ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES IN RURAL CALIFORNIA

Michael Kearney and Carole Nagengast

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE AND THE MEXICAN ECONOMY

J. Edward Taylor

DISCUSSION
BI-NATIONAL ASPECTS OF CALIFORNIA RURAL LABOR

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Anthropological Perspectives on Transnational Communities in Rural California**  
Carole Nagengast & Michael Kearney

I. INTRODUCTION ...............................................................................................................1

II. SUBJECT OR OBJECT ......................................................................................................2

III. OTHER THEORIES OF LATINO COMMUNITY..............................................................4
   A. Assimilationist Theory .................................................................................................4
   B. Cultural Nationalism .....................................................................................................6

IV. TRANSTATIONAL COMMUNITIES ................................................................................8
   A. Internationalization of Capital and Articulation .........................................................8
   B. Conditions in Mexico ..................................................................................................9
   C. Conditions in California Labor Markets ....................................................................12
   D. Enclavement: Rural and Urban ..................................................................................13

V. ECOLOGY OF THE TRANSTATIONAL COMMUNITY ....................................................15
   A. Household Developmental Cycles ..............................................................................15
   B. Gender .......................................................................................................................18
   C. Ethnicity .....................................................................................................................19
   D. Human Rights ...........................................................................................................22

VI. PRACTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN TRANSTATIONAL COMMUNITIES 24
   A. What Types of Rural Communities Exist in California and What are their Transnational Links? .................................................................................................................24
   B. What are the Impacts of U.S. Economic Conditions and Immigration Policy on Transnational Communities? .................................................................................26
   C. What are the Impacts of Economic Conditions in Mexico on Rural California? .................................................................26
   D. What are the Impacts of Transnationality on Rural Mexico? ....................................26
   E. How Can Human Rights be Improved in Rural California? ....................................28
   F. What Unofficial Organizations Exist in Communities as Resources? 28
   G. How Can Rural Latino Labor be Strengthened? ........................................................29
   H. What Cultural Resources Exist in Communities? .......................................................29

VII. CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................31

VII. NOTES .........................................................................................................................32

IX. REFERENCES ..................................................................................................................34
ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES IN RURAL CALIFORNIA

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I. INTRODUCTION

California's demography and its cultural and linguistic landscape are becoming progressively more Latino, a trend most noticeable in metropolitan areas.\(^1\) Less recognized, but as profound, is a corresponding transformation of many rural towns and the creation of ethnic enclaves in them -- the proximate cause of which is increased migration between Latin America and California. In this paper we address current anthropological insights into the relationship of migration and immigration between underdeveloped and developed areas of Latin America, especially Mexico, and parts of rural California. We also define a unit of analysis that we call the transnational community. Transnational communities are formed by movements of people among international locations as they respond to the imperatives of labor markets and their own economic life conditions. We give special attention to labor, class, ethnicity, and enclavement within transnational communities as well as to the formation of households, and issues of gender, and human rights; we discuss the effects of policy emanating from the institutions of the state on the people of these communities and the means through which people seek to empower themselves; we suggest ways in which their efforts can be enhanced by support from academic research and policy recommendations; and we propose areas requiring additional ethnographic research. A central concept here is that class, residential, and ethnic differentiation in rural California towns are the result of processes that transcend the boundaries of state and nation. This is a concept that questions the saliency of the nation-state as a theoretical entity capable of explaining the complex world in which migrants find themselves, indeed the world in which we in California live.

The value of the comprehensive anthropological approach we bring to issues of enclavement, ethnicity, household formation, gender, and human rights and to an analytic assessment of the transnational communities is that it encompasses the disparate and partial perspectives of economics, politics, sociology, psychology, and history. By theorizing the transnational community, we are consciously proposing an alternative to the local socio-spatial entity usually called "community" in functionalist and structural social science discourse.\(^2\)

Community in the latter sense implies a bounded space inhabited by a more or less coherent core population with ongoing social relations, a "shared way of life," and an internally consistent set of beliefs, values, and rules which govern the lives of all. As Rouse notes from a "post-modern" perspective on social space

\[\text{the heterogeneities and complexities of the worlds we actually encounter are normally understood in terms of either superficial interactions between distinct communities or transitional moments in the movement from one form of integrity and order to another (Rouse n.d.a:4).}\]

Yet the experiences of rural Mexicans as they move within different geographic and social spaces in both Mexico and the United States and the very nature of the global economy in which they are embedded suggests that these conventional means of representing their world and our own have outgrown their usefulness. Therefore, we define the transnational communities with which we are concerned as having enclaves within rural California made up of people who do share common features such as a low incidence of English as a first language, a high ratio of noncitizens to citizens, a high percentage of households relying primarily on farm labor for their reproduction, low income, and a high incidence of infants, children and women who are medically at risk. These enclaves also have high percentages
of migrants and immigrants with ties and/or residences in other places, both inside and outside the state and nation.

Moreover, the farm worker residents of enclaves are inextricably linked to dominant classes and the enclaves themselves are connected with broad domestic and international social and economic forces, in Mexico as in California. Thus, while we can spatially isolate enclaves and the Latino inhabitants of them in both locations for purposes of description and discussion, we cannot adequately theorize them as discrete units. The concept of transnational community, therefore, should be understood primarily in terms of its international social, political and economic components, and class relations, but not in a spatial sense and certainly not in the sense that "community" has historically been used in social science literature.

Migrant networks, circuits (Rouse n.d.a), and associations usually provide the intercommu-
nity, interstate, and international links between the various geographic and social moments of transnational communities. Spatial "nodes" fitting this description are found throughout rural California, especially in those parts of the state in which commercial agriculture is concentrated: e.g., the San Joaquin, Salinas, and Imperial Valleys; San Diego, Ventura, and Riverside counties; and the North and Central coasts; and throughout rural Mexico: especially the states of Michoacan, Jalisco, Guanajuato, Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon, and Zacatecas; more recently the southern state of Oaxaca; and in such Mexican border towns as Tijuana, Mexicali, Nogales, and Ciudad Juarez. The household is the primary component of the net-
works, circuits, and associations under consideration. Our working assumption is that the human impacts of the changes that are contributing to the "Latinoizing" of many rural Californian towns can best be assessed through research at the level of transnational community and household.

II. SUBJECT OR OBJECT

With respect especially to the California component of transnational Latino communities, there are two broad competing theoretical perspectives and associated types of project current in academic and policy making circles that have had and will continue to have profound effects on the everyday lives of residents and workers as well as on potential research agendas. The first, and more widespread, takes Latino "populations" as objects of research and policy, a situation partially due to the disciplinary specialization of researchers who study Latino populations in rural California, and to the disparate theoretical orientations that inform their research. Thus, sociologists, psychologists, historians, and so forth, attend to aspects of local "communities" given by their respective disciplines and by local political geography, rather than by the culturally distinct formations present within the communities themselves. Latinos represent target populations that, in and of themselves, pose diverse problems to be solved or addressed by academic disciplines, policy makers and the institutions of the wider society, especially those of the state, e.g., departments of health, education, welfare, and labor. The focus is on the demography, health, culture, income, linguistic skills, education, use of services, productivity, and other characteristics of minority "populations" that, for the purposes of research, are regarded as isolates demarcated from the general population with which they are assumed and "proven" to contrast in significant ways. These contrasts underscore the nature and importance of the problems. One such "problem popula-
tion" is that constituted by Mexicans who cross the border without legal documentation in order to work in United States agriculture and industry.
The illegal entry of such large numbers of persons creates a series of problems in communities where they live. Housing is perhaps the most critical of these. . . . Since the great majority of the aliens are men. . . . problems characteristic of homeless men are common to them: prostitution, venereal disease, drunkenness, delinquency and crime. Mexican and United States agencies working in public health, welfare, police protection, narcotics and many other fields have for years made joint efforts to solve these problems (Samora 1971:5-6; emphasis added).

The discourse that emphasizes target populations and their problems and issues in this way arises and thrives primarily within the dominant society and culture (in both the United States and in Mexico) whose institutions, often grudgingly and paternalistically, are charged with assuming main responsibility for the formation and implementation of policy intended to solve “problems.” The research and policy making in the United States that objectifies minorities (and others) in this fashion simultaneously reflects and reproduces the hegemony of dominant, Anglo societal ideas and ideals about, and practices toward, minorities in general and Latinos in particular. Of particular concern in this respect for our purposes are the documented and undocumented Mexicans who fill the most menial and low-paying jobs in California agriculture and industry.

The second perspective defines Latino/minority communities as subjects which experience problems resulting from structural and historic processes and from the position of those subjects within the dominant society and its institutions. This perspective is consistent with Foucaultian ideas concerning the relationship between knowledge and power, in this case among definitions of research problems, research agendas, politics, and the institutions of the state. Foucault demonstrates a relationship between the dominant “official” discourses of both the state and academic disciplines and political control. The official discourse is legitimized by the state and the institutions of academia and of society and is embedded in daily practice, linguistic forms, and ideas about the norms of everyday life (Foucault 1980). It follows that assumption of autonomy by minorities, and especially any manifestation of opposition or resistance, will be labeled as “deviance” from the norm and opposed by the prevailing organization of knowledge.

Differing research agendas and policy stances derive from each of these styles of research and the assumptions which inform them. The first, let us call it the official discourse, assumes that the institutions of the state, i.e., public agencies, should take primary responsibility for solving the “problems” isolated by academic research. The second, the subject discourse, assumes that official policy is as much a part of the matrix of the “problem” as it is a part of the solution. Adherents of this intellectual current and activist agenda within which we place ourselves define their project as empowerment, consider the “official” project paternalistic at best and ethnocidal at worst, assume that communities want and must take responsibility for their own destinies, and attempt to develop research based on the expressed needs of those communities. This strategy identifies communities and groups within them which are not only subjects of research, but collaborators and initiators of research in their communities. Community research in this form is practical anthropology in contrast to applied anthropology.
III. OTHER THEORIES OF LATINO COMMUNITY

It should be noted that the theoretical orientation suggested here contrasts with other theories that were until recently current in the social sciences and continue to inform popular thinking about the nature of Latino communities, rural and urban.

Assimilationist Theory

Much research within the official discourse and its associated policy agenda has been historically based on an assimilationist or melting pot model. Clark’s 1908 Department of Labor report, for example, focused on migrant workers in the United States and their incorporation into rural and urban labor markets, as does Paul Taylor’s (1928-1932) monumental seven volume work. Almaguer and Camarillo (1983:11) note that Taylor called for future research on Mexicans in the Chicago area that would reveal “how they accommodate and assimilate” compared with other immigrants in the area. More than fifty years later, many popular and some academic sources continue to allude to the successes and failures of foreign populations in assimilating or acculturating, a line of thinking especially prevalent in, but not confined to, literature dealing with the education of minority students (see, for example, Padilla 1971; Carter and Segura 1979).

Now mostly defunct in academic circles but still implicit and explicit among policy makers and the general public, the assimilation model assumes that the natural historic course of “problem” minorities is for them to eventually disappear as problems by being incorporated into the “mainstream.” This thinking has been reinforced by the history of European immigrants in the United States, e.g., Irish, Italian, Polish, and German who did more or less assimilate. Even nineteenth and early twentieth century immigrant farm workers in California (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Filipino), passed through a phase of rural poverty during their incorporation into the non-agricultural, urban (but still largely poor, discriminated against) population. Popular referendums such as the “English Only” proposition, overwhelmingly successful in the 1986 California election, is a recent manifestation of the adherence of the general citizenry (mainly Anglo) to the view that “foreigners” can and should be assimilated quickly and that official policy and institutions should not only encourage but mandate it by law.

The assimilationist perspective is also consistent with a vision of Anglo America’s historic mission in Latin America. Anglo America claims, after all, a “manifest destiny” to shape the development of the Western Hemisphere by virtue of its self-asserted and often self-proclaimed superior virtues (Zoraida Vázquez and Meyer 1985). It is popularly regarded in the United States as inevitable that not only will Anglo hegemony prevail to the south, but that immigrants from the south as well as those from Asia and elsewhere will and should become anglicized. But this process of assimilation is seen as proceeding unevenly. Some minorities lag behind others in moving into the mainstream of the dominant society and economy. The assimilationist model explains this lag by invoking variants of deficiency theories in which minority populations are said to have certain psychological, social, or cultural characteristics that impede upward mobility -- characteristics which can be addressed and changed by state institutions such as the departments of health, education and welfare. Barrera (1979:174-182) reviews and evaluates these theories, noting that "... it seems ... plausible to consider these theories as legitimizing myths, reflections in the social sciences that have historically
served to justify the relationship of inequality between European and Third World peoples” (ibid.:181). Myths are not necessarily totally false, but, even as partial fictions implying prescriptions for action for those who believe them, they can be and often are tools for domination and exploitation and a principal means of political practice (see Barthes 1972).

The goals of “official” policy are themselves contradictory. A society socializes its members to fulfill certain social and economic tasks considered important by its leaders and opinion setters. Among these tasks in a highly industrialized capitalist society such as the United States is the training and equipping of people to fill all necessary economic roles, including farm work. It is in the specific interests of sectors of California society and economy to ensure that most Latino migrant and immigrant farm workers do not assimilate or acculturate by taking on the education, linguistic skills, behavior and other characteristics and aspirations of Anglos.

To the U.S. economy the entry of illegal aliens is profitable in at least three ways: the employment of officials to apprehend, care for, and expel the aliens; the money that the aliens spend before being apprehended; and [most importantly] the cheap labor which the aliens represent (Samora 1971:5).

It is no accident that first the term *mojado*, or “wetback,” and more recently “alien,” labels which evoke images of the less than human, popularly denote and describe the undocumented workers who enable California growers and business people, rural and urban alike, to operate profitable enterprises and allow United States consumers to purchase relatively inexpensive commodities.

Citizen Latinos, regardless of their language, cultural, or educational skills also continue to fill the more menial and low-paying jobs in California (and elsewhere). Even in the same jobs, they are systematically exploited, earning less than equally qualified Anglos, a reality they generally recognize (Ogbu and Matae-Bianchi 1986:113-114). Acculturation does not equal parity.

Baca and Bryan (1983:2) note that “... common to all outcomes of assimilation is the assumption that an increase in length of residence in the host society entails denationalization, a view of U. S. society moving in the direction of inevitably attaining an all-inclusive sense of nationality or peoplehood,” an observation which suggests that assimilation as ideology is doubly determined. There is first the ethnocentric assumption of the cultural superiority of the “receiving” society. But beyond cultural chauvinism is a state imperative to insure the uncontested imagining of a homogeneous national community (Anderson 1983). In other words, the function of the state as a purveyor of images of society is to present the nation as, if not culturally homogeneous and unified, at least moving inexorably in that direction. Thus, insofar as the production of any theory or policy is consistent with this charge, it mutes and even denies the reality, possibility, or desirability of persistent ethnic diversity. Baca and Bryan in effect observe that “assimilationism” is part of a discourse, “of [an] order that supports the status quo and diverts attention away from possible contradictions that challenge it. Other terms in this [discourse] of order include: cultural deprivation, immigrant adjustment, mainstreaming, limited English proficiency, and the like” (Baca and Bryan 1983:18). Thus, in the very language of public discourse can be found official theory in the service of official policy.
The assimilationist view is inconsistent with the dynamics of California’s low income rural (or urban) Latino enclaves, the members of which for the most part are not being assimilated. For, as we shall see, even though in each generation some numbers of individuals leave, low income rural Latino communities in California — as communities — are not disappearing.

**Cultural Nationalism**

In the 1960s the project of many Mexican American scholars in newly formed Chicano Studies programs was to dismantle the hegemonic interpretations of Latino communities based on assumptions of assimilation, a project that grew out of the Chicano movement (Arce 1981; Gómez-Quinones 1977; Sánchez 1983). A major goal was to replace with positive images the negative stereotypes of Chicano society, culture, and psychology depicted in the deficiency models.⁵

Whereas the core assumption of assimilation is the eventual disappearance of all vestiges of the minority population as a result of the dynamics of labor markets and the acculturation of individuals — a presumed inexorable historic process — that of cultural nationalism foresees the continuity and strengthening of the minority community. In contrast to the methodological individualism of assimilationism, cultural nationalism utilizes structural theories, especially those of internal colonialism and class segmentation (see Barrera 1979:174-182), to explain the circumstances that brought the minority community into existence and which perpetuate it. The objectives of cultural nationalism, however, partially overlap with the stated goals of assimilationism, namely the elimination of economic differences. But whereas the latter foresees equality via the elimination of the minority community, the former expects the minority community to become more organized and therefore economically more powerful, and thus able to defend itself and to perpetuate its distinctive cultural identity.

But there is another commonality. Cultural nationalism and assimilationism share a similar image of the historic formation of “the Chicano community,” viz., the centrality of immigration from Mexico and the transfusion of a static traditional culture and corresponding social forms, especially that of the family, to the United States. Indeed, it is ironic that the concept of “traditional” culture and society as ontological givers, a cornerstone of assimilationism, is also regarded in the cultural national model as the basis for the internal constitution of Mexican American communities. While there is concern within the cultural nationalist model with structural forces that shape the Mexican American community, these are envisioned as operating to perpetuate the “traditional” content of communities rather than contributing to distinctive cultural content de novo. Apparent exceptions, such as distinctively Chicano culture components and identities like calo and pachuquismo, are theorized as more or less exceptional syntheses of “traditional” language and culture and Anglo forms. In general, theoretical perspectives that examine the historical, economic, and social processes whereby “tradition” is created, perpetuated or transformed to fit the actual conditions under which people live are not incorporated into models of this kind (see, for example, Nagengast and Kearney, n.d.).

The point here is that Chicano nationalism both as a political and an intellectual current seeks to distinguish “the Chicano community” from two dominant social and political forces towards which it has been ambivalent. The main opposition has been the dominant Anglo society with which Mexican Americans have had to contend. But in the background of family and community history there has always been Mexico. And just as Mexican Americans
have always been excluded in degrees from mainstream Anglo society, so have they been partially detached from Mexican identities. Chicano nationalism may reflect a kind of approach-avoidance behavior. Being in United States society but not allowed to be completely of it, the Chicano community is also rejected by Mexican sensibilities, especially middle and working class sensibilities which regard things Chicano as pocho, as bastardized, as having become agringado. Thus, having been partially cut off from Mexico, the only viable alternative is to defend and strengthen and reinforce where possible what one has, and that is the "traditional" culture which, in the United States, is modified into Chicano culture and society. The Chicano community, so conceptualized, is thus a third category, poised between Mexican and United States society and culture, and yet not completely of either one.

As Mexican Americans have in effect been rejected by Mexico, so do Mexican Americans in part reject contemporary Mexico. This, we think, in part explains the importance in Chicano scholarship given to the first arrival in and the occupation of California and the greater Southwest by original and later Mexican immigrants, who came, settled, and became Chicanos. The fact that California was in fact occupied by Mexicans before Anglos is an important political, legal, and cultural resource for the Chicano nationalist project. But this attention to immigration has largely obscured the power of ongoing back and forth migration between Mexico and the United States as a force shaping "the Chicano community." The concentration on immigration to the exclusion of migration is not peculiar to Chicano scholars, it should be noted, but is pervasive in social sciences and government agencies such as the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Department of Labor.

Insofar as undocumented Mexican migrant workers are taken into account at all in the cultural nationalism model, they are regarded as cousins of the sort that are acknowledged as distant relatives but not really taken into account in family affairs. Newly immigrants Mexicans on the other hand are seen as bearers of "traditional" culture, sources of replenishment for the Mexican population in the United States. Like the early assimilationists, however, it is implicitly assumed by cultural nationalists that immigrants and migrant workers alike share cultural, social, religious, linguistic and economic characteristics. Within-group distinctions are broadly enough described so as to obscure the different social, economic, and cultural conditions in their places of origin and in their disparate economic and social locations in the United States (Browning and De La Garza 1986).

Two kinds of institutional developments in California, one negative, the second positive, suggest that a change is occurring in this theoretical configuration. The first has to do with bureaucratic and administrative attacks on, and the disenfranchising of, ethnic studies programs, including Chicano Studies, throughout the State College and University systems, and the second on the simultaneous growth of binationally oriented research programs such as the Center for United States-Mexican Studies at University of California, San Diego and the university-wide UC MEXUS program. Also significant is the Mexico-oriented research that the Chicano Studies program at University of California, Santa Barbara has pursued under the direction of Juan Vicente Palerm and Manuel Carlos. Palerm and Carlos, along with Renate Rosaldo at Stanford, are among the few Chicano Studies anthropologists who have worked in Mexico.

The main intellectual strength of Chicano cultural nationalism has been the development of a theory of community as persistent and apart from the dominant mainstream, a concept historically validated in California. However, it is not just the previously recognized "Chicano
community” which has persisted. In what follows we shall present a profile of rural California in which neither assimilation nor the persistence of things Chicano are appropriate representations of rural Latinos.

IV. TRANATIONAL COMMUNITIES, ENCLAVES, AND RELATED ISSUES

The concept of transnational community as one which - with respect to production, biological and social reproduction, and residence - transcends national boundaries has been suggested in some anthropological and economic theories of development but not elaborated in terms of a coherent theory that fits the patterns of settlement, ethnicity, labor and class in rural California. Let us begin by briefly reviewing the relevant conceptual advances.

Internationalization of Capital and Articulation

From the 1950s to the early 1970s proponents of the then dominant paradigm of “modernization” assumed that increased economic integration between developed and underdeveloped regions of the world would level out differences in international and interregional development. In the face of growing poverty in the Third World and increasing rather than decreasing differentiation, critical scholars proposed alternative theories, arguing that international relations of dependency created and perpetuated inequality (see Chilcote 1974) within a single world system of capitalist relations and production (Wallerstein 1974). More recently, those working from an “internationalization of capital” perspective have pointed out the weaknesses of dependency and world systems theories, singling out for criticism their emphasis on international trade to the detriment of productive relations and their focus on nation states as the key units of analysis of the processes of development, underdevelopment, and de-development. As Barkin (1981:156) notes, “with the emergence of the transnational corporation as the principal organizer of production on a global basis, decisions cease to be made with reference to a single nation. It becomes increasingly clear that the nation, or nation-state, cannot limit capitalist expansion to its own borders.”

In very general terms, the transnational community is an analog of the transnational corporation (TNC). The TNC operates globally due to differences in availability and costs of raw materials and labor, and to differing marketing opportunities. The transnational community similarly responds through migration and immigration to differing national and international conditions, including labor markets, the domestic and international political and economic climate, United States immigration law and its enforcement, and local political and economic conditions having to do with, for example, consolidation of land by commercial interests. Through its responses to these conditions, the transnational community elaborates productive and reproductive strategies comparable to those of the TNC. But whereas the latter is now well understood, the former is not.

This lack of attention to the transnational aspects of Latino communities in California and in Mexico is due partially to academic specialization along national lines in which researchers tend to work in either California or Mexico, only occasionally in both – a spin-off of the conventional imagery of the nation-state. The processes and relationships that transcend borders are fairly well understood from studies carried out in rural communities in Mexico (e.g., Kearney 1986a; cf. Meillasoux 1981), but fewer studies informed by a transnational perspective have been done in California (Rouse n.d.b; García n.d.; Palerm n.d.a). Of these,
only a handful are based on research systematically carried out on both sides of the border (e.g., Kearney 1986a; Mines 1981; Rouse n.d.b; Massey, et al. 1987). Moreover, research which is transnational tends to focus on specific problems such as migration, labor, trade, health, etc., and is thus concerned with aspects of general populations rather than with specific communities. The data accumulated from such methodologies illustrate the problems but do not always speak convincingly to the more general anthropological dimensions of family, work, gender, and ideology at the local level, much less at the transnational. A point to be emphasized is that we now have a sizable literature dealing with the transnational aspects of the domestic economy as seen from the periphery and of migration as seen from sending and receiving perspectives but what we do not yet have is a coherent research agenda for what we are defining as the transnational community.

The parallels between transnational communities and transnational corporations must not be overdrawn, for the transnational corporation, in and of itself, is an inadequate unit of analysis in global political economy. Although the transnational corporation is a major actor in the increasing internationalization of capital, it is also reacting to historic processes and conditions inherent in capitalism itself as a world system. As Barkin notes,

[... even when investment and production decisions are made by national governments or local capitalists, it seems increasingly clear that global economic and political structures strongly influence the individual decision maker. It is possible to state this even more strongly: international markets and economic power structures are increasingly determining the individual decisions made in ever more isolated parts of national economies, even when "noncapitalist" productive groups are involved, such as peasant producers in many Third World economies (Barkin 1981:158).

Thus, this greater system, of which the transnational corporation is a component, also necessarily includes noncapitalist forms of production, such as "peasant" agriculture, which have a tenacious persistence in rural areas of Latin America that are not appropriate for commercial production. It is in such areas that what is now commonly called in the anthropological literature a domestic economy prevails. A domestic economy is one in which production is for subsistence and the only labor power expended is that of the household itself. In recent years some anthropological attention has focused on such noncapitalist forms of production within an articulationist perspective (as in the articulation of modes of production), one which investigates economic and social links between them and centers of industrial development (Foster-Carter 1978; Kearney 1986a). Proponents of the articulation model argue that the integration of domestic and industrial capitalist economies serves not to level the differences between them, but instead perpetuates these differences. Let us see how this works in practice by examining the dialectic between the highly developed California and the underdeveloped Mexican rural economies.

Conditions in Mexico

Most emblematic of present socioeconomic conditions in Mexico is what is called in the popular press the "national economic crisis," now in its sixth year, the proximate cause of which is the country's massive foreign debt which, at 105 billion dollars, is the second largest in the hemisphere. The term "crisis" implies a situation that has only just developed, but in fact the conditions that underlie it have been gestating since at least the Mexican Revolution.
Living and working conditions of the country's poor, especially its working class and rural underclass have been desperate for decades; chronic unemployment and poverty are hardly new in Mexico. Nonetheless, one of the most devastating symptoms of the current "emergency" is even more under- and unemployment, much of which seems to be structural in nature due at least in part to a steady shift from labor- to capital-intensive industry under the imperatives of the competitive capitalist world market. Aggravating massive unemployment is the constant devaluation of the peso which, along with other conditions, causes regular rises in the cost of living that far outpace wage increases. Because of the confluence of these and other macro economic trends, the "crisis" appears to be a long-term secular tendency. Under draconian limitations on domestic spending, rural development programs, rarely well financed to begin with, have been drastically curtailed, aggravating the deterioration in the conditions and quality of life in the countryside. Environmental degradation, often exacerbated by the production practices of subsistence farmers desperate to eke out a partial living, usually with inadequate and inappropriate technology, pushes ever more rural dwellers into the cities, seriously taxing already overburdened infrastructures. Although employment and other income-generating opportunities in urban areas outstrip those in the countryside, the cities cannot possibly provide jobs for all migrants.

Both rural and urban low-income peoples have elaborated often complex survival strategies to deal with current economic exigencies. Informal economic activities such as vending inexpensive commodities and providing menial services have expanded, and no doubt will continue to expand, a response to the lack of stable employment opportunities in the supersaturated labor markets. Also, in the absence of any significant social welfare "safety net," low income people rely heavily on their own resources, namely extensive informal networks that link individuals and households in relationships of mutual aid (Lomnitz 1977; Kemper 1977; cf. Stack 1974; Vélez-Ibáñez 1980), an elaboration of "traditional" kin and compadrazgo ties in the face of economic necessity and the absence of institutional alternatives. These kinds of ties are also sought, nurtured and activated by the hundreds of thousands of poor urban and rural migrants to the labor markets of the United States, where they find a similar paucity of institutional support (though for different reasons) and where the persistence of such "traditional" forms lends credence to those cultural nationalists and assimilationists who, depending upon their proclivity, either celebrate or decry "tradition."

As important as the "crisis" in the Mexican economy is to our consideration of transnational communities, land tenure and land use also and more significantly affect village domestic economies in peripheral rural Mexico and shape the form of its articulation with commercial agriculture in California, a process which influences the dynamics of Latino communities on both sides of the border. For all practical purposes there is a single land tenure and land-use system that spans the border. Corporate agriculture, much of it transnational in scope, dominates the California agricultural scene and, in Mexico, corporate transnational agriculture is also taking on increasing significance. But, unlike California where there have never been many small farmers, in Mexico a large and, in terms of demography, growing small farmer sector -- the domestic economy referred to above -- persists alongside commercial agriculture.

Mexican agriculture is polarized between these two types. The majority of the peasant units are subfamiliar in the sense that they are so small in size and so bereft of inputs that they cannot provide a livelihood for the households that operate them. Academic debates center on the essential nature of this huge impoverished rural population and the best way to ensure its
"development," a debate focusing on the degree to which the rural masses are peasants, proletarians, or semi-proletarians and whether the most realistic and beneficial development projects should promote small self-sufficient agrarian units or encourage the complete absorption of rural dwellers into agricultural and urban work forces. Regardless of how the participants in this debate view the probable long-term outcome, most informed sources foresee the persistence of a large rural population in Mexico for the foreseeable future, a population located in agrarian communities where for the most part it is unable to support itself. 6

There are structural reasons for this assumption, based on an analysis of the articulation of peasant and commercial agricultural production, land tenure, and the demography of rural communities—a conjunction which results in what de Janvry and Garramón (1977) refer to as "functional dualism." According to this analysis, in commercial agriculture, as opposed to industry, "Social relations of production do exist...which are more effective than proletarianization for cheapening labour in the agricultural sector of the peripheral economy" (ibid:208). Especially in the case of "semi-proletarian free labour," a large part of the cost of reproduction of the labor force for commercial agriculture comes not from wages but from subsistence activities of the work force itself on its own land. Currently about 84 percent of Mexican peasants are classified by the government as "infrasubsistence," that is they are incapable of supporting a family on the land they have access to. Their inadequate production means that such households must supplement agricultural income, which they do largely by seasonal migratory wage labor in commercial agriculture, in either Mexico or the United States. By employing this semi-proletarianized labor force, commercial agricultural capital, whether in Mexico or in the United States, need not pay wages sufficient to reproduce its work force since low wages are supplemented by subsistence farming. Said differently, domestic production, because of its dependence on commercial agriculture, subsidizes it. By the same token, domestic production would not survive without supplementary wages from commercial agriculture. Hence the two forms of production are articulated but hardly equal.

By definition, infrasubsistence farmers (as with landless laborers) possess unexpended labor power which they must sell in order to make ends meet. The high levels of unemployment in Mexico and the deterioration of the purchasing power of low income groups can be expected to continue to make migration to the United States in search of work a desirable and perhaps necessary option for growing numbers of infrasubsistence Mexicans.

United States immigration policy has been consistent with the structure of functional dualism. Its effect—distinct from its stated policy objectives—is to perpetuate migration and to minimize immigration, i.e., to maximize the benefits to United States agriculture and industry resulting from the spatial separation of production in the United States from biological and social reproduction of the work force in Mexican rural communities.

To understand how these patterns operate, supra-individual units of analysis must be used. For it is households, networks, and even entire communities as units of production and reproduction that elaborate such complex strategies. Seen from the Mexican side, these strategies must conform to opportunities and obstacles in the United States and, more specifically for our purposes here, to those in California.
Conditions in California Labor Markets

A number of forces and conditions come together in the lives of transnational migrants that mitigate against their assimilation into the United States non-low-income mainstream even if that were their goal. Segmented labor market models contrast with the assimilation model and provide some critical insight. Speaking of the unauthorized Mexican workers they studied in Los Angeles, Baca and Bryan say that they "...are simply not working-class members of a larger Mexican-American community; they constitute an underclass permanently locked into a secondary labor market" (Baca and Bryan 1983:16; see Fernández Kelly 1983). Add to the secondary labor market the highly competitive nature of the industries that employ foreign workers and the relatively unskilled nature of the work, and the exploitation intensifies (O'Connor 1973). Agricultural wage labor is toward the bottom of the secondary labor markets where it in effect constitutes tertiary segmentation. It is into these lower strata of the secondary and tertiary labor markets that the California-bound Mexican farm workers are directed. The lower levels of the segmented labor market are notoriously difficult even for United States citizens to escape; for Mexican nationals in United States labor markets it is virtually impossible, given their lack of marketable skills, their unfamiliarity with the language, culture and institutions and especially their legal status. Living as undocumented workers constantly in fear of apprehension by authorities and repatriation to their country of origin causes such workers to strive to make themselves as invisible as possible and the least visible work places are in agricultural fields, restaurant kitchens, garment factories, and similar secondary and tertiary labor market locations. These circumstances add up to abysmal living and working conditions: viz., exposure to potentially lethal pesticides; minimum and below minimum wages for back-breaking work; no job security; the need to be constantly on the move following jobs; inadequate or non-existent housing, education for children and health care; the constant fear of repatriation; and the everyday discrimination experienced by all minorities.

California agriculture is unique in the United States in terms of the relative insignificance of small, family farms and the corresponding prevalence of agribusiness (Runsten and LeVeen 1981). Like all corporate business, decisions are made to insure maximum profit and maximum efficiency, decisions which include the use of a mix of technology and labor. Labor markets in California agriculture are increasingly shaped by the imperatives of the competitive global economy, which brings the state's industries into ever sharper competition with overseas counterparts. After decades of technological intensification at the expense of labor (Friedland, Barton and Thomas 1981; Hightower 1978), commercial agriculture in some parts of the state is beginning to shift back to more labor-intensive cropping (Palerm n.d.b), in part as a response to heightened international competition. Always dependent on a cheap foreign "peasant" labor force, present cropping and marketing trends appear to be maintaining this dependence. Growers claim, and there is reason to assume that they are correct, that they cannot raise wages to the point that would attract domestic workers and still remain competitive in international markets. There are thus strong structural forces at work that will insure the need for a largely foreign, preferably illegal, work force in California agriculture for some time to come. Undocumented workers who eventually achieve legal status and "assimilate" by, among other things, accurately assessing the legal and social structure of United States society, learning English, becoming aware of wages and benefits paid to domestic workers, and demanding these and decent living and working conditions for themselves, are less desirable to employers that compete in the global marketplace.
Therefore, with all the rhetoric about the desirability of assimilation, it is not what a significant proportion of Californian employers want for their work force.

The strength and importance of the articulationist perspective, nested within that of the internationalization of capital, is that, in addition to global economics, it also draws our attention to the domestic economy of rural Mexican communities and households and the reproduction in both urban and rural enclaves in California. At this level it explores linkages between such low income communities in Mexico and their daughter communities in developed areas.

**Enclavement: Rural and Urban**

Attention has recently been refocused on Black ghettos on the twentieth anniversary of the report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (known as the Kerner Commission). In its 1968 report the Commission drew attention to the plight of inner city Black communities and warned that the country was heading "toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal." There is general consensus that the widespread poverty, unemployment, and despair that were endemic in Black ghettos of the 1960s are still prevalent, although there has been a sizable growth in the Black middle class outside of the ghetto.⁸

In a much publicized book, *The Truly Disadvantaged*, William Wilson (1987) argues that inner city Black ghettos have experienced an exodus of the Black middle class, leaving them without the benefit of the services and identities that the middle class formerly provided. While Wilson's book has been heavily criticized on the grounds that *inter alia* there never was a large middle class in the ghettos in the first place, the persistence of ghettos suggests that aspects of United States society and economy are capable of maintaining enclaves of oppressed citizen groups who speak English as a first language and are presumed to share at least to some degree the "American way of life." This being the case, the formation of and persistence of enclaves predicated on immigration/migration, much of it illegal, and inhabited by foreign, non-English speaking and culturally different migrants was perhaps predictable.

The intersection of the internationalization of capital and the articulation perspectives casts some light on the formation of contemporary ethnic enclaves. Research within this paradigm suggests two general trends that occur in transnational labor exporting-importing systems: "differentiation of the periphery" (Wallerstein 1974) and, to use Sassen-Koob's (1982) term, "peripheralization at the core." By differentiation of the periphery we refer to the processes whereby variants of the domestic or non-capitalist economy in peripheral areas are recreated, even as these rural economies become more integrated primarily via migratory wage labor with those of developed regions. Peripheralization of the core refers to the recreation of basic aspects of underdeveloped peripheral communities within the developed centers that import migrant and immigrant workers. For example, Sassen-Koob (1983) shows how New York City’s recent fiscal crisis was solved in large part by importing a large number of new migrants and immigrants to work in a garment industry made moribund by its inability to compete with production costs in Third World countries. That these workers were forced to accept low wages and living conditions analogous to those of the periphery made the revival of the industry in New York possible. The solution, in other words, was to recreate Third World enclaves and Third World production arrangements – of which cheap labor is the key
input — in New York City. Similar enclaves of Latin Americans, primarily Mexican and Central American workers, are located in the garment district of Los Angeles.

Scholars who have examined Mexican urban enclaves refer to “barrioization” (Saragoza 1983:120). Camarillo (1979:78) notes that Mexicans and Mexican Americans have responded to economic oppression and discrimination by “insulating themselves in the barrio and by modifying and adapting their community to the new circumstances they faced” (from Saragoza 1983:120), a process Ogbo and Matute-Bianchi (1986) call “secondary cultural discontinuity.” Secondary cultural discontinuity occurs among “caste-like minorities” such as Mexican Americans, Blacks, and Native Americans whom the authors contrast with “immigrant minorities.” “Caste-like minorities” are those who have been incorporated into society more or less involuntarily and permanently through slavery, conquest, or colonization and then relegated to menial status . . . . Mexican Americans in the southwestern United States were incorporated by conquest; people who later immigrated from Mexico were accorded the subordinate status of the conquered group (Ogbo and Matute-Bianchi 1986:90).

Other immigrant minorities such as Asians, in contrast, have come to the United States voluntarily, usually in order to improve their economic status. Ordinarily, they can return home, albeit with some difficulty, if they wish. While they suffer the same discrimination and exploitation as “caste-like minorities,” they respond differently because in spite of exploitation, their economic condition usually has improved and because their frame of reference is their place of origin. Hence they tend not to internalize the dominant group’s denigration and rationalization for the exploitation they suffer. Essentially, they attempt to “fit in” in the United States, adopting many of the behavioral characteristics of Anglos, characteristics which they can imagine being of benefit if and when they return home and even if they remain in the United States.

Caste-like minorities such as Blacks and Mexican Americans, on the other hand, have no real place of origin to return to and do internalize the racism and ethnocentrism directed towards them. Consequently, they devise a set of culturally specific strategies that are at odds with the social norms of the dominant Anglo culture. Some of these strategies are labeled “deviant,” others manifestations of “tradition” used in a negative connotation to mean “backward” (Nagengast and Kearney n.d.). These strategies, however, are survival mechanisms that make sense in the oppressive and exploitative world in which they find themselves and which they cannot envision escaping. As such they constitute a form of resistance. We will return to the implications of these strategies below in the context of ethnicity and opposition.

Palerm (n.d.b) also suggests that rural enclavement or barrioization of Mexican and Mexican Americans in rural California is analogous to the kind of inner city enclavements that Wilson describes in contemporary Black ghettos. According to Palerm, the Latino farm worker population has grown sharply in over 130 rural California communities; in some of them Latinos are now the majority (cf. Carlos 1987). The typical pattern is for the settlement of largely non-citizen Latino newcomers to coincide with a simultaneous “white flight.” An already disproportionately small middle-class which tends to relocate to emerging urban centers renders some rural towns increasingly in the control of absentee landlords. Many of these towns consequently have undergone and are undergoing a process of de development.
As tax bases and businesses decline, housing, public services, and infrastructure deteriorate. Chronic poverty is endemic among the remaining inhabitants who generally are poorly educated, speak little or no English, and have few occupational skills that would enable them to move out of the secondary or tertiary agricultural labor market. In terms of social ecology and economy, such rural enclaves, like inner city Black ghettos, no longer function as coherent communities.

The decline of services and of infrastructure in rural California enclaves located in small towns, which were in the past predominantly Anglo, is in large part explained by central place theory which predicts that certain towns will become primary centers of commerce and services. It is in such towns that developers will invest in shopping malls, department stores, and where most professionals will locate. As these areas attain more economic and demographic mass, they attract yet more development, services, and population. In towns not so favored, small businesses and their middle class proprietors are marginalized and eventually are either forced out of the market or relocate to primary towns, thus becoming part of a combined process of concentration and marginalization. Whereas the towns that are experiencing marginalization were formerly full service towns they now resemble labor camps, i.e., rural dormitories for migrant and immigrant farm workers. Gutted as they are of their services, infrastructure, and their middle class, many rural towns are becoming ethnic enclaves, a structural process of transformation similar to that of contemporary urban ghettoization (García n.d.).

V. ECOLOGY OF THE TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITY

We now turn to an exploration of the processes of ethnic minority enclavement in rural California with respect to household development cycles, to gender, to human rights, and to the formation of ethnicity as a means of self defense and self-identification. In each case we will refer to the links between California and Mexico, elaborating on our theme that neither California nor Mexican rural enclaves in which international migrants are a feature can be understood in spatial, social, or theoretical isolation. This is not to say that all aspects of all Latino communities in rural California have a strong transnational dimension to them. But it is to argue that such communities cannot be comprehended without an awareness of this dimension.

Household Developmental Cycles

The "family" has been a major research focus since the inception of the study of the Latino community in California. Alfredo Mirandé (1982:1) notes that, "Perhaps no institution has been more intensely analyzed, studied, and discussed, yet so thoroughly misunderstood as the Chicano family." As traced by Mirandé (1982), Baca Zinn (1983), Saragoza (1983), Ybarra (1983), and Zavella (1987:11-15), the study of Chicano families has gone through the sequence of theoretical and ideological phases outlined at the beginning of this paper. The assimilationist-functionalist phase, which was developed mainly by non-Chicano scholars, focused heavily on what have since been recognized as stereotyped gender roles, especially an academic concept of machismo, seen as "a perverted form of masculinity" used by non-Chicano scholars "to explain most of the problems faced not only by the Chicano family but Chicanos themselves" (Mirandé 1982:1). The second phase, largely a corrective to this stereotype, tended to replace earlier interpretations "with overly idealized and romanticized
conceptualizations" of the Mexican American family as highly cohesive and adaptive in the face of economic hardship and discrimination (ibid.:2; see Ybarra 1983:98-99). The third and present phase, reflected in two recent special volumes (Mirandé 1982a; Váždez, et al., 1983), recognizes the various family configurations associated with regional differences, immigration history, and class differences. Theoretically this newer body of work is informed by cultural nationalism and internal colonial models. The social and political context in which theorists locate themselves and the main theoretical and political force driving their work is the opposition between the embattled Chicano community and the dominant and largely oppressive greater Anglo society. The family is taken as a microcosmic representation of this opposition.

The general thrust of what we have proposed above suggests, however, that a careful and detailed consideration of international dimensions of transnational migration may be a useful addition to academic consideration of Mexican and Mexican American families. Consistent with this approach is an associated concern with households, a terminological distinction that reflects to some not small degree a shift in theoretical perspective away from standard sociological and cultural anthropological concepts central to discourse on "the family" (e.g., role theory, cultural and personality approaches, individual decision-making). The use of household signals concern with historic-structural issues and focuses on economic production and biological and social reproduction. These are issues reflected in, for example, the work of Zavella (1987) who, along with Ruiz (1987) links issues of household to those of race, class, and gender.

Except for the work of Rouse (n.d.a, n.d.b) and Mines and Kearney (1982), there is little research on transnational Latino families/households in California. Within the context of a large survey of farm worker health in Tulare county, Kearney developed a typology of farm worker households based on their migration-immigration histories (Mines and Kearney 1982:8-14) and found that household composition, citizenship, ethnicity, health needs, and health care utilization vary according to the types identified. Thus Mexican lone male circular migrants, as a type of farmworker, might with time bring wives and children and form newcomer immigrant households. After about eight years these households might take on the characteristics of settled immigrant households. These three Mexican types are distinguishable from United States citizen types, of which there are two: one made up of citizen farmworkers of Mexican descent (mostly from Texas), while the other of households with individuals who are not of Mexican but some other descent (e.g., Filipino, Anglo).

The four Mexican and Mexican American types to some extent represent a developmental process, but one which is neither unilinear nor inevitable. Thus, only a minority of lone male circular farmworkers form newcomer immigrant households in California, not all of them evolve into settler immigrants households, and not all of these become citizen households. When this process does occur, it the households and individuals which undergo it develop a life strategy oriented mainly to sustained residence in rural California communities. Barton (1988:51) notes, for example, that sometimes migrants "settle out" under the influence of changing technology that makes stationary "women's work," e.g., packing shed employment, a more predictable though lower source of income than "men's work," e.g., harvesting. Some percentage of settler households leave farm work as an occupation, becoming absorbed into nonfarm labor markets and other economic niches.9 Many, however, top out as citizen farm workers, remaining ethnically Mexican, and, more often than not, monolingual Spanish speakers.
The three Mexican non-citizen types, and even the fourth citizen type identified as "settler households" display a strong transnational component which correspond to what Rouse describes in a "community" spanning Michoacan and Redwood City:

Through the constant movement back and forth and the concomitant circulation of money, goods and services, Aguililla and [its] various satellites have become so closely linked that, in a sense, they now form a single community, one that I refer to as a 'transnational migrant circuit'. It is the circuit, rather than a segment of Western Mexico, that now constitutes for most Aguilillans the significant environment in which they organize their lives. Within this framework, the creation and maintenance of family ties has been a complex affair. Many Aguilillan families are divided between the two countries; family members are constantly separating and reuniting; and relationships between people more than a thousand miles apart are often as significant as those between people living side-by-side (Rouse n.d.b:11).

Baca and Bryan (1983) also describe what they call a binational community in Los Angeles made up of undocumented Mexican workers. Their ethnographic work reveals an urban enclave linked to "feeder communities" in Mexico by networks of relatives, households, and associates. Most of the people Baca and Bryan interviewed were indeed, as might have been predicted by the theories elaborated above, employed in secondary labor market jobs. Thus the longer they stayed in Los Angeles, the more they became disillusioned about the possibility of the "upward mobility" so often predicted by the official discourse. Sometimes staying in Los Angeles for up to ten years, these unauthorized residents return to their home community, only to be replaced by others explaining why people from certain home towns in Mexico tend to be concentrated in certain industries in the Los Angeles area. Moreover, "Extended residence [results] in an awareness of the limited opportunities for Mexicans in the United States and an awareness of the advantages of living in both countries" (Baca and Bryan 1983:1; cf. Carlos n.d.a).

As evidence of a "binational" life style and economic strategy anchored in Mexico but based on long and/or frequent work periods in Los Angeles, Baca and Bryan asked over 1400 unauthorized men and women in Los Angeles about their preferred status in the United States. Seventy-seven percent favored permanent residence status over United States citizenship because it allows retention of Mexican citizenship, and is thus consistent with a binational life style. Baca and Bryan "... hypothesize that return migration reflects family rather than individual needs and plans and that it becomes more routinized with time. With the accumulation of animals, land, and small businesses in Mexico, made available by U.S.-earned dollars, comes an increased number of obligations in Mexico" (Ibid.:1983:9). Baca and Bryan thus suggest that the experiences of long-term residents of the United States will strengthen their binational adaptation. The very success of unauthorized workers in the United States, while contributing to their economic enhancement in Mexico, prevents them from completely renouncing the value of going north. Hence, when in the United States this binational person dreams of returning home, but once this person is again in Mexico, he/she often ends up going north again to enhance or fulfill more economic needs.
The progression of economic gain, more economic success and heightened economic expectations, thus does not lead to settling in either country (Baca and Bryan 1983:12).

The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, known as IRCA, is likely to affect transnational household strategies for survival. Palerm observes that,

One possible outcome [of IRCA is that] work opportunities in the U.S. have slowly transformed the employment structure of Mexican villages as the migration flow has increased over the years by forcing women into previously male dominated farming activities in addition to their other responsibilities. Women have done so in order to fill the labor gap left by the men who out-migrate [Arizpe 1982]. A possible change in the linkage with California agriculture as a source of employment will alter basic occupational and gender lines and have economic, familial, and social consequences . . . . Nor do we know how undocumented workers and their families will adjust to these new threats to their livelihood.
(Palerm n.d.a:2-3)

We return to the implications of IRCA below.

**Gender**

Women and children are new migrants to the United States from Mexico and Central America. According to Immigration and Naturalization Service officials and spokespersons for refugee groups, the proportion of women crossing the border without documentation has risen dramatically in the last five years. The Border Patrol detained 226,945 Mexican women and children in fiscal year 1986, a 40 percent increase from 1984 (Juffer 1988:15). Women are more vulnerable than men to exploitation at the border and beyond; many have been subjected to sexual harassment ranging from verbal abuse to gang rape (ibid.). These women are coming primarily to join husbands and to work to both support their own families in the United States and those left in Mexico. Many will end up working in the garment district of Los Angeles and as maids in affluent homes throughout the southwest. Others will no doubt end up in the agricultural labor market in California where women are paid even lower wages and afforded fewer benefits than their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Even within the secondary labor market in California agriculture, women workers are an underclass (Barton 1988).

Issues of gender have been defined conventionally almost entirely in terms of “traditional” family and sex roles, reflecting a hegemonic vision of the ideal family as composed of a bread winning husband-father; a stay-at-home, home-making wife-mother; and non-working children who go to school and then grow up, marry and reproduce this pattern. In this discourse, characteristic of theory in the service of official policy and conservative ideology, research concentrates on sexuality and biological reproduction, largely ignoring related questions of economic production and cultural reproduction. In other words, the official discourse on gender has confined itself almost exclusively to the domestic sphere. These same foci of sexuality and “the” family have historically also been central to the writings of Chicano scholars who have worked to correct the gender stereotyping elaborated by the mainstream research and theory. This corrective task now largely complete, research on other aspects of
gender is emerging which, in addition to examining the relationship of gender to the family and households, also examines it in the work place. The interactive effects of family and workplace on gender identity and the role of human agency is increasingly the concern of some Chicana scholars who employ socialist feminist theory to examine the linkages between capitalist relations in the public sphere and patriarchal family relations. Zavella (1987) calls attention to how,

Women . . . are simultaneously wage workers, women workers, and family members. The relationship between women’s wage labor and ‘private’ domestic labor is obscured under capitalism . . . and comprises two major processes: the family’s influence on female labor-force participation and the effect of wage work on women’s roles within the families (Zavella 1987:2).

Reviewing the literature on women’s employment and decision-making within Chicano families, Zavella (ibid.:130-133) observes that recent research suggests that women gain power and autonomy when they become employed and that therefore Chicana families are more ‘egalitarian’ when wives work. Lea Ybarra (1982a, 1982b) claims that such couples are more likely to have egalitarian values in regard to the household division of labor and to act on those values, an interpretation supported by Hawkes and Taylor (1975) and Baca Zinn (1980). Consistent with post-adaptationist approaches which see the family as an arena in which there may be not only cooperation but contention for power, Zavella (1987) questions the conclusions of research which uncritically characterizes women’s work as having positive effects on the family. In the case of seasonal work, the linkages between the structure of labor markets and the household are actually more complex. For example, the research to which she refers does not distinguish between full-time and part-time/seasonal workers (such as the cannery workers that she studied).

Rather than the increase in marital influence reported in these studies, I found that, to the extent that company practices keep women in ‘women’s jobs’, Chicana workers will have difficulties effecting changes at home. Like other minority women workers, Chicanas seem to be at risk, since they are concentrated in declining industries or in occupations slated for elimination because of changing technology (ibid.:xvi).

Moreover, some unions are complicit “in limiting women’s participation in the labor market. Unions often exclude women from training programs and generally support protective legislation that denies women access to difficult ‘male’ jobs” (ibid.:4). Describing other recent research on the various ways in which Chicana/Latina women combine wage and family work, Zavella calls for continuing research, within the socialist feminist paradigm, on the two-way relationship between women’s work and family.

Ethnicity

Enclavement is a result of macro-economic and transnational structural processes that intersect with class and “race.” The enclave so formed is the crucible in which ethnicity is nurtured. This ethnicity thus becomes yet another marker for self-identification and for objectification of the self by the other. As such, ethnicity doubly determines enclavement. Such otherness also becomes the target of and is reinforced by the racism which is so deeply
ingrained in Anglo rural California. Saragoza (1983:120) discusses how proximity to Mexico resulted in a high degree of transiency which, “slowed and diluted the incorporation of Mexicans into the fabric of industrial capitalism in early twentieth century America.” He adds that, “If transiency was not enough, segregation maintained the general isolation of the Mexican community. This was most obvious in rural agricultural areas where the effects of class and race created a polarized ambience” (Ibid., emphasis added), suggesting that the dynamics of rural communities promote perhaps even greater enclavement than those of urban areas.

Three integrally related structural conditions promote the persistence of Latino ethnicity in California. One of these is the formation of enclaves, rural and urban, under conditions already outlined; the second is labor market segregation, also discussed above. Effectively isolated from mainstream Anglo society, culture, and work, the ethnic identity of both sojourner and permanent resident workers is maintained by living and working in “Mexican” ambiances, regardless of whether they are on this side of the border or the other. The third structural condition perpetuating Latino ethnicity is “replenishment.” European immigrant communities – which were not replenished by infusions of new immigrants after the early decades of the twentieth century – maintained their ethnic distinctiveness through oppositional relationships with other groups, a phenomenon especially prevalent where a strong “racial” opposition maps onto the ethnic. Oppositional conditions also maintain Latino ethnicity in California, but Latino enclaves are augmented by the regular arrival of persons socialized in Mexico. Newcomers generally enter the lower strata of the secondary and tertiary labor markets, and with time some (as individuals and families), move upwards in these labor markets, with a few escaping into primary labor markets. The point is, however, that those individuals and families who move up and out of lower strata are replaced by new arrivals, a process Mines and Kearney (1982) refer to as “flow-through” in which some members of the community undergo socioeconomic and cultural differentiation even as the more general structure of the community is simultaneously replicated.

Saragoza, discussing Mexican children in the San Joaquin Valley, invokes a similar flow-through model.

Continuing immigration from Mexico posed two problems. First, the new immigrants replenished the cultural base of the resident Mexican population. Within the context of established Chicano communities, the new arrivals became the “Mexicans” while older residents were relegated to becoming the “Mexican Americans.” Secondly, and more importantly, the new immigrants’ children created a distinct group among the children of previous and more Americanized immigrants: a distinction rarely missed among Chicanos but frequently ignored or unrecognized by non-Chicanos. (Saragoza 1982:66)

What is more, the Mexican American cultural frame of reference, especially after World War II, emphasized Mexican-based identity in opposition to an Anglo-based one. Mexican identity arose primarily because of a realistic assessment of opportunities in the Anglo dominated segmented labor market – a result of historical and structural conditions that constrain the economic and social prospects of Mexicans and Mexican Americans as a group. Within this frame of reference, Mexican Americans consciously resist practices, orientations, and behaviors they perceive as detrimental to their Mexican identity and threatening to Mexican
American integrity. Moreover, they have developed "folk theories" and practices on how one "makes it" in Anglo society and economy in lieu of adopting Anglo identities and behavior (Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi 1986:118-122, 125-126). These folk theories and practices constitute an oppositional logic and resistance to assimilation and acculturation that, taken together, insure ethnic maintenance.

Language, of course, is also central to the persistence and emergence of ethnic diversity. Linguists and educators, for example, regard Black English as a distinct language in urban Black enclaves. If such remarkable language differentiation within an ostensibly English speaking community is possible, the potential for the persistence and indeed the growth of the incidence of Spanish in rural California is all the more understandable. In Latino enclaves there is the added powerful reinforcement of Spanish electronic and print media and film, many of which emanate from Mexico, but not to be underestimated are the Spanish language media produced in metropolitan and rural California. Similarly, the cultural, social, and economic influence of links between rural enclaves and the large Latino communities in metropolitan areas must be considered - such as in Los Angeles, which, with its huge population of residents of Mexican nationality and descent, is the second largest city in "greater Mexico."

Ethnicity in the transnational community, unlike ethnicity in minority enclaves that have become effectively detached from their homelands, is not simply the persistence of cultural identities and forms that were originally implanted by earlier immigrants. It is instead something that is constantly created and recreated under novel social, economic, and political conditions (Nagengast and Kearney n.d.). Cárdenas and Flores (1977) and García (1981) reinforce this point, also arguing that Mexican ethnicity must be viewed in terms of the transfer of labor from Mexico to the United States rather than any presumed identification with and acceptance of North American culture. Following up on this observation, Baca and Bryan note that

Binationalism is unlike those ethnic preservationist forms of adjustment evident among a variety of U.S. ethnic subcultures. Instead of being a consequence of long-term residence in the United States, binationalism is a long-term pattern of adjustment to working in the United States and living in two countries. Unlike organizations and institutions designed specifically to preserve ethnic identity and which deplete and diminish as new generations of U.S. ethnic groups emerge, the culture of migration is likely to expand over time (Baca and Bryan 1983:15).

New tendencies in the ethnic composition of migrants from Mexico to rural California also affect Latino enclavement in rural California. Historically, some 80 percent of migrants and immigrants have come from mestizo North Central Mexico, especially from six states referred to as the "core sending area" (Cross and Sandos 1981). In recent years, however, new migrant circuits have developed that originate in southern Mexico from areas that are predominantly indigenous (Kearney 1986a). The most notable of ethnic groups new to arrive in California are Mixtecs from the state of Oaxaca.

Already a highly disadvantaged minority even in Mexico, for reasons which we describe below, Mixtecs in California form sub-enclaves within the larger enclaves of unauthorized Mexican residents in the state. Because of their language handicaps, average lower levels of
education, the extreme poverty in their homeland of Oaxaca which makes of them de facto economic refugees, the stigma of being indios, and because they are members of new migrant-immigrant networks which have not yet developed extensively in California, they are an especially vulnerable ethnic minority, even within the larger Latino enclaves. As such they resemble Hmong and Khmer speaking indigenous refugees from Southeast Asia, and of course the several hundreds of thousands of indigenous Guatemalan refugees. But whereas the Asians are “official” refugees who benefit from recognition by the United States government, Mixtecs are not. Their unauthorized resident status combined with their indigenous ethnicity exacerbates the usual health and work-related problems faced by rural minorities generally and creates certain serious human rights problems – problems which have, like others we have discussed, a transnational dimension.

**Human Rights**

Like wealth and power, the enjoyment of human rights is differentially distributed in society and varies with ethnicity, national origin, education, “race,” gender, and so forth. The human rights history of minorities in California vis-a-vis the dominant Anglo society has ranged from attempts at extermination of indigenous Californians to more modern policies of “benign neglect” of contemporary minorities. Certain features of rural California and its Latino population result in an array of human rights problems distinct from urban counterparts. As in urban minority populations, class, ethnicity, “race,” and resident status serve to demarcate vulnerable populations. But added to these conditions in the countryside is the context of corporate agriculture with its own distinctive potential for abuses of the human rights of persons in its employ. We here have space to call attention only to the most serious issues.\(^\text{11}\)

With the exception of indigenous Californians, those most vulnerable to human rights abuses in rural areas have been groups from out of state who have come seeking work. With time, such migrant/immigrant groups either move out of agricultural field work into other employment or they return to their places of origin. This has been the history of Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, and other foreign ethnic nationalities. Through the mid-1970s the great majority of migrant field workers coming into California were mestizo Mexicans. Presently, however, well over fifty percent of the mestizo Mexican nationals employed in California are located in urban jobs, thus replicating the pattern of moving through field work to better employment. As Mexican mestizo migrant networks become ever more redirected to urban destinations, new migrant networks from indigenous communities move into the vacated field jobs.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the living and working conditions of California agricultural workers improved appreciably due to the partial stabilization of the work force, a large part of which acquired permanent legal resident status. Many of these “greencarders” joined the United Farm Workers Union and strengthened its ability to bargain effectively for improved working and living conditions. The 1980s have, however, seen an erosion of these gains as the composition of the farm labor force in many key areas of the State has shifted to undocumented workers and undocumented indigenous workers.

Indigenous populations are economically and politically the most underprivileged sector in Mexico. They live in the poorest and the most deprived parts of the country, they suffer extreme poverty and are often without social services. The Mixtec are typical of such indigenous groups. Oaxaca, where over one-half the population is classified as indigenous and
where sixteen linguistic groups are represented, is one of the country's poorest states. It is also the scene of perennial and persistent conflict over land and other resources between indigenous people and local mestizo power elites. The victimization of indigenous people in these disputes has been documented by national and international human rights groups and regularly reported in the Mexican press. Amnesty International recently (1986) published a widely circulated report on human rights violations in rural Mexico which focused on the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. The AI report documents a number of incidents of torture, disappearances, and general intimidation of indigenous peasant leaders. Such incidents usually occur within the context of disputes between local communities and commercial agricultural interests in the region. A growing number of militant organizations, such as the Movimiento de Unificación Trique, Coalición Obrero-Campesino-Esudiantil del Istmo, and others, in which indigenous people participate or take the lead, have been formed in recent years and are struggling to insure their basic rights in Oaxaca and elsewhere in Mexico. Similar Mixtec associations have also recently formed in California and Oregon. In spite of grassroots organizing and in spite of efforts of federally sponsored and funded programs directed toward indigenous people (Instituto Nacional Indigenista COPLAMAR), conditions in indigenous villages in Mexico are actually deteriorating. Many of the human rights abuses occur within the context of the deepening economic and political crisis that Mexico as a nation is experiencing. A diminishing resource base, unemployment, economic exploitation, and consequent poverty mean that large numbers must seek temporary or permanent employment in the commercial agricultural areas of the country and in urban centers all over Mexico. Many of these migrant workers come to the agribusiness enclaves on the Pacific Coast of Mexico and to the shanty towns along the Northwest border. Throughout this diaspora in Mexico, their disadvantaged ethnic status is added to the stigma and experience of poverty in an ongoing history of human rights violations, including low wages, deplorable working and living conditions, extortion by the police and other representatives of the state, and deficient or nonexistent health and educational facilities.

Unknown thousands of Mixtecs also cross the border to work in California agriculture and increasing numbers are appearing in Oregon, Washington, and other states. Concern about the human rights of Mexican migrants in the United States has long been a bone of contention between the Mexican and the United States governments. In spite of legislation intended to protect the basic rights of migrant workers, their living and working conditions in the United States continue to be wretched, and comparable to those in Mexico. If indigenous migrants in coastal and Northwest Mexico are in double jeopardy, in California they are triply jeopardized: not only are most of them undocumented, they are almost all employed as agricultural workers in the lowest levels of the secondary labor market, a location that commands little respect and less money; they do not speak English, of course, but they also speak Spanish poorly, if at all, leaving them especially vulnerable to unscrupulous employers, labor contractors, and others, Latino and Anglo alike; and they are stigmatized in California as indios, a category often despised on both sides of the border. Add to these the working and living conditions described above which are endured by all migrant farm workers and a picture emerges of life conditions in which it is especially difficult to realize human dignity.

While the life conditions of foreign migrant workers in the United States have always been harsh, they have not been uniformly so, fluctuating over the decades with the vagaries of U.S. immigration policy and the economic and political contexts which shape it. In addition to the conditions noted above, the passage and implementation of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) has increased concern among human and civil rights activ-
ists in Mexico, the United States, and elsewhere about the plight of migrants to the United States. Much of this concern centers on the large numbers of Mixtecs and other undocumented residents currently in California and neighboring states who do not qualify for immigration amnesty under IRCA. Forced by necessity to migrate from their homelands, these transnational migrants are often in desperate situations in the United States. There are already indications that such individuals and families are subjected to unusually extreme hardships and abuses because of this vulnerability, a vulnerability which is compounded by their transnational and ethnic minority status.

VI. PRACTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES

In this section we identify some practical anthropological research priorities intended to promote community self-help projects and to strengthen the bargaining power of rural labor. The strategy of practical anthropology is to identify cultural and social resources already present in a community. Thus, many of these research needs assume the involvement of members of the transnational communities themselves as agents struggling with problems that confront them. The key here is self-empowerment rather than administration by others. Therefore, we give our main attention to research on conditions that enhance community empowerment. Research on existing cultural resources is of special interest. Thus, for example, we assess past and potential uses of ethnicity, feminism, worker consciousness, and the formation of transnational migrant networks and associations as means of potential empowerment and forces for the mobilization of latent community resources and political power. We also identify aspects of nationality, ethnicity, and gender that impede such mobilization and empowerment.

The existing ethnographic and historic literature on Mexico and on Latinos in California has left certain gaps in our understanding – gaps which are partially filled by synthesizing the perspectives of the internationalization of capital and articulation of domestic and commercial economies. It is thus within this greater transnational historical and structural setting that an ethnographic study of the transnational community must be set. Some steps in this direction have been taken. But there is relatively little research on the human dimensions of international trends in production, finance, and labor. We are just now beginning to consider how people in the communities of the sort we have defined and discussed are responding to these global forces. In this section, we identify ethnographic research needs within the overall framework of the transnational community, taking into account the possibilities for coordinated projects in California and in Mexico. These needs can be phrased in terms of questions.

What Types of Rural Communities exist in California and what are their Transnational Links?

The pioneering work of Goldschmidt (1947) revealed profound differences between the two rural California towns of Dinuba and Arvin that were associated with the main kinds of agricultural production within them: large, corporate enterprises employing agricultural workers in Arvin and small, diversified, individually owned farms in Dinuba. There is reason to think that now, more than forty years later, towns like Arvin, dominated by commercial enterprises, are becoming more prevalent in the state while socioeconomically diversified and organic towns like Dinuba are in decline. The work of Palerm (n.d.b) and García (n.d.) suggests that some, perhaps many, of the remaining Dinuba-type towns in California are
becoming gutted enclaves like those discussed above. Goldschmidt's book, however, was the last systematic comparative ethnography done in rural California. A mapping of the rural areas of the state which identifies towns defined in terms of types and scales of production, services, ethnicity, migrant-immigrant composition, class, income distribution, and transnationality is long overdue.\textsuperscript{12}

We have suggested some characteristics of the structure of international labor markets from the perspective of the global economy. Rosenthal Urey's (1986) anthropological research on linkages between Mexico and California is exemplary of research and analysis required to address and analyze at a local level the structure of transnational labor markets, migrant-immigrant networks, and remittances between spatial moments of transnational communities in California and Mexico.

Of special interest here is the issue of development and underdevelopment in Mexican villages and regions and the pressures within them to send migrants and immigrants to California and also their capacity to absorb remittances and voluntary and involuntary returnees. Part of the research addressing these issues must necessarily involve consideration of both the Mexican and California components of these places.

There are two basic strategies given by patterns of migration and settlement to conceptualize and carry out ethnographic research on transnational communities on both sides of the border. One is to take a town in California in which there is an enclave made up of immigrants/migrants from Mexico, and follow their networks and circuits wherever they may lead elsewhere in California and in Mexico. The California side, taken as a more or less bounded unit, is the primary object of study. This is, for example, García’s (n.d.) strategy with respect to the transnational aspects of his research centered in Guadalupe, California. Guadalupe is a focal point where a number of networks converge and from which they link up with other nodes in Mexico and in California.

The second strategy is to start from a 'core community' in Mexico and trace out its networks and circuits as migrants penetrate into various locations in California and elsewhere in Mexico and in the United States (e.g., Kearney 1986a; Mines 1981). Ideally, research employing both of these strategies would be combined by coordinated research teams, each of which concentrates on one of the strategies.

Moreover, there is need for research within transnational communities at the level of the household. Palerm observes that such communities spanning the United States-Mexico border are closely intertwined through common household economies which span both countries. They are also linked by social, familial, and friendship networks which serve as labor recruitment and allocation networks which distribute Mexican labor in both Mexican and California rural settings. . . . The linkages also provide a steady flow of cash into Mexican agricultural villages which contribute to the economic development and/or diversity of household consumption patterns of Mexican villagers . . . (Palerm n.d.a:2).

Presently there are only a handful of studies that address some of these issues from either the Mexican or the California side; and there are virtually none that address them systematically on both sides of the border, a notable exception being Carlos (n.d.b).
What are the Impacts of U.S. Economic Conditions and Immigration Policy on Transnational Communities?

For the foreseeable future, immigration status will have to be considered in research of the sort envisioned here. Immigration status is perhaps most important in the structuring of labor markets, but it thus indirectly affects the composition of transnational communities, and the strategies of households that are in part or entirely "undocumented." Specifically, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), assuming significant enforcement, is likely to exclude those who are already hardest hit by the Mexican economic crisis. How such selective exclusion will affect the California transnational communities with respect to class, ethnicity, household formation, and gender remains to be determined.

Salcido (1982) reports on a study of stress among both undocumented and citizen Latino households in East Los Angeles, noting that (unsurprisingly) undocumented families have fewer economic resources, less education, and are younger than comparable citizen families. They are also handicapped by not being eligible for public assistance such as food stamps, medical attention, and general relief. Salcido links these conditions to higher levels of perceived stress among the undocumented households. This study suggests that the physical and mental health ramifications of IRCA must also be monitored. Moreover, there is considerable anecdotal evidence that unauthorized workers who do not qualify for legalization but who remain in the country are vulnerable to more extreme economic exploitation under the circumstances of IRCA than they were prior to its passage (see Hernandez 1988). Such abuses and their implications for human rights will especially require monitoring.

What are the Impacts of Economic Conditions in Mexico on Rural California?

A safe assumption is that the "crisis" in Mexico will continue for some time to come, and may even worsen. Presumably declining earning power and increased costs of living in Mexico will affect the transnational survival strategies of infrasubsistence peasants. As the conditions in Mexico which impel migrants to the United States continue to deteriorate, transnational migrants will surely become yet more dependent on economic activities in the United States. Ironically the Mexican crisis coincides with the implementation of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which may throw the most disadvantaged back onto their places of origin in Mexico. The interactive effects of IRCA and Mexico's national economic situation on households that rely on transnational strategies need to be addressed, which raises the next question.

What are the Impacts of Transnationality on Rural Mexico?

Research on migration to the United States from Mexican villages suggests that many villages have become dependent on remittances. There is now a large literature on the impact of remittances and the international experience of migrants on economic development in home locations. Almost without exception these impacts are assessed as neutral to negative. Cornelius (1976) was one of the first to show that remittances from the United States to Mexico were used primarily for consumption, housing, and immediate needs rather than for investment in infrastructure. This is the general conclusion of three reviews of return migration and of subsequent studies (see Kearney 1986b). It is worth summarizing the research on these somewhat unexpected effects because of its relevance to migration-development theory. Studies of return workers from Turkey, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, the
Caribbean, Germany, India, Western Samoa, and other countries show that few migrants learn new skills, or if they do, only rarely are they able to put them to use when they return home (see Kearney 1986b:346). The same pattern is seen in Mexico (Mines and Massey 1985; Stuart and Kearney 1981; Wiest 1978). Those who get jobs in the industrial sector in the United States do simple repetitive tasks that have no relevance to productive activities at home. Reynieri and Mughini (1983), in a sectoral mobility study of Italian migrant workers, found that many moved from primary to secondary sector employment in the host country, but that the new work tended to be automated, requiring less skill than their original occupation. In any event, as the comparative research on European migrant workers by Castles and Kosack (1985) shows, industrial migrant workers do not want to work in industry when they return home; they want to be independent entrepreneurs of one kind or another or independent farmers. There is no reason to assume that Mexican return workers are any different.

The effects of agricultural wage labor on agrarian development in the migrants' villages of origin are similar to those of returning industrial migrant workers. Wiest (1979) and Stuart and Kearney (1981) find that Mexican farm workers in United States agribusiness acquire skills that have little use in their own small-scale cultivation. As for investment of savings by returnees, numerous field studies (see Kearney 1986b:346) consistently show that land for house sites and house construction are the most common major expenditures rather than commercial income or employment generating investment. Vivolo (1983) finds that return migrants in Sicily tend to abandon agriculture but buy land and become absentee landlords, thus provoking land inflation and fragmentation. These effects are similar to those described by Rhoades in Spain (1978, 1980); Rubenstein in the West Indies (1979); and Mines (1981), Stuart and Kearney (1981), and Wiest (1979, 1980) for Mexico. Investment in agricultural improvement is equally disappointing; most return migrants are not attracted to agricultural investment. They may buy land and leave it idle, or perhaps use it only for summer retreats. The only long-term positive effect of remittance use that appears in these studies is the tendency reported from Mexico by Cornelius (1978) and Dinerman (1982) for families to use migrant earnings to extend the education of their children.

The remittances of migrant earnings offer the greatest potential for the accumulation of capital for investment in productive infrastructure in sending villages. But as demonstrated by the studies cited above, migrants most often do not invest in production in their own villages even though a number of studies in Mexico have shown that remittances may by appreciable (Bustamante 1978; Cornelius 1976; Kearney 1986a; Mines 1981). Indeed, the articulation perspective suggests that remittances perpetuate status quo underdevelopment. For example, Stuart and Kearney (1981) find that one village in southern Mexico could only support a population of about 250 were it not for heavy circular migration to the United States, the remittances from which permit a population of around 1400. Cornelius (1976) observes that the benefits from migration earnings to Mexican communities depend to a large extent on the degree to which the migrants, while in the United States, participate in formal organizations. One of the best demonstrations of this are the transnational agricultural cooperatives founded in rural Mexico by farm workers who migrate to Arizona. As mostly undocumented workers who are members of the Arizona Farmworkers Union, they have won contracts with employers who then made contributions to funds that financed the cooperatives (Conover 1985). This case demonstrates an important type of link between United States-side developments within transnational communities and development on the Mexican side of the same communities. Strengthening transnational communities in California can translate into benefits in Mexico.
How can Human Rights be Improved in Rural California?

To improve the human rights of such vulnerable peoples as the Mixtec, binational policies must be developed on both sides of the border, among which priority should be given to the following: 1) Improved enforcement of existing national and international legal protections, and 2) the development of new binational agreements between the United States and Mexico that recognize the special problems of transnational migrants in general and of indigenous migrants in particular. In addition to these “top-down” interventions, there are ways in which the various transnational associations and communities can enhance their efforts and resources to improve their human rights situation directly (see below).

What Unofficial Organizations Exist in Communities as Resources?

Much has been written about informal social networks among migrants and low-income people generally in Mexico and in California and how they serve as support systems for households that otherwise would have no “safety nets” (e.g., Kearney 1986a; Kemper 1977; Lomnitz 1977; Mines 1981; Rouse n.d.b; cf. Stack 1974). In addition to these extensive networks there is a history among Latinos in rural California of more formal but “unofficial” self-help organization such as mutualistas and religious cofradías. Hirabayashi (1986) has studied and written extensively about associations of migrants from specific villages in Mexico. Most of these were formed with the stated purpose of assisting their home villages and barrios, but once organized they also provided support to their members in California. Other self-help groups are both formal and more transnational in their orientation; the Asociación Cívica Benito Juárez, based in Fresno and Madera, California and in Salem, Oregon, is a case in point. It is primarily a Mixtec oriented association that promotes village development projects in Oaxaca, but which mainly confronts problems of discrimination, exploitation, and health among Mixtec enclaves in California and Oregon. The ACBJ is an example of a migrant-immigrant association based on the shared ethnicity of its membership; other comparable ethnic based associations exist among Zapotecs and Guatemalan indigenous peoples.

These formal and informal self-help organizations are what we call “unofficial” in the sense that they are neither connected with nor supported by “official” government agencies at any level, (although in some cases they receive support from private corporate sources). A first step in the systematic promotion and integration of unofficial organizations must be a comprehensive inventory of them based on an ethnographically sensitive typology. Not to be excluded are youth gangs which, contrary to the “official” view, are not to be regarded as “problems,” or “deviants” but as potential community resources (Vigil 1979, 1983; cf. Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi 1986).

In contrast to unofficial organizations, there is growing participation of rural Latinos in local government, such as city councils and other “official” agencies and organizations (Cruz Takash n.d.). The participants in these circles have unofficial organizations within their constituencies, but the linkages between them are weak. First of all, high percentages of the membership of the unofficial organizations are undocumented or non-citizen residents and therefore not voters. Also, the official and unofficial organizations have rather different agendas. The Latino participants in official organizations are primarily settled citizens oriented toward civic and business issues and national party politics,13 while members of the unofficial organizations tend to be transnational in orientation. Moreover, these contrasts tend to map onto class and ethnic differences.
Unofficial self-help organizations have potential for progressive community development. We need, however, research on the extent and variety of ethnic, class, nationality, and gender based organizations, past and present, which can serve as models and, in some cases, actual foundations for stronger, more progressive associations. Links between these and labor unions also must be closely examined. Ruiz (1987:6) notes that La confederación de las uniones obreras mexicanas (CUOM), the major agricultural union in California during the 1920s, began from mutualista activities. Mixtec farm workers in the San Joaquin Valley presently are attempting to transform what is now primarily a migrant organization into a contracting association in which they, as workers, will sell their labor directly, thereby avoiding abusive labor contracting and promoting relationships with organized farm labor.

In addition to research on the forms and locations of self-help associations, possibilities for strengthening, integrating, and creating linkages between them and potential official allies must be explored. Of key importance here are power brokers within local communities and associations. Wells and Climo (1987) distinguish between “traditional” paternal brokers and movement brokers. Both depend upon and act to promote the ethnicity of the dominated group. But whereas the “traditional” broker functions “to preserve the existing power hierarchy” (ibid.:55), the progressive brokers seek to empower the local community.

**How can Rural Latino Labor be Strengthened?**

The relationship among the structure of labor markets, the organization of the workplace, work experience, class, citizenship, ethnicity, gender, and community organization is not well documented nor are the ways in which the ecology of work, at one and the same time, alienates and socializes workers. We are in need of more fine grained ethnographies such as Thomas’ (1985) comparative study of workers in the lettuce industry in the Salinas Valley and more studies of work that incorporate analyses of entire industries (see Friedland, Barton and Thomas 1981). The links between production and social, cultural, and biological reproduction in the households associated with these industries are far from well researched, although two model studies of how to connect on-job and off-job aspects of Latinas at work are Ruiz’s (1987) and Zavella’s (1987) studies of Latinas in the cannery industry in California. Thus, for example, Ruiz (1987:xvi) documents how

> The extension of family and friend networks inside southern California food processing plants nurtured the development of a closely knit work environment, one which eased their adjustment to the routines and conditions of labor peculiar to canneries and packing houses. This “cannery culture” would later facilitate women’s attempts to exercise control over their work lives. (Ruiz 1987:19-20).

The Union of Cannery, Agricultural and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) organizers utilized these worker’s social networks to promote “the switch in women’s conversations from movie land gossip to union contracts” (ibid.:xvi).

**What Cultural Resources Exist in Communities?**

Practical anthropology must explore the conscious and unconscious forms of and potential for resistance and organization latent in ethnicity, work culture, religion, gender identities, popular culture, and unofficial organizations. Conversely, attention must be given to the
penetration of negative cultural content antithetical to the community's interest.

Although a work situation may generate resistance, it may also generate adaptation and consent. The formation of a work culture involves a complex set of relationships between cultural meanings and ideology on the one hand and behavioral strategies or practices on the other. It also involves both management policies and workers responses to those tactics and strategies (Lamphere 1986:521).

The term resistance is relatively uncommon in Chicano scholarship. It is, however, central to practical anthropology, and a category to be added to our research agenda. The working hypothesis that we propose is that resistance is common in rural Latino villages, but is not usually recognized as such since much of it appears in passive guise (Kearney 1988; Nagengast and Kearney n.d.). Following the lead of Willis (1976) and Hebdige (1979), Chicano gangs, popular culture, grass-roots religious groups and unofficial voluntary associations can be theorized as forms of organized and/or cultural resistance and defense. In this vein, Mirandé (1982:4) rejects the view of machismo which “equates it with male dominance and violence and [suggests] a new perspective which sees it as an expression of resistance to acculturation and assimilation.” And Baca Zinn (1975:16) theorizes the concept of “political familism” which fuses cultural and political resistance into “a process of cultural and political activism which involves the participation of total family units in movements for liberation.”

Barton (1988) introduces gender into the debate on resistance, devising a model of women farm workers’ resistance to both workplace and patriarchal familial control that is useful to theories of resistance in general (ibid.:89-136). She argues that women farm workers have developed unique forms of resistance stemming both from their location in the bottom of the secondary agricultural labor market and their non-labor force experiences in patriarchal household, familial, and social situations. In addition to overt resistance, i.e., participation in and instigating strikes and slowdowns, gender specific covert resistance at the workplace is part of women farm workers’ everyday practice. “Gossiping” on the job, for example, often defined as a negative trait of all women, is not recognized by either Anglo or Latino male supervisors as resistance “to the dehumanizing nature of work [when it] is highly routinized” (Barton 1988:116). Surreptitious and momentary interference with the rhythm of the tomato sorting conveyor belt is similarly unrecognized by supervisors because of the presumed docility and malleability of women workers (ibid.:114). Resistance in the household may also be active and conscious – “choosing not to do housework” – or unconscious and reactive – “too tired from double duties for sex” (ibid.:126).

Ethnicity as an aspect of agency is another major potential cultural resource for community building and resistance. It is true that the ethnicity of a weak association or community can be a stigma and therefore a liability rather than a basis for resistance. But should such a group become politically organized under conditions of differentiation and enslavement, the use of ethnicity as a means of resistance may offset its liabilities. Ethnicity sometimes emerges or is maintained in other words because of overt confrontation between minority and dominant groups (Comaroff 1987; Nagengast and Kearney n.d.). Rather than a passive process of either retention or loss of cultural content, ethnicity so theorized and so experienced is an active process of self-formation and self-definition and as such may become a basis for shared identity and action. This is true in associations as diverse as youth gangs and migrant self-help associations. There is need for research on ethnicity in rural California and on its rela-
tionship — actual and potential — to the mobilization of community organizations. 14

Above we discussed language and enclavement. Language will probably continue to be a political issue. While the recent adoption of English as the official language of California was ostensibly intended to eliminate monolingual Spanish-speaking in the state, it will more likely instead create language barriers that reinforce monolingualism and, therefore, Latino enclavement. Socio-linguistic research is needed on the interplay of language, ethnicity, and social organization in the transnational communities.

A type of unofficial self-help association not discussed above is the evangelical Protestant churches that dot the Latino landscape in rural California. Many of these churches are founded by self-appointed pastors who, in addition to creating an income for themselves, form small local congregations that lend emotional and material support to their members. Our general impression is that most of these sects are not linked to progressive associations, nor do they embody progressive ideology or goals. To the contrary, they tend to be inward turning and other worldly. In contrast to these evangelical sects, a strong expression of the Theology of Liberation among Chicano Catholic clergy has emerged (Cadena 1987). This progressive religious current in Latino circles has strong transnational intellectual and political links with the struggles of oppressed peoples in Latin America, most recently and immediately through its involvement with the sanctuary movement. Practical anthropological research is needed on the potential of this movement as a form of cultural resistance opposing patriarchal conservative Catholicism in transnational Latino communities (see Kearney 1986c).

Finally, an evaluation of cultural resources in rural transnational communities must assess the actual and potential role of public media and other forms of communication ranging from local newsletters to other print and electronic media. The San Joaquin Valley, for example, is especially favored with Radio Bilingue and Radio Campesina, two stations whose cultural programming and public service broadcasting are supportive of and at the service of local transnational communities.

VII. CONCLUSION

To summarize, most thinking about research in rural California to date conceptualizes Latino communities as local social, cultural, and economic isolates. The state of the “art” is also limited by the kinds of theoretical assumptions underlying some research projects, especially those commissioned by the institutions of the state and/or sponsored by them and those which assume cultural and economic homogeneity among Mexican immigrants/migrants to the United States and indeed, homogeneity in Mexico itself. Moreover, manifold supra-national links to global economy have been neglected. Yet there are direct and demonstrable linkages between rural poverty in California and economic and social conditions in Mexico. Moreover, research strategies for rural California — both official and unofficial — are fragmentary, in part because of disciplinary boundaries and in part because of a lack of transnational perspective. The transnational community, as a unit of analysis, is intended to synthesize and order disparate understanding and future study of rural California Latino settlement patterns and related issues. The transnational model is the most effective way not only to accomplish the research goals outlined above but more importantly to be a positive force in the empowering of transnational migrants and immigrants.
NOTES

1. We are grateful to Ana Alonzo, Manuel Carlos, Alain de Janvry, Ventura Gutierrez, Daniel Nugent, David Runsten, and Carol Zabin for comments and suggestions on an earlier draft. The usual disclaimers about responsibility resting solely with the authors pertain.

2. Roger Rouse (n.d.a., n.d.b., 1989) designates the term transnational rather than binational as more appropriate to describe the communities under consideration. The former term coincides and is consistent with theories of, for example, the transnational corporation and other features of the world capitalist system of which transnational communities are a part.

3. The basic difference is that applied anthropology is conceived outside the community itself and within the official discourse and directed towards "target communities" at the behest of and/or for policy makers, while practical anthropology is initiated partly or entirely within the community and is conceived in terms of the expressed needs of that community. There is often but need not necessarily be a conflict between the objectives of the two kinds of research. A well-conceived practical anthropology seeks maximum impact within both the community itself and the circles of policy makers (Kearney n.d.).

4. Barrera (1979:182-219) summarizes the main theories that attempt to account for differentiation: the bias theories referred to in the text; structural discrimination theories; and Marxist analysis of class in contemporary capitalist societies. Among the structural discrimination varieties are the colonial and internal colonial models, and among the Marxist are racial inequality, labor market segmentation and class fractions, and class segmentation. He then elaborates his synthesis of the internal colonial and the class segmentation models.

5. See Rosaldo (1985:406-410) for a review of the "initial assault" on and the "devastating critique" that Chicano scholars made of negative stereotypes in the 1960s and 1970s.

6. This, for example, is the assessment of Rodolfo Stavenhagen, a leading authority on agrarian issues in Mexico, as formulated in recent works (1980) and a series of lectures given at the University of California, Riverside in March 1988.

7. Theories of segmented or split labor markets posit that secondary labor markets, in contrast to primary ones, are characterized by undesirable jobs with low wages and prestige, few or no benefits, low employment stability, relative high unemployment, poor working conditions, and little upward mobility; see Cain (1976).


9. We purposely speak of absorption rather than assimilation so as to not invoke that other discourse and its associated political project.

10. See Gilman (1986) on White colonial fascination with Black African sexuality. There appears to be a comparable fascination in the conventional literature with Mexican male hypersexuality -- machismo -- and a comparable, almost prurient, interest in Mexican female sexuality.

12. Muller and Espenshade's recent book, *The Fourth Wave* (1985), compared neighborhoods in Los Angeles County with respect to ethnic composition, class, settlement histories and public services, among other things, and as such provides one model for comparative studies in rural areas.

13. A significant exception to this, and possibly a portent of a new trend, is a meeting in Tijuana in April 1988, organized by the San Bernardino-based Institute for Social Justice, in which some 300 influential Latinos from the western United States met with about 800 Mexican representatives, including the then President-elect, Salinas de Gortari. Issues of concern to both groups were discussed at this meeting.

14. On the emergence of ethnicity as a form of social protest in the formation of Mixtec associations see Kearney (1988) and Nagengast and Kearney (n.d.).
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ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS,
CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE AND
THE MEXICAN VILLAGE ECONOMY

by

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Illegal Immigrants, California Agriculture and the Mexican Village Economy
J. Edward Taylor

I. INTRODUCTION

II. UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IN THE CALIFORNIA FARM WORKFORCE
   A. Undocumented Immigrants by Crop and Region
   B. Seasonal Changes in the Distribution of Undocumented Farmworkers
   C. The Distribution of Undocumented Workers by Farm Job
   D. Summary

III. MEXICO-U.S. MIGRATION AND THE MEXICAN VILLAGE ECONOMY
   A. Remittances and Village Income Inequality
   B. U.S. Migrant Remittances and the Structure of the Village Economy

IV. CONCLUSIONS

V. ENDNOTES

VI. REFERENCES

LIST OF TABLES
   A. Table 1: Concentrations of Undocumented Workers in the California Hired Farm Labor Force, by Crop
   B. Table 2: Concentrations of Undocumented Farmworkers by Crop and Region in California
   C. Table 3: Average Percentage Monthly Changes in the Distribution of Undocumented Workers Across Crops and Regions
   D. Table 4: Concentrations of Undocumented Workers in the California Hired Farm Labor Force, by Farm Tasks
   E. Table 5: Average Percentage Monthly Changes in the Distribution of Undocumented Workers Across Farm Jobs
   F. Table 6: Contributions of U.S. Migrant Remittances and Income from Other Sources to Total Village Income
   G. Table 7: Effects of a 1% Increase in Village Household Income from Different Sources on Village Income Inequalities
   H. Table 8: Effect of a $100 Decrease in U.S. Migrant Remittances on Total Village Production, Incomes and Investments

DISCUSSION
B-i-national Aspects of California Rural Labor
I. INTRODUCTION

Illegal Mexico-to-U.S. migration structurally links the economy of rural Mexico with the California agricultural economy. The availability of low-cost Mexican migrant labor makes possible the preservation and expansion of labor-intensive specialty crop production in California. In this way, it helps shape both the technology and the cropping patterns that characterize the California agricultural economy. This immigrant manpower lifeline extends from California farm labor markets into peasant households in even the most remote corners of rural Mexico.

Household incomes, production and investments in many parts of rural Mexico are intimately tied to income sent home, or remitted, by migrants in the United States. A large decrease in work opportunities for Mexican migrants in the United States, as envisioned by the framers of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), would require significant structural changes in village economies throughout Mexico if these villages are to survive as viable economic units.

Extensive migration networks, or contacts with communities of Mexican immigrants in the United States, are the fundamental mechanism that links households in rural Mexico with farm employers in the United States. Farm labor contractors, whose activities have increased significantly in recent years, typically tap into these migration networks as a means of recruiting a steady supply of foreign workers to provide low-skill labor services to California farms.

This paper provides an overview of the role that illegal Mexico-to-U.S. migration plays in the California farm economy and in the Mexican village economy. Part I provides a summary of available evidence on the role of illegal immigrant labor in the California farm labor market. Part II summarizes the role of income remittances from illegal Mexico-to-U.S. migrants in the Mexican village economy. Part III offers some policy conclusions.

II. UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS IN THE CALIFORNIA FARM WORKFORCE

California agriculture is characterized by a large demand for inexpensive, low-skill labor and by large seasonal variations in labor demand across crops, regions and farm jobs. Two fundamental characteristics of the undocumented farm workforce make this labor force critical to California agriculture, given its current cropping patterns and technology. First, illegal immigrants occupy the lowest-skill, lowest-paying farm jobs, jobs that are least likely to be attractive to U.S. workers. Second, the illegal immigrant workforce is highly responsive to changes in the demand for low-skill labor across crops and regions.

This section examines the role that undocumented workers now play in California’s agricultural sector. Unfortunately, information on the labor market experience and characteristics of undocumented workers in the United States is scarce. This is especially true for agriculture. In addition to the obvious difficulties inherent in identifying and eliciting information from illegal immigrant workers, the farm workforce is notoriously difficult to survey. This workforce is characterized by a high degree of geographic mobility and is subject to tremendous seasonal variations in employment. As a result, survey findings on the immigrant composition and other characteristics of the farm workforce are very sensitive to the time of year in which surveys are carried out. This, together with a lack of information on immigrants’ legal status and a limited coverage of workers employed in farm jobs, makes conventional data sources like the Census of Population, the Current

The findings reported below are based on a unique set of data on farmworkers surveyed throughout California by the University of California (UC) and the California Employment Development Department (EDD) in August 1983, at the peak of the farm labor season. The sample includes 1286 farmworkers in 37 counties; workers in all major crops and production-related activities were interviewed in each survey area. The sample was designed to represent as closely as possible the statewide distribution of farmworkers. A description of the survey design and survey instruments is provided in Mines and Martin (1986).

The UC-EDD survey provides detailed information on the crop, region and farm task in which each farmworker was employed at the time of the interview, on an array of socio-demographic characteristics, including immigrant farmworkers' legal status, and on wages. The following pages summarize first, the apparent reliance of different California crops and farm regions on illegal immigrant labor, and second, the concentration and distribution of undocumented workers in different kinds of low-skill and semi-skill farm jobs.

| Table 1 |
| Concentrations of Undocumented Workers in the California Hired Farm Labor Force, by Crop (August 1983) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of Undocumented Workers</th>
<th>Relative Concentration of Undocumented Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Crops</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus</td>
<td>0.43 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>0.28 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Tree Fruit</td>
<td>0.28 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Vegetables</td>
<td>0.14 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Fruits</td>
<td>0.11 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.09 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Taylor and Espenshade (1987)

* (**) Denotes that an average is significantly different from the average for all other crops at the .10 (.05) level of significance.

The numbers in the last column of the table are the ratios of the concentration in each crop to the concentration in all other farm crops.
Undocumented Immigrants by Crop and Region

Column 1 of Table 1 presents the reported shares of undocumented workers in different crops at the August peak of the California farm labor season. Interviewers in the UC-EDD survey team attempted to determine farmworkers' legal status, whenever possible, without resorting to direct questioning. However, any survey that collects information on workers' legal status is likely to understate absolute numbers of illegal immigrant workers. Many undocumented workers are reluctant to reveal their true legal status. Others may have purchased documents that are not valid (for example, falsified green cards).

Whereas underreporting of undocumented workers affects estimates of absolute numbers of illegal farmworkers, it does not present a problem for calculating concentrations of undocumented workers in given crops and farm tasks relative to other crops and tasks, or the distribution of undocumented workers across these crops and tasks, provided that illegal workers in particular crops and tasks are not systematically more or less willing to reveal their true legal status than illegal workers in other crops and tasks. In this case, estimates of relative concentrations or distributions can be treated as a reliable index of the true relative concentrations or distributions.

In light of these considerations, Column 2 of Table 1 gives relative concentrations of illegal aliens, calculated as the ratio of the share of undocumented workers in each crop or task to the share in all other crops or tasks. A ratio of 1.0 indicates that a concentration is no different than the average for all other crops and tasks. A ratio greater than 1.0 indicates that a concentration is above average, and a ratio less than 1.0 means that a concentration is below average.

By far the highest concentration of illegal workers is in citrus. Even without correcting for underreporting of undocumented workers, this concentration is 43 percent, 2.3 times the average for all other crops. In grape crops, which employ a below-average share of foreign workers overall (Taylor and Espenshade, 1987), an above-average share of foreign workers who are hired are illegal. As a result, Table 1 shows that grapes have above-average concentrations of undocumented workers. Noncitrus tree fruits are also above-average employers of undocumented workers. Nonetheless, the concentrations of illegal workers in these crops are well below those in citrus. At the other extreme, field vegetables and field fruits have significantly lower concentrations of illegal workers in their workforce, averaging just 60 percent and 52 percent, respectively, of the average for other crops.

A large variability in the concentrations of undocumented workers in different crops may reflect characteristics of the crops such as crop perishability and the difficulty of crop tasks. It might also be explained by characteristics of labor markets in the regions in which different crops are concentrated, including unemployment and wage rates, which reflect the availability of legal workers and their willingness to perform agricultural work.

Concentrations of illegal workers can be compared for different crop categories within each of the major agricultural regions of California to gain a sense of how regional characteristics and crop characteristics combine to influence the concentration of undocumented workers in the farm labor force.

The first row of Table 2 shows that while the concentration of undocumented workers in citrus is high overall, it is highest — more than three times the average for all other crop/region combinations — in the South San Joaquin Valley. The concentrations of illegals in citrus are also very high in
the South Coast and North San Joaquin Valley regions (2.9 and 2.6 times the average for all other crops and regions, respectively). By contrast, it is well below average in the Inland Southern California region. Grapes and tree fruit are the other two crops with high concentrations of illegal workers. For grapes, the Inland Southern California average is just two-thirds the average for all other crop/region combinations, while the San Joaquin Valley and North Coast regions are well above average. Concentrations of undocumented workers in tree fruit are above average in the San Joaquin Valley regions and well below average in both the Sacramento and the Central Coast regions. In crops that do not rely heavily on illegal immigrant labor, average concentrations tend to be highest in the South San Joaquin and Sacramento Valley counties.

The bottom row of the table shows average relative concentrations of illegal workers by region. The concentrations of illegal workers are lowest in Inland Southern California and in the South Coast, Central Coast and Sacramento Valley regions. Reliance on illegal workers is highest in the San Joaquin Valley, North Coast and “Other” counties. The North Coast region has an above-average concentration of illegal workers primarily because it is a major producer of wine grapes, which depend heavily on undocumented workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Crop</th>
<th>South Coast</th>
<th>Inland So. CA</th>
<th>Central Coast</th>
<th>So. San Joaquin</th>
<th>No. San Joaquin</th>
<th>Sacramento</th>
<th>North Coast</th>
<th>Other CA</th>
<th>All Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITRUS</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAPES</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.60**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER TREE FRUIT</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.51**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUTS</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIELD VEGETABLES</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.60**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIELD FRUITS</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.52*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL CROPS</td>
<td>0.70*</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>1.62**</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Taylor and Espenshade (1987)

*(**Denotes that an average is significantly different from the average for all other crops or regions at the .10 (.05) level of significance.

The numbers in the table are the ratios of the concentration in each crop and region to the concentration in all other crops and regions. A blank entry indicates a sample size smaller than 10 in the corresponding cell. These are inevitable due to the uneven geographic distribution of some crops.
Seasonal Changes in the Distribution of Undocumented Farmworkers

The findings presented in Tables 1 and 2 present a snapshot of the distribution of the California farm workforce across crops and regions at the peak of the farm labor season in August 1983. As the farm labor season unfolds, the distribution of undocumented workers evolves to reflect changing seasonal labor demands in the state. One of the most salient features of California’s undocumented farm workforce is its high degree of responsiveness to seasonal changes in labor demand in low-skill, low-paying farm jobs.

In addition to information on current jobs, the UC-EDD survey gathered retrospective data on all farm and nonfarm jobs in which respondents had worked over the 12 months immediately preceding the survey. These retrospective data can be used to construct a recent time profile of work activities for each person in the sample. Because the survey was conducted at the peak of the farm labor season, the retrospective data approximate major changes in the distribution of the California farm workforce from winter through the peak farm labor months. The reliability of retrospective data decreases with time. Therefore, the analysis that follows will be limited to farmworker activities during winter, spring and summer of 1983.

These data suggest that California agriculture is characterized by a two-tiered workforce. On the one hand, a small base tier of farmworkers enjoys relatively stable, high-paying year-round jobs. Of the farmworkers included in the August 1983 UC-EDD survey, 29.8 percent had been employed in the same job for 90 days or more and only 16.1 percent had been on the job 30 weeks or more.

These numbers are consistent with California unemployment insurance data, which indicate that approximately 14 percent of all farmworkers in California had more than 30 weeks of farm employment in 1985. Superimposed upon this relatively permanent workforce is a second, seasonal farm workforce which expands significantly up to the peak farm labor month. As this seasonal component expands, the absolute concentration of undocumented workers increases. The share of the farm workforce classified as “undocumented” increases 25 percent between January and August 1983 (Espenshade and Taylor, 1988). There is also a large increase in the activity of farm labor contractors (FLCs). As both the absolute and relative numbers of undocumented farmworkers increase, there is a 74 percent increase in the the share of farmworkers hired by FLCs instead of by growers, from 15.5 percent in January to 27.1 percent in August. Farm labor contractors, by tapping into migrant networks with villages in Mexico, are able to provide growers with large numbers of inexpensive, low-skill farmworkers on short notice, substantially reducing the risk to growers of relying on a largely illegal workforce.

The undocumented farm workforce is highly fluid, in the sense that the distribution of undocumented workers becomes more or less concentrated in given crops, regions and farm jobs as seasonal changes occur in farm labor demand. During the off-labor months of January and February, undocumented workers are concentrated in citrus (17 percent of the illegal farm workforce), in grapes (35 percent) and in winter vegetables (17 percent). They work primarily in harvesting citrus and winter vegetables (33 percent) and in tree pruning (28 percent). The share of undocumented workers employed in planting peaks during the late winter months, but this activity employs a relatively small share of illegal immigrants (7 percent). Geographically, the largest shares of the undocumented workforce during the winter months are in the Inland Southern California and South Coast regions (19 percent) and in the South San Joaquin Valley (34 percent), where winter vegetable crops are concentrated.
Table 3
Average Percentage Monthly Changes in the Distribution of Undocumented Workers Across Crops and Regions (January to August 1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>South Coast</th>
<th>Inland Coastal</th>
<th>Central Special</th>
<th>North San Joaquin</th>
<th>North Sacramento</th>
<th>North Coast Calif.</th>
<th>Other Calif.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-8.3**</td>
<td>-10.5**</td>
<td>12.3**</td>
<td>-3.8**</td>
<td>6.1*</td>
<td>9.8**</td>
<td>-8.8**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop Type</th>
<th>Citrus</th>
<th>Grapes</th>
<th>Other Tree Fruit</th>
<th>Nut Crops</th>
<th>Field Vegetables</th>
<th>Field Fruit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-11.2**</td>
<td>-6.8*</td>
<td>7.1*</td>
<td>-6.4*</td>
<td>7.7**</td>
<td>21.5**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The numbers in the table are obtained from least-squares regressions of the form:

\[ \ln (S_t) = a_i + b_{t}t + e_t \]

where \( t = 1, \ldots, 8 \) denotes month number and \( s_t \) is the share of undocumented workers in crop or region \( i \) at time \( t \). The estimated coefficient \( b_t \) is the monthly time derivative of the share of undocumented workers employed in \( i \):

\[ b_t = \left( \frac{1}{S_t} \right) \frac{ds_t}{dt} \]

**(**) Significant at the 0.10 (0.05) level for a two-tailed test.

Table 3 presents average monthly changes in the distribution of the undocumented farm workforce across regions and crops between January and August 1983. Panel A shows that as the farm season progresses into spring and summer, the shares of undocumented farmworkers employed along the South Coast and in Inland Southern California decrease at rates of 8.3 percent and 10.5 percent per month, respectively, while the share in the South San Joaquin Valley falls by 3.8 percent per month. The share of undocumented farmworkers in the North Coast wine-producing region also decreases (-8.8 percent per month). These declines are accompanied by significant increases in the share of undocumented workers employed along California's Central Coast (12.3 percent monthly), in the North San Joaquin Valley (6.1 percent per month) and, farther north, in the Sacramento Valley (9.8 percent per month). The share of illegal immigrant farmworkers employed outside the major agricultural regions of the state also increases significantly (9.2 percent per month).
These geographic shifts reflect a major seasonal redistribution of the illegal farm workforce across crops (Panel B of Table 3). The center of the distribution of undocumented workers shifts away from citrus and grapes (at rates of 11.2 and 6.8 percent per month) toward noncitrus tree fruits and field vegetables, which increase their claim on the undocumented farm workforce by 7.1 percent and 7.7 percent per month, respectively. The share of undocumented workers in field fruits — a minor employer of illegal immigrants — rises substantially, at a rate of 21.5 percent per month. Thus, the seasonal evolution of the farm labor market is such that, with the exception of field vegetables, crops that are the major employers of undocumented workers claim a decreasing share of undocumented workers as the peak farm labor season approaches, while crops that have the smallest concentrations of undocumented workers claim an increasing share of the illegal immigrant workforce. Even so, Table 2 shows that in August, citrus and grapes still had significantly above-average concentrations of undocumented immigrants.

The Distribution of Undocumented Workers by Farm Job

California growers rely heavily on undocumented workers to harvest crops (Table 4). However, the largest concentration of illegal workers is not in harvesting, where timing — especially in perishable crops — is likely to be critical. Although the concentration of illegal workers in harvesting is above average, it is much lower than the concentration of illegal farmworkers in tree thinning, and it is not much different from the concentrations of illegals in tree pruning and in irrigating. By contrast, the share of undocumented workers is low in hoeing and thinning of field crops and in crop sorting.

On average, undocumented workers are less likely than legal workers to be assigned to key, semiskilled jobs like machine operation and foreman positions, where their sudden apprehension could have a relatively large adverse effect on production, including the productivity of other workers. Table 4 shows that the share of undocumented workers among machine operators is just 41 percent as large as the share in other tasks. Taylor and Espenshade (1987) report that the share of U.S.-citizen workers is nearly twice as high in machine operation as in all other farm jobs. Foremen are only 30 percent as likely to be illegal aliens as are workers in other jobs. They are at least 39 percent more likely to be legal immigrant workers. Legal Hispanic immigrants, in addition to being proficient Spanish speakers, have a secure legal status which makes them preferable to undocumented workers in foreman positions. Overall, there is little evidence that undocumented workers displace legal workers in foreman and machine-operator jobs.

The job mix of undocumented workers, like the distribution of undocumented workers by crop and region, is seasonal (Table 5). The share of undocumented workers increases in harvesting (4.6 percent per month) and in hoeing of field crops (35.5 percent per month), while it declines sharply in tree pruning (-19.1 percent per month) and in planting (-15.0 percent per month). As the number of undocumented workers in California agriculture increases, the share of illegal workers declines in the relatively skilled machine operator jobs (-5.3 percent per month), and although in relative terms there is a substantial increase in the share of undocumented workers who are foremen, the actual size of this share is still very low in August (0.4 percent). These findings indicate that seasonal growth in the undocumented farm workforce is not absorbed significantly into relatively desirable, semi-skilled farm jobs but instead is channeled primarily into low-skill harvesting and field work. Taylor (1988) reports econometric evidence of segmentation of the California farm labor market along immigration-status lines.
### Table 4
Concentrations of Undocumented Workers in the California Hired Farm Labor Force, by Farm Task (August 1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Share of Undocumented Workers</th>
<th>Relative Concentration of Undocumented Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Tasks</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvesting</td>
<td>0.25 **</td>
<td>1.62 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Pruning</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Thinning</td>
<td>0.42 **</td>
<td>2.19 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoeing</td>
<td>0.10 **</td>
<td>0.48 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigating</td>
<td>0.28 *</td>
<td>1.50 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop Sorting</td>
<td>0.10 **</td>
<td>0.47 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine Operating</td>
<td>0.09 **</td>
<td>0.41 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foremen</td>
<td>0.06 **</td>
<td>0.30 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Taylor and Espenshade (1987)

* (**) Denotes that an average is significantly different from the average for all other farm jobs at the .10 (.05) level of significance.

The numbers in the last column of the table are the ratios of the concentration in each farm task to the concentration in all other farm tasks.
Table 5
Average Percentage Monthly Changes in the Distribution of Undocumented Workers Across Farm Jobs (January to August 1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harvesting</th>
<th>Tree Pruning</th>
<th>Tree Thinning</th>
<th>Hoeing</th>
<th>Irrigating</th>
<th>Sorting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.6**</td>
<td>-19.1**</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>35.5**</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting</td>
<td>Machine Operation</td>
<td>Foreman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-15.0**</td>
<td>-5.3*</td>
<td>24.0**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The numbers in the table are obtained from least-squares regressions of the form:

\[ \ln(S_i) = a_i + b_i t + e_i \]

where \( t = 1, \ldots, 8 \) denotes month number and \( s_i \) is the share of undocumented workers in crop or region \( i \) at time \( t \). The estimated coefficient \( b_i \) is the monthly time derivative of the share of undocumented workers employed in \( i \):

\[ b_i = \left(1/S_i\right) \frac{ds/ \times dt}{dt} \]

*(**) - Significant at the 0.10 (0.05) level for a two-tailed test.

Summary

The findings reported above highlight the central role that undocumented immigrant workers currently play in the California farm economy. Two characteristics that make undocumented workers critical to the smooth functioning of California agriculture are first, the concentration of undocumented workers in the lowest-skill, poorest-paying farm jobs and second, the considerable fluidity of the undocumented farm workforce, its responsiveness to large seasonal swings in labor demand across regions and farm jobs.

Analysis of the UC-EDD data suggests that the immediate impacts of employer sanctions on California agriculture will not be uniform. It appears that the largest immediate adjustments to employer sanctions will be in citrus, because these crops currently have the highest concentration of illegal immigrants in their workforce. By contrast, field fruits have a relatively low reliance on undocumented workers. Despite the high concentration of undocumented workers in citrus, in one respect citrus growers may be in a favorable position to respond to employer sanctions by switching to a more year-round, legal workforce. Citrus is among the least perishable of all California crops (Kader, 1985); many varieties of citrus can be stored on the tree for several weeks until harvested. Although many relatively perishable crops (e.g., field fruits) rely less on undocumented workers, the loss of even a small share of the workforce can be significant for commodities for which the harvest window is small.
III. MEXICO-U.S. MIGRATION AND THE MEXICAN VILLAGE ECONOMY

A strong body of evidence from recent empirical studies indicates that village economies in Mexico rely heavily on income sent home, or remitted, by migrants in the United States. This conclusion is based on three considerations: the magnitude of Mexico-to-U.S. migrant remittances, the importance of migrant remittances in village household incomes, and the apparent effect of remittances on the overall structure of the village economy.6

Village studies and surveys of migrants consistently show that remittances from Mexico-to-U.S. migrants to households in rural Mexico are large and represent an important share of income in migrant-sending villages. Surveys of return migrants and of families with members working illegally in the United States indicate average annual remittances ranging from $355 in 1982 nominal dollars (Adelman, Taylor and Vogel, 1988) to $585 in 1978 nominal dollars (Ranney and Kossoudji, 1983). Massey et al. (1987) estimate an average income from U.S. migrants of $146 per month (1982 nominal dollars) in a sample of households containing at least one U.S. migrant. A study of apprehended migrants by North and Houstoun (1976) estimates an average of $129 per month (in 1975 nominal dollars) remitted to Mexico per undocumented Mexican working in the United States.7 These numbers are significant in the context of the rural Mexican economy, in which nearly 80 percent of all households received less than $224 per month (1977 nominal dollars) in 1977 (Lustig, 1981).

Village studies show a high degree of dependence on undocumented wage labor in the United States. Some researchers have estimated that 20 to 25 percent of the entire Mexican population currently depends directly on income earned in the United States (Cornelius, 1976; Reichert, 1981). In Guadeloupe, a rural community on the edge of Mexico's central plateau, an estimated 68 percent of all households depend on income earned by one or more household members who work seasonally in the United States, primarily in agricultural jobs. Forty percent of these cases are households in which the principal wage earner is an illegal Mexico-to-U.S. migrant (Reichert, 1981).

The share of Mexico-to-U.S. migrant remittances in total village income is more difficult to measure, because it requires data on household income from all sources, not just migration. The findings presented below are from a survey of migration from a random sample of rural Mexican households conducted in winter 1983 in two villages in the Pátzcuaro region of the state of Michoacán, approximately 2,000 kilometers from the Mexico-California border. The sample consists of 423 adults from 61 households.

The state of Michoacán historically has been one of the major suppliers of migrants to the United States. The households in the Pátzcuaro sample reflect this. Despite their large distance from the U.S.-Mexico border, nearly one out of every two households surveyed had at least one member working illegally in the United States in 1982, and the households that participated in Mexico-to-U.S. migration had an average of 2.5 Mexico-to-U.S. migrants each.

The Pátzcuaro study shows that remittances from Mexico-to-U.S. migrants comprised 16 to 21 percent of total village income and 34.5 percent of the income of the average Mexico-to-U.S. migrant household in 1982. The contribution of Mexico-to-U.S. migrant remittances to total village income, on average, was larger than the contribution of remittances from migrants working in Mexican urban areas, and it was 25 to 35 percent as large as farming, handicrafts and all other non-migration income sources combined (Table 6).
### Table 6

**Contribution of U.S. Migrant Remittances and Income from Other Sources to Total Village Income (Percent)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Source</th>
<th>Village 1</th>
<th>Village 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-remittance Income</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Migrant Remittances</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico-to-U.S. Migrant Remittances</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stark, Taylor and Yitzhaki (1986 and 1988)

---

**Remittances and Village Income Inequality**

Mexico-to-U.S. migration also appears to play an important role with regard to income distribution. It provides many otherwise asset-poor households in rural Mexico with opportunities to obtain income through migration by selected household members.

The effects of migration on income inequality depend critically on where the households that benefit from migration are situated in their village’s income distribution. A number of studies have demonstrated that on average, Mexico-to-U.S. migrants come from neither the very richest nor the very poorest village households (Cross and Sandos, 1981:76). Households at the top of their village’s income distribution generally have fewer motives for sending illegal migrants to the United States than lower- and middle-income households. The former usually are able to enjoy both income-earning opportunities and a high social status without having to make the material and psychological sacrifices required to send a family member clandestinely into an unfamiliar foreign labor market. At the other extreme, although the poorest rural households might stand to benefit from Mexico-to-U.S. migration, they often lack the financial resources and economic security to risk sending migrants illegally across international frontiers. Members of these households are more likely to supplement their family’s income through seasonal migration within Mexico, often returning home to assist in major agricultural tasks on the family farm.

The distributional effect of migrant remittances does not appear to be the same for all types of migration or at all points in a village’s migration history (Stark, Taylor and Yitzhaki, 1986). At the beginning of a village’s migration history, when few households have established contacts in the United States, the distribution of remittances across households is necessarily unequal. The first households to send migrants illegally to the United States are likely to be from the upper portion of the village income distribution, since they are best equipped to make the large and risky investment required to finance illegal Mexico-to-U.S. migration. If remittances to these households are large, they can have a notable negative effect on the village income distribution by size.
However, the early migrants provide information and assistance to other villagers. Thus, as the stock of village migrants grows at a particular location, so does the propensity for other villagers to migrate. The effect of remittances on village income inequality over time depends upon how access to migration networks becomes diffused through the village population, especially to lower and middle income households. The Patzcuaro data indicate that a decrease in Mexico-to-U.S. migrant remittances would result in less income inequality in a village with little Mexico-to-U.S. migration experience, but it would increase income inequalities in a village with a long history of sending migrants illegally to Southern California (Table 7). This is because, in the village with more Mexico-to-U.S. migration experience, migration opportunities have become available to households in the village's middle-income groups. There is evidence that the poorest households in the two villages do not have access to U.S. labor markets, due to the high costs and risks of illegal migration (Stark, Taylor and Yitzhaki, 1988). The latter can share in the income benefits from Mexico-to-U.S. migration, however, if the demand for goods and services they provide increases as a result of the ways in which migrant households spend their income, or as a result of labor shortages created by the out-migration of village workers.

**U.S. Migrant Remittances and the Structure of the Village Economy**

Over time, remittances to village households from migrants in the United States can have a major impact on production and incomes in rural Mexico and on the structure of the rural economy. In the first instance, remittances increase incomes of the households that send migrants to the United States. Some remittance income may be used for productive investments that lead to future income growth in the village economy. However, even if U.S. migrant households are not big investors, income from migrant remittances stimulates the production of goods and services which these households consume. These goods and services may be produced outside the village, in which case their consumption represents a leakage of income from the village economy (but a stimulus to producers outside the village). To the extent the goods and services demanded by migrant households are produced within the village, remittances create a stimulus to village

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Source</th>
<th>Village 1</th>
<th>Village 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-remittance Income</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Migrant Remittances</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico-to-U.S. Migrant Remittances</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stark, Taylor and Yitzhaki (1986 and 1988)
production and lead to further rounds of income and employment growth in the village economy. Consumption linkages of this kind typically are far more important than linkages on the production side of rural LDC economies. As a result of such linkages, large and continued remittance flows can dramatically alter the structure of the village economy; conversely, their sudden loss would have a multiplicative impact on village economic activity and would lead to a reshaping of expenditure and production patterns.

Unfortunately, economy-wide impacts of U.S. migrant remittances – including impacts on the incomes of households that do not send migrants to the United States – have not been a major focus of past research. A study of the village of Guadeloupe in Michoacán found that migrant remittances have “financed numerous public works projects which have led to the rapid development of the town’s infrastructure and have benefitted all residents – migrants and nonmigrants alike” (Reichert, 1981). They also enabled migrant households to raise their standard of living dramatically by improving their housing and domestic services, sanitation, nutrition, and health care, and by purchasing consumer goods previously beyond their reach. Similar improvements resulting from migrant remittances have been documented by studies of other villages in Mexico. The Guadeloupe study also found that migrant remittances “created a limited number of opportunities for the development of new businesses” (Reichert, 1981:63).

To date, one study has examined the expenditure linkage effects of U.S. migrant remittances on a Mexican village economy (Adelman, Taylor and Vogel, 1988). This study found that, although the productive structure of the village economy is relatively simple and the village economy is very open, the impact of U.S. migrant remittances on the village economy is substantial. To illustrate this, Table 8 summarizes the effects of a $100 decrease in U.S. migrant remittances on production, investments, and household income in the village. On the production side (Panel A), the impacts range from a $12 decrease in construction and primary-goods production (fishing, wood-gathering) to a $23 decrease in livestock-sector production and a $42 decrease in agricultural production. There is also a $98 decrease in commerce-sector output, which consists primarily of manufactured goods “imported” into the village from the rest of Mexico. This number represents the effect of a decrease in remittances to village households on the Mexican manufacturing economy. On the investment side, the decrease in U.S. remittances results in a $25.50 decrease in physical capital investments and a $12.90 decrease in investments in secondary and post-secondary schooling.

Panel B of Table 8 shows that a $100 decrease in U.S. migrant remittances results in a decrease of $178 in total village household income. The large drop in village income results from the negative effect that a decrease in remittances has on the production of goods and services in the village -- and hence, on the incomes of households that produce those goods and services. In absolute terms, large landholder households are the biggest losers; their income declines by $80, compared to $54 for smallholder households and $43 for landless households. However, in relative terms, landless households, which have the lowest per-capita incomes in the village, suffer the most from the village’s loss of U.S. migrant income. Column 2 of Panel B shows that a one-percent decrease in U.S. migrant remittances produces a .39 percent decrease in the income of landless households, compared to a .35 percent drop in the incomes of smallholder and largeholder households.

The numbers presented above are from a single village, and additional research on the role of U.S. migrant remittances in the Mexican economy clearly is needed. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that a substantial reduction in Mexico-to-U.S. migration, as envisioned by the drafters of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, would have a disproportionately large, negative impact on production and incomes in the village economy while increasing poverty in the village
Table 8  
Effect of a $100 Decrease in U.S. Migrant Remittances on Total Village Production, Incomes and Investment

Panel A  
Production and Investment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>-$41.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>- 23.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>- 12.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>- 12.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>- 97.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Production</td>
<td>-187.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Panel B  
Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEOLD GROUP</th>
<th>Absolute Change in Household Income</th>
<th>Income Elasticity Remittances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landless</td>
<td>-$43.10</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smallholder</td>
<td>- 54.20</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largeholder</td>
<td>- 80.40</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>-177.70</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adelman, Taylor and Vogel (1988)

The income elasticity of remittances measures the percentage change in household income that results from a 1% change in U.S. migrant remittances.
significantly. Of course, a deterioration of income opportunities in rural Mexico would create new incentives for seeking income opportunities outside the Mexican rural economy. With entry into U.S. labor markets restricted by IRCA, this would imply an increase in migration to Mexico's already crowded urban centers.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Mexico-to-U.S. migration creates a structural link between the California farm economy and the economy of rural Mexico. Because of this immigration link, successful implementation of IRCA goes far beyond simply restricting the flow of undocumented immigrants across the Mexico-to-U.S. border. It implies a major restructuring of these economies and of the mechanisms that have joined them for decades. These considerations make IRCA extremely difficult to enforce. If the enforcement of IRCA is successful in the short run, resulting in farm labor shortages in the United States and negative economic repercussions in rural Mexico, this inevitably will create domestic and international pressures to import labor legally through temporary farmworker programs (for example, the H2-a program) or through the Replenishment Agricultural Worker (RAW) Program created by IRCA. Implicitly, a liberal temporary farmworker or replenishment worker program would represent recognition by U.S. immigration policy of a structural economic interdependence between the California farm economy and the economy of rural Mexico, as well as a legal sanctioning of this interdependence which, for more than two decades, has been manifested in undocumented labor flows across the California-Mexico border.
Endnotes


2. This section draws heavily from Taylor and Espenshade (1987 and 1988) and Espenshade and Taylor (1988); a more detailed analysis of the findings is reported there.

3. The analysis that follows makes two main assumptions: first, that the survey covered a reasonably representative sample of farmworkers who were employed in the peak farm labor season, and second, that the fraction of farmworkers employed at the beginning of the year (in the off farm season) and who left the California farm workforce during the peak farm labor month is small.

4. This calculation is based on employer-reported wages for each member of the California labor force who had at least one farm job in 1985, assuming an average hourly wage of $5 and a 30-hour work week.

5. The exception is vegetable crops. Unlike field fruit and noncitrus tree fruit, field vegetables are harvested during the winter months in the southern farm regions of the state, but the harvests expand northward during the spring and summer months.

6. Unfortunately, no single large data source provides reliable information about the role of remittances from Mexico-to-U.S. migrants in the rural Mexican economy as a whole. Some data on the size of remittances to Mexico by undocumented migrant workers are available from surveys of apprehended migrants in the United States and of return migrants in Mexico. Information on the role of migrant remittances in the economy of rural Mexico is only available from surveys that cover just a few villages at best.

7. For a brief summary of these and other studies see U.S. General Accounting Office (1988).

References


"Legal Status, Job Placement and Earnings in California Farm Labor Markets." Department of Agricultural Economics, University of California, Davis (mimeo.), 1988.


DISCUSSION

BI-NATIONAL ASPECTS OF CALIFORNIA RURAL LABOR

Moderator: Manuel Carlos, UC Santa Barbara

Discussants: Alain de Janvry, UC Berkeley
Eduardo Raya, Colegio de la Frontera Norte
Ventura Gutierrez, United Packing House Workers
Mario Lascano, United Packing House Workers
BI-NATIONAL ASPECTS OF CALIFORNIA RURAL LABOR

Moderator: Manuel Carlos, Department of Anthropology, UC Santa Barbara

Discussants: Alain de Janvry, Dept. of Agricultural & Resource Economics, UC Berkeley
Eduardo Raya, Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Tijuana, Baja California (spanish)
Ventura Gutierrez, United Packing House Workers, Coachella Valley
Mario Lascano, United Packing House Workers, Coachella Valley (spanish)

The following remarks paraphrase the comments of each discussant. Every attempt has been made to remain faithful to their meaning while summarizing, clarifying, and avoiding repetition. Direct quotations are so indicated.

Alain de Janvry

Alain de Janvry commented that labor relations is a conflictive area and it is important to bring together capital and labor to discuss the issues, as occurred in the morning session. He noted that Kearney had an important insight when he said that there is a growing "peripheralization of the core", citing the following similarities between agricultural labor relations in California and Latin America.

1) There is no increase in employment in the modern agricultural sector. The increase in the size of the peasant sector and the informal urban sector in Latin America is a symptom of development failure. The only difference between Mexico and the U.S. in this respect is that the U.S. can export its unemployment problem because it can send farm workers back to Mexico and does not have to provide for the livelihood of workers and their families throughout the year.
2) Surplus labor in rural areas has not decreased.
3) There is an increase in the seasonality of employment in the agricultural sector.
4) The role of farm labor contractors is increasing and in Latin America is completely unregulated.
5) There is an increasing integration and fluidity between agricultural and non-agricultural labor markets
6) There is a decline in the strength of unions
7) There is a marked decline in real wages
8) There is an increasing concentration of land ownership.
9) There is an increasing differentiation of the poor in the countryside, and to find solutions to their poverty we need to understand the causes and dynamics of poverty in a complex and differentiated fashion.

De Janvry commented that the presentations by Kearney and Taylor came to very different conclusions about the effects of migration on peasant communities in Mexico, indicating that our understanding of the problem is limited. Taylor's paper argues that remittances from migrants are very important in maintaining the level of income of peasants in their home communities, both because of direct income transfers and because of the multiplier effects of this additional income circulating in the local economy. His conclusion is that reducing the flow of migrants would have a negative effect in Mexico not only on migrants but on local economies. Kearney and Nagengast take a different stance and talk about de-development and the
fact that migration drains productive resources from and creates dependence in peasant villages. De Janvry questioned why the two papers have such different perspectives. Is it lack of sufficient data, since there have been very few village-level analyses of this type? Or is it that definitions of what is meant by development differ? Economists look at it in terms of flows of funds and anthropologists look at it in terms of dependency, sustainability, the types of communities that are created, the preservation of culture, etc. De Janvry expressed concern that we may be looking at a pattern of development that is not self-sustaining, because, like suburbs, peasant villages in Mexico are service areas, and depend on income being generated elsewhere. In this case, the income is being generated outside national borders and thus outside the control of national policy.

He commented that it is important to analyze migration in terms of the idea of trans-national communities, as Kearney and Nagengast suggest, and look at household strategies, family life-cycles and the importance of informal networks for getting access to jobs. "We also need to look at communities in California in terms of upward and downward job mobility, of patterns of investment in agriculture, of the maturing of migration streams and the settling out of these migration networks. This requires a much more detailed understanding of what is happening in this 'periphery of the core'." As in Latin America, policies and programs of change have to be tailored to specific groups living under specific conditions.

De Janvry concluded by posing the question, is there a possibility of maintaining a creative dialogue in this very conflictive area of farm labor relations in California? "As a project", he said, "we should be looking for areas of net social gain, namely, areas where the size of the pie can be increased, and where there can be mutual gains from what is being analyzed and proposed. When you work in technology, you create net social gains and this is not as conflictive an area. When you work with price policy you also create net social gains, and it isn't as conflictive. When you deal with labor relations, if it is only a redistributive struggle, then you have a problem, which at the limit makes impossible any kind of dialogue on the issue of how the two parties should relate." He suggested that there are two propositions for this project where net social gains could be created and where a basis for dialogue can come about. One is information: we are always better off with better data. Second, we should be looking at experiences where net social gains have come about in the past.

**Eduardo Raya**

Eduardo Raya commented on three aspects of the migratory process of undocumented Mexican workers to the United States. First, he emphasized that an international labor market exists in which demand for labor in the core is matched by a supply of labor from the periphery. This means that public policy geared towards physically stopping migration at the border cannot work. Instead, policies should be instituted in Mexico to change the economic structure of the agricultural sector.

Second, patterns of migration are shaped by the kinship networks that migrant households and communities have and by the costs of reproducing the workforce in each country. The research project he is working on, with a migrant community in Salinas, California, from the state of Jalisco in Mexico, is attempting to 1) quantify the cost differential of reproducing the farm worker household in Mexico and in the U.S., and 2) assess the degree of cohesion that communities and households maintain in the face of geographic mobility.
Third, the type of people who migrate is changing; since the economic crisis in Mexico, more qualified, better educated, and more urban-based migrants have entered the U.S. Now, people with jobs, not just the un- and under-employed, are leaving Mexico. What is going on in Mexico has much more effect on the number of migrants entering the U.S. than the Simpson-Rodino Immigration Law. This has implications for the degree to which migration benefits Mexico, because now more qualified workers are leaving.

Raya concluded by saying that two important changes are important to watch for in the future. The first is the changing profile of the migrant worker. Second is the expanding use of undocumented workers in the United States in new sectors of the economy and in new geographic areas.

Ventura Guttierrez

Ventura Guttierrez began his comments by describing his organization. The United Packing House Workers Union is a member of the National Farm worker Coalition which was established with 15-17 groups last year. It includes groups in California, Arizona, Puerto Rico, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Texas, New Jersey and other states. His organization is encouraged by the discussions generated at this conference and the studies presented on economic and demographic trends and the internationalization of agriculture. “We are especially inspired by the words of Jim Lorenz and Bill Freidland where they bring to our attention the development of a community of information, which has been in the works for a long time. At the same time they caution us to watch out for the fox, which we call the coyote. This community of information, to support the organization of agricultural workers in the provision of solutions to the problems of poor people in general, with a sense of spirituality, needs to be established.”

To deal with the structural changes that are happening in agriculture, Guttierrez suggested that we need to deal not just with farm workers but also other workers, such as packing house workers, many of whom are women and receive wages even lower than farm workers. “We need to study who holds title to and controls agricultural production in this state, and on both sides of the border, in order to filter out, for example, the real family farmers and establish linkages with the new agriculture movement that is developing; so we can deal with the farm labor contractor system head on; and so we can stop viewing unions as an end in themselves. Unions are not working in the best interests of workers when they are dealing only with bread and butter issues, whether they be short-term or long-term. But the most important thing I think we need to study is the migration of political ideas and ideologies by way of the migrant and agricultural workers who enter this country, that no border is going to stop. This is going to play an important role in the future of labor organizing in agriculture. We need to place all this information in context, within what is happening south of the border and in the Pacific Rim, within the 21st century that is already upon us.

“Lastly, we all need to open up the organizing of farm workers and agricultural workers to individuals and groups throughout this country, wherever, that are serious about organizing workers. We need to support the Union Campesina Lazaro Cardenas, Pete Maturino’s group in Salinas, our group in the Coachella Valley, the Citrus Organizing Committee in Yuma, the AFW, the folks in El Paso and Las Cruces, COTA, CATA, FLAC, and others. That’s the only way we’re going to make forward movement, and that’s the only way we will see the day that we establish one organization, one movement and one class of hard-working people that we all represent.
Mario Lascano

Lascano spoke from the perspective of a Mexican migrant farm worker and commented that they come because they have to, to escape hunger and unemployment for an apparently better life. The life they come to is difficult, and people live in apartments crowded with 20 people, or live in the fields and orchards. The only people who work in the fields in California are brown-skinned people, and that says something. He stressed that agricultural workers have the right to work, and the right to work under the same conditions as people here, since they work as much or more as people here. They also have the right to organize to protect their rights.

Lascano argued that farm labor contractors are used by big companies to undermine organizing efforts and to divide farm workers. “We need to be organized in order to get contracts. But we also need to be organized to protect ourselves in other ways. Isn’t there a law that says a grower can get rid of his operation when he wants to and leave us with no work? Our organization is all that we have to help us in this situation. Where can we find education for our children, respect for our women and respect for our culture? What can the world think when the new immigration law denies us the right to live with our families? What kind of response have we seen in this conference to the human drama that exists when our families stay in Mexico and we have to come here. Or we bring them here where we are humiliated and scared that the ‘migra’ will catch us.”

Lascano concluded, “for the Mexican people, the border is an imaginary thing. We are one people, wherever we live.” Unfortunately the U.S. government doesn’t protect migrants, and this is a country of immigrants. The Mexican government also hasn’t done anything to protect its people. We have the right to be seen as human beings.

Manuel Carlos

Carlos talked of the need to incorporate Mexican scholars into this process and open lines of communication so that the narrow national perspective of academics from each country can be overcome.

Questions and comments from the audience (Remarks are paraphrased and summarized. Speakers are identified when possible, otherwise noted “audience.”)

Audience

Does the PRI’s candidate for president in Mexico, Salinas de Gortari, have a proposal to get rid of the ejido system?

Eduardo Raya

He doesn’t plan to get rid of the ejidos, but he has talked about rationalizing their productive system. There will still be emphasis on commercial agriculture and on organizing agricultural workers, and not so much on the peasant sector.

1Ejidos are lands that were redistributed to peasants through Mexico’s land reform.
Mario Lascano

The ejidos are on the worst land in Mexico. Commercial agriculture on good land is controlled by large growers and often with North American capital. It would be worth researching what is going on when asparagus is being grown in the Valle de Mexicali by the same company that used to grow it in the Coachella Valley.

To answer the question, the PRI isn't advocating getting rid of the ejido system, it's the PAN's candidate, Clouthier, that is.

Harland Padfield

(to Ventura Guttierrez) Why didn't you mention the Teamsters in the list of farm-worker organizations that should be supported?

Ventura Guttierrez

The Teamsters have affiliated with the AFL-CIO and are in dialogue with the UFW and it's preferable to hold judgment until the results of the discussions are known. "Our position is that having a union is better than not having one, but better than that is having a democratic union."

Harland Padfield

(To de Janvry) What was the second area in which there was room for net social gains?

Alain de Janvry

"I don't have a recipe for solutions but it is important to analyze the variety of ways that different crops have responded to changing conditions, for example the end of the bracero program, and to see situations in which both labor and capital have gained from these adjustments. In some cases the productivity of labor has increased through mechanization, which could lead to gains for both labor and capital. Mechanization displaces workers and it is important to embed the process of change in a situation in which those who are displaced are compensated or retrained or given other work opportunities. But for crops that are facing severe foreign competition, the loss will be less if there is mechanization (and compensation to the displaced) than if the production of the crop shifts overseas." The Japanese experience, as well as others, shows that capital and labor can come to some agreement whereby any gain to one side doesn't necessarily mean loss to another. In California, labor relations are really archaic, and creative ways to resolve labor relations have not been explored. "As social scientists we should look at the relative success stories, the situations in which adjustment to change has led to gains for both sides."

Audience

There have been criticisms of both the U.S. and Mexican policy-makers because they have failed to resolve the problems of migration and protect and provide for migrant workers. Impacto 88 has brought together Chicano leaders who have met with leaders from Mexican political parties. What input have the panelists' had in Impacto 88?
Eduardo Raya

I don't know much about it but I don't see a favorable political climate for the discussion of these issues.

Ventura Guttierrez

There isn't one grassroots organizer in Impacto 88. There are government people, but what is needed are grassroots leaders. Plus, the people involved in Impacto 88 don't have a very good understanding of Mexican politics, as was shown by their attempts to appear neutral by meeting with all the political parties from the whole political spectrum. They also don't understand the impact of Cesar Chavez's statement of support for the ruling party's candidate. This hurt efforts by Impacto 88 within the political currents in Mexico that are really trying to help farmers and poor people.

Audience

All of us campesinos that come from Mexico hope to be able to vote against a government that keeps us down more and more, and doesn't support us. Why is there money to help campesinos on this side of the border and on the other side there isn't any? We can organize so that we can help each other on both sides of the border, if that's what we want to do.