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Roderic A. Camp*

Consequences of Rural and Urban Origins for Mexico's Post-Revolutionary Leadership

Urbanization is both a prod to and product of modernization in Latin America. Individually, communities can shrink or even disappear altogether, as witness mining communities in many societies. But as overall populations continue to expand, generally both the number and size of communities grow correspondingly. The process, therefore, is essentially irreversible. Because social and economic changes which accompany urbanization are identified with the characteristics of modernization, urbanization itself is equated with modernization.

For much of Latin America the advent of independence raised the level of tension between the large cities and the provincial towns and villages. In South America, the division often took the form of conflicts between the coastal ports and the inland communities.[1] In other locales, such as Mexico, the conflict centered on differences between the politically powerful center and the periphery. The further away provincial leaders lived from the center, the more likely their political disenchantment. Thus in Mexico, both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, examples of strong political dissension between the center and periphery, in some cases reflected in attempted secession, can be found in Chiapas, Yucatán, and along the northern frontier.[2]

Geography and the level of communication exaggerated the differences between rural and urban communities in nineteenth-century Mexico. Historians argue that liberal forms of Europeanization reached large urban centers, while in contrast smaller communities and villages retained more traditional Spanish values blended with indigenous beliefs. Eventually Europeanization superimposed itself in each Spanish American society, but without integrating the two sets of cultural values.[3] In Mexico, as in many other Latin American countries, this led to the creation, in the words of one of Mexico's leading intellectual figures, of "two Mexicos".[4]

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the conveyors of modernization have been the elites, especially politicians and intellectuals. In many Latin American societies the military as a political actor since World War I has played a similar role.[5] Furthermore, as modernization became synonymous with economic development, entrepreneurs exerted a significant influence on elite values and choices.[6] In the nineteenth century the clergy had a considerable impact on elite values, especially through education. After a hiatus it has revived its influence since the late 1950s, although its orientation has changed and much of its impact is directed towards the masses. In Mexico, however, its influence since 1929

*Central University.

[1]Richard Graham, *The Independence of Latin America* (New York, 1972), pp. 32-33.

[2]Roderic A. Camp, "La cuestión chiapaneca: revisión de una polémica territorial", *Historia Mexicana*, 24 (1975), pp. 579-606; Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatán* (Palo Alto, 1964); and Héctor Aguilar Camín, *La frontera nómada: Sonora y la revolución mexicana* (Mexico City, 1977).

[3]E. Bradford Burns, *The Poverty of Progress: Latin America in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, 1980), pp. 18-34.

[4]Octavio Paz, *The Other Mexico: Critique of the Pyramid* (New York, 1972), p. 45; and for the most recent exposition of this situation and its consequences, see Alan Riding, *Distant Neighbors: A Portrait of the Mexicans* (New York, 1985), pp. 364-71.

[5]Gary Wynia, *The Politics of Latin American Development* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 82-90.

[6]Albert Lauterbach, *Enterprise in Latin America: Business Attitudes in a Developing Economy*(Ithaca, 1966), p. 168.

has been minor for historical reasons.[7] For this reason the clergy, except as intellectual actors, are not considered in the following analysis.

This essay traces the urban backgrounds of four Mexican elite groups since the 1920s: intellectuals, politicians, military officers, and entrepreneurs. The four groups are characterized by different values and interests, which produce tensions among them, but on the other hand they share certain experiences and biases which give them a dregree of homogeneity. The most important of these shared experiences is their urban background. Within the space limitations of this article, I will trace the patterns of urban-rural backgrounds of these groups over time, compare them with each other, examine their effect on elite education and careers, and suggest possible consequences of these trends.

What is most striking about the birthplace patterns of Mexican elites is the degree to which they are associated with cities. Elites have always come disproportionately from urban backgrounds,[8] but the difference between their birthplaces and those of ordinary Mexicans is truly extraordinary. No matter what age cohort one examines, regardless of the career they pursue, elites have come from urban birthplaces in numbers far in excess of the general population. No fewer than 36 percent of any elite-group cohort born in the nineteenth century came from the cities, at a time when fewer than ten percent of the overall population lived in urban centers (Figure 1).

The urban explosion for the general population of Mexico did not take place until after 1940, since between 1910 and 1940 the rural population declined from 71 percent to only 65 percent. Yet the bulk of Mexico's elites were born during this period, and they came from urban backgrounds in proportions inverse to those of the general population. The data in Figure 1 also suggest that certain elites, notably intellectuals, have been even more disproportionately urban since the 1880 age cohort, when only 15 percent of their members were born in rural locales. The background of intellectuals remained exaggeratedly urban, and beginning in 1920, 98 percent of all leading intellectuals came from urban birthplaces. In the case of politicians one might expect rural birthplaces to be better represented, since public leaders who have followed careers in the legislative branch could be expected to have a stronger presence in the provinces. Although politicians initially had a more even distribution between rural and urban backgrounds than intellectuals and entrepreneurs, and since 1900 have compared favorably with military officers, they showed an extraordinary jump in urban birthplaces beginning with the 1940 decade (Figure 1).

Of the four groups, one might expect military officers to come from rural backgrounds in larger numbers than their peer groups. Yet, despite the fact that the Mexican Revolution of 1910 recruited provincials into political and military careers, those who came from the provinces were from the larger cities. It should be remembered that in 1910 only eleven of Mexico's 31 states had more than six cities each qualifying as urban (over 5,000). Separating the officer corps into age cohorts, however, reveals the importance of the Revolution in maintaining briefly strong rural representation among the military's birthplaces. As can be seen in Figure 1, the greatest single jump in any given decade among all elites is that which took place between the military's 1890-99 and 1900-09 age cohorts, representing a 26-point increase in urban birthplaces. This rise suggests that changes outside the Revolution had taken place affecting those officers too young to have participated in the fighting, and that such changes countered any influence the Revolution might have had in sustaining rural backgrounds among Mexico's military.

Similar to intellectuals, Mexican entrepreneurs have come in extraordinary numbers from urban birthplaces (Figure 1). Perhaps more than any other group, immediate environment has influenced their career choice, or the possibilities of pursuing such a

[7]Karl Schmitt, "Church and State in Mexico: A Corporate Relationship", *The Americas*, 40 (1984), pp. 349-376; and Claude Pomerlau, "The Changing Church in Mexico and Its Challenge to the State", *Review of Politics*, 43 (1981), pp. 540-59.

[8]Peter H. Smith, *Labyrinths of Power: Political Recruitment in 20th-Century Mexico* (Princeton, 1979), p. 75; Roderic A. Camp, "Political Generations in Mexico: The Last One Hundred Years", Paper presented to the American Historical Associaton Annual Meeting, Chicago, December, 1984.

Figure 1

Urban Backgrounds of Mexico's Elite

Percentage from Urban Birthplaces[a]

Decade of Birth	Intellectuals	Politicians Officers	Military	Entrpreneurs	General Population[b]
Pre-1880	70	41		50	
1880-89	85	45	36	62	
1890-99	87	53	40	77	19
1900-09	86	63	66	88	24
1910-19	87	72	87	80	29
1920-29	98	75	74	97	31
1930-39	95	79	84	95	33
1940-	100	94		100	35
Averages	86		75	84	

[a]Born in cities over 5,000.

[b]Residing in cities over 2,500 at the time of the general census. Because I use a figure twice as high that of Mexican government.

choice. In terms of formal credentials such as education, an urban environment is less important to businessmen. Informally, however, the opportunity to learn entrepreneurial skills necessary for success in business is typically found in urban, not rural, environments. On the other hand politicians, military officers, and intellectuals need similar credentials in the form of education and training, and these can be found only in urban locales.

Finally to be noted, and perhaps most revealing about future trends in the birthplaces of Mexico's elite, is the disappearance altogether of elites from rural birthplaces. Those individuals born after 1940 will govern Mexico politically in the 1990s, make most of her economic decisions, and form elite values. If for a moment we forego making a connection between birthplace and values, equally significant implications exist for leadership channels and mass-elite relationships.

In the first place, obviously there is a lag between the birthplace of Mexico's leadership and that of the contemporary population. The urban explosion is closing the gap between the two somewhat, since the urbanness of today's elites is more in tune with where Mexicans live in the 1980s than with where they came from in the 1940s. But among their ordinary middle-aged contemporaries Mexico's leadership groups share little in common

in terms of birthpace. The structural significance of elite-mass disparity in birthplaces is that rural Mexicans born since 1940, who even at that point accounted for two-thirds of Mexico's population, have little or no possibility of achieving elite status in their society. To exclude automatically that proportion of Mexicans from achieving leadership positions must not only have a negative influence ultimately on kindredness in shared values with urban-born elites, but more importantly, on their tolerance with being excluded from entering leadership channels.

A distinct geographic bias which explains to some extent the resentment directed against Mexico City by the provinces, can be found within the larger trend of increasingly urban birthplaces among Mexico's elite. The birthplaces of each group suggest a long-term trend in favor of Mexico City. For the period 1910-1930 among military officers 27 percent were born in the capital; intellectuals 33 percent; entrepreneurs, 29 percent; and politicians a poor fourth with 17 percent.[9] Yet, the general population living in Mexico City from 1910 to 1930, during which most of our elites were born, never exceeded 7% of the population.

In spite of the growth of Mexico City, especially since 1930, the bias in the trend of birthplaces of Mexico's elites has become increasingly exaggerated. If we look just at those individuals born since 1930, we find that an impressive 42 percent of the officer corps came from the capital, 30 percent of the political leadership, and 38 percent and 33 percent respectively of intellectuals and entrepreneurs. Even by 1940, only nine percent of all Mexicans resided in the capital. The predominance of Mexico City among the birthplaces of Mexico's elite has several important explanations, structural (location of education and career opportunities), economic (parents' socio-economic status), and familial (kinship antecedents in respective elite). Each of these factors is very much intertwined with the other, and we will examine them in general terms, as well as for their impact on Mexico City specifically.

Among Mexico's post-revolutionary elites a direct relationship generally exists between birthplace and parents' socio-economic condition. In each group individual leaders from urban birthplaces are very likely to have had middle- or upper-class parents. In contrast only a small proportion of leaders born in rural communities could claim parents from well-off economic circumstances. Thus, 87 percent of the intellectuals from urban beginnings were raised in privileged economic conditions, as was true of 78 percent of the politicians, 72 percent of the officer corps, and 91 percent of the entrepreneurs (Figure 2). The data in Figure 2 suggest that elites from rural backgrounds are more likely to be equally distributed among the various social classes than are their urban counterparts.

The class backgrounds of Mexico's leadership groups are not the subject of this essay, but they cannot be ignored because of their relationship to place of birth. Mexican leaders from rural backgrounds form a small minority among post-1920s elites. Yet they, at least, provide a slightly better opportunity and as a consequence fairer representation to the ambitions of working-class Mexicans for upward mobility than is true for lower socio-economic groups who are urban born.

Middle and upper-class status reinforces other differences produced by urban and rural birthplaces. In the first place, a historical tendency exists in Mexico for children to pursue their father's career. This assertion is most true of the professions, and numerous examples exist of four generations of lawyers, physicians, engineers, or government officials. Among leadership groups, family background is a distinct advantage to children desiring to continue within the elite. For example, approximately 30 percent of Mexico's leading politicians have themselves been the children or close relatives of successful politicians. Also, although the military is proportionately one of the smallest professions in

[9]This can be explained by the fact that many individuals who qualify as political elites were representative of various states in the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, thereby guaranteeing a certain proportion of elites from the provinces because of my methodology. If only cabinet members are considered,the percentage of those from Mexico City increases to 23 percent of the total.

Figure 2

Rural/Urban and Socio Economic Backgruonds of Mexico's Elite

	Percentage from Rural or Urban Birthplace							
	Intellectuals		Politicians		Military Officers		Enterpreneurs	
Socio Economic Status	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Low	44	56	57	43	43	57	71	21
High	13	87	22	78	28	72	09	91

Figure 3

Rural/Urban Background and Educational Attainments of Mexico's Elite

	Percentage from rural or Urban Birthplace							
Level of Education	Intellectuals		Politicians		Military Officers		Entrepenreneurs	
Completed	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Primary, Secondary or Normal	50	50	58	42	78	22	31	69
Preparatory	17	83	38	61	70	30	20	80
University	15	85	29	71	34	66	12	88
Postprofessional or Ph. D., MD, LLD	12	88	16	84	22	78	03	97

Mexico, one out of five applicants to the Heroic Military College's officer cadet program is the son of a career military man. Among intellectuals, at least 12 percent are the children and grandchildren of other intellectuals, and including in-laws, aunts, and uncles in that calculation, the figure rises to 30 percent. Family ties are equally important among entrepreneurs, 43 percent of whom have inherited their businesses from their parents. (Figure 2)

Middle and upper-class Mexicans tend to concentrate in urban locales, whether in the provinces or in Mexico City, thus reinforcing the likelihood of their children following a similar residential pattern. The middle classes have flocked to the cities for several reasons, among them career opportunities and access to higher education. The most successful businessmen can be found in Mexico City, Monterrey, and Guadalajara because the largest enterprises and industrial complexes are located in these regions. Mexico City likewise attracts intellectuals because it is the publishing center and place of employement of 95 percent of Mexico's leading intellectuals, most of whom work in higher education, publishing, mass media, or government. Politicians, even from the provinces, eventually move to Mexico City if they wish to pursue a successful national career. The centralization of political life has made this choice essential. Mexico City appeals to all professional groups since 46 percent of Mexico's professional class is employed in the capital, while only 15 percent of the total population resides there.[10]

Educational opportunity is one of the magnets of city life. If educational achievement among Mexico's elite is examined on the basis of their birthplaces, the advantage of urban versus rural beginnings is clearly delineated. For those in the elite who have achieved an education no higher than secondary or traditional normal training, an individual's birthplace is not too significant, although in the case of military officers, intellectuals, and politicians those with the lowest level of educational achievement came in large numbers from rural birthplaces (Figure 3). For most of the elites, a change-- in some cases dramatic-- can be seen among those individuals who acquire a preparatory degree and those who do not. In Mexico such an education marks an individual who wishes to pursue the last step necessary in preparation for a professional degree. Access to such programs in the past has generally meant access to universities, all of which are locted in Mexican urban communities. The most dramatic increases in pre-university educational attainments can be found among urban-born intellectuals and politicians, who showed respectively 33 percent and 119 percent increase just from secondary to preparatory levels (Figure 3).

Educationally, the most significant difference between rural and urban-born elites emerges when they are classified according to the completion or non-completion of a university degree. One would expect a higher frequency of urban backgrounds in college-educated elites since education has taken on added importance among younger, and therefore more urban, elite members. But age alone does not account for the high percentages of the urban elite with college degrees found in Figure 3. Among all college-educated politicians, for example, only 25% were born in rural communities compared with 75% from urban birthplaces. For politicians who achieved some post-professional, graduate, or medical degree, the figures were further distorted in favor of the urban-born politician. The same pattern was true for entrepreneurs, intellectuals, and the officer corps.

The figures for the military are especially important because unlike with any of the other elite groups, advanced education is paid for by the service. Therefore, while social class determinants may be important in applying to the military academies, they do not per se determine educational achievement. Yet a slightly disproportionate number of officers with advanced education beyond the military academy have come from urban backgrounds, reflecting the urban bias among recent graduates and perhaps a tendency among officers from urban backgrounds to place a somewhat higher emphasis on

[10] *Hispano Americano*, May 5, 1980, p. 12; Van Whiting, Jr., "Political and Institutional Aspects of Technology Transfer in Mexico", Unpublished paper, 1980, p. 53.

Figure 4

Relation of Urban Background to Educational Institutions Attended by Mexico's Elite

Percentege from Rural or Urban Birthplace

Universities Attended	Intellectuals		Politicians		Military		Enterpreneurs	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Private	0	100	20	80	0	0	05	95
Foreign	09	91	17	83	75	25	03	97
UNAM	11	89	23	77	20	80	11	89
Public	22	78	30	70	100	0	14	86
Military Academies	30	70	30	70	23	77	0	100[a]

[a]Accounts for one person only.

advanced education. For the other three groups (intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and politicians), parents' socio-economic status is an important determinant of admission to, and completion of, higher education. Although moderate numbers of students from working class backgrounds do enter the public university system (for example 14 percent at the National University), very few actually complete their degrees.[11] Therefore, freedom from having to work one's way through college is critical to measuring actual success.

The differences between pre-university and university-level educational figures are not as exaggerated for entrepreneurial elites because they have not historically placed as high a value on college education as have their intellectual and political counterparts. Most prominent businessmen born at the turn of the century completed primary, secondary, and private business studies. Because the first generation was often self-made, and because the second generation inherited resources from their parents, on-the-job training was considered more essential than a college degree. As business management and technology became more complex, the third generation (those born after 1920) have been extremely well educated, although unlike many politicians and intellectuals they rarely obtain Ph.D's.[12] Those who do obtain advanced degrees, however, are nearly all from urban birthplaces.

[11]Arthur Liebman, et. al., *Latin American University Students: A Six-Nation Study* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 41; and Lucio Mendieta y Núñez and José Gómez Robledo, *Problemas de la Universidad* (Mexico City, 1948). For some insight on how the university perpetuates class differences, see Soledad Loaeza, "¿Meritocracia o mediocracia?", *Diálogos*, No. 114 (November-December, 1983), p. 34, and David Barkin, "Education and Class Structure: The Dynamics of Social Control in Mexico", *Politics and Society*, 5 (1975), p. 197.

[12]The linkage between urban birthplace and higher education exists historically. Flavia Derossi, in her study of industrialists, found that 74 percent of those born in cities attended universities, while the same was true for only 44 percent of village-born business leaders; *The Mexican Entrepreneurs* (Paris, 1971), p. 164.

Birthplace not only affects level of education, but also is an important determinant of the type and location of education. If institutions of higher learning are separated into five categories, some significant trends related to place of birth can be identified. The single most important institution attended by three of the groups is the National University, the largest publicly funded institution in Mexico. Elite members from urban backgrounds account for a disproportionate percentage of graduates among intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and politicians, but not excessively so. In the case of other public institutions, the percentages are fairly representative of the birthplaces for these three groups. However, among those attending private and foreign institutions, a person's place of birth is a strong determinant. These universities are located in major urban centers, and only rarely has a Mexican from a working class background pursued a degree at such an institution. In fact, among intellectuals, not one leader who attended a private institution came from a rural background (Figure 4). The figures contradictory to this general pattern are those for foreign- educated military officers (Figure 4). These figures are deceptive for two reasons. In the first place, the number of officers educated in non-military colleges is miniscule. In the second place, those few officers who received an education abroad did so during the Mexican Revolution, and are not representative of the officer corps as a whole.

The fact that place of birth, in combination with family background, gives certain leaders more opportunities to attend distinct types of universities is significant. The value orientation of private vs. public schools, both in and out of the class room, is quite different. Attendance at a private university socializes future leaders in an entirely different set of values from those found at public institutions.[13] Ultimately, these experiences have an influence on elite perceptions and behavior.

The influence of place of birth does not stop with elite Mexicans' educational attainments or institution attended, but extends to the type of degree college-educated elite members complete, which in turn affects professional career choices. Several consistent patterns between birthplace and degree choice show themselves among the non-military elite. Generally those degree fields popular in the twentieth century, and not available in Mexico before 1900, have been chosen in disproportionate numbers by urban-born elites. Two degrees which stand out in this regard are economics and public accounting. For example, not a single leading rural-born intellectual has graduated in either of these two fields (Figure 5).

It is probable that urban-born elites, and their parents, developed an initial appreciation of the value of economics and accounting degrees before their rural counterparts. Urban employers, both public and private, were the first to hire economists and accountants. As economic development takes place and task specialization occurs, urban residents are usually the first to experiment with new types of learning and fields of knowledge. The growth in the importance of these disciplines, of course, was not unique to Mexico, but had already occurred elsewhere in the Western, industrialized world. Both degrees were first offered in Mexico at the National University. Similarly, architecture attracted urban-born elites in equally disproportionate numbers. As a field it epitomizes and accompanies the process of urbanization. Architecture is even less popular among rural-born intellectuals than the figures indicate, since most of those intellectuals pursued degrees in the plastic arts.

Whereas traditional fields such as law, medicine and engineering are on balance well represented among the rural-born elite, only one degree is strongly over-represented among them. Rural-born politicians have been much more likely to follow an education in agricultural engineering than have their urban-born counterparts (Figure 5). Agricultural engineering is the only degree with any direct relationship to Mexican rural problemas.[14]

[13]Richard LaBarge and T. Noel Osborn, "The Status of Professional Economics Programs in Mexican Universities", *Inter-American Economic Affairs*, 31 (1977), p. 9.

[14]Hydraulic engineering is another, but it was not a specializaton within the engineering profession until the 1940s, and its recipients are subsumed under the engineering category along with civil, electrical, and chemical engineers. The federal

Most graduates in this field are from the National School of Agriculture in Chapingo, on the outskirts of Mexico City.[15] Latin America has a long history of prejudice against agriculture as an occupation or intellectual pursuit.[16] In fact, large numbers of agricultural engineers at the time of the Mexican Revolution joined the rebel cause because they were sympathetic to rural problems and their talents were ignored by most rural and urban employers.

Interestingly, similar linkages between birthplace and educational preparation can be found among career military officers. The educational background of successful officers is quite similar since most attended the Heroic Military College and the Higher War College. Their choice of a military specialty, however, has in some cases been affected by their place of birth. The two traditional fields in the Mexican military are infrantry and cavalry. The only military specialty over-represented among rural-born officers is infantry. On the other hand, the fields most over-represented among urban-born officers are communications, engineering, and artillery, all of which are more technical than the traditional military specialties. Historically, communications is the most recently initiated specialization within the Mexican army. Again, as modernization has taken place within the armed forces and as communications has become an increasingly critical area, officers from urban backgounds have been the first to recognize the attractiveness and importance of changing specializations, even when institutional surroundings are relatively traditional.

Eductional choices are important to the pursuit of successful careers in government, business, the military, and intellectual life. Each elite establishes its own pattern of credentials, one of which is type of education. Obviously the completion of one type of degree versus another does not prevent an individual Mexican from reaching elite status. On the other hand, pioneers in the forefront of the changing educational requirements of any profession can enhance individual chances for success. It is clear that the government, for example, is demanding a stronger background in economics among top politicians.[17] Younger entrepreneurs, whose fathers never even attended college, are graduating with degrees in economics and business administration. The urban-born Mexican with political or entrepreneurial ambitions is making these choices sooner than his rural-born competitor, thus insuring preferential consideration by elites who have already initiated these changes. Any advantage individual Mexicans acquire in pursuit of elite status soon will be translated to and perpetuated among the group as a whole.

Ultimately birthplace is connected to career choice and therefore, to some extent, elite success. In Mexico birthplace, class background, and educational opportunity, location, and level are all intertwined. Their importance to the achievement of elite status is exaggerated by the fact that Mexico's recruitment process is largely one of personal selection by individuals who already hold elite status. In other words, mentors play a crucial role, and Mexicans who rise to the top on ability alone are a tiny minority in the political, military, business, and intellectual worlds.

For example, an individual who has musical interests and wishes to be a force in the Mexican intellectual world is not very likely to succeed. No automatic prohibition exists against musicians becoming prominent intellectuals, but the fact is that for reasons peculiar to Mexican intellectual life few musicians have risen to intellectual prominence.[18] Therefore, if rural-born Mexicans with intellectual aspirations choose music as a career, while they might succeed as musicians they decrease their chances for attaining elite intellectual status. The reason for this is that the overwhelming number of Mexicans who presently control intellectual life are not musicians, nor can they be found in universities

government employed most irrigation specialists in the National Irrigation Commission, later the Ministry of Hydraulic Resources, and presently the Secretariat of Agriculture.

[15]For detailed backgrounds of its graduates, see Marte R. Gómez, *Biografías de agrónomos* (Mexico City, 1976).

[16]Clarence Haring, "The University in Latin American Life and Culture", in Angel del Río, ed., *Responsible Freedom in the Americas* (New York, 1955), pp. 116-125.

[17]Roderic A. Camp, *Mexico's Leaders: Their Education and Recruitment* (Tucson, 1980), p. 72.

[18]Roderic A. Camp, *Intellectuals and the State in Twentieth-Century Mexico* (Austin, 1985), p. 101.

Figure 5

Rural/Urban Backgrounds and Degree Fields of Mexico's Elite

Percentage from Rural or Urban Birthplace

Degree Received	Intellectuals		Politicians		Military		Enterpreneurs	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Economics	0	100	12	88	0	0	0	100
CPA	0	100	11	89	0	0	10	90
Architecture	10	90[a]	08	92	0	0	0	0
Agric. Eng.	0	100	39	61	0	0	0	100[b]
Law	13	87	29	71			13	87
Medicine	21	79	23	77	0	100	0	100
Engineering	15	85	23	77	05	95	10	90
Other	11	89	24	76			10	90[c]
Military					33	67		
Infantry						43	57	
Artillery					08	92		
Cavalary					36	64		
Communications					0	100		
Administration						29	71	
Air					28	72		

[a]For intellectuals, architecture includes plastic arts.
[b]Only one individual received this degree.
[c]These degrees are mostly in business administration.

or institutions frequented by musicians. Urban-born Mexicans with intellectual aspirations seem more aware of elite preferences.

Today most successful intellectuals have degrees in the social sciences, humanities, and literature, and most end up choosing careers in higher education. As can be seen in Figure 6, urban-born intellectuals have dominated higher education careers. Intellectuals naturally teach in the fields in which they themselves received training. Therefore, a Mexican hoping to make contact with a likely intellectual mentor will in turn find that individual in those disciplines. If a rural-born Mexican pursues studies in the military sciences, music, or seminary, three careers in which rural-born intellectuals are disproportionately represented, they will not meet intellectual mentors because urban-born intellectuals shun these fields. Thus, their under-representation in elite circles is likely to continue.

The importance of mentorship is shared by intellectuals, politicians, and military officers. These groups have institutionalizad the mentor-disciple relationship, primarily in education. For politicians the univesrity is the crucial place of contact. For intellectuals, both the university and the intellectual journal are the sources of intellectual sponsorship. Among career officers, the Heroic Military College and the Higher War College are critical.[19] Entrepreneurs constitute something of an aberration in this regard since their recruitment and career channels are not as structured and institutionalized.

Entrepreneurs are the most open of the four groups in the formal credentials they require. That is, their requirements for success are more eclectic. Several special conditions, however, do assert themselves over the aspirations of Mexican entrepreneurs. In the first place, family background has much to do with reaching elite status. More than with any other group, inheritance guarantees an entrepreneurial aspirant's elite status rather than just his opportunity to compete for elite status, as in the other three groups. The Mexican business world is still very dominated by family-owned or controlled enterprises. The children of entrepreneurs are all urban born.

A second condition pertaining to business elites, unlike their peers in other groups, is that they do not teach. Therefore the university is not a place of contact between mentor and disciple in the business world but rather it is through marriage, social contact, and the business world itself that contact is made. However, the younger generation of prominent entrepreneurs have come in contact whith peers at selected institutions, primarily private, urban universities. These institutions are, and will become more in the future, sources of later recruitment into family-controlled business. Rural-born Mexicans, especially those from working class backgrounds, are not likely to end up in expensive private institutions, and therefore will have few opportunities for this type of entry into the elite.[20]

Unlike politicians and military officers, businessmen's ranks are open to foreign immigrants. For whatever reason, whether capital resources of entrepreneurial initiative, European and Spanish immigrants have risen to the top of the Mexican business world in percentages disproportionate to their representation among the general population. Intellectual circles, too, count many first generation Mexicans in their midst. For reasons of nationalism, most successful politicians and career officers have been the children of native-born Mexicans, although prominent exceptions among politicians do exist. European immigrants generally move to the larger cities, futhering the bias already present among native Mexicans towards urban-born elites.

The correlation between birthplace and career choice for politicians and military officers is not very useful because Mexicans who opt for these two professions generally begin them at such a young age that they are unexposed to alternative careers. Most politicians not immediately employed in government are professionals, especially lawyers.

[19]Roderic A. Camp, "Generals and Politicians in Mexico: A Preliminary Comparison", in David Ronfeldt, ed., *The Modern Mexican Military: A Reassessment* (La Jolla, 1984), pp. 126-28.

[20]Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "El Grupo Monterrey crea sus propias fábricas de hombres", *Proceso*, June 23, 1980, p. 12. For example, at the University of Monterrey, only 2 percent of the students came from blue collar families. In contrast, 53 percent were the children of industrialists.

Figure 6

Rural/-urban Backgrounds and Professional Creers of Mexico's Elite

Percentage from Rural and Urban Birthplace

	Intellectuals		Politicians		Military Officer		Enterpreneurs	
Career	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Educational Adminst.	03	97			0	0	0	0
Professors	06	94			0	0	0	0
Journalists	20	80			0	0	0	0
Bureaucrats	15	85	33	67	56	44	17	83
Businessmen	08	92	21	79	0	0	16	84
Clergymen	22	78	0	0	0	0	0	0
Musicians	29	71			0	0	0	0
Military Officers	38	62	46	54	33	67	0	100[a]

[a]Only one individual was a career officer

Politicians who first pursue business careers before entering public life are typically from urban birthplaces (Figure 6). Military officers who have become prominent politicians contrast with this pattern. The military has provided more opportunities for rural-born Mexicans who have reached notable positions in politics. In the past many of the most successful general officers either in the ministry of National Defense, or in zone commands, followed political careers. Among military officers who have held national political office, rural-born officers actually exceed their urban counterparts in absolute numbers. The reason for this is that political office was helpful to an upwardly mobile military career among older officers, more of whom came from rural backgrounds. Today, however, political careers are not beneficial to promotion in the military, a fact recognized among all officers, but especially those from urban birthplaces.

Some distinctions between birthplace and type of military career can be suggested by breaking down the type of experience generals follow within their careers. If officers are separated into three categories--line, staff and other (medical, legal)-- it is clear that the rural-born cadets provide a disproportionate number of line officers, that is those in direct command of troops, primarily in provincial posts. Officers from urban backgrounds

typically follow staff careers leading to more rapid promotion and positions in the Ministry of National Defense, or they choose non-military specialties within the service (Figure 6).

Conclusions

There is no doubt that the world of Mexican intellectual, political, military, and entrepreneurial elites is an urban one, not only in terms of where they reside when engaging in their activities, but in terms of their origins. This has been so throughout the twentieth century and is increasingly the case, far exceeding the growth of the general, urban population. But more important than the fact that Mexican elites are urban born and bred are the consequences of this urban trend. These are three-fold: the trend is self-perpetuating, it is changing the elite recruitment structure, and it is contributing to the gap between elite and mass values.

Urbanity among elites tends to become self-perpetuating because of the existing channels for elite recruitment. Education increasingly is a determinant of career success regardless of which group is considered. In spite of the attempts to expand university education among the masses, there is no evidence that such attempts have succeeded. In fact, opportunities are more and more restricted to those Mexicans from urban and higher socio-economic backgrounds who want to achieve higher levels of education. Because elites predominate in the selection of their successors, they choose individuals with whom they share common experiences and values, especially those with whom, with the exception of older entrepreneurs, they have shared institutional experiences.

The long-term consequence of domination by an urban elite is to change the recruitment structure as it has existed for most of this century. As middle-class, urban politicians take charge of Mexican political affairs, their bias increasingly favors disciples with a formation from private universities, newer academic disciplines such as computing, and graduate study abroad. Potential elites from rural origins not only have fewer opportunities to pursue these choices, but they are less likely to make them in the first place. Consequently, the politicial office-holders of the future will ensure the continuity of their value preferences by selecting individuals with similar characteristics. These biases represent a change from past choices, and they narrow rather than widen channels for prospective leaders.

The most difficult-to-prove assertion made here is that the cultural baggage of urban-born elites determine to some extent their values, outlook, and sensitivity towards rural issues. It is worth noting that both Mexican provincial intellectuals and politicians believe urban-born-and-raised politicians not only do not understand rural problems, but perhaps more importantly do not understand provincial problems. Thus one of the major issues in the 1985 elections was whether gubernatorial candidates, such as the official party's contestant for governor of Sonora, were cognizant of local problems.[21] Similarly, Guadalajaran intellectuals, who themselves may be urban-born, do not share the same priorities as do those of Mexico City.[22]

Perception of elite concerns is just as important, or moreso, than their reality as demonstrated by the fact that opposition political groups are capitalizing on the perception of regional neglect and control from the urban center. While evidence of resentment towards the capital city elite is widespread, it is also true that when given the opportunity few provincials, especially those from rural backgounds, resist the appeal of the national urban, cosmopolitan culture. The dominant culture, perpetuated by the elites, readily overwhelms and absorbs, through a voluntary process of cooptation, the most innovative rural Mexicans.

[21] *Arizona Republic*, March 17, 1985.
[22] Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, pp. 78-79.

The consequences of urban absorption are far-ranging. Among intellectuals there is very little interest in rural problems, nor do these problems receive the level of attention given to urban issues in leading intellectual magazines.[23] On the other hand, among entrepreneurs, a recent failing has been their over-emphasis on capital intensive industries, and their emulation of North American businessmen in acquiring, helter-skelter, numerous businesses having little in common with the original holding companies. Overpaid executives with MBA's from United States universities were prominent in the mismanagement of those Mexican companies. Mexican elites are being educated in a universal Western culture which provides developmental solutions from urban, industrialized societies. While this homogenization in education may increase the ability of elite Mexicans to communicate with each other, it creates a language and a culture unshared by most rural Mexicans. Thus it may be that Mexican elites not only ignore rural problems, but more importantly, they lack a perspective from which best to understand and solve those problems.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 81.