

Journal of Agrarian Change

Volume 20 Number 2 April 2020

- Matthew Houser and Diana Stuart An Accelerating Treadmill and an Overlooked Contradiction in Industrial Agriculture: Climate Change and Nitrogen Fertilizer
- Chen Yiyuan Land Outsourcing and Labour Contracting: Labour Management in China's Capitalist Farms
- Shreya Sinha The Politics of Markets: Farmer-Trader Relations Under Neoliberalism in Punjab, India
- Noaman G. Ali Agrarian Class Struggle and State Formation in Post-Colonial Pakistan 1959-1974: Contingencies of Mazdoor Kisan Raj
- Rowan Lubbock The Hidden Edifice of (Food) Sovereignty: Rights, Territory and the Struggle for Agrarian Reform in Venezuela
- Horacio Mackinlay Well-Off Small-Scale Tobacco Growers and Farm Workers in the Mexican Agrarian Reform (1972-1990)
- BOOK REVIEWS

View this journal online at wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/joac

ISSN 1471-0358

WILEY

Journal of Agrarian Change

Editors: Liam Campling, Cristóbal Kay, Jens Lerche, Bridget O’Laughlin, Carlos Oya, Jonathan Pattenden and Helena Pérez-Niño
For general feedback, comments and suggestions: Enrique Castañón, Editors’ Assistant, joac@soas.ac.uk

Editors Emeriti: Henry Bernstein and Terence J. Byres

Book Review Editor: Shreya Sinha

For queries on manuscript submission, review and ScholarOne: Anjelo Ronquillo, Editorial Office, JOACedoffice@wiley.com

International Advisory Board

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| Lincoln Addison – Memorial University, Canada | Peter Gibbon – Danish Institute for International Studies, Denmark | V. K. Ramachandran – Indian Statistical Institute, India |
| Filomeno Aguilar – Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines | Christophe Gironde – Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Switzerland | J. Mohan Rao – University of Massachusetts, USA |
| Kojo Amanor – University of Ghana, Ghana | Carla Gras – Universidad Gral. Sarmiento, Argentina | Ashwani Saith – International Institute of Social Studies, The Netherlands |
| Kirsten Appendini – El Colegio de México, Mexico | Irfan Habib – Aligarh Muslim University, India | Peter Sarris – University of Cambridge, UK |
| Jairus Banaji – India | Barbara Harris-White – Oxford University, UK | James C. Scott – Yale University, USA |
| Stephanie Barrientos – University of Manchester, UK | Gillian Hart – University of California, Berkeley, USA | Ben Selwyn – University of Sussex, UK |
| Halil Berktaý – Sabanci University, Turkey | Çağlar Keyder – Boğaziçi University, Turkey | John Sender – School of Oriental and African Studies, University of Cambridge, UK |
| Saturnino M. Borrás Jr. – International Institute of Social Studies, The Netherlands | Gavin Kitching – University of New South Wales, Australia | Sérgio Schneider – Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil |
| Jan Breman – Centre for Asian Studies, The Netherlands | Pablo Lapegna – University of Georgia, USA | Subir Sinha – School of Oriental and African Studies, UK |
| Robert Brenner – University of California Los Angeles, USA | Tania Li – University of Toronto, Canada | Ravi Srivastava – Jawaharlal Nehru University, India |
| Víctor Bretón Solo de Zaldivar – Universitat de Lleida, Spain | Luis Llambí – Venezuelan Institute for Scientific Research, Venezuela | Leandro Vergara-Camus – University of London, UK |
| Anita Brumer – Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil | Joan Martínez-Alier – Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona | Michael Watts – University of California, Berkeley, USA |
| Ray Bush – Leeds University, UK | Peter Mollinga – School of Oriental and African Studies, UK | Stephen Wegren – SMU, Dallas, USA |
| Vivek Chibber – New York University, USA | Jason W. Moore – Lund University, Sweden | Harry West – School of Oriental and African Studies, UK |
| Flemming Christiansen – University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany | Kevin O’Brien – University of California, Berkeley, USA | Chris Wickham – University of Oxford, UK |
| Ben Cousins – University of the Western Cape, South Africa | Utsa Patnaik – Jawaharlal Nehru University, India | Bill Winders – Georgia Institute of Technology, USA |
| Terry Cox – University of Glasgow, UK | Pauline Peters – Harvard University, USA | Philip Woodhouse – University of Manchester, UK |
| Carmen Diana Deere – University of Florida, USA | Jonathan Pincus – Harvard University, USA | Jingzhong Ye – Beijing Agricultural University, China |
| Marc Edelman – City University of New York, USA | Charles Post – City University of New York, USA | Qian Forrest Zhang – Singapore Management University, Singapore |
| Laura Enríquez – University of California, Berkeley, USA | | Karl S. Zimmerer – Pennsylvania State University, USA |
| Niels Fold – University of Copenhagen, Denmark | | |
| Harriet Friedmann – University of Toronto, Canada | | |
| Jayati Ghosh – Jawaharlal Nehru University, India | | |

Aims & Scope: The *Journal of Agrarian Change* is the leading journal of agrarian political economy. It promotes investigation of the social relations and dynamics of production, property and power in agrarian formations and their processes of change, both historical and contemporary. It encourages work within a broad interdisciplinary framework, informed by theory, and serves as a forum for serious comparative analysis and scholarly debate.

Contributions are welcomed from political economists, historians, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, economists, geographers, lawyers, and others committed to the rigorous study and analysis of agrarian structure and change, past and present, in different parts of the world.

As well as original research, the journal features review articles and essays and a substantial book review section. Occasional special thematic issues are published.

Publisher: *Journal of Agrarian Change* is published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester PO19 8SQ, UK

Production Editor: Honey Claudine Delos Santos (email: JOAC@wiley.com)

Disclaimer: The Publisher and Editors cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this journal; the views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Publisher and Editors, neither does the publication of advertisements constitute any endorsement by the Publisher and Editors of the products advertised.

Copyright and Copying: Copyright © 2020 John Wiley & Sons Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission in writing from the copyright holder. Authorization to copy items for internal and personal use is granted by the copyright holder for libraries and other users registered with their local Reproduction Rights Organisation (RRO), e.g. Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, USA (www.copyright.com), provided the appropriate fee is paid directly to the RRO. This consent does not extend to other kinds of copying such as copying for general distribution, for advertising or promotional purposes, for republication, for creating new collective works or for resale. Permissions for such reuse can be obtained using the RightsLink “Request Permissions” link on Wiley Online Library. Special requests should be addressed to: permissions@wiley.com

Well-off small-scale tobacco growers and farm workers in the Mexican agrarian reform (1972–1990)

Horacio Mackinlay 

Department of Sociology, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Campus Iztapalapa, Mexico City, Mexico

Correspondence

Horacio Mackinlay, Departamento de Sociología, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Iztapalapa, San Rafael Atlixco No 186, Colonia Vicentina Iztapalapa, Mexico City C. P 09340, Mexico.
Email: hmg@xanum.uam.mx

Abstract

In this article, I study small-scale growers of blonde tobacco varieties from the state of Nayarit in Mexico who had contract farming arrangements with the state-owned company Tabamex (1972–1990). I refer to them as “well-off small-scale tobacco growers” given that in the 1960s, 1970s, and the 1980s, they became one of the subaltern social groups that benefited the most from the Mexican Agrarian Reform. I want to set this research apart from the ones carried out on tobacco growers in Nayarit, which have almost exclusively understood this group as agricultural producers and have perceived as secondary, and even as anecdotal, the impact of the high levels of wage labour hired in the region. I argue that in order to have a better understanding of the social relations at play, it is important to take into account that Nayarit tobacco growers have also been employers of farm workers. Hence in my analysis, I have also included the seasonal farm workers hired by these small-scale tobacco growers because of their importance in the labour force. More specifically, I have looked into the vulnerability and invisibility of these workers both within this branch of agricultural activity and state institutions.

KEYWORDS

contract-farming, Nayarit, seasonal farm workers, social differentiation, tobacco growers

1 | INTRODUCTION¹

During the Agrarian Reform (1917–1992), contract farming expanded significantly in Mexico. This was mainly due to the fact that Article 27 of the 1917 Constitution impeded shareholder companies, as legal entities, from owning any land property that exceeded the amount of land allowed for individual private property.² In order to provide the necessary organic, or animal, inputs required for industrial processing such as cereals, fruits, vegetables, herbs, fibres, and meat products, companies such as McCormick, Del Monte, Nestle, Bimbo, Anderson Clayton, Campbell's, and General Foods were obliged to acquire them in the market or secure them in advance through various types of contractual relationships with *ejidatarios*,³ private smallholder peasants or agricultural and livestock grazing entrepreneurs (Mackinlay, 2004a).

An agrarian reform is a historical process that involves much more than the mere distribution of land. This is particularly true when considering how vast and prolonged it was in Mexico, and the fact that it encompassed a wide range of public policies affecting the agricultural and forestry sectors to promote rural development and other governmental measures aimed at fulfilling its objective. As for its periodisation, it is worth mentioning that in Mexico, between 1917 and 1934, land distribution was limited and did not have a great impact on the overall agrarian structure (Simpson, 1937). Extensive land distribution began under the government of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940) and continued until the end of the agrarian reform in 1992. As a result, the social property regime covered more than half of the national territory. This conversion affected around 103 million of hectares, out of a total of 197 million, and benefitted nearly 26,500 agrarian *ejidos* and 2,500 traditional communities (INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática), 1991; Mackinlay, 1991).

In the 19th century, agro-industrial activity developed significantly in Mexico as a result of the export-oriented economy promoted by Porfirio Díaz (1880–1910; Cardoso, 1980). However, its most important expansion took place after 1940. The postwar process of import-substitution industrialisation and the expansion of the domestic market that accompanied it created a significant demand for food products to fulfil the consumption needs of a rapidly increasing urban population (Medina, 1994). Under the new Keynesian regime, the import-substitution industrialisation policy affected both the industrial and agricultural sectors as it forced agribusiness to progressively acquire a greater proportion of the goods that had previously been imported. This made imperative to promote the internal production of these goods by local producers.

Prior to the period that begins in 1970, which is the focus of the present study, signs of decline of the agricultural growth started to show in the second half of the 1950s. It initially affected several export crops—the prices of which began to decline in the international markets—but was soon accompanied by the first signs of an economic crisis affecting both corn and other basic crops traditionally produced by small holding peasants. This trend led to the increasing inability of satisfying the consumption needs of the Mexican population in the following decades and forced the government to import increasing volumes of basic grains (Barkin & Suárez, 1982). The government of Luis Echeverría (1970–1976) undertook the task of significantly expanding state intervention in the multiple sectors of forestry, agricultural, and livestock production as he worried about the strong impact that the crisis could have on the economic growth of the country. Among the numerous measures that were put in place, state companies were created or restructured in order to regulate the market of grains and basic food products, such as the gigantic *Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares*, which was made up of numerous subsidiaries. The state also created

¹Translated by Paula Hevia. I am thankful to anonymous reviewers and to Gerardo Otero for very useful feedback for this article.

²The maximum size of an individual private property was 100 ha of irrigated land; 200 ha of seasonal rainfall land or the equivalent in other types of soils and diverse specifications for certain crops (cotton, banana, sugarcane, coffee, etc.) as well as for livestock grazing (see L.F.R.A. (Ley Federal de Reforma Agraria), 1971, pp. 249–250).

³*Ejidatarios* are title holders of land under the "social property regime." After the Mexican Revolution, the *ejido* and traditional communities gave peasants access to collectively owned land through the redistribution of private properties that exceeded the legal limits (*ejidos*) or through the legal recognition of land they had possessed since immemorial times (traditional communities). Legally, *ejido* and communities were not allowed to engage in any commercial transaction such as the sale and rent of the land nor were they able to put it up for collateral, for loans, and so on (Pérez Castañeda, 2002; Pérez Castañeda & Mackinlay, 2015).

various public enterprises in sectors with high commercial and or export value such as coffee, tobacco, sugar, henequen fibre, and so forth (CEHAM (Centro de Estudios Históricos sobre el Agrarismo en México), 1990).

The Mexican state mainly intervened in the primary sector, such as the agricultural production and the first stage of agro-industrial processing, while adopting a leading role in the promotion of exports of semiprocessed products, also known as *commodities*. This was usually done without affecting the participation of big national and transnational companies in the stages of industrialisation and commercialisation, where most of the profit-making laid. This was the case with the state-owned company Tabacos Mexicanos S. A. de C. V. (Tabamex) that was founded in 1972 as a result of the nationalisation of the agro-industrial assets of existing transnational tobacco companies (Mackinlay, 2011). In contrast, under the welfare state and state interventionism that emerged after the second World War, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Japan went even further and created powerful state monopolies that covered all stages of production: "(...) tobacco production, commercialisation, industrial transformation, and distribution" (Coordinación General de Desarrollo Agroindustrial [CODAI (Coordinación General de Desarrollo Agroindustrial), 1982], p. 69).

The main objective of this paper is to study well-off small-scale tobacco growers from the state of Nayarit whose product (i.e., blonde tobacco varieties) was intended for the production of cigarettes. During the 1960s, 1970s, and the 1980s, these tobacco growers represented one of the groups of *ejidatarios* who achieved significantly higher living standards than most Mexican peasants. I will therefore consider not only their specific relation with the state-owned company, as contract farmers, but I will also examine the various factors that impacted the social reproduction of their domestic units. In doing so, I will pay special attention to the seasonal farm workers that were hired by these tobacco growers and I will analyse their vulnerability (i.e., invisibility) within the agro-industry and state institutions.

This research focuses mainly on the state of Nayarit—its North and South Coast regions. It is the state with the largest production of blonde tobacco varieties necessary for cigarettes manufacturing, which represents over 90% of their production. Due to space restrictions, I will only make limited observations about the administrative division of the Gulf of Mexico, which includes the states of Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Chiapas. The first two states produced mainly dark tobacco intended for the manufacturing of both cigars and cigarettes, whereas the third one accounts for the remaining proportion of blonde tobacco produced in Mexico (Figure 1).⁴

The subordination of tobacco growers to a technological package that over time reached higher levels of control and substantially reduced the margins of autonomy they had enjoyed initially is a matter of great interest (Mackinlay, 2011). Once this technological package was consolidated in the late 1950s and early 1960s, these tobacco growers found themselves integrated into an agro-industrial complex that began in the countryside and ended in the cigarette factories. Although the notion of the essentially peasant character of tobacco growers is present in many studies on Tabamex, in the existing literature on contract-farming producers have been mostly presented as *de facto* proletarians on their own land. This is why I will review and comment on some of the categories commonly used such as "peasants," "proletarians," "capitalists," "entrepreneurs," and "foreman" to refer to tobacco growers in academic studies carried out during the Tabamex era. This, to a certain extent, should help us have a better understanding of the characteristics of these producers.

I will also occasionally refer to the previous agro-industrial stage, between 1927 and 1972, which was mainly under the control of transnational corporations, as a context from which one can better understand some of the subsequent policy reforms and transformations. I also compare tobacco and sugar cane growers as these are branches of the agricultural activity that bear many similarities with each other. Additionally, it will be necessary to situate well-off small-scale tobacco growers, which are at the centre of this study, within the context of a great diversity of groups and agrarian social strata that prevailed during the Tabamex era in order to draw brief parallels with other peasants and agricultural producers of the period of the Agrarian Reform. Looking beyond Mexico, I found it useful

⁴Tabamex created an administrative division between the Nayarit–Jalisco zone and the Gulf of Mexico zone. The former included a very limited production in two Jalisco municipalities identified in Figure 1. This is why, from now on, I will only refer to Nayarit.

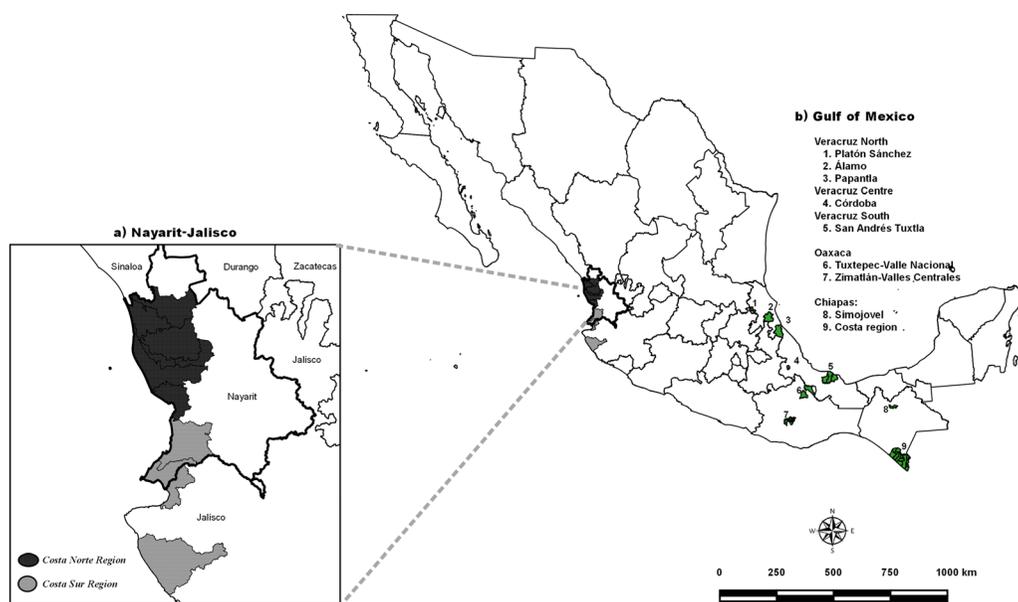


FIGURE 1 The tobacco producing regions of Tabamex

to make some comparisons with the case of Argentina because it is a country with an important tobacco industry that is also supplied by small-scale tobacco growers in some of its provinces, offering an interesting and contrasting case study.

Tabamex was a state-owned company that has been significantly researched. Because the company relied on contract farming, all transactions were recorded, leaving an important amount of statistics to work with. However, the numerous interviews I conducted during my many visits to the Nayarit countryside, between 1994 and 2008, are at the core of this study. These conversations were held with tobacco growers, public servants, tobacco manufacturers, management and fieldwork personnel of Tabamex, as well as with engineers and leaders of the organisations of tobacco growers from the different regions and other social actors involved in the sector.

In this article, I will first describe the vertically integrated agro-industrial complex with state participation. This will be followed by another section that presents tobacco contract farming under the leadership of Tabamex in Nayarit. These sections will set the tone for the third one where I will analyse the nature of the subordination of tobacco growers within the productive processes and touch upon the debate on their sociological characteristics. In the fourth section, I will focus on the central subject of this investigation: the well-off small-scale tobacco growers of the Mexican Agrarian Reform. In the last section, I will examine the employer role that these producers have played, which represents an aspect that has not been considered as one of their defining characteristics but rather perceived as something complementary, or even anecdotal, derived from the virtual invisibility of farm workers.

2 | A VERTICALLY INTEGRATED AGRO-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX WITH STATE PARTICIPATION

According to official accounts, and in parallel to the nationalisation of the oil industry in 1938, the creation of Tabamex resulted from the discontent caused by the despotic treatment of tobacco growers by transnational cigarette companies and the low prices these paid them compared with the large profits they earned.⁵ It is true that much higher levels of discontent prevailed in the once important tobacco regions of Álamo, Papantla, and Platón

⁵For a more comprehensive account of the creation of Tabamex, see Chumacero (1985) and Mackinlay (2011).

Sánchez in the north of Veracruz. However, this was mainly due to the declining demand for dark tobacco, traditionally produced in that region for the manufacturing of dark tobacco cigarettes intended for both the national and international markets. This variety of tobacco lost ground compared with lighter varieties of blonde tobaccos for cigarettes due to the changing preferences of consumers. This led to a gradual decrease of productive activity levels and the eventual cancellation of numerous contracts with small-scale tobacco growers.

In Nayarit, where production constantly increased and where prices paid to tobacco growers were much higher than for other crops contracts were also cancelled, albeit on a much smaller scale. Growers affected by these cancellations were being discharged for the low quality of their lands, particularly those affected by soil and aquifer salinisation (see Figure 1). This explains why most of the social mobilisation arose from the north of Veracruz, much more than from the state of Nayarit where it found little response. In any case, the nationalisation of agro-industrial companies was also in line with the political project of the Echeverría administration to create state-owned companies in accordance with his approach to income distribution and his vision of development for Mexico. According to Manuel Aguilera (1985), the first general director of Tabamex, the creation of the company sought “the rupture of the power structures that led to internal colonialism in the tobacco countryside” (p. 262) and responded to the need to “extend, among a largest number of peasants, the benefits of such a profitable crop” (Aguilera, 1976, p.77).

Tabamex was created in the context of a mixed economic system with majoritarian state participation and minoritarian participation of both organisations of tobacco growers and cigarette companies operating in the sector (Chumacero, 1985). Initially, the company was established through the nationalisation of assets that belonged to transnational tobacco companies involved with crop production as well as the infrastructure used to produce *preindustrialised tobacco*, which was the main input (raw material) of cigarette manufacturing: the buildings, warehouses, vehicles, machinery and equipment, experimental fields, as well as drying ovens and stripping plants.

For their part, U.S. transnational companies K. R. Edwards Leaf Tobacco Co. and the Austin Company, which specialised in the export of different tobacco varieties, were forced to join Tabamex in partnership in the two stripping plants that they had built in the 1960s. This was no easy task, and the Mexican government had to convince them to pursue their activities after the nationalisation process. This association was accepted in exchange for better production conditions and special treatment for the production of tobacco varieties intended for export (Jáuregui, Kuschick, Itargo, & García Torres, 1980 pp. 72, 178).

Among the seven tobacco companies that operated in Nayarit in the 1960s, Tabaco en Rama S. A., a subsidiary of the British American Tobacco, was the largest and most emblematic of them all. Tabaco en Rama S. A. started operations in Nayarit in 1927. It was made up of both United States and British capital and had built the first tobacco stripping plant in the 1950s. This transnational supplied tobacco to the cigarette companies belonging to its conglomerate, the most powerful in the world at the time. As such, it played a key role in the introduction of blonde tobacco varieties in Mexico and of a technological tobacco package specially designed for local conditions. Philip Morris, which arrived in Mexico in the 1960s, and La Tabacalera Mexicana, which resulted from the merging of various pioneer national companies of the 19th century, were the other important tobacco companies (Sáinz & Echegaray, 1988). The latter had to associate with the Liggett & Myers Tobacco Company because of the decline of its main cigarette brand that was mainly manufactured with dark tobacco varieties (Llanos Lerma, 1970).⁶

In short, Tabamex replaced the companies that were financing tobacco producers via a credit system (i.e., *crédito de habilitación*), or “tobacco financing package,” designed to support the production of tobacco leaves and the curing process through which they were dried. The next step consisted in sending the leaves to the industrial *stripping plants* to have them deveined and stored before being shipped to the cigarettes manufactures. The end product of this process is known as preindustrialised tobacco. All of this process consisted in a case of vertical integration of agriculture with the mediation of a state-owned company in the agro-industrial stage.

⁶To simplify, I will refer to the period before Tabamex (i.e., 1927 to 1972) as “the era of the predominance of transnational corporations,” without underestimating the presence of Mexican capital and that of other regional cigarette companies (CODAI, 1982, p. 38).

3 | CONTRACT AGRICULTURE AND THE TOBACCO PRODUCTION PROCESS IN NAYARIT

Following the armed phase of the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), the cigarette companies that had settled in Mexico began supplying themselves through intermediaries, mostly large landowners that took upon themselves the task of financing small-scale tobacco growers with different production capacities. The radical land distribution that took place between 1934 and 1936, which led to the transformation of the agrarian structure of Nayarit into a land tenure system dominated by *ejidos*, allowed the settlement of small *ejidatarios* in the best tobacco lands of the coastal plain (Castellón, 1992; Meyer, 1989). Initially, there was a considerable disparity between the contracts of *ejidatarios* with smaller land parcels and private owners that kept the largest contracts and higher-quality land. However, this changed with time. As a result of the agrarian reform, small *ejidatarios* came to dominate over private owners. In the last agricultural cycle administered by these companies (cycle 1971–1972), the average size of such land parcels was 2.5 ha and there were very few private landowners: this productive cycle involved 10,327 *ejidatarios* and only 256 private producers (Jáuregui et al., 1980, p. 227). During the Tabamex era, this average was 2.3 ha (Table 1).

Unlike the vast majority of other crops under contract farming, the tobacco production process was fully financed. The only other comparable case was that of the sugar cane sector. The negotiations of the tobacco financing packages were carried out with the organisations of tobacco growers from different regions, and the support allocated differed according to the variety of tobacco (Mackinlay, 2014, pp. 109–111). These financing packages covered all expenses incurred in the process: (a) the wages of farm workers; (b) the hiring of portable irrigations systems, machinery, and other agricultural equipment; and (c) the provision of all inputs, from seedbeds to agrochemicals (i.e., fertilisers, herbicides, insecticides, and soil disinfectants) and other materials required for the production and the curing of the tobacco leaves (like those employed for the construction of drying sheds). There was also a programme for long-term equipment credits for the purchase of tractors, irrigation equipment, trucks, and vans to help maximise the capitalisation of the productive units. This was financed by discounting a certain amount from the delivered production at the end of the agricultural cycle.

The tobacco growers had to abide by the guidelines and procedures described in the contracts. They interacted with the technical staff and field supervisors of the state-owned company that were usually agronomists. The latter made suggestions during their periodic inspections of the land parcels: they oversaw the application of the technological package components at the appropriate time, agreed upon programming the services involving machinery and equipment; they delivered the supplies and the money for the farm workers; and they addressed requests and exchanged ideas about the ways to proceed.⁷ Tobacco production was intensive in the use of inputs and labour power. In order to produce optimal results, it required constant vigilance and the implementation of the correct farming tasks; numerous and timely interventions (especially during the 3 months that are needed for tobacco plants to grow), in addition to all the tasks involved in the postagricultural phase, that lasted for more or less a month depending on the variety of tobacco (González Castañeda, 1995, p. 23).

Compared with the tobacco production process in the United States, where industrial agriculture originated from and where the use of mechanical planters, harvesters and more mechanised procedures had become widespread in the tobacco sector by the end of the 1960s; in Nayarit, it still required a good amount of manual labour and artisanal work (Daniel, 1985, pp. 256–270).⁸ In other words, although tobacco consisted in a typically agro-industrial crop of the Green Revolution on the basis of the use of mechanical equipment, the technological package was adapted as much as possible to local conditions, such as the size of land, traditional productive practices, and the greater or lesser availability of rural workforce.

⁷Interview with Mr. L. S. E., former inspector of Tabamex and employee of one of the new companies that emerged after its privatisation in Tepic, Nayarit (December 9, 1996).

⁸In the United States, however, tobacco production was considerably behind with other crops like cotton and rice regarding the development of agricultural technology. This was due to social considerations that derived from the New Deal era (see Daniel, 1985).

TABLE 1 Tabamex, harvested areas by tobacco varieties in the Nayarit–Jalisco zone (hectares)

Agricultural cycles	1972–1973	1973–1974	1974–1975	1975–1976	1976–1977	1977–1978	1978–1979	1979–1980	1980–1981	Percentages and averages from 1972 to 1990
Tobacco varieties										
Virginia green (flue cured)	5,256	4,037	3,595	5,196	4,747	5,674	7,128	9,173	8,436	
Virginia sun cured	11,995	12,860	10,706	9,252	8,788	8,538	9,544	8,307	7,724	
Burley semishade cured	8,507	11,193	11,027	11,156	12,161	14,120	13,511	14,307	11,489	
Burley shade cured	2,411	2,096	2,366	3,832	3,736	4,213	4,376	4,841	4,689	
Burley sun cured	2,179	1,801	1,869	1,803	1,654	1,497	1,475	1,833	1,568	
Harvested Areas	30,348	31,985	29,561	31,239	31,086	34,041	36,034	38,461	33,906	
Number of growers	10,915	12,041	11,522	12,598	13,238	14,052	15,134	15,163	14,243	
Average of hectares per grower	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	
Agricultural cycles										
1981–1982	1982–1983	1983–1984	1984–1985	1985–1986	1986–1987	1987–1988	1988–1989	1989–1990		
Tobacco varieties										
Virginia green (flue cured)	7,660	8,065	4,379	5,109	10,316	9,008	7,188	7,012	7,157	21%
Virginia sun cured	8,986	6,856	8,536	9,440	9,286	5,658	10,030	7,586	2,931	28%
Burley semishade cured	13,399	11,377	10,549	7,490	11,156	6,635	11,628	9,167	8,028	35%
Burley shade cured	4,760	5,360	5,047	4,803	5,444	3,835	3,981	2,676	1,750	13%
Burley sun cured	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3%
Harvested Areas	34,805	31,658	28,511	26,842	36,202	25,136	32,827	26,441	19,866	31,053
Number of growers	14,814	14,130	13,583	13,658	17,100	12,657	17,012	14,078	11,027	13,720
Average of hectares per grower	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.8	2.3

Note: Source: This compilation is based on official data from Tabamex. For the agricultural cycles from (1972–1973) to (1980–1981), see CODAI (1982). For the agricultural cycles from (1981–1982) to (1989–1990), see Saldívar (1991, p. 157) (the agricultural cycles go from october to may of the following year).

The productive process was expected to be carried out, as much as possible, by the tobacco growers with the support of their families in order to keep the wages that were covered by the tobacco financing package within the domestic units. But because of the high demands for labour and depending on the availability of family members, it was common for tobacco growers to hire farm workers. This was especially the case during the planting of seedlings, the harvesting, and for the many postagricultural tasks related to the curing of tobacco leaves, when the internal capacity of the family units to provide labour force was insufficient.

Nevertheless, tobacco growers worked on fewer tasks than they would otherwise have done if they did not have this cash advances for wages available, even though this meant losing the opportunity to pocket the entire budget assigned to salaries. Instead, many of them preferred to pay wages to farm workers external to the household to free themselves for engaging in other economic activities. The typical tobacco grower household would run the productive process without getting directly involved in it, with varying levels of involvement of the remaining members of the family unit (Bracho, 1990, p. 69). These strategies negatively affected production and its quality because this productive model required the commitment of the household's labour. They were made possible due to the low exigency by Tabamex and did not significantly impact in the income generated when it came to deliver the production at the end of the season.

Once the seedbeds were provided directly by Tabamex, as previously done by the transnational companies, the direct participation of the tobacco growers began with the planting of seedlings, which implied the preparation of soils with machinery, and the sowing was made manually and required external farm workers (Améndola, 1984, p. 93). Subsequently, and as detailed in the contracts, they had to make several cuts in the tobacco plants to apply fertilisers, insecticides, and herbicides. Occasionally, the application of fungicides was also necessary. The members of the domestic units tended to participate the most in this agricultural stage, despite the fact that they also had, as I just mentioned, the possibility of hiring workers.

Tobacco growers of the Virginia sun cured, Burley semishade cured, and Burley sun cured varieties (Table 1) usually turned to seasonal farm workers in the harvesting and the curing processes. Indigenous workers from Huichol, Cora, Tepehuano, and Mexicanero ethnic groups were hired in the picking and stringing of tobacco in the tobacco fields. Accompanied by their families, Huicholes were the most predominant group. They travelled long journeys from their communities located in highlands of Nayarit, Jalisco, and Durango states to the coastal plain of Nayarit. Their stay lasted for 4 to 6 months and they worked in agricultural activities that included other crops, not just tobacco (Díaz Romo & Salinas Alvarez, 2000).

Indigenous seasonal farm workers were predominantly employed in the making of *sartas*, which consisted in cutting the tobacco leaves one by one and stringing them in order to be hanged and cured outdoors or in closed drying sheds, depending on the varieties. This procedure required precision and dexterity, otherwise the leaves were at risk of falling as they dried. Household men, women, and children performed these tasks from dawn to dusk in an unhealthy working environment contaminated by agrochemicals. Families worked and prepared their meals under the shade of *enramadas* made of thick branches and palm roofing to protect them from the sun. At night, they rested in shacks they made themselves with whatever materials they could find in situ, such as branches and plastics. Only a few rested in houses made of wood and palm leaves provided by the tobacco growers. Even these, as mentioned by Maldonado Lee (1977), were far from what was required by law.⁹

Other temporary rural wage employees were local farm workers from nearby cities and *ejido* urban settlements hired by tobacco growers to work on various agricultural and postagricultural tasks. These farm workers were other *ejidatarios*, relatives of the tobacco *ejidatarios* and newcomers into the *ejido* communities. There was also another group of migrant seasonal mestizo farm workers from the neighbouring states of Jalisco, Nayarit, Michoacán, Guerrero, and Zacatecas migrating in periods of higher demand for labour force. These workers were housed temporarily

⁹According to the Federal Labour Law, employers had the obligation to provide rural workers with "adequate and clean rooms, large enough to accommodate their relatives and dependents" (quoted by Maldonado, 1977, p. 103).

in the urban settlements and took part in the harvesting and curing of Virginia flue cured and Burley shade cured tobacco leaves, which involved different postagricultural procedures that did not require the making of *sartas*.

The Burley shade cured tobacco was only produced in the *Costa Sur* region. The curing process was less complex but required more infrastructure (Figure 1 and Table 1) and larger land parcels (around 5 ha). The harvest was not done leaf by leaf but rather by cutting the whole plants, which were later hung upside down in big metal sheds belonging to Tabamex. The sheds were installed permanently in *ejido* lands and had the capacity to cure the equivalent of approximately 6 ha of production. Because this tobacco was intended for export, it also required a more careful treatment to comply with international quality standards. Tabamex was in charge of the harvest and curing of the tobacco leaves and hired mainly local farm workers to do the job (Jáuregui et al., 1980, pp. 178–182).

The Virginia green tobacco once cured, which is internationally known as *flue cured*, was produced in the most important tobacco centre of the *Costa Norte* region (Figure 1). The curing process was done in drying ovens to dehydrate the tobacco leaves.¹⁰ As it was the case for the Burley shade cured tobacco, Tabamex was in charge of both the harvesting and the curing processes. Harvesting was done by tobacco pickers made of local farm workers and mestizo seasonal farm workers, aided by mechanised platforms where they placed the tobacco leaves. They also selected and prepared the green leaves for their transportation by trucks to the oven plants. Lower quality or imperfect leaves were cured by the tobacco growers through the *sarta* system (Mackinlay, 2001, p. 111).

If we do an overall assessment of the working conditions of temporary farm workers, the local farm workers that lived in tobacco towns worked in the various agricultural activities that took place during the 3-month long agricultural phase of production. They also took part in specific postagricultural tasks and were paid per day of work. Indigenous migrant workers had no other alternative but to camp in the tobacco fields under the conditions described above, and their labour was paid by the piece in accordance to the number of *sartas* delivered. Migrant mestizo seasonal farm workers, who usually did not migrate with their families, were housed in the tobacco towns; they worked only in the postagricultural tasks mentioned above and were also paid per day of work.

In most cases, wages depended on the negotiations that took place between tobacco growers and farm workers. The amounts of money paid were usually lower than the rates agreed in the tobacco financing package that was established before the beginning of the productive cycle. In exceptional occasions these could be exceeded, such as in times of labour shortage. This money was periodically given in cash to the tobacco producers by field supervisors for them to dispose of.

In summary, tobacco growers of Virginia sun cured, Burley semishade cured, and Burley sun-cured¹¹ varieties, which amounted to 66% of the harvested area in the times of Tabamex, were responsible for the agricultural phase (with the exception of seedlings), the harvesting, and the curing of the tobacco leaves. This kept them busy on their land parcels a little over 6 months a year. As for Virginia flue cured and Burley shade cured tobacco growers, which represented the 34% left over of the harvested area (Table 1), their participation was practically limited to the agricultural phase because Tabamex took on the tasks related to the postagricultural phase. These activities represented over 5 months of work per year.

To end this section, it is worth mentioning that during the Tabamex years and from the angle of the productive process, there were no great technological innovations or significant changes to the agricultural and postagricultural processes that could be said to be different to the methods established during the era dominated by transnational corporations. However, the state-owned company made important investments in both the consolidation of the productive infrastructure and the funding of research in agronomy and technology (Tabamex-INEGI, 1989, p. 52). The investment in infrastructure included the sheds, the warehouses and storage structures, furnace plants, deveining facilities, and the construction of fertiliser mixers. Tabamex also contributed to the extension of the areas under irrigation, with the maintenance and construction of hydraulic infrastructures that had been expanded during the previous decade (Domike & Rodríguez, 1979).

¹⁰For further details about drying ovens, see Tabamex-INEGI (1989, pp. 58–59) and Mackinlay (2004b, p. 33).

¹¹The Burley sun cured was discontinued from the 1981–1982 cycle onwards (Table 1).

4 | THE SUBORDINATION OF PRODUCERS TO THE PRODUCTIVE PROCESSES

In light of the previous description and following Baranger who writes about the tobacco agroindustry in the province of *Misiones* in Argentina:

(...) tobacco production is a typical case of contract-farming, characterised by a vertical integration of production in which direct producers act as formally independent farmers but work for a company that provides them with the inputs in exchange for their commitment to turn in their production (...) it can be said that the companies have outsourced the agricultural production process, whilst keeping it under their almost absolute control (Baranger, 2007, pp. 35–36).

Despite the subordinated nature of this relation, most of the studies on Tabamex including that of Améndola (1984), Améndola and Albarrán (1983), Ceballos, Díaz Pineda, and Gomezcézar (1985), CODAI (1982), Giarracca (1983), Jáuregui et al. (1980), and Valtierra (1984) have characterised tobacco growers as *peasants*, without underestimating the “peculiar” nature of their “integration to the agro-industrial complex” (CODAI, 1982, p. 134). In contrast, the prevailing interpretative tendency that appears in research on contract agriculture has been to perceive these tobacco growers as being involved in a process of proletarianisation through contractual relations. Following this trend, their lack of independence and the imperative to have to follow the indications of the technological package clearly turned them into workers subordinated to external guide lines with not much to say about the procedures to follow in the productive terrain.

Little and Watts (1994), who are among the many authors that share this view, argue that “contract-farming disguises a wage relationship between buyer and grower, so that peasants are relegated to being hired hands on their own land” (p. 16). “Nominally independent growers retain the illusion of autonomy but have become in practice (...) workers cultivating company crops on private allotments” (Watts, 1994, p. 64). Along the same lines, Bracho (1980) was one of the few researchers working on Tabamex to perceive tobacco growers as “hidden” wage workers and de facto proletarians (pp. 130–132). In a similar branch of activity, according to Paré (1977) who conducted a study in the 1970s on large sugar cane *ejidos* of the Atencigo region in Puebla, the majority of sugar cane producers involved in a contract-farming system with full funding to supply sugar mills¹² should have been considered “proletarians disguised as peasants” (p. 175).

My intention is not to make a theoretical argument about contract farming in general. The conceptual discussion that follows has the objective of providing some foundations to improve our understanding of the Nayarit tobacco growers. Concerning the first interpretation, I am aware that the concept of peasant, which usually assumes a reliance on family labour in order to ensure the social reproduction of the households, may be of little help to understand our case study. In contrast to this commonly accepted feature of peasant domestic units, tobacco growers of Nayarit systematically relied on the hiring of wage labour. I will thus refer to them as “well-off small-scale tobacco growers” and use the term “peasants” when referring to other groups of producers that are closer to more traditional definitions of the term. These aspects will be discussed in more detail in the next sections.

I am not convinced either that we should refer to them as being disguised proletarians. The reasoning of Little and Watts is particularly convincing for many cases of industrial agriculture where the technological package requires high levels of control (see also Barlett, 1991). However, in other situations, even though the subordination of producers to the technological packages in the context of contract agriculture is undeniable, there are several reasons why it cannot always be understood with the proletarianization approach.

¹²For the sugar cane branch of activity, also see Singelmann (2001) and Otero (1998, 1999).

TABLE 2 Tabamex, size and percentage of land parcels in the Nayarit–Jalisco zone (agricultural cycles 1973 to 1974 and 1982 to 1983)

Categories	Size of parcels in hectares	Agricultural cycle: 1973–1974		Agricultural cycle: 1982–1983		
		Number of parcels	Percentage	Number of parcels	Percentage	
I	0.50 to 1 ha.	1,264	10.6	2,564	18.1	+
II	1.25 to 2 ha	4,676	39.1	6,524	46.1	+
III	2.25 to 3 ha	2,491	20.8	2,581	18.3	–
IV	3.25 to 4 ha	3,029	25.3	2,290	16.2	–
V	4.25 to 6 ha	507	4.2	178	1.3	–
	Total	11,967	100	14,137	100	

Note: + symbol means that the parcels in the category grew in number from agricultural cycle 1973–1974 to agricultural cycle 1982–1983.

– symbol means that the parcels in the category declined in number.

- 1 Technical inspections are periodic, making it impossible to hold permanent surveillance of the tasks that are carried out in the same way as it is done in factory work.
- 2 Growers have their own agricultural knowledge and criteria that sometimes differ from those of the personnel in charge of their supervision.
- 3 Agriculture is subject to natural conditions that are unpredictable and require timely intervention by producers without technical consultation.
- 4 The administration of a whole package of productive resources provided by the companies—in cash or in kind—usually gives growers an important range of autonomy.
- 5 Technological packages, as we saw in this study, must be adapted to local conditions as well as to peasant cultures where they exist. This means that companies need to take into account traditional and artisanal methods and techniques and combining them with modern agriculture procedures.
- 6 Depending on their social reproduction strategies, contract holders express different degrees of commitment to the productive process. This affects the time, the effort, and their level of observation towards the fulfilment of mandatory stipulations.

Producers can actually decide to privilege other sources of income if need be and not deliver the expected level of commitment to agricultural and postagricultural activities. They can divert part of the resources allocated for the production of tobacco to other crops or for the clandestine sale of some inputs, such as agrochemicals, which is a very common practice in contract agriculture. This can result in higher or lower remuneration on the basis of the productivity or for having delivered higher or lower levels of quality products than expected. If results turn out to be unacceptable to the companies that provide the funding and buy the production, they risk losing the contracts the following season. This situation, as highlighted by Little and Watts (1994), can put the profitability of the accumulation process at risk and eventually its economic viability as well. However, it is only “in surprisingly few cases are growers actually evicted from the schemes” (p. 17).

The discussion around proletarianisation only concerns the specific relation of growers towards contract farming, without considering their eventual participation as independent producers in other agricultural activities. In the case of Nayarit, the majority of tobacco growers had access to other small land parcels where they grew products other than tobacco and in which they worked effectively as independent producers. Kuschick (1989) dealt with this matter more thoroughly and argued that tobacco producers “generally rent, lend and even borrow land until they reach the average size land unit of 9.66 hectares” (pp. 99–100).

In interviews with tobacco growers that I held in the mid 1990s, 20 years after this research, Kuschick’s findings still held up. They confirmed that tobacco growers practiced other farming activities in additional *ejido* plots that they

either bought, rented, borrowed, exploited in sharecropping, or in partnership with other producers.¹³ This was irregular because the original *ejido* endowment had been restricted in the coastal plain of Nayarit to only one land parcel, and the prevailing laws during the Agrarian Reform prohibited renting or holding any kind of commercial transactions within the *ejidos*. However, this was so common and socially accepted that nobody hid it. The fragmentation of land and the clandestine land market were a widespread phenomenon in the *ejido* sector of the Mexican Agrarian Reform (FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), 1995).

Despite considering the majority of tobacco producers as peasants, Jáuregui et al. (1980) encountered a selected group of tobacco growers that took on different characteristics and were closer to being business producers. They had access to land parcels between 4.5 and 6 ha—and eventually of even greater size—as they amassed several contracts with other family members or through other persons that simulated holding the contracts (Table 2). Following these authors, and considering the conditions of production and the relatively high prices of blond tobacco at the time, these growers were in a position to engage in capital accumulation (Jáuregui et al., 1980, p. 334).

Going back to the abovementioned case of sugar cane production, Paré (1977) also refers to the existence of a very reduced group of *ejidatarios* and of small holders of the Atencingo region that owned more land and “expensive means of production” that situated them within an “accumulation path” (p. 175). Otero (1998) who conducted research in the same region in the 1990s considered that a group of sugar cane producers (around 35%) had a clear commercial orientation but worked “under a basically family based logic” (p. 296). Unlike Paré, he argues that this type of producers should have been considered as a “peasant entrepreneurial class,” which was not quite the same as a capitalist class in formation (Otero, 1999, p. 117).

On the other end of the spectrum, a few smaller-scale tobacco growers that had a peasant logic of production stood out. As seen in Table 2, the size of parcels in Category I, which varied from 0.5 to 1 ha, increased from 10.6% to 18.1% in nearly 10 years between the beginning of the 1970s and the early 1980s. This can be explained by the redistributive policy adopted by Tabamex that reinforced even more the smallholder character of tobacco production.

Because of the smaller size of their tobacco surfaces, they received more reduced resources from the tobacco financing package and thus had lower revenues. Although it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusions here because tobacco growers had access to other land parcels and sources of incomes that could modify this assessment, presumably those belonging to this group performed with the support of their families most of the agricultural and postagricultural tasks themselves. Thus, they seldomly hired farmworkers external to the households.

In this same Table 2, it can also be seen that growers belonging to Categories II, III, and IV, ranging from 1.25 to 4ha, which will be discussed in the next section, were the most representative of the tobacco growers, despite decreasing their numbers from 85 to 80% in that same period of time.

5 | WELL-OFF SMALL-SCALE TOBACCO GROWERS

It was in the 1960s when transnational corporations were predominant in the tobacco sector that producers “obtained the highest real incomes” in the history of the tobacco agro-industry in Mexico (Valtierra, 1984, p. 169). In the 1970s, Tabamex was able to maintain relatively high living standards and income levels among producers, but these tended to decline in the following decade (Améndola & Albarrán, 1983; Ceballos et al., 1985). During the agricultural cycle, tobacco growers sustained themselves with the income they received in advance, which was granted through the funding allocated through the tobacco financing package. This income was deliberately calculated to grant more than what was strictly necessary for the accomplishment of the production tasks in order to ensure the social reproduction of the household during the productive cycle. This extra income was made possible by the fact that it would eventually be discounted at the end of the season (with the exception of growers that incurred a debt).

¹³These consisted of 44 structured interviews that I carried out at two different occasions in 10 *ejidos* of the Costa Norte and 8 *ejidos* of the Costa Sur in August 1994 and in May 1996 (see figure 1).

The remaining fraction of the pending income was obtained on the last payment, which resulted from subtracting the total value of the financial package from the total value of the production delivered at the end of the productive cycle. Overall, it represented an income considerably higher than the one obtained by the majority of Mexican peasants for the sale of their crops (Jáuregui et al., 1980, p. 259–300).

This money was usually used for larger expenses such as the building or improving housing and the purchase of durable consumer goods (i.e., appliances, agricultural equipment, or vehicles, such as vans). As previously mentioned, in addition to the tobacco-related activities, *ejidatarios* generally had access to other land parcels that were dedicated to agriculture. They also worked in numerous rural and urban jobs when seasonal tobacco activities were suspended, which represented between 5 and 6 months a year. Those with higher incomes had small businesses in the tobacco villages (Giarracca, 1983, p. 221). An important number of them migrated to the United States during this period to seek temporary work in the tobacco fields in the states of North Carolina, Kentucky, and Virginia, where their services were appreciated due to their experience with this crop (Salazar, 2010).

The affiliation in 1972 of Nayarit tobacco growers to the *Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social* (IMSS) was a fundamental gain. In contrast, growers from the Zona Golfo never obtained it. The corresponding administrative matters were taken up by the organisations of tobacco growers, the *Asociación Ejidal Esteban Baca Calderón*. In Nayarit, sugar cane workers that were members of the *Unión Nacional Cañera* and the *Unión Nacional de Productores de Caña de Azúcar* as well as a number of livestock producers from the *Confederación Nacional Ganadera* were also among those affiliated to the IMSS. This social security, paid for via a fee that was directly retained by Tabamex from the payment earned at the end of the season and complemented by a similar fee by Tabamex itself, provided medical care to affiliated members and their families. It also provided them with a labour accident insurance and a pension upon retirement. Tobacco growers also benefitted from two other significant advantages such as a life and agricultural insurances provided, in this case, by Tabamex and the state agency *Aseguradora Nacional Agrícola y Ganadera, S. A.*, respectively (Ceballos et al., 1985; Mackinlay, 2001).

In Mexico, very few rural producers from the era of the Agrarian Reform benefitted from affiliation to the IMSS. This can be explained by the fact that the social security was designed fundamentally for wage workers from the formal sector. Some rural producers belonging to the legally defined “nonwage popular groups,” as the ones mentioned above, managed to become affiliated but with restrictive health services. Because of the fact that they were not salaried workers, in order to obtain them, Tabamex had to negotiate a special affiliation agreement with the IMSS at the beginning of each agricultural cycle.

Temporary farm workers also benefitted from the IMSS, but it only provided health, maternity, and labour accident insurances. Permanent rural workers were the only ones to be fully insured. To make things worse, this unique health coverage was not always enforced by the tobacco growers that hired them. They sometimes allocated IMSS “vouchers” to access these benefits to other relatives or friends (Mackinlay, 2008, pp. 132–140).

Tabamex also put in place an impressive social programme aimed at the tobacco communities that built urban infrastructure for towns, public squares, auditoriums to hold assemblies and cultural activities, as well as offices, libraries for the *ejidos*, and government-run stores with subsidised products. The state-owned company also provided pantries, school scholarships for the children of growers, and other social benefits (Ceballos et al., 1985, pp. 27–28; Chumacero, 1985, p. 54). This was made possible through the *Fondo de Apoyo para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad Tabacalera*, which was financed in part by producers through their contributions as shareholders of Tabamex. It is in this context that I refer to the well-off small-scale tobacco growers of the Mexican Agrarian Reform.

In contrast to tobacco growers, temporary rural wage workers were left without protection. Aside from their affiliation to IMSS, which could only be made effective in formally registered rural enterprises, very little was done to improve their labour and social conditions. In the tobacco sector, according to the institutional division of labour, Tabamex did not consider itself to be responsible for temporary farm workers but rather believed it to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour. In fact, the Presidential Decree that created the state-owned company only mentioned peasants and never farm workers, notwithstanding the central role that they played in production (D. O. F. (Diario Oficial de la Federación), 1972). To illustrate the attitude adopted by the executives of the company towards

farm workers, they were only briefly mentioned in four reports produced by Antonio Noriega Verdager, the General Director of Tabamex between 1977 and 1980, when referring to extending social security and a life insurance that was not implemented (Tabamex, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981).

The invisibility of farm workers was a characteristic of the Mexican Agrarian Reform. Social justice for them was conceived as their conversion to the status of peasants through land distribution but not through the granting of fair wages and adequate working conditions in the agricultural fields and even less through the organisation of unions to promote their rights (Lara, 1996). The governments that emerged from the Mexican Revolution oriented their social policies in the countryside on access to land and on the creation of services to support the *ejidatarios*, leaving rural wage workers unattended and in conditions of acute social precarity.

Although left-wing and progressive circles were conscious about this situation, for many years they showed more concern about land than labour issues in the countryside, in spite of the increased number of peasants that needed to subsidise their agricultural activities with off-farm temporary jobs. The number of rural proletarians that had no land or limited access to it increased as well. With a few exceptions, these circles emphasised much more the “fight for land” than independent trade union organisation. To some extent, this attitude was also widely shared by farm workers. Many of them had small *ejido* or community parcels in social property regime, or the possibility to cultivate a small piece of land in determined periods of the year.

It would have been extremely important for Tabamex to take the necessary measures to protect temporary farm workers—or to make sure that some institution did—especially for the most deprived indigenous and mestizo migrants. Within this group, this would have been particularly important for the indigenous seasonal farm workers that travelled with their families and were not looked after in regard to their accommodations in the tobacco fields nor targeted in relation to child-labour prevention measures and educational services for school-aged children.¹⁴

Following the criteria of CEPAL (Comisión Económica para América Latina) (1982), which were based on data collected for the 1970 census, the majority of peasants in Mexico that lived under “infrasubsistence” and “subsistence” levels represented 71.9% of rural producers. Therefore, they were forced to sustain themselves with income obtained outside their farming activities (Comisión Económica para América Latina, 1982, p.114). In this respect, instead of full-time peasants, it could be said that the Mexican Agrarian Reform led to the creation of a predominantly “semiproletarian” peasant class (Kay, 2006, pp. 471–472). The majority of farm workers fell into this category. They worked their own land during the rainy season and migrated to sell their labour power the remaining part of the year. It is worth mentioning that the Agricultural Census of 1970 was conducted just over a year before the creation of Tabamex.

Among the stratifications of tobacco growers that were made, the one produced by CODAI stands out. It covered all the tobacco regions, including the Gulf of Mexico administrative zone, and referred to three groups: (a) the “poor” peasantry; (b) an intermediate sector or the “middle” peasantry; and (c) the “rich” or “surplus-producing” peasantry (CODAI, 1982, p. 134). Poor peasants were identified in several regions of this zone but were not detected in this study on the Nayarit–Jalisco zone. This group included the smaller growers of dark tobacco for cigarettes from the north of Veracruz and especially “microproducers” from Zimatlán, Córdoba, and Simojovel (Figure 1) that cultivated areas ranging from 0.2 to 0.5 ha of special tobacco varieties. Microproducers only received a limited amount of financing and support from Tabamex.¹⁵

The “middle” peasantry, predominant in both zones, was the most representative of the “tobacco population” and received a total income derived from the tobacco activity that was allegedly sufficient to cover its social reproduction needs “not only during the productive cycle but throughout the year.”¹⁶ The third category of producers

¹⁴It was only late in the 1990s that some measures were taken on this matter (Mackinlay, 2008).

¹⁵See also Giarracca (1983, 1985) who was a member of the team of researchers of CODAI 1982 headed by Miguel Teubal.

¹⁶This statement about the tobacco income was based on the widespread idea put forward by Jáuregui et al. (1980); according to which, the typical tobacco grower from Nayarit could cover the basic needs of his family during the agricultural season with the “anticipated income” mentioned above, whereas the “final income” allowed for “the reproduction of the domestic unit during the non-productive period” (1980, p. 285). Despite the unlikely nature of this idea—which nonetheless reflected its significantly high standards of living—it became a “mantra” that was repeated in the subsequent studies on Tabamex that were inspired by this pioneering work.

“was in a process of expanding its business operations,” diversifying its agricultural production and getting involved in other activities such as transport, retail, and small businesses (Giarracca, 1983, pp. 134–135).

Taking all of this into consideration, it is no easy task to categorise small-scale tobacco growers according to conventional sociological categories. They were not by any means wealthy capitalists, but they did quite well. They were in a situation that was comparable, or better, with that of middle peasants. In certain cases, they leaned towards the status of wealthy-affluent peasants. In comparison with the period prior to land distribution of the 1930s, when they had been indentured farm workers living in poverty, migrants in search for land or recently settled peasants in *ejidos* as a result of the Agrarian Reform, they experienced important economic progress and social mobility.

In Tabamex times, there were other producers, comparable with the tobacco and the sugar cane producers, who earned equivalent incomes and shared similar social standards through different productive regimes. They originated from a myriad of groups that, considering the extent of the Agrarian Reform, managed to access quality agricultural lands (generally irrigated) in sufficient quantities with adequate organisational regimes (González, 1994). This can be explained by the fact that they were involved in especially lucrative activities that allowed them to obtain reasonable prices in exchange for their products or services. This diverse array of “middle” range producers working independently or in an associative way through different business agreements, enjoyed income levels and living standards that were substantially higher than the average low-income peasants of the Agrarian Reform. It is therefore not surprising that for many years they were part of the most loyal social bases of the official and corporatist *Confederación Nacional Campesina* and of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Mackinlay, 1996).

6 | THE NAYARIT TOBACCO GROWERS AS EMPLOYERS

Despite the insistence on the basically peasant condition of tobacco growers in most of the studies about Tabamex, what distinguishes them from other small producers is that most of them systematically hired nonfamily workers. This practice distances them from the category of peasant. Thanks to the financial support they received for salaries, an important number of tobacco growers opted out from a direct involvement in the productive process, with variable levels of participation of other household members.

What is missing from all the studies on Tabamex I have referred to is that while focusing exclusively on producers, they only occasionally mentioned the employment of salaried workers. This resulted in minimising the significance of this phenomenon. They assumed that this practice was restricted to needs that exceeded the capacity of the family unit to provide the required labour power. It was only Bracho (1980, 1990) who considered this labour hiring practice more integrally. Nevertheless, the problem with his approach is that he classified producers and wage workers within the same category as he conceived tobacco growers as covert proletarians and farm workers as full proletarians. He therefore concluded that these were two different forms of labour exploitation.

According to a Tabamex officer interviewed by the team of researchers from CODAI, producers and their families provided the equivalent of 30% to 35% of the workforce, the proportion of indigenous migrant seasonal farm workers represented around 35% to 40%, whereas local farm workers combined with migrant farm workers that came from states bordering Nayarit represented another 25% to 30% of the work force (1982, p. 125). This is a rough estimate because such proportions are difficult to evaluate quantitatively—none of the research on Tabamex provided any statistics that included such variables—but this can be confirmed with the high levels of arrivals to the Nayarit coast for the harvesting and the curing of tobacco leaves.

The labour structure of the sugar cane agro-industry was very similar, although this productive activity was much wider than the tobacco one. In 1982, it covered 15 Mexican states and involved just over 128,000 producers that worked for a total of 69 sugar mills (Paré, Juárez, & Salazar, 1987, p. 33). In contrast, during the same year, an average of 13,720 tobacco producers (Table 1) supplied three deveining plants in Nayarit, and there were similar numbers of producers in the states of Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Chiapas (CODAI, 1982, p. 47). The sugar cane economic activity also employed a considerable number of workers during the agricultural phase and over 97,000 seasonal

farm workers for the harvest period, many of which were indigenous migrant workers from poorer states such as Guerrero, Michoacán, Puebla, Oaxaca, and Hidalgo. Just as in the tobacco sector, sugar cane producers gradually substituted family labour with hired labour external to the household. The cutting of the sugar cane was carried out in extremely adverse and difficult conditions. In this “hard and poorly paid” work, the vast majority of producers “(did) not personally cut their cane” (Paré et al., 1987, pp. 40–52).

The following quotation from Paré reveals certain bitterness about these peasants of the agrarian reform: “Currently, *ejidatarios* no longer work their land. All or most of the work is done by farmworkers; at the most they irrigate the land or go about doing little tasks when they do not find anyone else. Nowadays, they are mainly administrators, supervisor or foremen (...) Who benefitted from the profits of the last harvest? Was it an income, profit or rent from the land (...)? (Before) most *ejidatarios* worked the land themselves in each stages of production such as sowing, irrigation and other tasks albeit not in the harvest” (1977, pp. 181–183)

As for the indigenous migrant seasonal farm workers of the tobacco sector, they lived in their communities in the highlands during the rainy season (from March to September), where they produced corn, beans, chili peppers, squash, amaranth, and other crops for self-consumption. During the dry season, they travelled to the Nayarit coast in extremely precarious conditions to pick and string tobacco. These were, for the most part, “infrasubsistence” and “subsistence” semiproletarian peasants that sold their labour power part of the year.¹⁷ They were hired by these well-off small-scale tobacco growers that operated as their bosses. This kind of hiring represented a custom initiated in the 19th century when the crop was in the hands of *hacendados* (landlords) that lacked sufficient local labour force. It was continued when transnational corporations predominated from 1927 to 1972 and became part of the Nayarit tobacco culture, just as hiring cutters was common practice in the sugar cane sector. It was commonly assumed that indigenous farm workers performed these tasks better than mestizo farm workers

If we approach this wage relation from the perspective of the labour theory of value, with no doubt, the exploitation relation principally benefited the tobacco companies—and the sugar cane mills—that extracted most of the surplus value. Tobacco and sugar cane producers were, to some extent, mere intermediaries or middlemen of this relation of exploitation. Eventually, if we follow Bracho (1990), they could have been considered as de facto foremen: “the *ejidatario* serves as a foreman who supervises and controls the labour process” (p. 69).

However, tobacco growers were in charge of labour in an autonomous way, without any interference from companies. They benefit from, and were active participants, of this relation of exploitation because a significant part of their income came from the work of farm workers. Their status of small producers did not exempt them from the rarely fulfilled obligation of paying the legal rate to their workers (for their day of work or per piece), providing them with dignified housing, as well as with access to medical services in accordance with labour laws. As argued by Díaz Romo and Salinas-Álvarez (1999)

Negotiations between the Huichols and land-owners and *ejidatarios*—acting as middlemen between the labour force and tobacco companies—usually take place in the village squares, bus stations, or sometimes even in the land-owner's [tobacco growers]home. In some cases, the Huichol Indians will timidly ask for ‘extra conditions’ such as a certain number of tortillas per day for the family, or purified water. Very few, however, are able to obtain these amenities, and those who receive them consider themselves fortunate. The rest are forced to drink water from the Santiago River, one of the most contaminated rivers in Mexico. (...) Many Huichols do not even attempt to negotiate either the ‘extra conditions’ or the fair monetary value of their work. Many do not speak Spanish, and if they do, they are reticent, due to the discrimination against Indians that is rampant throughout Mexico. Most are afraid that they will not be hired if they seem to be ‘too demanding’. Besides, they need the job so desperately that they will end up taking any offer. When business deals are worked out, they are usually unfair to the Indians. Sometimes, after arguing for hours about prices and working conditions, the

¹⁷For these categories, see Comisión Económica para América Latina, 1982.

boss leaves abruptly. (...) There are bosses who fire the workers after one or two weeks, forcing entire families to migrate again in their painful search for a job (pp. 347–348).

To balance out this vision, there were some small-scale tobacco growers that treated their indigenous workers and their families better than stated in the above quotation. Indigenous workers were provided with blankets to cover themselves and a diesel lamp to have light at nightfall (which also helped them continue their work). This was despite the fact that they still had to work and sleep in the tobacco fields in precarious conditions and prepare their food in outdoor grills. Once work began, they were also provided with their daily tortillas, potable water, and, eventually, beans that were not always deducted from their weekly pay. If bosses did not take workers, or members of their families, to the IMSS when they became ill —because they had already used the five “vouchers” per hectare they were entitled to allocate to farm workers for the benefit of their relatives or friends—they at least provided them with medical attention with private doctors (Mackinlay, 2008, p. 130). During weekends, it was also quite common for families to be housed in the courtyards of their bosses, where they could stock up on food, rest with their families, and go out for entertainment in the town squares of tobacco villages.

The hiring of nonfamily farm workers, where very few relations of kinship, cooperation, and solidarity prevailed and where relations were mainly based on market mechanism, was much more significant in Mexico than in other countries where the labour force is more scarce and expensive. As an example, we can look at two cases of tobacco regions in the province of Misiones, in the northeast part of Argentina, where small burley tobacco growers plant an average of 1.5 ha and where their farms “are based on the use of domestic labour, a fundamental feature that heavily conditions all their economic behaviour.” In Misiones, the average size of farms is 17.3 ha, which is larger than in Nayarit, allowing tobacco growers to perform multiple activities in the rest of the property (Baranger, 2007, pp. 10–32).¹⁸

In this case, according to Schiavoni (2001), farms are units “based in the use of family labour power, market integration and with some capacity for capital accumulation.” Mutual support and the reciprocal exchange of work are prevalent across that province and are carried out within nuclear and extended families. These are slightly different to the “collective forms of mutual support,” as could be the *tequio* in the indigenous communities in Mexico because they are “more economic” in nature. This means that they include an “estimate of the amounts of money being exchanged and the repayment terms in exchange for support” even if these are kept “within the gift economy,”¹⁹ which is based on the “preference for transactions among friends and relatives” (Schiavoni, 2001, pp. 461–462).

In the northwest province of Tucumán, Carla Gras (2005) studied the tobacco growers with less than 2 ha of Virginia flue cured tobacco that relied “only on family labour.” Those who had between 2 and 5 ha, especially in situations where “seasonal labour requirements exceeded the ability of the family to provide it” had to combine it “with the hiring of temporary farm workers” (Carla Gras, 2005, p. 89). In this case, like in Nayarit, there was also the possibility of looking for work outside the domestic unit. Although this was done because it was economically convenient to do so, they tried to keep the hiring of external workers to a minimum given the high cost of labour.

In Tucumán, as well as in Misiones, “relations of reciprocity” that did not involve “exchange of money” existed between “relatives that were not neighbours nor part of the family unit” (Carla Gras, 2005, pp. 89–90). This is paradoxical considering that the Argentinian agrarian structure does not have, with the exception of a few regions, a peasant character. This greater peasant-extended family–community inclinations in those regions can be explained by a less socially differentiated agrarian structure, and the fact that costs of labour intermediation are among the highest in Latin America due to labour power scarcity, the existence of farmworker unions, and labour rights organisations (see Neiman, 2010). In addition, and most importantly, there is no ethnically distinct subaltern social group of an important magnitude and a significantly lower social stratum of poor semiproletarian peasants as it is the case in

¹⁸In April 2006, I had the opportunity to visit tobacco farms of *Colonia Aurora* of Misiones.

¹⁹The “gift” economy has to do with the reciprocal exchange of favours and different forms of support or exchange of labour among relatives, friends, and neighbours.

Mexico.²⁰ Indigenous peoples and other subsistence peasants in Mexico that find themselves living in extreme poverty are compelled to accept low wages while often being subject to social discrimination.

7 | CONCLUSIONS

The relatively privileged economic status of tobacco producers—which lasted 30 years from the 1960s to the 1980s—does not mean there was a strategy to promote their conversion into dynamic agents of the regional agricultural economy. The small size of their land plots, the insufficient credits for the purchase of machinery and equipment, the increasing high levels of collusion between tobacco growers and fieldwork supervisors to obtain financial advantages, and a whole series of factors that inhibited a production of higher quality, higher returns, and productive efficiency—which I could not analyse here due to lack of space—prevented such an outcome. The research by Ceballos et al. (1985) was the one that contributed the most to describe this situation. This meant that “opportunities of *accumulation from below*” did not develop in Nayarit, as was the case for “certain groups of producers” of tobacco contract farming in a country like Zimbabwe (Scoones, Mavedzenge, & Murimbarimba, 2015).

Well-off small-scale tobacco growers represented a very particular social group that is only comparable with the sugar cane producers, whose productive activity and labour practices were carried out under similar conditions. Therefore, they can hardly be used as a paradigmatic model of contract farming. They were settled in good quality irrigated lands, they had access to an exceptionally favourable regime of fully financed contract farming and flourished in profitable economic sectors that were labour intensive. They had resources in cash that they derived from the tobacco financing package, which combined with low labour costs allowed them to employ wage workers. It is not impossible for such conditions to have prevailed in other countries but, in any case, it would have been quite exceptional. However, the fact that these conditions prevailed for the tobacco agro-industry during the period studied does not make it less of an example to reflect on this delicate issue that means the hiring of wage labour by small-scale growers. This is especially true in the case of a country like Mexico where in rural society, an important level of social differentiation prevails that gives small-scale tobacco growers the freedom to exploit indigenous migrant farm workers and other workers of inferior social and economic status. The situation is very different in other countries where, like in the case of Argentina, this situation is not possible due to the high costs of labour.

It is also worth mentioning that the labour conditions of farm workers in the large agricultural export oriented agricultural fields of the northeastern states of Mexico (mostly Sonora and Sinaloa at the time) were also highly precarious. The production, in that region, of horticultural crops intended for exports was carried out by an agrarian bourgeoisie with much greater means (Carton de Grammont & Lara Flores, 2010; González, 2019).

Due to their specific characteristics, it was not possible to situate the well-off small-scale tobacco growers from Nayarit under any of the traditional sociological categories or a combination of the same. Instead, I was able to associate them with this heterogeneous group of “middle producers” that adopted different characteristics and productive schemes. This conceptual dilemma did not arise in the case of the indigenous migrant seasonal farm workers who were clearly infrasubsistence and subsistence semiproletarian peasants that cultivated their own land half the year and spent the other half working outside their regions to subsist and support their agricultural activities. This was also the case for a certain number of local and mestizo seasonal farm workers who had access to land and worked for a wage part of the year. There were also landless local and seasonal mestizo migrants that much resembled the traditional agricultural proletariat because they only sold their labour power year around.

In the aftermath of the privatisation of Tabamex, which occurred in 1990, Nayarit tobacco growers were not able to sustain their living standards. Most of them lost their contracts, and their income levels collapsed (Mackinlay, 1998, 1999). From 1990 to 2000, the extension of cultivated areas was drastically reduced from 31,053 ha during the period of Tabamex (Table 1) to an average of 22,607 ha in 2000. In 2005, it had fallen to an average of 9,897 ha

²⁰In the Argentinean provinces of Santiago del Estero, Jujuy, Salta, and Formosa, there is a small indigenous population. But given its size, it does not have a significant impact on the general conditions of the rural labour force.

(Mackinlay, 2008, p. 125). The contract holders that were discarded lost their tobacco income and also lost access to social security benefits.

Many factors explain this debacle that did not only result from productivity-related market policies implemented by big national and transnational groups that went on to control the tobacco agro-industry. Other factors were also at play, such as the lack of development of a culture of efficiency, productivity, and quality production of small-scale tobacco growers during the era of the Mexican Agrarian Reform. This would have allowed them, despite their subordination to a technological package dictated from outside, to develop greater business skills and thus to acquire better chances of economic survival even without the support of a state-owned company. On the contrary, producers were immersed in an environment permeated by practices of corruption and the seizure of small rents. This did not help them to acquire the tools to face the challenges posed by neoliberal policies, the retreat of the state, and market liberalisation. An assessment of this economic dimension of state interventionism in the tobacco activity will be the object of a more detailed study.

During the 1990s and 2000s, the tobacco agroindustry was deeply affected by the neoliberal restructuring. Small-scale tobacco growers from the former tobacco economic centre of the *Costa Norte* who lost their contracts had almost no other option but to produce beans, a very difficult crop to sell in an open economy, as well as rice and vegetables. Some of them could shift to the production of tropical fruits and vegetables intended for the export market, which they sold to large merchants settled in the region. Growers from the *Costa Sur* region additionally benefited from the close-by tourist centres, which offered employment as well as the opportunity to sell handmade crafts (Figure 1). The emigration towards the United States increased, especially through the H-2A programme for non-immigrant foreign workers that are hired for a limited period of time, after which they have to return to Mexico. In this regard, migrant tobacco growers from the Tabamex era paved the way for other growers. Although the living standards of small-scale tobacco growers from the rich and fertile agrarian regions of the coastal plain of Nayarit did not drop into infrasubsistence levels, they became semiproletarians that had to diversify their agricultural way of life. As such, they had to sell their labour power more often than before, they became more dependent on remittances from migrant members of the household, and had to earn a living through a variety of activities in order to survive and guarantee the social reproduction of their family units.

ORCID

Horacio Mackinlay  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9876-7215>

REFERENCES

- Aguilera, M. (1976). Problemática y perspectivas del tabaco. *Revista del México Agrario*, 9(1), 67–82.
- Aguilera, M. (1985). Discurso en la toma de posesión de Tabaco en Rama, S. A. (TERSA), 25 de abril de 1973. In A. Chumacero (Ed.), *Origen de una empresa pública. El caso de Tabacos Mexicanos* (pp. 261–264). Tepic: Universidad Autónoma de Nayarit.
- Améndola, C. (1984). *Cambios tecnológicos en la estructura técnico-productiva del cultivo del tabaco en Nayarit (1960-1980)* (Bachelor thesis, Mexico). Texcoco: Universidad Autónoma Chapingo.
- Améndola, C., & Albarrán, J. M. (1983). Agroindustria del tabaco en Nayarit. *Text*, 3(11), 26–37.
- Baranger, D. (Ed.) (2007). *Tabaco y Agrotóxicos. Un estudio sobre los productores de Misiones*. Posadas: Universidad Nacional de Misiones.
- Barkin, D., & Suárez, B. (1982). *El fin de la autosuficiencia alimentaria*. Mexico City: Centro de Ecodesarrollo & Nueva Imagen.
- Barlett, P. (1991). Industrial agriculture. In S. Plattner (Ed.), *Economic Anthropology* (pp. 205–291). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Bracho, J. (1980). La agroindustria de tabacos mexicanos: Relaciones de producción y proceso de trabajo. *Coyoacán*, 3(9), 129–136.

- Bracho, J. (1990). Conflicto en el tabacal: Campesinos, técnicos y sindicatos en Tabamex: 1972-1974. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 52(2), 65–92.
- Cardoso, C. (Ed.) (1980). *México en el siglo XIX*. Mexico City: Editorial Nueva Imagen.
- Carton de Grammont, H., & Lara Flores, S. M. (2010). Productive restructuring and standardization in Mexican horticulture: Consequences for labour. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 10(2), 228–250.
- Castellón, F. J. (1992). Tabaco y modernización en Nayarit (1930-1990). In *Gobierno del Estado de Nayarit, Memoria del 75 Aniversario del estado de Nayarit, 1917-1992* (pp. 38–45). Tepic, Nayarit: Gobierno del Estado de Nayarit.
- Ceballos, H., Díaz Pineda, M., & Gomezccésar, I. (1985). *La organización campesina y la integración vertical de la agricultura: el caso de los tabacaleros de Nayarit*. México City: Centro de Investigación para el Desarrollo Rural Integral, Secretaría de Programación y Presupuesto.
- CEHAM (Centro de Estudios Históricos sobre el Agrarismo en México) (1990). *Historia de la cuestión agraria mexicana, Los tiempos de la crisis*. In Tomo 9 (primera parte). Mexico City: Siglo XXI.
- CEPAL (Comisión Económica para América Latina) (1982). *Economía campesina y agricultura empresarial*. Siglo XXI: *Tipología de productores del agro mexicano*. Mexico City.
- Chumacero, A. (Ed.) (1985). *Origen de una empresa pública. El caso de Tabacos Mexicanos*. Tepic: Universidad Autónoma de Nayarit.
- CODAI (Coordinación General de Desarrollo Agroindustrial) (1982). *Cuadernos Técnicos para el Desarrollo Agroindustrial No 26: El desarrollo agroindustrial y los sistemas no alimentarios: tabaco*. Mexico City: Secretaría de Agricultura y Recursos Hidráulicos.
- D. O. F. (Diario Oficial de la Federación) (1972). Decreto Presidencial por el que se autoriza la creación de una empresa estatal que se denominará Tabacos Mexicanos S. A. de C. V. (pp. 8-10). Retrieved July 10, 2019 from: http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_to_imagen_fs.php?codnota=4831165&fecha=06/11/1972&cod_diario=207954
- Daniel, P. (1985). *Breaking the land. The transformation of cotton, tobacco, and rice cultures since 1880*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Díaz Romo, P., & Salinas-Álvarez, S. (1999). Huichol Indians, tobacco and pesticides. In J. Winter (Ed.), *Tobacco Use by Native North Americans. Sacred Smoke and Silent Killer* (pp. 342–352). Norman: Oklahoma University Press.
- Domike, A., & Rodríguez, G. (1979). *Agroindustria en México. Estructura de los sistemas y oportunidades para empresas campesinas*. Mexico City: Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica (CIDE).
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) (1995). *Mercado de tierras en México*. Rome: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco & FAO. Retrieved July 10, 2019 from: https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/4494/1/S019764_es.pdf
- Giarracca, N. (1983). *La subordinación del campesinado a los complejos agroindustriales. El tabaco en México (Master's thesis)*. Mexico City: Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).
- Giarracca, N. (1985). Complejos agroindustriales y la subordinación del campesinado. Algunas reflexiones y el caso de los tabacaleros mexicanos. *Estudios Rurales Latinoamericanos*. Bogotá, 8(1), 21–39.
- González Castañeda, H. (1995). El Tabaco. La mayor derrama económica para Nayarit, (entrevista). *Unir Universidad*, (3), 20–30.
- González, H. (1994). Política liberal y corporativismo. Las asociaciones de empresarios agrícolas. In Ochoa E. y Lorey D. (Eds.), *Estado y Agricultura en México. Antecedentes e implicaciones de las reformas salinistas* (pp.101-126), Mexico City: UAM-Azcapotzalco.
- González, H. (2019). What socioenvironmental impacts did 35 years of export agriculture have in Mexico? (1980–2014): A transnational agri-food field analysis. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 1(25), 1–25.
- Gras, C. (2005). *Entendiendo el agro. Trayectorias sociales y reestructuración productiva en el noroeste argentino*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos.
- INEGI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática) (1991). *VII Censo Agropecuario y Ejidal*. Mexico: INEGI. Retrieved July 10, 2019 from: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/cae/1991/>
- Jáuregui, J., Kuschick, M., Itargo, H., & García Torres, A. I. (1980). *Tabamex: Un caso de integración vertical de la agricultura*. Mexico City: Nueva Imagen.
- Kay, C. (2006). Rural poverty and development strategies. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 6(4), 455–508.
- Kuschick, M. (1989). *Las estrategias de sobrevivencia en las unidades económicas domésticas de los ejidatarios tabacaleros de Nayarit (Master thesis)*. Mexico City: Escuela Nacional de Antropología e Historia.
- L.F.R.A. (Ley Federal de Reforma Agraria) (1971). Mexico City: Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria. Retrieved July 10, 2019 from: <http://www.pa.gob.mx/publica/MARCO%20LEGAL%20PDF/LEY%20FED%20REF%20AGR.pdf>
- Lara, S. M. (1996). *Mercado de trabajo rural y organización laboral en el campo mexicano*. In Hubert Carton de Grammont (Ed.), *Neoliberalismo y organización social en el campo mexicano* (pp. 69-112). Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) & Plaza y Valdés.

- Little, P. D., & Watts, M. J. (Eds.) (1994). *Living under contract. Contract farming and agrarian transformation in sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Llanos Lerma, R. (1970). La producción de tabaco y su proyección nacional. *Revista del México Agrario*, 3(3), 59–94.
- Mackinlay, H. (1991). La política de reparto agrario en Mexico (1917-1990) y las reformas al artículo 27 constitucional. In Massolo, A. et al., *Procesos Rurales y Urbanos en el México actual* (pp. 117-167). Mexico City: Departamento de Sociología, UAM – Iztapalapa.
- Mackinlay, H. (1996). La CNC y el 'nuevo movimiento campesino'. In Hubert. C. de Grammont (coord.), *Neoliberalismo y organización social en el campo mexicano* (165-238). Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) & Plaza y Valdés.
- Mackinlay, H. (1998). ¿Negociación Colectiva o individualizada? La organización campesina en la rama del tabaco frente a los procesos de restructuración productiva de los años noventa. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 60(4), 209–251.
- Mackinlay, H. (1999). Nuevas tendencias de la agricultura de contrato: los productores de tabaco en Nayarit después de la privatización de Tabamex (1990-1997). In H. C. de Grammont (Ed.), *Empresas, restructuración productiva y empleo en la agricultura mexicana* (pp. 145–204). Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) & Plaza y Valdés.
- Mackinlay, H. (2001). *Crisis del intervencionismo estatal y nuevos arreglos institucionales en la rama del tabaco. La empresa paraestatal Tabamex (1972-2000) y su privatización durante los años noventa* (Phd thesis). Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales.
- Mackinlay, H. (2004b). Concentración de Tierras, eficiencia y productividad en la rama del tabaco. *Alteridades*, 14(27), 31–56.
- Mackinlay, H. (2004a). Los empresarios agrícolas y ganaderos y su relación con el Estado mexicano durante la época del Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). *Polis*, 2, 113–143.
- Mackinlay, H. (2008). Jornaleros agrícolas y agroquímicos en la producción de tabaco en Nayarit. *Alteridades*, 18(36), 123–143.
- Mackinlay, H. (2011). Estado, campesinos y empresas transnacionales en la época de la sustitución de importaciones. La agroindustria del tabaco y la formación de la empresa paraestatal TABAMEX: 1920-1972. *Polis*, 7(2), 213–262.
- Mackinlay, H. (2014). La organización de los productores de tabaco en tiempos del corporativismo estatal: el caso de Tabamex (1972-1990). *Artículos y Ensayos de Sociología Rural*, 9(17), 97–120.
- Maldonado Lee, G. (1977). *La mujer asalariada en el sector agrícola. Consideraciones sobre la fuerza de trabajo en el cultivo del tabaco*. Mexico City: Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social.
- Medina, L. (1994). *Hacia el nuevo Estado. México, 1920-1993*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica.
- Meyer, J. (1989). Historia del reparto agrario en Nayarit, 1915-1934. *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*, 51(2), 237–246.
- Neiman, G. (Ed.) (2010). *Estudio sobre la demanda de trabajo en el agro argentino*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Ciccus.
- Otero, G. (1998). Atencingo revisited: Political Class formation and economic restructuring in Mexico's sugar industry. *Rural Sociology*, 63(2), 272–299.
- Otero, G. (1999). *Farewell to the peasantry? Political class formation in rural Mexico*. Boulder, CO and Oxford: Westview Press.
- Paré, L. (1977). *El proletariado agrícola en México. ¿campesinos sin tierra o proletarios agrícolas?* Mexico City: Siglo XXI.
- Paré, L., Juárez, I., & Salazar, G. (1987). *Caña Brava*. Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México y Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana.
- Pérez Castañeda, J. C. (2002). *El nuevo sistema de propiedad agraria en México*. Mexico City: Palabra en Vuelo S. A. de C. V.
- Pérez Castañeda, J. C., & Mackinlay, H. (2015). ¿Existe aún la propiedad social agraria en México? *Polis*, 11(1), 45–82.
- Sáinz, L. I., & Echegaray, M. A. (1988). El siglo XX. In *Tabamex, Historia y Cultura del Tabaco en México* (pp. 195–258). Mexico City: Tabacos Mexicanos S.A. de C. V.
- Salazar, L. (2010). *Productores en Nayarit, Jornaleros en Kentucky. Los productores de tabaco de Amapa y su participación como jornaleros en la producción de tabaco en Eminence y Pleasureville* (Master's thesis). Mexico City: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social.
- Schiavoni, G. (2001). Economía del Don y obligaciones familiares: algo más sobre farmers y campesinos. *Desarrollo Económico*, 41(163), 445–466.
- Scoones, I., Mavedzenge, B., & Murimbarimba, F. (2015). Tobacco, contract farming, and agrarian change in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 18(1), 22–42.
- Simpson, E. N. (1937). *The ejido. Mexico's way out*. North Carolina: Chapel Hill.
- Singelmann, P. (2001). *Mexican sugarcane growers. Economic restructuring and political options*. San Diego: Center for U.S. - Mexican Studies, University of California.
- Tabamex-INEGI (Tabacos Mexicanos & Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática) (1989). *Atlas del Tabaco en México*. Mexico City: Tabamex S. A. de C. V.
- Tabamex (Tabacos Mexicanos) (1978, 1979, 1980, 1981). *Informes de actividades presentados por el Director General, Lic. Antonio Noriega Verdager*. Mexico City: Tabamex S. A. de C. V.

- Valtierra, E. (1984). *La evolución del complejo sectorial tabacalero (1765-1982)* (Bachelor thesis). Texcoco: Universidad Autónoma Chapingo.
- Watts, M. J. (1994). Life under contract: Contract Farming, Agrarian Restructuring, and Flexible Accumulation. In P. D. Little, & M. J. Watts (Eds.), *Living under Contract. Contract farming and Agrarian transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

How to cite this article: Mackinlay H. Well-off small-scale tobacco growers and farm workers in the Mexican agrarian reform (1972–1990). *J Agrar Change*. 2020;20:311–332. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12352>