in a rich country in terms of its resources, which allows us a variety of food that varies over short geographical distances and even altitudes above sea level.

In short, I can continue describing the stereotypical identity that has been sold since the XIX century with the formation of the nation-state, but the spirit of the essay is another, which brings us back to the initial question: *East and South of Nicaragua: How is this region defined from the perspective of Romero and others?*

To answer this question it is necessary to analyze the work in response to the approach of regional history, with the general elements (man-time-space-environment) and indicators that help us achieve objectivity and even subjectivity in the description of the region, of course, without losing sight of methodological elements as: completeness, complexity and transdisciplinarity.

### **Conceptual relationship (man-time-space-environment): approximation "East and South Nicaragua"**

**Man:** In the regional history, man is not only a political, a military, an ecclesiastical, a hero ... the man is a father, a mother, an artisan, a worker, a native, a peasant... that wears, eats, feels and transforms his reality, his environment and therefore his context. This is noticeable in "*East and South Nicaragua*", for example, when the book talks about the period of the president Jose Santos Zelaya, regarding to the "resistance, earth and social struggle," he says, citing Burn (1993:58):

*The conception of different social layers in relation to the construction of the nation state was different. Natives [...] considered that Nicaraguan nation had nothing to offer them, as his life revolved around local life.*

The localism against the nation is not supported, but clearly there is an identification with the near environment, before that with the nation, or rather with the state, of whom these men do not expect any benefit.

In a general way, the book talks about the producer of corn, cocoa, tobacco, sugar cane, beans or livestock, which can be determining for their diet which also is mentioned superficially. This, reminds a me conversation I had with "don Fabio" a man in his 60's from rural Jinotepe, who told me, among many things, that in their times of childhood they usually ate beans, bananas and other things made from corn, everything cooked with lard and they used to drink coffee or pinol sweetened with brown sugar or weakling. And I mention this example as a clear evidence of how this approach to history helps us understand reality closer in time or space.

**Time:** In the regional history, according to García González (2004) periodization does not have to match the history of national states, even with traditional concepts of periods born in Europe,

since each region has its own dynamics, but “*East and South Nicaragua*” is framed in parallel to the history of the nation time: ancient history, colonial history, the XIX century and the XX century. Maybe this is due to the long duration and the territory is delimited according to the political administrative division, which will be addressed in more detail in the relevant section.

However, it is noteworthy in each period how authors, go and come in the short time, which is interesting, since it is evidence of a complex thought, but it also should be noted that in this attempt, they tend to confuse the reader because the fact or event under discussion is not focused or the historical time of particular event is not clearly defined. For example, on page 124 the authors wrote:

*As for its political-administrative division this department is divided into four municipalities [...] and its population density is 99.8 people per km<sup>2</sup>. (No date or census reference, to place me accurately in the XX century)*

Even trying to explain why the time of the region to national history is related by authors, that the region has had its own historical time related, for example, to the coffee boom, which transcends the periods studied, from mid XIX century to the present.

In this sense, it must be noticed that this understanding of regional time helps us to better understand the present, because relationships are not linear time as encapsulated dates, but as a connection of historical processes in space, also it allows us determinate the potential of the region to the national and to the future.

**Space:** From an objective point of view, the space in “*East and South Nicaragua*” is determined by physiographic features described in the first chapter of the book, also by the political and administrative division, which fully agrees with the previous determination. Subjectively, space was established from production and trade relationships especially as well as similar ethnic components.

Both approaches objective and subjective have internally differences and similarities. For example, in the scope or physiographic space, the region includes volcanoes, plateaus and coastal areas, each with its own characteristics that allows the people of each area a modus of living according to their reality. However, over the time, the activities of one and other have been supplemented for their own benefit through trade routes and meeting points, where space becomes structural and functional.

This space has been built and rebuilt by the mobility of people from their settlement, their resources as ports, products such as the expansion of coffee, etc.

For example, between the late XIX and mid XX century according to the book, the land used for the cultivation of cocoa, corn and snuff, in the pre-colony, became cultivated for coffee, sugarcane and pasture for livestock, which shows how the target space which is not prone to fast changes, it happens subjective and accelerated changes .

**Environment:** It is expressed throughout the book, mentioning and interrelating the resources available to the region, fertile soil, abundant water, natural ports such as Granada or Rivas in San Juan del Sur, among others; which at some point they go on to become resistance, incidentally mentioned on page 105 of the subtitle “The trafficking route and maritime transport”:

*The route, instead of going between Granada and Realejo (León), begins to circulate between La Virgen and San Juan del Sur (both located in Rivas)... When the traffic took the road to San Juan del Sur... it caused a migration to this department (Rivas). In August 1851, the port of San Juan del Sur, was only a bay surrounded by thick forests; eight months after the streets were drawn it had a population of 1,500 inhabitants... At the end of the transit route in 1869, both San Juan del Sur as La Virgen declined.*

It is now evident how the *route with its ports* were a valuable resource at a time and then became a resistance, however the relationship is dialectical, as areas such as ports were developed, other areas tend to become come down, but when the port fails, it happens the opposite.

The situation of coffee in 1867 reached 4,143 quintals in Granada, which Jinotepe and Diriamba<sup>1</sup> had increased production. But it was not until the construction of the railway branch, built under the administration of President Zelaya, the regional economy was invigorated, the export production from department of Carazo was a reality, then considered one of the richest in the Republic. This is another case illustrated in *“East and South Nicaragua”*.

The perspective changed for the department when the coffee was affected by the coffee rust problems in the mid- XX century, entering the region other crops such as sesame, banana, sorghum, rice, but mainly cotton and livestock. (Romero Arrechavala et al, 2006)

Nowadays, all crops are still occurring although in smaller scale, but neither has much influence as trade, tourism and manufacturing.

How man affects the transformation of the environment can be appreciated, but we also see that this same environment changes the social relations and production of man. In this regard and in response to this change in social structures there are depressed populations and favored populations, because changes occurred within the same space, but social structures are modified from those changes. It does not refer to Marxist approach to class struggles, that of course are present- but the depression of promoting or producing class coffee, livestock, etc., which according to the moments of that product it may be combined with his guild in a situation of comfort or discomfort.

### **“East and South Nicaragua”: Regionalization and approach**

Having described each of the basic conceptual elements of regional studies, present in *“East and South Nicaragua”* though roughly speaking, it is necessary to go rediscovering the historical region selected, but it is necessary to start off from a concept of what we will understand as historical region, since this, being a polysemic term, needs to be contextualized.

Some concepts are:

1. Dario Barrieta quoted by Botey Sobrado (S. F.), in his study *“Scales of observation and historiographical practices. The construction of alternative horizons”* notes that the region is a choice of the investigator, it is a social construct that has meaning unit, depending on the questions and explanations of this. Of course, regions seen as units of meaning, not necessarily coincide with the administrative and state jurisdictions.
2. Meanwhile García González (2004) wrote that the historical region is a geographical, social

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1. Both Municipalities with the category of Town, yet belonged to the Granada’s circumscription.

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and intranational space, in which, the city acts as hierarchizing center and economic, social, political, cultural and ideological are coherently converged, whose interaction in long term producing an identity that endures in its career and changing within its own dynamics, without thereby it ceases to belong and be equally influenced by the outside space it is member of.

3. Another contribution is the one of Cariño Olvera (1996) who considers the historical region is a territorial space whose boundary is configured and diluted according to the rates and magnitudes of some regional composition. To identify and define the components of this regional plot it requires an interdisciplinary and multidetermined capable to appreciate social links that make up certain historical processes of space-time analysis lived.

Based on the concepts of the cited authors, the historical region is relative to the interests of the investigator, which can be opened or closed according to other factors both objective and physiographic aspects and resources; or subjective such as productive activities, market relations, demography, power relations and family and community organization; the changing and amending certain lapse of time and to be understood it needs to be studied from an interdisciplinary mindset. This concept of historical region needs not necessarily coincide with the political and administrative boundaries of a nation.

At this point, a question raised by Andrzej Dembicz<sup>2</sup> should be analyzed: Is it historical regional study any regional history related to a territory that, according to the will of a researcher, we can consider a region, it means a portion or land territory?

In the case of *“East and South Nicaragua”* based on the interest of researchers which is among others: “to develop regional and local histories of Nicaragua...” it does not focuses on the physiographic aspects to delimit the region, though those are described in the first chapter, but falls within the political and administrative borders of the nation.

Moreover, the authors of the book, in terms of methodology, the study addresses issues related to economics, politics, administration, society, culture, population, gender, military, social movements, mentalities and ethnic groups. (Romero Arrechavala, et al, 2006)

From the objective aspect, it is stated, -though implicitly established, because they mention like that other sub regions as Pueblos Blancos, coastal areas, volcanic elevations, among others. What helps understand the relationships of trade and migration.

Because of the so ample explanatory dimensions of regional history, it should be noted that Andrzej Dembicz proposes three approaches that addresses the many conceptual contributions, to be mentioned with the intention of locating *“The East and South Nicaragua”*:

1. The regional history as a linear study and description of phenomena occurred in a given area (and equivalent to integral or selective description -theme- of such developments).
2. Regional history as the study of the formation of a regional society, seeking to define its identity (in full or partial sense).
3. Regional history as an instrumental study of the definition/verification of the existence of a

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2. Regional Space Studies – Regional History. The author is president of the European Social Research Council in Latin America and President of the Center for Latin American Studies. University of Warsaw, Poland. Document provided by Professor Ivette Garcia.

region or social-territorial (historical or current) structural unit.

Of the proposed trends, the second one comprises the environment of study of the work “East and South Nicaragua”. This position relates with the methodological description done before.

However, it is noteworthy that the book can also be placed in the first trend because it follows a linear sequence from the past to the present and also, the space is delimited by the administrative and political boundaries of the republic of Nicaragua. The argument that places it in the second classification is the identity rescue achieved due to the totality of how it is addressed and the multidisciplinary with which it is treated.

To better explain the location of “East and South” in the second trend I will base on the key indicators proposed by Hernan Vanegas (2007) to define the historical region.

### **Indicators that define “East and South Nicaragua” as a historical region**

According to this Cuban researcher, it is impossible to consider a hierarchy of indicators; however, a set of indicators does not define a regional history, as a set of stones does not build a house. Under this logic, it is necessary for these to meet, discuss and build and rebuild.

In the case of “*East and South Nicaragua*” the first indicator, which is the geographical environment as stated above, it is subjected to a political and administrative division which coincided with its physiography, but this is not a coincidence, what happens is that when the Spaniards demarcated the territories, they could consider such relation, according to Vanegas Delgado (2007).

Thus, a distinction of this region according to the first chapter of the book in analysis, is the combination of volcanic plateaus elevations, which later descend to the coastal zone. You can also highlight the soils of volcanic origin, which favored certain fruit species, musaceous, and very large trees, also their rivers had similar characteristics: short, moderate inclination and good for irrigation. The weather was another factor associated with the height of the area in general and the dominant vegetation.

A particular example that describes the book is when, due to the request of Spaniards who lived in the valley, the town of Rivas is promoted to Burg in 1717, defining territorial boundaries as follows:

*[...] eighteen leagues from east to west, and from north to south, five, six and more. The ones counted from Granada's lagoon to the small savannah expressed above, and the others, from Ochomogo river to the very sea of south, between this and the lagoon mentioned an isthmus or strait is formed, out of which the length outcomes finally. Ometepe island was subordinated to the new Burg” Morel de Santa Cruz (RCPCA. Vol. 17, No 82. 1967:2) cited by (Romero Arrechavala et al, 2006)*

A second indicator referring to the *type of economy*, is described as “*East and South Nicaragua*”, with its own characteristics in the different historical periods covered. Then, in the ancient history it describes a subsistence economy which production unit was the cornfields, also it refers to the slash-and-burn method for soil preparation, what places them within the Mesoamerican cultural area with higher growers or high cultures; later in the colonial period it stands out as main economic activities; the encomienda, agriculture, livestock, trade and crafts; all influenced by religion. Once in the nineteenth century, land tenure and subsistence agriculture prevail and in the twentieth century it approaches landlordism and the non-traditional crops introduction.

The sequence of the economy described in time is closely linked to commercial networks, as the transit route or railroad, the ports and centers of production of certain crops that make the region particular from others. However, some of these elements, such as the transit route, made the region transcend and keep transcending the national and international context.

The economy with its variants, contributed to the change in *the structure of classes*, another indicator for the definition of historical regions. To demonstrate this indicator without repeating all the social changes described in the book, there is a reference to an iconic example:

*During the colonial period the crisis, between the colonial authorities and dominated sectors (Creoles, Mestizos and Indigenous) was always a constant; the contradictions became more violent as the domination over these sectors elapsed. In XVII century the trade monopoly and smuggling came to weaken the economy of the Creoles, which, notwithstanding, was controlled by the Spaniards; despite the relative economic boom that existed in the late XVII century thanks to increased export of indigo and livestock, producers and traders of the region found their economic situation deplorable, due to the control over their economic activities.*  
(Romero Arrechavala, et al, 2006, p. 59)

Inside the example we can see, classes that coexist as dominant or dominated sectors, that in the midst of their contradictions they have the reality of the region, they have common resources, but the access to them is unequal. These groups have a space in which they develop, communicate and trade. They also have a way of life in respect of the resources, and even the resistance, which makes them inhabit this region and not another.

It exists in this structure a social and economic symbiosis, some produce and other trade, but they do it with resources of environment known by them.

From outside of the example, we can locate other regions such as the Caribbean, where the social structure is not hierarchical like the one in the example, and the relations established with the “others” (English, pirates and buccaneers) is not that of a colony but that of a protectorate, which enables them other forms of social and trade relations, which makes of this region particular.

*Migration and ethnic problems*, are another indicator that we can see in the book: if going back in time, Chorotegas covered along the Pacific coast, later -in the XI and XII centuries they were displaced by the Nicaraos who brought a different cultural heritage (Romero Arrechavala, et al, 2006) that is why, it is considered that by the time Europeans arrived, these did not find a different culture, but two, which later on explains the localist rivalries, added to the particular interests of the time, which hampered the feeling of the national “us”, but at the same time achieved strong roots in the region.

This process of meeting caused by new migrant populations, generates a hybridization not only cultural but racial that ended up configuring both social structure and the use and possession of the territory depending on the class the person belonged to.

However, throughout history there have been other migrations, even internally in the region, encouraged by poles of economic development such as ports, or temporary crops such as coffee, cotton, cocoa, indigo and sugar cane: this type of migration are often called by Vanegas Delgado (2007) temporary migrations or “swallows”. In this case, both the hosting populations and migrant, transform their social relations, which immediately affects all aspects in the region.

Here arises what Vanegas Delgado (2007) calls “ethnic problem” –though I do not know why she sees it as a problem- it is clear that “*East and South Nicaragua*” is a topic poorly treated when in this region are present such a variety of ethnic groups, including Indigenous peoples of Monimbó and Sutiaba, which have maintained their cultures well preserved despite using borrowed cultural elements from other social groups, either foreign or local.

For the second indigenous people, García Bresó (2014) highlighted a study and, stated that *they (Monimbó’s) have maintained their indigenous culture through stigmatization and an encapsulation mechanism, taking those cultural elements that are useful for them, but at the same time recognize as foreign; something like loans of cultural elements.*

A topic that is evident in the positivist historiography as it is *the political level* represents an indicator for the construction of the historic region, though from this historiographical trend some other, sub-indicators related to what is economic and politics, etc. are considered, but the political and administrative division is a particular element “*because the state generally tends, by itself, either to facilitate or legally validate the emergence and development of the region*” (Vanegas Delgado, 2007)

Thereon “*East and South Nicaragua*”, keeps depicting in each chapter, the political-administrative changes experienced by the region since conformed as towns or agricultural villages under theocratic governments in ancient times, going through the audience and colonial governorship, governing boards in XIX century until the XX century, and be called “Region of eastern Nicaragua” containing two major regions: the Central Pacific (Granada, Masaya and Carazo) and south Pacific (Rivas). But for the study of these two regions it was decided to take them as a single region due to “some peculiarities” of each of the departments, and although the book does not mention it, it is worth mentioning that after the 80`s this region was called “The fourth region”.

*The rapidly changing nature of these divisions, -such as shown in the commented sequence- is very risky, therefore it is never advisable to identify the political administrative demarcation concerned with the region* (Vanegas Delgado, 2007).

This point is highlighted because in “*East and South Nicaragua*” it tends to confuse when it relates to Masaya and Carazo in different historical times: in the distant past and more recent past, considering that these departments once belonged to Granada. Also, when it refers to the department of Carazo in particular, at some point, it reduces it or considered Carazo as small as the municipality of Teresa, and just to cite some punctual examples but there are more.

Moreover, this a distinction of the region due to the political administrative-division which tends to reduce the region to political and partisan zones. As evidence: “[...] *but the creation of the departments of Masaya, Managua and Carazo propitiated the formation of a district and departmental electorate that, when the century was over did not adhere to the Conservative Grenadians, to this lasts ones the electorate of Rivas joined. This group in question was defined as liberal*” (Romero Arrechavala, et al, 2006, p. 75).

However, it is noteworthy that as for the sub-indicators (economy, society, etc.), the book makes great contributions, since the policy focuses within the state relationship with the nation, at least after the twentieth century, giving these power relations, the perspective of public policy -though with a top down focus- and concreteness and reception of these policies by the governed; but

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before the independence in 1821, it also refers to the colonial policies that affected all the aspects of the regions and of course its inhabitants.

*Urbanism and architecture* as indicators of historical region, give us a reading of how regions develop or paralyze, even if they fall behind, they show us, spatially, places where wealth is concentrated or poverty or misery and scarcity appear. For example, urban and economic development of Granada related to Rivas is shown in the following example:

*“In 1586, Granada had 220 Spanish neighbors (...) most of the houses were built on base of stone and brick, which the wood wall and thatched roof stood upon (...) later on, the constructions for Spanish neighbors housing became in spacious houses with corridors, balconies, interior gardens that allowed ventilation; nicely decorated, even with material imported from Europe”* (Romero Arrechavala, et al, 2006, p. 35).

In the case of Rivas:

*“Regarding to the urban development, by the time of the visit of Father Morel of Santa Cruz, the village had twenty tile roof houses including the one of the council, and ninety seven straw houses that formed a proportionated village and three square streets...”* (Romero Arrechavala et al, 2006, p. 37)

To understand this difference among the sub regions, the book itself gives an idea when it says that Granada was founded on the banks of “La Mar Dulce” (Lake Nicaragua), and from there, to manage the economic power, to find the coveted “Doubtful Strait” (Rio San Juan) and to promote expansion to new territories. Instead Rivas, in colonial times was barely a village of Granada and served as one of the main collection centers, then became part of the party of Leon, until it is finally raised to town by the Council of the Indies in 1727.

If the functions of each city are determined with its architecture and urbanism, its development could be understood.

The last indicator that will help us understand the region of “*East and South Nicaragua*” is the *cultural and educational level*. Regarding culture, assuming it is present in the individual and collective life of the people and is transmitted from the familiar context to the social one, through tangible and intangible expressions can be said that this is addressed in all the book, and because we have an economical, political and national culture; which perhaps is where there is a peculiarity, since this is what gives us a sense of ownership within the national territory and the relationships we have with the society which people live in.

In the book, a pre-colonial culture is analyzed, that expresses materially through the rock art or crafts, there is a discussion of a culture in the colony through the integration of other elements brought by Europeans, there is an affirmation of a political culture born with nation-states, but it also speaks of a spiritual culture, in which there is no evidence nor recognition of the Protestant sects, especially in recent times; they are not represented in this history. While it is true, the Catholic religion had and continues having great influence on the social, political and cultural life of the nation, it is also true that religions have been gaining new spaces left unstudied.

Moreover, it should be mentioned that regional culture is important in this case because it is conditioned by the elements of the region; economic, religious, traditional, ways of looking

themselves in the space of the region, in this case; How a Caraceño a Rivense a Masaya or Grenadian feels regarding the historical region? You might say for example “*I am from the eastern region or I am oriental*”; actually in their minds it exists that identification with the region it would not be more common to say “*I am a coffee grower*” it the case one belongs to coffee growing regions, or say “*I am a fisherman*” knowing that lives in a coastal area and even, say “*I am Caraceño*”, if you identify with this people.

Another example, the region may break rather than getting sub divided when we talk about cultural identity elements, such as “The Dance of the Ants<sup>3</sup>” Representative dance of the island of Ometepe, Rivas. It represents a ritual to disappear a plague of ants which depleted crops. It promises in honor of San Diego de Alcalá, who gives them the miracle of ending the plague.) can be representative for Rivenses but not for Diriambinos, who identify with “The Güegüense<sup>4</sup>”

In fact, the dimension of culture in the historical region studied is too broad, so that it is considered it is all over the work, except in the case of religious sects or identification with the region, rather than with their department or municipality.

As for the education as a formal academic act, it begins to be evident in the work, from the XIX century, indeed, evidenced as an elite education: “...*public education must be universal, all classes of the society must participate in it, but not in the same way. In sum education must be universal, but not uniform, public but not common*” Burn (1993: 40) (Romero Arrechavala, et al, 2006, p 120)

In this case, education is located in class and this is in turn into a historical region as already seen. Moreover and since education is an essential axis for development, regions can be highlighted because of its intellectuals or contributions they have made towards the development of the municipality. In fact, in “The East and South Nicaragua” Jinotepe is considered a city of intellectuals, due to the production of literate people who have emerged from within that municipality.

Finally, another elements taken into account as methodological are totality, complexity and transdisciplinarity in the study of the historical region.

Regarding the first term, *totality* is considered by García González (2004) a coherent unit, from the point of economic, political, social and cultural. Therefore, it be can said that based on the mentioned indicators, it has been described the entirety of “*East and South Nicaragua*”.

As for the complexity, it is achieved internally in each chapter -in some more than others- but not so in the general structure, which continues a linear sequence in time. In this regard, some authors like Lorenz, Morin, Delgado and Maldonado, quoted by Luis Carrizo et al (2004) have insisted that within the complexity theory are investigations on non-linearity, in which the effects are not proportional to the causes and get interchanged.

Another methodological element which does not reach its fulfillment in the work “*East and South Nicaragua*” is the *transdisciplinary* vision that, rather than a simple transfer of the model from a branch of knowledge to another, taking into account the flow information circulating among various branches of knowledge.

3. Representative dance of the island of Ometepe, Rivas. It represents a ritual to disappear a plague of ants which depleted crops. It promises in honor of San Diego de Alcalá, who gives them the miracle of ending the plague.

4. Comedy dance seventeenth century, represents the first expression of social protest and rebellion against the colonizer yoke. Anonymous author. Considered as a masterpiece by its full dimension; linguistic, literal, social, cultural, theatrical, musical and dance. It is oral and intangible heritage of humanity since November 25, 2011)

In this regard, the proposal of Edgar Morin calls for a move beyond the modes of knowledge production that reduce all the parties and assume a universal causality. (Carrizo, Luis; Prieto Espinoza, Mayra; Klein, Julie T; 2004)

This is evident in the work, because each chapter to develop -depending on the time or the element- is written by a specialist. For example, the first chapter, on biogeography is written by a geographer, ancient history by anthropologists, etc.

The transdisciplinarity must transcend the discipline and settle in the thought, to be complex and trans disciplinary itself.

### Final Considerations

Finally, the book *East and South Nicaragua: How this region is defined from the perspective of Romero and others?* is proposed.

A region is a construction relative to the interests of the researcher, but covering a territory and a sense of coherent totality, which must interact in every way (no cause and effect) and non-linear time. This region, because of its peculiarities and dynamics, is not desirable that falls within the political-administrative space or historical time of the nation state.

The stated allows us to conclude that the region is totally well defined, and that addresses the basic elements of regional studies: man-time-space-environment and that it is better defined when it is studied from fundamental indicators proposed by Vanegas Delgado to define a historical region. However, there are two elements that are not very well developed: complexity and transdisciplinarity.

- In the case of the first, the complexity is expressed internally of each chapter; it is not so in the general structure of the book that follows a linear sequence of history. In one of the chapters –that referred to the XIX century it is achieved fully, but in the others it is confusing, because of the not clarification of dates or definition of the internal political-administrative divisions in the region.
- Referring to transdisciplinarity, the bridge of the different disciplinary knowledge is not achieved, since each chapter of the book is written by a specialist in the concerning subject, which in turn limits the holistic view of the elements in each chapter, reducing it to the disciplinary exclusivity.

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