Reading Questions Rhoda and Burton Chapter 21 500 Year Transition to an Urban Society

1. How urbanized is Mexico now, and one century ago?
2. What changed 4500 years ago that allowed for early cities?
3. List names and regional affiliation of the first three significant urban centers in Mesoamerica.
4. What parallel is made with the urbanization of the Classical Maya period with that of Greece?
5. What two groups invaded from the north and later dominated for significant periods of time?
6. As Spain established Mexico City as the colonial capital of New Spain, what was different from the general rule as to where colonial capitals were established?
7. Why was the urban system of New Spain not well connected with roads between the various urban centers?
8. Towards the end of the Independence movement 1810-1821, why did the larger cities see significant population increases?
9. Contrast what was meant by “conservative criollos” and “urban liberals”.
10. During the early years of independence, did cities function more as consumers or producers?
11. When was it that the population of Mexico City finally regained the size it had at the time of the conquest?
12. Why did Britain, France and Spain all send their armies to Mexico in the mid 1800s?
13. List several forces that contributed to urbanization during the Porfiriato. Add another one or two from class notes.
14. What was the ejido, and what was the role of the Cárdenas Administration in it? Why did its creation as an institution reduce rural-urban migration?
15. What major landmark in Mexico-US relations during the Cárdenas Administration was not mentioned here by the authors? (see notes or Google “Cardenas 1938 Mexico”)
16. What period of years in Mexican history is characterized by explosive urbanization?
17. How did the Bracero Program with the United States paradoxically increase urbanization in Mexico?
18. List as many factors as you can that are specifically described by the authors as contributing to urbanization during the explosive urbanization period.
19. Why did import substitution contribute to the primacy of Mexico City at the expense of the rest of the country?
20. List several negative consequences of the rapid growth of Mexico City, from the chapter.
21. Describe what the Federal government did to promote deconcentration by the 1980s.
22. With regards to the deconcentration trend, the authors don’t discuss the point that a major reason that the northern cities did not grow as fast as the central cities in general is because the central cities had much larger rural populations nearby that migrated into them.
23. Since the mid 1990s, what are two major forces that slowed down urbanization rates in Mexico?
24. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) stimulated urbanization in Mexico and out-migration to the United States from rural areas. Why?
25. Which type of cities saw the most rapid urban increases in the wake of NAFTA? Explain.
26. Summarize the basic argument that Mexico City and surrounding cities have formed a functional “megalopolis”.
27. Where is the most rapid rate of urbanization predicted to happen in the next few decades, and why?
28. List the three places in Baja California Sur that are expected to grow rapidly in the next few decades. What do they have in common with the places in the previous question?