Urbanization without Breakdown: A Case Study

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The author, who is a member of the staff of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Illinois, has long been interested in the social and economic aspects of rural Latin-American culture (see Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied, Sci. Monthly, 74, 368 [1952]). Dr. Lewis will leave next month for India, where he will be on a two-year leave of absence from his university post. The project on which he will work, jointly sponsored by the government of India and the Ford Foundation, is a vast experiment in controlled culture change. Centers will be set up in various provinces, in which Indian personnel will be trained in modern extension service methods. Dr. Lewis will help to evaluate the progress of this work.

This is a preliminary work report on a research project on urbanization in Mexico City. The research is an outgrowth and continuation of my earlier work in the village of Tepoztlán. In brief, we attempted to learn what happened to individuals and families from the village of Tepoztlán who had gone to live in Mexico City.*

Before presenting some of the preliminary findings, I should like to indicate how our work is related to other studies in the same field. In the first place, it should be noted that there have been very few studies of the sociopsychological aspects of urbanization in Mexico or other Latin-American countries. Urban sociology in Mexico has lagged behind developments in some of the other social sciences. The data most nearly comparable to ours are to be found in the rural-urban migration studies done by rural sociologists in the United States. These studies have been primarily concerned with the causes, the rate and direction, and the amount of migration, factors of selectivity, and occupational accommodation.

To the extent to which they have dealt with the adjustment of migrants in the city, the findings have on the whole highlighted the negative aspects, such as personal maladjustment, breakdown of family life, decline of religion, and increase of delinquency. The total picture has been one of disorganization, sometimes referred to as culture shock incident upon city living. One common theoretical explanation of these findings has been in terms of the change from the primary group environment, which is generally characterized as warm, personal, moral, and intimate, to a secondary group environment, which is described as cold, impersonal, mechanistic, nonmoral, and unfriendly.†

The preliminary findings of the present study of urbanization in Mexico City indicate quite different trends and suggest the possibility of urbanization without breakdown. They also suggest that some of the hitherto unquestioned sociological generalizations about urbanization may be culture-bound and in need of re-examination in the light of our findings.

† The tendency to view the city as the source of all evil and to idealize rural life has been corrected somewhat by the work of rural sociologists in recent years. We are no longer certain that rural society per se is nearly as Rousseauan and anxiety-free as we once thought. Studies by Mangus and his colleagues suggest just as high an incidence of psychosomatic illness among the farm population of portions of Ohio as in urban areas (see A. R. Mangus and John R. Seeley. Mental Health Needs in a Rural and Semirural Area of Ohio, Mimeo. Bull. No. 1951. Columbus: Ohio State Univ. [January 1947]). Moreover, a study by Goldhamer and Marshall suggests that there has been no increase in the psychoses (and, by inference, also in the neuroses) over the past hundred years in the state of Massachusetts, a state that has undergone considerable industrial development during this period. (see Herbert Goldhamer and Andrew W. Marshall. The Frequency of Mental Disease: Long-Term Trends and Present Status. The Rand Corp. [July 1949]).

* I am grateful to the Graduate Research Board of the University of Illinois for financial assistance on this project. The field research in Mexico City was carried out in the summer of 1951 with the aid of a group of students from the University of Illinois.

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of comparative studies of urbanization in other areas.† Some of our generalizations about the differences between rural and urban life also need to be re-examined. It should be recalled that direct studies of the urbanization process itself are difficult, and most studies have been indirect and inferential. Sociological generalizations about the differences between rural and urban society have been based largely on comparative statistical data on the incidence of crime in rural and urban areas, on birth, fertility, and death rates, size of family, educational opportunities, and social participation. As Ralph Beals has recently pointed out, "... sociologists paid much more attention to urbanism than to urbanization."§ Moreover, we know very little about the psychological aspects of urbanization as it affects specific individuals and families.

Perhaps one of the difficulties in this field has been the inadequate methodology. There is not, to my knowledge, a single study that has followed up migrants from a rural community which had first been the subject of intensive analysis on the social, economic, political, and psychological levels. An adequate research design for the study of the sociopsychological aspects of urbanization would require a project consisting of three phases: a well-rounded study of a rural or peasant community, including intensive family and psychological studies; locating families from this community who have gone to live in the city; an intensive study of these families in the city.

The present research has attempted to conform to this design. The first phase was completed some time ago with a study of the village of Tepoztlán. The second and third phases were begun last summer in Mexico City.

The specific objectives of the research were conceived as follows: (1) to study the process of urbanization directly by analyzing the changes in custom, attitudes, and value systems of Tepoztecan individuals and families who had gone to live in Mexico City; (2) to compare family life and interpersonal relations of selected urban families of Tepoztecan origin with those of the rural community from which they had migrated; (3) to relate our findings to the more general theoretical findings and problems in the field of culture change.

The study was planned on two levels. First, we wanted to do a broad survey of all Tepoztecan families in Mexico City and obtain data for each family on such items as date of and reasons for leaving the village, size of family, kinship composition of the household, the extent of bilingualism (Spanish and Nahuatl), the general level of living, the religious life, the compadre system, curing practices, and the life cycle. For most of these items we had rather full data on the village of Tepoztlán; these data could therefore be used as a base line from which to analyze the nature and direction of change.

Second, we planned to do intensive studies of a few selected families representative of the different lengths of residence in the city and of different socioeconomic levels. Other variables that might become significant in the course of the study were also to be taken into consideration.

We located 100 Tepoztecan families in Mexico City and interviewed each family at least once. Sixty-nine families were interviewed twice, and 10 of these were interviewed ten times. The quantitative data in this paper are based on the 69 families for which we had the fullest data. The major factor in our inability to gather more information on the remainder of the families was lack of time. On the basis of the data obtained in the one interview with each of the 31 families, it appears probable that our total picture would not have been appreciably changed. The fact that the 69 families were distributed in many different sections of the city and that they represented distinct socioeconomic levels further insures against an inadvertently loaded sample.

The city families were located with the help of our informants in Tepoztlán, many of whom had friends and relatives in the city. But most of the families were located with the aid of officers of the now-defunct Colonia Tepozteco, an organization of Tepoztecas in Mexico City, which kept a list of the names and addresses of Tepoztecas living in the city. We have reason to believe that the 100 families we located represent approximately

† Theodore Caplow's excellent article on "The Social Ecology of Guatemala City" (Social Forces, 26, 113 [December 1949]) suggests the provincialism of earlier sociological ideas about the nature of the city. Caplow writes, "The literature of urban geography and urban sociology has a tendency to project as universals those characteristics of urbanism with which European and American students are most familiar... there was until recently a tendency to ascribe to all cities characteristics which now appear to be specific to Chicago..." (p. 132). Caplow raises the question whether "much of the anarchic and unstable character attributed by many authorities to urban life in general is not merely a particular aspect of the urban history of the United States and Western Europe since the Renaissance" (p. 133).

90 per cent of all Tepoztecans living in the city.

It should be noted that field work in the city is in many ways more difficult, more costly, and more time-consuming than in the village. The Tepoztecan families were scattered in twenty-two different colonias, or neighborhoods, extending from one end of the city to the other. Much time was lost in traveling to and from the homes, in making appointments for interviews (only one of the families had a telephone), and in establishing rapport. Often we would spend an entire morning calling on two or three families, only to find people out or otherwise unavailable. Moreover, we did not have the advantage of working through community leaders, of becoming familiar and accepted figures in the community, or of utilizing neighbors—and village gossip—as sources of information.

The earliest contacts between Mexico City and Tepoztlán probably resulted from trade. A small number of Tepoztecan merchants regularly sold their products (mainly hog plums and corn) in the Merced, Lagunilla, and Tacubaya markets. Consequently, some of the earliest migrants of whom we have record settled near these markets, and to this day there are small concentrations of Tepoztecan families around the markets.

Our study revealed that the Tepoztecan families now living in Mexico City came in three distinct periods of migration. The first was prior to the Mexican Revolution of 1910; the second was during the Revolution, from about 1910 to 1920; the third since 1920. The motives for migration and the number and quality of migrants, as well as their social composition, show interesting differences for each of these periods.

During the first period only young men left, their primary motives being to get a higher education and to seek better employment opportunities. These early migrants were generally poor young men related to the best families in the village. We located 15 individuals who left during this period. In general these early migrants made good, economically speaking. Some became professionals and have achieved important positions in the city. Many became the intellectuals who later formed the core of the Colonia Tepozteca, which was to play such an important part in community affairs.

The second period was one of forced migration, when hundreds of Tepoztecans left the village, generally as family units, to escape the ravages of the civil war. The earliest ones to leave during this period were the cacique families who fled before the threat of the Zapatista revolutionaries. Later, when the village became a battleground for opposing forces, people from all social levels fled. It is estimated that by 1918 there were approximately a thousand Tepoztecans in the city, and, according to our informants, approximately 700 attended one of the early meetings preceding the formation of the Colonia Tepozteco. Most of these migrants returned to the village after peace was established. Many of those who remained were the conservative, wealthier families who had been ruined by the Revolution. About 65 per cent of the families we studied came to the city during this period.

The striking thing about migration during the third period is the relatively small number of migrants. Only 25 per cent of our families came during 1920–50. We find a wider variety of motives for migration than formerly, but the two most important seem to be improved educational and economic opportunities. During the later twenties and early thirties, however, a number of men left because of the intense political strife which flared up in the village. Again we find that the young men predominated in the exodus, but now there were also young women, who came either to attend school or to serve as domestics. In all cases during this period, the migrants came to live with relatives.

Back-yard scene, Tepoztecan home, Mexico City, is typical of back yards the world over.
or compadres. There was apparently a sharp increase in the number of migrants to the city toward the latter part of this period, particularly after the road was built in 1936.

The figures for Tepoztecans in Mexico City are not an accurate index of the total migration from the village. This was established by a study of all the cases that have left the village since 1943. Of 74 cases that left, only 41 went to live in Mexico City; the remainder went to other villages and towns. Of the 41 in Mexico City, there were 23 single males, 16 single females, and one married couple. Over 90 per cent were from two large barrios in the center of the village.

Tepoztecans in the city live in three types of housing: the vecindad, the apartment house, and the separate, privately owned dwelling. The vecindad represents some of the poorest housing conditions in the city. It consists of a series of one-story dwellings arranged around a courtyard. Often there is a communal water fountain in the center and one or two toilets for a settlement of 25 families. In a few cases there is piped water in each apartment. One of our families lived in a vecindad of 150 families—practically a small community in itself. The rentals varied from 25 to 65 pesos ([$3$–$8$]) a month. Forty-four per cent of Tepoztecan families live in vecindades. The dwellings are generally small, usually consisting of two rooms.

The apartment house provides much more privacy and represents a distinctly higher standard of living. Sixteen per cent of the families lived in apartment houses, at rentals ranging from 65 to 300 pesos a month. Professionals and skilled laborers live here—typical Mexican lower-middle-class families. The apartments are better constructed than the vecindades and have more and larger rooms.

Privately owned homes were dwellings for 28 per cent of the families. There was a wide range in the styles, size, and property value of these houses. Some were one- or two-room wooden shacks built on tiny lots on the outskirts of the city; others were modern eight- or ten-room buildings, with enclosed private gardens and patios, located in a

Many former residents of Tepoztlán live in low-quality housing such as the vecindad shown at the left.

Patio of Tepoztecan home, Colonia Portales, Mexico City.

Patio in a Colonia Portales home reflects the peasant's love of growing things.
thriving middle-class neighborhood. Home ownership is therefore not a good index of wealth or class position.

The average size of Tepoztécans' households in the city was somewhat larger than in the village—5.8 as compared to about 5 (Table 1).

The composition of the household shows about the same pattern as in the village except that there is a slightly higher percentage of extended families living in the city (Table 2). In contrast to Tepoztlán there were no cases of persons living alone or of unrelated families living together. There is probably greater economic pressure for families to live together in the city than in the country. In Tepoztlán, if young couples do not get along well with the in-laws and wish to live alone, they can almost always find someone who has an empty house that can be used rent-free. The same is true of old people and widows, who manage to eke out a living with garden produce and by raising chickens or pigs.

We found very little evidence of family disorganization in the city. There were no cases of abandoned mothers and children among our 69 families studied nor was there a history of separation or divorce in more than a few families. Families remain strong; in fact, there is some evidence that family cohesiveness increases in the city in the face of the difficulties of city life. In Tepoztlán the extended family shows solidarity only in times of crisis or emergency. Although there is more freedom for young people in the city, the authority of parents shows little sign of weakening, and the phenomenon of rebellion against parental authority hardly exists. Nor are the second-generation children ashamed of their parents. Perhaps this can be explained by the general cultural emphasis upon respect for age, authority, and parenthood. Similarly, we found no sharp generation cleavage in values and general outlook on life.

As might be expected, the general standard of living of Tepoztécans in Mexico City shows upward movement as compared with Tepoztlán. Thus, 78 per cent of our city families had radios as compared to about 1 per cent in the village; 83 per cent had clocks as compared to about 20 per cent in the village; 54 per cent had sewing machines as compared to 25 per cent in Tepoztlán; 41 per cent reported buying a newspaper with some regularity as compared to 6 per cent; 3 of our 69 families owned cars in the city; there were no car owners at the time of our Tepoztlan study. In the city all slept in beds; in the village only 19 per cent slept in beds in 1940. However, there seemed to be more crowding in the city, especially among the poor families, than in the village. I found cases, in vecindades, of 10 people living in one room and sharing two beds. A similar situation holds in regard to toilet facilities. All Tepoztécans familiar in the city had some toilet facilities, but we found cases where 15 families shared a single toilet, and in other instances there was a semiclosed toilet in the kitchen. From the point of view of hygiene, it is doubtful whether this was an improvement over the orchards of Tepoztlán.

The die of the city families is similar to that of the village except that there is greater variety, depending upon income. The city dwellers all enjoy Tepoztécans cooking and continue to make mole on festive occasions. They strongly prefer Tepoztécans tortillas, and many continue to prepare beans with epazote, as in Tepoztlán. About 80 per cent of the families continue to use the metate and meclapil, especially for preparing fiesta meals. A few buy corn and make tortillas at home; a larger number buy mill-ground corn or masa; a still larger number buy ready-made tortillas.

The Tepoztécans custom of having household pets continues in the city. Fifty-four per cent of the
families owned a pet—dogs, cats, or pigeons, and 24 per cent owned either chickens or pigs or both. Most of these families lived in privately owned homes.

The religious life of Tepoztecanõs in Mexico City appears to be at least as vigorous as in Tepoztlan. Again, the evidence does not support the findings of rural sociologists in this country to the effect that there is a decline in church attendance and religious practices when farm people move to the city. In our study it is not so much a matter of becoming more or less religious, but rather of a change in the content and form of religious expression. Specifically, it is a matter of becoming more Catholic and less Indian.

In general, the city Tepoztecans follow the Roman Catholic tradition more closely. The village belief that El Tepozteco is the son of Mary is no longer held and is regarded as backward and superstitious in the city. Tepoztecans in the city tend to send their children more regularly to Sunday School to learn doctrine, to take first communion, and to attend mass. Confession is as unpopular among city Tepoztecans as in the village, but probably occurs more often.

Mexico City, as the center of the Catholic Church in Mexico, has better organized and better staffed associations, which carry on intensive pro-

### TABLE 1
**Number of Persons per House Site, Tepoztlan and Mexico City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Persons per House Site</th>
<th>Percentage of House Sites, Tepoztlan</th>
<th>Percentage of House Sites, Mexico City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 and over</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

grams of indoctrination. In many *vecindades* we found religious shrines, usually of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and all residents are expected to honor them as the protector of the *vecindad*, to lift the hat in passing, to cross themselves, and to partake in the collective prayers organized by some enterprising member of the *vecindad*. That social control is strong can be seen from this statement by an informant: “If one does not salute the Virgin, the janitor and all the old women of the *vecindad* begin to call one a heretic and throw dirty looks.”

Such shrines are also found in some of the factories in which our informants worked. A few of our Tepoztecans who are bus drivers tell of the requirement to carry images of San Cristobal, the patron saint of their union. They also tell of religious pilgrimages organized by the unions. One Tepoztecan explained that he had never bothered about the Virgin of Guadalupe when he was in Tepoztlan, but since working in the city has gone on two union pilgrimages. This same informant, who as a child in the village had received no training in doctrine classes, had no first communion, and rarely was obliged to attend mass, now attends

### TABLE 2
**Kinship Composition by Households—Tepoztlan, 1943, and Mexico City, 1951**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Families in Mexico City (662)</th>
<th>Families in Tepoztlan (60)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple biological family</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with married children and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandchildren</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married siblings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with their children</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons living alone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated families</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>living together</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Even in the city villagers like to make their own tortillas.
mass frequently, consults a priest about his economic and domestic problems, and, thanks to the perseverance of Acción Catolica, regularly sends his four children to Sunday School.

As another example of the increased activity of, and the greater identification with, the church is the fact that several of our city informants draped their doors with black crepe to mourn the death of a bishop of the church. In Tepoztlán it is doubtful whether the death of the Pope himself would lead to such action.

There are some differences in church organization in the city which affect participation of Tepoztecans. Unlike the village, there are no barrio mayordomos. Many of the tasks connected with the care of the images and the church, which in the village are assigned to members of the community or to the specific barrio, are carried out by paid church personnel in the city. Since many of these jobs were the work of men in the village, the net result is that in the city the men play much smaller roles in the religious life. Another difference is that the Tepoztecans in the city contribute less money to the church than in the village.

The system of compadrazgo continues to function among Tepoztecans in the city. Each Tepoztecan interviewed in Mexico City had compadres, godparents, and godchildren. With one or two exceptions the changes that compadrazgo has undergone represent an adaptation to urban life rather than a breakdown or even a weakening of the system.

A major change in compadrazgo in the city is the disappearance of several types of godparents known in the village—namely, the godfather of miscoton, godfather of the ribbon, godfather of evangelio, godfather of the scapulary, godfather of the Child Jesus. There is also much less use of the godfather of confirmation and the godfather of communion. The compadrazgo system is largely limited to the godparents of baptism and of marriage, thereby resembling the original Catholic practice as introduced by the early Spaniards and as practiced to this day in Spain.

The decline in the role of the godfather of baptism is another important change. In the city he is no longer consulted in the selection of the godparent of confirmation in the cases where this occurs. Moreover, in the city there is no sacamisa, thereby eliminating the role of the godparent of baptism in this ritual. The absence of the sacamisa is probably due to the unwillingness of the mothers to remain at home for forty days after the birth of the child, as is required in Tepoztlán. Another adaptation to city life is the delayed baptism. In Tepoztlán babies are baptized as soon as possible, often when only a few days old, almost always before three months. In Mexico City baptisms in our families did not occur for 12 to 18 months and sometimes not for several years. This delay may be attributed in part to the lower death rate among infants born in the city and to a lessened anxiety about infant health.

Another interesting change in the city is the increased frequency with which relatives are selected as godparents. In Tepoztlán it is unusual to find relatives who are compadres. Most Tepoztecans consider this undesirable, for it conflicts with the basic notion of respect and social distance that should exist between compadres. In the city, where Tepoztecans find themselves without friends, they turn to relatives for godparents. Family ties are thereby reinforced by the ties of compadrazgo. But this changes the character of the compadrazgo relationship from a formal and ceremonial relationship to a more informal and personal one. The mode of address among compadres in the village...
is always of “Vd.–Ud.” In the city it is frequently merely a continuation of the form of address used prior to becoming compadres. Thus, in the city we find compadres addressing each other as “tu–tu,” “Vd.–tu,” and “Vd.–Vd.” The “tu–tu” is used between brothers or sisters who have become compadres. The “Vd.–tu” is used when an uncle and nephew become compadres. In rural Spain we found the compadre system to be practically identical with the urban forms in Mexico.

Still another change in the system in the city is the custom whereby a man or woman will offer to be a godparent before the child is born. In the village one always waits to be asked in a formal manner. Since it might be taken as an insult to turn down an offer of godparentage, the net effect is to reduce parental control in the matter of selection. The obligations of godparents to godchildren and of compadres to one another are more clearly and specifically defined in the village than in the city. In the city there is much more familiarity between compadres, and a compadre may ask for almost any kind of favor.

Many Tepoztecan families in the city still use herbs for cooking and curing. In almost all the privately owned homes and in some of the vecindades common herbs such as yerba buena, santa maria, and manzanilla are grown in gardens and flowerpots. Herbs are used to cure colds, headaches, stomachache, toothache, and so on, much the way they are in Tepoztlán; however, city families tend to rely more upon patent medicines than do village families. Illnesses such as evil eye, los aires, and muina (‘illness of anger’), for which there are no patent medicines, necessarily are cured by native herbs. In these cases it is not uncommon for city people to return to the village to be cured. It should also be noted that, when other illnesses do not respond to patent medicines or to medical treatment, the sick person may be taken to the village for re-diagnosis and cure. One informant told of suffering a partial paralysis of the face and of being treated unsuccessfully by several doctors. Finally, a visitor from Tepoztlán diagnosed it as an attack of los aires, whereupon the patient went to the village and was promptly cured by means of appropriate herbs placed in a bag suspended around his neck. The daughter of another informant was stricken with poliomyelitis and despite hospital treatment remained paralyzed. Her father, in desperation, took her to Tepoztlán, where she was given a series of sweat baths in a temascal. This treatment, according to her parent, brought about considerable improvevment. Sometimes, in the hope that the local curanderos would “understand” the illness better, an incurably ill person may be taken from the city to the village, only to die there. Thus, not only do country people go to the city seeking cures, but the same process works the other way around.

In considering stability or change in the way of life of Tepoztecans in Mexico City it is important to realize that the ties between the city families and their relatives in the village remain strong and enduring for almost all the city families studied. They visit the village at least once a year on the occasion of the Carnaval. Many go much more often, to celebrate their own Saint’s Day, to attend their barrio fiesta, a funeral, or the inauguration of a new bridge or school, to act as godparent for some child, or to celebrate a wedding anniversary, or the Day of the Dead. The ties with the village do not seem to weaken with increase in years away from it. On the contrary, some of the most ardent and nostalgic villagers are those who have been away from it the longest. Many old people expressed a desire to return to the village to die. Some men, who have been living in the city for thirty years, still think of themselves as Tepoztecans first and Mexicans second. Fifty-six per cent of the families studied owned a house in the village, and 30 per cent owned their private milpas.

The proximity to Tepoztlán, and the bus line which now runs to the village, facilitate visiting. The young people enjoy spending a weekend or a Sunday in their village. There is also some visiting from Tepoztlán to friends and relatives in the city.

In the past few years Tepoztecans in the city have organized a soccer team and play against the village team. The organization of a team in the city means that Tepoztecans from distant colonias must get together; however, the cohesiveness of Tepoztecans with their village is much greater than among themselves in the city. The Colonia Tepozteco has not been functioning for many years, having broken up because of factionalism within the organization.

In summary, this study provides further evidence that urbanization is not a simple, unitary, universally similar process, but that it assumes different forms and meanings, depending upon the prevailing historic, economic, social, and cultural conditions. Generalizations concerning urbanization must take these conditions into consideration. From our study of Tepoztecans living in Mexico City, we find that peasants in Mexico adapt to city life with far greater ease than do American farm families. There

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Middle-class homes occupied by former Tepoztecans in Mexico City, and worker’s home in a vecindad, Tacubaya. Community well in foreground.

is little evidence of disorganization and breakdown, of culture conflict, or of irreconcilable differences between generations; many of the trends and characteristics found among these urbanized Tepoztecans are in direct opposition to those that occur among urbanized farm families in the United States. Family life remains strong in Mexico City. Family cohesiveness and extended family ties increase in the city, fewer cases of separation and divorce occur, no cases of abandoned mothers and children, no cases of persons living alone or of unrelated families living together. Household composition is similar to village patterns except that more extended families live together in the city. There is a general rise in the standard of living in the city, but dietary patterns do not change greatly. Religious life in the city becomes more Catholic and disciplined; however, men play a smaller religious role and contribute less money to the church in the city. The system of compadrazgo has undergone important changes, but remains strong. Although there is a greater reliance upon doctors and patent medicines to cure illness, city Tepoztecans still use village herbal cures and in cases of severe illness sometimes return to the village to be cured. Village ties remain strong, with much visiting back and forth.

In considering possible explanations for the above findings the following factors would seem to be most relevant: (1) Mexico City has been an important political, economic, and religious center for Tepoztecans since pre-Hispanic times. The contact with an urban, albeit Indian, culture was an old pattern, and has continued throughout recent history. (2) Mexico City is much more homogeneous than most large urban centers in the United States, both in terms of the predominance of Catholicism and of the cultural backgrounds of its people. Neither Mexico City nor Mexico as a whole has had much immigration from other parts of the world. The population of Mexico City therefore has very close ties with the rural hinterlands. (3) Mexico City is essentially conservative in tradition. In Mexico most of the revolutions have begun in the country. The city has been the refuge for the well-to-do rural families whose local positions were threatened. (4) Mexico City is not as highly industrialized as many American cities and does not present the same conditions of life. (5) Mexican farmers live in well-organized villages that are more like cities and towns than like the open-country settlement pattern of American farmers. (6) Finally, Tepoztlán is close to Mexico City, not only geographically but also culturally. The similarities between the value systems of working class and lower-middle-class families in Mexico City and those of Tepoztecans are probably much greater than those between, let us say, families from the hill country of Arkansas and working- and middle-class families from St. Louis or Detroit.

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that this study is still in its preliminary stage, and the findings are therefore tentative. The primary purpose has been to indicate a research design which might yield valid and reliable data for the understanding of the urbanization process.

It may be that Tepoztlán was not the best possible choice for this kind of study because of its proximity to Mexico City. It may also be that Tepoztlán is a special case from other points of view. Certainly we need other studies. We should have follow-up studies of migrants to the city from George Foster’s Tarascan village of Tzintzuntzan, from Robert Redfield’s and Villa Rojas’ Maya village of Chan-Kom, from Julio de la Fuente’s Zapotecan village of Yalalag, to determine to what extent the findings agree with those from Tepoztlán. It would also be important to have comparative studies of migrants to Mexico City, not from ancient and stable communities like Tepoztlán, but from plantation areas populated by poor and landless farm laborers.

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