# ANA CASIS AND KINGSLEY DAVIS

PART II. TRAITS OF THE URBAN AND RURAL POPULATIONS

F, as Part I has shown, the cities of Latin America already embrace a substantial portion of the population, and if (under the impact of industrialization) they are destined to embrace a still larger portion, the next question is this: What are the leading characteristics of the city populations as contrasted with the rural? What is the nature and extent of the gulf that separates the two? The answer to this question will help explain the process of urbanization in the region. It will also throw light on the future of Latin America, because, with the further diffusion of urbanism, the city characteristics of today will become tomorrow those of the whole country.

Statistics on rural-urban characteristics in the Latin American region are scarce and fragmentary. The data are not always broken down according to the rural-urban difference or according to size of city. For some countries, however, the existing statistics are either satisfactory or can serve as a basis of reasonable estimates. It is thus possible to assemble considerable information on the vital rates, the age distribution, the sex ratio, the marital status, the place of birth, and the literacy of the city and non-city populations. Since the countries for which data exist are scattered and varied, the basic facts about rural-urban differences within these countries seem applicable in a general way to the region as a whole.

We shall try to show that the cities are dependent on the countryside for their people, the countryside dependent on the cities for its cultural advance. First we shall deal with the supply of people, *i.e.*, with the vital statistics—births, deaths, and migration; then

<sup>\*</sup> From the Office of Population Research, School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University. This is the second part of the paper. The first part appeared in the last issue (April) of the *Quarterly*.

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we shall deal with their biological characteristics, such as sex and age, and finally with their cultural traits. We shall find that these topics are all interrelated, and that the facts help to clarify not only the evolution of Latin American cities but also the evolution of Latin America itself.

# VITAL RATES

*Fertility.* There can be no doubt that the urban dwellers of Latin America, like those in the rest of the world,<sup>1</sup> have fewer offspring than the rural dwellers. Proof can be found in two independent lines of evidence: First, in the few countries having fairly reliable birth registration, the reported birth rates of the cities are lower than those of the country. Second, in all countries having censuses the urban child-woman ratio is lower than the rural. Both kinds of evidence are subject to error, but the biases would seemingly tend to minimize rather than exaggerate the rural-urban differential. Consequently, the existence of differential fertility may be accepted without cavil.

Reported birth rates for four countries are depicted in Figure 6, the top row of diagrams. In each case, despite some tendency for outlying inhabitants to hospitalize their births and thus report them in the city, and despite better registration in the cities, the urban rates are lower than the rural. Only in Chile in 1941-1943 was the relationship reversed. In general the differential is apparently not so great as in the United States, but this result may be due as much to error as to a real situation; exact comparisons between countries as to rural-urban fertility differences are extremely hard to make. Since Latin America is in an early stage of industrial development, we should expect that the differential between city and country fertility has not yet reached its greatest width. If births were fully reported and were allocated to place

<sup>1</sup> Jaffe, A. J.: Urbanization and Fertility. *American Journal of Sociology*, 48, July 1942, pp. 48-60. Davis, Kingsley: Human Fertility in India. *Ibid*: To be published soon.



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Fio. 6. Vital rates for cities and rural areas in four countries





Fig. 7. Child-woman ratios in cities by size class and in rest of country. Selected countries.

of mother's residence, the trend in the differential could be accurately gauged.

The evidence furnished by child-woman ratios is as impressive

as that furnished by registered births. Figure 7 gives, for seven countries, the number of children 0-4 per 1,000 women 15-49 in two sizes of city and in rural areas. In every case the urban ratios are substantially lower than the rural, and in general they are lowest in the larger cities. The cities of 100,000 and over have a ratio, on the average, only half as high as do the places under 10,000. Below are given, for the seven countries combined, the

	Children 0-4 per 1,000 Women
	15-49 (Seven Countries)
Cities 100,000 Plus	352
Cities 10,000-100,000	412
Places Under 10,000	659

average ratio found in each kind of place.<sup>2</sup> It can be seen not only that the larger cities have the lowest ratio, but also that the difference between them and the smaller cities is far less than the difference between cities in general and the rest of the country. In other words, the gulf between cities of different size is less, in this respect at least, than the gulf between city and country.

One would like to know how long these differentials have prevailed, and whether they have grown or declined. But in addition to the incompleteness of registration and the infrequency of censuses, changes in the habits of hospitalization, of registration, of enumeration, and of presenting the data all frustrate an attempt to get valid statistical series. Historical analysis of rural-urban fertility differentials therefore seems impossible for the present.

Even without the historical data on rural-urban fertility, however, one can rely on the current differential and two other known trends to furnish a prediction that fertility in Latin America will

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> The censuses from which the figures were derived did not all occur in the same year in these countries. The dates are given in Figure 7. The disparity of date, not great in any case, is not fatal for this kind of average.

The age structure of women 15-49 is not sufficiently dissimilar in the cities and rural areas to justify a refinement of the child-woman ratio on this basis. The large bias lies in the differential underenumeration and mortality of children under 5, not in the distortion of female age distributions within the 15-49 range.

decline in the fairly near future. The two trends are (a) the faster growth of population in urban than in rural areas,<sup>3</sup> and (b) the spread of urban patterns to the rural population. Given the existing differential fertility, these twin processes-urban growth and urban diffusion-will in time lower the birth rate substantially. But there may be still a third factor at work-namely, a secular decline in urban fertility itself. It is this third factor that cannot be proved for Latin America on the basis of present statistics.

The influence of urbanization in lowering fertility seems observable from the figures presented in Table 5. Here the countries are listed according to their urbanization index, and then their reported or estimated birth rates and their child-woman ratios are

Country	Date 8	Urbanization Index <sup>1</sup>	Average Birth Rate	Children 0-4 per 1,000 Women 15-49 <sup>1</sup>
Argentina	1943	43.1 <sup>b</sup>	25.2° 2	425 <sup>d 3</sup>
Chile	1940	35.8	33.4° 2	52.8f
Cuba	1943	30.5	37.8 <sup>g</sup> 4	535
Panama	1940	23.4	44.8 <sup>h 4</sup>	594
Mexico	1940	19.1	43.8° 2	580
Puerto Rico	1940	17.8	40.0 <sup>e</sup> 2	606
Venezuela	1941	17.4	43.2 <sup>i 4</sup>	593
Colombia	1938	13.3	45.6 <sup>1</sup> 4	62.8
Peru	1940	13.1	44·3 <sup>h</sup> 4	654

Table 5. Birth rates, child-woman ratios, and urbanization index for selected countries.

• The date in this column refers to columns (2) and (4).

<sup>b</sup> Derived from estimated populations.

º 1940-1943 average.

d 1938.

• 1940-1944 average.

1 1930.

<sup>1</sup> 1933–1943 average. <sup>1</sup> 1930–1940 average. <sup>1</sup> 1931–1941 average.

i 1928-1938 average.

<sup>1</sup> Computed from census returns.

<sup>2</sup> Averages computed from official reports.
 <sup>3</sup> Alejandro E. Bunge, UNA NUEVA ARGENTINE. Buenos Aires: Guillermo Kraft Ltda.,

1940, p. 116. <sup>4</sup> Birth rates estimated by using survival rates, ages o-9, from roughly applicable Latin American life table to trace the age groups o-9 back to the births that presumably gave rise to them. Since the census age distributions have not been smoothed, the esti-mates are probably lower than reality.

<sup>8</sup> See Part I, pp. 196-199.

given. It can be seen that there is a fairly good negative correlation between a country's degree of urbanization and its general fertility. In fact the correlation is surprisingly good in view of the ragged nature of the data. The growth of cities and the diffusion of their reproductive habits is already, it appears, having a depressing effect on national birth rates.

Mortality. If the data on fertility are poor, those on mortality are even worse. To judge by reported rates there is no marked or consistent difference between city and country. If anything, as shown in the second row of diagrams in Figure 6, the cities tend to have a higher mortality, but this conclusion must be accepted with care. Obviously the possible advantages run both ways: the cities have better sanitation and more medical service, but they are also more crowded and possibly offer poorer diets. Probably the registration of deaths is much better in the city, and the death rate is artificially increased by deaths of rural people in urban hospitals. Unfortunately there is no measure of rural-urban mortality independent of the reported figures-nothing comparable, that is, to the child-woman ratio. Until further evidence is in, it seems safe to say that the rural-urban difference in mortality is less than the difference in fertility, and possibly has an opposite direction.

Natural Increase. If the cities manifest a birth rate lower than, and a death rate equal to or higher than the country, their natural increase will fall considerably below that of the rural areas. This seems to be the case with the four countries presented in Figure 6 (bottom row). Here the natural increase in the urban areas has ordinarily been between a third and four-fifths of the rural figure. It should be borne in mind that the "urban" population, for the purpose of this chart, is represented only by the Federal District in Argentina and Mexico, only by the three major cities in Puerto Rico, and only by the cities 20,000 and over in Chile. Nevertheless, the magnitude of the differential suggests that in general the

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rural population enjoys a rate of natural increase far superior to that of the urban population.

## **RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION**

Granting the correctness of these results concerning vital rates, we reach the conclusion, mentioned in Part I, that the faster growth of urban than rural population in Latin America has been due primarily to rural-urban migration, and not to a higher natural increase in urban zones. This conclusion is buttressed by a study of those population characteristics that reflect migration.

In Chile it is possible to compare the natural increase of the population in places of 20,000 and over and in the rest of the country with the actual population growth in each of these zones. Theoretically, the figures should run as follows:

Cities 20,000 and Over Population Growth less Natural Increase = in-migration Rest of Country Natural Increase minus Population Growth = out-migration

The in-migration to the cities and the out-migration from the country should approximately equal each other. Actually, because of great under-registration, much late registration, and some foreign immigration, this is not the case. The data are sufficient, however, to permit estimates to be made for the 1930-1940 decade, and from these it appears that more than 50 per cent of the growth of the population in cities 20,000 and over is due to ruralurban migration. The rest of the country apparently lost about 17 per cent of its natural increase to the cities. Since the decade in question was a period of severe depression for Chile, we may assume that this rural-ruban movement was not exceptional.

In Puerto Rico there are three centers of urban concentration— San Juan-Rio Piedras, Ponce, and Mayaguez. By computing natural increase and population increase for the four municipalities containing these centers,<sup>4</sup> it is possible, as in the case of Chile, to form an estimate of the migration into these centers, which can be checked by forming an estimate of the migration *out* of the other municipalities. The results indicate that no less than 61.5 per cent of the population gain in the four municipalities was due to in-migration, while the rest of the island lost approximately

Country and Urban Areas	Census Date	Per Cent of Total Population in Urban Area	Per Cent of Foreign-Born in Urban Area
Argentina Capital Federal Places 1,000 Plus	1914	19.8 57·4	32.5 68.3
<i>Chile</i> Santiago and Valparaiso Cities 10,000 Plus	1930	21.5 34·7	55-9 77-9
Colombia Urban Municipios®	1938	10.5	47.5
Cuba City of Havana Cities 10,000 Plus	1943	13.8 35·7	30.8 50.1
<i>Jamaica</i> Kingston–Port Royal, and St. Andrew Parishes	1943	19.3	56.0
<i>Mexico</i> Federal District	1940	14.6	28.6
<i>Panama</i> Panama City and Colon	1940	24.8	72-5
Peru Lima and Callao	1940	14.7	62.6
Puerto Rico	0401		

Table 6. Per cent of total population and per cent of foreign-born in specified urban areas.<sup>1</sup>

• Includes only those municipios having 70 per cent of their population in cities of 10,000 and over.

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30.3

44.0 76.2

<sup>1</sup> Computed from census returns.

City of San Juan

Places of 2,500 Plus

<sup>4</sup> The only one of the four municipalities that is not mainly urban is Rio Piedras, but it has a density of 1,240 per square mile (1940) and is the main area of expansion from San Juan, which is entirely urban.

29 per cent of its natural increase. These findings are roughly similar to those for Chile. It seems correct to say that throughout Latin America the rapid growth of cities is due in large part to rural-urban migration.

Not only does internal migration contribute heavily to city growth, but in some areas foreign immigration does the same. In this region, as elsewhere, immigrants have tended to settle in the cities rather than in the country.<sup>5</sup> Evidence of this has already been presented in Part I, but the material is now brought together in tabular form in Table 6. In all the countries examined the immigrants are concentrated in the urban parts and particularly in the larger cities.

## AGE DISTRIBUTION

The age structure of the cities reflects both their lower fertility and their greater attraction to migrants. As compared with the country, the cities have a deficiency of children and an excess of adults. In Table 7, for example, there are six countries for which the proportion in broad age-sex groups is given as a percentage of the proportion found in the general population. (See also Figure 8.) It will be noticed that in both small and large cities there is, in addition to a low percentage of children, a heavy concentration of males and females in the age class 15-49. The concentration is somewhat greater in the larger cities, but as between males and females it is approximately equal. In the age group 50 and over, however, the concentration is greater for small cities than for large, and much greater for women than for men. Apparently, then, there is a tendency for the cities to attract both men and women in the vigorous period of life, and the larger cities exert a greater pull than the smaller ones. In the later adult ages

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> For the Brazilian situation, see Smith, T. Lynn: BRAZIL: PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1946, pp. 199-200. For the world situation see Forsyth, W. D.: THE MYTH OF THE OPEN SPACES. Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1942, Chs. 3 & 6. The case of Buenos Aires and other Latin American cities was mentioned in Part I, pp. 199-200.

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the pull is not so great for males, especially in the larger cities; but it is just about as great for females. In the older ages there is a heavy concentration of females, greater than is found in Canadian cities. This concentration of elderly women in Latin American cities is possibly due to greater employment opportunities there, especially in domestic and other service occupations. It may also reflect a tendency to live with urban rather than rural relatives when both are available.

Professor T. Lynn Smith, who has noted similar age phenomena in Brazil, has this to say: "In general . . . the age profiles of Brazilian cities are of the type that arises where rural-urban migration is a one-way process. There is little evidence to indicate that persons who have moved to the cities in early life, later seek a

Size of City and	Size of City and Date U		15	-49	50 and Over	
Country	OF Census	Both Sexes	Males	Females	Males	Females
Cities 10,000 to 100,000						
Chile	1930	92.5	106.6	106.5	92.2	97.2
Colombia	1938	87.3	110.7	110.9	92.3	108.7
Mexico	1940	90.I	104.5	106.7	106.3	115.4
Panama	1940	63.6	123.0	122.0	137.0	116.8
Puerto Rico	1940	83.5	108.7	112.1	104.3	123.6
Venezuela	1936	82.3	112.9	109.9	100.4	125.0
Average— 6 Countries		83.2	<b>I</b> II.I	111.4	105.4	114.4
Canada <sup>a</sup>	1941	79.2	109.5	110.4	101.8	104.0
Cities 100,000 Plus						
Chile		83.7	111.6	113.1	87.4	104.5
Colombia		79.7	116.2	118.2	86.8	112.2
Mexico		82.8	113.8	114.4	88.1	110.2
Panama		73.0	120.4	118.7	103.1	111.6
Puerto Rico		78.8	116.0	116.6	95-9	113.5
Venezuela		81.8	114.8	108.4	100.6	129.1
Average—6 Countries		80.0	115.5	114.9	93.6	113.5
Canada		81.9	106.2	108.7	103.4	108.0

Table 7. Per cent which city age distributions form of the total country. (Proportion of total country in each age group = 100.)

\* Cities 20,000 to 100,000.



Fig. 8. City age distribution compared with total population.

home on the land in which to spend their declining years, as is prevalent in the United States and some of the European countries."<sup>6</sup>

## Sex Ratio

The concentration of women in the cities occurs not only at <sup>o</sup>Op. cit., pp. 210-211.

elderly ages, but at all ages above 15. In Table 7 and Figure 8, however, the sex ratio cannot be determined, because each percentage relates to a given sex, not to the other sex. In Table 8, on the other hand, the sex ratio is given for the population above age 15. In all of the six countries except Panama (which is in a peculiar situation) the rural sex ratio is substantially more masculine than the urban, and in every case except Puerto Rico and Venezuela, the small city ratio is more masculine than the large city ratio.7

The accumulation of women above age 15 is exactly what one would expect. In an area where urban growth is based on light industry, commerce, political centralization, and leisure-class interest, and where the rural areas sadly lack civilized conveniences, short-run rural-urban migration would normally tend to be feminine in character. This is not the case in India, where a different kind of culture has produced cities that are dominantly masculine, but it is the case in Western lands. In this matter the Latin American countries resemble the United States and North-

Country and Census	Census Date	Places Less Than 10,000	Cities 10,000 to 100,000	Cities 100,000 and Over
Chilea	Í930	104	91	80
Colombia <sup>a</sup>	1938	98	86	76
Mexico <sup>b</sup>	1940	98	81	77
Panama	1940	107	119	100
Puerto Rico	1940	106	82.	84
Venezuela <sup>a</sup>	1936 ·	93	80	86
Canada	1941	1100	98ª	96

Table 8. Males per 100	females in	population	aged 1	15 and	over, f	or cities	; by
size class and rest of country.							

» In Chile, Colombia, and Venezuela the characteristics of the population of cities are In chuc, Colombia, and venezuela the characteristics of the population of cities are not given. Instead, the population characteristics are given for the comunas, municipios, or distritos. We took those units that had 70 per cent or more in the city and assumed that their characteristics were practically the same as those of the city that each contained.
 b Includes only 22 out of the total of 32 states.
 b Places less than 20,000.
 c Cities 20,000 to 100,000.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, op. cit., pp. 215-216, finds that the capital of each state in Brazil had, on the average, a lower sex ratio than the rest of the state, according to the 1920 census.

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western Europe, except that there appears to be less variation from city to city in the Latin American region. In the United States the sex ratio of the cities varies markedly according to the type of industry,<sup>8</sup> but on the whole the cities of Latin America are not yet so occupationally specialized. The main disturbances to the sex ratio appear to come as a result of foreign immigration.

# MARITAL STATUS

Usually in the city, as compared to the country, people marry later and less frequently. Certain peculiarities of Latin American culture, however, appear to reverse this pattern (Table 9). In a country such as Venezuela, for example, a greater percentage of persons aged 15 and over in the city are married than in the country. But the key to this situation lies in the term "married." The Venezuelan census does not give figures on the number of consensual unions-i.e., unions entered into without a formal marriage and capable of being broken without a formal separation or divorce.9 Presumably it classifies people in such unions as "single," although probably some of them slip into the "married" column. If, on the other hand, we take a country that does give figures on consensual unions, we find that the proportion of persons living together, whether in wedlock or in consensual union, is greater for the rural areas than for the city. In Panama, for instance, the figures are as follows:

	Per Cent Living in Marriage				
	0	r in Cons	ensual Uni	on	
	Males		Females		
	15-49	50 <b>+</b>	I5-49	50+	
Cities of Panama and Colon	42.0	59.1	47-4	33-3	
Rest of Country	46.1	62.4	56.7	35.4	

<sup>6</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States, POPULATION, Vol. II, Characteristics of the Population, Part I, p. 116. For regional differences *see* Vance, Rupert B.: ALL THESE PEOPLE. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1946, Ch. 4.

<sup>9</sup> The Cuban census of 1943, pp. 767-68, in accordance with the 1940 Constitution, did not inquire into the legality of the union, but the census authorities believe that most persons living in consensual union were listed as "single" and in the comparative tables of this (Continued on page 308)

# Table 9. Per cent in each mar country, selected countries.<sup>1\*</sup>

Table 9. Per cent in ea country, selected countrie	ch mar s. <sup>1</sup> *			ia.	
	MA	ALES	Females		
	15-49	50+	15-49	50+	
Argentina 1914 <sup>a</sup>					
Federal Capital					
Single	50	0.3	38	3.6	
Married	46	.6	50	0.2	
Widowed	3	.1	11	.2	
Rest of Country					
Single	55	.2	43	3.1	
Married	49	0.9	47	7.2	
Widowed	3	6-9	9	<b>)</b> •7	
Chile 1030					
Cities 100.000+		1		1	
Single	52.8	12.6	47.9	18.0	
Married	45.2	70.2	45.8	21.7	
Widowed	2.0	17.2	6.2	49.4	
Rest of Country		-,	,	דיעד	
Single	59.2	16.5	49.6	17.1	
Married	28.8	66.2	46.1	42.2	
Widowed	2.0	17.3	4 2	206	
W Ido wed		-/.5	4	33.0	
Colombia 1938					
Cities 100,000+					
Single	64.1	19.7	62.3	34.4	
Married	34.7	67.6	32.9	27.4	
Widowed	I.2	12.7	4.8	38.3	
Rest of Country					
Single	65.2	22.2	58.1	30.7	
Married	33.2	65.1	37.7	35-5	
Widowed	1.6	12.7	4.2	33.8	
Cuba 1042b					
Province of Havana					
Singleo	64.3	26.5	53.0	22.7	
Married	34.0	60.6	42.3	41.8	
Widowed	.9	11.8	2.9	22.9	
Divorced	.8	1.2	1.8	1.6	
Rest of Country					
Single <sup>o</sup>	74.9	32.6	65.2	27.7	
Married	24.0	55.2	32.2	42.6	
Widowed	.8	10.6	2.0	2.8.1	
Divorced	.3	-5	.6	.6	
• •		,			
amaica 1943	1				
Kingston, Port Koyal					
and St. Andrew					
Single	53.0	20.0	56.7	34.6	
Married	25.3	58.0	23.5	30.6	
Consensual	21.1	12.6	17.4	2.9	
Widowed	.4	9.1	2.2	31.6	
Divorceda	.2	.4	.2	.3	

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#### Table 9. (Continued)

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	Ма	LES	Females		
	15-49	50+	15-49	50+	
Jamaica (Cont.)					
Rest of Country					
Single	58.9	20.7	52.4	32.6	
Married	20.2	57.5	24.0	36.5	
Consensual	20.4	12.8	21.9	4.6	
Widowed®	.5	9.0	1.7	2.6.3	
Mexica 1020 <sup>f</sup>					
Federal District					
Single	42.6	9.9	42.1	16.1	
Married	40.8	50.6	32.3	12.7	
Consensual	12.1	7.3	10.8	2.2	
Widowed	2.4	23.0	14.4	68.7	
Divorced		.2	.4	.3	
Rest of Country				,	
Single	24.2	6.0	31.7	11.9	
Married	47.4	60.3	44.2	23.8	
Consensual	14.8	11.1	13.8	4.8	
Widowed	3.2	21.9	9.8	58.8	
Divorced	.4	.7	.5	.6	
Panama 1940 Panama City					
Single	57.4	28.8	50.2	33.6	
Married	23.0	44-4	24.6	24.0	
Consensual	18.5	17.3	21.2	7.1	
Widowed	.7	8.7	3.4	34-4	
Divorced	.4	.8	.6	.9	
Rest of Country					
Single	53.4	30.1	41.1	37.0	
Married	16.3	32.0	20.1	21.0	
Consensual	29.3	29.3	35.9	15.2	
Widowed	.8	8.3	2.6	26.3	
Divorced	I.	-3	-3	-5	
Venezuela 1936					
Cities 100,000+					
Single	70.4	29.8	64.8	44.3	
Married	26.4	56.0	28.7	20.0	
Widowed	1.7	13.3	5.6	35.2	
Divorced	.5	.8	.9	-5	
Rest of Country			1		
Single	79.0	41.6	73.9	54.2	
Married	18.9	45.0	21.9	19.3	
Widowed	1.8	13.0	3.9	26.2	
Divorced	.2	•4	.2.	.2	

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\* Argentina, Chile, and Colombia do not give any data on divorce.
\* Argentina gives data only for "15 years and over" combined.
\* The breakdown below age 50 for Cuba is 14-49.
• Includes single, consensual union, and unknown.
d Includes divorced and "not specified."
\* Includes widowed, divorced, and "not specified."
\* The breakdown by age for Mexico for Males is 16-59 and 60+; for Females, 14-59 and 60+.
\* Computed from census data of the given date.

Thus the apparent reversal of the urban tendency toward late and infrequent marriage is not a real reversal. This fact must be borne in mind in interpreting Table 9. But the fact that a larger proportion of people living together in the city are officially married indicates once more that the city is ahead of the country in cultural advance. It is the backward and out-of-way areas that have the highest proportion of consensual union. As the influence of the city spreads, the amount of consensual mating will probably decline. At the same time, the formation of effective reproductive partnerships of all kinds, legal or non-legal, may also decline.

As might be expected, the proportion of persons widowed and divorced is also greater for the city. The tendency of widows to concentrate in the city is very apparent, although there is no such tendency for widowers.

## LEGITIMACY

If more of the city people are "married" in comparison to the country, it follows that more of the city births will be "legitimate." This actually turns out to be the case in the few countries for which the data could be found (Table 10). Most of the so-called illegitimate children are of course merely the offspring of consensual unions. What the proportion is, and what the ruralurban differences are with respect to offspring of promiscuous relations, nobody knows. It is possible that such promiscuous illegitimacy is more frequent in the city than in the country. As for recorded illegitimates, the rural-urban difference appearing in the statistics is probably a minimum, because the registration may be poorer for illegitimate births in general, and for those in the country in particular.

Census they were so treated. In Chile, where also no inquiry was made, it is thought, on the other hand, that most of those in consensual unions recorded themselves as "married" (Census of 1930, Vol. II, p. ix). Colombia also made no attempt to get data on consensual unions, and hazards no guess as to how they were returned (Census of 1938, Vol. VII, p. xi). For a treatment of the institution of concubinage in Latin America, see Davis, Kingsley: Contemporary Modes of Marriage *in* Becker, Howard and Hill, Reuben: MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY. New York, Heath, 1941, pp. 100-06.

#### LITERACY

Another evidence that the cities are in the van of cultural change in Latin America is the fact that the urban populations

Table 10. Per cent of registered births that are illegitimate, by cities and rest of country.1

Country and Area	Per Cent Births Illegitimate
Chile 1940–1943	
Cities 100,000+*	20.1
Rest of Country	25.5
Mexico 1937–1939	
Federal District	30.9
Rest of Country	37.9
Venezuela 1940–1944	
Federal District	48.6
Rest of Country	61.9
Cities 100,000+ 1939-1940	46.8
Cities 10,000+ 1939-1940 <sup>b</sup>	52.9
Peru, July, 1941–June, 1943	
Lima and Callao <sup>o</sup>	43.4
Rest of Country	45.7

a Includes Santiago, Valparaiso, and Viña del

<sup>a</sup> Includes Santago, .... Mar. <sup>b</sup> Includes only eleven out of the sixteen cities listed by the 1936 census in this size class. The cities included, however, represent 84.7 per cent of all cities 10,000+ in 1936. <sup>c</sup> Includes the entire province of Callao and the entire department of Lima. Data for cities are not available.

<sup>1</sup> Data taken from official reports.

show a considerably higher literacy than the rural (Table 11). In some cases (e. g., Mexico and Panama) the literacy in places of more than 10,000 is twice that of the rest of the country. In others (e. g., Chile and Puerto Rico) the difference is much less. Apparently the Latin American countries are in an intermediate stage so far as literacy is concerned. The cities are not completely literate as yet, but they are beginning to approach that condition. In the mean-

time, the countryside lags behind and promises to catch up only after the lapse of some years.

Literacy does not necessarily increase with size of city. As Table 11 shows, the cities below 50,000 generally manifest a lesser literacy than those above 50,000, but once this point is passed an increase in size of city does not consistently mean a higher literacy. Perhaps the largest cities have the heaviest rural-urban migration and therefore draw a larger proportion of their citizens from the relatively illiterate countryside.

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A question important for estimating future social development can now be raised: Is literacy increasing faster in the cities or in the country? If it is slower in the country, we may expect future improvements in general literacy to take painfully long. One commonly hears, indeed, that education for rural peons means little, because they cannot use it in their elementary pursuits. Such opinions might lead us to expect progress in the country to be slower than in the cities. But according to the results given in Table 12, this is apparently not the case. In four out of five countries having available data, the non-urban parts manifest a higher ratio between literacy age 10-10 and that age 20-plus than do the cities. The only exception, Venezuela, involves merely an insignificant difference between the two ratios. The higher ratio of childhood to adult literacy in rural parts means that, as against the cities, these parts will gain in the future. It could mean simply that rural youth, having learned to read and write

Country	Total Population	Above and Below 10,000		CITIES OVER 10,000		,000
		10	10+	10-50	50-100	100+
Chile 1930 <sup>a</sup> Colombia 1938 <sup>a</sup> Mexico 1940 <sup>b</sup> Panama 1940 Puerto Rico 1940 Venezuela 1936	73 56 46 65 68 36	65 53 35 50 65 29°	87 80 77 94 80 73 <sup>ª</sup>	84 69 72 94 76 °	89 84  77 •	88 82 79 93 83 79 <sup>4</sup>

Table 11. Per cent literate age 10 and over, for cities by size class and rest of country.1

Classified as literate: those able to read. For the other four countries the classification includes only those able to read and write.
 <sup>b</sup> The percentage for total population is based on data from twenty-six states. Other percentages are based on data from twenty-one states.
 <sup>c</sup> Computed by subtracting from the total population the urban districts of Girardot, Maracaibo, Heres, Puerto Cabello, and the Federal District.
 <sup>d</sup> Includes the above mentioned districts.

<sup>•</sup> Not available.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>†</sup> Includes Caracas and the whole district of Maracaibo.
<sup>1</sup> Computed from data in census volumes.

in school, later forget this skill more often than urban inhabitants, or that the city draws by migration the more literate individuals from the rural areas. On the other hand, it seems logistically plausible that as the cities approach fairly complete literacy, their percentage increase in literacy will decline, whereas the rural rate of increase will remain high. There is at least one place, Puerto Rico, where recently the rural literacy is known to have grown faster than the urban. Here between 1010 and 1040 rural literacy increased by 145 per cent, urban literacy by only 31 per cent. For various reasons, then, the hypothesis that the rural areas are gaining faster in literacy seems acceptable. This means that the citizens of Latin America are becoming more homogeneous with reference to cultural development, and that the old gulf between hinterland and metropolis is being bridged.

	Date	Per Cent Literate		Ratio
		Age 10–19	Age 20 Plus	
Cities 20,000 Plus Chile <sup>a</sup> Mexico <sup>b</sup> Panama Puerto Rico <sup>o</sup> Venezuela Rest of Country Chile <sup>a</sup> Mexico <sup>b</sup> Panama Puerto Rico <sup>o</sup> Venezuela	1930 1940 1940 1935 1936	91.9 75.1 97.5 88.8 70.3 72.5 39.9 63.9 78.6 27.0	84.8 77-3 92.4 71.1 74.6 61.9 34.1 43.9 48.4 30.0	1.08 0.97 1.06 1.25 0.94 1.17 1.17 1.46 1.62 0.90

Table 12. Ratio of per cent literate age 10-19 to per cent literate age 20 plus, for cities 10,000 and over and for rest of country.<sup>1</sup>

Literates include also those able to read but not write.
Estimate required to get this age breakdown. Ratio of literates 15-19 to those 15-39 in Mexico was assumed to be the same as in Panama.
Urban population defined as that living in cities and towns, rural population as that living out of cities and towns. "Cities and towns" includes some places of less than 2,500. See Census of Puerto Rico, 1935, Bulletin 2, p. 1.
Data taken from relevant census volumes.

## LANGUAGE

One of the reasons for the country-city gap in literacy, at least in Western South America and Central America, is the concentration of Indians in rural sections. Generally if a person speaks an Indian language as his native tongue he is not literate, because Indian languages have not usually been made a medium for popular written communication. Also such a person is generally in a rural section, because it is in the outlying parts that Indian culture has persisted. Consequently, the greater the proportion of a nation's inhabitants speaking an Indian language, the larger the gap between rural and urban literacy. In Table 12, for example, the largest gap is found in Mexico where there are many Indians. and the smallest in Puerto Rico where there are none. In countries having large Indian populations (e.g., Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru) there is, by departments or states, a strong correlation between the percentage speaking an Indian language and both the percentage illiterate and the percentage rural.

The census publications do not give much attention to language, and when they do include it, they do not always break down the data on the basis of rural and urban categories. But it seems safe, on the basis of available information, to say that the Indian-European dochotomy is one of the factors helping to create a gulf between country and city in Latin America.

## CONCLUSION

Founded by Europeans and serving as links with the outer world, the cities of Latin America have grown rapidly. They have grown, not because of heavy industrialization as in most other regions, but because of water-borne foreign commerce, political centralization, and large-scale land ownership. They have reflected foreign influence to a high degree, and consequently have been separated from their own hinterlands by a wide cultural gulf. The extent of this gulf is revealed clearly by the characteristics of the urban and rural populations. In every way (with the possible exception of risk of death) the city traits are closer to those associated with modern industrial civilization, even though heavy industry is still largely absent.

The urban population has a markedly lower fertility and a lower natural increase. Its more rapid growth, therefore, is due to a heavy rural-urban migration. This migration does not take away all of the natural increase of the agricultural areas, but it undoubtedly helps to postpone pressure in these areas; and it apparently contributes 50 per cent or more of the city growth. As a result of the low birth rate and the heavy intake of migrants, the cities have a concentration of persons in the productive ages. Also, because the cities perform primarily commercial, political, and cultural rather than industrial functions, their adult sex ratios are predominantly feminine. The migrants, especially the female migrants, tend to stay in the city rather than return to the country in old age.

In apparent contradiction to other Western experience, the Latin American cities show a higher proportion of married persons than do the rural sections. When, however, the consensual unions are taken into account, the proportion of mated persons is lower. "Illegitimacy" is definitely lower in the cities, but again this largely arises from the lower proportion of consensual unions.

The cities are much more literate, in some cases twice as literate. The reasons lie in everything that has served to emphasize the city as against the country, including the concentration of Indians in rural regions, the preference for urban expenditure, and the tendency of immigrants to settle in the cities. It appears from age data and historical analysis, however, that rural literacy will increase faster than urban in the future, and that the gap will thus be reduced.

All told the rural-urban differences are such as one might expect in a region basically Western in culture but still in the industrial

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revolution.<sup>10</sup> Such peculiarities as are found arise from the transplantation of Iberian social institutions to the particular geographical and cultural environment of South and Central America. These peculiarities are likely to be temporary, being modified as the process of industrialization accelerates. It is significant that the trend toward urbanization shows no slackening as yet, and that the gap between country and city seems to be narrowing. With further industrialization it seems likely that the cultural characteristics of the cities will soon become those of the rural population, and that the gulf between city and country will eventually become no greater than in the United States today. If in the meantime the Latin American nations can profit by the experience of more developed lands, to hasten and guide the process of industrial advance and urban diffusion, so much the better.

<sup>10</sup> For an analysis of the demographic stage in which Latin America finds itself today, see Davis, Kingsley: Population Trends and Policies in Latin America, PROCEEDINGS OF CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF POST-WAR INTER-AMERICAN RELATIONS. Austin, Institute of Latin-American Studies, University of Texas, to be published in 1946.