

Elite networks, organized crime and power in the Southern Pacific region of Mexico

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Abstract:

We present a brief history of the evolution of the elite networks and their recent collusion with the organized crime groups, in the southern pacific part of the state of Guerrero in Mexico. With ethnographic data we have reconstructed part of these networks from the end of the XVIII century to the present. We have observed that the elites have been adapting, diversifying and creating new relationships in order to maintain and expand their power and dominance over the region. In the XVIII century most relationships were based on kinship, by the first 15 years of the current century, such elite networks have incorporated political and economic relationships, and particularly they have established new connections with actors that are openly recognized in the region as being part of groups involved in drug dealing, extortion, kidnapping, etc. Finally, we have created two multiplex networks, one family and political pertaining to the XVIII and XIX century and a second one with government and commercial-illegal activities actors from the XX and XXI century. The evolution in space and time of the elite shows that it is capable of maintaining a dynamic behavior that allows it to adapt to the external and internal circumstances of its own becoming. Kinship, political participation at local, regional, state and federal level are all spaces of action for the elite. Moreover, the use of agribusiness and criminal practices can be understood as strategies used by the elite to reproduce, expand and diversify power, otherwise its existence in constant quantitative as well as qualitative expansion would be threatened.