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Elite Stratum Analysis: Brazilian Data

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Errata Sheet

<u>page</u>	<u>line(s)</u>	
1	11	substitute "concerns" for "aims"
3	21	" "employing" for "illustrating the use of"
4	21	add a period after "nations."
8	1	delete everything before "In view..."
9	12	delete "the length of"
14	6,7	correct: classificação, Ocupações, Ministério
20	2,4,10 11,18	correct: Brasília
40	<u>1</u>	between citations to Lerman and to Merrick and Graham: McDonough, Peter 1981 "Mapping an authoritarian power structure: Brazilian elites during the Medici regime." <u>Latin American Research Review</u> 16(1): 70-106.

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the concept of the "elite stratum" and illustrates its use by means of data on Brazil. The national elite consists of all persons who participate regularly in the decisions by which a nation is governed. An elite stratum is made up of all persons at the very highest levels of the nation's stratification system, and includes the elites. By using the large national probability sample surveys that are now becoming available, it is possible to estimate parameters for the elite stratum even when this is not feasible for the elites, thus contributing indirectly to scientific understanding of elite phenomena. Such data (1973: N=279,238) are used herein to specify certain demographic characteristics of a large and rapidly changing nation and to elucidate the country's intra- and inter-stratum cohesion. Brazil's high levels of individual and regional inequality might be expected to weaken ties within the elite stratum and between it and the other strata. Hypothetically divisive factors include: 1) elite stratum impermeability; 2) a concentration of the stratum in any one region; and 3) national domination by stratum members originating in a given region. The data show: 1) that the Brazilian elite stratum is recruited from all strata; 2) that the regional concentration of the stratum is low except in the capital city (Brasilia), a factor which probably promotes societal cohesion; 3) that, despite this, there is a slight tendency for the affluent South to attract stratum members from the other regions; and 4) that relative to other regions, the poor Northeast contains and contributes proportionately fewer members of the stratum, while disproportionately exporting stratum members to Brasilia - where the Northeast turns out to be proportionately overrepresented - and to the South. Except for the low proportion of the stratum in the Northeast, the overall pattern appears generally to work toward mitigating the potentially divisive individual and regional inequalities of the nation. The results thus provide an example of the utility of elite stratum analysis in large nations where the technical problems of sampling elites are so great as to make elite analysis as such unfeasible.

Elite Stratum Analysis: Brazilian Data

At least since the turn of the century, following Mosca's (1939 [1896]) and Pareto's (1902-1903) writings on the topic, the concept of the elite has served as a useful tool in analyzing the structures and transformations of societies. In effect, national elites are considered to be collectivities which make and execute policy for the independent nation states of which they are members. The concept continues to be widely employed, perhaps mostly in comparative research on societal change (e.g. Eisenstedt, 1978; Giddens, 1973; Hagopian, 1974; Keller 1963; also see Beck, et al., 1965). Obviously, there are many specific research questions involving national elites that are of interest to such thinkers. Here we wish to point out just two very general aims. First, the actions of elites presumably determine to a large extent the responses of a nation to changing internal and external circumstances. Second, the composition of an elite presumably influences to a large extent the degree and perhaps the form of integration of the nation.

The elites of a nation are thus those individuals whose behaviors repeatedly exert an identifiable influence on the policies of the nation. The national elite, that is, consists of all persons who participate regularly in the decisions by which a nation is governed. The elite stratum is broader. It consists of all persons at the higher levels - say, the top two percent or so - of variables describing the stratification system of the nation. It is reasonable to suppose, as classical thinkers seem to have done, that all countries possess fairly clearly defined elite strata, and that most if not all elites are drawn from the elite stratum and the families in which the latter are involved. In most if not all pre-20th century societies, influential families have managed to pass their status on to at least some of their offspring. There may, of course, be interludes during and after revolutions in which new elite strata come into prominence. These solidify their new positions within a few decades and usually manage to pass them on to the next generation. It remains to be seen whether this will be true

following the socialist revolutions of this century. If so, what is said here about elite strata would be expected to apply to them as to other societies. In any case elites are often products of pre-revolutionary, even revolutionary elite strata. This is not to say that in non-revolutionary periods all elites are drawn from and participate in the elite strata. For past centuries - as today - some individual elites may have emerged from non-elite strata, attaining their positions because of outstanding performances in military service, trade, religious organizations or other institutional spheres. Even though some may presumably have originated outside of it most would nonetheless participate in the elite stratum. Exceptions exist. During this century, in countries where free trade unions are powerful, some of their officers are national elites even though they may not often originate in elite strata and they often appear to be socially isolated from such strata. In some authoritarian countries trade unions may not provide elites but rather may be controlled by them. Thus except for trade union leaders in some countries, the members of the elite tend to be participating members of the elite stratum and are usually recruited from it.

The advantages of examining the elite stratum would be expected to be found wherever it serves as the normal recruiting ground for elites. In such situations elites would not only be involved with each other but embedded in a matrix of relationships - many of them primary group relationships - with non-elite members of the elite stratum. Obviously people who are deeply involved in such relationships exhibit attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors which tend to correspond to each other. In small societies, members of such strata would normally fall into only a few sets of interacting individuals, perhaps only one or two. These might be all in close proximity to each other, as in a small city and its immediate hinterland. In large societies, many such sets of interacting members of the elite stratum might be found. Certainly every large city would have one or more such sets. Large

cities might well contain quite a few such sets and the members of one might be well known to members of another. In some cases a given set might be found in more than one city. In a few words, members of a society's elite stratum are of very high status and they are members of interacting sets which are limited in number but would often be large and sometimes be dispersed throughout the society. Inasmuch as most elites are participants in the elite stratum, their attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors would be more or less like those of the broader stratum whilst such shared stances of the elite strata might be quite different from those of other strata. If an elite stratum is united, the elite itself is likely to be united, and conversely if the stratum is divided. If an elite stratum is becoming polarized it is a safe bet that the elite is, too. If an elite stratum recruits its members only from the offspring of earlier members of the stratum, so also the elite will tend to do so. If the elite stratum is made of persons of diverse status origins so too the elite itself will tend to come from a wide range of status origins. If, in a multiregional nation, members of the elite stratum tend to only originate only in certain regions, so too will the elite itself. Thus for some purposes the study of an elite stratum could be as useful as the study of an elite itself.

This paper illustrates the concept of the elite stratum in connection with data on modern Brazil, illustrating its use with the kinds of large scale sample survey data now becoming available in a number of nations. The paper is concerned with national, rather than regional or segmental (e.g., economic, cultural, etc.), elite phenomena; and with the elite stratum of which elites are a part, rather with than with elites as such. It concentrates on the elite stratum rather than on the elite because, while both are important, there are serious obstacles in the way of systematic empirical research on elites and because it is both feasible and advantageous to study the elite stratum.

The main emphasis is on certain demographic bases of the intra- and inter-stratum cohesion of Brazil in relation to its main regions. Its population is large and growing. Its territory is vast -- roughly the size of Australia, Canada, China, or the United States -- and it is unevenly developed. Several of its 26 major political entities (States and Federal Territories) have highly developed regional loyalties. Its economy has been expanding rapidly and unevenly. Its share distribution of income is quite unequal by world standards (Jain, 1975). From 1964 until at least 1981, its people have been governed by an avowedly authoritarian government which is devoted to state capitalist economic growth through industrialization and the rationalization of agriculture, as well as to developing the nation's immense Frontier and to maintaining the country's overall integration and sovereignty. These conditions make Brazil an especially pertinent instance on which to concentrate the study of interrelations between elite phenomena and phenomena of societal integration. Another is the Brazilian elites' determination to understand the nation's social and economic structure -- manifested in the availability of high quality empirical data and a sharply unxenophobic interest in exploiting it effectively.

Problems of elite research. Even today it is difficult to conduct research on elites in a way that permits secure generalizations estimates of meaningful parameters concerning elites in large nations (See Groholt and Higley, 1972; also the following writings in which quantitative research on national elites has been attempted: Caesar E., 1973; Freitag, 1975; Gurevitch and Weingrod, 1978; Higley, Deacon and Smart, 1979; Lerman, 1977; Moore, 1979; Nicholson, 1975; Searing, 1971; Smart and Higley, 1977; Weingrod and Gurevitch, 1977). There are at least three practical problems confronting such research: identifying the elites within a vastly larger population; eliciting data from or about each elite; and obtaining data on samples of

elites which would be large enough to assure reasonably reliable estimates of elite population parameters. 1) The first of these problems addresses the question of biased sampling, leading to biased estimates of parameters. It is easy enough to identify some elites, those for example who hold central administrative, legislative, judicial, and military offices or positions in other types of institutions (e.g. Higley, Deacon, and Smart, 1979; Moore, 1979). But for many purposes samples of government or other officeholders are one-sided, if not imprecise. They are one-sided because they ignore many elites -- persons who participate seriously and often in formulating policy but who are not office holders, such as "outside" advisers whose regular employment, if any, is in some other sector. (This problem is tacitly acknowledged and may be partially overcome by means of "snowball sampling", in which previously identified elites nominate others). They may also be imprecise, depending upon whether the individual officeholder actually participates significantly in the formulation and conduct of national policy. One-sided or imprecise rules of sample inclusion lead to biased, inaccurate estimates of population parameters. 2) Obtaining data from or about elites is also problematical. To be sure, for some elites, certain kinds of data are public: sometimes the votes of legislators, court actions, and public policy statements; sometimes biographical data. But not often will these be the kind of systematic, comparable data required for dependable estimates of population parameters. Then, too, some kinds of information are personally or politically sensitive. Respondents may withhold or misrepresent them. Perhaps above all, elites are frequently inaccessible to interviewers, as was illustrated by the non-response rate of a recent attempt to survey elites in Brazil, reportedly 59 percent (McDonough, 1981). 3) Finally, the proportion of elites in any population is very small, while the absolute number of them may be quite large. Suppose for example that, by some defensible

estimate a nation's elites would constitute one one-hundredth or one-thousandth of a percent of a nation's population. At such rates, there would be only one elite in 10,000 or in 100,000 persons. (Higley and his colleagues estimate the elite to be three or four per 10,000 in Australia and three or four per 100,000 in the United States [John Higley, personal communication]). Yet the absolute numbers could be rather large. Brazil's population was just over 121 million in 1980. The foregoing percentages would imply that it would have a body of elites numbering somewhere between 1,200 and 12,000 individuals. It is a difficult task indeed to draw a useable probability sample of, or including, persons who are so rare in a population but so numerous in the aggregate, even under the unlikely assumption that all the elites could be readily identified.

The elite stratum concept. As a concept, we define a national elite stratum to be those persons who occupy positions at the top of the stratification system of a nation in terms of power, prestige, or privilege. By definition, a national elite stratum, then, includes all members of the national elite, as well as many persons who may never be elites. Technically speaking the elite stratum would include all the persons who are in elite positions, plus many who are not. It also includes many of those who have been elites in the recent past and who will be elites in the near future. The concept thus appears to be more inclusive than Giddens's (1972) "recruitment substrate", in that it does not presume that all its members have formal status in influential organizations. Relatively unbiased estimates of parameters regarding the demographic composition of a given elite stratum may now be obtained from large scale public data sets. This makes it possible to test on members of the elite stratum a fairly extensive repertoire of hypotheses pertaining to elites which previously were not feasible subjects for quantitative research.

The Brazilian elite stratum. In the case of Brazil, it is our opinion that any government, now or in the near future, whether of the right, as is now the case, or of the left, would be largely manned by persons drawn from the current elite stratum as we have operationally defined it below. The only obvious potential exceptions would be labour union leaders: if Brazil's government restores democracy, union leaders could come to be powerful enough to qualify. In 1973, when the present data were collected, they did not; neither would they qualify today, as recent events have demonstrated. In other words, Brazil appears to be so much an elitist society that one might speak seriously about "right elites" who are now in power or "left elites" who though now out of power are nonetheless influential - both sets being members of the same elite stratum and often members of the same extended families.

There are several reasons why a study of the composition of the Brazilian elite stratum would be of interest. For one, it provides an illustration of the utility of the elite stratum concept - a strong justification which will surely become even stronger as comparable studies are carried out in other countries or in Brazil in the future (perhaps especially if redemocratization or some other dramatic change occurs). Next, there are two related reasons why Brazil's elite stratum would be of interest on the international scene. First, Brazil is on the verge of becoming a world power -- "the first Southern Hemisphere star in the world system" (Schneider, 1976, xiii). Other things being equal, the more influential a nation is within the world system, the greater would be the world-wide relevance of its elite stratum. Second, the greater a nation's military and economic power viz a viz its neighbors, the greater the relevance of its elite stratum. Brazil occupies half of South America, and its population is about four times that of the next most populous country, Argentina. Its armed forces and its economy both appear strong by comparison with its neighbors (USACDA, 1975: 20-66).

comparison with its neighbors (USACDA, 1975: 20-66). In view of this, despite the fact that Brazil is rather isolated from most of its neighbors, a knowledge of the characteristics of its elite stratum should prove useful in understanding its continental activities. The study and composition of the Brazilian elite stratum would also be of interest because of its implications for possible internal changes. All societies have social, economic, and political divisions within their populations, including their elite strata, that might turn into civil discord under the right circumstances. Since the cohesion of a society is presumably a partial consequence of the divisions within the elite stratum or between the elite and the other strata, an analysis of intra- and inter-stratum cohesion would be informative. This would include ordinary demographic variables such as the comparative sex and age composition of the stratum as well as information on variables more immediately related to possible sources of weak cohesion. In Brazil the latter include social and regional inequality. A national elite stratum whose membership is closed or which is concentrated regionally is likely to be viewed as illegitimate by those who are blocked out; it might even be so viewed by many who are members of the elite stratum itself. As we shall elaborate in a moment, Brazil can be thought of as if it were composed of three distinctly different sociological regions -- the poor and populous agricultural Northeast, the vast and empty Frontier, and the populous and rather well-to-do industrial and agricultural South. These differences exist in a nation-wide context of inequality and poverty. The nation's share distribution of income appears to be the most unequal of all the larger countries of the world, with Gini coefficients of around .55 in 1960 and .59 in 1970 (Jain, 1975). Then, too, its functional illiteracy rate, though probably falling, is quite high. In 1970, 64 percent of the economically active population had not completed primary school, and 35 percent had no schooling at all (Pastore and Haller, 1977). The national inequalities are

unequally distributed among the regions. In such a situation, a closed or regionally concentrated elite stratum would be likely to be viewed extremely critically, certainly by the "outs", and very likely by its own members.

In a few words, an analysis of the demographic characteristics of Brazil's elite stratum, containing as it does the actual and potential elites of the nation, should be of interest to sociologists because it illustrates by means of the Brazilian example how the concept may be used in conjunction with modern data sets to aid in assessing some of the bases of the cohesion of a nation.

ON BRAZIL

In some ways Brazil resembles a vast, isolated, island society. One-third of the length of its national bounds are fixed by the sea. The remaining two-thirds, 15,719 km, or almost 10,000 miles, touch 10 other countries, including every other nation in South America except for Ecuador and Chile. Yet only at Argentina and Uruguay does its border, perhaps 1,500 km. of it, face even moderately populous areas. Practically all the rest of its borders are in the wilderness. Its regional isolation is illustrated by its trade patterns. The nation's export and import ties with Europe and North America far exceed those it has with its neighbors. For example, in 1970 the European Economic Community (EEC) and the United States (U.S.) received over 50 percent of its exports, whilst 11 percent went to Latin America, despite the fact that the main ports of the EEC and the U.S. are at least 5,000 miles from those of Brazil. Also, its language is Portuguese, which sets it off from the rest of the Americas.

Brazil's population is concentrated near the coast, far from its northern and western borders. As of 1975, 90 percent of its people lived in coastal and near-coastal states, from Maranhão south to Rio Grande do Sul. These populous states comprise but one-third of the national land surface. Its main demographic regions, then, are two: a densely populated band of states extended SSW along the coast, and a sparsely populated frontier (Yoder and Fuguitt, 1979). Just as it can be seen to be split demographically, so also can it be treated as if it were socioeconomically dichotomous. On this latter axis, the five southern states plus perhaps the southern third of the their nearest neighbors to the north stand out from the rest of the nation. These are the south of Minas Gerais, and all of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul, and parts of southern Goiás and of Mato Grosso do Sul. Together this region constitutes about 16 percent of the land surface. In 1975 about 60 percent of the population lived in this southern region. In 1970, the per capita income of the South was nearly double that of the rest of the country: Cr\$371/person/month in the five southernmost states, versus Cr\$184/person/month in the rest of the country (calculated from Langoni, 1973:81 and IBGE, 1977:159). Putting these two dichotomized regionalization criteria together, we readily see that Brazil can be viewed as having three distinctly different basic regions: the densely populated and (at least moderately) affluent South; the somewhat less densely populated and poor Northeast; and the poor and vast but sparsely populated western and northern Frontier.

The three basic regions (Map 1) are quite marked. Table 1 presents

[Map 1 and Table 1 about here]

a quick synopsis of the data comparing the three basic regions in terms of land size, population, population density, and mean monthly income. The figures are for 1970. Though the absolute values have surely changed in the past decade, the regional delineations and the general picture of regional differences in population density and in income was almost identical in 1981.

These three regions are distinct in other ways, too. The South's agriculture and manufacturing are rather highly developed by world standards. The Frontier is just what its name implies. It is rich in natural resources and as yet unpopulated, except in a few remote cities such as Rio Branco, Manaus, and Belem. The population is growing everywhere in the country. Even so, there is a more or less continuous flow from the Northeast to the industrial centers in the South, and a smaller -- though still impressive -- flow northwestward from the South into the southern and western border regions of the Frontier (Merrick and Graham, 1979:121-126). All in all, Brazil is a dynamic and diverse nation.

DATA

Data for this study were taken from the 1973 Brazilian National Household Sample Survey (Pesquisa Nacional por Amostragem de Domicílios: PNAD 73), as one of a regular series of official sample surveys conducted by the nation's national statistical service, the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). PNAD 73 is a probability sample of the nation's households. Except as indicated below, it is designed to permit accurate estimation of national household parameters, as well as those at the individual level. The exceptions are the contiguous northern states of Amazonas and Pará, covering 1.8 million square kilometers or 20 percent of the nation's land surface, where dense, tropical forests and sparse population

make sampling and interviewing prohibitively costly. In these states, only the metropolitan areas of Belem and Manaus were sampled. Their 1975 estimated populations are 819 thousand and 696 thousand, respectively, or over 40 percent of the combined estimated population of the two states.

The resulting sample consists of 279,238 persons: every individual, male or female, of 10 years of age or over who resided in the 80,191 households sampled. (Institutionalized persons were excluded). This sample affords an unusual opportunity to identify members of an elite stratum. While an elite stratum is more inclusive than an elite, some of the statistical strictures we noted above apply to the study of both, although they are doubtless more severe in the case of elites. Specifically, members of an elite stratum constitute a small percentage of a society's population. Yet they may still be exceedingly numerous. The large size of the PNAD 73 permits the identification of substantial numbers of the members of the elite stratum, and to permit its division into subsets consisting of members and nonmembers of the elite stratum, further subdividing these according to various demographic characteristics. Here it is possible to do this without seriously threatening either the representativeness of the subsamples or the numbers of cases in the resulting cells.

The Elite Stratum. For this analysis we have attempted to specify operational definitions of the elite stratum which would provide a reasonable quantitative referent for the concepts of power, prestige and privilege. Whatever the exact variables, it is clear that an elite stratum consists of a very small proportion of a total population. For modern Brazil we have made a more or less arbitrary judgment that an operational definition of the elite stratum should include about two percent of the population.

A second decision concerns the exact status variables to be used. We selected education, income, and occupation. For many years Brazilians have thought that a university degree or its equivalent from a professional school was almost a necessary condition for participation in the national leadership. Among persons over 20 years of age in the PNAD 73 sample only 1.9 percent were graduates. Graduation from a university or an equivalent professional school was taken as one criterion for inclusion in the elite stratum. A corresponding decision was made for income. All sample members reporting income (N=125,880) in the PNAD 73 sample were rank-ordered to determine the income cutting point to be used. By coincidence, the nearest feasible approximation to two percent turned out to be 1.9 percent. This cutting point marked all whose reported annual income exceeded \$6,565 (U.S. dollars of 1973) as members of an elite stratum based upon income. Occupation was used as a final criterion.

Several methods of identifying elites by occupation are possible. One choice would be to pick out each occupation to be included on a priori grounds -- all professionals or high government officials for example, or all occupations in which a great deal of authority is normally invested. A rationale for this has been adduced for the Sao Paulo industrial management corps (Pastore, Haller, and Gomez-Buendia, 1975). A second would be to construct a measure of occupational socioeconomic status such as that of Duncan (1961) or Featherman and Hauser (1978). A third would be to choose a Brazilian scale of occupational prestige such as that of Gouveia (1965) or Haller, Holsinger, and Saraiva (1972). A fourth would be to use Treiman's (1977) Standard International Occupational Prestige Scale. A fifth might be to employ a simple hierarchy of broad categories of occupations. We chose a variant of the second for most present purposes (Bills and Godfrey, 1980). A 92-category scale of occupational status was constructed, in which each occupational category is assigned a canonical weight based upon the average

educational attainment and income of each person in it. (PNAD 73 uses 263 occupational titles. These were translated from Portuguese to English by bilingual members of the research team, using the Dictionary of Occupational Titles [United States Department of Commerce, 1976], the International Standard Classification of Occupations [Spanish and English: International Labour Organization, 1968], and the Classificacao Brasileira de Ocupacoes [Ministerio do Trabalho, 1977] as guides). The highest scoring 1.9 percent of the sample were defined as members of the elite stratum. Thus a PNAD 73 sample member could be identified as a member of the elite stratum in three basic ways: by being a university graduate, by being employed in an occupation whose score places him or her in the top 1.9 percent of the sample, or by indicating an income that places him or her in the top 1.9 percent of the income-reporting population. A second classification of occupations, devised by Jonathan Kelley (unpublished), was used to measure intergenerational mobility.

Obviously, anyone who fits any one, two or three of these criteria would be defined as a member of the elite stratum. The definitional composition of the elite stratum is presented in Table 2. In all, 6,354

[Table 2 about here]

individuals qualified; they constitute 2.28 percent of the sample. The status composition of the stratum is detailed in Appendix Table A. Most of those in the occupations qualifying automatically would usually be considered as high and low professionals or managers.

Brazilianists would doubtless agree that the pinnacle of the elite stratum is populated with industrialists, fazendeiros (agriculturalists), and military officers. However, most industrialists, most fazendeiros, and most military personnel (the categories used in PNAD 73) are not in the stratum

because they do not occupy positions at the top of the stratification system. Those who do appear in the stratum are included herein because they are also university graduates and/or because they report an income high enough to qualify. Indeed, quite a few individuals from these occupations are found in the present sample of the elite stratum: 157 fazendeiros, 142 owners and managers of manufacturing plants, and 92 military personnel -- a total of 391 persons or 6.2 percent of the elite stratum as operationally defined here.. (See Appendix Table A for details).

FINDINGS

In this section we shall present a statistical description of the elite. The first part will offer data on general demographic characteristics. This will be followed by data on the variables pertaining to the potentially most divisive factors -- social mobility, regional mobility and regional concentrations. Where useful, comparable data on those not defined as in the elite stratum are also presented.

General demographic data. An abbreviated set of data on the age distribution is shown in Table 3.

[Table 3 about here]

It shows that about 8.6 percent of the elite stratum were quite young, under 25. There were, of course, none under 14; and only 43 were under 20. (Data not presented). The bulk of the elite stratum, slightly more than 60 percent, were between 25 and 44. Middle aged members are also common: almost 19 percent were between 45 and 54. While those in the elite stratum tend to be rather older than the remainder, on the whole they are quite young. They certainly do not constitute a "gerentocracy". They may indeed be young by international standards, although obviously this conjecture is entirely speculative.

The distribution by sex is presented mainly in Table 4. Not

[Table 4 about here]

surprisingly, men are far more numerous than women, constituting over 75 percent of the stratum. Additional analyses throw light on the differences between men and women in the bases of their inclusion: 49 percent of the women, but only 12 percent of the men qualified solely because they graduated from a university; 22 percent of the men, but only three percent of the women qualified because of income alone; 14 percent of the men qualified on all three status criteria, but only about two percent of the women did so. In other words, if money and occupational position are more important bases of power than education, then women are even less prominent in the elite stratum than Table 4 suggests. Actually, half of the women (48.8%) but only one-eighth (12.3%) of the men were included because of education alone.

The educational distribution is given in Table 5. First, quite a few

[Table 5 about here]

of the elite stratum are not especially well educated, at least in the formal sense. A handful (17) were illiterate, while almost 1,400 (21.6 percent) had no more than a junior high school education. Second, nonetheless, even those who were not university graduates (and thus automatically included) tend to be substantially better educated than those in the non-elite stratum. Still, the most impressive single datum is that 40 percent of the elite stratum had not attended a university.

Employment status data are given in Tables 6 and 7. In interpreting

[Tables 6 and 7 about here]

them it should be remembered that Brazilians consider each person 10 years of age or over as a potential participant in the labor force. It is also useful

to keep in mind that one-third (34.3 percent) of those not in the elite stratum were under 20 years of age. The most noteworthy items appear to be these. First, only 4.1 percent of those in the elite stratum were not gainfully employed at the time of the survey. In sharp contrast, over 51 percent of those who were not in the elite stratum were not gainfully employed. Most were in school. Still, it is underemployment, not unemployment, that characterised Brazil in 1973. Of those over 15, only 1.3 percent of the men and 0.4 percent of the women were unemployed and seeking work. Second, as Table 7 makes clear, among those who are employed, those in the elite stratum are employed in sharply different organizational circumstances than their non-elite fellows. The most important item is that nearly 40 percent of those in the elite stratum are employed in government, while only about 8 percent of the others are so employed. Also, 27.3 percent of the latter are self-employed persons without employees; this is true of only 7.6 percent of those in the elite stratum. Finally, 59.3 percent of the non-elites are salaried workers in the private sector, while only 38 percent of those in the elite stratum are so employed.

Origins and locations of the elite stratum. We have noted that stratum origins and regional factors offer likely sources of weakened cohesion within the elite stratum. Let us now look at the data on the composition of the stratum according to these factors.

The data on social origins of the stratum are given in Table 8.

[Table 8 about here]

The following percentages are based on the 4,496 (71 percent) for whom occupational data are complete for both the subjects and their fathers. The main finding is that the social origins of the stratum are quite diverse, although quite a few of course came from the higher strata of Brazilian society. The fathers of 35.1 percent were professionals, managers, or large

farmers, although the fathers of less than eight percent of the non-elites were from that occupational class (see Appendix Table B). The fathers of about 36 percent were from the laboring strata, both urban and rural. Most telling of all is the fact that over 13 percent were from the lowest stratum in Brazilian society - the huge numbers of people, over 65 percent of the nation's adult population, whose fathers were subsistence farmers, sharecroppers and agricultural wage laborers, here called "farm workers". One would suppose that if in their social origins the elite stratum were set off sharply from those of the other strata of the society, this fact would be a source of divisiveness within the elite stratum, as well as between it and the rest of the population. But this is not the case: the elite stratum appears to have been drawn from the whole status spectrum of Brazilian society.

This does not mean that it is at all easy for those starting at the bottom to obtain that status we have defined here as membership in the elite stratum. Quite the contrary: less than one percent of those starting in the rural lower stratum actually joined the elite stratum. Similarly, only about four percent of the middle and lower nonrural strata made it to the top. But then only about 14 percent of those whose fathers were professionals, managers or large farmers made it into the elite stratum (calculated from Table 8 and Appendix Table B).

In a few words it has not been easy to get into Brazil's elite stratum. It is extremely unusual for those from the large masses at the very bottom to rise to that level. Yet in absolute numbers, quite a few actually make it. Surely those of the elite stratum have a general awareness of their status origins and those of the others with whom they have contact. We surmise that the presence in this stratum of large numbers of people who originated in non-elite strata is likely to be a source of relative cohesiveness of the elite stratum itself and of the stratum with the society at large. Members of an elite stratum who see themselves as more or less representative of all levels

of the society are not likely to be viewed by themselves or others as illegitimate insofar as the question of legitimacy rests on status criteria. In terms of income, it will be recalled, Brazil appears to be one of the more unequal countries of the world. We take it that the potential threat to the current elites which might otherwise be posed by its high degree of inequality is probably mitigated by the fact that real instances of substantial upward mobility are not difficult to observe.

We turn now to the regional origins of the Brazilian elite stratum. Here as in the foregoing, the issue is the degree to which concentrations of elites would be expected to be divisive. It will be remembered that Brazil's regional socioeconomic disparities are both well marked and well known to Brazilians. These and the question of possible domination of the nation as a whole or of the poorer regions (especially of the Northeast) by those of the elite stratum of the more affluent South (especially São Paulo) are matters of concern to the Brazilian public, to policy makers, and to scholars.

Table 9 shows the regional origins of the elite stratum. Actually

[Table 9 about here]

no single region seems to have contributed a sharply disproportionate number to the stratum. The main tendencies are for the richer South to have contributed a bit more than its proportionate share (68.0 percent of the elite stratum, 57.5 percent of the remainder), while the poorer Northeast contributed fewer than would be expected (16.7 percent of the elite stratum, 33.7 percent of the rest). Also noteworthy is the percentage of the elite stratum who were born abroad (7.1 percent).

Yet regional origins are perhaps less significant than regional locations. These data are presented in Table 10. There the most important

[Table 10 about here]

items appear as follows: First, though the actual percentages are small, the relative participation of the population of Brasilia in the elite stratum (1.9 percent) is more than three times greater than its share in the non-elite group (0.6 percent). Second, while Brasilia was statistically overrepresented, the Northeast was noticeably underrepresented. Only 12.8 percent of the elite stratum resided in the Northeast, while 28.3 percent of the whole sampling was living in the region. Table 11 provides a clearer

[Table 11 about here]

picture of the proportions of elite stratum persons in each region and in Brasilia. The concentration of the elite stratum is markedly higher in Brasilia (6.4 percent of the regional sample) than elsewhere. It is sharply lower in the Northeast (1.0 percent), with both the Frontier and the South represented in nearly equal concentrations (2.6 and 2.8, respectively).

It is not a foregone conclusion that the Northeast's apparent deficit would necessarily lead Northeasterners to feel deprived, if indeed they sense the statistical imbalance. Table 12 presents data on the interregional

[Table 12 about here]

migration of the of the elite stratum. Here it can be seen that the Northeast contributed more (3.1 percent) of its stratum members to Brasilia than did the South (1.6 percent) or the Frontier (2.9 percent), although in absolute numbers, the contribution of the South was slightly more than double that of the Northeast. Still, their numbers are presumably sufficient to allow effective representation of the views of the Northeast in the central decision-making agencies of the Federal Government.

Another item of special importance in Table 12 is that the only evidence of great interregional movement among members of the elite stratum is found in the apparent attraction of the South for those of both Northeastern and Frontier origin.

In general, it can be stated that the South has drawn to itself a larger percentage of the nation's elite stratum, and that the Northeast has lost most heavily in the interregional exchange of those in the stratum in all areas except in Brasília. If these data suggest any basis for a tendency toward regional antagonisms, it would lie in the Northeast's relatively low concentration of those of the elite stratum. But if this has such an effect at all, it may well be offset by the proportion of Northeasterners of the stratum who are working in Brasília.

CONCLUSIONS

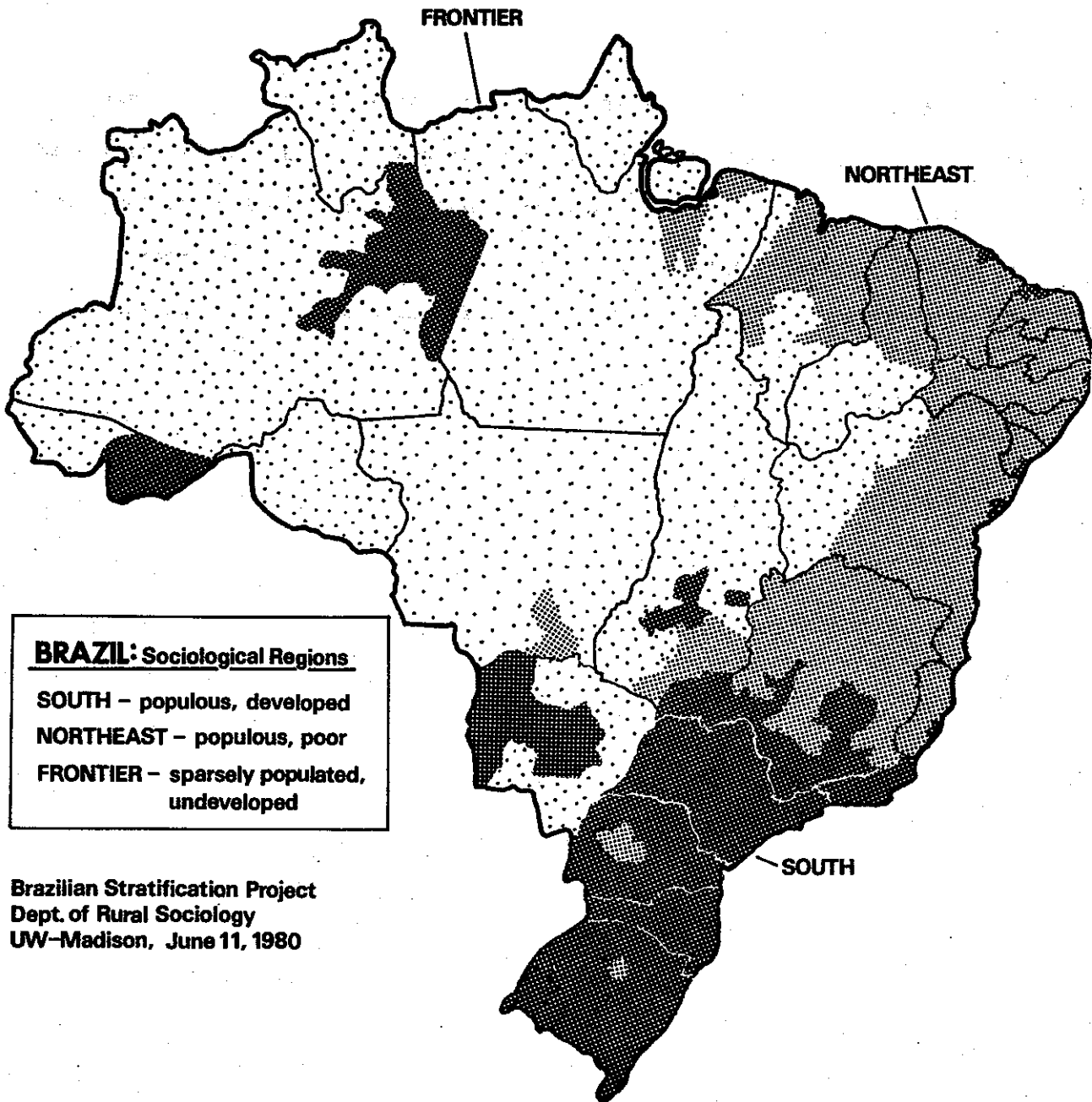
This paper has demonstrated the utility of the concept of the elite stratum, illustrating its use by means of data on Brazil -- a large, populous, regionally diverse, socioeconomically unequal nation. The concept can be of considerable importance in the analysis of elite phenomena. For certain purposes it is theoretically as useful as the concept of the elite itself. It has the great advantage of being more tractable. In the present empirical analysis much was learned about Brazil's elite stratum and its place in the national system. This is doubly useful: it illustrates the potentials of similar analyses that might be conducted for other countries and it aids in interpreting Brazil itself. For the Brazilian case the analysis helps the researcher to understand how the nation's leadership maintains its position in the face of a high degree of status inequality, and to illuminate the possible effect of the regional representation of the elite stratum in maintaining the interregional cohesiveness of the nation given its high degree of regional inequality. These are old issues in the political sociology of nations. The

present data on Brazil illustrate the utility of approaching them through the use of modern large scale social data. Such data permit the identification of analytically important characteristics of unbiased samples of stratum members and nonmembers, thus making it possible to draw from the elite stratum inferences pertaining to elite phenomena which are not feasible for appropriate samples of elites as such.

Regarding Brazil, we infer that the potential divisiveness offered by the nation's sharp individual and regional inequalities is probably mitigated by a rather impressive degree of upward mobility into the elite stratum, and by a somewhat greater proportional stratum representation of the most impoverished region (the Northeast) in the Republic's capital city, Brasília.

MAP 1

MAP 1



Brazilian Stratification Project
Dept. of Rural Sociology
UW-Madison, June 11, 1980

Table 1. Basic Sociological Regions of Brazil (1970 data)¹

Item	Regions ²			Brazil
	South	Northeast	Frontier	
Population	54.7 million (58%)	29.7 million (32%)	8.7 million (9%)	93.1 million
Land Surface (km ²)	1.5 million (18%)	1.5 million (18%)	5.4 million (64%)	8.5 million
Population Density (persons/km ²)	36	19	2	11
Monthly income (cruzeiros)	Cr\$371/person	Cr\$157/person	Cr\$218/person	Cr\$287/person

¹ The regionalization was conducted as part of the larger project which includes the present paper. Original data were taken from the Brazilian national statistical service (IBGE). Demographic data were compiled and were provided by G.V. Fuguitt. Parts of this have been published (Yoder and Fuguitt, 1979). The socioeconomic data were provided by Dr. Speridião Faissol from the archives of IBGE in Rio de Janeiro. We thank both Drs. Fuguitt and Faissol for their generosity.
The statistical data in the table were calculated from Langoni (1973:81) and IBGE (1977:26, 159). The exact boundaries of the three regions vary slightly from data set to data set. Hence the income calculations must be taken as rough, though not unreasonable, estimates.

² The states and territories comprising these regions are: South--Parts of Minas Gerais, Goiás and Mato Grosso do Sul; all of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul. Northeast: Most of Bahia and Minas Gerais, part of Goiás, half of Maranhão and Piauí, and all of Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Sergipe, Alagoas, and Espírito Santo. Frontier: Most of Goiás, half of Maranhão and Piauí, part of Bahia and Mato Grosso do Sul, and all of Mato Grosso do Norte, Rondônia, Acre, Amazonas, Roraima, Amapá, and Pará. (Brasília is about where the three regions meet).

Table 2. Status Composition of the Elite Stratum.

Status Variables and Their Combinations	Totals		
	N Elite Stratum	Elite Stratum As a Percentage of all Sample Members Aged 20 and Over	Composition of the Elite Stratum (Percent)
<u>Education:</u> All graduates of universities or their professional school equivalent	3392	1.9	53.4
<u>Occupation:</u> All persons employed in occupations of high average status	3426	1.9	46.1
<u>Income:</u> All persons reporting an annualized income of \$6,565 (US\$ of 1973)	2468	1.9 ¹	38.8
<u>Elite Stratum Qualification Criteria</u>			
<u>Education only:</u>	1359		21.4
<u>Occupation only:</u>	1628		25.6
<u>Income only:</u>	1127		17.7
<u>Education and Occupation:</u>	899		14.2
<u>Education and Income:</u>	441		6.9
<u>Occupation and Income:</u>	207		3.3
<u>Education, Occupation, and Income:</u>	693		10.9
All Persons in the Elite Stratum	6354	2.30	100.0

¹ Of 125,880 who reported income.

Table 3. Age Composition of the Elite Stratum¹

Age	Stratum		Total
	Elite %	Not Elite %	
10-14	0.0	18.5	18.1
15-24	8.6	28.0	27.6
25-34	34.4	17.6	18.0
35-44	26.2	14.1	14.4
45-54	18.8	10.2	10.3
55-64	8.1	6.6	6.6
65 and over	3.9	5.0	5.0
Total	100.0 (N=6354)	100.0 (N=272,826)	100.0 (N=279,180)

¹ The 58 "non-elites" who failed to provide age data were dropped.

Table 4. Sex Composition of the Elite Stratum

Sex	Stratum				Total	
	Elite		Not Elite		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
Male	4,776	75.2	131,345	48.1	136,121	48.7
Female	1,578	24.8	141,539	51.9	143,117	51.3
Total	6,354	100.0	272,884	100.0	279,238	100.0

Table 5. Educational Composition of the Elite Stratum.

Education	Stratum				Total	
	Elite		Not Elite		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
None: Illiterate	17	.3	61,969	22.7	61,986	22.2
Elementary Only	684	10.7	157,943	57.9	158,627	56.8
Junior High School	696	10.9	36,342	13.3	37,038	13.3
Senior High School	1152	18.2	13,696	5.0	14,848	5.3
Some Higher Education	412	6.5	2,864	1.1	3,276	1.2
University Graduate (or equivalent)	3392	53.4	--- ¹	--- ¹	3,392	1.2
No information	1	0.0	70	0.0	71	0.0
Total	6354	100.0	272,884	100.0	279,238	100.0

¹ By definition, all university graduates are considered to be in the elite stratum.

Table 6. Employment Status Composition of the Elite Stratum.

Employment Status	Stratum				Total	
	Elite		Not Elite		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
<u>Salaried</u>	<u>4,768</u>	<u>75.0</u>	<u>89,676</u>	<u>32.9</u>	<u>94,444</u>	<u>33.9</u>
Private	2,316	36.4	78,510	28.8	80,826	28.9
Public	2,452	38.6	11,166	4.1	13,618	4.9
<u>Self-Employed</u>	<u>1,327</u>	<u>20.9</u>	<u>42,808</u>	<u>15.6</u>	<u>44,135</u>	<u>15.8</u>
Employer	862	13.6	6,685	2.4	7,547	2.7
Not Employer	465	7.3	36,123	13.2	36,588	13.1
<u>Not Employed</u>	<u>249</u>	<u>3.9</u>	<u>114,243</u>	<u>41.9</u>	<u>114,492</u>	<u>41.0</u>
<u>Unpaid Family Worker</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>.2</u>	<u>26,157</u>	<u>9.6</u>	<u>26,167</u>	<u>9.4</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>6,354</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>272,884</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>279,238</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Table 7. Class of Gainfully Employed Persons in the Elite Stratum (Percentages only)

Class	Stratum	
	Elite	Not Elite
<u>Employees</u>		
Private sector	38.0	59.3
Public sector	40.2	8.4
<u>Self-employed</u>		
Employers	14.1	5.0
Not employers	7.6	27.3
Total	100.00 (N=6,095)	100.00 (N=132,484)

Table 8. Occupational Status of the Elite Stratum¹ vs. Status Origin.

Occupational Status of the Elite Stratum	Occupational Status of the Fathers' of Those in the Elite Stratum									
	Professionals; Managers; Large Farmers		High Production Clerical, Sales and Service; Military		Middle & Lower Production, Clerical, Sales, and Service Small Farmers		Farm Workers		TOTAL	
Professionals; Managers; Large Farmers	1,367	36.5	1,061	28.3	842	22.5	477	12.7	3,747	100.0
	86.5		82.0		81.8		80.6		83.3	
High Production, Clerical, Sales and Service; Military	124	25.2	174	35.3	126	25.5	69	14.0	493	100.0
	7.8		13.4		12.3		11.7		11.0	
Middle & Lower Production, Clerical, Sales and Service; Small Farmers	85	35.4	58	24.2	62	25.8	35	14.6	240	100.0
	5.4		4.5		6.0		5.9		5.3	
Farm Workers ²	4	—	1	—	0	—	11	—	16	100.0
	.3		.1		0.0		1.8		.4	
TOTAL	1,580	35.1	1,294	28.8	1,030	22.9	592	13.2	4,496	100.0
	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	

¹ Father's occupation was reported as of the time of the individual's first job, consequently data on social origins are not available for those who were unemployed. Also omitted are those whose fathers were unemployed. The occupational categories were collapsed from Kelley (unpublished).

² Row percentages are not presented due to the small size of the row total.

Table 10. Regional Composition of the Elite Stratum.

Region	Stratum				Total	
	Elite		Not Elite		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
Brasília	122	1.9	1,782	.6	1,904	.7
South	4,780	75.2	169,172	62.0	173,952	62.3
Northeast	812	12.8	78,290	28.7	79,102	28.3
Frontier	640	10.1	23,640	8.7	24,280	8.7
Total	6,354	100.0	272,884	100.0	279,238	100.0

¹ All but six were born abroad. The six were born on Fernando de Noronha Island, a Brazilian possession.

² The 128 who did not know their birthplaces were eliminated.

Table 9. Regional Origins of the Elite Stratum.

Region	Stratum				Total	
	Elite		Not Elite		N	%
	N	%	N	%		
Brasília	2	0.0	143	0.1	145	0.1
South	4321	68.0	156,852	57.5	161,173	57.7
Northeast	1061	16.7	92,035	33.7	93,096	33.4
Frontier	525	8.2	19,545	7.2	20,070	7.2
Other ¹	439	7.1	4,187 ¹	1.5	4,626	1.7
Total ²	6348	100.0	272,762	100.0	279,110	100.0

¹ All but six were born abroad. The six were born on Fernando de Noronha Island, a Brazilian possession.

² The 128 who did not know their birthplaces were eliminated.

Table 11. Region of Residence: Elite Stratum as a Percentage of the Total Sample in the Region.

Region	Elite Stratum
Brasília	6.40
South	2.75
Northeast	1.03
Frontier	2.64

Table 12. Interregional Migration of the Elite Stratum¹

Region of Current Residence	Region of Origin				Total			
	South		Northeast			Frontier		
South	94.7	93.3	22.3	5.4	11.0	1.3	74.3 <u>4,387</u>	100.0
Northeast	0.9	4.8	69.5	93.7	2.3	1.5	13.3 <u>787</u>	100.0
Frontier	2.8	19.5	5.1	8.8	83.8	71.6	10.4 <u>614</u>	100.0
Brasília	1.6	59.7	3.1	27.7	2.9	12.6	2.0 <u>119</u>	100.0
Total	100.0 <u>4,321</u>		100.0 <u>1,061</u>	18.0	100.0 <u>525</u>	8.9	100.0 <u>5,207</u>	100.0

¹ Italicized numbers are the numbers of persons. The total is smaller than 6,354 because of missing data on birth places.

APPENDIX

The occupations defined here as contributing to the elite stratum are presented in the Appendix, Table A. In all, the list includes 45 of the 264

[Appendix Table A about here]

available in the NHSS-1973. Each occupational title was interpreted by comparing it with the Brazilian Dictionary of Occupations (CBO: Classificação Brasileira de Ocupações, Ministério de Trabalho, 1977). Although more detailed, it is intended to be compatible with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO: International Labour Organization, 1968). The latter volume is available in both English and Spanish, among other languages. Portuguese titles were initially translated by Portuguese-speaking project personnel and then checked by comparisons with definitions given in the CBO, which in turn were checked in the Spanish and English versions of the ISCO and with the definitions given in the American Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT: United States Department of Commerce, 1977).

Appendix Table A. Occupations Defined as Constituting the Elite Stratum¹ or
Appearing Among Those Defined as Elite According to Education or Income^{2,3}

Defined as in the Elite Stratum: Public Service Administrators (715); Bank and Insurance Administrators (283); Tax Auditors (153); Labor Inspectors (17); Administrative Officials (129); Editors (7); Interpreters and Translators (19); Librarians (34); Computer Programmers (44); Engineers (210); Architects (31); Chemists (44); Pharmacist (21); Geologists (11); Agronomists (32); Veterinarians (15); Naturalists (2); Medical Doctors (210); Dentists (183); Registered Nurses (29); Physical Therapists (29); X-Ray Operators (30); Statisticians (10); Economists (38); Accountants (404); Sociologists (4); University Professors (113); Judges (23); Legal Officers (23); Lawyers (219); Notaries (30); Legal Recorders (119); Priests, Ministers, and Nuns (49); Social Welfare Agents (30); Social Workers (5); Writers and Journalists (33); Radio and Television Announcers (26); Pilots (11); Police Chiefs (40).

Falling into the Elite Stratum according to Education or Income²: Farmers (87); Livestock Ranchers (70); Owners and General Managers of Manufacturing Plants (142); Merchants (232); Auxiliary Office Workers (167); Proprietors (n.e.c., not Hotel or Boardinghouse Owners) (75); Designers, Draftsmen (23); Administrators (n.e.c.) (510); Cashiers or Treasurers (36); Military Personnel (92); Elementary School Teachers (112); High School Teachers (426); Teachers (n.e.c.) (75); School Instruction Supervisors (20); Salesmen (75); Commercial Representatives (37); Fiscal Inspectors (government service) (23).

- 1 Included because of membership in the highest category of a canonical weighting procedure.
- 2 Only those in occupations contributing at least 20 individuals (approximately 0.3%) to the 6,354 in the elite stratum are presented here.
- 3 The actual numbers of elite stratum persons in an occupation are given in the parentheses immediately following the name of the occupation (except as indicated in Footnote 2).

Appendix Table B. Occupational Status vs. Status Origin of the Non-Elite.¹

Occupational Status of the Elite Stratum	Father's Occupational Status									
	Professionals; Managers; Large Farmers		High Production Clerical, Sales and Service; Military		Middle & Lower Production, Clerical, Sales, and Service Small Farmers		Farm Workers		TOTAL	
Professionals; Managers; Large Farmers	2,278	25.1	1,438	15.9	1,778	19.6	3,577	39.4	9,071	100.0
	23.3			14.0	7.4		4.3		7.1	
High Production, Clerical, Sales and Service; Military	1,130	9.4	2,323	19.2	3,470	28.8	5,144	42.6	12,067	100.0
	11.5			22.5	14.3		6.2		9.5	
Middle & Lower Production, Clerical, Sales and Service; Small Farmers	3,585	6.7	6,090	11.4	16,774	31.4	27,050	50.5	53,499	100.0
	36.6			59.2	69.3		32.7		42.1	
Farm Workers	2,797	5.3	440	0.8	2,168	4.1	46,931	89.8	52,336	100.0
	28.6			4.3	9.0		56.8		41.2	
TOTAL	9,790	7.7	10,291	8.1	24,190	19.1	82,702	65.1	126,973	100.0
	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	

¹ Father's occupation was reported as of the time of the individual's first job, consequently data on social origins are not available for those who were unemployed. Also omitted are those whose fathers were unemployed. The occupational categories were collapsed from Kelley (unpublished).

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