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BINATIONAL FARMING FAMILIES
OF SOUTHERN APPALACHIA
AND THE MEXICAN BAJIO

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

By

Mary Elizabeth W. Schmid

Lexington, Kentucky

Co-Directors: Dr. Ann Kingsolver, Professor of Anthropology
and Dr. Carmen Martínez Novo, Professor of Anthropology

Lexington, Kentucky

2018

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

BINATIONAL FARMING FAMILIES
OF SOUTHERN APPALACHIA
AND THE MEXICAN BAJIO

Over the last four decades, farming families throughout North America experienced significant transitions due, in part, to the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement. This multi-sited dissertation investigates the ways in which a network of binational (Mexican-American) families organize their small- to mid-scale farming enterprises, engage in global networks as food producers, and contribute to rural economies in the southeastern U.S. and the Mexican Bajío. To mitigate difficult transitions that came with the globalizing of agri-food markets, members of this extended family group created collaborative, kin-based arrangements to produce, distribute, and market fresh-market fruits and vegetables in the foothills of southern Appalachia and basic grains in the foothills of the Mexican Bajío. Members of extended binational families regularly negotiate social, economic, and political borders within and across regions, genders, and generations.

This study shows how these binational kin use cooperative practices to navigate two distinct, yet interrelated, contemporary agricultural political economic environments in North America. The study counter-constructs stereotypes of Latinx and their roles in southeastern U.S. agriculture by focusing on a vertically integrated, kin group of allied, migrant farming families and theorizing them as binational collective strategists. Their stories and strategies provide insight into the importance of temporalities and practices of kin relatedness to agri-food enterprises and suggest possibilities for alternative distributions of surplus value within the globalized agri-food system.

KEYWORDS: food system, kinship, time, migration, rural livelihood

Mary Elizabeth W. Schmid

April 30, 2018

Date

BINATIONAL FARMING FAMILIES
OF SOUTHERN APPALACHIA
AND THE MEXICAN BAJIO

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April 30, 2018

I am dedicating this dissertation to Jesse Langlais, Adeline Langlais, Catherine Schmid, Tom Schmid, and all the families who generously shared their stories, lives, and time with me.

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Binational Farming Families of Southern Appalachia and the Mexican Bajío

Part I. Chapter 1

"Se arregló el problema" (*The problem was solved*), Luz[1] informed me as I started up the engine after the attendant at the Pemex station filled up our gas. We were in her white 1987 Ford pick-up truck, which she called La Paloma (*the dove*). Her husband "la arregló" (*legalized the truck*) for driving in Mexico at the border in Texas before he and his son drove it down to her one December. I was driving because, as Luz explained, she did not know how to drive in reverse and besides, she was viejita (*elderly)* and her eyes weren't great in the rain, or at night. She was excited that I was an experienced rural driver since this meant that she could travel to the pueblo (*market town*), other ranchos *(rural village in west central Mexico),* or to visit her farmland whenever she needed and would not have to wait for a bus or find someone to drive her. We joked that I was her chofera, a word people in that area often only heard in the masculine form as chofer (*driver*).

We traveled down a two-lane highway amongst the irrigated flatlands of milpa-packed ejidos in the foothills of the Mexican Bajío in late June 2012 during their rainy season – the three or so months a year when "cae el agua del cielo" (*the water falls from the heavens or sky*). We saw a rain cloud as it broke open over Michoacán, dropping rain over the purple-ish grey mountain ridgeline. As we rode, we passed greenhouses as long as soccer fields. They were high-tech and, though made of plastic, you could not see inside. These greenhouses were new to this microregion and specialized in growing

[1] All the names (including people and small- to mid-volume enterprises) used in this dissertation are pseudonyms.

tomatoes and vegetables for the export market (Echánove and Steffen 2005). They were located on the highway next to a traffic circle, right before we entered the pueblo. The market town was approximately ten miles from the microregion's agri-industrial center – a city located closer to the lowlands which were full of fields and processing plants for vegetables and fruits.

As we rode, we also passed Pioneer signs advertising the seed variety of the milpa covering the land behind them and large concrete block warehouses with advertising spray painted on the walls for PRI and PAN political campaigns and agricultural companies like AsGrow and SWISSMEX. We were going to the pueblo to look for a butcher at the in-door food market – a butcher who would buy Luz's pig which was fat and ready to be sold at 115 kilos. Once she sold this male pig, she would only have her "señora y señorita" pigs for breeding, she informed me. Coming back to the problem Luz had mentioned as I started the engine for this drive: it could be considered a fertilizer problem or debt cycle problem, depending on how you look at it.

Luz explained that she was not able to get a loan from her acaparadores (*profiteer, and in this microregion grains broker*) the Dominguez – the family name of the company she sold her crop to and claimed as her kin, though distant. She was not able to get a loan because she could not find her property (ejido farmland) title to use as collateral. She thought most people in her rancho sold their white maíz (*corn*) to the Dominguez and that eventually they would sell it too, and it would end up going to the U.S. According to many local agriculturalists, all the quality crops ended up in the U.S. or elsewhere.

White maize was the best grain cash crop to grow in the area in terms of profit, but the most capital intensive as well. Most people in the microregion grew sorghum,

wheat, white maize, alfalfa, and beans – garbanzos mostly. However, over the last few years, many farmers found themselves with good harvests in terms of quality and volume and, yet, continued to lose more money than they could earn with market access limited to extremely low market prices. This is often described as a "cost-price squeeze" and is seen as the ultimate dilemma for most contemporary agri-food producers. During my fieldwork, agricultural community members in Mexico and the U.S. often wondered out loud: who will keep farming if all they end up with is debt?

Luz could not get a loan from other places. You see, she explained, they were not willing to wait until the harvest came. She did not have a steady enough income to comply with their requirements. To resolve the problem, she went to the man in her rancho who sold her fertilizer and explained what was going on. Later, she reasoned that he lent her the fertilizer because he knew her well, and he knew that she always paid her debts. She planned to pay him for the fertilizer in a few cash installments in the near future. She was pleased with this arrangment because she paid according to her timeframe.

She told me she would get the first payment from her son José, who was working as a tomatero (*tomato worker*) in South Carolina at that time. That money would come soon so she could pay down a bit now and more later to spread out the burden. We were supposed to go get the fertilizer the next morning with her husband's brother and a few peones *(workers*). We had to go look for workers that evening, walking door to door around her ranchito.

On our way home, we would ride through the ejido called La Joya (*the gem*) and check on her crop before we went home for la comida (*a mid-day meal*). Her husband's

cousin told her that some fields were already espigando (*flowering, when the silk tassel emerges from the top of the stalk*) in an ejido nearby which meant that she should check on her crop's progress.

After she filled me in on her plan, she began to worry aloud about her prospects of obtaining a tourist visa to come to the U.S. to visit her family. Her husband and the majority of her children were living there – four of them in the Carolina mountains. Even though her husband is a citizen of both Mexico and the U.S., he could not travel to Mexico to see her because he was receiving dialysis. He had dedicated his whole life to working in agriculture – as a grain farmer and cattleman in the Mexican Bajío and as a tomatero in the southeastern U.S. seasonally from March until November.

She had her immigration interview at the U.S. consulate in Juarez scheduled for next month. She explained that her nephew who was a tomato and vegetable ranchero (*farmer*) in the Carolinas and Georgia was vouching for her. Not only was he buying her the plane ticket, but he had enough assets to prove to the U.S. government that he could finance her visit. Additionally, she owned her farmland and was keeping tabs on his. She told the immigration representatives that she had to come back to Mexico and harvest all of that tierra (*farmland*) in November. With this proof of economic stability and enterprise establishment both in Mexico and the U.S., she thought they would "darle licensia" (*have permission*) to cross the border and see her family – possibly her husband for the last time.

Binational Farming Families

This dissertation focuses on the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres[2] binational kin group of farming families of which Luz is a contributing member. In this dissertation, I call them the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia (*family*), since I use pseudonyms throughout to protect interlocutors' identities. The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia are binational as a group because many of their members have a degree of state membership in two nation-states, Mexico and the U.S. In this sense, they are (legally and socially) and act (culturally, political-economically) in two nation-states simultaneously. Members work in agricultural industries in both southern Appalachia and the Mexican Bajío. All of the adults (of the immigrant generation) were born in the same rancho or in a rancho very close by the microregion in southwestern Guanajuato. Many of them own and/or operate agri-food enterprises in the microregions, and some in both.

This kin network is webbed together via compadrazgo (*godparenthood, a form of fictive kinship*) and intermarriage of multiple families – with most members coming from their rancho in Mexico and others coming from the ranchitos nearby. Within the kin-based network, there are nested subgroups of families who collaborate on rural livelihood projects, like agri-food enterprises and ritual gatherings. In the Mexican Bajío (their self-proclaimed kin group origin), they cultivate basic grains such as white maize used to make tortillas and wheat which they now sell through a state brokerage (private-public market) arrangement to Mexican companies like Bimbo and Japanese beer companies

[2] Families from this area usually use two last names. I use three last names to further anonymize this kin group and to point to the fact that this is an extended, kin network as opposed to a closed or discrete group.

like Sapiro. These farming families also raise animals – such as pigs and cattle – for consumption and trade as part of a complementary production system.

In southern Appalachia, Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group members farm and sell fresh-market produce, with tomatoes as their primary cash crop and other complementary warm season vegetables – like peppers and chilies. In each setting, many families within the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres network own and operate agricultural enterprises. Some of them strategically make use of their binationality by acting as workers and/or enterprisers in both regional agricultural political economies. All active members participate in transnational kin circuits whether by traveling, building relations over the internet, or through sharing information.

Being in two places at one time is impossible for an individual; however, through cooperative arrangements, people can own and operate agri-food enterprises in multiple places simultaneously. This is true not only for the geographically dispersed, high-volume transnational corporations like Del Monte, but also for networks of well-organized small- to mid-volume agri-food enterprisers, like members of this binational kin group. Through these rural livelihood activities and kinship practices, members of this binational kin group maintain transregional kinship circuits and contribute to the globalized agri-food system in multiple ways from multiple places in North America.

As workers and owner-operators of agri-food enterprises in two regions in two nation-state territories in North America, members of this kin group have a critical vantage point for understanding globalized agri-food systems. As industry workers who are connected by kin relations, each of them has a particular perspective which sheds light on the influential role that kin relations and social time can, and do, play in

agricultural political economies. Despite the marginalizing policy realms members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group encounter – both in terms of U.S. immigration and agri-food commodity trade in the U.S., Mexico, and between – they draw on their knowledge, resources, and skills (and those of their relatives) to establish agri-food enterprises and create rural livelihoods. This dissertation maps out how members of this kin-based corporate group do this, the internal power dynamics – in terms of gender, generation, nationality and class – and the external power dynamics – in terms of agricultural industry and immigration policy obstacles – and the related socio-cultural struggles they mitigate in each region.

In this dissertation, I attempt to show how diverse dimensions of power relations and their effects (ideology, influence, exchange, practices, limitations, and opportunities/structures) coexist within and between cultural groups to argue that rural kin-based agricultural producers continue to contribute to the global agri-food system despite their disadvantaged political economic positions in this era of neoliberal policy. Much research focuses on how various waves of policy have disadvantaged kin-based farming producers and advantaged highest-volume, vertically-integrated (usually corporate and transnational) farming enterprises.

This project contributes to this conversation by offering analysis of collective farming livelihood strategies through the perspectives of people who keep farming and working in the agricultural food crop industry despite the disadvantaged position that both agricultural and immigration policy have imposed on them. This is why my research constitutes an exploration of the "politics of economic possibility" (Gibson-Graham 2006) in the globalized agri-food system. Allies and cultural group members do this

through creative, alternative practices and livelihood strategies (like farming enterprises) that necessitate collaboration and cooperative relations.

This study shows how power relations shift and transnational “class process” (Resnick and Wolff 1987) occurs within a binational kin group and agri-food systems. The “up, down, and sideways” (Stryker and González 2014) methodology allows for an analysis of this mobile group that takes multiple places, times, and scales into account to show how class process happens. By acting as a mobile researcher, I was able to trace how, when, and for whom economic identities and practices change and the strategies agri-food system contributors use to make this possible. This approach reveals the oversimplification of binary stereotypes that plague agri-food system analysis – class binaries like that of farmer v. farm worker and the gendered and racialized assumptions that these cultural categories carry.

It also reframes questions concerning equity and the agri-food system in that it does not take agri-food system class categories for granted and instead, points to the strategies of agri-food system contributors who occupy these categories and the ways in which they are positioned within a globalized, exploitative agri-food system. Tracing the changing relations and practices of this binational kin group, shows how women and men (together and separately) negotiate multiple temporalities embedded in agri-food systems (Tsing 2015) in the U.S. and Mexico and collectively mitigate individualized barriers that accompany inequitable access to legal status (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017) to create sustainable rural livelihood opportutnities.

This is not to say that these groups are necessarily models of the egalitarian ideal of social organization that should or could be exactly replicated. I am instead arguing that

there are collective, rural livelihood alternatives that are less noticed and studied, and that these alternatives can inform a politics of economic possibilities in the agri-food system realm. Perhaps, the reason for this is because this project and the theory that it builds on aim to make sense of relations beyond capitalism to recognize the varied and complex interactive power dynamics at play in actor-subjects' varied lives of political economic becoming (Connolly 1995; Gibson-Graham 2006). A combined focus on temporalities and kin relations aids in this goal.

This dissertation suggests that a temporal lens helps us understand class process and the role of social organization of kin-based agri-food enterprises in globalized agri-food systems because it reveals how women and men use kin relations to negotiate agricultural political economies in a binational context. I argue that scholars need to re-examine the significance of kinship – as a form of relatedness which influences perspectives, forges bonds, and organizes transactions and work – in modern political economies (McKinnon and Cannell 2013) and re-conceptualize the role of farming families in shaping global agri-food circulations.

This study contributes to scholarly debate in the following ways. First, it contributes to the study of kinship's relation to modern political economies through a discussion of a network of allied, geographically dispersed, family-based farming enterprises, and the ways in which they use kin-work relations and time strategically in, and across, each political economic context. In turn, this dissertation contributes to the globalized agri-food system literature with a case which highlights the cooperative strategies of a kin-based group of enterprises in a binational context. In particular, I contribute to this conversation by analyzing gendering practices embedded in kin

relations and the ways in which kin members navigate the temporal logics of agricultural industries in a binational context. Thirdly, I contribute to the anthropology of time through my focus on the political economics of time. Overall, the focus on a binational farming family as a group of strategists engaging in globalized agricultural industries allows for the re-imagining of Latinx[3] in – and their contributions to – the rural southeastern U.S.

Drawing on Ortner's (1984) and Bourdieu's (1972) theory of practice, this study shows how practices are gendered through kin relations, shift over generations, and influence power dynamics differently in different political economic contexts among diverse groups. This research explores temporalities and kin relations within one binational network engaging in multiple political economies to make sense of transnational activities and cooperative practices that allow for collective strategy and rural livelihoods. Time – as a social construct which highly influences livelihoods – is often taken for granted. Through a lens that brings together temporalities and kin relations, this study explores the rural livelihoods of members of a binational kin group of farm commodity producers within two regions and cash crops highly influenced by the current NAFTA-TLCAN context. This gives them important insights into the changes that came about due to NAFTA-TLCAN and the globalizing of food economies, policy, and circulations. The perspectives and life theories of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia – a mobile-minded binational kin group – inform this study and welcome readers into seeing the world from multiple vantage points in an attempt to communicate what life is

[3] I use this term to indicate that I am referring to both men and women, which is often glossed with the usage of Latinos when referring to people who are women and men. Following activists in southern Appalachia, I use the term "Latinx" instead of Latin@ or Latino/a.

like for differentially situated members of a kin group whose members live and farm in southern Appalachia (and the southeastern U.S.) and the Mexican Bajío in the NAFTA-TLCAN era.

Contemporary scholars analyzing global socio-economic development tell a now familiar story in the context of neoliberal policy and the globalized "market economy." The common story is that families in rural places emigrate to find wage work and retain their farmland as a form of insurance, knowing that the wage jobs they seek in urban areas may not provide a sustainable livelihood. The Guzmán- Ortega-Torres binational kin group offer an alternative case: one which illustrates how kin groups collectively leverage resources to continuously farm in their place of origin and in their new place of settlement – with both conceived simultaneously as "home" in different ways. They maintain transnational circuits to overcome the collective action dilemma in time – over space – through cooperative practices. As a rural-rural migration story of farming families, the dissertation contributes an analysis of time politics and binational kin relations to global food commodity chain studies (Fischer and Benson 2006; Freidberg 2004; Barndt 2002; Miller 1997; Mintz 1986).

The macro relationship between the people and the states of the U.S. and Mexico has been historically defined, in part, by circular and chain migration between the two nation-states. In recognition of the fact that social reproduction of agricultural workers in California largely took place in Mexico, Juan Vicente Palerm and José Ignacio Urquiola argued that there was a binational agricultural production system in and between California and the Mexican Bajío (1989). This is a point that should not be taken lightly and which many anthropologists are recognizing in contemporary studies of the link

between global inequalities and the spatial separation of social reproduction and capital accumulation sites (Miraftab 2016).

This ethnography builds from studies of binationality. Scholars in South America like Gioconda Herrera, María Cristina Carrillo and Alicia Torres have brought attention to the importance of the state in sanctioning binationality and the differences that binational families experience (Herrera et al. 2008). This research shows how the state interacts with family life and mobility, and how families mitigate that interference. Binationality (or being of two nations in terms of state-sanctioned status) is an important distinction to recognize especially in terms of mobile people and their relation to state power. Binational analysis is also achieved through sharing and comparing perspectives from people in, and of, two nation-states like the U.S. and Mexico (Klahn et al. 2000; Kingsolver 2001).

Within a binational context, this dissertation takes on a regional studies lens when trying to make sense of how people are placed (and place themselves) in a global context (Kingsolver 2018). Appalachia is imagined as an exceptional region in the U.S. (Batteau 1990) which results in acceptance of uneven development and environmental destruction. A regional lens – as is used by many Appalachian studies scholars (Anglin 2002; Kingsolver 2015) – allows for a multi-scalar analysis of trans-state commerce and a more comprehensive understanding of agri-food systems. It is important for this study, which highlights how people with binational status innovate across time and space through varied political economic identities and practices. Challenging the spatial fixity that often accompanies the notion of "culture" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997), it avoids the nation-state territory container frame (Basch et al. 1993) and furthers the analysis of the

similarities and differences that people in regions' experience as part of transnational processes (Kingsolver and Balasundaram 2018). For these reasons, a regions approach allows for the recognition of alternatives to the seemingly hegemonic capitalist logic that can dominate studies of globalization processes and development. This dissertation makes use of this regional (and microregional) approach in chapter three, which interweaves farming families' histories and regional histories of the Mexican Bajío and southern Appalachia. Then, Part II investigates a seasonal tomato circuit as a regional phenomenon, and Part III considers how producers of specific food crops in particular regions are situated within MX-U.S. trade policy.

Counter-constructing: Whose Voices and Why

In this dissertation, I theorize members of this Mexican-American kin group as complex thinkers and agri-food enterprisers to challenge the oversimplified racialized image of Latinx in the southeastern U.S. as farmworkers and dislodge the assumption that all U.S. farmers are self-sufficient, middle-aged Euro-American males. The dissertation counter-constructs the popular narrative of "farmworkers" which is mistakenly mapped onto persons with diverse political economic identities. Over the last forty years throughout the contemporary southeastern U.S., the category of "farmworker" has become a kind of gendered, "racialized code word" (Torres et al. 1999:10) for Latino and is also often conflated with the national identity of Mexican. The indiscriminate use of this category has obscured the fact that Mexicans and Mexican Americans have a wide-range of livelihood skills and knowledge. With these skill and knowledge, Mexicans and Mexican Americans gained careers in various industries and in an array of livelihoods

through which they contribute to many industries and, importantly, the North American agri-food system in multiple ways.

Perhaps the most important point of this project is that people who live in multiple places (especially multiple nation-states) can call upon multiple points of reference for making sense of globalized political economic contexts, and thus, their perspectives are informed by place-making activities in more than one culture. They navigate more than one political economy. This makes them uniquely positioned to compare and contrast cultural contexts with a kind of "bifocal vision" – or a perspective that deals with two frames of reference at once – which researchers should also attempt to access through a social fields approach that de-centralizes the nation frame (Glick Schiller et al. 1993). I agree that it is important to take a global perspective and discuss transnational activities, so as to avoid the re-inscription of methodological nationalism and the ways in which it frames theoretical debates (Glick Schiller 2009) about "mobile selves" who are subject-actors engaged in transnational class process (Berg 2015) and practice circular migration (Gidwani and Sivaramkrishnan 2003) between nation-states and cultures (Gupta and Ferguson 1992) with particular histories and practices of racialization (Banton 2005; Sider 2006).

In the past, scholars argued that social class groups were produced within nation-states – groups like the "English working class" (Thompson 1963). More recently, transnational migration scholars turned to the concept of simultaneity (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Çağlar 2016) to theorize mobile persons' social presence in a place while their material influence and social presence are still felt elsewhere. This dissertation contributes to this angle of analysis by offering im/mobility stories that provide a

foundation for delving into the possibilities and limitations of "simultaneity" as an individual and as part of an allied group.

This kind of complex perspective relates to W.E.B. Du Bois' insight that African Americans cultivated a kind of "double consciousness" which is "the sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" (in this case Euro-Americans in the U.S.) and feeling a kind of "two-ness" – meaning that he both belonged as a U.S. intellectual and yet was ascribed (or symbolically marked) as an "other" through racialization (1961). He belonged and yet, simultaneously, did not belong. Likewise, anthropologists like Patricia Zavella theorize the comparison that Mexicans make with the U.S. (whether in the U.S. or in Mexico) as a kind of "peripheral vision" which always compares "here" to "there" even if "there" is mostly imagined (2002:238). There may be no better context and no better interlocutors to inform a study of the interface of kin relations, social time, and political economic im/mobilities than a group of enterprisers like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group who are contributing to the globalized agri-food system in varied ways in a binational context from both Mexico and the U.S.

In this dissertation, I share how members of this group conceptualize and draw on binational kin relations to organize agri-food enterprises and navigate time as a creative group of complex thinkers. The study is based out of southern Appalachia and highlights the perspectives of women in this kin group. Their perspectives and lives support a re-imagining of women in globalized agri-food systems (Sachs 2010) and reveal the importance of their work to farming families and rural communities as a whole. Community members conceptualize their work as "women's work" and scholars recognize that these contributions have long been underemphasized due in part to an

erroneous masculinization of rural work (Campbell et al. 2006). A social time lens reveals how collective enterprise strategies, livelihoods and agricultural industry shape and are shaped by gendering practices, collective identities and social institutions, such as nationality and kinship.

My purpose here is to tell a story that is a counter narrative to many portrayals of Latinx participants in the North American food system. This study challenges stereotypes which racialize and oversimplify working people and the worlds they navigate. Power disparities exist within the kin group and the farming enterprises. Particular families within – and members of – the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group engage in a less visible class struggle and identify as part of the emerging agrarian middle class in the U.S. and Mexico, while others see themselves as working class in the U.S. and middle class in Mexico.

Social categories like “low-income” and “unskilled” tend to obscure class mobility and subject-actors’ diverse and signficant contributions to humanity. Academic books challenge the claim that Mexican immigrants come to the U.S. as “unskilled workers” arguing that their skills are being used but that they are not being remunerated or recognized for them (Hagan et al. 2015). Newspaper articles have told the stories of how Mexican-American men (framed as individuals) act as agricultural entrepreneurs in California who move “From the Field to the Farm Office” (Vega 2014). This dissertation aims to the reconfigure the “immigrant entrepreneur” (Portes 1995) narrative that prioritizes macro-economic considerations, resulting in a “one-dimensional [economic, individual] man” theory (Marcuse 1964) that legitimizes a western market economy perspective (Escobar 1995). To do this, I offer ethnographic details of how people as

groups related via kin bonds act cooperatively within capitalist contexts. To avoid glossing over power differentials within and outside the binational kin group, I discuss how differentially positioned members of a binational kin group create, organize, and manage agri-food enterprises, time, exchange relations, and livelihoods in the southern Appalachia and the Mexican Bajío across gender, class, generational, national and state borders.

In the southwestern U.S. (a different context than southern Appalachia), there is ample literature representing Latinx as "emerging from the long shadow of farm labor"– as if "farmworker origins" socially marked generations to come (Wells 2013). The long-term violence of marginalization is an important topic of research. I contribute to this conversation of gendered agricultural work by sharing a set of im/mobility stories and realities that illustrate the challenges of (and strategies for) political economic mobility within the farm work context (DuBry 2007) of a heterogenous cultural group – a group whose members experience class process differently depending, in part, on their socio-economic and state authorization status.

In light of the aforementioned stereotypes and the pro-immigrant public discourse which argues for the presence of Latino immigrants so that their farm labor can be exploited in the present inequitable agri-food system, I consider this dissertation as "an activist form of academic storytelling" (Kingsolver 2001:4). Storytelling is a symbolic act – a political act of meaning making. It is a form of theorizing. This is because the "concepts which govern our thoughts... also govern our everyday functioning… Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people" (Lakoff and Johnson 1980:124). These concepts, while symbolic, have

real material consequences and are foundational to culture – that which makes us human. Through thick descriptions, interpretive anthropology investigates and suggests cultural meanings in contexts that people give meaning to (and asses meanings of) in our attempt to make sense of social worlds and human behavior (Geertz 1973).

Hannah Arendt viewed storytelling dialectically, as “a mode of purposeful action (praxis) that simultaneously discloses our subjective uniqueness and our intersubjective connectedness to others, as well as the environmental [such as cultural] forces to which we are all subject” (Jackson 2013:13). Stereotypes that frame public discourse are examples of sources of symbolic violence that can impede political economic mobility, equity, and justice. Paying attention to the creative and complex strategies that members of this binational group create and use is critical to understanding their theorizations of and contributions to the agri-food system. A study that includes their political economic im/mobility stories and their comingling capitalist and alternative transactions – capitalist, non-capitalist, and all practices and relations in-between – enables us to imagine possibilities for a more equitable agri-food system (Gibson-Graham 2006).

As “flexible producers” (Rothstein 2007), some binational kin group members are positioned in such a way that they are translocal contributors to agri-food systems in North American (Núñez-Madrazo 2007). They are politically and economically positioned to be able to exploit people in one place (as owner-operators) while they themselves are exploited in another (as workers) – as María de Lourdes Salazar Martínez found with tobacco farming families who work via H-2A visas in Kentucky and own farms in Nayarit (2013). Some have become owner-operators in multiple locations. As part of farming families, many find that they must practice self-exploitation as well. To

account for these complexities, this dissertation considers class as a process (Resnick and Wolff 1987; Gibson-Graham, Resnick and Wolff 2001) – in particular political economic contexts for particularly positioned persons. For this reason, I investigate the questions: who gets to be a capitalist and what roles do kin relations and the state play in determining this?

Class is understood here as a particular social process, not as essentialist or as a fixed identity. Class process theory looks at "the relationships between class and nonclass aspects of society" and views "all aspects of society … as distinct processes such that each is overdetermined by all the others" (Resnick and Wolff 1987:109). Class relations concern a mixture of dominance and resistance. In other words, class – like race and ethnicity – is "always actively constructed" and is "one of the significant social positions that intersects with race and ethnicity" (Torres et al. 1999:13). Members of these families are discriminated against in the U.S. in varied contexts for varied reasons. One of the main reasons they give is due to their race which is understood here as a social construct used "to identify population groups whose distinguishing characteristics are political and cultural, even if membership in them is signaled by physical features" (Banton 2005).

So, instead of framing this study as a case study of "ethnic family farms" (Salamon 1992) or "ethnic capitalism" (Verver and Dahles 2013) or "ethnic farming knowledge" (Wells 1991), this dissertation purposefully investigates the collective strategies for accessing political economic power and the coexisting layers or "intersections" (Crenshaw 1991) or "axes" (Collins 1992) of discrimination which particular persons face in their everyday lives. Through the lens of their stories and

conceptualizations, I counter a homogenized representation, or a racial or ethnic group[4] definition of persons.

While families may share an ethnicity, they have diverse work identities and lives and the relationship between their ethnicity and kinship-related economic behavior should not be oversimplified, nor represented as one-dimensional (di Leonardo 1984). Thus, I am not suggesting that ethnicity is the most important defining factor of a person's identity nor that all immigrant families exhibit harmonious economic behaviors that function to inevitably bolster internal, harmonious solidarity (Nader 1990) and entrepreneurial self-employment (Portes 1995). Rather, I hold that regional political economies – and persons' access to rights within them – is more of a factor in accessing capital and the other resources needed to work sustainably as owner-operators (di Leonardo 1984).

To account for these complexities, this dissertation considers class process in particular political economic contexts for particularly positioned persons. The binational kin group is composed of members who construct multiple political economic identities and enact multiple class positions within the globalizing agri-food system from two socio-culturally, politically, economically, ecologically, and historically distinct regions in North America. Together they compose a knowledge-creating network and a group engaged in transnational class process. Due to this, any singular literature is insufficient

[4] This is important to note. This study does not use a scientific racist framing which compares one racialized group (as if homogenized due to ethnic or racial categorization) instead another. For instance, this study does not look at "Anglo" v. "Latino" strategies which would support a dehumanizing framing that prioritizes racialized social constructs.

to understand the conceptualizations and strategies of members of this heterogeneous binational kin-based group of agricultural enterprisers.

Ranchera Familia: "Debes vivir no donde haces, sino donde lo pases." (*You should live not where you do but where you can make it*.)

Falling victim to the international farm crisis in the 1970's, farming families throughout the U.S. were demoralized as they watched their farming enterprises go bankrupt and suffered from dispossession of their livelihoods (Barlett 1987, 1989, 1993) and, potentially, their next generation's future farming livelihoods (Dudley 2000; Kingsolver 2011). This decade ushered in neoliberal polices in the U.S., which began a restructuring process now evident due to a four-decades-long decline in the number of operating family farms (Chibnik 1987; Boyd and Watts 1997). The U.S. farming population has not been as low since the 1850's (USDA 2012).

However, in recent years, the number of Latinx owner-operators has grown, with growth concentrated in western and southern states (USDA 2012) as more Latin Americans move to rural places in the U.S. to work and raise their families (Salamon 2003; Du Bry 2007; Zúñiga and Hernández-León 2005, 2011; Marrow 2011; Allegro and Wood 2013). Even "The Old Farmer's 2018 Almanac" features "ethnic diversity" in their article entitled "The Future of Farming" (Kusterbeck 2018). With only two percent of the U.S. population working in farming (USDA 2012), and the U.S. shift away from an agrarian philosophy (Adams 1987), this increase in (so-called) "immigrant farmers" (Lewis 2007) and "immigrant farm owners" (Oates 2017) is a significant phenomenon

and noteworthy when thinking about potential national food security strategies. This phenomenon merits investigation.

From 2000 until 2010, the number of Latinx in the U.S. Southeast grew by 2.3 million or nearly 70% – a demographic change experienced by many as quick and stunning. The southeastern U.S. continues to globalize (Peacock et al. 2005) through the migration and settlement of families (Smith and Winders 2007) and the opening (and closing) of globalized industrial work places, especially poultry (Engstrom 2001; Striffler 2002; Mohl 2005; Ansley 2012; Stuesse 2016). Playing a part in a globally connected political economy, the Appalachian region is (and has been) globalized by various forces and groups, such as the tobacco industry (Kingsolver 2011). In fact, the region continues to globalize with a tripling of the Latin American population since 1980 (Pollard 2003; Barcus 2007) – even creating what some have called a transnational Appalachia (Margolies 2012) and thus, changing how people imagine the region and the alternative economic development possibilities it holds. Latinx Applachians are, now, not so uncommon.

Latinx are creatively engaging in agricultural industries in the U.S. In particular, they are critical contributors to the fresh-market fruit and vegetable (FFV) industry in the southeastern U.S. The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group illustrates this phenomenon working as allied small- to mid-level conventional fresh fruit and vegetable agri-food enterprisers. As kin-based enterprises, these families – like others – adapted to the restructuring of the produce industry through highly coordinated vertical integration strategies by becoming packinghouse owners and operators as well as produce growers (Epperson and Estes 1999). They are experimenting with vertical integration and other

collectivizing arrangements to maintain and grow their enterprises from one season to the next.

The fresh fruit and vegetable industry in the U.S. – and increasingly for export abroad – is competitive and risky (Cook 1990), with high rates of bankruptcy and consolidation. This has resulted in the domination of market share by high-volume companies often owned (at least in part) by transnational corporate entities. Despite this marginalizing farm policy context for small- to mid-volume food commodity producers, these first-generation immigrant-led farming families established farming enterprise that create jobs in rural places. They have strategically established farms primarily in southern Appalachia in the North Carolina and South Carolina foothills – an area on a regional, seasonal tomato industry circuit in the southeastern U.S. I will discuss this seasonal, regional industry circuit further in chapter four.

The "pioneers" of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia first arrived on the tomato industry scene in Immokalee, Florida in the early 1980's. As children of agricultores (*agriculturalists*) in Mexico, they grew up assisting their parents with "campesino" tasks – if they were privileged enough to be landowners. The now Mexican-American women say they were raised in west central Mexico to become "amas de casa" (*housewives*), whose tasks included quehaceres (*chores like, cooking and cleaning*) and raising children as well as managing the household resources and creating more recourses through (petty) rural agri-food enterprises, such as breeding animals. These enterprises were often organized around traspatio (*adjoined patio*) pig production.

Most of the fathers of the now Mexican-American immigrants raised cattle and tended to their kin's farmland – their ejido parcel – amongst other jobs as youth. As the

first and sometimes second generation to inherit the ejido parcel(s), the men usually inherited a percentage of their father's land, split evenly amongst the males – a practice called partible inheritance. Only a generation later were women seen as legitimate inheritors with equal right to claim inheritance. However, this land did (and does) not solve their need for sustainable rural livelihoods for themselves nor for their kin.

One of these women was Yanely who – in her mid sixties – lived in her hometown rancho and had nine siblings, six children, and ten grandchildren when I met her. She was a sturdy woman, about five feet tall with golden brown skin and short, dyed red/brown hair which was growing out as grey from the roots. But, she always wore dresses or skirts, usually a mandil (*apron*), and simple slip-on shoes. She only wore pants over her dresses, while working with her pigs. She told me once that God had a plan for her to be a woman who worked in the siembra (*planting*) and bred pigs. She told me that she put her money into her land and her animals instead of a bank account. When family members came to visit at Christmas, during the fiesta time, they all came to her house even though it was not the largest nor the most luxurious of houses – of which there were a few in their migrant town and binational kin group.

Yanely remembered "el otro día" (*the other day or* días de antes, *times before*) as duro (*tough)* but happy. She recounted bonita (*nice, pretty*) memories of her youth, funny stories and adivinanzas (*riddles*) she memorized as a child. When we spoke, she lived with her son and his family in the Carolina mountains where he and his wife grow tomatoes and peppers on less than 10 acres of land. Her parents, she told me, were agri-food comerciantes (*business people*) in their rancho in Mexico when life was different before the U.S. flooded all their markets with subsidized agri-food commodities. When

they needed the money, she and her siblings worked in the nearby industrial marigold fields and every week her family sold meat.

Her grandfather was known as a quality butcher in her rancho. Her papá (*father*) raised cattle and also worked as a butcher. He had a table in the middle of the rancho where her family sold cuts of meat on Saturdays and Sundays. Their wooden table was under the tree which still stands there today, below the gazebo with the rooster ornament. To display their meat, they hung it on the limbs of the largest tree in the cement plazuela (*small town square*). Her uncle sold meat too, she told me, but everyone would go to her papá's table because her mamá (*mother*) knew how to treat the customers.

This collaboration was a family-based livelihood project, which revolved around a rhythm of enterprise activities, delegated tasks, and gendering practices. On Wednesdays, her father and a few of her siblings would kill a pig. On Thursdays, she, her sisters, and her mamá would cook and sell carnitas (*shredded roasted pork*). Then, they sold chicharron (*fried pork belly or rinds*) on Friday in the streets. They cut the res (*beef*) up on Fridays and then sold the good cuts (that people would presumably buy for a sustainable, locally negotiated price) at the market Saturday and Sunday. Then on Monday, with what was left, they would go early to try and sell it in the street door to door, or they would process it by drying it with salt. She laughed that they may not have had a lot of money, but they ate lots of salted meat! She joked, "Y, ahora comemos mucho tomate!" (*And now we eat a lot of tomatoes!)*

The income they could generate from these collective agricultural enterprises was not enough to sustain social reproduction, nor was it reliable. Their state of Guanajuato is located in west central Mexico and thought of as a "traditional sending" region where

people have practiced circular, chain migration (Durand 1987; Arias 2004) and partible inheritance of farmland over the last century. Some of the fathers of the now Mexican Americans signed up to work as braceros (*men who work with their hands*), in the 1950's and 1960's in a bilaterally sanctioned agricultural "guest worker" visa agreement between the U.S. and Mexico known as the Bracero program. They went to places like Texas and California to work in various crops and came back home to the rancho seasonally to harvest and invest in their own crop land, focusing on white maize (to eat and sell), wheat (to sell), sorghum, and often alfalfa (to sell and/or feed their animals). Many women worked in the fields as well, but never traveled to the U.S. to work in agriculture on the visa program since it was restricted to males. Some men today continue to participate in a similar program known as the H-2A "guest worker" visa program (Griffith 2000, 2006, 2009; Smith-Nonini 2002, 2005, 2009, 2013; Benson 2008, 2010, 2012).

Throughout the 1980's – also known as Mexico's "lost decade" due to an oil crisis and the linked devastating devaluation of the peso – families faced widespread despair and crisis at a community level in their ranchos in a then globally, economically integrating rural Mexico. López Portillo – who was president of Mexico from 1976 to 1982 – began the "liberalization" era of Mexican policy by ending the land (re)distribution program that generations before lost their lives in the Mexican Revolution. These policies benefited latifundistas (*large land owners*) as opposed to smaller (often collective) landowners, known as ejidatarios. The policies included the now infamous Law for Agricultural and Livestock Production which eliminated restrictions on the amount of productive farmland an individual could legally own. The

Salinas administration took over later in 1988 and cut even more social and smallholder agricultural programs – laying the foundation for NAFTA and an increase in export agriculture at the expense of the livelihoods of Mexican basic grain farmers and rural communities.

While many of the men in the village began to migrate to more distant workplaces, mothers began migrating on short-term trips to make an income as well. Many of them would travel to Mexico City, which is about a day's journey from the rancho on the bus. Some mothers in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family went to urban centers to sell door to door, temporarily leaving their children with loved ones in the rancho. Extended kin helped raise children and take care of elders when relatives had to migrate to find cash-earning work. Many tias (*aunts*) – like a few in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family – acted as "community mothers" (Collins 1992), taking care of their children as well as nieces, nephews, and other relatives whose parents were living elsewhere trying to make a living. In the 1990's, larger groups of young women and men began to migrate to the U.S. in small multigenerational groups for long-term (possibly indefinite) trips.

Most of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia came first to Florida to work harvesting a variety of crops – different crops during different seasons. Most of the migrant farm working men in the kin group received permanent residency with the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986. This process made the kin group binational or comprised of members with a range of both Mexican and U.S. legal statuses. Many of these migrant farm working husbands filed paperwork for their wives' U.S. authorization in the mid to late 1980's. Since then, more and more family

members – women, men, and children – have come to the U.S. with authorization through tourist visas to visit relatives, as H-2A workers, or as Lawful Permanent Residents. Others have come without state authorization. This diverse im/mobility process is further discussed in chapter six.

The older generation of this three-generation kin group remembers working in citrus in south Florida when they first arrived. Rosalia remembers working "en naranjas" (*in oranges*) with her four brothers. They all decided – because of her stature and the physicality of the job – that she would be responsible for gathering the oranges they knocked off the limbs while on ladders above her. At the end of the day, they would split the wages equally. When they got home, she cooked dinner and packed lunches for all of them since her job on the worksite was not as difficult as her brothers' jobs of climbing, picking, and hauling. In their view, it was a cooperative, equitable arrangement they developed to mitigate their collective work situation. She was proud of her work – her contribution to the family livelihood.

This kin group consists of three generations, or Mexican "grandfamily" (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987). Each generation creates cultural sets of knowledge and skills (or mētis) which they use to navigate the political economies they find themselves in. Mētis is "situated," or specific to how a person is positioned in terms of power relations (Haraway 1988). This is evident in the (seemingly ironic) case of the recent generations of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia who are mobile-minded and, yet, act as agricultural enterprise owner-operators. As they say in their rancho, "Tiene que irse para sembrar" *(You have to leave to be able to plant).*

By the late 1980's and early 1990's, the majority of the extended kin group was specializing in tomatoes in the southeastern U.S. Most of the men in the extended kin group – who were mostly residing in the U.S. – began to work year-round "in tomatoes" and migrated from field to field, state to state to harvest throughout the southeastern U.S. Some of these constellations of tomato farms were organized and operated by the same corporate-volume tomato company while others were created by labor contractors' industry networks which linked harvesters to smaller fields of crops and growers to pickers in a timely order. The labor migration routes follow a tight schedule so that harvesters can continue to harvest and make money over the course of months and so that the crop in each field is harvested at the right point in maturation to allow for the maximum amount of time to sell and deliver the perishable good. Since tomato fields can be harvested up to three times during harvesting "windows," this makes for a complex production program to coordinate.

There are various constellations of tomato farms that could be linked in one seasonal industry tomato circuit. The circuit that the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group engages in – and helped create – connects microregions of southern Florida with central Florida, southern Georgia, and the Carolina mountains (upstate South Carolina and southwestern North Carolina). The microregions are complementary because of the way their harvest seasons fit together like a puzzle to create an almost year-round work schedule.

The seasonal regional tomato industry circuit traces the following concomitant schedule and route. Tomato harvest seasons of southern and central Florida combine to cover the months of November through to the end of April. Then workers – and often

machinery and managers (and sometimes even owners and farmers) – travel up to southern Georgia for a month or two. Most of them move around the microregion for a short "window of opportunity" and some even travel to the coast to access more "peak harvesting" times. Then by late June or early July, they move up to the Carolina Hill Country for the remainder of the year until late November or earlier, depending on the weather. This seasonal circuit is further discussed in chapter four. If they have "papers" (or U.S. migration authorization), then many of them will travel to southern Guanajuato to spend the December holiday season in their rancho. Those who "van y vienen" (*come and go*) are seen as the privileged ones – the members of the group who have access to the most freedom and opportunities due to their binational status. This inequality of political economic im/mobilities within the kin group is further discussed in chapter six.

By the late 1990's and 2000's, many families within the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group decided to move to southern Appalachia to build a "home-base" (Griffith 2000) where many would live year-round and some would begin to farm tomatoes as allied subgroups, or mini-coalitions. Since their kin-based work network was geographically dispersed, they realized they could grow vegetables in southern Appalachia during Florida's "off season" with the aid of Florida-based, mobile harvesting crews (Griffith and Kissam 1995). Then they could market and ship their Carolina-grown tomatoes to south Florida counter-seasonally, and access a better market price. Even though large-volume tomato corporations were still harvesting (albeit in states other than Florida), these Mexican-American farming families found alternative markets so as to avoid competing with the largest volume companies.

The principal tomato and vegetable farming microregion for the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres is the Carolina Hill Country – with fields in southwestern North Carolina and northwestern South Carolina. Members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group made connections in the tomato industry and worked as a group to harness resources and establish farming enterprises in the microregion. Slowly but surely, various allied families in the group began to grow and sell tomatoes and peppers for their own enterprises instead of working for Euro-American farmers. Today, kin group members work at a variety of jobs within the fresh-market tomato and vegetable industry in southern Appalachia as harvesters, grader-packers, crew leaders, brokers, marketers, bookkeepers, truckers, and farmers. Some act as industry leaders, and all of them contribute to their collective (kin-based) rural livelihood projects.

Study Design

I use an interpretive and political economic approach (cf: di Leonardo 1991; Nash 1992, 2001; Hellman 1994; Vila 2000; Kingsolver 2001; Farmer 2006; Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007) to investigate how binational kin-based enterprising groups navigate two agricultural political economic contexts simultaneously – contexts embedded in particular and varied forms of global capitalism (Gibson-Graham 1996; Miller 1997). Following interpretivists like Geertz (1973), I emphasize cultural meanings and narratives. Through cultural meanings and narratives, I look at how these working family members theorize their lives, define themselves, and make sense of their globalized circumstances and related changing political economic contexts (Kingsolver 2011). Through this narrative approach, the project investigates how women and men in this kin-

based corporate group conceptualize and draw on kin relations to negotiate political economic contexts and create collective livelihood strategies when organizing and operating agri-food enterprises in a binational context.

To address this, this dissertation research explored various sub-questions. These questions concerned how members of this kin-based group construct their temporal orderings and cooperative practices when enacting their mutually dependent and often mobile rural livelihoods. I considered how various memebers work collectively to navigate their binational context and how they reconfigured forms of relatedness from the Bajío in southern Appalachia. I also paid attention to the temporal logics they worked within for their agricultural livelihoods and how kin relations articulated with these temporal cycles and logics in the globalized agri-food system context. I found that particular temporalities and work rhythms resulted from this for particular members.

Many multi-sited studies that employ a production-distribution-consumption frame do not take kin relations or social time into account and instead take perishable agri-food commodities – as an object to follow – as their starting point (Friedland et al., 1981; Friedland 1984; Jackson et al. 2004). These food commodities include the "corporate tomato" which Deborah Barndt followed up the west coast of North America from production sites in Mexico to processing sites in the U.S. to consumption sites in Canada (2002). Susanne Freidberg followed "global green beans" from production sites in Zambia and Burkina Faso to marketplaces in their neocolonial counterparts such as France and the United Kingdom, where they were scrutinized in different food cultures for various reasons such as food safety "scares" (Freidberg 2004). The linked social

relations that make this value transformation possible are theorized as “social paths” (Friedland et al. 1981; Friedberg 2004).

These studies offer analyses of the relations of sites in the “global supply chain” and the social relations that link them. However, much of this academic literature featuring case studies in the Americas focuses on space and the implications of “capital mobility” (Bonanno and Cavalcanti 2011) and overlook the numerous temporalities and temporal logics involved in producing the global agri-food system. Transnational methods and analysis provide an opportunity to examine the intersections of agriculture, timings, trade, kin relations, and im/migration policy from various places and vantage points.

The ways in which people imagine globalization (García Canclini 2001) and the “elsewhere” of global connections often neglect to address the desires and plans of all the actor-subjects (Fischer and Benson 2006) who contribute to the larger processes that global crops perpetuate (Kingsolver 2011). I hope to contribute to this analysis of ineqeualities of the global agri-food system – and the reimagining of the system in terms of ethical possibilities – by examining how agri-food enterprises are organized via binational kin relations and the temporal logics and cooperative practices that make these perishable commodities’ “social paths” possible in the NAFTA-TLCAN context.

My research contributes to the interdisciplinary study of rural livelihoods in North America (Adams 2007) that make the globalized agri-food system possible by examining this binational group’s collective farming strategies, conceptualizations of how to organize farming enterprises, and kin-based cooperative practices. After two research seasons in the Mexican Bajío, I based the study in the Carolina mountains of southern

Appalachia and designed it as a multi-sited transnational ethnography. The families with whom I worked influenced the study design, and their advice helped guide the study's evolution much like other multi-sited studies (Gallo 2009) grounded in feminist methodology. Many contexts require a multi-sited design to account for empirical realities (Marcus 2011; Robben 2012). This study design evolved "from following to collaborating" (Coleman and Von Hellermann 2011:2) and positions researchers well to study connections within and across transnational social fields (Riccio 2011), practices (Horst 2009; Mand 2011), and policies (Kingsolver 2001, 2007).

My purpose is not to treat my interlocutors as objects of research but instead to recognize them as collaborators by listening to their advice and theorizing them as complex thinkers and as subject-actors. I forefront actors' conceptualizations (e.g., strategies), stories, and social relations rather than the locations of the agri-food industry (Fog-Olwig and Hastrup 1997). Instead of following an object (e.g., tomatoes) in space, this dissertation traces the kin-work relations, timings, and particular policies that make it possible for a food crop like tomatoes or white corn to act as a commodity. In particular, I trace the kin-work relations to make sense of the varied knowledge sets, cooperatives practices, logics, creative strategies, and temporalities that shape – and are shaped by – agricultural industry as part of globalized trade and commodity chains. In that sense, this study supports the idea that "local realities are (at least in part) produced elsewhere" (Marcus 2001:19).

In talking about place through the social relations that organize agri-food enterprises, I highlight the uneven power relations between places (Gupta and Ferguson 1997) – like southern Guanajuato and western North Carolina – in the globalized agri-

food system. Importantly, I address particularly situated persons' conceptualizations of policy (e.g., NAFTA-TLCAN) that intermingle with actions and discourses produced by states, industries, and nations (Kingsolver 2001:5) and reshape agricultural livelihoods, power relations, and the temporalities that come with them. Members of a binational kin group who work in agricultural industries in both countries can offer insights into these topics which people who are less mobile cannot.

Methods: Data Collection and Analysis

My combined interpretive and political economic approach is supported by a mixed methodology. I conducted ethnographic research in the summers of 2012-2013 and during various seasons in various locations from 2014-2017, with most of the research taking place in the Carolina Hill Country. My interlocutors used their expanded kin network to arrange my housing and part of my research in most research sites. I was invited by the binational family group of interest to conduct research with them in all locations. I received a kind of "sponsorship" in the Bajío and in Florida from family members due to my rapport with other family members in southern Appalachia which facilitated snowball sampling and research overall in each location (Trotter II 1999).

While I was in Guanajuato in 2012, I received permission to conduct my research from the comisario (*village official*) and from anthropologist Dr. Maria Elena Aramoni at INAH (National Institute for Anthropology and History) in Guanajuato City. In the U.S., I conducted ethnographic research throughout the southeastern U.S. from southern Appalachia to South Florida, staying with families and sometimes on my own at different places along the seasonal tomato circuit. Throughout this dissertation, I refer to

microregions instead of naming places like particular towns or municipios (*provinces, or counties*). For instance, I will discuss the Carolina foothills microregion as the Carolina Hill Country. Since I see multi-sited research as a longitudinal process instead of an event (Horst 2009), I am situating this project as part of my long-term research agenda centered on globalized circulations food, food policy, and distribution practices.

I conducted preliminary research with extended binational families in the Carolina foothills during the summers of 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016 and in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho during the summer of 2012 and again later in the holiday season of 2014-2015 when I began my full-time research. During the spring of 2015, I conducted research in and between key tomato industry sites in southern Georgia and throughout Florida. This allowed me to gather contextual data on the produce industry in the southeastern U.S., and on the links between tomato industry enterprises, market access, routes and distribution infrastructure. During two seasons from 2015-2016, I worked at a produce packing house which offered me additional insight into the FFV industry, work relations, and conditions. I spent a portion of 2016 at UNAM in Mexico City and the spring of 2017 facilitating an applied project with women from the farming families in the Carolinas. These data support my analysis of how enterprises use southern Appalachia, collective strategies, and mobility to engage in the fresh-market tomato industry as allied groups of owner-operators. I elaborate further on this in the following paragraphs.

Since my research in the southeastern U.S. concerned a seasonal tomato circuit, my research strategy included paying attention to the transportation systems and fellow travelers, and cargo I encountered while in transit – a method used in other multi-sited

studies concerning mobility (Mand 2011). To aid my analysis, I paid attention the regional organization of industry (e.g., processing plant locations). While on the roads traveling between my various research sites, I paid attention to places along the way such as distribution centers and food processing plants. I also rode with family members or invited them to ride with me when traveling, both regionally and between the U.S. and Mexico.

To address the main research question, I gathered data on how women and men of this group conceptualize “family” relations, temporal-spatial strategies, change they have experienced, and rural enterprises. I did this through a mixed methodology which included participant observation and interviewing. I conducted 105 interviews. In each microregion, I conducted formal and informal interviews with family members and a variety of local industry actors to ensure contextual depth (cf. Wells 1996). Industry actors included (but were not limited to) agricultural cooperative extension agents, brokers, farmers, repack facility operators and owners, packing house workers, marketers, labor contractors, truckers, harvesters, produce buyers, farmers’ market agents, state representatives, seed breeders, food processors, and restaurant owners.

I conducted these interviews in a variety of places such as production fields, greenhouses, packing houses, farmers’ markets, farm offices, neighborhood cookouts, agricultural extension research stations, trucks, homes, family gatherings, and growers’ meeting venues. I attended local and regional industry gatherings such as growers’ association meetings, economic development forums, growers’ schools, and workshops. I conducted participant observation at worksites and family events – such as life course celebrations and family ritual gatherings like quinciñeras, weddings, and birthday parties.

Life history interviews (both individual and group) serve as a chief data source for this study. They focus on family, migration, and work. I engaged in deep "listening" (Thorne and Yalom 1992) and conceptualize my interlocutors as "storytellers," "theory makers" (Kingsolver 2001), and "active collaborators in epistemological engagement" (Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007: 12). Gathering these types of "shared stories" (Narayan 1993; Kingsolver 2001) is vital to documenting subjective voices and "situated knowledges" (Haraway 1988). Together, these data provide insights into patterned histories that concern the nexus of migration, kinship, policy, and work. They provide insight on how women and men draw on (gendered) "family" relations to organize collective strategies for their enterprises and other kin-based group projects of production, distribution and marketing (di Leonardo 1984; Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987; Yanagisako 2002; Pérez 2004; Gallo 2009; Zavella 2011).

Life histories provide specifics on shifts in family life and enterprise strategies in relation to decision-making environments and (interrelated) large-scale, historical processes like the implementation of NAFTA-TLCAN or IRCA. People use these historic moments to mark time in narrations of life histories and make sense of their life trajectories (Yoneyama 1999). Reconciled with other data sources and interpretations (Gerle 1999), these life histories offer evidence on gender and generational differences within agricultural industries and rural family enterprises. Life history interviews enable a fuller perspective of binational families' migration rates and cycles in relation to livelihood decisions and strategically timed kin-based coordination for agricultural projects (e.g., investment in land, payment of debts).

To ensure historical contextualization (Roseberry 1996[1989]), I collected aggregate data on im/migration patterns, policies, and practices as well as agricultural trade policies (e.g., marketing orders), labor relations (e.g., the H-2A“guest worker” visa program), marketing projects (e.g., state-sponsored agricultural advertising), state-funded technology initiatives (i.e., grants for greenhouse construction), agricultural loans (e.g., FSA), and subsidy programs (e.g., specialty crop grants) in southern Appalachia and the some in west central Bajío.

In southern Appalachia, I conducted archival research on agricultural livelihoods and political economies at genealogical libraries, cultural resource preservation centers, and community organizations. I toured local agricultural museums to analyze collective representation, rural development, and agricultural histories. I visited government agencies such as the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and agricultural extension research stations and offices. I analyzed secondary data sources such as state-based pesticide license lists, industry- and state-based agriculture reports, national reports (e.g., the United States Department Agricultural census), and international websites and reports (e.g., Food and Agriculture Organization statistics and reports on the U.S.-Mexico “tomato trade wars”). I followed agricultural industry media such as *The Packer* newspaper and industry websites such as the American Vegetable Grower. I also reviewed oral histories conducted in western North Carolina (collected by local historians) and contributions to the Latino Migration Project at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

While I was in Mexico, I conducted ethnographic research in a municipio (*country*) in southwestern Guanajuato during the summer of 2012 and winter of 2014-15.

I conducted interviews, including life history interviews and formal interviews with local historians and industry actors. I also conducted informal interviews and created kinship charts. I was able to interview local agricultural workers who worked in agriculture in the Carolinas in the past as unauthorized workers and as H-2A workers. I learned about local agricultural markets, federal agricultural agencies (e.g., SAGARPA and ASERCA), local associations, and small farmland owner programs (e.g., PROCEDE and PROCAMPO). I was also able to interview farmers and a few members of the binational kin group in the rancho for the first time and then interview them again in western North Carolina a second time.

It was important that I consult Mexican scholarship in Spanish since this dissertation puts perspectives from both Mexico and the U.S. into conversation to better understand the processes that happen in and between the countries, and regions within them (Klahn et al. 2000). I did this primarily in 2016 when I was affiliated with the Centro de Investigaciones Sobre América del Norte (Center for Research on North America) at la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (National Autonomous University of Mexico). There, I was able to access academic sources and government reports. I drew on government reports and regional studies (e.g., of transnational migration and trade policies) on agriculture and migration with the help of colleagues at the Colegio de Michoacán in Zamora de Hidalgo, INAH (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia) in Guanajuato City, and UNAM in Mexico City.

While at CISAN, I attended a migration course taught by Dr. Graciela Martínez-Zalce Sánchez which allowed me to listen to students' perspectives on migration and Mexico-U.S. relations. I met researchers and attended lectures and conferences on the

agricultural political economy, migration, and human rights issues in Mexico at various departments at UNAM and in Mexico City. I took research trips to Guanajuato City to visit the state-based university, graduate studies center, and Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (IINEGI) office. I was hoping to make trips to southern Guanajuato with a colleague, but the risk of encountering narco-state violence had not dissipated. Instead sadly, the violence had increased since I had last been there in 2015.

Mexico as a whole is now "one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists" (CPJ 2017:1), and the microregion in southern Guanajuato is experiencing a surge in violence due to "turf wars" between the Cártel Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG) and smaller ambitious narco groups. Over the years, the CJNG adopted more brutal tactics and public performances modeled by Los Zetas (Correa-Cabrera 2017). When I began this project, I planned to spend more time in southern Guanajuato, observing the harvest season and the transactions that come with it. This plan changed while I was in the rancho in the winter of 2015. After realizing the severity of the changing situation and the impunity (on the part of the Mexican state) which allowed for these everyday violent acts to occur, I decided that I needed to return to the U.S. and re-design my study so that I would not put my interlocutors at risk (since a U.S. visitor in the household would draw attention and perhaps represent extra capital). At that point, I re-designed my study so that I would put more focus on the southeastern U.S. seasonal tomato circuit and on the North American Free Trade Agreement as an exemplar of neoliberal policies shaping the globalized agri-food system.

In the summer of 2016, I received social network analysis (SNA) training at the University of Kentucky LINKS Center workshop. I was hoping to use this method to

analyze the embeddedness of the kin group within the fresh-market tomato industry; however, the combination of the political turbulence (i.e., local immigration enforcement) and the secrecy of FFV brokers limited my ability to access sufficient data to conduct whole network analysis. Brokers are clearly the gatekeepers in the fresh-market fruit and vegetable industry and who they buy from and sell to is considered part of corporate confidentiality. Due to this, I was not able to conduct complete network analysis, which would have been necessary for this method to produce data to support my argument.

As I mentioned earlier, I worked part-time in a produce packing warehouse as a receiving clerk when I had IRB approval but not research funding. I did not work with members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, but I did work in the microregion in the FFV industry. In that position, I conducted quality assessments of the produce, engaged in shipping and receiving procedures, and learned about the software systems brokerage firms use to keep track of each farmers' produce. I learned about the precarity of part-time agricultural jobs and the importance of timings, consistant communication, and distribution logistics in relation to capitalist projects and agri-food systems as a whole. The participative position allowed me to observe and experience the cultural chasm between the marketing sector and the field and packing house crews and managers. Additionally, I was able to interview co-workers after work and talk to workers, farmers, brokers, truck drivers, and managers about industry issues and daily challenges while at work throughout the summer-fall harvest season.

Field notes and interviews were coded as part of a qualitative textual analysis process (Kuckartz 2014) with categories derived both deductively (examples include kin relations, timing, and decision-making) and inductively – an open-coding methodology –

so that themes could emerge from the data (Bernard 2006). When coding data, I paid particular attention to gender and generation in relation to the following: kin relations, migration patterns, and enterprise; the kin group's organization, industry structures and network of relations; members' categorical constructs, roles, responsibilities and social mobility; decision-making processes, practices, and cycles; placement of production sites and particular timings of circulations; and the role of "family" in shaping legal ownership, livelihoods, and capital accumulation. I reconciled aggregate data from reports, local histories, and genealogies with complementary data collected through life history interviews and participant observation.

Positionalities

I first realized the need for this study when I worked as a migrant education outreach specialist in southern Appalachia. Working with parents to serve their children's educational needs introduced me to families who are vital to agricultural industries and networks, but who are often left out of research agendas. I openly discussed the project with interlocutors who offered me advice on how to conduct the research. This was vital since agricultural work places in the southeastern U.S. and foreign-owned sites in Mexico are notoriously hostile research environments. This is especially true when immigration enforcement is carried out by local law enforcement agents, as was the case in the southeastern U.S. during the research period. In particular, programs like 287g had a grave impact on North Carolina residents and will be further discussed in chapter six.

In southern Appalachia, I knew many people in the microregion due to my previous job with the Migrant Education Program. When I went to Guanajuato, I would

carry letters and gifts to relatives from their relatives in southern Appalachia. After I conducted fieldwork in Guanajuato, people from the rancho who reside in the Carolinas and Florida knew of me as the “güera” (*blond, or person with light colored skin and hair*) who would visit the rancho. This was possible since – according to the people I spoke with – no one like me (i.e., a Euro-American woman with fair hair, eyes and skin) had ever been to the rancho. They also recognized me because they saw me in homemade and community-circulated videos such as the video made of a rodeo in the rancho and videos of weddings in the Carolinas.

This multi-sited research project would not have been possible without my U.S. passport, as I learned from my colleagues at CISAN at UNAM in Mexico City. U.S. passport holders are able to stay in Mexico without a visa for up to six months while Mexican researchers have to acquire a J-1 visa, which is costly, time-consuming, and not guaranteed. The privilege that came with my U.S. nationality status facilitated my travel to and from Mexico and the U.S. as well as my travel within the U.S. With a driver’s license, I was able to travel to rural worksites and homes, which was critical to the completion of this project.

While I am not a native to Appalachia, I am from North Carolina, but I am not from a farming family. I would not consider this a “native ethnography” (Narayan 1993) or even “half native” ethnography (Adams 1994), though I was able to draw on social connections that I had prior to the study to enhance the research and my access in the agricultural communities of the Carolina mountains. The contemporary, conventional agricultural industry in this microregion tends to be quite guarded and self-protective. Conventional farmers tend to believe that they are not given a fair chance by media and

are always on guard about who they talk to and what they divulge. Some may even say they are secretive due to the fear that they will be sued or fined over regulation violations. Farmers can also be secretive in terms of business plans because of their assessment of local market supply-demand cycles. Collaborative conversations are not necessarily the norm for conventional FFV producers in the industry in this microregion.

On top of this, the agricultural industry is weary of immigration enforcement. While agricultural labor falls within the U.S. "agricultural exceptionalism" – in that much of the labor force is unauthorized to live and work in the U.S. – there has been an unspoken agreement between local law enforcement and many farming communities that farmworkers will not be apprehended while driving to and from work. The rumor was that unauthorized workers would only be reported to ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement) via a detainer order if they committed a grave crime, because, as one farmer explained, the sheriffs are farmers or from farming families too. They understand the "labor situation." This does not quell all the fear of labor law enforcement however, especially in 2018 as I finish this dissertation. Like in Florida and California, health care workers and education outreach workers in the Carolina Hill Country have been run off farms and out of housing sites by farm owners with a gun in hand. Some newly arrived Latinx say that they worry that Euro-Americans who speak Spanish well are secretly working for ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement).

This relates to another access issue I faced while doing research in South Florida. People there perceived me in relation to the CIW, Coalition of Immokalee Workers. While in this microregion, I learned that there is an "us v. them" political battle between the large-scale tomato growers and the farmworker union-like, collective bargaining

group – the CIW. Since – as one agricultural extension agent worker bluntly told me in South Florida – I was a "white woman who speaks good Spanish and doesn't wear makeup," people were going to assume that I was undercover, spying for the CIW or for a "liberal" media source like the *Washington Post*. When speaking with members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group in South Florida, I expressed my concern that no one would talk to me because they may think I am with the CIW. One member responded by saying, "No. They already think you are with the coalition." Due to this, women in the older generation of the kin group in southern Florida decided to accompany me while I did research, even contributing to interviews and initiating collaborative conversations. Just as in Mexico, they lent me clothes and hats to wear so that I would better fit into worksites.

In Mexico, people suggested that there might be rumors that I was working with the Zetas. I heard that people thought this could have been the reason why I was trying to record farmers' assets so that they (Los Zetas) could better extort and rob them. Others said that I could be with the CIA, gathering intelligence on the narco groups. Still others thought I was a daughter-in-law or even visiting the rancho as a labor contractor, recruiting H-2A guest workers. Clearly, these rumors made me re-think my data collection and overall methodology. Due to the circumstances of the rancho and the fact that I was a "muchacha" (*unmarried woman*), family members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group insisted that I spend most (if not all) of my time with women and that I not go anywhere alone, or even sleep in a room alone. Older women assured me that I was safe and insisted that I never go anywhere alone. If I went to interview a man, an older woman would accompany me. This limited my mobility and taught me about

gendering practices and the numerous circumstances that create and impose im/mobilities. It also afforded me a sense of personal security I would not have had otherwise.

Throughout my fieldwork, I offered my time and labor to the people who were sharing their time and stories with me. I completed household chores, cleaned pigs, drove trucks, and accompanied people with tasks – all as part of my participant observation. I assisted high school students with scholarship information and college applications. I helped younger children with their homework. I served as an interpreter when needed, going on special trips to take care of English language-related tasks. As an engaged anthropologist, I facilitated a Spanish-language bookkeeping course for women in farming families in the spring of 2017. I connected a group of these women with a women's business support center in western North Carolina. The courses were approximately three hours long and met every week for a total of eight weeks. In the courses, women learned how to do formal bookkeeping (e.g., fill out a ledger) and best practices for agricultural enterprise recordkeeping so that they would be able to pass Good Agricultural Practices inspections and satisfy Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) requirements. They also learned the basics of how to use QuickBooks for their enterprises.

Dissertation Overview

"Binational Farming Families of Southern Appalachia and the Mexican Bajío" is comprised of three parts and eight chapters. In it, I bring class process, new kinship studies, and anthropology of time literature into conversation with globalized agri-food

system literature to re-conceptualize the political economic activities, identities, and possibilities of Latinx in southern Appalachia, the U.S., and the globalized agri-food system. Part I, "Binational Farming Family Enterprises and Global Circulations," lays the structural and historical foundation for the dissertation and includes three chapters. Chapter one (this chapter) introduces the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres (MX-U.S.) kin group and the multiple NAFTA contexts which help characterize their rural livelihood strategies.

Chapter two begins the dissertation's exploration of how members of this binational kin group act as "flexible producers" (Rothstein 2007) – meaning that they work within a neoliberal flexible accumulation regime (Harvey 1989), but as subject-actors and collective strategists. Importantly, people (often kin) create collective strategies for capital accumulation and the redistribution of wealth within this regime that constitute forms of resistance and alternative livelihood possibilities (Rothstein 2007). The chapter maps out the overarching argument of the dissertation – that practices of kin relatedness matter in modern political economies (McKinnon and Cannell 2013; Franklin and McKinnon 2001) and to the temporalities and circulations of the globalized agri-food system. Kin relations and the metaknowledge – that they build and maintain – can overcome the "collective action dilemma" (Cronk and Leech 2013). There are related, multigenerational, multi-gendered, multi-class people who act as the agri-food industry community – who as a group create the processes that make the agri-food system possible.

Through interlocutors' voices, chapter two shares the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres practices of compadrazgo (*godparenthood*) and social organization of their agri-food

enterprises. Their stories and perspectives on their agri-food enterprises allow for an analysis of total farm work process and the role of kin relations in class process. Kin relations set in place a long-term time horizon for exchange practices and plans. This belief system appears to support their agri-food enterprises and related collaborative capitalist projects. The second half offers an overview of internal and gendered agri-food enterprise organizational strategies, challenges, and cooperative practices particular members engage in as part of action groups within the binational kin network.

Chapter three offers an interwoven version of histories of two mobile (at some point "immigrant") farming families who now act as FFV farming families in southern Appalachia. The histories follow the contexts of the agricultural regions where this kin group has created family-based farming enterprises: southern Appalachia and the Mexican Bajío. Because they negotiate two political economies, I offer this history of both regions to tell the stories of the two agricultural political economies that the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group navigate today along with kin members' memories and research. I put the histories of the two together to provide two ways of seeing, and to offer a comparative frame for understaning the contexts that created the contemporary agricultural environments. The theoretical framing is built around the concept of coevalness – a concept used to criticize anthropology for othering subjects of ethnographies by displacing them temporally (Fabian 1983) – to put people labeled as "immigrant" in the same temporal plane as those who claim to be "natives" or "locals." This chapter offers the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin history along the same lines as a kin group who migrated to the U.S. centuries earlier to underscore the point that even

farming families migrate and to ask the question: how long does it take to belong as farming families in a rural place?

The chapter places the events of the Bajío into the same chronological time as the events in southern Appalachia to provide an equitable frame. The chapter does not offer a comprehensive history of each region. Instead, with agricultural political economy as my overarching topic, I identify particular historic events (e.g., war) that generate political economic change (e.g., land redistribution and collective farming projects) from the 1500's until 1986. This history shows how collective rural enterprise strategies come in and out of favor in the two regions through discussions of policy and development projects.

The history of the development of the tomato industry in southern Appalachia is also shared. This history shows how a change in labor migration was linked to the development of determinate seed breeding, funded by both private and public entities. The chapter ends in the 1980's when the stories of the two farming families come together. The year 1986 is notable in that it marks when neoliberal policies were implemented in full force with Mexico entering the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and the U.S. passing the IRCA (Immigration Reform and Control Act). I will update U.S. immigration policy since the IRCA in chapter six. In chapter seven, I cover an emblematic neoliberal trade policy – the North American Free Trade Agreement – that largely shaped the rural livelihood possibilities for the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group and most other food commodity producers and workers in Mexico and the U.S.

Part II is called “Southeastern U.S. Tomato Circuit, Comercio Mētis and Redistributive Practices.” Here, I develop an ethnographically-supported socio-economic analysis of exchange relations, cooperative practices, value creation, and political economies of temporality in the context of the mobile fresh-market tomato industry in southern Appalachia. Chapter four takes readers along the seasonal tomato circuit from one site to the next in the southeastern U.S. It shows how southern Appalachian production sites relate to other southeastern U.S. production sites (like South Florida) as part of a seasonal industry circuit. Then, it explores the multiple political economic identities of workers (specifically tomateros) who are both enterprisers themselves and (sometimes simultaneously) employed by large-scaled, agri-industrial firms. The data allow for a comparison of two redistributive practices: one in southern Appalachia (e.g., buying the field) and the other South Florida (e.g., pinhooking).

While chapter four offers data on the production of tomatoes in the fields of the southeastern U.S., chapter five offers ethnographic insight into the marketing and distribution of fresh-market tomatoes and other warm season vegetables in the same region. Chapter five contributes to the globalized agri-food system conversation with an analysis of “localized” fresh-market tomato industry actors and practices in southern Appalachian marketplaces. It focuses on the comercio (*commerce*) mētis of Mexican-American women of FFV farming families in the Carolina hills. Perspectives include members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group as well as other women and men who work in the same industry sites. Marketeras (*women who act as fresh-market produce vendors*) build intergenerational comercio mētis, and this chapter explores how they use it to “read” the market and “move” perishable commodities their kin grow and pack.

Thus, the chapter maps out social relations from “seed to supermarket” (Friedland et al. 1981) but focuses the discussion on the question of industry knowledge and skills, strategic timings (e.g., manifest in linking harvest seasons and counter-seasonal markets), industry work rhythms and temporalities of particularly positioned workers, management of various shelf life cycles, trade networks, consolidation-inducing policy (e.g., Food Safety Modernization Act) and differential power relations pulsing through the fresh-market produce industry.

Part III, “MX-U.S. Policy and Im/Mobilities of People and Commodities,” connects the account I developed in Parts I-II – of social, economic, political, and normative issues relating to the interface of gendered and intergenerational kin relations – to binationality, the political economics of temporalities, and the politics of economic possibilities of agricultural life in, and between, southern Appalachian and the Bajío. Chapter six, “MX-U.S. Binational Kin: Everyday Violence and Temporalities of the U.S. Im/migration System” critically examines what binationality means and how that meaning varies for differentially positioned people in societies and families – details which are typically obscured by a blanket transnational approach. This chapter provides ethnographic content in the form of im/mobility stories – stories of how, when, and why people in these families experience everyday violence of the U.S. immigration system and temporalities produced by both the U.S. immigration system and gendered kin decision-making practices. These stories consider how mixed-status kin relations play a role in the production of im/mobilities and temporalities of legal and social “limbo,” or waiting. It shows how many young women act as navigators for their kin, in that they do the “kin work” necessary to organize collective strategies to mitigate the individualizing

bureaucratic immigration process. This process includes naturalization proceedings and accessing a driver's license.

Chapter seven is titled, "NAFTA-TLCAN: Binational Kin, Collective Strategy and Human Insecurity." The chapter contests the rhetoric of "free trade" and aims to show how agri-food markets are designed by globalizing trade policy. The stories shared here provide an account of market im/mobilities of two commodities which lie both at the heart of the kin group's livelihood strategies and the NAFTA-TLCAN agricultural debate. These two commodities are fresh-market tomatoes – which made headlines in the 1990's as part of a MX-U.S. "trade war" – and white corn – which is used for making tortillas and critical to Mexican national food security. These commodities serve as paragons for the imbalanced Mexico-U.S. agri-food trade relations in that they both could be seen as violating the "anti-dumping" regulation. To mitigate these inequitable NAFTA-TLCAN policy terrains, the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group use collective intergenerational strategies to sustain rural livelihoods.

Chapter seven also emphasizes how NAFTA-TLCAN – which imposes a consolidation-inducing policy and an economies of scale logic onto the food system – is complicit in the creation of human insecurity. Though kin use alternative cooperative arrangements to negotiate this unjust rural livelihood terrain, they are positioned as vulnerable food producers in Mexico with the growth of narco-state corporate groups that increasingly exert their violence in the form of extortion, theft, kidnapping, and murder. The chapter both seeks to contribute to the larger analysis which anthropologists are developing, within political economic studies – of global-local relations and processes in agricultural life – and to offer an account which could be used to reorient this

conversation towards the question of equitable access to market share as a human security issue.

The concluding chapter suggests that a reimaging of how farming families contribute to the globalized circulations of food commodities is necessary to support global policy and programming that would promote alternative transnational arrangements within the globalized agri-food system. The chapter argues that the perspectives and stories of Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin members show that U.S. agricultural cooperative extension programming should be re-assessed to take gender as well as the vast roles of Spanish-speakers into account. Theirs is an example of how geographically-dispersed members of a binational kin group collaborate across regions and borders to access market share in multiple crops, in multiple political economies simultaneously. Alternative cooperative arrangements – which are both productive and conducive to more equitable market share access – are possible and could reshape regional agri-food systems to support food security through the development of sustainable livelihoods for farming families. Using this lens, I hope to offer insights into how to design bilateral policy and programming to promote alternative organizational strategies which would foster a more equitable globalized agri-food system.

Time, Values, and Practices of Relatedness of Binational Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Farming Families

Part I. Chapter 2

¿A qué se dedica? (*What do you do for a living?)*

This question illustrates how members of this kin group re-phrased my preliminary questions about work in a way which forefronts values expressed through work, a person's temporal contribution through work, and the meanings of work and human work relations. To think about "work" as what you dedicate yourself and your time to is an important re-conceptualization of one's relation to work. This re-conceptualization allows for more activities to be understood as work practices and as part of a total work process.

With this re-orienting phrasing in mind, I utilize an anthropology of time lens not to measure other people's time by my units, but to make sense of how, where, and when power and varied temporalities intersect to shape agricultural political economies, agri-food systems, transnational class process, and binational working families' precarious livelihoods (Tsing 2015). I use the concept of livelihood to underscore the interwoven nature of farming families' "work" and "home" lives, and to emphasize that "family" and "enterprise" are not compartmentalized in working families' everyday lives and their ways of thinking – as they are often treated in analytic framing. When work is at least somewhat of your own design – as is the case for enterprisers – it can also be thought of as a life project, which requires varied exchange relations and cooperative practices to enact.

In the U.S., the FFV community and media often discuss “labor problems” that come with the “seasonal” and inconsistent work schedule of FFV production, distribution, and marketing. Due to the timings involved in this industry, it is understood in the U.S. as “exceptional” in terms of labor conditions like workers’ rights. However, this framing allows for systemic inequities to persist. In the U.S. FFV industry, there is a lack of long-term, legal obligation and often commitment on the part of contributors to farming enterprises and the industry as a whole. The FFV system is set-up to provide only precarious livelihoods, characterized by intermittent incomes and complex cash flows. There is a need for long-term exchange relations and practices of mutual respect and cooperation in agri-food system work. This chapter shares practices of binational kin relatedness that support long-term FFV enterprise relations that are not defined simply by exploitation, but instead are based in cooperation across gender, generation, nationality, and geographic distance.

This chapter lays out the foundations for the overall dissertation argument that temporalities and cooperative (gendered) practices of kin relations interact to play important roles in class process and the globalized agri-food system. Kin relations matter in political economies (McKinnon and Cannell 2013), to the social organization of enterprises, and in the shaping of the multiple temporalities and circulations that make the globalized agri-food system possible. While scholars like Tamara Hareven have shown that women’s time and tasks are disciplined through family and industrial lenses (1993), this dissertation considers the shaping power of temporalities and kin relations in the realm of agricultural industries. It does not separate agriculture from other industries (e.g., factory labor) but instead looks at all these commitments of time together.

Similarly, women's economic contributions to households – and the political economy writ large – through unpaid as well as paid labor have been recognized by feminist scholarship (Sacks 1982). My framing continues this work by bringing these complex sets of commitments and positions in organizational activities together. This approach allows for recognition of the co-existing and interrelated dynamics of power relations – shaped by ideas about gender, class, political status, and gender – and cooperative practices of, and between, kin members in agricultural industries.

This chapter introduces members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group who work in a variety of fresh fruit and vegetable (FFV) industry positions in southern Appalachia, and thus, the globalized agri-food system. I begin with an overview of the FFV industry in the Carolina Hill Country to contextualize the enterprise strategies that the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres members use in navigating the political economic realities of farming hand-harvested, fresh-market produce in this microregion. This includes accounts of how various members think about the industry and the social organization of their kin-based agri-food enterprise. Then I present their conceptualizations of practices of kin relatedness and their (compadrazgo) kin system, including the values (respeto and confianza) that they see as foundational to their kin relations. These learned, practiced, and shared values are also critical to participants in the FFV industry. I bring new kinship studies, family farm, class process, and temporality studies together to analyze this case.

Ranchera Familia (*Farming Family*)

Families and farming enterprises – like most human pursuits – require cooperation between and across gendered and generational categories. Often gendered

categories are framed as inherently bad, as ascribed not obtained, and in many instances, they prove to create inequitable relations and asymmetrical decision-making powers. However, this is not always the case; power relations are constantly contested. Cooperative practices – by and across people who are gendered differently – happen every day and call for academic attention. I see gendered and generational cooperative practices as central to farming enterprises. Instead of using a financial lens to highlight the importance of circumstances such as land ownership and formal credit lines, I explore how the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group uses gendered and intergenerational cooperative practices to access rural livelihoods, collectively.

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group is comprised of mobile-minded women and men who organize agri-food enterprises within nuclear family relations and within their kin network through arrangements with other relatives. Their projects are in large part capitalist, and yet – because they are approached collaboratively through cooperative practices – they also promote exchange relations that are alternative to capitalism in the sense that they are not 100% negative exchanges for one party. While this heterogeneous group of kin are not a bounded entity, I estimate that the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family members who participate in kin and work relations and practices are a three-generation group of approximately 120 people and twenty-four nuclear families. Three of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group FFV enterprises in southern Appalachia are large-scale (growing 75 acres or more of FFV) and vertically integrated, meaning that they grow and market their produce and own and operate a packing house. The rest of the enterprises either contribute to those larger operations through subcontracted labor or by selling them their crop. They say, "Todos ganan" (*Everyone wins*) when their enterprises do business

together – each selling to the next – from retail to wholesale, from “seed to supermarket” (Friedland et al. 1981).

Most of these FFV farming families grow warm season vegetables, like squash, tomatoes (technically a fruit but sold with vegetables) and peppers, because they are sold to the same buyers and require a lot of the same materials. A few of them rotate these crops with maize, beans or soybeans. They may also use a winter crop cover cereal grain like rye, which has a low market value, but is more about maintaining the soil health by neutralizing nitrate levels. Many members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group work in the FFV industry and most work for themselves or for their kin for at least part of the year. They have a kin-work relationship, in that they have overlapping kin and work relations. This kind of overlap is the norm in most agri-food communities and many rural economies. Families historically and currently structure farming production organizations that together make up industry sectors. The warm season fruit and vegetable production-distribution system in southern Appalachia is possible thanks to industry workers, kin relations, and the cooperation they practice. I use the social categories that the members of this kin group use to explain their enterprise practices and arrangements.

These workers label their work category identities via the activity that defines their industry or enterprise roles and work routine: as trabajador (*worker*), fletero (*trasnporter of the product),* chofer (*worker driver*), troquero (*truck owner and labor contractor*), tractorista (*tractor driver, farm manager in charge of irrigating and planting in particular*), pintero (*picker and resaler*), empacadora (*packer*), marketera (*female marketer*), broker (wholesale marketer), and ranchero (*grower*). The section of this chapter following the theory overview will discuss how the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres

farming kin group members internally organize enterprise responsibilities, gendered roles, livelihood challenges and collective strategies as FFV farming families.

When talking with the various members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, kin members would tell me the last name of the family who owns the enterprise they work with instead of naming the enterprise itself. For instance, s/he may say that in the Carolinas, this season, s/he is working for the Ortegas, but last year s/he worked for the Torres. People work with whichever enterprise in their kin network calls upon them and/or whomever they decide to work with due to exchange transactions from previous seasons. Later in this chapter, I describe the diversified political economic identities within the kin-based network of agri-food enterprises and break down the groups by agri-food enterprise volume, in terms of the range of product and capital flows in and out of the enterprise – from low volume (small enterprise) to high volume (large enterprise) to indicate exchange relations, "set-up," scale and FFV diversification.

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational group engages in kin-based, transnational farming livelihoods. Since many of the members have binational status in and between the U.S. and Mexico, many of them work with kin members to establish diversified farming enterprise portfolios – combining opportunities to farm FFV in the southeastern U.S. and to cultivate basic grains and raise cattle in the Mexican Bajío. These binational kin have a particular yearly cycle, in that after their FFV harvesting is done in late October or early November in southern Appalachia they travel to the Bajío to manage the white corn harvest and enjoy the holiday season with relatives there. Some of them may come back to the U.S. in January and go to Florida for the tomato harvest season or to the Carolinas to plan for their March planting.

“Everything is relative in produce”: Farming FFV for the Globalized Agri-food System in Southern Appalachia

Farming is often thought of as a family tradition and an inherited job, due in part to all the components needed to even get started. Within the family farming realm, farm work time is not diminished to wgae time, nor are relatives’ work commitments reducd to “wage labor” in terms of the meanings they carry. Farming work is intergenerational, and a constant learning process. The kin-based farming enterprise is how kin groups organize their activities and lives as collectives and individuals. It is a collaborative, long-term project that most members feel they should contribute to through particular roles and related tasks. Ann Kingsolver defines farming as “a set of skills often passed in families, enduring mobility and class mobility unless choice or circumstances cut those ties” and as “skills [drawn on] when the cash economy is in crisis” (Kingsolver 2011:17). Many people talk about farming as an obligation to both their kin and the land – as a shared, multi-generational, kin-based livelihood project. Within this framing, long-term commitment is naturalized, made into common sense and linked to farming families and rural values. Today, many farming families are asking the question of whether the farm as an enterprise can “afford a successor” due to management, retirement, and tax questions (van der Hoeven 2014).

Produce farming enterprises require unconventional schedules and continuous communication to facilitate coordination. To successfully farm fresh-market fruits and vegetables, people must coordinate and enact plans on precise schedules that fluctuate greatly due to the climate (e.g., rain, temperature), volatile market prices, and harvesting

worker availability. Since the 1970's, the U.S. has transitioned from acting as a net exporter of fresh and processed fruits and vegetables to engaging in the globalized agri-food system as a net importer with a recent gap of $11.2 billion (Johnson 2014). Truly, timing is key to the production, distribution and consumption of produce. For these reasons, industry subject-actors say that "everything is relative in produce."

The FFV industry is labor intensive in the vegetable fields where transplants[5] are planted by hand, and full-grown crops are hand-harvested. In the case of tomatoes – the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group's principle cash crop in southern Appalachia – a field of transplants are planted and then a harvesting crew begins to make their sweeps through the field three months later. Fields are harvested two to three times at various intervals over the field crops' development, depending on the production plan. This production element further reveals the complex cyclical nature of many of the FFV farming practices and the multiple and interacting temporalities involved in just one FFV enterprise. FFV farming enterprises usually grow in various fields and these fields are planted "in succession" so that FFV enterprises will not create "bottle-necks" for themselves in terms of having enough workers to harvest the crops on schedule. If fresh fruits and vegetables are not harvested at precise times in their development, they will not meet industry quality standards nor earn the producers the optimal market price. Importantly, they also have to manage these continuous flows of products so that they can supply their customers consistently – in hopes that they will not go to other suppliers.

[5] Plants are considered as "transplants" when they have developed from seed (a few inches long in the case of tomatoes and peppers) and safe to up-root from the greenhouse beds where they are grown. They are then sold to farmers to plant directly into their fields. This increases the chances that the plants will develop into full crops as harvestable commodities.

Temporality and kin relations are significant to the globalized agri-food industry. The way people think about time, organize their enterprises and relate to each other are interrelated and affect our agri-food system. No matter the scale, agri-food commodity producers today must be "flexible" to engage with industry rhythms – or other institutional clock times (Hantor and Lahr 1975) in terms of their farming organizational enterprise strategies (Reinhardt and Barlett 1989) – and to mitigate the climatic conditions and natural life-cycles, of people, objects, and animals. Farming enterprise workers must orchestrate their lives via gendered work rhythms to collectively negotiate their work within the agri-food system. Livelihoods and agri-food system rhythms and logistical arrangements are defined, in part, by what are thought of as "natural cycles" and capitalist temporal logics. Growing enterprises, chemical companies, and seed breeders attempt to rush crops through development stages, but ultimately, they must adhere to the crop's development temporalities and thus, the climates in which they develop. Though capitalist logic structures the industry, the environment still helps shape farming temporalities.

The practice of farming requires cooperation and the orchestration of multiple work rhythms so that a crop can be sold as a commodity. These work rhythms and the pacing of commodity cycles and exchange relations vary and prove to offer more to analysis than the overdetermined (Hareven 1993) notion of speed of accumulation in neoliberal times (Bestor 2001; Tsing 2015). Work rhythms, pacing, and accumulations shape people's lives and livelihood strategies in varied ways that help characterize political economies (Bear 2016). For FFV enterprises, seasonality is a critical temporal organizing factor. In industry terms, there is a "window of opportunity" or production

(Fischer and Benson 2006) during which crops can be harvested and (most importantly) sold on the global and/or regional market without lots of competition from other production areas. FFV farming families strategize the best they can to match their harvests with market supply lulls and price hikes. Brokers manage these exchanges and their enterprise cycles through a kind of "just-in-time" operation scheme (cf. Boyd and Watts 1997). However, all of this work does not simply take place during the harvest season.

FFV farming families will be the first to tell you that that does not mean that they do not work a year-round schedule. What this means is that the enterprise must manage a particular kind of cash flow, in that the harvest is the only temporal window when (typically) revenue flows into the enterprise. For this reason, some farming enterprises spread out in a few ways. They strategically distribute the risk of a failed crop or commodity market by diversifying their cash crops (Ortiz et al. 2013); likewise, they spread out in terms of geographic location, or spatial organization, to lessen the risk of ecological problems (LaLone 2008). These two spatial strategies serve to spread profits and work out temporally, which are examples of "managing risk" that allow for a more sustainable enterprise cash flow.

The farming families I conducted research with – and many FFV farming operations – diversify their crops so that harvest seasons fall at varied times that fit together like puzzle pieces of an annual calendar. Some kin members work in other agri-food enterprises during the coldest part of winter – making wreaths for Christmas or irrigating at nurseries –while their kin continue to manage their farming enterprises. They make sense of this cycle for the enterprise and certain members negotiate nested financial

cycles (as well as natural growth-decay cycles). That being said, farming enterprises prove to be social action organized around tasks and plant development. In many ways, farming is determined less by clock time than by natural time (Kantor and Lehr 1975), especially compared to many urban jobs. Many farmers will tell you: “Nature won’t wait.”

While farming production cycles continue, distribution-marketing must continue as well. The FFV distribution-marketing sector of the larger industry manifests modern capitalist temporal logic with the aim of the fasted possible transfer, or “movement,” of packed and documented produce out the door into a truck and on to a customer. These transactions and the assumption that speed is optimal above all else work within capitalist temporal logics (Syring 2008; Bear 2016). As one farming family father told me, fresh-market produce farming enterprises consume more than they produce. They take out credit to produce and then pay it back piece by piece to keep producing. This is an enterprise cycle that depends on redistributive flow management. This annual enterprise cycle often determines whether the “family farm” will be sold or serve as inheritance for the next generation (Salamon 1992).

Many FFV industry actors who contribute to the globalized agri-food system from southern Appalachia (and beyond) believe that fresh-market produce farming enterprises will not be financially soluble without vertically integrating their operation. FFV growing enterprises (and many primary producers) are considered as “price takers” in the industry, which means that they are marginally structured within the global supply chain to the extent that they cannot negotiate a sustainable market price with the dominant (wholesale) buyers like grocery store chains. To gain leverage in the supply chain,

farming or food-producing enterprises must also act as food distributers – complete with a packing facility, traceability software, staff, boxes, branding and various types of expensive machinery, like large walk-in coolers and factory-line like “wash lines.” They must act as a farm, processing or packing facility, and a marketing or brokerage firm.

A packing facility of this type can cost a million dollars. Most grocery stores require this level of capitalization to buy from a produce seller, or broker. This means that produce farming enterprises either must follow that route and become “grower-shippers” (in industry terms), find new markets (e.g., tailgate markets and “local food” restaurant distribution programs), or sell their produce to a “shipper” (i.e., packing house or brokerage firm) to act as their produce conduit. All of these “set-up” options (i.e., enterprise infrastructure and exchange arrangements) entail spending money, thought, and time on distribution and marketing. They also entail new production plans so that the enterprise produces enough food commodities to cover all of these (now additional) expenses. With input costs high and profit margins remaining small, low- to mid-volume FFV farming enterprises must navigate this political economic context carefully to remain solvent. The FFV industry in this sense is exemplary of the extreme inequities of a neoliberal “free market” and the ways in which this approach to trade creates unequal playing fields, narrows both the number of food producers and food channels, and puts widespread food security at risk.

Overall, the U.S. health consensus shifted over the last century from a preference for cans to a health-based, perception of “fresh” whole foods (Friedland 1994). Over the last two decades, members of what many call the middle and upper economic classes shifted to a “postmodern diet” that emphasized cutting out grains, which in the past were

central to the U.S. population's "healthy diets." Though this fetishization of "fresh" produce (Cook 1994) seems like it would improve the market prices that FFV farming families would receive, low- to mid-volume enterprises are largely locked out of the opportunities to access the wide profit margin realities that are accessed by transnational agri-industrial corporations, such as Del Monte. The "economies of scale" logic supports the domination of the food markets by a few transnational corporations. It equates the operation size with "efficiency" – the larger the size, the more efficient the operation can be. This is an equation that only works when "externalized costs" are not taken into account. This logic dominates the globalized agri-food system which is structured by intersecting neoliberal policy environments that farming families encounter in many places throughout the world.

"Labor" reifies workers and their contributions to the production process. "Cheap labor" is a social construct that dehumanizes people and devalues their time commitment, as mortal humans, through the presumption that their wage (a monetary measure of their work time) is worth less than that of other humans (Marx 1867). "Labor" and "efficiency" both are often spoken about as if work process (and capital accumulation) were person-less, a noun without a face, an action without an actor. This is why studies that analyze "time as technique" and as "knowledge" must also take the "ethics of time" into account (Bear 2016). In this sense, the study of time – in terms of ethics as mediator of relations, as a form of knowledge and strategy – can inform anthropology of work studies. This dissertation challenges the notion of "cheap labor" by counter-constructing the stereotypes that define particular, racialized, and temporally othered human beings in southeastern U.S. agriculture. This seems to be supported by the other side of the

"efficiency" coin in modern capitalist agriculture – mechanization. To mechanize farming is to dehumanize agri-food systems.

Today, comercially produced fruits and vegetables are "global crops" in that they are part of global circulations and simultaneously defined by local production relations (Kingsolver 2011). Global crops are produced and distributed through various, interacting scales (i.e., global, local, and regional) and temporalities which are made possibly by cooperative arrangements that are shot through with asymmetrical power relations. In the past, many scholars thought of "global crops" as agri-food products as symbols of colonialism – imported by the "Global North" and exported by the "Global South." No matter which enterprise orchestrates the transformation of a crop into a commodity, they do this so through "social paths" (Friedland 1981; Friedberg 2004), or the connections of exchange relations which allow for value transformation. This value transformation can be created via industrial relations which can be, and often are, part of kin networks[6].

Low- to mid-volume farming is now framed in the U.S. capitalist system as inherently "inefficient" if operations do not have high levels of mechanization, capitalization, and production volume. The higher volume you "pull off" (or harvest) from the field, the more work has to be done off the field in terms of regulation compliance, distribution logistics, and marketing. For any of this to work, coordination must take place between all facets of the enterprise and industry. No one can grow, harvest, pack, and "move" (sell) produce alone. People act as "go-betweens" to

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[6] Actor-network-theory (ANT) allowed for the "realization that the social is a certain type of circulation" (Law and Hassard 1999[2005]:19). Bruno Latour argues that "actor-network-theory" (ANT) allows a kind of leveling of relations that includes relations to objects and ideas, along with people in the same scale (2005). I do not use ANT theory in this study, because I focus on people and their work and kin identities, practices, collective strategies, perspectives, values and layered relations from particular positions within the globalized agri-food system.

communicate to mangers and translate the issues farming workers have in the fields with workers in marketing offices who are scheduling shipments. Though these communicators are central to operations, cooperative practives amongst workers in enterprises – and across enterprises – are overlooked. These cooperative practices and relations are the underbelly of the globalized agri-food system.

Contemporary agri-food products are not understood by most as symbols of the injustice of globalized agricultural industry. Many people in the U.S. do not know when their fresh-market produce was harvested, where it geographically came from, via what kinds of seed and production methods it grew, nor which labor arrangements or social relations organized the process. Some consumer campaigns were formed by making those labor relations visible, like in the case of the "Campaign for Fair Food" led by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. This campaign asked that workers be paid a penny more per pound and worked with consumers to boycott buyers (e.g., the Publix grocery store chain) who would not join the collective, vertical agreement. However, for the most part, these labor relations within the FFV commodity chain are not transparent. People know the store from which they bought their FFV, and the price they paid at the cash register. That is as far as the path leads for the majority of consumers who do no further investigation.

In southern Appalachia, fresh-market tomatoes are culturally and historically important due to the large number of family-based farms that produced them commercially. Tomatoes and other warm season vegetables were central farm commodities in southern Appalachia and became critically important to families' livelihoods as complementary cash crops to burley tobacco which lost its reliable and

sustainable market price in the 1990's with the phasing out of the Tobacco Buyout. I will discuss this regional farming history more in chapter three. In the current NAFTA-TLCAN era, competitors are not only active in the local in the fresh-market produce industry, but they are global due to trade relations and "cold chain" technology that allows fresh-market produce to be transported across vast distances, even in container ships over oceans (Levinson 2016).

Despite the increasing reliance on imported fresh-market produce, the microregion is still an important contributor to the FFV industry of the U.S. East Coast in part because of its location – within 3,000 miles or a few days drive of major urban areas in the U.S. Northeast, where the majority of the U.S. population is concentrated. With the introduction of four-lane highways to the mountains in the twentieth and twenty-first century, these producers were able to access market prices that could keep them in business and provide them with an opportunity to access a rural livelihood. But since the 1980's, fewer and fewer families conventionally grow FFV in this microregion because profit margins are thin; the market price is volatile; and, financial risk is high due to neoliberal trade policy. Despite these conditions, family groups like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres keep farming. Some industry actors in the region, like Richard – an agricultural cooperative extension agent and farmer – believe that this is because, "They are far more cooperatively minded than the local farmers who hold onto family feuds."

The Family Farm trope is popular in the fresh-market fruit and vegetable industry (Torres 1997) and can be useful when agricultural enterprises make (otherwise intolerable) temporal work demands. In the tomato industry in the southeastern U.S., some farming corporations call themselves a "family of farms." They act as corporate-

scale growers producing in various places in and across the region throughout the year. They often have mobile work crews that travel the regional, seasonal circuit with them as production shifts from one particular company to another within the same corporate entity. Workers travel along with the managers and sometimes even the equipment. According to some of the corporate growers in the southeastern U.S., these workers are said to be "like family" though the corporate growers may not know the workers' names. Susanna Donaldson wrote about fictive or "like family" farming work relations in Appalachia on small-scale tobacco farms where she found a mixing of reciprocal arrangements and wage labor (2011).

According to one grandfather in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, "La vida es puro trabajo acá" (Life is pure work here). He spent most of his life traveling back and forth seasonally, coming and going from the U.S. and Mexico to cultivate basic grains in Mexico and pick tomatoes in the U.S. It seems that life is all work especially for families who are trying to earn their livings from the marginal profits of a perishable crop in a globalized market – where strategic timings can make or break your enterprise with twenty-five-pound box market price fluctuates during a steady season from approximately nine dollars to approximately twenty-five or fifteen dollars. The price goes from breaking even at approximately eight dollars to earing three times that cost, depending on your crop, your buyers, and the market price.

Farming Enterprises: Class Process, Time, and Gendered Kin Relations

I put family firms and new kinship studies into conversation with literature on "family farm" literature to explore gendered power relations within corporate units

organized by kin-based relations and production-distribution-consumption strategies. Instead of taking the concept of “family farm” – which conceptualizes work within the realms of a place with spatial boundaries – I use the concepts enterprise, circuit, cycles, kin network and (nested) action groups to emphasize the temporal logic of flows, cooperative practices, and enterprise activities that make the social organization of rural livelihoods possible.

When firms and corporations are conceptualized as enterprises, the critical element of a collective effort to manage the flows that travel through – and are shaped by – these social organizations is made legible. By enterprise, I mean social, political and economic sites of “distributive flows” where class and nonclass processes occur and interact (Resnick and Wolff 1987; Gibson-Graham and O’Neill 2001). It should be noted that collective effort can also be used for consolidated capitalist accumulation by corporations (Shever 2012). In fact, “the enterprise is also the locus of the exploitative class relation that makes possible the accumulation of capital. In this vision, class is functional to accumulation, a requisite but not theoretically interesting element of capitalist dynamics” (Gibson-Graham and O’Neill 2001:2).

I suggest that this collective strategic approach to the total farm work process can be seen via their kin-based agri-food enterprises. By enterprise, I mean social, political and economic sites of “distributive flows” where class and nonclass processes occur and interact (Resnick and Wolff 1987; Gibson-Graham and O’Neill 2001). I use the term agri-food as opposed to agricultural because various kin members operate food processing and distribution enterprises which are complementary to agricultural

production enterprises. These enterprises are diversified across the production-distribution-consumption spectrum and total farm work process.

Collective efforts make enterprise possible, and they all do not necessarily follow a zero-sum, negative exchange capitalist logic. Instead, many enterprises create and use alternative exchange relations and logics. The concept of enterprise also allows me to recognize these redistributive flows and temporal orderings that make value creation possible and thus, to recognize the labor contributed by various kin members to the overall livelihood-generating project. As a second-generation tomato farmer from the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group said, "No one can do this alone. There is too much to do. There's just no way. Too much to do."

The concept enterprise also allows me to draw attention to the temporal logics and critical natural cycles at play in the agri-food industry and the strategies these enterprises develop to manage temporal demands and livelihood commitments in a binational production context and a globalized trade context. For instance, particular members of the binational kin group are able to deal in both highly perishable goods (fresh-market tomatoes) in the U.S. and storable goods (basic grains) in Mexico to create a complementary binational enterprise portfolio. Asking how kin-based enterprises – and individual workers within those enterprises – navigate time allows for the analysis cooperation and conflict, and of agency in relation to time and the structuring powers of the agri-food system. In particular, I contribute to this conversation by analyzing gendering practices taught through kin relations and the ways in which kin members navigate the temporal logics of agricultural industries in a binational context. Overall, the focus on a binational farming family as a group of strategists engaging in globalized

agricultural industries allows for the re-imagining of Latinx in, and their contributions to, the rural southeastern U.S.

To allow for this reimagining of Latinx farming families' contributions to the globalized agri-food system and their potential contributions to a transnational politics of economic possibility, I use cooperation theory to make sense of how and when relations allow for high levels of cooperation, to solve the collective action dilemma (Crank and Leech 2013) and to analyze what this has to do with collective identity and shared livelihood projects.

The various enterprise organizations within the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin network are not manifestations of an inherent (nor essentialized) ethnic capitalism – as is assumed in much of the anthropology of business literature. I also do not categorize their knowledge as inherent to a particular ethnic heritage (Salamon 1992) or ethnic group (Wells 1991) per se, but instead frame it as knowledge of farming families with particular histories, interests, and skillsets – as part of a transnational framing of (binational) farming families who contribute to corporate capitalist projects (McDonald 1993) and flexible producers with livelihoods projects in the U.S. and Mexico. They are instead manifestations of coordinated rural livelihood strategies that draw on kin relations to navigate the temporal challenges of agricultural political economies. Social organization – across genders, nationalities, class and generations – makes the coordination of enterprises within agricultural political economies possible and the kin relations that undergird the social organization of enterprises seem to supply the circuitry needed for many of these capitalist agri-food system projects.

The meaning of labor and understandings of kin relations are diverse and vary culturally, even for farming families in North America. Labor can be thought of as collective or as a noun that is bought and sold. In the U.S., the notion of "work time" is an obvious, yet subtle, indicator of power relations, and cultural meanings. As one produce industry expert told me, "efficiency is labor whether it's your own or someone else's." Equating "efficiency" with "labor" demeans humans who contribute the labor – humans who give part of their temporally limited (mortal) lives to the work process. According to capitalist logic, and U.S. popular belief, "efficient labor" is "cheap labor." These are often elided. Efficient in this sense means that the work demands less work time, and thus, costs the enterprise less monetary value – which presumably will enable more profit. In this context, time proves to be a form of "work-discipline" in industrialized, capitalist society (Thompson 1967). But considering that there are multiple forms of capitalism (Miller 1997), instead of one capitalist totality (Gibson-Graham 2006) – or as some would call it, "global economy" – we must ask: how, where, when, and for whom?

Family firm literature convincingly shows how kin produce and reproduce ideologies that gender – and falsely separate – entwined domains like family and firm (Yanagisako 2002) through analysis of complex forms of transnational family capitalism (Yanagisako 2013) and capitalistic competition (Marcus 1992), which previous scholarship has not addressed. This separation further embeds the gendered assumptions of family as domestic and female, and firm as male and public. These spatial-centric gendered assumptions render women's work less visible and inhibit the analysis of how genders work together to negotiate power and accumulate capital. A focus on the various

experiences and ways of thinking about temporality can contribute to this work (Bear 2016).

Through family relations and discursive strategies, family members “craft” subjectivities (Kondo 1990) and in turn, (re)produce ideologies that gender – and artificially separate – entwined domains like family and firm (Yanagisako 2002). As a form of capitalism, the light treatment given to “family capitalism” by Marxist and Weberian scholars “is itself part of the hegemonic processes…” which obfuscate the relation between family-kinship processes and capitalism and put under erasure the power of sentiments in the realm of capitalist production (Yanagisako 2002:13).

New kinship studies scholars argue that kin relations are also critical to organizing economic behavior, and even industrial systems (McKinnon and Cannell 2013). When Shever analyzes the privatization process of oil in Argentina through a kin relations lens, she argues that programs like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) manifest corporations’ attempts to coopt the cooperative power behind kinship bonds between workers to privatize and reorganize the oil industry into neoliberal subcontracting schemes – programs aimed at forging affective relations and mapping affective kin relations onto work realms to engender a sense of loyalty and solidarity (2012). This is but one study that renders visible the importance of kin relations to modern political economies. The family as business trope naturalizes inequities and obscures class division within a corporation. In Jessica Smith Rolston’s study of the connection between gendered kin relations, work rhythms and the mining industry, a CSR program and an internship program for miners’ children seemed to further blur the lines between affective kin relations and work place (2014). She showed how kin-based engendering practices

took place between nuclear families and how those which were performed while mining allowed for cross-gender cooperation that supported capitalist projects over the long-term via kin-work relations (Rolston 2014). This is also evident in the agricultural sector.

A combined gender and generational lens reveals when and how women and men make use of the "family" trope – as a particular cultural category of bond or relation that is somewhat flexible depending on the cultural context. As feminist scholars have argued, the family is "an ideological construct associated with the modern state" (Collier, Rosaldo and Yanagisako 1992:31). State "family" ideologies are critical to understanding gender and mobility, especially within the context of transnational migration processes (Gallo 2009) and family enterprises (Shever 2012, 2013). While at the same time, divisive political categories are challenged through practices of kinship, like life-cycle rites, that forge a collective, kin-based identity (Yen 2001).

The gendered, fictive kin trope can also be found in agricultural companies with male enterprise names (e.g., Church Brothers) and female enterprise relations (e.g., sister companies). The corporations' marketing firms re-enforce the naturalized assumptions that with kinship comes long term trust relations which translate to reliable and quality products. The FFV industry advertises trust and implicitly signifies long-term (or learned) respect for the exchange process when selling their brand via claims of being multi-generational. Large-scale companies in south Florida use their multi-generational Euro-American immigrant farming family stories for advertising on their websites and in FFV industry media, like *The Packer.* For instance, one example of an advertisement that does this reads: "Fifth Generation of Upright Committed Services." In other words, this

enterprise is seen as patrimony and heritage and claims a legacy in the name of value creation.

Of course, many industry actors argue that farming enterprises are still legally a family business, even though all of their labor is not supplied by the direct nuclear family members. In fact, 97% of the farms in the U.S. are family owned (USDA 2012). Subsistence strategies are part of the farm economy. However, with industrialized farming schemes which are far less diversified, there is less opportunity to provision your family from your farm. No matter the size operation, U.S. farm policy privileged mono-cropping system and induce consolidation (Strange 1988). According to an agricultural extension agent in south Florida, "many of (the large-scale Florida tomato companies) aren't [even] corporations. They are LLCs or something. So, they incorporate that way to shield their finances, but you know often they are family businesses. Some of the largest companies are still run by family members." Kin systems can encourage the collective harnessing of resources necessary to establish and maintain an enterprise: resources like capital, knowledge, opportunity and social industry connections.

Within economic anthropology debates, Stephen Gudeman argues that "economic practices and relationships are constituted within the two [dialectical] realms of market and community, and the four value domains that [he] term[s] the base, social relationship, trade, and accumulation" (2001:5). The "domains of value" for Gudeman create the fabric that we call economy and these values are and become deeply intertwined with and in the lives of economic subject-actors. It seems, however, that this framing of market as still separate from community decenters questions about economic justice in terms of the redistribution of wealth. Just as a "harmony ideology" should not be mapped onto a

group of people just because they see themselves as "community" (Nader 1990), pure capitalist logic should not be mapped onto all "market" practices (Gibson-Graham 2006). Alternatives transactions are amongst us (Gibson-Graham 2006) – and have always been (Kingsolver 2016a) – as coexistent in the diverse contexts of capitalist process. Power relations are constantly contested as relations, practices, and livelihood circumstances transition – even in the "family economy."

In the context of the contemporary globalized agri-food system, farming families – who depend on coordination of kin relations – adapt and employ various collective strategies including mixing reciprocal arrangements and wage labor (Donaldson 2011), particularly in timing resource circulations and allocations (Wilk 1989; Guyer 2004) and diversifying crops and geographic distribution of cultivation sites to access more temporally dispersed harvest seasons (LaLone 2008), as do many well-capitalized agri-business operations (Ortiz et al. 2013).

Kinship recognizes mortality, cyclical rhythms to human life, and symbolic power. It also can make up the social web or "community" that shares what Stephen Gudeman calls "the base" (2001), which is defined as a "shared commons…[or] a shared interest of value…anything that contributes to the material and social sustenance of a people with a shared identity…and represents temporality and continuity" (Gudeman 2001:27). As I, and new kinship scholars and new class politics scholars would suggest, "the base" and its "community" should not be analyzed as separate from "the market," because this rendering limits the possibilities of creating and embracing a larger-scale, diversified "community economy," conceptualized as "a potential convening signifier for

many different forms of economic difference, constituting a chain of equivalences through new acts of identification" (Gibson-Graham 2006:78).

Scholars have studied the related concept of "family economy" within immigrant communities and informal economies in California by documenting collectivizing strategies such as pooling incomes and have shown that workers can access enterprise "opportunities that would be beyond [their] reach outside of the sphere of kinship" (Zlolniski 2006:147). Often, scholars point to "pooling incomes" as evidence of this (cf: Roberts 1994; Chávez 1992; Sleby et al. 1990; Wood 1981). Feminist scholars argue that these studies romanticize women's work within or for family groups as generalized reciprocity (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Zavella 1995; Mahler 1995).

An intergenerational, collective approach to farming as an enterprise– and the practices of relatedness that map onto livelihood activities – is not as explicitly recognized as political or economic as other organizational enterprise strategies. It is assumed and seen as a sign of success. As Billy, an agricultural cooperative extension agent in southern Georgia, explained, "You call them up and they tell you 'ohh my grandson is farming it.' They are probably trying to teach them. Get them a place to practice. They are all using the same equipment and everything so…" Some kin groups do this more than others. Limited "nuclear" understandings of "family" are suburbanized notions found in many places in the U.S. today. However, in rural places, kin relations were (and for many are) understood as wider networks of farming families, not simply as the nuclear intergenerational family relations (Salamon 1992; Donaldson 2011). This is related to the shifting organization of segmented social labor in terms of gender (Sachs 1996; Fink 1987; Poats et al. 1989; Barlett et al. 1998; Arias 1992) that came about with

urbanization and the ways that power is exercised, especially in terms of family social status and contingent political economic relationships (Finkler 1989). There are many Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family-based farming enterprise alliances and action group projects between enterprises within the wider binational network.

Scholars who study kin in relation to political economies recognize that exchange relations amongst kin cannot be separated from capitalist strategies within wider interlocking communities of exchange and market transactions. Larissa Adler Lomnitz and Marisol Perez-Lizaur offer the concept of an "action group" with their study of how kinship articulated with class process and Mexican politics over the course of five generations (1987). An "action group for economic purposes is a group of trusted relatives organized around an entrepreneur, who acts as a broker on their behalf toward the rest of society" (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987:119). I see this as a useful concept; however, I use enterprise for this study, because it allows for the recognition of multiple contributors and managers of flows for the group's common purpose of capital accumulation – instead of assuming a centralized organizational structure around one "entrepreneur." I relate this concept of an "action group" to that of allied enterprises working as a coalition in chapter seven.

Kin relations are long-term exchange relations which follow an alternative temporal logic to the short-term market relations assumed in neoliberal economies. The concept of enterprise – and the notion behind it that worker-owner production operations offer more to what we may now call community economies (Gibson-Graham 2006) – directs attention to the flows and relations (Resnick and Wolff 1987) instead of to "labor" and, as I argue, the timings that make agricultural industrial exchange possible. With

worker-owner enterprises, the worker-owner her/himself makes the temporal claims on her/himself in negotiation with the political economy s/he is navigating for her/his livelihood.

As the political economics of temporality often shows, time is a social construct – defined, ordered, and made real in a societal sense by culture – and thus, not neutral (Greenhouse 1996). People make use of temporalities in a variety of political ways (Rutz 1992). These temporalities entail not only the ones lived out through livelihood (Guyer 2001; 2004), but also the temporalities that are socially determined by cultural meaning, like those of resources, or "timely assets" (Ferry and Limbert 2008). These temporalities are foundational to understanding how the global agri-food system works and can be changed.

This temporal "othering" (Fabian 1983) – and the temporalities it produces – influences working families lives in profound ways. Theories concerning the political economics of temporality (Greenhouse 1996; Ferry and Limbert 2008; Fabian 1983; Bear 2016) and spacetime (Munn 1986) – and the politics of timespace (Boyarin 1994) – can offer insights into the inequities of the agri-food system, and potentially aid in the re-imagining of how agri-food system livelihoods and work relations could be. Of course, agricultural (especially highly perishable) production also entails temporalities that must be taken into account. Together these temporalities reveal political economic insight into agricultural inequities that are in part structured by the (organization of the) agri-food system. "Alternative capitalist" models to livelihoods (Gibson-Graham 2006) must take social time into account when analyzing power relations.

The temporalities of farming and of the agricultural systems are multiple (Tsing 2015) and naturalized. They are often assumed as fixed due to the particular type of environmental engagement, as opposed to say a textile factory, as if family farming was were not industrial as part of a globalized industry (Barnett 1989; 1993). Farming family temporalities can also be understood as industrial temporalities. To describe how these temporalities, allow for farming, feminist scholars theorized family farms as agri-family system (Bennett and Kohl 1982; Salamon 1992). But it is important to note – in addition to the capitalist industrial temporalities the navigate – that a multi-generational family group does not frame all their exchange relations within what is assumed to be an overall short-term capitalist market timescape.

Today, most people in the U.S. require year-round work schedules. An agri-food enterprise goes through cycles of its own, from generation to generation. There are yearly cycles that the enterprisers must account for and coordinate within particular time ranges. They must arrange for planting for the next season which involves financing, clearing of the field, ordering and transporting of the transplants and lining up clients, and access to credit and machinery, just to name a few goals that must be achieved to reach a harvest season. Certain types of agricultural enterprise work continue almost year-round. However, the "seasonal temporary work" mindset has always caused issues for the agricultural industries that have developed over the last one hundred years. This is part of the reason why mechanization is considered "desirable" even within what are considered as hand-harvested agri-food commodities. In neoliberal logical terms, a machine is more efficient than a human. This is only logical if, as is neoliberal tendency, the costs are externalized from the enterprise efficiency and capital accumulation equation. While

speed appears to rule the day, quality is what sells produce. In the highly perishable crop industry, this is measured in the producer buyer industry as “specs” (e.g., shape, maturation level, weight, etc.). To produce the highest volume of produce with the highest “spec” rating, people tend to be on call all the time.

Particularly demanding industrial work schedules can provide a lifestyle in which kin relations are mapped onto workplace relations, which can result in the facilitation of cooperative practices and work relations (Rolston 2014). In this way, this temporal approach is tied to my argument (and that of new kinship studies scholars) that scholars need to re-examine the significance of kinship – as a form of relatedness, which influences perspectives, forges bonds and organizes transactions and work – in modern political economies (McKinnon and Cannell 2013), and thus, re-conceptualize and re-imagine the roles of farming families in shaping global agri-food system circulations and the cultural logics (Ong 1999), practices of relatedness, and temporal orders that produce them.

When “labor” is “someone else’s time,” it is clear that ethical perspectives help shape the meanings, practices, and expectations that come with the laboring subject-actor position. When the question of kin relations enters the “labor efficiency” conversation, naturalized cultural assumptions – about the relations between time commitments, obligations, and gender roles – come into play. For the farming families with whom I worked, life and time spent laboring at their own enterprises are not diminished to simply money in terms of meaning and value. This notion is bound up in the rural U.S. nostalgia for “farm life” – which is in part defined by gendered notions of work (Campbell et al. 2006).

Kin ideology promotes a naturalized temporal logic of solidarity which can be used for agri-food enterprises. This temporal logic supports reciprocal practices of sharing that instill values that make cooperation possible. This is not simply for the group with which I conducted research, but for many, if not most, farming families in the southeastern U.S. Social time is an important lens for understanding the role of kin relations in political economies, social process and, I suggest, agri-food systems. Time is often taken as a structural given. A social time lens on exchange relations and practices can offer a new perspective which highlights the agency people can practice through culturally constructed, temporal orderings of circulation cycles and collective strategies.

Social time can be used to unify a group, such is the case for kindred and to organize multiple temporlaities and practices of exchange relations around a collective project like a farming enterprise. Feminist scholars in the 1990's realized there was a need to "rethink" the cultural concept of family and all the naturalized assumptions that come with it (Thorne and Yalom 1992). One of those naturalized assumptions is that sharing biological matter (i.e., DNA or blood) makes someone 'family.' However, kinship is a cultural practice, not a biological fact. Many people assume that kin relations are long-term relations of trust, loyalty, confidence. This temporal assumption of "kin as forever" – which is assumed due to supposed biological truths – is powerful in cultural worlds.

The way the farming FFV industry functions today for small- to mid-scale farming enterprises necessitates a kind of self-exploitation to financially survive. Very particular work time commitments are understood as the norm for those who work in the industry. Scholars write about the ways in which farmers self-exploit in the peasant

economy in Latin America (Chayanov 1966; De Janvry 1981; Collins 1984; Jones 1991), and in the U.S. capitalist economy (Barlett 1977). Here, I re-frame this conversation to recognize the entire families' contributions to the FFV farming work process that make facets of the globalized agri-food system possible and the precarious political economic livelihood environments which necessitate self-exploitation for small- to mid-scale farming enterprise survival.

Self-exploitation is naturalized, as "just normal life," especially by women who work to manage household tasks and FFV farming enterprise activities. Take Julia for instance; during an agri-food enterprise accounting course, Julia said that she doesn't account for her or her husband's wages because she does not want to demoralize her husband. One of her nieces, Monica, said, "I could work at Dollar General. But I would never work for seven dollars an hour. I will just go work for my family. That work matters more." These women point out that the unit of labor and value of labor cannot simply be measured by clock time. They may be "self-exploiting" for their family's farming enterprise, but in their minds, it is better to do that work with and for their kin, than to work for a corporation that exploits them, controls their use of their time, and undervalues their livelihoods. And women are not the only FFV farming enterprisers self-exploiting in this neoliberal farming policy context; their husbands do this as well, with their work in the fields.

This is what Frances Abrahamer Rothstein saw as characterizing the process from which families went from acting as "worker-peasant to small-scale flexible producers" of cottage-textile producers in rural neoliberal Mexico (2007: 43). I conceptualize the practices of these families of "flexible producers" as similar to family farming enterprise

strategies in southern Appalachia. The collective strategies used and created within and amongst enterprises – like those of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group – are evident in the economic policy-making realm. Policy serves to draw boundaries around markets (Marshall 2012) – and thus opportunities for alternative exchange relations – to design, or at least influence, market power relations. Another way of explaining this would be to state that people make change through cooperation (Goodenough 1963) and innovation happens in groups (Gudeman 2001).

When life is purely work then one must make more out of work than simply money – despite the ever-present neoliberal political economic context that values market value over use value. Families create flexible livelihoods for themselves so that if work must "be life" than at least work and life can be spent with kin (Williams 1984).Their practices of relatedness within their kin group can re-enforce their practices of relatedness (in the form of cooperation) when working on farming enterprise activities. I follow this binationally in two related regions in North America.

For the farming families in this study, working is not simply farm labor, but a contribution to the kin group and family enterprise. When work is conceptualized as an intergenerational project –thought of within a long-time horizon – it can take on deeper meanings and create relations that operate alongside a capitalist system, sometimes even in the name of capitalism. But this is not always the case, which farming families often teach us. Attention to these exchange relations and kin-based practices can reveal insight into cooperative economic possibilities and alternative exchange arrangements, which a capital-focused analysis would obscure.

Of course, kinship – like other systems that organize exchange relations and practices of relatedness – can differentially constrain and empower interdependent individuals positioned at overlapping intersections of social constructs or cultural categories. These categories can be used to naturalize power disparities and exploitative practices (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995; Collins 1993). Particular persons in the binational kin group face particular forms of discrimination depending on the social constructs which are mapped onto them, putting them in social categories which are often imagined as "either/or" (e.g., man or woman, white or colored) instead of a "both/and" logic (Derrida 1992).

When total work process is used as the (wider) analytical frame, it enables an analysis of class process recognizes the importance of work that is done in the so-called private sphere (such as kin work) as part of the larger political economic context in which men's work in the "public sphere" is most readily acknowledged, and thus, visible (di Leonardo 1984:136). Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – the national economic development measurement that defines which labor counts – is an example of this kind of dual visibility and invisibility (Gibson-Graham 2006). This kind of capital-centrism explains, in part, why kinship studies has been sidelines from much other social scientific political economic analysis, via Weber and Marx (McKinnon 2013). Today, with Donald Trump and a portion of his family working in the U.S. White House, the importance of kin relations to political economic analysis can no longer be cast aside by analysts in the U.S. Kin-based alternative exchange relations, arrangements, and practices could contribute to the politics of economic possibility.

Particular members of the farming families discussed in this project negotiate these cultural boundaries simultaneously, boundaries such as those mentioned above as well as those created by social institutions like citizenship and kinship that mark certain people as nonmembers – deemed unable to legitimately make claims on certain collectivities and rights (Ong 1996, 1999; Franklin and McKinnon 2001; Stephen 2007; Wilson 2009; Massey and Sánchez R. 2012). Attention to families' engagements in an industry in an im/migration context allows for the analysis of total work process, which takes more than one place into consideration. These social categories are multiple and have symbolic power which proves to greatly affect people's lives. The categories most cogent to this research are gender, nationality, class, ethnicity, and race. To make sense of the ways that these differentiating categories interact and shape people's lives, I draw on the theory of intersectionality which emphasizes that social categories are not mutually exclusive and that to make sense of how a person is socially constructed, one must look at categories such as gender, race, and class as mapped one onto the next (Crenshaw 1991; Collins 1992).

Family firm literature shows how familial idioms serve as disciplinary mechanisms (Kondo 1990; Hamabata 1990) that naturalize power disparities (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995) and—as scholars have shown in the context of "family farms" – obscure women's and children's labor contributions (Fink 1987, 1992; Adams 2002; Figueroa Sanchez 2013). As a flexible institution, kinship both constrains and enables individuals who are differentially positioned within "matrices of domination," or intersections of social constructs – such as class, age, gender, citizenship, ethnicity and race – on which oppression is based (Hill Collins 1993, 2000). Women's underpaid labor

at worksites is naturalized as inferior to that of men's (Barndt 2002) and justified through discursive strategies when marked as "temporary" (Kondo 1990) and framed as "supplemental" (Collins 1995). Social relations are continuously restructured as economic institutions and as the people who operate them act. Despite the current "insidious capitalist individualism" (Davis 2016) that is touted by neoliberal supporters and policy, social relations and cooperation prove to make economic institutions possible.

Kin ideology promotes and teaches both value systems and practices that reflect a long-term time horizon for exchange relations. The theories of practice and of social capital are part of this conversation on how people whose identity is linked by kin relations engage in (change and are changed by) political economies. However, social capital seems to have become a "grab bag" and has served to empower capitalism as a frame of thinking (Gibson-Graham 2006) even though it seems that it was meant to draw attention to the value of less obvious exchange relations, practices, and alternatives. The point according to Silvia, one farming family mother and marketera, is for members of the kin group to "ayudarse mutualmente" (mutually help each other) over the long-term.

Work is often gendered as part of kin-based collective strategies, and gendered work spheres are learned through cultural practices of kin relatedness that can be mapped onto ficitive kin work relations (Rolston 2014). They create gendered work rhythms (Guyer 1991) and structure cooperative relations and tasks organized around one social activity – for instance, a farming enterprise. Though farming enterprises in the U.S. operate within a capitalist system, they all rely on nonclass relations and the naturalized assumption of cooperation in the sense that the collective is ultimately more important than one individual. This is despite the fact that farming enterprises are often referred to

instead as “farmers” which are assumed to be male and autonomous – like the yeomen ideal and the farming entrepreneur (Salamon 1992). This is also clear in the term “farm wife” as a social category that works quite hard to avoid ascribing the term “farmer” to a woman who labors in a variety of ways, in a variety of places (e.g., domestic) with a variety of inter-generational people. These categories frame the difference between gendered work realms as forefront and asymmetric. While many scholars discuss gendered spatial work spheres, it seems to me that temporal organization of work is a chief factor in the gendering division of labor. Feminist scholars have drawn attention to the “double shift’ work days when, for example, women spend the day on capital production and the evening and night on work for social reproduction (i.e., cooking cleaning, raising children). Rural women’s and children’s labor has historically been under-recognized and obscured (Fink 1987, 1992; Adams 1994; Figueroa Sanchez 2013).

The women I worked with experience a variety of exchange relations including exploitation, but this is not what defines their family farming enterprise contributions or their political economic or kin-based identities. In this study, I found that “women’s social relations include economic autonomy and political and economic decision making” powers (Sacks 1975:6). Their diversified, year-round work is critical to their family-based farming enterprises and their kin group as a whole. Their relatives express this understanding as well. Since the women I worked with expressed the idea that material well-being cannot be individualized and recognized these practices and their work and work-kin relations as their contribution to a larger collective goal of well-being, I am discussing their family-based farm-firms as enterprises and their enterprise activities and arrangements as cooperative strategies that exists within varied and shifting power

relations and political economic identities. And because this dissertation is about a group or network of binational kin, this approach allows for an analysis of gendered work within the context of transnational class process and total farm work process.

In attempting to render visible women's unpaid labor within the family-kin realm, scholars have posited the concept of "centralizing women" who work to reproduce boundedness (Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987) through "kin work" – or the work of organizing gatherings and exchange practices which maintain family-based relatedness (di Leonardo 1984), even across long distances and state borders (Pérez 2004). Much of this "women's work" consists of the practices of "care givers" (di Leonardo 1984, 1986; Pérez 2004), which have largely gone underexplored. While many scholars have focused on women's work in industries and their role in the "family economy" (Lamphere et al. 1997), new kinship studies urge scholars to use their work to start to make sense of kin relations as part of (instead of separate from) larger political economic processes earlier in the conceptual framing – as is possible with total work process and class process.

Power relations within farming families vary as do agri-food commodity arrangements and production contexts. In the case presented in this dissertation, it is clear that these women – who act as members of farming families – claim decision-making power with their husbands, and through relationships beyond their kin group. They, like many, farming family women (Barlett 1993; Adams 1994; Sachs 1996), are part of the decision-making process for their farming enterprise, deciding on gendered co-responsibilities with their husbands (Adams 1994). The industry policy and the corporations that support it are marginalizing more diversified producers.

As I mentioned earlier, family farming studies argue that self-exploitation is a central facet to farming even in the capitalist U.S. setting (Barlett 1977). Martha, an enterprising FFV woman, believes that there are hardships that come with choosing farming as your family livelihood whether in the U.S. or Mexico. But in the U.S., where work is pure life, she explains that if you are an owner-operator, you may not get to sleep more than five hours, but you can pick your kids up from school. In other words, you may be able to act without permission and manage multiple schedules, but you cannot achieve this kind of livelihood without sacrifice. That struggle can mean self-exploitation in multiple forms whether sleep deprivation or other serious health conditions. Within the California strawberry fields, scholars found that gendered kin relations can be used to justify exploitation through family-worked share-cropping-like arrangements (Figueroa-Sanchez 2013). This study found that women of these FFV farming families use and gain comercio mētis when navigating the "rhythms of work and income" that come with the gendered work realms and phases of FFV farming enterprise work cycles (Guyer 1991:272) in southern Appalachia. It is clear that kin relations can help provide the social circuitry and temporal commitments, arrangements, and expectations needed to invest in, establish, and maintain rural agri-food production enterprises.

Harta Familia (*A lot of Family*): Kinship, Long-term Values, and Compadrazgo Practices

Larissa Adler Lomnitz and Marisol Perez-Lizaur argue that the "grand family" (or a three-generation extended kin group) acts as the "basic meaningful unit of solidarity in Mexico (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987:7) and that "kinship bridges the gulf

between macro- and micro-structure" (1987:14). This is a point that many new kinship studies argue also (McKinnon and Cannell 2013). Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur claim that this is because "kinship ritual and identity are central to the cultural system of any social group (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987: 5) and social groups use exchange relations to organize their livelihoods. This can be seen in the case of enterprising action groups which are simultaneously nested within the wider agricultural political economy and wider kin groups. This kind of cooperative activity is not always initially legible, though it is an important cultural aspect that shapes political economies and the circulations of the globalized agri-food system as this dissertation will show.

Kin relations are critical to modern political economies and as such, kin relations (like those which organize family firms and family farms) must be studied to get a more comprehensive understanding of cultural practices, social organization, capitalist strategies (McKinnon and Cannell 2013) and the temporal logics that guide them. The power of kin-based (long-term) cooperation can be harnessed by and for capitalist projects and non-capitalist projects – as family firm literature and cases like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group illustrate. Kinship provides an alternative timespace that opposes the market-based short-term time horizon. Kin relations' temporalities are characterized as longue durée and supported by systems of relations and customs like compadrazgo.

Kinship rituals and relations intermingle with affect, which bonds individuals over the long-term and produces the social foundations needed for capitalist projects. Exchange relations and the affective practices that accompany them are critical to defining kinship and understanding the underbelly of modern political economies

(McKinnon and Cannell 2013). Kin relations are social identity constructs that promote and naturalize long-term relations and support a kind of respect economy. In this way, they can be seen as generating social capital in that they help people economically get through critical moments when, for instance they may lose a tractor due to a missed loan payment. What is important here is that trust is in circulation. The temporal aspects of that trust are different from capitalist temporality. As such, kin relations can provide social relations and lay the foundation for cooperation which can be easier to access in small groups (Olson 2007).

In the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, comadres and compadres are "de la familia." They are already "de confianza" or trusted (though some more than others), and mutually practice "respeto" amongst each other. Often, the comadres and compadres are chosen based on their geographic microregion – in the "mismo rumbo" (*same area*) – so that the children and parents will have them closeby to rely on if needed. When lives change and migration happens, these relations can dissolve, but they can also be the glue that bonds migrants to their rancho and their kin there. Ideally, the trust bond will last longer than a lifetime, into the next generation.

Kinship as a social institution presents the conditions necessary for a collective identity. Though this corporate group is heterogeneous, members are united as "kin" under one shared, overarching identity. They live geographically dispersed yet coordinate livelihood projects, ranging from weddings to agri-food enterprises. Kin relations are assumed to last and develop over a lifetime and into the lives of generations to follow. One might even say they are assumed to have an endless time horizon. This long-term group identity offers a sense of stability and of belonging for many people.

As a cultural institution, kinship inculcates an ideology, a system of beliefs and values that structures relations and promotes solidarity – solidarity that is assumed to last over the long-term and manifest in ritual exchange. A system of values, practices, rituals, schedules, and long-term relations and obligations produces the foundations necessary for economic collaboration – as found in "family economy" in Mexico in the early 1900's in rural places (Rothstein 2007) and in urban settings (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987).

Kin systems are examples of collective creation, as products of people's actions who unite under a similar identity and cause (Olson 1965) to overcome the collective action dilemma, or the assumption that there will be a "free loader" (Conk and Leech 2013). A shared identity and cause can allow for collective coordination of tasks. In this sense, kin groups – like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group – can and do act as long-term thinking, planning, and caring market-oriented corporate groups within political economies.

Temporal logic of kin relations often implies long-term thinking and unquestionable solidarity which facilities cooperation within the wider political economic context. The long-term temporal logic is critical to the family trope and its power to unify and, importantly, naturalize asymmetrical power relations and quiets the "free loader dilemma" which accompanies capitalist logic (Conk and Leech 2013). Long-term relations require bonding practices to re-connect kin members and reproduce collective identity. Life course rituals are particularly important and re-enforce the link between kin relations and long-term temporal logics.

Ritual exchange requires and normalizes long-term, collective planning around a social activity – namely, a life course celebration that marks kin members' rites of passage at ages designated by the religious-kinship ritual system. Ritual exchange, which happens through compadrazgo, creates occasions for cooperation. Often, for this kin group, a religious ritual is organized early in the afternoon and then around five or six offers "comida" (*afternoon meal*). Depending on the crowd and the ritual, they sometimes organize karaoke and dancing with live music after the comida. These ritual exchange practices carry symbolic and material power, both in churches and in rented party rooms. These practices foster and are fostered by the belief in kinship as defined by long-term relations and a promise of no abandonment.

Cooperative practices – like those used to make ritual exchanges happen – are often taken for granted as natural to kin-related groups. Kin-related enterprise owner-operators collaborate as allied enterprises, which operate in and between in/formal economies as action groups through cooperative practices. Cooperation requires a certain amount and type of metaknowledge to be able to take place (Crank and Leach 2013). This metaknowledge is learned and reproduced through kin relations and practices like those of compadrazgo. For the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia, enterprise and kin interests are inextricably interwoven via kin solidarity and kinship ideology that is reproduced over generations through participation in symbolic kinship rituals.

Scholars have found that women who have been deemed "centralizing women" are often the arbiters and organizers of these life course rituals and other family gatherings (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987). As a group, kin members contribute to quinceañeras and baptismos and share in symbolic meaning and collectivizing

practices – all of which fulfill social kinship contracts and serve to honor kin members and the collective identity. They give resources, share information, and cultivate mutual exchange practices which are valued and inculcated through the daily experiences of learning through livelihood, or kin-work life.

These practices are built into kinship systems and manifest in life course rituals which kin groups like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres familia create collectively and then share in the experience of as a corporate group – even though asymmetrical power relations and practices are also still present. As a Catholic, mestizo, Latin American kin group originating from west-central Mexico, compadrazgo or ritual kinship is part of their kin system and lays the foundation for forging and re-enforcing particular kin relations. Through these practices and relations, they are reproducing forms of relatedness from the Bajío in southern Appalachia.

Hacerse Compadres

Compadrazgo is important in terms of organizing culture and society and mediating relations between nuclear families (Nutini 1976). As such, it is a varied form of fictive kinship, a set of kin-based vertical and horizontal relationships formed via multiple dyadic bonds (Mintz and Wolf 1950). It creates a kind of relationship template or cultural model complete with obligations and roles, ritualized practices and symbolic meanings, values, stories, and social categories that are supposed to last a lifetime and beyond, through the next generation. More precisely, compadrazgo is a:

> [social] institution [that] is an elaboration of Catholic Church dogma and practices and is formed normally at baptism and confirmation. Its core pattern consists of three roles: parent, child and godparent; and three relationships: a

> kin tie between parent and child; a spiritual tie between child and godparent; and a spiritual tie between godparent and parent. However, this structure is found in dramatically variant forms (Gudeman 1971:45).

Stephen Gudeman argues that compadrazgo must be understood for the spiritual aspects, as well as for the functional implications of the cultural system (Mintz and Wolf 1950) and the ways in which trust and solidarity are instilled in and by the network through the system (Foster 1961; Hammel 1968; Pitt-Rivers 1968). These bonds and the cultural-religious roles that come with them provide long-term identity markers, foundations for long-term relations, and practices that express respect and belonging.

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group practices compadrazgo in such a way as to fortify relations of exchange and create a close-knit group within a larger kin network. Their kin "hacerse compadres," (*to become godparents*) and in doing so, practice compadrazgo in their particular ways. Godparenthood is a kind of sponsorship or sorts: a patronage that more tightly bonds a kin group through dyadic relations. For them, as for most, compadrazgo inter-links households, forming a larger collective and kin-based community. Many kin members see these differences as regional and reason that because they are Catholic and from the Bajío, they follow these particular cultural-religious practices.

Life-cycle events are the main rituals that the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group practice and relate to their compadrazgo relations. Life-cycle events create life stages, which are understood and enacted as part of collective, long-term identity. Participation in these rituals places a person within (or outside) a group. Through the initiation of these rituals, people are "spiritually reborn" (Gudeman 1971:53) into bonds of respect and trust, as members of a larger kin-based group but now with new roles and responsibilities.

The life-cycle rituals this kin group puts the most energy and resources into celebrating are baptisms, quinceañera, and matrimony. In their rancho, they also celebrate school graduation with compadres (as a kind of symbolic sponsors of their education), but this kin group has not carried that tradition on in the U.S. where sixth grade graduation is not as highly revered as in their rancho in west-central Mexico.

Each life-cycle ritual has different sets of activities, responsibilities and symbolic practices that engender mutuality, interdependency, collective identity, and socially formalize exchange relations[7]. These ritual time frames create schedules for events which call for the coming together of relatives, or group members, to share food and forge bonds. These scheduled, predictable rituals require cooperation and tend to discourage disintegration of the group. As important rites of passage, they are used as markers of time in people's life stories (Yoneyama 1999).

Compadrazgo creates the stories, the need, and the projects for kin to work on and share in together. Julia, a farming family mother of this kin group, was kind enough to explain her view of their compadrazgo relationships one summer afternoon in South Carolina. She carefully explained the difference between compadres/comadres and padrinos/madrinas:

> Tengo mis hijos ¿Verdad? Lo que te voy a decir es mi caso, cuando uno se casa. Yo me casé por la iglesia, entonces mi esposo y sus padres tuvieron que buscar los padrinos de la velación. [Los padrinos] de la velación, son los principales, ¿Verdad? Son los padrinos principales. Y entonces hay los papás, como mi suegro y mi suegra; y hay padrinos que se dicen compadres y que allí se hacen compadres. Y mi mamá y mi papá por parte mía, y mis suegros, se hacen compadres cuando los hijos se casan; los papás de cada uno de ellos ya se hacen compadres, los padres de los novios.

[7] I will discuss more about the different responsibilities in chapter four.

Se hacen. Y entonces a los padrinos que buscaron para la velación, ya les dice uno padrino a ellos. Y supongamos, mi suegra le decía comadre a ellos también. También mi mamá pude decirles [compadres]. Mi mamá y papá son comadre y compadre. Y allí queda. Eso es, se forma de la gente [que] se hace comadre y compadre. Y la otra [forma] es cuando tú tienes tus hijos ¿Verdad? Yo que tuve mi primer hijo, tuve que buscar un padrino de bautizo. Entonces, ya le dice uno compadres a los padrinos de él [hijo o hija]. Ya se dice uno comadre y compadre, y a ellos, su padrino y madrina, ¿Verdad? Y eso es una y otra. Y cuando por la parte religiosa, porque nosotros somos católicos, porque hay muchas religiones y todo, pero nosotros somos católicos. También cuando [te] confirmas, que es como la confirmación, ¿Verdad?, también le buscas, pero no es nada más que uno. Es un padrino o una madrina, no es una pareja, no es más que una persona. Y allí se hace uno comadre también, ¿Verdad? Y cuando hace su primera comunión los niños, igual. Y luego cuando salen de la escuela, en el sexto.
I have my children, right? What I'm going to tell you is for my case, when someone gets married. I got married in the church so my husband and his parents had to look for the godparents; these are called the principle god-parents, right. They are the principle godparents. And so there the parents, like my in-laws, there are godparents that they call compadres, to each other, there [and then] they become compadres. And my mom and dad for my part and my parents-in-law they become compadres when two children get married, the parents of each one of them become compadres, the parents of the newly-weds. They become or are made. And so, the padrinos that were looked for the veiling ceremony, now we can call them padrinos. And let say, my mother-in-law, can call them comadre also. Also, my mom can call them compadres. My mother and father are comadre and compadre. And that is how it is. This is a way for people to become comadres and compadres. The other [way] is when you have children, right. I had my first child and I had to look for a baptism padrino. Then, you can call compadres o comadres to the godparents of him [kids]. So, we are called comadre y compadre and to them, godfather and godmother, right? And that is one and the other. And for the religious part, because we are Catholic,

> *because there are many religions and everything, but we are Catholic. Also, when you get confirmed, that is confirmation, right? You also look for one, but it's not more than one. This is a padrino or a madrina, but it is not a couple; it is no more than one person. And there you become one comadre, also, right? And when [the kid] receives his first communion also. And then, when they finish school in the sixth [grade].*

Julia spelled out the basic ways to "hacerse compadres" above in her kin group's context. She continued by describing the quinceañera (fifteen-year-old or coming out party) and how it works. In the last few decades within this community, this life-cycle ritual has largely focused on girls instead of boys – meaning that community-wide parties are thrown for girls and smaller family celebrations are created for boys. The fifteenth year marks the transformation of when girls symbolically become women – though not legally nor in practice through life changes in the household like moving out or getting married. Julia described how these kin relations are formed for this ritual in Mexico since she has less experience with this in the U.S., having been here only five years and not having a daughter of age herself.

> Cuando buscan padrinos allí en México, cuando [cumplen] sus quince años, la gente [lo] acostumbra. Yo creo que la mayoría que busca padrinos pues, casi por lo regular [son] de la velación de la misa, son los mismos que lo bautizaron. Así se le pide a los padrinos del bautismo que se acompañen. Y si es que no pueden, pues, a cómo … sólo son las personas que nombra. Yo creo que en todas [las familias], buscan padrinos de todo. Pero a ellos no se les dice compadres, no más así, padrinos. La mamá de la quinceañera no les dice compadres a todos. De todos, de la cooperación, no. Son padrinos. Busca los padrinos para que los auxilie. [Ríe] Es como una forma de decir padrino que les ayudan a… como le hacían para juntar tanta gente. Para cooperar, para que organicen la fiesta, porque a veces yo sé que es mucho dinero. Padrinos para gastos, [ríe] … ¿Verdad? Hay padrinos de todo, de la iglesia también, del matrimonio. Son personas serias.

> *When people look for padrinos there in Mexico, when [they turn] fifteen-years-old, people are used to do that. I think most people who look for padrinos, they look for padrinos and almost regularly the padrinos of the candle from the parent's marriage are the same as the child's baptism padrinos. If you ask the baptism padrinos, they accompany the child [for part of the ritual]. And if you ask them and they can't, well, like... they are only the ones named; during the ceremony]. I believe that for everyone they look for padrinos for everything [for this fifteen-year-old life-cycle ritual]. But you do not call them compadres, nothing more than padrinos. The mom of the fifteen-year-old [being celebrated] does not call them all compadres. To all for the cooperation, no. They are padrinos. You look for padrinos for assistance. [laugh]. It is a way to say that padrinos help them to … as people do to gather so mnay people. For cooperation to organize the party because sometimes I know that this is a lot of money. Padrinos for expenses (with a laugh) … right? There are padrinos for everything for the church too, for matrimony. They are serious people.*

One warm fall afternoon, while Ilvania prepared dinner over the stove, she told me about how her kin practice compadrazgo. Ilvania is a relative of Julia's and a binational farming family mother who works seasonally at a packing house. She explained that their compadres are always within their kin network. They are "pura familia" (*pure or only family*). They do not ask people outside of their kin group. She said,

> Yo busque, yo mi hermana y mi esposo igual, pero de la familia. Uno busca gente que tú dices [es] como de la familia, pero de confianza y con alguien con que tú puedes convivir. No vas a buscar una persona que tu ni siquiera tratas bien, o no sepas, porque la cercanía a tus hijos, ninguna. Debe de ser una persona, para mí, una persona muy cercana a ti, que tú puedes decirle a tus hijos. 'Mira es tu padrino' y… porque uno le inculca a sus hijos que al padrino de bautismo tienes que hablarle cuando lo veas, saludarlo y pues, respetarlo. Es lo que uno tiene. Casi todos somos de la familia.

> *When I looked… (I asked) my sister. My husband the same [ask his brother]. We looked but, in the family,…. We look for people that you would say, [it is] like part of the family, but you trust and whom you can get along with. You don't look for someone you wouldn't even try to treat well, or someone you wouldn't know, because there is no proximity with your kids, none. It should be someone… for me… someone very close to you. With whom you can say to your kids 'look this is your godfather', and because we instill in our children that their padrino of baptism is someone you have to talk to when you see them, say hello and respect him. It is what a person has. Almost all of us are from the family.*

Family members teach these values and model the relations which forge exchange relations and serve to guide value systems through kin-based practices. Two of the main components of the conceptualization tied to "la familia" for members of this enterprising kin group are confianza (*trust*) and the related notion of respeto (*respect*). Cultural values and concepts like respeto and confianza are concepts that are both conceptualized and practiced in work life and what my interlocutors would call the home life, or in your house. They can be found in the work place and prove to help shape livelihood opportunities. The term livelihood includes work completed in spaces that families consider to be private as well as public.

De Confianza (*a person that you trust)*

Often, enterprise *socios* (partners or allies) are asked to be compadres and comadres. Through these alliances, kin group members create action groups for capitalist projects made up of trusted relatives. For this group and others, "confianza is thus a basic element of economic interaction in business" (Alder Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987: 119). In this sense, de confianza (*trusted person*) is foundational to the conceptualization

of kin-based bonds and critical to exchange relations. The idea of kin relations as long-term bonds can simultaneously help people solve problems in the short-term and reassure them when they take risks that they will be supported in the long-term. Confianza does not imply that there are not multiple ways of trusting or varied trust relations. Instead, this notion of “de confianza” lies as the base of both kin relations and desirable exchange relations.

Kin relations for the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres famila are also important in the fresh-market produce industry in southern Appalachia. As Marisol Torres told me when discussing her brother’s enterprise, “I would imagine he sells to him because somos de la familia” (*we are of the [same] family*). In this conversation, she assumed that her brother, Alfonso, sold to the Ortega subgroup of the kin network. He worked with his brother-in-law in the Carolinas whom he paid to grow tomatoes for him. He came up during the harvest season with a crew of workers (most of whom were from their rancho) and harvested the crop and then sold them to the Ortega grower-shipper enterprise at the packing house. Marisol emphasized in this conversation that Alfonso respected these men and, he believed, they respected him. He showed that he had a lot of trust in his brother-in-law to invest with him and in the Ortegas to sell fresh-market produce to them.

While cooking lunch in a mobile home kitchen in western Carolina in 2014, Paola and I discussed her husband’s enterprise arrangement and the importance of confianza in a binational context. We began the conversation by talking about how much the dollar was worth in Mexico, and Paola said it had gone up to thirteen pesos and something. She then told me that families she knew had or were in the process of buying land in Mexico near their rancho. If people had the opportunity to buy land there, they did, she said.

A key aspect of accessing this opportunity was having a relative there with whom to partner or coordinate activity. Paola told me that her father used to farm her husband Mateo's land (two to three hectares) there. But since her father had to flee Nueva Generación (a narco group) which was extorting him, her prima hermana's (*first cousin's*) husband (Rodrigo) – who was a compadre to her first son – began to farm it with Mateo through a crop-sharing arrangement called tercios (*thirds*) which I will discuss more in chapter seven. The harvest work usually takes place early November. You either had to go there to see the harvested grain weight on the scale for yourself or you had to work with someone whom you trust not to "steal" from you. That, she told me, was why Mateo worked with her father and then began to work with their compadre, Rodrigo.

At the same time, compadres/comadres and padrinos/madrinas are not necessarily the person you always look to for a loan or something outside of compadrazgo activities. The social relations are about more than money. Financial support is not their primary role. Antonio explained this to me while we ate lunch from a lonchera (*food truck*[8]) in a tomato field,

> Una persona que dice, como dices tú, "Yo necesito compararme", como dices tú "un carro o una camioneta". Pero la quieres en… como a crédito ¿Verdad? Como decir, se busca un aval. Se puede decir aval, es como ser una persona que te respalda. Es una forma de decir alguien que te respalde, verdad. Pero de padrinos, eso no. A lo mejor en otro lugar se puede decir eso, pero no sé.
> *A person that says, as you say, "I need to buy myself" as you say, "a car". But you want to buy it with credit, right? You'd say, you look for an endorsement. You can call this an endorsement, it's like this person can back you up. It is a way to say someone who backs you up. But compadres?*

[8] Lonchera can also mean lunchbox, but this community refers to food trucks as loncheras.

> *That's not them. Maybe in another place it is possible to say that, but I don't know.*

One example of a practice shared by Guzmán-Ortega-Torres compadres in the U.S. is that of investing in a truck as a group. Often, there are two socios (*partners)* who buy a truck together. Marisol's husband Cristóbal was one of three brothers, and Marisol described them as muy hermanables (*brothers who get along well*). They were not only hermanos (*brothers*) but also compadres. They used this strategy to establish their enterprise like a sociedad (*association*), she told me. They accumulated trucks over about ten years so that they each now have at least one. The issue at the beginning was that one of the brothers did not have U.S. "papers" or authorization. He could not be listed formally as an owner of a truck or access a driver's license or a license plate on his own. His name was not on the ownership papers of the truck. So, "hay mucha confianza," (*or there was a lot of trust and loyalty to each other*), she told me. From her perspective, this meant that the "ownership papers" did not matter as much as the confianza because that was what mattered in the long-run.

Within both agricultural industry and kin systems, action which engages the state through a formal legal system is often deemed less trustworthy. The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group and many other extended kin groups that engage in collective projects – especially kin who are dispersed across state borders – have a lot to lose in various locations. In Mexico, people discuss how social contracts that are supposed to be formal and state-sanctioned are often broken, for instance with inheritance. Of course, this happens in business exchanges as well. Even though farmers may have contracts with their buyers, a price is not fixed until it is paid. As I explain later in this chapter, tethering

long-term kin relations to political economic relations is a strategy used by perishable goods producers.

Respeto (*respect, but more than the English word conveys*)

According to Guadalupe Valdés who studied respeto within the context of Mexican-American families in the U.S. public school system, "Respeto in the broadest sense is a set of attitudes towards individuals and /or the roles that they occupy… Having respeto for one's family involves functioning according to specific views about the nature of the roles filled by the various members of the family (e.g., husband, wife, son, brother)" (1996:130). These roles include obligations and responsibilities to particular persons of the group and the group (or family) as a whole. When talking about respeto, members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group expressed the importance of teaching children how to respect people and show that respect through shared practices. They also taught the importance of treating each other with respect as family members – as daughters, brothers, sisters, nieces, wives, husbands, and the like. As Monica and many of her relatives expressed, "Lo que cuenta es que nos respetamos… Esto es lo que les inculcamos a nuestros hijos" *(What is important is that we respect each other… This is what we instill in our children).* This respect extends to work life, despite the fact that the respect economy is diminished in the context of U.S. state violence. This kin group shows that respect has value in itself.

Diana sat across from me in a wooden chair in her transpatio in the rancho while breaking open dried chilies to empty out the seeds before we boiled them to make enchilada sauce. She explained how "el respeto" related to work and kin relations:

> Mi papa siempre siempre, nos ensenó el respeto. El respeto. Y este, la honradez, nos ensenó que nunca hay que agarrar las cosas que no son de uno. Y de trabajar todo. De todo. Sé como hacer todo. Sé ordinar vacas. Sé cortar pastura, cortar alfalfa. Sé trabajar con el azadón. Todo, todo, todo, y no tengo miedo de trabajo del campo, lo que sea. Todo, todo. Y ibamos a cargar vacas. Ibamos a revolviéramos el alimento a los puercos. Molíamos el sorgo, el maíz, lo que fuera… todo, todo.
> *My father always, always taught us repect. Respect. And this, honor, he taught us to never take things that belong to someone else. And to work, everything. All of it. I know how to do it all. I know how to milk cows. I know how to cut pasture, to cut alfalfa. I know how to work with a hoe. Everything, everything, everything, and I am not afraid to work in the fields, whatever. Everything, everything. We would take the cows. We would refill the pig's feed. We would grind the sorghum, the corn, whatever there was…. everything, everything.*

With this explanation, Diana expressed the intimate links between respect and parent-children roles. She saw this as central to her identity as a mother and as part of a kin group.

Rosa, a binational farming family mother, believes that marriage and family are for your whole life. She believed that you get married not because of a whim but because of respect practiced over the long-term. This respect is what you need to teach your children. This is what she believed and expressed below.

> Siempre eso, que nunca se pierda el respeto. Porque, aunque esté uno pobre, pero junto con sus hijos, tiene que inculcarles a sus hijos eso. Algo estable. Aunque estamos para aquí y para allá, siquiera algo estable [es] aquí en la casa. Lo que es importante es que se respeten todos. Es lo que uno tiene que inculcar a sus hijos.
> *It's always so that you don't lose respect. Even if you are poor, but together with your kids, one must inculcate this in their children. Something stable. Even though we move from here to there, no matter what there is something*

> *stable at home. What is important is that you respect each other. This is what you have to inculcate in your children.*

Rosa's sister-in-law expressed similar sentiments about respect and her responsibility to her children to teach them how to respect other people and things: how to approach the world with respect.

Here is a story she was proud of which illustrates a life event that she saw as foundational for her children and their understanding of the importance of respect. She even had a saying that the story explains: "Que respetas hasta las paredes." (*Respect even the walls*).

> A mis hijos les dije, "Que respeten hasta las paredes. Que respeten las paredes, que no las rayen, les digo. En el rancho, cuando estábamos en el rancho. No sé si las conozcas, una yerba [que] se llama higuerillas. Una yerba, que estaba verde, muy verde. Y rayaron. Pues, jugaban mis hijos, que allí vivía una tía de ellos. Tenía sus hijos, [que] igual jugaban. Y un día fui por ellos en la tarde y tenían toda la pared rayada con verde, toda y acababan de enjarrar. Y a mí, como ni era mi casa, me dio tanto coraje. Les dije: ¿quién rayó la pared de Mónica? Y los puse a limpiarla. Y entienden. Intento enseñar a mis hijos casi todo lo que me enseñó mi mamá, este respeto.
> *To my children, I told the, ´respect even the walls. Respect the walls, do not make marks on them, I tell them. In the rancho, when we were in the rancho. I don't know if you know, an herb called castor-oil plants. An herb that was green, very green. And it marked, stained. People would use them to stain things. Well, my children played there, where one of their aunts lived. She had her children out playing too. One day I went to get them in the afternoon and they had marked up the entire wall with green, all of it and it was just plastered. And for me, since it wasn't my house, it made me so angry. I told them: who marked up Monica's wall? And I made them clean it. They listened. I try to teach my children almost the same as what my mother taught me, this respect.*

Practices are symbolic of value systems such as those that accompany compadrazgo. They are often part of an ever-changing cultural heritage that parents and wider communities of interaction offer children through socialization. Intergenerational meanings of respect and compadrazgo teachings of morality are changing in Mexico – as scholars have shown in areas where narco-state violence is present (Wilson 2010; Malkin 2001). No matter the context, ritual exchange fosters long-term bonds and exchange relations. To contribute to and share with someone in a responsibility imposes a kind of mutuality of purpose that seems to temper, or check, asymmetrical power claims. Organizing events like life-cycle rituals require coordinated, long-term planning. Kin systems can create the relational circuitry needed to organize bond-forging events, practice exchange, foster industry networks, coordinate capitalist projects and establish enterprise networks. All of this can be seen in kin-based farming enteprises and the cooperation amongst them.

From the Ground Up: Low Volume FFV Enterprise to High Volume FFV

The USDA defines farm sizes according to acreage and annual gross income. A small size family farm is defined by the USDA as a farm that is "179 acres or less in size or earns $50,000 or less in gross income per year. A large farm gross sale are $250,000 or more" (2016). A family farm in general is understood as "any farm where the majority of the business is owned by the operator and individuals related to the operator, including relatives who do not live in the operator's household" (USDA 2013). Farm size and earnings are wide-ranging and are relative to the crops they cultivate and the markets they have access to. For instance, a mid-volume FFV farming operation would be seen as a

small row crop farm in terms of both acreage and volume, but the income per unit sold would be higher. This is why farm typologies or categories are tough to go by as indicators of economic viability without including lots of other information. What that information is exactly, is debated.

In southern Appalachia, in fresh-market commercial tomato and vegetable production, 50-100 acres is seen as a medium- to large-size FFV farming enterprise in part, because the costs are quite demanding. For instance, for tomatoes, many farmers report costs of approximately $10,000-$12,000 per acre, from seed to sale. Of course, if you invest more you stand to gain more, which is why tomato farming is said to be a gambler's game. Because they would stand to lose so much if they could not sell their perishable commodities, they may even pay a broker commission to sell their produce for them, usually through connections that lead beyond local marketing outlets. One of the counties where I conducted research reported approximately eight thousand agricultural jobs and $400 million in annual farm receipts from state-department research. For 2012, North Carolina ranked 10 in the U.S. and 50 in the "universe" for the commodity group: vegetables, melons, potatoes and sweet potatoes (USDA 2015).

In the U.S., family members of the binational kin group of interest to this study migrate seasonally from southern Florida to western South and North Carolina to take advantage of the tomato harvest seasons. The tomato season in southern Appalachia takes place during the "off season" in most of central and southern Florida which means that growers can utilize another segment of the year to piece together their year-round production cycle and, thus, access a larger market share through contracts with buyers such as Walmart which give preference to suppliers who source commodities throughout

the entire year. It also means that farmers are more likely to access labor crews for their harvest since many leave Florida in search of employment (Griffith and Kissam 1995; Griffith 2000).

Produce growers and distributors aim to construct a year-round work schedule to gain revenue from more than one or two annual harvest seasons – which is normally what one production site in North America offers. Thus, agro-food enterprises connect multiple geographic sites to construct multi-sited production, distribution and marketing systems. These allied enterprises often become visible when formed as corporations which have absorbed many small- to mid-scale "family" farms. Other multi-sited arrangements are not as easily visible. For instance, some large-scale companies (e.g., Thompson Family of Companies) prefer for their workers to move seasonally with their entire operation including trucks, tractors and certain management staff – moving to compete for more market share.

Many of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres enterprises in southern Appalachia began with a partnership between the parents in two nuclear families. Between the set of two couples (husbands and wives in the mini-coalition as a group), they had at least one produce truck, the social relations necessary to gather workers, knowledge of how the tomato industry worked in terms of selling the produce, and the knowledge and skill necessary to grow the produce so that it would fetch a market price that allowed them to make a living and invest for the next growing season. Once they began to grow, many realized that a critical element to succeeding as a FFV farming enterprise in the U.S. was having one worker dedicated to recordkeeping and sales – unlike in their rancho in Mexico where regulation is not as onerous, and men and women seem to organize

production distribution and marketing for distinct (yet, reciprocal) enterprises (e.g., animal breeding and grain raising). Once they began growing at a higher volume, many of the nuclear families split off into their own enterprises with the wives often working on the recordkeeping and the sales. They still cooperated as a mini- coalition but kept their enterprises formally separate. Many of the largest scale or grower-shipper enterprises are operated by mini-coalitions organized as a corporation which employs extended kin members.

Janet, a mother of three in her late thirties, and her family had a small-scale tomato and vegetable farming enterprise. She was in charge of the paperwork, much of the household cleaning, and also worked in the fields. She described it as,

> …una empresa pequeña de verduras. Solamente siembran jitomate, *bell pepper,* y de este pepino y este calabazo de yellow squash. Tiene que ser derecho. Casi la mayoría pasa por derecho por number one y las que están curved. Casi son number two. Si tiene algún defecto, se tiene que piscar cada rato, cada tercer día, la calabaza y pepino. Porque si lo dejas pasar se pone muy grande y ya no te lo compra.
> *…a small vegetable enterprise. They [her husband and his brother] only plant tomatoes, bell peppers, and this pepper (cucumber) and that yellow squash. They [the vegetables] have to be straight. Almost the majority of them pass as number ones and the ones that are curved are almost all number two's, if it has some defect. They have to be picked often for them to be number ones. Every third day, for the squash and the peppers. Because if you leave it and let it go, it gets really big and then no one wants to buy it.*

She then told the story of how they got started by investing and growing a little bit more every season. As they established their farming enterprise, they had to figure out which land in the microregion would work for their production scheme.

> Se empezó sembrando poquito. Poquito será como tres o cuatro melgas. Son como cuatro pedacitos así, cuatro

> melgas. Es como un tercio. Y después mi esposo quiso sembrar más. Y ya empezó a sembrar de tres o cuatro, empezó a sembrar diez. Cuatro de chile y los de más de tomate. Encontramos la tierra … bueno eran tres. Uno aquí y esta tierra estaba buena. Si se dio [un] producto bonito y todo, y la otra esa [la tierra] se echó a perder, porque la tierra tenía una bacteria y el producto no estaba bonito. Al mismo tiempo que [se] estaba poniendo bonito, se marchitaba la planta y no era bueno para el producto y no sirvió; y en otro pueblo, teníamos otros dos pedazos, uno de tomate igual. También tenía esa misma bacteria y no se echó a perder el tomate. Toda es rentada.
> *He began planting a little bit. A little bit like three or four rows. They are like four pieces, like that 4 pieces of land prepared for sowing. It is like a third [of an acre]. And later, my husband wanted to grow more. So, he began to plant three or four, and started to plant ten.*
> *Four of them were pepper and the rest were tomatoes. We found the land... well, they were three. One here and this land was good. Yeah it produced good product and everything, and the other land went bad because the land had bacteria and the product was no good. At the same time, it started to look good, the plant got stained and it was not good for the product and it didn't work [i.e., no sellable]; and in another town, we had two other pieces [of land], one was of tomato, the same. It also had the same bacteria and it didn't go bad, the tomato. All of it is rented.*

Silvia, another woman from the binational farming family described her family's enterprise via the products that they planted and she arranged for sale. Silvia, a cousin of Janet's, explained what they grew and why:

> Chile, de *bell pepper* y tomate. Mi esposo, un tiempo, si sembró la calabaza, pero la calabaza es muy complicada, porque tienes que piscarla todos los días, todos los días… Porque por ocasión no la piscas, ya creció… ya no sirve… entonces a veces no hay tanta gente que puede trabajar en eso… pues… mi esposo… no pudo… sembramos los chiles porque el chile y el tomate tiene más demanda. Tiene más demanda aquí. Entonces, por eso uno no siembra eso porque, no se si sea, porque es casi lo mismo lo que se les echa… no es mucha la diferencia… entonces si siembras otro producto, ya vez que tienes que cambiar de planes o trabajar de otra manera… casi parecido.

> *Pepper, bell pepper and tomatoes. My husband for a time, yes, he planted squash but squash is very complicated, because you have to pick it all the days, every day... Because if by chance, you don't pick it, it has grown and doesn't work (i.e. is not sellable) Then sometimes there are not that many people that can work in it. Well, my husband, he couldn't do it. We plant the peppers because the pepper and tomato have more demand. It has more demand here. Then, because of this, a person doesn't grow that because I don't know if it is, because it is almost the same what we put in it... It isn't a big difference. So, if you plant another produce, you will see that you have to change the plans or work in another way... almost the same.*

Janet's aunt and uncle – Patricia and Mario – used to migrate from one site to another on the southeastern tomato circuit (which will be discussed more in chapter four). However, they decided to settle in the Carolina Hill Country where they spent a decade establishing their FFV enterprise. Once they were established as farming enterprisers in the microregion, they assisted their relatives with their enterprise development. Patricia told the following story as part of her life history.

> Cuando vine, yo pensaba [que] era diferente la vida, porque fui una semana con él en la naranja. Duré una semana, para poderme sentar. Porque era… me dolía tanto la espalda, porque era juntar la naranja; él la tiraba y yo la levantaba… ajá. Entonces, este, cuando yo llegue todavía no sembraba. Trabajaba por cajas. Y luego fuimos a la naranja. Llegamos a Florida porque él conocía gente. Y este… mi esposo, como iba lejos a trabajar, yo no podía irme porque por los niños. Empecé a trabajar en una nurseria. Me lo traje de dos años, uno. Cuando iba a trabajar en la naranja, si se podía llevar el niño, pero cuando iba a trabajar en el tomate, no podía ir con él, porque él iba a un pueblo cerca de la costa oeste. Si va al sur, si va a un pueblo en el centro, iba ir buscando en donde podía piscar. No podía andar con él. Por eso no lo acompañaba. Pero aquí en Carolina fue cuando empezó a conocer más de tomate y fue de que se fue enseñando más que nada. Duró 10 años, migrábamos entre Florida y Carolina. Nos decidimos quedar y al último [fue] cuando él empezó a sembrar. Porque la tierra se empieza a cultivar casi como desde cuando se quita el frío, arrastrar,

todo de eso, casi febrero marzo, entonces uno tiene que preparar la tierra. Y luego, este, usted sabe que tiene que tener todo en orden, y no podíamos irnos. No tenía caso, así aquí tres meses y nos fuimos a regresar. Entonces decidimos quedarnos. Nosotros aquí nos quedamos más que nada porque el primero que abrió las puertas fue mi hermano cuñada porque ellos hablan inglés. ella fue conociendo más personas, ellos fueron quienes nos ayudaron a nosotros. Tienen muchos años, treinta acá. Como hermano, pues le quiso ayudar a mi esposo. Y entonces, ellos son como más pioneros. Ellos son los que ayudaron. Entonces cuando mi esposo decidió sembrar, pus no tenía nada. Su hermano le prestaba el tractor, le prestaba su herramienta. Entonces, mi esposo casi todo [lo] hacía por la tarde porque su hermano lo hacía temprano y él la hacía en la tarde, lo suyo. Entonces ya luego, mi esposo compro un tractor, y así al pacito, nos hemos crecido. La lucha hemos hecho a vivir. Este, no se puede decir mejor, pero vivimos como nos gusta y hace lo que [a] él le gusta. *When I came [here to the U.S.], I thought it would be a different life, because I went to work for a week in the oranges. It was a week before I was able to sit down... because it was… I had such terrible back pain, because I was the one to gather the oranges. He would throw them and I would pick them up… aha… So, when I arrived, he still wasn't planting. I worked for boxes. And later we went [to work in] the oranges. We arrived in Florida because he knew people there. And... My husband would go far way to work and I wouldn't be able to go with him because we had children. I started to work in a nursery and it carried me for two years, one of them... When he went to work in the oranges, it was possible for him to bring the child but when he went to work in the tomatoes, I couldn't go with him because he would go to a town on the west coast. If he went to the south, or if he went to a town in central Florida, he would go looking for a place to pick. I couldn't go with him. That is why I couldn't accompany him. But here in Carolina was when he began to concentrate more in tomatoes and was when…he would teach more than anything. That lasted ten years, we would migrate between Florida and Carolina. We decided to stay. And that was when he began to plant. Because the land is ready to cultivate almost once the cold spell has stopped, all of this, almost February, March, then one can start to prepare the land. And, you know, is when you have to have everything in order, and we couldn't leave. It didn't make sense. Here*

> *almost three months and we would return. Then we decided to stay here. We stayed here mainly because the first one to open doors for us was my sister's brother-in-law, because they speak English. She was meeting more people, they were the ones that helped us. They had [been here] a long time, thirty years here. As a brother, well, he wanted to help my husband. And so, they were like pioneers. They are the ones that helped. So when my husband decided to plant, we he had nothing. His brother lent him a tractor, he lent him his machinery. So, my husband did almost everything in the afternoon because my brother would do the work in the morning and then let my husband do his work [with the equipment] in the afternoon. Then, later, my husband bought a tractor and like that, slowly we have grown. The fight we have made to live. Well, this can't be explained better, but we live how we like and he does work as he likes.*

"Tu esposo y tú tienen" (*Your husband and you have*): Gendered Enterprise Work Realms and Rhythms

Enterprises created, owned, and managed by kin offer work environments where intergenerational knowledge creation is common and gendered work, or gendered realms of activities are (re)produced (Yanagisako 2002). Kin relations tend to play themselves out as gendering relations that interact with capitalist practices and logics (McKinnon and Cannell 2013). In the process, people (whether they formally see themselves as "family" or not) map kin relations onto work relations, and thus, they can come into service when people are in conflict by offering a cultural model from which bonds are forged and cooperative practices are valorized. Gendering practices in both the "public" workplace and the "private" workplace (at home) influence and are influenced by capitalist and non-capitalist ideologies.

Kin-based enterprises are sites where gendered work realms are apparent and taught through the multigenerational organization of enterprise tasks. Women and men

coordinate tasks while managing family-based enterprises. In many cases, gendered division of labor is not simply based on oppression. Kinship, just as other social institutions, differentially constrains and empowers people based on these social categories which serve to naturalize power disparities and exploitative practices (Collins 1993; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995; King 2013). I find it useful to think of all of this through the frame of enterprise because members of family firms and family-based farm negotiate asymmetrical power relations through everyday activities while working towards a collective goal of sustaining their enterprise. When a farming operation is thought of as an enterprise, women's work and the ways they navigate challenges are more apparent. Gloria expressed this in terms of her and her female relatives:

> Si nosotros no les ayudáramos a ellos, ellos no habrían podido hacerlo solos. Es lo que siento que pasa con los señores que no tienen quienes [lo] ayuden. Otro componente.
> *If we didn't help them, they wouldn't have been able to do it alone. That is what I feel happens with the men that don't have anyone to help them. Another component.*

Particular realms of work – like agricultural production – produce particular work rhythms, or predictable temporal patterns that accompany and organize production activities (Guyer 1991, 2004). A work rhythm is a helpful concept within the context of agri-food systems. One can situate work rhythms within industry rhythms and temporal logics. One can also make sense of how flexible producers (Rothstein 2007) collectively navigate timings and work rhythms (Guyer 1991, 2004). By demonstrating how women navigate industry-specific rhythms and manage the flows of their kin-based corporate units (i.e., enterprises), this chapter and chapter five extend the findings of family farm studies (Fink 1992; Salamon 1992; Barlett 1993; Adams 1994; Sachs 1996; Dudley

2000). As much of this literature has shown, women's work is often put under erasure by gendering practices in rural areas where masculinities tend to dominate (Campbell et al. 2006), even in the cosmological realm (Delaney 1991).

Importantly within agri-food enterprises, workers need to coordinate the planning and activities taking place in the marketing office with the planning and activities that take place in the field. As self-identified "ag industry people" say, you must coordinate the "production side" with the "marketing side" of the operation. There is too much to do and too many cycles to keep in mind for one person to manage all the flows and exchange relations needed to produce and market agri-food commodities, especially fresh fruits and vegetables[9]. The women of the kin group who are now in charge of the recordkeeping for their enterprises realized early on that this was a possibility for them since they could do this from home and also do the "kin-work" (di Leonardo 1986: Pérez 2004) such as housework and raising children and caring for the elderly. They work in the fields when they are needed, and some manage the growing of seedlings into transplants in their own greenhouses in the winter. Their husbands are typically in charge of field production activities.

Julia and her husband have gendered work realms that set up their complementary rhythms of work. She described her family FFV farming enterprise in this way:

> Aquí en la empresa de nosotros, que nosotros tenemos, Ediberto es el presidente, ¿Verdad? Yo soy el vice-presidente. Pero éste es [presidente] porque él es el que hace más. El hace más. El trabaja la tierra, la prepara, cosas que yo allí no hago. El anda con el tractor, pero cuando emplasticamos, este, emplasticamos entre los tres: Ediberto, mi hijo mayor y yo. Mis dos hijos menores no hacen mucho. Entonces cuando andamos plantando es

[9] I will return to this in chapter five in my discussion of marketeras and marketing-distribution flows.

cuando luego ayudan. Ayudan a regar las plantas. Ayudan a pasar las plantas a la gente que está…casi no más, mi esposo, mi niño grande, y yo… somos lo que [lo] hacemos
Here in our business, that we have, Ediberto is the president, right? I am the vice-president. But this is because he is the one that does the most. He does the most. He works the land, prepares it, things that I don't do there. He drives the tractor but when we wrap with plastic, we do this between tthe hree of us: Ediberto, my oldest son, and me. My two younger children do not do much. So, when we go planting is when they help. They help to irrigate the plants. They help by handing the people (workers planting) the plants. Only my husband, my older son and I, we are the ones that do it.

Kin-based Enterprise Alliances: "La union hace la fuerza" (*The union makes the power")*

Kin relations are a mixture of support and competition; actions and conversations usually fall within that range, as is the case with most corporate groups. For this binational kin-based group, families work together through their enterprises as nested action groups within the wider industry networks and kin network. They collectively mitigate risk and negotiate the challenges of acting as farming families in globalized (capitalist) agri-food systems as a kin group, instead of solely as nuclear families. There is a diverse history of collective culture and cooperative practices in Mexico. For instance, I found that some of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group come together in groups of three to vouch for kin members' loans, through the state-sanctioned Alianza program. Their cooperative relations cross gender, generation, class, and nationality boundaries to establish, operate and expand agri-food enterprises. They do not work on one large vertically integrated operation but instead work as many enterprises – and some as coalitions of enterprises – diversified across the production-distribution-consumption

process. Workers and enterprises work for and with different coalitions within the binational kin group. Some may switch between enterprises, while others may work for the same large-volume enterprise at each site throughout the southeastern U.S. seasonal tomato circuit. This is further explained in chapter four.

One of the Guzmán FFV enterprises is low-volume, small-scale and somewhat stuck selling to their relatives' packinghouse, due to a lack of capitalization. This enterprise is very diversified, growing "jitomate (*red tomatoes*), frijol (*beans*), pepino (*peppers*), calabazas (*squash*), elote (*sweet corn*), chile dulce (*sweet pepper*), chile jalepeno, tomatillo, and eggplant," among other warm season vegetables. Maria, who picks and packs for this FFV enterprise, explained that this is "lo que van a entregar" (*what they are going to turn into the packing house*). Or in other words, what they will sell to a wholesale broker, who happens to be another relative. The reason they continue to do this – even though they would make more money if they sold directly to the food service industry – is because of the new Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) regulation which requires that produce sold on the wholesale market (and shipped across state lines) must be washed on a "line" (or "corredor" in Spanish). This facet of the FFV industry – and the changing capitalization it demands – will be discussed more in chapters five and seven.

One of the low-volume enterprises that contributes to the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group's scale-making project began like many of them, as Juana explained to me. They collectively harnessed the resources to maintain the enterprises through coordinating strategies and by collectivizing some of the risk. First, two couples decided to work together. Then three couples united as one enterprise. They reasoned that the

more product they could supply to the buyers as one organization, the more purchasing power they could access as a group of producers in need of supplies. When this coalition began to see some success after a couple years, they decided to invite a few more related nuclear families to join. Three women acted as founders of this FFV kin-based farming coalition and see that the importance of this coalition is far-reaching. They understand all of this as more about the next generation and helping their younger kin get established as farming enterprisers.

According to Denise, one of the youngest members of the FFV farming kin group enterprise members,

> Ahorita ya mi esposo, [tiene] pues lo más básico, es un tractor y es una esprayadora (rociadora)… Es lo básico… la rastra (rastrillo)... [que] se necesita una vez cuando empiezas. El plástico se pone una vez, pero tiene que esprayar cada 8 días. Entonces mi esposo ya tiene muchas cosas, pero las que no tiene se las presta su sobrino. Y Chuy y Mateo este año compraron un tractor, ellos. Ahora... mi esposo les presta a ellos, o Chuy les presta lo que puede y entonces ellos, apenas están empezando… *Right now, my husband has, well, the most basic, a tractor and a sprayer. It is the basic, a rake which is needed once, when you start. The plastic is put on once but it has to be sprayed every eight days. So, my husband already has a lot of things but what he doesn't have his cousin lends him. Chuy and Mateo, this year, they bought a tractor, themselves. Now, my husband lends to them or Chuy lends to them [my husband and Mateo] what he can and so they are barely starting...*

Of course, the more well-established enterprises growing on more acreage also benefit from growing their coalition. So, while their "next generation" alliance strategy fits their family ideology, it also fits their capitalist project. The "pioneers," as Patricia

described the kin members with the most time in the U.S., have more authority during the group's decision-making process.

It is important to point out, however, that the female founders of the coalition – while they have the most acreage and make the most money out of the coalition – also contribute the most time. These two women speak English fluently and first taught themselves all that they later spent time teaching the "next generation." All of these activities are crucial, including accessing resources (e.g., FSA loans), filling out paperwork (e.g., crop insurance) and keeping good records to pass industry requirements (e.g., Good Agricultural Practices), among other skills. They taught their female relatives to do this as well. They take votes as a coalition, but asymmetric power relations remain, with most members turning to the founding couples to make big decisions with the reason that they have the most experience in the industry. When they grew to a coalition of eight couples, they decided it was time to stop expanding and start working on improving each enterprise. Now they use cooperative strategies to operate and sustain their enterprises.

Another issue that holds small-scale farming enterprises back and threatens their survival is their need for a certain number of harvesters at very particular segments of time during the crop cycle. They must plan for both short-term crises and long-term sustainability as a kin-based group of farming enterprises. At the smallest scale, of approximately five to ten acres, a family of three can manage the labor. However, due to the harvesting cycles – most of which are organized around three succession fields – and marketing requirements, larger acreage demands more workers to harvest simultaneously to fill orders. Harvesters do not want to work a job that is going to be as short-term and sporadic as are the harvesting jobs that small- to mid-scale farming enterprises can offer.

Harvesters prefer to pick in densely packed fields so that they can fill their buckets quicker and make more money, since they are often paid piece rate. They also prefer to work close to where they are living and to have steady work with the same growing enterprise without having to spend time looking for fields to harvest every few weeks. The larger scale the grower, the more work opportunity is provided, and the tighter the work schedule – all of which harvesters prefer. These lower volume FFV farming enterprises rely on their kin relations to organize harvesters; they coordinate their planting schedules so that they can share harvesting crews and work on each other's land.

As small-scale tomato and vegetable growers in the same microregion, they could have recognized that they were competing with each other and stopped there. But instead, this realization helped them to unite. They decided to unite because they were all growing and knew they could access more markets if they coordinated their enterprises. Members of this coalition conceptualize, discuss, and act on strategic timings as part of a larger cooperative strategy. Chapter seven discusses this and other cooperative practices of the coalition in more depth.

Grower-Shipper Corporation: "Cada quien lo suyo" (*to each their own)*

One of the three grower-shippers in this binational kin group grew out of the coalition described above. The other two grew out of mini-coalitions which began between brothers and grew to include wives, sons, and son's wives. One of these corporations, I will call the Ortega Hermanos (Brothers) enterprise. These are four brothers, and two of them and their families are mobile. They move back and forth between the Carolina mountains where they have their largest operation and South

Florida, where they have a smaller operation and where some of the members work for other corporate farming enterprises. They own houses and approximately 50-100 acres of farmland in southern Appalachia and rent approximately 100 acres every season. They own houses but no farmland in South Florida.

There are four brothers: Jose (who stays in the Carolinas to farm), Raul (who stays in South Florida to farm) and then the eldest two brothers – Antonio and Miguel (who both travel and administer the corporation in South Florida and the Carolinas). They rent the bodega (packing house) in the Carolinas and rent space in a state farmers market to pack out their produce in South Florida. They own everything they need, even their own "reefers," or refrigerated tractor trailers. When they grow in the Carolinas, they sell to produce buyers in Orlando and Miami as well as other places like Texas. When they grow in south Florida, they sell to produce buyers in southern Appalachia and places like Chicago. While kin members run the farm office, the production fields, and the packing house, they mostly hire Mexican-American traileros (*semi-truck drivers*) from outside of their kin network to transport the FFV commodities.

Another kin-based FFV corporation is Torres Fresh Farm Produce. They, like most grower-shipper operations, have two or three enterprises that are legally separate for liability reasons but are coordinated and run as one corporation. The Torres Fresh Farm Produce corporation grows a variety of crops as well even though they too got their start in tomatoes. Now, they grow zucchini, squash, tomatoes, watermelon, and peppers. They watch the market and try out new FFV crops every few years. As Raul, one kin group member, described it like this: "They grow it all. I think they are the biggest operation right now. Even though it's hard to tell since they all rent land in counties all over the

area." Raul used to work picking tomatoes for them. He was a cousin, the son of their primo hermana *(first cousin*).

> They rent a packing house up here, but they have one with a corredor (runner, wash line) in south Florida. I guess they bring the corredor up with them…They got the corredor [which can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars) because of a contract. It's a ten-year contract with a supermarket up here. The supermarket loaned them the money to build that packing house. The deal is that he pays them with produce for ten years. He only has three years left. That is why they have a few different companies. Because they have to keep that one separate, or that's how I understand it anyway. It costs two million to build a packing house and the corredor is the most important part, well expect for maybe the coolers. The supermarket tells them what to plant, what they want each season. They didn't ask for money from a bank instead they asked for money from the supermarket, who they had been selling to for years.

He went on to say that he thought that the supermarket gave them a fixed price, so they could not lose a lot if the market price was bad or gain a lot if the market price was good. Then, he told me that all the rancheros (*growers*) in the U.S. have all their money invested. They did not have a lot of cash available to them, just credit and really a lot of debt. They lived off loans. Raul thought it was the same way in their rancho. There is a lot of land there, but the soil and water are no longer very good. In the U.S., they have big machinery and really nice houses which are expensive to build, but the bank owns all of it her. Then, he turned to me with a smile to say, "at least here you sell in dollars. In Mexico, you sell in pesos and buy in dollars." The point was that there was no way to win in the Mexico-based farming scenario.

Conclusion: Temporalities, Cooperation, and Class Process in a Binational Farming Kin Group

Not all members of this binational kin group are binational. I frame the group as binational. However, the group often refers to individual statuses as opposed to describing the entire kin group's political status. This differential political access is discussed more in chapter six. Some of them are workers and find themselves tethered to relatives with long-term U.S. state-sanctioned status and a relative's enterprise. If an individual does not have authorization to work and live in the U.S. territory, then this person also cannot access a pesticide license. Salvador is one such person. He works as the farm manager for his wife's uncle, Tio Ismael. He irrigates the crops and manages much of the production operation. But, he does not have a pesticide license so he cannot buy pesticides for a farming enterprise of his own. Tio Ismael has the license. To get a license with the state to buy pesticides from a private enterprise, you have to apply, take classes, pay a fee, and re-train each year to renew your certification. Even though Salvador had been in the U.S. working for a farming enterprise for eighteen years as a tractorista (*tractor driver, farm manager*), he could not grow for his own enterprise because of his lack of U.S. legal authorization – not a lack of knowledge. Salvador believed he had even saved Ismael money since he had not had to buy an expensive tractor with a computer to manage the cultivation. As he said, "We don't need them [tractors]. They do and know what we already do and know."

Within the larger kin group, people employ various cooperative arrangements both in the FFV industry in western North Carolina and in the basic grains and animal economies in southern Guanajuato. Well-coordinated plans and trustworthy social

relations are critical to the diversification schemes they use for their agri-food enterprises. They, like other farming groups, strategically distribute risk by diversifying crops (Ortiz et al. 2013) and spatial organization (LaLone 2008). With family members working at all stages of the agri-food system – with some trucking, picking, selling, packing and growing – the subgroups in the kin network are able to turn crops in a field into fresh-market commodities. Having workers and allied enterprisers who you can trust to respect you and your enterprise is critical for establishing, operating and owning agri-food enterprises in a binational context. These binational crop production and marketing arrangements, the kin-based gendering practices that organize these arrangements, and the power dynamics that kin members negotiate to manage the enterprise arrangements will be discussed throughout the dissertation with special attention paid to the binational context in chapters six and seven.

As Edward Kissam and David Griffith argued, agriculture should not be considered as "marginal" because clearly the profit margins have attracted corporate entities (1995: 270). However, rural families in southern Appalachia now question if it is possible to have "fresh produce" farming livelihoods. The binational Alvarez-Ortega-Torres kin group offers insight into the transnational class processes that prove to be the underbelly of the agri-food system. The study of kinship in modern political economy has been sidelined due to the treatment of kin relations by Weber and Marx (McKinnon 2013) – pitted against ideas about kin relations in relation to peasant society and (locally-based) moral economy. Kin relations, like temporal cycles, are naturalized in agricultural political economies and thus, often ignored. The Alvarez-Ortega-Torres kin group uses knowledge circuits and collective strategies to act as an allied enterprising group of

farming families who navigate two agricultural political economies in North America. Like other farming families around the world, they show that kin relations matter to and within the globalized agri-food system.

Interwoven Histories of Mobile Farming Families

Part I. Chapter 3

When studying rural societies, political economic analysts tend to emphasize the relation between land tenure and claims to belonging, highlighting the ways in which the claim to long-term land ownership brings with it a claim to power in and belonging to a certain place. Belonging, in this sense, is a social construct which presumes that more time in a place grants a greater right to local identity and to accessing economic opportunity. This chapter will discuss the importance of inclusive temporal frames to making sense of place-based belonging.

This chapter interweaves the stories of two family groups who immigrated to southern Appalachia and now produce and market fresh fruits (mostly tomatoes) and vegetables in the Carolina Hill Country. It offers a "history of the present" by tracing and interweaving the political economic histories of rural regions in Mexico and the U.S. with im/migration stories of two families who grow and market FFV in southern Appalachia – the Caldwell and the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres families. I do this to offer historical contextualization (Roseberry 1996[1989]), take immigrants' farming histories into account, and challenge the political economic power embedded in temporal representations of people as "new arrivals" to rural places. This kind of historical parallel framing – one that takes kin relations and temporal representations into account – allows for a longue durée study of class process in the multi-scalar context of agricultural political economic change.

My analysis relates social time to equity. Social time can be understood as the product of "temporal politics" when it is de-naturalized and understood critically and as a

mode of social status contested and culturally categorized within political economic contexts. Scholars have shown that elites use such temporal representations to legitimate exclusive power claims via legal systems (Greenhouse 1989; 1996), national collective memory (Boyarin 1994; Herzfeld 2012), and myths (Attali 1985). When social time is categorized, it "reproduces codes of selection" – an act done by elites to assign social identities and orderings (Greenhouse 1996: 233). Particular groups are strategically altered (Kingsolver 2007) through social constructs based in temporal claims. People deemed "peasants," for example, are constructed as "outside of modernity" (Kearney 1996) and isolated from globalized forces.

Scholars today often work to counter-construct the conventional stereotype of the Appalachian region – exceptional in terms of how it is imagined (Batteau 1978) – and Appalachian people as "backwards" (Kingsolver 2018) and "homogeneous" (Catte 2018) in terms of culture, class and identity (hooks 1990). In certain respects, the poverty stereotype of the region is similar to how many people in the U.S. imagine Mexico (Kingsolver 2018) – as "behind" other regions when compared on some imagined teleological path towards development. But such claims to power and belonging are also challenged, when questions like these are asked: who contributes and who is imagined as "belonging" in and to the southern Appalachia farming community? Who is able to act as a capitalist, a worker, an owner-operator, or an investor?

Often in rural places, "newcomers" are marginalized and deemed to have arrived too recently to be able to belong (Salamon 2003). In fact, some people in southern Appalachia believe it takes seven generations to access belonging (Bolgiano 2011). Claims of belonging often come through kin ties, especially in cultures which use

patrilineage to define it (King 2014). Whether kinship is understood as traditional lineage obligations or as burgeoning social networks, this form of organization of social relations is clearly linked to place-making, to boundaries, and to claims to belonging inside – rather than outside – privileged social space. These claims can be used to justify power over natural resources like land and define space as territory. They can also be used to justify what types of employment certain groups within the community can have access to.

In this chapter, I invite readers to ask themselves the following questions: How long does it take for a person who immigrated to belong to a farming community? Who has the right to farm or to act as an agricultural capitalist? I argue that conventional, short-sighted temporal frames – and their related racialized temporal representations – carry considerable weight in cultural politics and within the arena of agricultural industry and family farms. This chapter counter-constructs that representation by blending the migration histories of two particular fresh-market produce farming families in southern Appalachia and setting them in much wider historical frameworks. The chapter offers a history of the present by focusing on the stories of how the Caldwell and especially the (now binational) Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin groups came to farm in southern Appalachia.

By interweaving their stories with regional agricultural histories, the chapter reveals “larger global capitalist patterns, paralleling privations, nationalization, and privatizations in Mexico” and the U.S. (Kingsolver 2018:31). In this sense, the stories trace rural class process in two interrelated regions over the longue durée. This chapter is not meant to parallel regional histories, but to instead invite readers into a way to make

sense of how agricultural political economies – and contributors to them – interact in and over time and space. This story – of particular families, vast technological and social changes, periods of progress and decline, regional development of modern capitalism and gradual integration of the agricultural economies of two nations – is the background against which I highlight the importance of "temporal politics" in rural cultures and challenge the stigmatization of "recently" arrived Mexican-American immigrants who are a critical part of the agri-food industry in southern Appalachia.

Time Politics and Power in Rural Places

Like scholars before me – such as Carol Greenhouse and Henry Rutz – I theorize time as a social construct and argue that as such, time is power. People use temporal markers as a mechanism for resource-making and resource-claiming (Ferry and Limbert 2008). According to Johannes Fabian, "time belongs to the political economy of relations, between individuals, classes, and nations" (Fabian 1983:x). When people are temporally displaced, they are discursively marked as "other." For example, popular media often represents Appalachia and the people who live there as currently "stuck in the past" and even "left behind" the rest of the U.S. This happens on a global scale as well, and is especially prevalent in development discourse, as Arturo Escobar (1995) has shown. This temporal displacing of particular people and places has material consequences in terms of political economic power, development, and working families' im/mobility. To counter this, this chapter offers "immigrant" farming family histories to recognize both the past of a place and the pasts of mobile kin groups.

Erasure from history is one way to temporally displace contributors to society (Wolf 1982). For instance, there is the case of enslaved Africans in mountain farming communities in eastern Kentucky. Ann Kingsolver found these individuals of African descent recorded in the census, but this reality contests the popular myth that slavery did not exist in the mountains and challenges the premise of that myth which claims that self-sufficient, Euro-American farmers were solely responsible for the development of the mountain economy (2007). The popular regional history erased these racialized individuals, their labor, their enslavers, their inhumane treatment, and the farmsteads where they were enslaved. Today, the whitened homogenized family farm image continues to erase the contributions of the diverse multigenerational farming families of, and in, southern Appalachia, and other regions in the U.S.

People from Mexico, Ireland, Colombia, China, and other countries around the world own and or operate many contemporary farming enterprises in southern Appalachia. Mexican Americans are often viewed as "recent arrivals" no matter how many generations have lived in the U.S. as Leo Chávez (2008) and Suzanne Oboler (2017) have argued. In this chapter, I focus on the migration histories of two farming families who, at particular historic moments, could have been (and can be) considered as "immigrant farmers" in the US. One family group can be considered as Latin American and the other as Euro-American. It is important to note that I could also have told (and will tell in the future) the stories of other ethnically diverse families – such as Mayan, Hmong, or Scandinavian – who contribute to the globalized farming communities of southern Appalachia. But here I offer just the histories and memories of these two farming families who now grow fresh-market produce in southern Appalachia.

These histories are not tales of teleological development. Instead, they are memory lenses that – when put into conversation – share families' livelihood strategies and point to historic moments that help explain the contemporary lives of U.S. farming families and U.S.-Mexico relations. People such as David from the Caldwell kin group and Rosalba and Ivan from the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group call upon certain memories to give a narrative form to their life stories, place themselves in larger temporal and social frameworks, and claim a farming identity as part of specifically imagined communities in particular historic moments and rural places.

The Hill Country of the Western Carolinas and the Mexican Bajío

The physical settings for this chapter are the Carolina Hill Country and the Bajío cerro *(hill*) country of southwestern Guanajuato. These microregions of settlement and agricultural development are considered as neither mountainous (or high country) nor simply bajío (*lowlands*). For this reason, I call them both "Hill Country" and as such, both microregions are "edge environments", or places in which people can be "marginalized or strategically participate in a number of overlapping environments, identities and conversations" (Kingsolver 2011:59). They are "territorio ondulado" (*rolling lands*) and – at one point of another in their histories – they were each considered as borderlands. This is true because of the movement of political state lines and with them, shifting boundaries of belonging and rural livelihood conditions.

When the Spaniards arrived in present-day southwestern Guanajuato – a microregion of the Bajío – in the sixteenth century, the territory was seen as a kind of border area where Tarascans had battled the Aztec and the Otomí for centuries.

Additionally, due to an old corrido (*ballad*) some folks in Mexico believe that the county that the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres claim as their ancestral home is still part of present day Michoacán, when in fact it is part of present-day Guanajuato. The fact that people hold this belief is also due to the fact that this hilly area is unlike other sections of southern Guanajuato which lie at a lower altitude and thus specialize in different agricultural crops. Spanish soldiers came to this "Hill Country" area of the Bajío (lowlands) in 1519 and conquered the resident natives by 1524, re-naming the territory as "New Spain." Spanish clergy and entrepreneurs fought natives for claims of the land and built haciendas. This organized the commercial agricultural production of the "Old World crops" like wheat which they brought to their "New World" along with cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, and goats. All of these foreign species transformed the ecology. Alongside the hacienda system – and particular to Guanajuato – a significant small property, agrarian middle class of sorts (or "ranchero class") formed playing a vital role in the agricultural economy and social structure (Brading 1979, 1986; Leopoldo Solís 1970).

The microregion of southern Appalachia that is of interest to this study spans the North and South Carolina border, and lies within territory that was once considered the Cherokee Nation. Today, it lies on the edge of the Appalachian Regional Commission-designated Appalachian border lines. As such, both microregions in Mexico and the U.S., act as "zones of interaction" (Williams 2002:12). While their seasonality differs, the climates, rivers, and fertile soil in both microregions offer favorable conditions for agricultural development projects.

Southern Appalachia and the Caldwell Kin Group

Long before the Caldwell or Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin groups, Spanish colonizers arrived in what we now call southern Appalachia already in the 1500's. The Spaniards called this territory the "New World." The first known European to arrive in the "New World" was the infamous Spanish Hernando de Soto, who is said to have named the mountain region of the East Coast "Appalachia" after a native American group living in the mountains (Dunaway 1995). In popular U.S. history, Sir Walter Raleigh was thought to have created the first settlement in the U.S., and Christopher Columbus was thought to be the discoverer of the Americas – even though he never came to North America. However, in 1986, a then-teenager found pottery shards along the Catawba River in western North Carolina on his family's farmland. Archeologists followed up his discovery and found evidence of Fort San Juan – a Spanish fort built in 1567 – and of a native American trading town known today as Joara. It is believed that Hernando de Soto came through this area on his expedition to find gold in the "New World," and Juan Pardo soon after returned with soldiers and built this fort. Approximately 250 years later, the Caldwell kin group would arrive in southern Appalachia and begin their story in the western Carolinas.

After the American Revolution ended in 1776, land owned by the British was seized and granted to members of the U.S. battalions. Over the next century, "newcomers" to southern Appalachia included a variety of farming families who migrated from coastal settlements where they first arrived after their transatlantic journey. They came from countries like England, Germany, and Ireland in Europe as well as places throughout western Africa, where they were enslaved and forced to cross the

ocean. Some were first-generation immigrants and others were second- or third-generation, migrating to the mountainous "frontier" to find cheaper, fertile land and better life chances. They were often seen by their heirs – and portrayed in U.S. historic accounts – as modernizing, courageous pioneers.

David Caldwell's personal story of his family's history traces from southern Appalachia to Ireland, but – as a vegetable farmer and distributor – he believed the blight and Irish potato famine of the mid-1800's provided the historic impetus which caused his family to cross the Atlantic Ocean and begin a new life, away from the home where they were born and raise. However, most members of the Caldwell kin group trace their "roots" through a Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) genealogy library in the Carolina mountains to a "family founder," William Caldwell. This man migrated from Galway, Ireland to the Virginia coast, and fought for U.S. Independence. He received a land grant and a few decades later, at the turn of the century, he and his wife Sarah moved to southern Appalachia where their kin claim their home today. Their "home place" is part of the same area that the Cherokee Nation once called their home, until the majority of them were dispossessed of their land and livelihood, and forcibly displaced to present-day Oklahoma[10] in the decade following President Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act of 1830.

In southern Appalachia and especially the western Carolinas, the nineteenth century was largely defined by land speculation – though the trade activity was orchestrated elsewhere. "Distant trading was facilitated by brokerage houses in Richmond, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., New York, and Boston, where military land

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[10] It is important to note that a segment of the Cherokee, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) still live and farm in western North Carolina on and around the Qualla boundary.

warrants were bought for resale and margin trading. Brokerage houses traded in scrip and warrants (claims for acreage) and shares (inland companies' stocks)" (Dunaway 1995: 57). The wealthiest capitalists, such as Robert Morris of the North American Land Company, engaged in the practice of dodging which meant that they acted as speculators and "sold lands in Europe before acreage or warrants were actually purchased on Appalachian frontiers," which caused land disputes between title owners and settlers (Dunaway 1995: 57).

Due to this history and the advertising (often in the form of handbills) that went along with the land dealings, a good portion of the western Carolinas became known as the Speculation Lands. While the handbills and other Speculation Lands advertisements boasted of opportunity and natural decadence of honey and milk, they did not reveal the valuable mineral deposits hidden under the ground – at the time thought to be iron and lead, or even silver and gold. From 1820 to 1856 Rutherford County – where much of the speculation lands were located – acted as the center of gold production in the U.S. By 1828, disputed areas of the Cherokee Nation in western North Carolina and Georgia attracted prospectors in search of valuable minerals, while the indigenous groups sought to resist these acts of Euro-American "pioneer" settler expansion. In fact, until gold was discovered in California in 1848, North Carolina was the leading gold producing state. The North Carolina gold rush was also one of the longest in U.S. history. Ironically, the twenty-eight-pound gold nugget credited with starting the gold rush in 1803 was found by a man named Peter, an African-American slave. After that, people from all over North Carolina went into the woods and created mines (Lewis 2004).

After the Native American groups were forced off their homelands, waves of Euro-American settlers moved into the area, bought or claimed land, and began to found counties and towns. Then came the U.S. Civil War, which devastated many communities in southern Appalachia and caused turmoil even within kin groups. Many people are surprised to hear that some farming families in the Carolina Hill Country fought for the Union because they saw the war along class lines which positioned them against the "lowlander" coastal plantation owners – some of whom owned land and "summered" in the Carolina hills. In this context, the working-class farmers felt that their sons were being sacrificed while the elite farming families were able to keep their sons at home and off the front lines. The question of which side the Caldwell kin group was on is not a topic of conversation that they seem to enjoy. But archives do show that Caldwell kin excitedly discussed the southern Appalachian railroad boom of the late 1800's which opened up marketing opportunities for their food enterprises and investment opportunities for developing the region (cf. Pudup et al. 1995).

The "rage of the railroads" era began in 1830 in western North Carolina and then made great strides in the 1880's after a series of recessions. The first locomotive in the U.S. was shipped across the Atlantic from Europe to ride the Baltimore & Ohio Company line. In 1837, the North Carolina Legislature granted charters for railroad lines that would run through the mountains like the one which connected Cincinnati (Ohio) to Charleston (South Carolina). Prior to this charter, Judge Mitchell King came to Henderson County in 1829 from Charleston to investigate the proposal for this railroad (FitzSimons 1977). He played a critical role in convincing investors to collaborate and buy stock in the railroads which later connected the Carolinas, Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio through the Hill

Country routes (FitzSimons 1977). In 1854, the western North Carolina Railroad was incorporated.

The North Carolina Legislature started chartering railroads in 1831, though most of these were built in the flat lands of the eastern part of the state. Corn was the principle crop of western North Carolina during this decade. When poor seasons brought corn crop failures in the Hill Country and market price crashing levels of oversupply in the east, law makers began to recognize the need for transportation infrastructure in the western counties. The roads were not in good enough condition for wagon trains to haul foodstuffs across the state and nearly impossible for farming families who had more corn than currency to make the journey (FitzSimons 1977: 221). Railroads were the solution for food shortages, market expansion, and industrialization. The railroad system served as a mechanism for reorganizing commodity markets and re-scaling food systems from local-regional to local-global. But it also gave the railroads a stranglehold on the farmers, since they delivered their goods to urban markets.

State representatives argued that rural development was a key reason to attract railroad companies. The idea was that industrial development and railroads went hand-in-hand. Tanneries and mills – mostly pulp and paper – all developed on railroad lines. They would get raw materials from the mountain forest, process them in towns, and then ship them by rail to consumers elsewhere. Railroad companies had the power to redraw political lines, even creating new towns, counties, and positions for government representatives. Centers of economic, social and political power formed along the railroad lines (Williams 2002: 235). Entrepreneurs and settlers tended to invest in towns

along the railroads in the second half of the 1800’s, turning many of them into cities over time. Johnson City, Tennessee is a good example.

According to local historians, Johnson City was but a crossroads, “initially called Johnson’s Tank, where an entrepreneur had established himself at a point where the railroad met a wagon road” (Williams 2002:237-238). The beginning of its industrial boom started with a tin yard where bark from the mountains’ chestnut-oak forests was processed and made into the acids used to tan leather. This was a strategic spot for such an industry, but it grew only because of the railroads which made Johnson City a new distribution node – connecting sites of forest-timber industry in places like West Virginia with coastal markets.

Railroad expansion in the Appalachian microregion boomed from 1875 to 1891. This was achieved physically by means of the little known, unsavory practice of state-sanctioned, convict-leasing to the railroad companies – some of which were state-owned. With convict labor, officials from the railroad industry and the state together created a kind of “postbellum extension of slavery” (Williams 2002: 232). Convict labor meant that railroad companies could rush the construction of the rails, putting workers’ lives at risk for the sake of monetary gain. The convicts, of course, were paid nothing for their labor. Many convicts died in western North Carolina while building the railroads from Morganton to Asheville and through the Blue Ridge mountains[11]. Leased convicts were used for North Carolina state-owned railroad maintenance and construction. As the railroads expanded, they dictated migration patterns, determining where and how people traveled. They allowed elites to accumulate wealth by facilitating the movement of

[11] There were 120 state-recorded deaths, but this could be much higher (Williams 2002: 221).

commodities and by controlling the rates they imposed on farmers shipping their goods to distant markets.

With the railroads to transport the tobacco, cities in southern Appalachia like Asheville became tobacco marketing centers in the 1890's. This was during the flue-cured tobacco boom which lasted approximately twenty years, from 1870-1890. Farmers recognized the potential in railroads with the idea that one could "make your own market" with the strategic use of railroad transport (Hahamovitch 1997: 22-26). Farmers were doing well in southern Appalachia with the tobacco boom and the advances in truck farming that came about thanks to the introduction of guano and the expanding use of agricultural chemicals. As the first USDA yearbook indicated in 1894, many commercial farmers were already expanding and thinking about their rural farming enterprises as "agri-business."

Farmers began to find outlets for surplus in markets in Augusta, Columbia and Charleston. Many of them would carry their products in wagons – powered by mules, horses or even oxen – down the same routes as the stock drovers, while others relied on the railroads. Local elites, such as Jacob Caldwell, owned stockyards and grocery stores at railroad junctions. Jacob created a jockey lot (or flea market) behind the Caldwell building where a local hardware store was also located. He would buy produce from the wagons and load it into the freight cars for shipment to faraway markets. He and his kin started the first wholesale packing house there called Caldwell's Packing Yard. They procured produce (some of which came from their farming kin) and shipped it wholesale by car loads via the Spartanburg & Asheville Railway, two to ten car loads a day during peak season (FitzSimons 1977). During the peak seasons, there would be a glut of

wagons which would wait in line for days sometimes. For this reason, the Caldwell enterprise built a fence around the area and built stalls for the farmers and animals who waited overnight. The yard became famous as a marketplace itself, where farmers and others would barter and sell, and listen to politicians, who set up roadside stands.

In 1900 in the southeastern U.S., approximately half of all farmers owned their farmland (USDA 1950). The rest of the farmers were sharecropping and renting the farmland. With the arrival of the railroads in the western Carolinas, political groups were promoting agricultural development with stock and poultry raising, dairying, and fruit growing – and publicizing the soil and climate of microregion of the Carolina Hill Country as a great place for farmers to come and grow. The aim of the Greater Western North Carolina Association, for example, was "exploitation and development of the Land of the Sky." This was meant not only to encourage industry and farming, but also to encourage a tourist industry that is still economically important today. The Biltmore kin group made their home in the area as well and made their fortune – and ecological mark – by building up the logging industry which utilized the rivers for transport and caused major flooding threats for the area which manifest in the flood of 1916.

Since industries can be co-constitutive, meaning that one affects another, these initial overall development projects also supported the farming industry. Thus, the apple industry "blossomed along with the saw mills, while the value of locally produced livestock went up with the loggers' demand for food" (Williams 2002: 249). However, rural enterprises overall declined at the turn of the century in much of southern Appalachia, as the effects of the 1893 depression rippled through communities by affecting the prices of main cash crops in the area, such as burley tobacco. Ever resilient,

the Caldwell kin group continued to grow and enter into new economic ventures, though their identity remained tied to farming tobacco and truck farm[12] crops (fruits and vegetables) and to marketing them throughout the region.

With the start of World War I in 1914, U.S. farmers began to reap the benefits of wartime food demand. “Farmers’ incomes increased an average of 120 percent as a result of higher prices for wheat, corn, oats, cotton, and potatoes, and income from truck crops increased by 99 percent” (Hahamovitch 1997:109). Due to the demand for fuel and transportation of machinery for the armed forces, freight expenses increased. This meant that food producers on the East Coast did not have to compete with the industrialized California agriculture industry and were able to dominate East Coast urban markets. Farmers in areas like southern Appalachia benefited from this as long as they could get access to markets beyond their local communities.

Truck farming is a type of rural livelihood inextricably linked to marketing and the fresh produce industry. It is also tied historically to intensive chemical farming, which was called “progressive farming” in the late 1800’s but is known today as “conventional farming.” U.S. truck farming started in New Jersey in the 1880’s close to the urban centers of New York, Philadelphia, and Newark (Hahamovitch 1997:5). The truck farming industry in the Northeast took off as they invested capital, transitioned to new crops and horticultural methods, and adjusted to so-called “market pressures” and looked for new sources of workers. The first public legal controversy in the U.S. over the correct power relations between the federal government, farming enterprises, and workers took place in southern New Jersey and concerned Italian immigrants working in berry

[12] A truck farm is also known as a market garden.

fields (Hahamovitch 1997:41). Truck farming spread out from the northeastern U.S. with the innovation of refrigerated rail cars after the Civil War, and the expansion of railroads which linked the southeastern U.S. with high population cities and other regions across the continent. In 1920, Florida drained the Everglades and began their intensive winter produce production, marketing mainly to the northern urban centers – shifting the fresh-market produce industry tide once more.

These years of war were seen by many (due to farm lobby efforts) as creating a shortage of farmworkers, even though in some states like North Carolina there were "eighty-seven of 100 counties [that] reported labor shortages before the U.S. even entered the war" (Hahamovitch 1997:87). "Farm hands" were (and still are) categorized as "unskilled" and thus, more likely to be recruited for the armed services. However, sharecroppers from southeastern states like Georgia would migrate to work on truck farms in the Northeast during their "off season." Historians have shown that the Department of Labor recognized that farmers could have afforded to pay better wages to the largely African-American worker population who were attempting collective bargaining but, instead – according to the *Southern Regulator* farming magazine – chose to seek new ways to "replace muscle with machine" (quoted in Hahamovitch 1997:87). A good example of this move toward agricultural mechanization was the growth of the International Harvester Company, which began in this era.

Disputes over the issue of farm labor scarcity would have important consequences for the story I am telling, but it is important to realize the "scarcity" was exaggerated. "The best evidence against growers' claims of labor scarcity in southwest Georgia is that farm wages remained depressed despite war inflation and the Great Migration"

(Hahamovitch 1997:88). Even the U.S. Department of Labor at the time believed that farmworkers were more available than farmers wanted them to believe: "Half of the farm labor shortage is imaginary, and the other third can be remedied" (quoted in Hahamovitch 1997:108). Farm labor in the Carolinas was the biggest concern of industrialized farmers in the eastern parts of the states where they were growing on such a large-scale that their kin and neighboring farm families could not (and would not) do the work that they demanded at the unjust wages they would offer. This kind of hard physical labor was thought of as fit only for the lesser classes, and racialized immigrant others. Later in the 1920's in various locations in the southeastern U.S., farmworkers were actually able to informally bargain over pay with farmers because their labor was in demand; however, this possibility was reversed in the 1930's which I discuss later in the chapter.

The political economic tension concerning agricultural labor markets and workers' rights (especially in the southwestern U.S.) was what prompted the U.S. government to negotiate with Mexico. This led to the U.S. Immigration Act of 1917. This policy allowed for approximately 73,000 Mexicans to come to the U.S. legally to labor in the fields and simultaneously barred "Asians" from assimilating (Ngai 2004). Much of the political impetus to this extraordinary intervention in the farming economy of the country came from agricultural elites in the southwestern U.S. In fact, it was this law and subsequent government policy – not mere movement of individual workers from Mexico – that initiated a pattern of agricultural industry-induced circular migration between Mexico and the U.S. It also began a legacy of U.S. immigration regulation that prioritized farm lobby desires for an abundant supply of farmworkers, which would in turn keep farm work wages low. 1917 was a big year in Mexican-American relations. It also

marked the official creation and partial militarization of U.S.-Mexico border[13] and the end of the Mexican revolution, which removed José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz Mori from power, and resulted in the nationalization of U.S.-owned extractive companies and properties in Mexico. This era also links us to the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group's history of the man that many of them think of as their founding member, Juan Ortega Torres.

Mexico 1900's: Turn of the Century and the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres Kin Group

In southern Appalachia, the Caldwell farming family is part of the same farming community as the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family, whose memories of kin take us to the Bajío in west central Mexico. Rosalba Gomez Ortega and her husband Ivan were born in the late 1940's. They are retired and spend most of their time with their children and grandchildren in southern Appalachia. Like David, Rosalba traced her family history back to a noteworthy "founder."

> [Juan Ortega Torres] era mi tío. El fue presidente de aquí, por eso lo mataron, porque el hacía muchos bienes por el pueblo y a los hacendados no les gustó. Pelearon. Y cada quien se repartió. Como el abuelo de nosotros era uno de los que pelearon las tierras, ganó sus tierras. Les dio tierras a todos sus hijos. Se llamaba Cervero Ortega. Mi papá sembraba maíz, garbanzo, trigo… El mataba puercos y mataba reces. El vendía carne aquí en el rancho. Era el único en ese tiempo que vendía carne.
> *Juan Ortega Torres was my uncle. He was president here, for that they killed him because he did a lot for the pueblo, and the hacendados didn't like it. They fought. They gave land to each person… like the grandfather of ours is one of those who fought over the lands, he won his lands. He gave land to all of his children. He was called Cervero Ortega. My father grew maize, (corn) garbanzo…wheat… He killed pigs, and cows. He was the only one in those times that sold meat in our rancho*

[13] This militarization of this area was formalized in 1924 with the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol.

Many ancestors of Mexicans today fought for a new order of society and regional power in rural areas where the hacienda's agrarian social labor system exploited the peasantry.

The Mexican Revolution officially ended in 1917 after seven years of bloody battles between various factions over regional and federal power and structural reform. It is understood by scholars today as a class war between northern industrial entrepreneurs, powerful semi-feudal landlords with foreign business affiliations, and peasant factions which aimed to overthrow the hacienda system of production which positioned them captive labor (Flores Magón 2002; Vaughan 1997). After Francisco Madero (the leader aligned with the northern forces) won the presidency in 1910, he and his party turned on their allied groups (led by Zapata from the south and Pancho Villa from the north). The war continued until the 1917 ratification of the new constitution including the radical Article 27, which regulated property relations and Article 123, which delegate" fars the inclusion of organized labor into the formal political process and functions to formalize labor's eminent position in national politics. Though the war officially ended, presidents and political leaders continued to be assassinated until 1929, when the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) took control of the Mexican government. They kept control for seventy years, lost it in 2000 – and then regained it in 2006.

The ejido system began with Article 27 in the 1917 Mexican Constitution, but its implementation did not begin until the early 1930's with the progressive Lázaro Cárdenas del Rio administration which supported a "state-peasant alliance" (Fox 1992:47). With the creation of these collective ejidos in irrigated areas, the state introduced rural development agencies and the rural or agricultural bank, which resulted in tighter control of the rural population by the state (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984). The issuing of ejido land

grants to rural residential groups went on for decades after the 1930's. As mentioned previously – from the enactment of the land reform in 1917 until 1990 – more than half of Mexico's land was legally entitled ejido land assisting around three million people (DeWalt et al. 1994; Brown 1997). Of course, after the revolution, hacendados also began to sell large pieces of their land before the reparto (*land distribution)* took effect.

In the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group's microregion, there were two prominent hacendados whose land eventually was seized and redistributed, though after they had sold off some of it. Some hacendados saw the writing on the wall and decided to give some of their land to workers, before the revolution was finalized. This was true of Ramón Camachaco Ruiz in southwestern Guanajuato who had a few haciendas in the area. He inherited the farmland and during the political turmoil, changed sides numerous times. By the end of the revolution, he had sided with the victors and given away part of his land in hopes of retaining some once the revolution had settled. He – like other savvy hacendados – was able to keep a portion of his farmland and infrastructure, though the rest of his estate was portioned off to ejidatarios from land that now pertains to seven different ranchos, or villages.

By the end of the reparto, the Mexican government had expropriated 44 million acres and redistributed it amongst approximately 811,000 eligible peasants, or ejidatarios (Henderson 2011: 200). Article 27 mandated that the government had the right to expropriate private property – usually from large landowners who operated as semi-feudal landlords known then as hacendados (*hacienda owners*) – for public interest and redistribute the land to registered rural resident (peasant) communities, who were indebted to the hacendados and/or hacienda farmworkers. This land reform created the

ejido system. An ejido is understood differently in different areas in Mexico, but generally speaking it can be understood as community agricultural land with particular structures of governance and connections to the state delineated into parcels which members both individually or collectively possess and farm.

According to members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, one of their relatives at the time – a great aunt of Rosalba's – fed the federal land survivors and engineers when they came to the rancho. Due to this connection, they were also able to buy a pequeña propiedad (*small piece of farmland property*) aside from the ejido land that each head of household who was a member of a local association was granted later in the 1930's. "Les empezaron a comprar tierras, poco a poco. De esta forma, tienen propiedades." (*"They began to buy lands, little by little. Through this method, they have properties").*

The reparto was uneven throughout their microregion in the Bajío, and the country as a whole. In their rancho, each of these male heads of household were granted approximately six hectares (or approximately 18 acres) while in other ranchos nearby – where assumingly they had less political power – each head of household was only granted two to four hectares of farmland. The associations also collectively held hill land which they used (and still use) to graze their animals, especially during the rainy season. Amassment of land by individuals still took place. By using kin relations and other means, individual enterprises could manipulate the system and farm as one continuous enterprise on large tracts of land (Henderson 2011:59). Others worked together in northern sites like Durango on collective ejidos to access economies of scale (Henderson 2011). Families, like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres, considered themselves as average

campesinos farming wheat and maize and raising animals for both subsistence and to market locally. At this point in their kin group's history, migration was not a rural livelihood strategy they were considering.

Caldwell Family Farming and the Shifting U.S. Approach from Farm Labor Policy to Foreign Policy

Some members of the Caldwell kin group entered non-farming economic ventures in the early 1900's, but most continued to farm and market their products in a variety of ways in southern Appalachia. After WWI when many farmers' incomes increased, farming families began to re-think their approach to marketing and their organizational structures. In the Carolina Hill Country, farmers began to form collectives that pooled resources, sold in bulk, and gained buying power. The Caldwells were part of one such group called the Farmers' Federation.

While its people and projects changed across its lifetime, the Farmers' Federation was organized in 1920 as a cooperative – according to their own by-laws – before there was legal infrastructure to allow for the creation of co-operatives (Ager 1991: 248). Their by-laws were modeled after the Equitable Pioneers of Rochdale, England, who were independent weavers, not employed by a company. In 1844, they created the first consumers' cooperative and the Rochdale Plan. The Rochdale plan centered on the equity enhancing "one man, one vote" rule as opposed to the corporate decision-making norm of one vote per share. The goal of this group was to serve its members by accessing buying power as a collective, not to make profit as a single enterprise. Farming families in western North Carolina were not the only ones in the U.S. in the 1920s who were

thinking about organizing as a collective as a principle livelihood strategy. There was a growing shift in thinking in other parts of the agricultural U.S. as well.

The national interest in forming cooperatives during the "progressive era" was part of the larger societal question which some referred to as the socio-economic "agricultural problem." After World War I, and the increased value of agricultural commodities it brought about, land speculators reverted their gaze back to farmland. Farmers attempted to expand, but many of them had to take on debt to do so. When the 1920's drop in commodity values hit, it caused them to experience the Great Depression before other groups. This "agricultural problem" related directly to the investment in technology that replaced people with machines and the spreading of distribution infrastructure (like the railroads) which resulted in tighter global connectivity. These changes were part of the globalizing of U.S. economies – which were thought of as suffering from "over supply" – by connecting them to "foreign markets" which resulted in questions of how to manage supply so to stabilize markets (and market prices) for producers. This change meant that "local people" could be fed by farmers elsewhere.

The U.S. legal infrastructure is still not set up well to address the legal needs of cultural groups but was instead largely designed to address individual grievances (Norgen and Nanda 2006: xvi). Political actors in the early 1900's, however, envisioned a different kind of economy than the one we have today. This was to be an agricultural economy led by cooperatives – a cooperative-based economy that the U.S. legal system would have to accommodate. The beginning of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) can be traced to this era and spread through funding and support from local chambers of commerce, the Rockefeller Foundation, railroad companies, and other

business groups (Curl 2009:337). Following the idea of Aaron Sapiro who advocated a plan for marketing agricultural commodities based on the commodity (as “commodity basis”) instead of the locality, the AFBF and others created national livestock and grain marketing organizations with the aim to ally farming families and large-scale farming operations under one political group.

Farming families in western North Carolina participated in this national agricultural (re-organization) movement. Interestingly, the founder of the farmers’ cooperative that the Caldwells participated in was not a local organization, but one founded by a Presbyterian preacher of an elite Chicago family who saw himself as doing God’s work by farming and organizing farmers (Ager 1991). Before he moved his family to western North Carolina, he toured a meat company factory owned by the Swift Family in Chicago and also toured Henry Ford’s Tractor plant where he saw a prototype of a “Pelton wheel.” Ford sent him a wheel to test out in the hills of the Carolinas, and he also received “advice and support from Quaker Oats company” which “provided them with feed at a reasonable rate” (Ager 1991: 224). He used his elite family network in Chicago and his network from attending Yale to raise development funds from “outside investment” for the Farmers’ Federation. Later, he created a “folk music” fundraiser campaign and even sold stock in the federation to regional elites like Mrs. Vanderbilt and Dr. Grove. His motto was, “Helping the mountain farmer to help himself.”

The trend toward mechanization continued and contributed to this social movement. Vegetable and fruit farming became more industrial, and this happened in the “absence of markets” – meaning that farming was not producing a profit for most farming enterprises (Fite 1984:111). Automobiles and tractors were changing cultivation

techniques, input costs, and social organization of agricultural production. To access these cultivation techniques, one had to access capital to purchase the necessary technological equipment. To do this, many farmers in different places (and other producers) decided to pool resources and act as a collectivity of enterprisers.

Collectivities seemed to be popping up throughout the agricultural industry. Farmers in mostly the eastern half of the state created the North Carolina tobacco growers cooperative association (Fite 1984: 106). By 1921, there were 150 Farmer's Federation members who were engaged in a diversity of agricultural endeavors and whom collectively owned two warehouses along the Southern Railroad. By the 1930's, North Carolina had undertaken a massive highway building program which linked their eight warehouses[14] throughout western North Carolina (Ager 1991:360).

The Caldwells' farming enterprises managed to access markets by selling their produce locally and also to elites in urban places throughout South Carolina, like Greenville and Columbia, and North Carolina, like Charlotte and Asheville. In the 1920's, families sold the surplus perishable goods that they themselves could not eat – such as fresh-market produce, butter cream, eggs, and milk at "curb markets" in these cities. "Pioneer families" were said to have begun these marketplaces and worked with the state to turn them into institutions complete with regulations. Younger generations would inherit relatives' tables and spots at the marketplaces, when they convened for marketing hours (Wirtz 2010:11). Much like the state farmers markets that are still in operation today, curb markets were created by (and sustained) an exchange community,

[14] In 1925, there was a fire at their central warehouse which they believe was due to the straw on the ground and kerosene stoves used to store bananas at an optimal 75-80 degrees F to ripen for timely sales.

who developed practices and relations needed for a sustainable, diverse community economy (Gibson-Graham 2006).

Many family farmers would drop off a "peddling load" around six in the morning with a vender at one of these markets who would sell their produce on commission. A "peddling load" might contain grapes, apples, cabbage, eggplant, peppers, greasy (green) beans, and tomatoes. The trade negotiation and event of a "curb market" necessitates a certain level of cooperation and coordination between farming families that should not go unrecognized as a common good – an asset for collective well-being. Not all exchanges are purely capitalistic, with one winner and one loser. These privately-run "curb markets" – and other similar marketplaces throughout southern Appalachia from Greenville, Tennessee to Greenville South Carolina – are sites for envisioning and recognizing the economic politics of possibility (Gibson-Graham 2006). I will discuss this concept more throughout the dissertation.

The 1920's were a difficult decade for farmers in the U.S. who "lacked bulk buying apparatus," with many economists blaming Europe's slow economic recovery for U.S. farmers' low agricultural commodity prices throughout the decade. But the Farmers' Federation could be of help. It organized a regional, diverse network of enterprises because there was one reliable food cash crop to pool. Most of these farming families began to grow more burley tobacco in the 1920's as their main cash crop and in the 1930's the marketing for this crop was organized through the federal quota system[15] which included auction houses. Diverse agricultural projects were necessary to keep a

[15] The federal tobacco-marketing quota set a limit as to how much poundage each producer could sell on the market at the auction houses. It was a system developed in the 1930's to regulate supply and demand, so as not to flood the market. This stabilized prices. But the program ended in 2004 with the "Buyout."

continuous cash flow, but farming enterprises and collectives struggled to survive throughout the 1930's.

The Federation tried a number of projects such as branding products like the "federation potato" and the "Carolina Sunshine" yellow tomato juice. They built a tobacco curing plant and a canning company, and even created mobile unites like a canning apparatus to connect to the federation truck and used a railroad cart to facilitate a mobile poultry trade. They even hoped to send green tomatoes to South Florida during the hottest summer months (Ager 1991). During this era, the "butter and egg" trade proved to be important to farming families' incomes. Much of this was thought of in the twentieth century U.S. South as "women's work"[16] (Jones 2002).

Meanwhile in the U.S. – the national attitude toward and state policy governing – immigration was shifting toward more racially exclusionary guidelines. In the 1920's, the importance of immigrants' "nation of origin" was formalized into policy with the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act of 1924[17], also called the National Origins Act which imposed a quota system (or number-based limitation to immigration from particular countries) on immigrant policy, charting the course for the next century of immigration

[16] Chicken enterprises are emblematic of "what farm women do" in the Carolinas (Jones 2002) – not unlike chicken and pig breeding in Guanajuato. The entrepreneur who commissioned the prototype of the first shipping container was the son of a chicken enterprise woman in North Carolina – an enterprise which offered him experiences to learn from to begin his career trajectory in the fruit and vegetable wholesale. Malcom Purcell McLean, a now famous logistics entrepreneur from rural North Carolina, credits his experience selling eggs for his mother on commission on the side of the road in the 1920's as his first exposure to commerce (Levinson 2006).

[17] The precursor to this act took place in 1921 when the U.S. Congress placed the first number-based restriction on immigration tied to "sending" country, or source of immigrants as an "emergency" act that largely followed the 1911 Dillingham Commission Report that argued that immigrants from southern and eastern Europe posed a "threat" to the U.S. and for this reason, mechanisms should be put into place to curtail this migration pattern. Immigration based on "national origin" was not accounted for in U.S. census collection until 1899 and then after WWII, state borders changed which meant that the classification system needed to adjust as well.

policy. The same law created the Border Patrol. The National Origins Act capped immigration to "155,000 a year, established temporary quotas based on two percent of the foreign-born population in 1890, and mandated the secretaries of labor, state, and commerce to determine quotas on the basis of national origins by 1927" (Ngai 2004:23). However, there was no immigration limit put in place for immigration from countries of the western hemisphere (like Canada and Mexico).

Both the Quota Law of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924 gave preference to "quota immigrants" with agricultural skills. In fact, part of the justification for these unbalanced quotas was linked to agriculture. Some believed that this was logical since the geographic areas which had "furnished the United Sates with the greater portion of her foreign-born farmers… [had been] those in northwestern Europe" (Brunner 1929:27). Approximately a quarter of the "foreign-born farmers" in the U.S. in 1920 were born in Germany and another quarter of (what was counted as) the total number of "foreign-born farmers" was born somewhere in Scandinavia (Brunner 1929: 3-4). In 1921, a three percent quota was placed on countries from which the immigrants had come. In addition, immigrant countries were linguistically mapped as "southern and eastern Europe" and "northern and western Europe," with the latter designated as more preferable, or desirable as a source of immigrants. Three percent came from the total percentage of immigrants at the time of the census that they used to calculate the quota. Therefore, to operationalize this restriction, the "national origins" of all U.S. citizens had to be defined so that the percentages of each group could be calculated[18]. Congress finally approved of these definitions and calculations in 1929. Of course, as Mae Ngai argues, the numbers and

classification system are themselves contestable and thus, any logical assumptions tied to them are then reproachable (2004).

The new approach to U.S. immigration policy (supported by the nativist movement) was based on restrictions and an implicit ethno-racial hierarchy[19]. It "established for the first-time numerical limits on immigration and a global racial and national hierarchy that favored some immigrants over others" and tightly linked in the public imaginary the social constructs of race and nation (Nagi 2004:3). While families coming from Ireland (like the Caldwells) had in their time been characterized as "savages" (Baker 1998), immigrants from southern and eastern Europe were the new targets of marginalization. The purposed solution to what was perceived as an immigration problem was the National Origins Act which continued as a central immigration policy until 1965.

The conflation of race and nation was (and still is) common in the U.S. where physical anthropology helped establish the categorization (and ranking) system of people based largely on phenotypical (biological) difference. The power to shape people's perceptions of belonging, violence, and (in)justice through the conflation of race and nation is still present today, with the popular usage of "Mexican" as a way of both classifying someone by race and nationality, as I discussed previously. In fact, "Mexican" did not show up as a census category until 1930. In the 1920 census, "Mexico and all others" was listed under All White countries of birth, though this racial classification of the Mexican nationality shifted out of the All White category in a short amount of time.

[19] The nativist lobby at the time wanted to use decades old census data (from 1890) to set the quota numbers, which would skew the ethno-racial proportions of immigrants – aiming to "whiten" the U.S. population as a whole (Ngai 2004).

Of course, eugenics and biological determinists worked to convince others that morality and race were inextricably bound, with “white” northwestern European Protestants (imagined as males) as the national moral ideal. Persons seen as biologically and culturally inferior to European Americans characterized as “backwards” much like the way that Appalachians were stereotyped as under-developed, “stuck back in time.”

The national origins quota system was a “regime of immigration restriction” which imparted an ethno-racial hierarchy on the nation (including “whiteness”) and the world, and a “new sense of territoriality” which brought with it a policing of bodies and borders with the aim of maintaining control over sovereignty of a nation by the state (Ngai 2004). Its goal was homogenization, to spread “whiteness” and keep “colored races” from tainting the “melting pot.” This meant that immigration policy was designed to support a racist ideology that was justified (at least in part) by eugenics.

During this era, from 1927 until 1948, local governments started to keep “alien registration records” (or immigration records) in accordance with the Alien Registration Act as a form of immigrant surveillance that is now carried out by federal authorities. This is evident in archives in the Carolina Hill Country, though the microfilm archives seem to be incomplete in the sense that most of them date to the late 1930’s and early 1940’s. The diversity of arrivals to this microregion as reported in these archives may be of surprise. One county documented new comers with the following “country of origin” listed: Germany, England, Canada, Switzerland, Scotland, Poland, Cuba, Creek, Russia, Dutch West Indies, Lithuania, Hebrew, and Ireland. There were also farmers who came first from Florida and before that from another country. There were farmers from Switzerland and Great Britain and a few “farm overseers” who were listed as “without

nationality." Many persons told officials that they immigrated to reunite with their families; this reason for migration was also listed on their alien registration form. Families migrated together as groups, and even as part of congregations.

The Great Depression struck in the 1930's and the U.S. government decided to reverse the farm labor supply policy promoted by the U.S. Immigrant Act of 1917 with the repatriation of an estimated 150,000 Mexican Americans throughout the 1930's, increasing the Mexico's population by ten percent (Henderson 2011:46). President Hoover supported the scapegoating of Mexicans and Mexican Americans during and after the Great Depression and his Labor Secretary William Doak institutionalized deterrence mechanisms like home raids as part of the anti-immigrant campaign (Henderson 2011).

During this era 1929-1939, euphemistically called "Mexican repatriation," an estimated 150,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans moved south across the Mexico-U.S. border due to the extreme, even violent pressures, which included blocking Mexican Americans from accessing construction jobs and various scare tactics used in places like southern California where "dust bowl" survivors were also looking for work (Hoffman 1974). Supposedly, this was done to open up employment opportunities for U.S. citizens of Euro-American descent; however, many of those who left to find work in California were unemployed. Some scholars argue that these actions were also motivated in part by the spread of labor organizing and political mobilizing by Mexican-American farmworkers in the southwest (Hahamovitch 1997). The economic depression of the 1930's brought labor disputes and social turmoil to farming communities around the country.

In 1928-29, the U.S. House of Representatives, followed by the Senate, passed another infamous policy: The Tariff Act, also called the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Bill. This policy put nationalist or "protectionist" trade policy into effect – meaning that import tariffs were increased. The idea or purpose behind raising taxes on imported goods was to transfer the rising unemployment from the U.S. labor market to foreign labor markets. Higher taxes on imported goods would "protect American jobs" (and farmers) from "foreign competition." In retrospect, it seems that this act was initially meant to protect agricultural commodities, and then other industries wanted "protection" too from "cheap foreign imports." The issue of foreign trade goes back all the way to the logic behind the writing of the U.S. Constitution which reasoned that states on their own would not be able to participate in foreign trade and for this reason, a federal government would be advantageous. Tariffs on foreign traded goods (especially stimulants like sugar, coffee, tea, and alcohol) were also at the root of why the U.S. became an independent nation-state. Tariffs were (and still are) revenue raisers and residents at that time wanted to benefit from those taxes instead of having the money be sent over the ocean to Great Britain. Due to this and other grievances relating to political rights, the American colonists boycotted British goods and eventually went to war for independent sovereignty.

As part of his presidential campaign in 1928, Herbert Hoover promised to raise tariff rates on imported agricultural goods to get the vote of struggling farmers. With nearly a quarter of the U.S. population living and working on farmland still in 1928, Hoover needed to appease the agricultural lobby – whose supporters were not benefiting from the capitalization (due in part to electrification) taking place in the urban centers in

the 1920's and who saw themselves as disadvantaged in the domestic market with the entrance of imported, cheap foodstuffs. In 1929 as President, Hoover signed the Agricultural Marketing Act to "promote the establishment and financing of a farm marketing system of producer-owned and producer-controlled cooperative associations" (Knapp 120 quoted in Curl 2009:139). Agricultural commodity prices at the time were falling in "foreign markets" and the value of imported agricultural commodities was on the rise (USDA 1940:386). President Hoover said that agriculture was "the most urgent economic problem" facing the nation and that "an adequate tariff is the foundation of farm relief." The Great Depression hit in 1929. It, along with World War II, defined the generation that endured it – as well as the next U.S. generation whom they would raise.

Though economically the Great Depression did not help farming families in the Carolina Hill Country, they were able to continue to farm and provide food for their families. Elders today remember particular strategies their families would use, like burying harvested cabbages upside down in the snow so they would keep for longer. Many of the Caldwells today think of David's father, Jonathan, and his father, Andrew, as patriarchs of their farming kin group and foundational actors that allowed for their FFV faming success. David recalled one of his favorite stories about his family:

> My father was born in 1935. He grew up eating a breakfast of two eggs, sausage, strawberry jelly or grape preserves, milk, biscuits and his parents would have coffee. And the only thing they bought was the coffee, the sugar, and the salt and the pepper. All the rest they had grown. My father was 1 of 11, and each one of them had something to do with that (produce) packing house. They either sold it farmed, trucked it, loaded it, you know. They would actually haul the stuff down the mountain there and meet grandidi. Whatever boy went down, he'd stay with him…he'd then take the wagon back up ½ the mountain. Then the other brother would come down there with a load

> and he would take the load down to Thomasville or they would swap. Grandidi would actually stay on the market in Thomasville…. That's our roots. That's all we've ever done.

Members of the Caldwell kin group see their kin-based fresh-market farming and marketing practices as the reason why their family made it through cycles of economic crisis.

The Caldwell family was one of many that contributed to the agricultural economy in the Carolina Hill Country by establishing local markets. Different branches of the kin group helped establish town agricultural markets like "curb" farmers' markets in towns in the microregion in the 1920's. These markets did not begin with infrastructure like the construction of a big building or shed but were, instead, markets that took place on the weekends in certain parking lots and along certain roads in many towns in southern Appalachia.

Many families remember these local weekend markets as places of community, where they would sell fresh-market produce or home-made jellies, pickled okra, and chutney from a table or stand with their sisters or cousins. The tables or selling stands that made up the markets were often passed down from generation to generation within a kin group. These markets illustrated the change in transportation infrastructure, since earlier in the century people traveled by wagon and created markets near railroad stations to facilitate the receiving and shipping of goods. By the late 1940's, most everyone buying and selling at these markets arrived and departed in automobiles. A few of the Caldwells remember one man who would bring a horse and wagon to the market in the 1950's, but he was definitely seen as a novelty.

WWII and After: Braceros from MX in U.S.

The Great Depression ended with the start of WWII, which also brought change to the Carolina Hill Country and arguably most of the world. During WWII, large-scale farmers throughout the U.S. again turned to the U.S. federal government to supply them with farmworkers who would not be able to access collective bargaining power. This was described as a necessary emergency measure, based on the reasoning that many of the U.S. farmers and rural workers would go to fight the war, leaving the U.S. in danger in terms of food supply and overall food security. Through their lobby, farm enterprises sought noncitizen workers who could be (and were) threatened with deportation when they attempted to negotiate payment (Galarza 1964:183-198). Though the Jim Crow Law was still in effect, African Americans were gaining collective bargaining power in the eastern states' farm labor context until the creation of the federally-managed labor import program, known as the Bracero (*strong-armed men*) Program.

In western states, U.S. citizens of Japanese heritage were displaced and disposed of their farms and imprisoned in internment camps during the war. They were stereotyped as potential security threats, potentially disloyal members of U.S. society. Through an executive order and the Alien Enemy Act, the Justice Department arranged the arrest of 2,192 Japanese, 1,393 Germans and 264 Italians nationals. The Japanese Americans were treated quite differently from the Germans and Italians on the ground that they were racially different from the "Caucasian race" which meant, according to then California Governor Earl Warren, that they could not as simply identify which among them were disloyal (Ngai 2004:175-6). Whole families of Japanese American citizens were sent to "military areas" (or internment camps) during the war to be held as quasi-prisoners for

the duration of the war. This policy was part of a larger anti-immigrant ideology taking hold in the U.S. at the time. James Cockcroft argues that Taft-Hartley, McCarthyism, the Alien Registration Act, McCarren-Walter Immigration Act and the Bracero Program were all "interrelated parts of a frontal assault on labor activism and the free exercise of American basic civil rights" during this era of farm labor "exceptionalism" (Cohen 2011: 30).

A few men from the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group participated in the Bracero Program in the 1950's and early 1960's. They traveled to work in a variety of crops like peaches, tomatoes, strawberries, and pears. Gerardo was one of them. He worked in places like Merced and Stockton California, Texas and Arkansas.

> Cuando tuve en Stockton, allí tuvimos con un contratista. Estábamos piscando fresa, nada más un rato. Como tres o cuatro horas diarias, nada más sacábamos para la comida. Hicimos huelga y nos fuimos a la asociación y nos dijeron, '¿Quiénes son los huelguistas? [Le] dije a mis compañeros, creo que no hay más infierno [que en el] que estábamos. En México, a ver un peso, pues no lo hay. Nada más gano para comer con un contratista que tenía más de mil personas. Todos llenos de polvo. Fuimos a un lugar, cerca de Tracy.
> *When I was in Stockton, there we worked for a contractor. We were picking strawberries, only a little bit of time. Like for three or four hours daily, we got only the amount of money we needed to eat. We went on a strike and we went to the association and they would say, 'Who are these strikers?' I said to my coworkers, I believe there is no worse hell than where we were. In Mexico, to see a peso, well there were none. I only make to eat with a contractor who has [employed] more than one thousand people. All full of dust. We left and went to a place near Tracy* [where they worked for someone else].

The men viewed the program as a way for them to earn income in dollars that they would then invest in land and agricultural projects in their rancho in the Bajío. But

as Gerardo's story shows, the program did not ensure just working conditions or even maintain the standards of the work contract that these men agreed to. Today, some of these men and their nuclear families are part of the "acomodado" *(accommodated, well-off)* class in the village. Most of them were able to buy land and pass on this wealth to the next generation, who are now in their thirties, forties, and fifties. Most of these men continued to practice circular migration – doing farm work as wage earners in the U.S. and as farm owners in Mexico. Later, in the late 1980's, many of them became MX- U.S. binationals through the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) amnesty program, which will be discussed in chapter six.

The Bracero program was a bilateral farm labor program that facilitated the logics of transporting registered men to work as farm workers for particular U.S. farm enterprises. As such it was bureaucratically managed circular migration. The farm enterprises paid a fee for each worker. This U.S.-MX bilateral private-public program came about due to the farm lobby and powerful grower associations. These private growers' associations actually ran the program and earned profits from the fees. Then in 1951, the federal government took over the role of principal administrator of Bracero program from the big growers' associations (Galarza 1964: 156-171).

At first most of these workers were sent to Texas, Arizona, and California because, at the time, the most powerful facet of the grower lobby were the cotton growers who were concentrated in these states (Kiser and Kiser 1979). They benefited from the Emergency Price Control Act (Fite 1984:142). California was (and still is) a powerful force in the agricultural industry due to their immense variety and volume of crops. After the first few years, farm enterprises from many more agricultural states – throughout the

U.S. including the East Coast – entered the program. Many critics of the program believe that this was a way for farm enterprises to access more harvest season workers who were not given access to worker rights while in the U.S.

Deborah Cohen theorizes that these male workers were becoming transnational subjects, in that crossing political borders and participating in a managed migration process meant something more than simply supplying labor from Mexico for labor demand in the U.S. (2011). These men went through "the same process that identify men as exceptional for their peasant class and would transform them into modern yeoman farmers simultaneously reinscribed them in hierarchical social relations and brought them into an individuated relationship to the state" (Cohen 2011: 110).

These men were also imagined by the patriarchal Mexican government to be "modernizers," individuals who went to the U.S. as mere campesinos focused on subsistence agriculture, but who came back to Mexico as "technological," commercial farmers (Cohen 2011). But, the program came to an abrupt end with the Hart-Cellar Act[20] in 1965. This was brought about by public discontent of the program, which was itself derivative from the larger social justice movement that was unfolding in the 1960's. What sparked the national conscience was a CBS television program, *Harvest of Shame*, which put the injustices of the program on display for the nation, and the outcry led to its downfall. Much of the T.V. program footage was shot in South Florida. By the end of the

[20] This act also abolished national quotas from 1924 and allowed for more migrants from underdeveloped and developing countries. The country-specific national quota system replaced it with a global limit of 20,000 each and raised the overall number to 300,00 a year. It established family reunification and occupational visa program. But this did not take Mexico and the MX-US interwoven economies and decades of MX-US migration into account. In a way this then structurally linked "Mexican" to "illegal migration" since the policy did not allow for higher numbers from Mexico, than say Nigeria (Ngai 2004:261).

program, approximately 4.5 million men from Mexico had come north to work in agriculture in the U.S.

The supporters of the Bracero program claimed that it would lessen the unauthorized flow of workers from Mexico to the U.S. But, in fact, it increased the flow since many workers realized that their relationships with farmers and their expanding social network between the U.S. and Mexico could facilitate their movement without having to go through the bureaucratic (and demeaning) process demanded of them by the Bracero Program. Many grower enterprises also preferred that workers come to work on their own because this would mean that they (nor the workers) would have to pay the fees to participate in the Bracero Program. Scholars based in California have argued that the reliance on this program by agriculturalists in that state and beyond resulted in a binational agricultural system (Palerm and Urquiola 1993).

The "Mexican Miracle"

The decades of 1940-1970 are known as the "Mexican Miracle" when the GDP increased by 600% and the population only doubled. This policy era supported import substitution industrialization (ISI) which aimed to create profitable domestic production units. ISI policy is considered as protectionist policy due to the manipulation of exchange rates and tariffs on competing imports (Conor 1987). This economic growth is credited to the substitution of imports and low inflation as well as the peso-dollar equilibrium (Hewitt de Alcántara 1984). Agricultural development was a large part of this modernization process, and it grew at an impressive rate – particularly in northern

Mexico where the total amount of irrigated land more than doubled between 1950 and 1965.

Initially, the land reform justified itself in terms of productivity. The average agricultural production during the three-year period from 1939 to 1941 was higher than it had been at any time since the beginning of the revolution. But the Cardenas land reforms were (to a considerable extent) reversed by succeeding governments, starting with the Aleman government of 1946-52, which allowed capitalist entrepreneurs to rent peasant land. This created the phenomenon known as neolatifundismo, where land owners build up large-scale private farms on the basis of controlling land which remained ejidal but was not sown by the rural resident group to whom it was assigned.

Harking back to the policy of the Porfirio Díaz regime – the turn of the nineteenth century into the twentieth – increasing preference was given in government policy to large-scale agriculture owned by foreign, especially U.S. nationals and corporations in the 1950's and 1960's. The Mexican agrarian policy of 'contrived dualism,' begun by Cardenas: "had created an efficient commercial sector, assuring rapid growth in the production of wheat and exportable; at the same time, it had settled the mass of the peasantry in the ejidos, thereby creating sources of cheap food and the labor reserve for commercial agriculture" (De Janvry 1981:234).

The Green Revolution was an important factor in the "Mexican miracle." An American scientist, Norman Borlaug, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, began experimenting and developing disease resistant high yield varieties (HYV) of wheat in Mexico in 1943. This marked what is now known as the Green Revolution, a process which would make many of the farmers in the world into consumers of petroleum-based

agricultural inputs. The Green Revolution was sold to nation-state development agents as land-saving technology (e.g., HYV seeds) which would further the development of industrial capitalism in agriculture, especially in "Third World" countries by increasing food production without using more land. By the 1960's and 1970's, this had spread to regions across the world.

With the capital earned by the full-scale import-substitution programs enacted after World War II, the Mexican state invested heavily in infrastructure and vastly expanded the road network. These were, in part, supported by funds from the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (now part of the World Bank). Thus, technological "progress" was tied to an ideology and global economic "modernization" project. This was adopted by the Mexican government as a key element in the agricultural development strategy.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the Mexican state invested in irrigation projects to enable the process of capitalization of the countryside through large-scale industrial agriculture by local elite, large landholders (Gardea and Aguilar 1987:131). The policy privileged agricultural elites and urban-based consumers. By 1960, Mexico had the highest population rate in the world, and this became a problem because the Mexican agricultural modernization policy did not support subsistence agricultural production – meaning that many of these once self-sufficient farming families decided they had to send a person in their family to a city to gain wages to support their family-based agricultural livelihoods. Gradually, the impact of the rising costs of production led to very uneven economic results: a 1970 study put out by the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) revealed that 72 percent of the agricultural production units

were “units in the actual or potential process of disintegration” (Bartra 1993: xv). This disparity shows that “economic progress” was coupled with the growth of economic inequality.

In 1967, the Rockefeller Foundation funded the Puebla Project. Understood as the small “Green Revolution” (GR) because it targeted smallholders, its focus was to increase corn yields implemented in response to criticism of GR and the socio-economic struggles that the small to medium landholders were suffering from due to competition with the industrial agricultural companies flooding their markets with cheaper products. Though the project was successful – in that it spurred agriculturalists to form “solidarity groups” to get access to credit and fertilizers (like the groups that were formed to gain access to land through the ejido land reform) – it failed to include provisions for GR seeds as well as the technological package necessary for smallholders (de Janvry 1981:235).

By combining mechanization with HYV seeds, Mexico began to produce a surplus of wheat and became an exporter by the 1960’s. Most of production was being done by agricultural corporations in the highly irrigated, northwestern region – irrigated through state funded projects during the Porfiriato and then again in the 1940’s. By the 1960’s, the large-scale capitalist farms in the Northwest – which had been promoted by Mexican state programs came to claim the title of the “Breadbasket of Mexico,” which was once claimed by the Bajío region and its small- to mid-scale producers. But, as was recognized by 1970, the “introduction of the Green Revolution in Mexico, as in many developing nations… contributed to a worsening of income distribution within the agricultural sector; the large private farmers have repeated much higher profits through

increased yields, while freeholding peasants and ejidatarios (*land grant holders*) …experienced no such increase" (de Janvry 1981:124).

In fact, the GR – together with the promotion of large scale industrial agriculture – slowly changed the conditions of economic production and value in rural Mexico, such that the small agriculturalists created by the land reforms could no longer "compete" successfully in the now colonized Mexican agricultural marketplace. Scholars found this issue – as well as serious ecological issues – arise due to the GR (Shiva 1991; 2000). This precarious situation was tipped over the edge by the 1973 oil crisis and subsequent massive increase in agricultural costs in the 1970's. Towards the end of the "Mexican Miracle," academics in the campesino school of thought began to back the notion that Mexico was suffering from "dependent capitalism," one unable to develop without external aid (Bartra 1993). The story of modernization and "development" – which looks back to "progress" from 1943 on – largely displaced the story of "social emancipation" begun in 1917 and the ideal of equality the Mexican Revolution had proclaimed.

Rosalba grew up during the "Mexican Miracle" – an era of technocratic rural development. Rosalba sold food in the street with their mother and her father worked with the cattle and managed the fields. Her mother and the older children raised pigs and chickens. Their father would grow wheat, sorghum, and chickpeas. They would sell all this, but the maize which they also grew was mostly for household consumption. They stored it in a room which it filled up after harvest. Throughout the year, they would sell one or two bags of it when they needed cash to buy other food that they did not produce themselves. Her mother – and most mothers in that area and era – would "administrar" (*administer*) the corn, just like people administer household expenses these days. If you

used it all (by selling it too fast and buying food out a lot and lots of shoes or something), then you would be in trouble, she explained. The maize was supposed to last you all year. You would sell it to the shops when you needed to and use it little by little for household consumption of tortillas. Her mother would take it to the molinero (*miller*) and her and her sisters would make tortillas that her family ate at home. She explained, that when she was little, she would go to the store and they would give her just a little bit of whatever she was buying (like salt). So little that she would bring a napkin with her and they would put that little bit in the napkin. It is not like today, she exclaimed. Today when she goes to the store, she buys huge amounts of stuff compared to then.

Her sister, Luz, remembered childhood fondly, going to school, playing and doing chores with her siblings. She remembered her parents as treating them well, being very loving. When she was a kid she went around “juege juege” (*playing*), “dando guerra” (*making trouble*) and everything. When she was old enough, 12 or 13 years old they gave her chores like washing dishes, making tortillas (as she tells me this she claps her hands together softly as if shaping a tortilla by hand), sweeping, hauling water in a pot, and later ironing. Just as little girls grew up, she explained. She helped feed her siblings since she was one of the oldest. Her cousin, born in the late 1950’s, remembered,

> Vivíamos en casas muy pobres de adobe. Recuerdo que fuimos nueve de la familia, cuatro hermanas y cinco hermanos. Vivimos, puede decir, pobres, económicamente pero bueno. Yo como persona me sentía feliz en mi niñez, en la manera que me desarrollé. Mis padres eran campesinos. Trabajaron en el campo. [En] parte, mi padre fue negociante, compraba y vendía animales, en cuestión de vacas, puercos, vendíamos carne. Todo este tipo. Que digo. Gracias a esto no tuvimos la necesidad nosotros de trabajar. Éramos sus ayudantes en el plan. Todos sus hijos trabajaban en el campo cuando no había una máquina para trillarlo. Entonces lo cortábamos todo… Me gustaba porque

> mi mamá siempre nos llevaba algo para comer. Comíamos todo en el campo así. Durante esos tiempos, casi siempre los animales se quedaban en el campo, en el cerro. Es tierra aparte. Cuando el ejido se repartió se dieron cierta cantidad para trabajar y cierta cantidad para pastar los animales…En aquel entonces sembraban maíz, frijol y trigo, y luego sorgo para el forraje.
> *We lived in very poor adobe houses. I remember we were nine in the family, four brothers and five sisters. We lived, you can say, poor, economically but good. I felt like a happy person during my childhood, in the way I developed, grew up. My parents were peasants, they worked in the fields. In part, my father was a busnissman, buying and selling animals, related to cows, pigs, we would sell the meat. Everything in this regard. What I say. Thanks to this, we (the children) did not have the need to work. We were his helpers in the fields. All their children worked in the fields when there was no thrashing machine to harvest. So, we would cut everything… I like it because my mom would always bring us something to eat. We would eat everything in the fields like that. During those times, almost always the animals stayed in the countryside, on the hill. This land is separate. When then ejido land was redistributed, they gave a certain quantity to work and a certain quantity for pasturing the animals… In those times, we planted maize, beans, and wheat, and later sorghum for animal feed.*

Members of the oldest living generation of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group remember working as children in commercial flor de cempasúchol (*marigold flower*) fields. This is one of the most common flowers used to celebrate the Day of the Dead. Juana, a woman in this kin group who was a teenager during the 1970's, recalled her siblings and neighbors piling into a truck to travel to work in the fields.

> Entrábamos a las siete de la mañana y salíamos a las tres de la tarde … Pagaban 30 pesos diarios. Cortábamos la flor con los manos. Siempre se cortaba en junio, julio, agosto que es cuando llueve, se corta esa flor… Los propietarios les daba gusto cuando llovía porque la flor pesaba más. Nosotros íbamos a trabajar aunque lloviera, teníamos que seguir trabajando.
> *We started at seven in the morning and left at three in the afternoon. They paid 30 pesos a day. We cut the flower*

> *with our hands. It was cut in June, July, August when it rained, the flower was cut…The owners liked it when it rained because the flower would weigh more [meaning that they would be paid more for it during the sale based on volume]. We would go to work even though it would rain, we had to keep working.*

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres and their community members began to consider temporary rural-urban migration as part of their agricultural livelihood strategy later in the 1970's, after farming with tractors became the norm in their microregion. In1967, Rosalba's husband, Ivan started to work as a tractortista farming basic grains in the Bajío working his own land and for medium- to large-scale farmers in his community. He did this in addition to raising cattle. Rosalba and Ivan met in the street. He would walk through there while taking care of his cows, and she would walk through as she hauled water. She remembered that everyone would use the streets for their animals and the like. There were not many cars in the area at the time. She and Ivan would pass each other and that is how they got to know each other and decided to get married. She was sixteen at the time.

Rosalba believed that during this period – with the widespread use of tractors and the farming system that came with them – her rancho, and the agricultural production system they were all accustomed to, drastically restructured.

> El rancho, pues, ya cambió. Ya no es el mismo. Antes toda la gente trabajaba, y ahora toda la gente anda de vaga. Como ya [a] las personas les empezaron [a] dar tractores para fertilizar. Y ya los tractores hacen todo. Ya no hay trabajo para la gente. Por eso [la gente] ya no trabaja. Toda la gente de allí anda de vaga. Trabajan un día, dos o tres, y así. Ya no hay trabajo como antes. Porque antes todo lo hacían con la mano, antes cosechaban con la mano, acarreaban maíz en caballos. Y así. Y ahora todo lo acarrean en carro. Y hay máquinas trilladoras. Ya hay de todo.

> *The ranch has changed. It's not the same. Before everyone would work and now everyone walks around aimlessly. They began to give people tractors to fertilize and now tractors do everything. Now there is no work for the people. Because of that, the people don't work... They work one day, two, three and like that... Now there is no work like before. Because before everything was done by hand, with animals. They carry the corn with horses…like that. And now everything is carried in cars. And there are threshing machines. There is everything.*

It is important to note that U.S.-based transnational food corporations gained a strategic foothold in Mexico and the agricultural marketplace during the "Mexican Miracle" era. Based in the Bajío close to fertile flatlands, companies like Birdseye, a subsidiary of General Foods began operation of a vegetable processing plant there in 1967 "within an old garlic dehydrator on a farm outside Celaya" Guanajuato (Borrego 2000:492). The Bajío offered irrigated farmland, good soils, river water, and easy access to a major North-South running highway that is now part of the so-called "NAFTA corridor." Birdseye was following in the footsteps of Campbell Soup and Del Monte which built processing plants for canned vegetables in the region in the 1950's.

The transnational corporations both sold to the Mexican market and exported to the U.S. As such, they were considered part of the ISI development plan which meant that they could avoid tariffs. As part of a "stabilizing development" program that was meant to support domestic farmers, the Mexican government built frozen food plants in the microregion to freeze vegetables and fruits like berries so that farmers' commodities would last longer and thus offer them a higher rate of return (Feder 1975). These "stabilizing development" projects were insufficient, however, and the "ratio of imports to exports went from 55-60 percent in 1970 -71 to 833-84 percent in 1980-81." (Gardea and Aguilar 1987: 133) This development resulted in what was called the agricultural

crisis. This crisis "manifested principally in a decline in the rate of growth in domestic maize production and an increase in the import/production rations for maize, sorghum, soya, wheat, and powered milk" (Gardea and Aguilar 1987: 131)

In 1970, President Luis Echeverría began his term in office by declaring land reform dead. In the face of a possible peasant revolt, however, he was soon forced to backtrack – after which he embarked on the biggest land reform program since the Cárdenas administration of the 1930s. Echeverría expropriated huge foreign-owned private farms (many in Sonora), which were turned into new ejidos (community land grants) and increased ejido holdings by around 17 million hectares. There were also a number of different programs initiated to respond to domestic food demand which aimed to increase farm productivity and ease the competition and investment burdens of the small agriculturalists, including programs for credit (BANRURAL, FIRA), seed (PRONASE), tractors (SIDENA, FTA), crop insurance (ANAGSA), and technical assistance (SARH, BANRURAL, FIRA, CONASUPO, PACE) (Fox 1992:89). CONASUPO (the rural consumer food subsidy program) was introduced "to renew the [PRI] regime's political base among the peasantry" (Fox 1992:152). However, in 1971, the state also carried out a reform of the Agrarian Code reflecting its commitment to the now powerful large-scale commercial agricultural enterprises that developed in northern Mexico (Fox 1992:58).

Fox argues that the Echeverría reforms "presented a new, 'integral' vision of the ejido as an economic as well as political institution, making peasant managed rural development an official priority for the first time since the Cárdenas era" (Fox 1992). This move – which was re-recognition of the ejido as both economic and political – was

undone, however, by the intervention of larger economic forces in Mexican life and governmental actions that favored agricultural production oriented to global markets rather than basic local consumption needs, e.g. the production of sorghum for pig feed (Diaz-Polanco 1995). This analysis seems to ring true for my field site in the Bajío region, where agriculturalists' crop preference includes a significant amount of sorghum.

Already in 1976 during the beginning of the oil crisis and the devaluation of the peso, the new government of Lopez Portillo reversed CONASUPO's reformist orientation and enacted the Agricultural Development Act which legalized the rental of ejido land. His "agrarian policy began with generous compensation for those whose land had been expropriated, and the new official rhetoric stressed the importance of bettering rural incomes instead of redistributing property" (Fox 1992:61). According to Fox, for the "…populist and liberal policymakers… agriculture was the oil boom's Achilles' heel, since the autonomy and foreign exchange to be gained through oil could be lost through increasing dependence on imported food" (1992:60). This led to the petrodollar / peso crisis of 1982 which culminated in NAFTA.

During these years, the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group worked collectively to feed their relatives and manage their households in their rancho, while parents practiced labor migration. Some of the single women in the group attempted internal migration as part of their kin-based, collective livelihood strategy, but quickly decided that migration to the U.S. to work in agriculture would be more accessible. One of these women was Beatriz, one of Rosalba's cousins. She went to D.F. – or the Distrito Federal (*Mexico City*) – and realized, as she put it, there was no work there for her. She then decided to go to Florida with her brothers to work in lemons. She was estranged from her husband, the

father of her children, whom she met and married in D.F. years prior. At this point, her three children were of school-age and she needed to find a way to make money for their school uniforms and other necessities. She remembered that in Florida, she only made $150 a week. She worked in lemons and hated it. Bugs bit her all over her face and arms.

She also worked in tomatoes and peppers. The drivers would take them to one field one day and another the next. She sent most of her earnings home to her children and her parents in the Bajío. Her children were living at her sister's house during this time. Then after a year, she had to come back, because she was too sad living without her children. She came back to the Mexico and then went to D.F. to make money clean houses. She would come home to the rancho for four days a month. She lived with her sister-in-law while in D.F., and, slowly but surely, she found better jobs like working at a pharmacy and then a shoe shop. She would bring her sisters clothes from D.F. Then, one of them, Marta created a clothes vending enterprise from this in their rancho. Marta began traveling to D.F. to both sell clothes door-to-door and buy clothes bring back to the rancho to resell them. Marta would also stay with Beatriz's sister-in-law while in D.F.

The agricultural crisis of 1976 officially ended the "Mexican Miracle" in rural places. By then Ivan – like Beatriz and others from their rancho – had begun to practice circular migration with his male relatives to find wage work in Mexico City where he sold ice cream on the street. Then, he moved to Bachoco, Sinaloa to work in commercial agriculture. Though he migrated seasonally, he and his wife continued to grow maize, garbanzo, wheat, and beans on his approximately nine acres of ejido land. When he was home, he managed the farming, when he was gone Rosalba farmed with relatives she hired.

Ivan believed that the difference between Mexico and the U.S. is that you cannot starve in the U.S. He explained that even though you may own a little land in Mexico, all the water is being used up. On the road to a nearby rancho, there is a large area that was once all water, but now it is dry. The rivers have also been polluted from the agro-chemicals. People used to be able to eat the herbs and other wild food, but they cannot do this any more because they may get sick. For him, 1978 and the arrival of electricity to his rancho changed everything. Before then, he told me, you just had firewood, no chemicals or tractors to work the land. With electricity, they could use wells to irrigate the land. Before the land was mostly temporal (*non-irrigated*) land. The land that was irrigated was done so by the Rio Lerma and with water from the lake. Farming in their rancho has changed.

1980's Policy, Economic Turmoil, and a Transitioning Rural Mexico

Mexico's trade balance and purchasing parity with the U.S. changed drastically in the 1980's. In "the 1976-78 period, Mexico's positive trade balance averaged nearly $400 million per year. In 1979, the net agricultural trade balance was about zero, and in 1980 it was more than $1 billion in favor of the United States" (Norton 1987:243). By 1980, it was clear that the U.S. and Mexico were deeply integrated in terms of the agricultural sector – as Palerm and Urquiola argued with their concept of a MX-U.S. binational agricultural system (1993). The U.S. not only has come to rely on Mexico for farmworkers, by this point in history, but also for winter vegetables and other agricultural commodities. As Norton points out in the late 1980's, "each country is thus a major importer of agricultural products and factors from the other, yet neither appears to have a

comprehensive policy concerning its agricultural trade relations with the other" (1987: 246).

One issue that kept Mexican producers from accessing more agricultural market share was their lack of reliable storage and transportation infrastructure. As Gardea and Aguilar point out,

> [T]he presence of an infrastructure of storage and transport makes truly integrated rural development possible. By the same token, food-imports activities also require efficient distribution networks. In Mexico's case, the large increases in food imports placed great strains on the transport system. Particularly in 1980 bottlenecks tied up the movement of goods (railroads, tucking, and shipping were all affected) at the northern frontier (Nuevo Laredo) and in the Gulf port (Veracruz). These bottlenecks sparked an embargo on the shipment of cars and machinery by U.S. rail companies as well as high costs for delays in unloading freighters. [As a result] subsidies for railway transport have been significant (Gardea and Aguilar1987:140).

Though in the late 1960's Mexico had food surpluses, Mexico was importing U.S. grain which amounted to "37% to 39% of the volume of total production" by 1970 (Meyer 1993: 11). Then, in 1982, the Mexican governement used the SAM (Sistema de Alimentación Mexicana) program, run through CONASUPO (Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares), to "temporarily reduce the bias against grain producers. [However], a loss of self-sufficiency is also reflected in maize purchases by CONASUPO, Mexico's basic food procurement agency, which functions as the country's grain importer and principal supplier of food grains to urban consumers" (Meyer 1993:11). Though it was successful in addressing food insecurity (espeically in extremely impoverished areas), the program did not last long.

When the Mexican government developed SAM (Sistema de Aliementación Mexicana) as part of Plan Nacional de Desarrollo in 1980, the plan was to prioritize food security (especially in the case of production of beans, maize, wheat and rice) despite the pressures to rely on (mostly U.S.) imports. “The Mexican food system (SAM) adopts a global approach because its objective is to attain food self-sufficiency via both production and consumption-oriented programs” (Norton 1987:248). However, though SAM is seen by many analysts as a well-designed, national food distribution program, SAM was no longer implemented after 1982 due to the drop in global oil prices, the “peso crisis,” and austerity measures. This resulted in food and livelihood insecurity for a large portion of the rural population. Then, later in 1982, came a more serious development, when Mexico suffered from what is known as the “debt crisis.” During this currency crisis, the Mexican government devalued the peso twice, the second time at 50 percent which increased their debt burden to U.S. (dollar-based, USD) banks and increased inflation for everyone relying on the peso in Mexico. The 1979 oil price boom increased the value of the USD which put countries attempting to repay loans in USD in a far more disadvantaged position.

The U.S. and Federal Reserve loaned Mexico approximately 3.5 billion dollars. To avoid the collapse of the banking sector and further financial catastrophe, the government nationalized the private bank sector. The Mexican government agreed upon a stabilization program with the IMF which severely cut social services. Many scholars believe that the “petrodollar recycling strategy” was to blame for this crisis (Smith-Nonini 2016). This devaluation of the peso also meant that the dollar was more powerful in Mexico and that labor costs were also cheaper in Mexico.

Food processing companies owned by U.S. firms with processing based in Mexico began to accumulate a lot of wealth during this period. All of this resulted in a sort of recalibration of MX- U.S. agricultural relations. Companies with processing plants in the U.S. decided that to retain their market share they needed to move their production to Mexico – to regions like the Bajío where their competitors were paying less for labor. Before this happened, California-based processors dominated the market and acted as price-setters. Their competitors, who had production facilities in Mexico, strategically lowered their prices a bit to push out their California-based competition and for this reason, companies like Green Giant – still based in places like Watsonville, California – lowered wages which caused an eighteen-month strike from 1985-87. After this, the company decided to move operations south to places like Irapuato, Guanajuato (Borrego 2000:493).

By 1988, Mexico was importing seven million tons of U.S. grain at a cost of "one billion dollars in foreign exchange" (Meyer 1993:14). This grain – which was extremely expensive to transport to processing plants in Mexico – was cheaper than the global grain market, and some argue could have been cultivated on then "idle" land in Mexico. Due to this bias towards importing U.S. grains,

> [S]mall (grain) farmers in rain-fed areas became the subject of open discrimination in favor of an industrialization program predicated on low wages underpinned by a policy of cheap food. This was part of what has been referred to in the development economic literature as the bimodal or 'Mexican' model of agricultural development in which support for commercialized production is concentrated in subsector of large farms which employ relatively capitalist-intensive technologies (Meyer 1993:15).

The drastic budgetary cutbacks severely limited the ability of the rural credit bank to dictate production programs to small farmers.

With support prices increasing substantially less than other prices and the cost of grain rising in rural markets, many small farmers increased basic food production for their own use and for sale in local markets. However, for the majority of small farmers, increasing living costs (declining real wages) obliged them to seek off-farm work, and the abandonments of land became a national problem. Official data suggest that as much as 40% of the rain-fed (or temporal) land already open to cultivation is no longer being farmed because of its lack of profitability. Since the sweeping policy changes of the mid to late 1980's, CONASUPO has not been able to obtain the necessary food supplies for urban markets and has been forced to maintain its imports as at very high levels" (Meyer 1993:17). By 1990, the "Mexican Miracle" was a tale of the past, and NAFTA was already being drafted.

Caldwells: Farming Tomatoes in Southern Appalachia 1950's - 1970's

Why is there a tomato industry in the Carolina mountains of southern Appalachia? Where did it come from? How did it get its start? The development of the tomato industry in this microregion is linked to both binational farming families like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres who grow grains in the Bajío and to the history of families farming burley tobacco in Carolina Hill Country microregion of southern Appalachia. In the 1950's, North Carolina had a very large farm population. Families farming burley tobacco in the mountains began to recognize tomatoes as a potential cash crop and as a

strategic crop to combine with burley tobacco. "Burley tobacco was here but they needed a high value crop for farmers after that went out of the picture," according to John.

John is a retired farmer in western North Carolina in a county that borders South Carolina. He lives on land that goes back in his family history at least five generations. Farming families realized that two cash crop production schedules complement each other, with tomato production taking place during the "off season" for burley tobacco. As John described,

> All winter long you are thinking about where to put tobacco, tomatoes, cucumbers so they are rotated. Tomatoes and peppers use the same stuff from the ground. Tobacco and tomatoes work well together, good crop rotation. The tomato season [is] winding down right when tobacco season starts to pick up. Worked good on the labor deal too…

This is how John and many in his generation chose to organize their family farming enterprises and some participated in the creation and operation of farmers' cooperative packing houses. The introduction of commercial tomato cultivation helped shape contemporary FFV enterprise relations and FFV farming industry as a whole in the microregion.

Barry, one of David's uncles, remembered learning to farm with his father right after WWII. His father was a carpenter and farmer in southern Appalachia. He paid his way through an agricultural education degree at the North Carolina State University (NCSU)[21].

> I remember when I took rural ag. in high school hybrid seed corn came out the next year, in 1946 or 7. The average corn production in North Carolina was 15 bushels per acre. They came out with hybrid seed corn and my dad and I had

[21] He then was in the army in Virginia where he got some tomato seeds. He came back to the mountains in 1957 and started growing tomatoes along with two other local farmers.

> the first full acre of corn in our county that produced over 100 bushel. Again, the varieties, fertilization. One of my friends, his dad was the first guy to produce 200 bushel an acre in North Carolina. But now a guy has produced 500 bushel on an acre. If I told that story in 1946, nobody would've believed me. Not even 200 bushel at the time.

Clearly the yield that one family could generate changed vastly, this came with ripple effects which altered farm work process, rural economies and entire societies.

During the 1950's, Florida's vegetable industry rapidly expanded due in large part to advanced refrigeration and transportation options (Fite 1984:203). In 1950, North Carolina had the largest farm population of any state in the U.S., while today NC ranks at 16th (USDA 2012). In the Carolina Hill Country, growth was less pronounced, but farmers remember the market being steady and processing companies moving to the area to take advantage of the large number of FFV farming families. Local community members bought their fresh produce from their neighbors through farmer-owned cooperatives and these "curb-side" markets. The farming families grew both burley tobacco and vegetables, especially tomatoes. In 1957 – in one of the Carolina counties in which the Caldwells live and farm – there were approximately 2,000 farms which ranged from 50 to 1000 acres. Each farm had pasture land to support the large dairy and beef cattle industry. In that same year 7,000 vegetable crops were planted (FitzSimons 1977). You can find produce companies listed in local newspaper directories of the time.

Most tomato industry actors of this era date the beginning of the tomato industry development in the Carolina hills country to the late 1950's when a few farmers and agricultural extension agents began to experiment with commercially growing tomatoes in fields, on the ground. "Burley tobacco was here but they needed a high value crop for

farmers after that went out of the picture," John, ao southern Appalachian farmer, recalled.

John Caldwell is kin to David and is now a retired farmer in western North Carolina, in a county that borders South Carolina. He lives on land that goes back in his family history at least five generations. The two cash crop production schedules complement each other, with tomato production taking place during the "off season" for burley tobacco. In John's county, "there were about 300 acres in commercial tomato production and about 200 growers during the late 1960's. We are still growing the same amount of tomatoes as 40 years ago, but it is only seven or eight growers. Farms were dependent on themselves back in the day." This change began in the 1970's when a lot of the farming families left tomato production because of oversupply in local markets, industry changes and alterations in cultivation techniques. The tomato farming enterprises that remained began to grow on larger acreage. They also switched cultivation techniques with the local introduction of determinate seed varieties.

Like Rosalba, David highlighted the 1960's as an era of important agricultural, industrial change in regions throughout North America with the emerging widespread use of tractors, genetically modified seeds, and petroleum-based agri-chemical production packages. David romantically imagined this era through his collection of antique tractors, which remind him of his childhood and his father.

> My father was a farmer. He farmed for Bush Beans and Gerber and they kind of pulled out of this area, and we had some real bad floods then in '66, '67. He went bankrupt in '67 and you know, my brother and I kind of took over. Everything changed in the 60's and 70's. Yields exploded, something I think no farmer will ever witness again. Me and my cousins, we could grow it but we had to sell it.

John Caldwell remembered the 1960's and early 1970's when there were at least thirteen packing houses in his county alone, and most of them were farmer-owned co-operatives. Even though tomatoes were their focus, they packed and sold warm season vegetables too. During the summer harvest season back then, family labor was sufficient. After children went back to school, the "house wives" would pick in the morning and pack at the cooperative in the afternoon and early evening. The tomato growing trend spread, and thousands of family farms in the microregion began to grow tomatoes on as little as one to two acres of farmland. Many farming families used their tobacco allotments, rotating tobacco and tomatoes from season to season, like John's family.

Forty to fifty years ago, in the 1960's and 1970's, families were investing both time and money into family-based fruit and vegetable growing enterprises organized around tomato production and cooperative enterprise strategy. "In my mind we are going full circle back to that kind of thing" according to Tyler, one fifth-generation southern Appalachian farmer and agricultural extension agent in the area. Many farming family studies have found that work responsibilities of "farm wives" (Kohl and Bennet 1982; Salamon 1992; Barlett 1993; Adams 1994) shifted and expanded during the late twentieth century farm crisis in the U.S. (Barlett 1993) even though their farm work is often not recognized as labor but instead as "help" (Fink 1986; Adams 1994).

Back in the 1950's, every family farm in the microregion grew tomatoes and there were packing facilities for them in all the counties. But by the 1970s – the beginning of the long-term crisis caused by globalizing neoliberal policy – this changed. Tyler continued, "We kind of went away from that and the bigger farmers are doing a lot more now. There were cooperatives across the entire region in the 60's and 70's and people

quit buying from cooperatives and started buying from their local grocery stores and now we are going full circle back to a lot more of that." Later, Tyler admitted that changing the food system depends heavily spreading the belief that change is possible.

Many people experienced the dwindling of the curb market customers and decided they needed to petition the government for marketing infrastructure they could rely on year after year. This era coincided with the transition of the tomato industry. As one farmer and vender explained it, they went from "growin' maters' to tomatoes." In other words, they went "big-time." The field-grown, fresh-market tomato industry had become a 10-million-dollar industry for the region, attracting processing plants to the region and shipping tomatoes south to Florida during their summer and early fall "off-season" when it was too hot for the fruits to set in the fields.

The late 1970's introduced a new era of conventional tomato cultivation practices. With indeterminate tomato varieties like the ones used by families in the 1950's and 1960's, the vines keep growing and the crop ripens over the course of the season, until the first frost. Determinate tomato seed varieties, however, only grow to approximately four feet, produce about four hands of fruit (or four large hanging clusters of tomatoes), and all of the crop ripens around the same time – over about a two-week period. Then these plants die. Crews come through to pick during two heavy harvesting periods work well for marketing and labor coordination, especially if enterprises grow on various fields and organize production so that their harvests are sequential – or one after another which is key to diversified FFV farming.

This means that enterprises can harvest more tomatoes in more compact units of time with determinate seed varieties. Philip, a tomato specialist, described the process,

"You know ten weeks from now they are going to go in there and get 50,00 pounds [of tomatoes] for the acre. They are going to come back one more time and maybe get another 30,000 pounds for the acre. Usually they will abandon the field at that point." When FFV farmers switched to determinate varieties, the FFV farm work process was reorganized to suite the changing needs. The scaling-up created too much manual labor for a family, and, on top of this, they had a lot more produce. As a highly perishable commodity, it had to be sold or lost forever to natural cycles.

Tomatero (tomato worker) harvesting crews from Florida began to migrate to southern Appalachia during the tomato production "off season" in Florida and became a large portion of the FFV farming workforce. They did the labor that family farms – using determinate tomato seeds – could not handle on their own. The scaling-up created too much manual labor for a family – labor that needed to be done quickly to get the most value out of the perishable crops they were producing. For this reason and because many families found themselves in need of an "off farm income" to pay for bills including the hiring of "temporary" or seasonal workers. Like mobile agricultural workers in other times and places, these agricultural workers' group identity was strategically altered (Kingsolver 2007) through a cultural identity politics process that produced vulnerability for them (Martínez Novo 2004, 2006).

This rural economy and agricultural transition period was supported by the development of a new NCSU agricultural cooperative research station in western North Carolina in the late 1970's. This research station was, in part, developed to house a tomato seed breeding program which employed one of the most influential seed breeders of our time in the U.S. who developed the cultivars used on 60-75% of all the vine-

ripened tomatoes in the eastern U.S. as of 2015. This research program began to develop new seed varieties to fight production problems and especially those found in the micro-climates of southern Appalachia like nematodes, verticillium wilt, and blight. Due in part to this seed breeder, North Carolina has a $30 million-dollar tomato industry today. The seed breeder's impact was felt not only in southern Appalachia but globally within the tomato industry.

The late 1970's also marked the beginning of a regional farmer's market in southern Appalachia. Local farmers and market organizers had to convince officials in Raleigh that the initiative in the mountains was worth the investment. As some current venders recalled, the construction of this market was important because grocery store chains would contract directly with large-scale growers' and would not buy from farmers who produced in lesser volumes. "They passed us on growers like us." This market gave these family-based farming enterprises a marketing outlet – a place to find customers who then would use the fresh-market produce for their restaurants (in this tourist area) or for re-sale in smaller rural communities in the area.

In the late 1970's and 1980's, farming families in the U.S. who had not already sold their enterprises to larger farming entities found themselves dealing with the threat of farm loss as they tried to come up with livelihood coping strategies in the middle of what is today known as the international farm crisis (Barlett 1993). This crisis was brought on by a combination of causes like the increasing input costs, an enormous drop in agricultural commodity prices and the devastating deflation of farm equity values, amongst other causes. It was a sweeping process of dispossession in the rural U.S. (Dudley 2000).

The rural studies scholar Paul Durrenberger called for policy reform and connected the emergence of capitalist categories into the farming realm to the negative outcomes that farming families were forced to mitigate on their own (1986). He argued that the influx of capitalist categories into the farming realm was empowered by anti-populist officials and corporations in the 1920's – who popularized the identity shift from "old country" family farms to "modern business." They designed policy to push farming in that direction, undermining "family farm scale" enterprisers' economic relation with the state (Durrenberger 1986). This identity shift imposed a "business man" (or market) ideology that does not match up well with actual agricultural economics.

Farming in the 1980's Carolina Hill Country: Caldwells and Guzmán-Ortega-Torres

In the early 1980's, Ivan like Beatriz began to migrate with kin to Florida to work in the citrus orchards and then the tomato fields. He recalled,

> Llegamos con el primo de mi esposa. Fue quien nos recibió. [El] todavía no plantaba casi aquí ni tomate. Eran los primeros que plantaban y casi mexicanos no había. Fuimos de los primercitos. Miguel Guzmán. Fue el primero que piscó de la gente conocida de allí. Con ellos trabajé mucho tiempo. Ellos tenían carro y yo trabajaba con ellos. Compraron un terreno. Ellos tienen dos ranchos aquí. Ellos son rancheros.
> *We arrived [in southern Appalachia] with my wife's cousin who received us. He still didn't grow here not even tomatoes. They were the first to plant and there were almost no Mexicans here. We were some of the very first. Miguel Guzmán. He was the first one to pick of the people known there. I worked with them for long time. They had a car and I worked with them. They bought land. They have 2 farms here. They are farmers.*

In 1987, he (like many of his kin and people from his rancho) applied for and received Lawful Permanent Residency (or “green card”) status through the Immigration Reform and Control Act. Ivan traveled back and forth and sent the money he earned picking produce in Florida to Rosalba who then invested much of it in farming grains in the Bajío. Ivan began to work seasonally for fresh-market produce farmers in southern Appalachia and in the late 1990’s, he started to work for his kin – who, as he mentioned above, had become southern Appalachian farmers.

Today, some of those field workers of yesterday operate their own FFV farming enterprises in southern Appalachia. Certain Mexican-American families, like Rosalba’s, have accessed political economic mobility in the Carolina mountains transitioning from tomato and vegetable harvesters and packers to farm labor contractors and farm managers to packing house and farm operation owners. They have done this through the practice of diversifying geographic production sites, working collectively as family-based industry groups on strategic marketing – developing comercio mētis which I discuss in chapter five and seven. Steve, an agricultural cooperative extension agent, witnessed this shift occur.

> Most of the year-round production is being done by the Mexican growers. They are growin’ in Florida during the winter and here in the summer. They first came here to work for people in mid-1970’s and by the late 80’s early 90’s you’d see those people come in and grow on their own. That has grown over the years. We have some pretty big operations producing on at least 100 acres. [They have] leased and bought land here by now.

Many of these Mexican-American growers are growing Roma and Grape tomatoes instead of the “mature green” tomatoes which are dominated by corporate operations like

the ones they used to work for in Florida. They have also diversified into peppers and specialty chilies to create more optimal harvesting schedules and marketing packages.

The Carolina Hill Country microregion still has a range of tomato production enterprises from small operations of only four or five acres to larger scale corporate grower enterprise producing on hundreds of acres. Most of the FFV enterprises of this scale grow fresh-market produce to sell regionally and a few are more directly engage in globalized distribution. State agencies encourage the arrival of large-scale agricultural operations, and many have come and gone due to volatile weather patterns and other enterprise-specific conditions (e.g., finances). Within this context, the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group established their FFV farming enterprises and adapt to the globalized agricultural industry changes as they encounter them.

Conclusion: Globalized Agricultural Regions and Mobile Farming Families

Time politics relates to political economic positionality, class process, and im/mobility. The politics of memory requires that symbols are historically contextualized – temporally placed in political moments within a larger process of societal change. According to Jonathan Boyarin, memory politics can help create contemporary equity in the "sense of solidarity, of common human identification with those who lived and died in previous generations… [and] solidarity with our living contemporaries across the planet" (1994:3). This was my intwnw with this chapter, to put two histories inot the same temporal plane, to recognize immigrant farming families' histories. When people say they are farmers, they assert a cultural identity and make a temporal claim to

belonging that was once thought to be socially inaccessible for mobile groups. But, historical depth shows that mobility is part of many farming families' group histories.

The politics of memory can serve to differentially include and/or exclude diverse farming families from the imagined rural U.S. nation. Racialized farming families from diverse backgrounds are stereotyped as temporary and as farmworkers. This stereotype denies them of potential class mobility and long-term belonging, erases their multigenerational farming knowledge and identity, and obscures their contributions to the agri-food economy. They are left out of the imagined community of "U.S. family farms" and unacknowledged as critical contributors to "rural America." We need to not only uncover the histories of diverse farming families but also to reimage who farms in the U.S. to recognize the potentiality of their farming knowledge and to support our diverse farming families in their shared claim to belonging, legal authorization, economic resources, and equitable market share.

Today, members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group and the Caldwell kin group contribute to the agricultural economy of southern Appalachia as "fresh-market" produce farming enterprise owners and operators. This chapter showed how this came to be. This framing allows for a deeper understanding of farming livelihoods as intergenerational and context-dependent. The comparative histories allowed for a parallel view of transnational process of agricultural change – a view that reveals long-term patterns of agricultural social organization and the role of policy and farming families in particular places in a globally connected context. By interweaving these mobile farming families' histories, larger processes are revealed as part of regional political economic transitions that are, in part, determined by geopolitical relations.

Southern Appalachia and the Mexican Bajío are agricultural regions where farming families engage in globalized circulations. They are separate in place, but united in time, culture, and economic life. Part II of this dissertation will show how particular members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group engage in and contribute to the fresh-market produce industry in the Carolina Hill Country. Then, Part III will address their varied positionalities as part of binational farming family and contextualize their collective strategies within the larger neoliberal foreign policy context of MX-U.S. migration and NAFTA-TLCAN.

Tomatero Circuit of Southern Appalachia-South Florida

Part II. Chapter 4

Drawing on the voices of tomato industry actors, this chapter offers a multi-sited ethnographic view of largely unrecognized practices in the conventional, field-grown fresh-market wholesale tomato industry in the southeastern U.S. Tomato industry actors – including agricultural cooperative extension agents, tomato farmers, labor contractors, marketeras (*female vender at farmers' market*) and harvesters – share their stories and insights on production-exchange relations and what I call emerging redistributive practices found throughout the southeastern U.S. tomato circuit. This seasonal regional tomato industry is mobile, and the harvesting crews are not the only ones that migrate seasonally. In fact, enterprises, infrastructure and workers make a seasonal circuit to sites throughout a southeastern U.S. to access harvesting production seasons year-round.

The data shared in this chapter were gathered in various production sites and microregions within this circuit. The particular industry circuit of interest to this study is formed around two key microregions, one in southern Appalachia and another in South Florida. These sites are connected by political economic relations and also a common seasonal-geographic diversification strategy practiced by industry actors. After discussing the different sites along the circuit and how they are connected, the chapter focuses on a southern Appalachian context and shows how Mexican Americans – like members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group – contribute to the industry through varied production-exchange strategies. Thus, this chapter will not follow the tomato as a social object through globalized flows (Appadurai 1988, 1994). Instead, it will explore production-

exchange relations, shifting political economic identities, and emerging redistributive practices that take place while the tomatoes are still on the vine, in the fields and technically still in the production stage. Power relations are changing in the tomato industry in the southeastern U.S. and perhaps, in southern Appalachia in particular. These dynamics may begin in tomato fields, but they continue to play themselves out in other industry sites, such as wholesale farmers' markets in the Carolina mountains.

By looking at how tomato enterprises – which plant, cultivate, harvest, transport and/or market produce through coordination – this chapter presents a body of evidence that counter-constructs the racialized stereotype concerning Mexicans and Mexican Americans' contributions to agriculture in the southeastern U.S. First, the chapter travels from one site to the next on a year-round, seasonal tomatero circuit in the southeastern U.S. – a circuit that members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group work along and help to create. This section heavily relies on interviews with agricultural cooperative extension agents and research station staff and faculty. In particular, I present a multi-sited ethnographic view which highlights the relation of, and connection between, the Carolina mountains and other industry circuit sites to recognize industry actors, redistributive practices, and production-exchange relations which are normally ignored.

The chapter then discusses what this ethnographically-informed picture of a seasonal, regional tomato industry circuit shows about social change, coordination of enterprises, production-exchange relations, and redistributive practices. In the second section of the chapter, I analyze the distinctive features and patterns of two such redistributive practices: pinhooking and "buying the field." The chapter concludes by

suggesting that these enterprise arrangements and practices could support the creation of more equitable and diversified regional agri-food systems.

Farming and Marketing Fresh-market Produce in the Carolina Hill Country

July begins the tomato harvest season in southern Appalachia. In July 2015, the stalls on the "local farmers line" of a wholesale farmers' market in the Carolina mountains were filled with stacks of twenty-five pound, two-layer boxes of plump, red tomatoes of various varieties – Romas, Beefsteaks, Mountain Majestys and more. Some of the tomato boxes advertise Florida-based companies' tomato brands, but vendors assure their buyers that the tomatoes are local even if the used boxes, the tomatoes are in, are not.

Billy, a Euro-American man in his late sixties, stepped out of the driver's side door of a white box truck after driving into a stall in the local farmers' line. He walked around to the back, unlatched the lock, slid open the garage-like door of the truck and pulled out four wooden crates of half-runner green beans. He set up the crates in front of the stall along a white line painted on the asphalt, bent the wires to open each crate, and then leaned back on his truck behind his display. "I've got these half-runners today, but I am a 'mater' man. Mine aren't ready to harvest just yet." He told me that tomatoes are his specialty and his passion. When he looked up from his display, he waved at his market neighbor for the day, Rosa.

Rosa – a member of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group – was already set up, riffling through tomato boxes and pulling out (or "culling" in produce industry lingo) the ones that were too ripe to sell. Her husband was a tomatero (*a tomato*

worker), and he picked these tomatoes. She was at this market vending every day during the local harvest season. When she was not there, she was in South Florida at a produce market where she would sell tomatoes with her cousin. During the harvest season in southern Appalachia, Rosa's and her husband's enterprise shipped tomatoes down to her cousin in Florida to sell counter-seasonally to get a better market price. The organization of Rosa's enterprise made use the multiple production sites and seasons of the regional tomato circuit. Billy, on the other hand, was in the Carolina Hill Country year-round and constantly worried over his one harvest season and seemingly worsening desperation for tomato harvesters. Raising his arms above his head then dropping them, he declared, "I am so fed up… I'm about to quite next year. Just grow what we can eat."

Billy, Rosa, her husband, and her cousin were all part of the tomatero industry circuit discussed in this chapter. The summer/fall harvest season (July – October) in southern Appalachia fits like a puzzle piece into the hole in work supply in South Florida (November – May)[22]. As harvesting season begins each year in different microregions throughout the southeastern U.S., tomateros organize field labor and constellations of production-exchange relations, coordinating with harvesters, growers, and other industry actors – often through triangular work relations based on subcontract agreements (Kissam and Griffith 1995; Griffith 2000, 2007) as has become common in U.S. farming (USDA 2014) and other global industrial agriculture sites (Ortiz et al. 2012). Tomateros exercise mobility, strategically shifting political economic identities as they move. I found that

[22] The other puzzle piece which makes this regional tomato industry circuit whole is southern Georgia and northern Florida. Tomateros stop in this microregion to work during June and to bridge the work gap between October and November if needed.

production-exchange arrangements and relations can differ from season to season and place to place within the regional circuit.

Within the produce industry, it is common knowledge that produce growers and distributors aim to construct year-round work schedules to gain revenue from more than one or two annual harvest seasons – which is normally what one field production site in North America offers. Thus, agri-food enterprises connect multiple geographic sites to construct multi-sited production, distribution, and marketing systems. These allied enterprises often become visible when formed as corporations – which have absorbed small to midscale "family farms" – while other smaller scale multi-sited arrangements remain less visible. Many large-scale Florida-based produce companies prefer for farmworkers to work for them most of the year, meaning that the working families move seasonally throughout the southeastern U.S. along with many parts of the operation (e.g., tractors, and management staff) from company site to compnay site.

Within this context in the U.S., family members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group migrate seasonally from southern Florida to the Carolina Hill Country of southern Appalachia to take advantage of the summer/fall harvest there. This tomato season in southern Appalachia takes place during the "off season" in most of central and southern Florida which means that growers can utilize another segment of the year to piece together their year-round production cycle. This is seen as advantageous because it enables access to a larger market share due to contracts with buyers such as Walmart which give preference to suppliers who source commodities throughout the entire year. It also means that farmers may have better access to labor crews for their harvest since

many leave Florida for the "off season" in search of employment (Griffith and Kissam 1995; Griffith 2000).

As Billy and Rosa can attest, the fresh-market produce industry is a culturally contentious political economic arena. Tomatoes, like all food, carry distinct culturally symbolic meanings, and evoke particular political economic questions that vary from place to place. The power struggle over relations of production and exchange are often hidden from public view and, yet, prove to be embedded in every day practices, meanings, and overall social life – especially in the context of food and agriculture (Wolf 2010[1982]; Mintz 1985; Bonanno et al. 1994; Watson and Caldwell 2005; Bonanno and Cavalcanti 2011). The stories and mobility strategies of these agricultural industry actors are part and partial to the larger stories of class struggle. To recognize these struggles, this chapter uses an enterprise-oriented class process approach (Resnick and Wolff 1987) to pinpoint instances of when and how flows of resources are redistributed – redistributive flows which potentially re-shape production-exchange relations and point to potentially more equitable arrangements.

In this chapter, I argue that the varied forms of the practice of exchanging a cash crop – tomatoes while still on the vine in the field – be recognized as redistributive practices, negotiated between actors who are attempting to mitigate risk in their enterprises. I take enterprise – meaning a social, political and economic site of "distributive flows" where class and nonclass processes occur and interact (Resnick and Wolff 1987; Gibson-Graham and O'Neill 2001) – as my entry point to analyze how industry actors engage in multiple political and economic (i.e., livelihood) identities

through the coordination of enterprises across state lines and at different sites in the tomato industry circuit.

This conceptualization of enterprise allows for the recognition of practices, relations, and moments of potential redistribution. Redistributive practices are understood here as alternative distribution forms (Gibson-Graham and O'Neill 2001) which divert and/or create new resource flows. Here this concerns the cash crop itself and not the farmland – as is usually the analytic focus (e.g., land grabs and reforms). These are redistributive practices of actors within this regional tomato industry. This pinpointed exchange between enterprises distributes "market risk" (or the financial burden of a crashed commodity market) and the commodity itself (e.g., marketable tomatoes). The moment suggests that the analytically separate concepts of production and exchange are, in fact, interwoven in everyday life and many livelihood practices. This approach to understanding the tomato industry changes one's perspective on whose contributions shape the industry's operation and the possibilities for more equitable, regional agri-food systems.

Over the last forty years throughout the contemporary southeastern U.S., the category of "farmworker" has become a kind of "racialized code word" (Torres et al. 1999:10) for Latino and is also often conflated with the national identity of Mexican – as was discussed in chapter one and two. The indiscriminate use of this category has obscured the fact that Mexicans and Mexican Americans have gained positions not only as farmworkers and farm labor contractors (FLCs) but also as marketers, truck drivers, farm managers, growers, and more within this regional industry seasonal circuit. Some people work as one position at one site of the circuit and as another in a different site and

season. As this chapter will show, tomateros participate in various industry activities and transactions throughout the circuit and strategically shift from one political economic identity to another via these exchange activities – and the relations that make them possible.

For that reason, this chapter relies on the notion of an enterprise as opposed to a fixed identity category (like FLC) to make sense of these livelihood realities. I use the word tomatero to describe anyone who works in tomato fields, the self-identifying term troquero to refer to workers who are often reduced by the term FLCs, and the term FLC when it is the most apt term for the enterprise activities that a person is performing (i.e., transporting and managing "temporary" harvesters as subcontracted work for corporate tomato enterprises).

Tomatoes must be harvested every other day and require a large number of skilled harvesters for short harvesting periods. Fresh-market fruits and vegetables demand more delicate handling. To be sold in the fresh-market, they must be hand-picked – instead of machine-harvested like lettuce (Friedland et al. 1981) or tomatoes which are destined to be processed into pasta sauce or salsa by workers as processing plants like ConAgra in eastern Tennessee, just over the North Carolina-Tennessee border. For these reasons and others, the FLC position and activities prove critical to the harvesting phase and this structure of industrial fresh-market produce agriculture. Yet, FLCs are often vilified in popular press as the "middlemen" of the hand-harvested produce industry and discussed as "the problem" of the exploitative system. Popular narratives focus on the most sensational cases, such a human trafficking and slavery in tomato fields (Bowe 2008; Estabrook 2013), which often place most of the blame on (and thus, stigmatizes) people

working as FLCs because they own and operate the subcontracted enterprise. This shifts attention away from the larger systematic issue of agricultural inequitable policy that naturalizes these exploitative triangular work relations. These companies exploit the "subcontractor" FLC enterprisers and the "temporary" workers who they hire and manage.

Workers constructed as "temporary" are marginalized in the global agri-food system and yet, coveted as the solution to neoliberal agricultural policy design (Sánchez Gómez and Lara Flores 2015). This exploitation is structurally built-in to the agricultural industry in the U.S. with this creation of triangular labor relations between the harvesters, growing enterprises and the harvesting management enterprise (FLC). This organization became the norm in the 1980's after IRCA and the threat of employer sanctions for enterprises hiring people in the U.S. without authorization. Today the FLC enterprise and the growing enterprise have "dual responsibility" though this industry structure continues as the norm. This exploitative system is rationalized by a capitalist logic of "efficiency" that undermines livelihood security.

This exploitation is clear in industrial sites, like those found in central and southern Florida. There is a large body of reputable literature on the link between labor contracting and human rights abuses in U.S. perishable agriculture (Human Rights Watch 2012; Oxfam and Farmworker Justice 2010; Ruckelshaus et al. 2001). The Coalition of Immokalee Workers has made advances with collective agreements and collective action campaigns which encouraged consumers to boycott certain tomato companies and especially the fast food companies that buy from them (cf. Marquis 2017). Both "subcontracting" and "temporary" work are social constructs and legal mechanisms that

systemically worsen access to worker rights. This is key to the commodification and segmentation of labor in the contemporary U.S.

Scholars throughout the Ameriacs have shown that a “middle man” or labor manager position in various agricultural systems is one which operationalizes the exploitation of the workers for the capitalist (often absentee) owner. There is a long history of abuse of power by the “overseer” or enganchador throughout Latin America and in highly industrialized agricultural sites in the U.S. since IRCA in California (Castaneda and Zavella 2007) and the southeastern U.S. (SPLC 2010) as well as sites inbetween. This chapter is not meant to negate or challenge these findings. Instead, this chapter like these studies, argues that the agricultural systems in which these abusive labor relations exist are systemically exploitative, enable injustice, and embed inequity in our agri-food systems. People act within the labor process and some of them act within these work categories, but this does not mean that there not are people whom occupy these labor positions that act differently or experience and enact a variety of work relations while occupying these labor categories. This chapter discusses the variation of work relations and practices of people who fall under the FLC category to look beyond the FLC stereotype to show that redistributive practices are possible and could lead to more equitable relations within the FFV sector in the U.S. The data shared here support this analysis because I gathered it as I traveled across multiple sites in the tomatero circuit where people’s social categories change along with the scales of enterprises and exchange relations that make the FFV farming work process possible.

There are various types of agreements between farm labor contractors and the harvesting workers they hire (Griffith 2000). This variation is found in each industry site

and in comparing them especially when scale is considered. These contractor-worker relations are not all the same and this is due, in part, to the fact that the redistributive practices and pre-existing social relations between the workers and manager (FLC) are not always the same. For instance, in southern Appalachia, there seem to be more kin-based, small harvesting crews (who also work in other industries) than when compared to highly industrialized sites like South Florida. In certain sites, there is more potentiality to consider more channels for marketing products and, thus, more varied relations between the farm labor contractor and the harvesting crews.

Due to analytic focus on one type of relation – the extremely exploitative relation – there is not much understood about the diverse economic practices, identities, relations, and enterprises of people who act as "farm labor contractors" and harvester. Looking beyond the perimeters of this stigmatized cultural category, this chapter asks: who are the workers labeled as FLCs in this tomato industry context and how do they define themselves? What types of production-exchange relations do they negotiate through their enterprise? What varied forms of redistributive practices do they engage as they move from place to place, season to season within their industry circuit?

"State Deals" and Seasonal-Geographic Distribution: Sites along a Tomatero Circuit of the Southeastern U.S.

Circuitries of the agri-food system are made up of multiple temporalities (Tsing 2015) like work rhythms and commodity life-cycles, known as "shelf lives." This circuitry acts as system of relational connections that, I argue, can teach about power, cooperation, and exchange. Whether between inanimate objects and humans or amongst

humans, connections are what make life (i.e., reproduction) possible. The tomato industry in the southeastern U.S. is no different. The social circuitry that organizes the production schemes connect people – in space and time through production – across the region, and beyond. This section provides data that illustrate this. In this section, I outline a year-round, regional tomato production scheme that connects harvest seasons of multiple microregions. The ethnographic data describes the two main seasonal tomatero sites of this particular circuit where conventional tomato crops are harvested and distributed from.

The year-round tomato production scheme is an example of this seasonal-geographic diversification strategy which is common amongst mid- to large-scale growers and grower-shipper enterprises. The industry calls these temporal units "windows of production," which are understood as timeframes in which you can harvest and "get to market" the perishable commodities you have produced. "Windows of opportunity" is a term which refers to the slivers of time during the harvest season which coincide with a lull in market supply – meaning that enterprises can access a competitive market price because other sites that produce the same crop will "off season" or not harvesting. This is one reason why, for instance, urbanites in Nashville eat broccoli grown by Mayans in Guatemala (Fischer and Benson 2006). These are (metaphorical) production "windows" in the larger "house" of time, or annual livelihood calendar. This metaphor points to one element of the temporalities that characterize and organize the fresh-market tomato industry (i.e., when, where, how, and who can produce for which market).

This year-round, yet seasonal, regional organization of production also enables growers, marketers, and brokers to "hold the market" – meaning that enterprises are able to steadily supply their buyers with product and thus, keep their buyers from looking elsewhere. Growers want to lengthen or "stretch" their windows by connecting them so that payments for products are steadily flowing in as they invest in production. Farming enterprises cooperate (or "do business with") particular brokers who can either work as (or for) separate brokerage firm entities – or as a brokerage firm that is a subsidiary of the farming enterprise corporation. Brokers who sell the product from these enterprises can be mobile, or they can own and/or operate receiving packing house enterprises at different spots along the seasonal industry circuit. They can also be partial owners of the growing enterprises themselves, if they are part of a larger corporate structure.

For this particular southeastern U.S. region, this temporal-spatial diversification strategy works because the food commodity (tomatoes and other perishable vegetables) can be transported with "cold chain" technology and shipped anywhere on the U.S. eastern seaboard within three days. There is, of course, a history of southern "truck farms" supplying produce to the eastern U.S. including the northern cities full of consumer-subjects (Hahamovitch 1997). In fact, by 1866, fresh tomatoes were available year-round in many cities like Chicago and cities in the northeastern U.S. (Smith 1994:151). This transportation – and connection of production and marketing – is only possible when people overcome collective action dilemmas on a daily basis. Coordination and cooperative practices amongst industry network nodes – amongst people and the enterprises they create and manage – must become a habit for enterprises to sustain livelihoods.

Together, Florida and California produce the majority of commercial fresh-market tomatoes in the U.S. with the largest increase taking place in the 1980's (USDA 2016). Other important U.S. states for fresh-market, field-grown conventional tomato production are Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, New Jersey, and Michigan (USDA 2016). While growing elements in the southeastern U.S. – such as frost dates, soil types, and market conditions – may differ from microregion to microregion and state to state, much of the production techniques and distribution relations are alike and even overlap. When it comes to marketing strategies they are – to some extent – mutually dependent especially when enterprises make use of the varied "windows of production" within the region.

As one agricultural extension agent in eastern Tennessee told me, "It takes all of us, Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia." Spatial-centric state-based data is the norm because it is produced by state-based entities like land grant universities and the linked agricultural extension agencies. These data do not offer knowledge about the industry's temporal dimensions – the dimensions that provide the logic for why and how tomato enterprises are transregionally diversifying production sites. Nor does it tell about harvest microregions that may cross state borders since the research infrastructure (and most often the data produced) are state-territory based.

The produce industry media often elides the ideas of "state deals" and "windows of opportunity." The "state deal" is a less precise way to discuss the shifting of harvest seasons throughout the country. Of course – as is obvious with states like those in southern Appalachia – harvest seasons differ within state borders. The headlines like, "Georgia blueberries run into late Florida deal," reveal a competitive atmosphere in

where normally – because the marketing offices are state-based – the discourse follows suite. Within the media industry, “players” (as risk-taking fresh-market produce enterprisers) constantly measure their possibility of success with speculations about supply and demand. For instance, one FFV industry newspaper article reads, “That deal looks to be timely according to the sales manager [in Georgia]. While, others have seen a slightly earlier production window” (Shipman 2016).

When states – or production microregions in those states – have overlapping harvesting seasons, the industry anticipates a flooding of markets and thus, a glut of supply and a drop in overall price. According to one agricultural cooperative extension agent I spoke with, this is a “race” in that all growing enterprises want to “hit the market early” because “early” and “late” timings in their harvesting seasons is when they get the highest market prices. This is a “game” because – the often unpredictable – climate plays a big role in the outcomes, as this heading expresses: “Cold, rain push back Mid-Atlantic harvests” (Shipman: 2016).

Below, a cooperative extension agent in central Florida explains why production in the Carolinas or Georgia is not a “threat” to “them” as the Florida tomato industry. (Of course, this state-based framing is misleading because enterprises in Florida, the Carolinas, and Georgia are allies as part of either the same corporation or supply chain, and thus work together.) This quote seems to point to an overall consensus of when planting in different microregions should take place and offers examples of reasons why harvest timings shift despite precise planning and schedule assumptions.

> They are no threat to us. They grow at different seasons and all of that. We have some things in printing. Crop profiles available for all the states. But the growers have worked

> that out. It used to be central Florida, they would plant you know in July and we would plant in August. You know, south of us would plant in September, October, November. But you see some – because everybody is so competitive these days – you see some blurring of those lines which is, often times, well it ruins the market because everybody is coming in at the same time. Then you know we have events like the freeze last week. Those guys that tried to go in early up there. They were probably hurt really bad because it was five or so degrees cooler. Regional production expansion has to do with the climate. You know you grow here. You grow in central Florida and that season ends in mid-June so you want to be some place far enough north that it is going to come in mid-June. So, you know if you are going to come in at mid-June you have had to have planted that crop 90 days before. So, where are the weather patterns going to allow that. You know South Carolina dn the eastern shore is relatively warm compared to the rest of Virginia, North Carolina so they get an earlier start in the spring.

In order to access production opportunities throughout the year, enterprisers are mobility-oriented and attempt to "stretch" their harvest season. They do this through the use of technologies (e.g. sheltered agriculture and genetically-modified seeds) within seasons and the use of year-round coordination of multiple harvesting seasons across state lines with the aim of "holding the market" or supplying clients. This movement is not just season by season. Suppliers, producers, and growers are very strategic when it comes to timing-placement. They work to geographically diversify their production sites across zones to also take advantage of climatic differences microregions – a point I will discuss more in the Carolina Hill Country section, shortly.

Tomato enterprises work to geographically diversify their production sites so as to take advantage of climatic differences and to keep revenue flowing in. Thus, harvest seasons and timings are central to the organization of tomato enterprises and the industry

as a whole. Tomato growers also see this as a risk management strategy. Just as they may diversify the crops they produce to avoid commodity market crashes, they diversify their field locations to "spread risk" as well. Zach, an industry expert explained it like this,

> Well its twofold. One is to spread the risk. You know produce has gotten very expensive. For instance, an acre of tomatoes, at least in South Florida is almost $16,000 per acre investment by the time you get it to harvest. And so you can see if you have 100 acres that's 1.6 million dollars in the ground. And if, like last week for instance, Friday we had a freeze and it was a bad freeze thank god but it got down to 30 degrees for an hour or two and it hurt some of the production. But you know a few years ago we had a freeze where it got down you know one night. In February it got down to 28 degrees and stayed there for four hours and you know this area lost over 250 million dollars in destroyed produce. You know workers were without work for six weeks and things like that. You know sometimes we get hurricanes. You know back in 2005 we had hurricane Wilma and again it caused massive damage. And so if you are just in one place it's hard to recover from all that. But if you have multiple production sites you might get a freeze here but not in Naples or in … you get hit by a hurricane here and you lose a lot of money but you make it back to Georgia, North Carolina wherever. So one is risk management strategy and the other is marketing. If you are going to these big buyers and you can tell them I can supply you with tomatoes year-round and you go to the same buyer and you say I have tomatoes for six weeks. It's a lot easier to deal with me. [Especially with buyers like] you know Burger Kings, Dominoes or Sysco, or food service. The big groceries.

Temporal planning and continuous assessment put order to the temporal-geographic diversification strategy and allow for complex coordination of project activities. When analyzing timings, planting coordination, harvesting, and marketing tomatoes, growers and the industry media refer to "labor deals" as the circumstances under which they can access a sufficient amount of (knowledgeable) manual laborers.

Fresh-market tomato and warm season vegetable growing enterprises will choose particular crops to grow so as to organize around tomato production and disperse their harvest labor supply needs. Industry actors know that harvesting cannot wait. Tomatoes call for harvesting by a large number of workers, all at once every other day. To balance out their flows and work rhythms, produce farmers whose main cash crops are tomatoes will often grow squash and/or cucumbers which are a bit less demanding and harvested more sporadically over a longer period of time.

The creation of a steady flow of work for harvesters is just as important as timing planting/harvesting schemes based on market availability. Timing harvesting is not as easy as one may think either. With high heat, tomato production is sped up which affects the timing of when the tomato supply is sold in the market. Market prices fluctuate from day to day and from region to region, and market to market. Many industry actors in the southeastern U.S. believe that the lowest prices are in the middle of each harvesting region's harvest season. One farmer told me to think of a bell curve chart, as the illustration of supply and demand over the course of a season. Better prices fall at the start and end of "windows of opportunity," but the supply in the field peaks two weeks into the pick of that crop. Growers in the southeastern U.S. can plant two crops of tomatoes a year, while in places in California they can plant three a year. As you may imagine, growers rely on (and trust) harvesting crews to work these demanding schedules and continue to show up to work until the end of the harvest for that season.

As migrating, or mobile workers, these harvesters may be part of larger crews or they may find work on their own. Sometimes FLCs or groups of crews coordinate work together, especially on large acreage. Growers will choose to produce particular crops

even if they know they will make no profit on them just to keep the harvesters from looking for work elsewhere. Phil, a Euro-American farmer in his late 60's in southern Appalachia, believes that "diversity [of production] helps you manage the labor" and believes that through diversifying your crops while keeping labor coordination in mind will craft it so that the harvesters "will stick around." "Even back east it's like that." Phil continued, "That's why the tobacco guys started growing sweet potatoes [because of the need to keep trained workers busy in the area until your vital harvest season]."

Mutual respect and loyalty is important to this production-exchange relation. Workers and worker managers, like FLCs, use their geographic mobility and network of community and industry relations to enter and exit job markets. Taking workers' schedules into account when planning which crops to grow, where and when influences the planting schemes and thus, harvesting timeframes and the agri-food system as a whole. In turn, if tomato enterprises can offer their harvest workers more stable and consistent supply of paid work and respectful managerial treatment, they will (presumably) be more likely to become reliable workers.

All of the conventional wholesale tomato field-production in the southeastern U.S. region is done with raised beds, stakes, plastic mulch, and drip tape irrigation. Input costs vary per state due to variation in soil, disease, climate, farmland prices, and overall farmland quality. Tomato operations calculate the costs from tomato seed through to production per acre. Woody, a tomato and pepper farmer in southern Appalachia, estimated his costs to be "$9,500 to $10,000 / acre to bring [tomatoes] through to production." These costs include inputs like, land lease plastic, fumigant, fertilizer, stakes, ties, string, labor, fuel for irrigation, and boxes. He reminisced about when it cost

him $1.00 a box. Now, it costs him around $3.60 per box before harvest and harvest workers' pay accounts for approximately four dollars, or half of the total production cost. After harvest, he needs to make approximately $8.00 a box to break even. If the market price is lower than that eight dollars, growers might not want to risk paying the harvesters – whose wages account for at least half of the total production costs. In central and southern Florida, the average production cost is $15,000 - $17,000 per acre, meaning that large scale tomato enterprises must make at least ten dollars a box to break even. If they can sell counter-seasonally to the northern cities, they make well above this price point. The following section presents the year-round seasonal industry circuit and sites starting with South Florida in the fall.

November to June: Florida, An Industry Hub

Florida's tomato harvest season (as a state) runs from November to June – though there are different microregions with varied, precise seasonal timeframes. Often mobile crews, owner-operators, and other managers travel seasonally within Florida to work at the various sites, and sometimes they also travel outside of the state if their operation requires it. The largest amount of tomato production in Florida as a whole takes place in April and May and again in November and January. From November to May, production is mostly based out of southern Florida – or South Florida as it is referred to in the region. This microregion is considered an epicenter for conventional tomato production in the U.S., due to (in)famous places like Immokalee and Homestead where the largest corporations dominate the industry landscape.

While driving to South Florida tomato production sites, I passed other agricultural industry sites like Helena Chemical offices, AgNutrients offices, mines for phosphate and sulfur, and even farm equipment auction sites, like on Highway 66. Though the fields themselves are often out of site, the rest of the industry sites sit along the two- and four-lane roads. The vegetation is not lush, like it is in southern Appalachia. One agricultural extension agent in South Florida explains their advantage as, "What we've got going for us is the climate not the soil. We don't have soil. We have sand. The soil is only there as an anchor. Hydroponic farming is what they really have in Florida in the fields." This production scheme requires a large volume of agri-chemicals.

South Florida agricultural sites, like Immokalee, are examples of uneven development (Tardanico and Rosenberg 2000) – uneven in terms of the redistribution of wealth, not because the industry sites themselves are undeveloped. However, Immokalee and other places where the tomato industry resides are defined by more than this. They are communities with members who want to be proud of where they live. As one community member expressed to me, "It makes Immokalee look bad! Gives it a bad name, ugly image for the world. Though the wages are too low, this is not the same as slavery."

Places like Immokalee are known for their connection to the "BigAg" tomato industry through popular press books which often focus on the negative aspects of the industry and the most sensational stories of labor abuse (Bowe 2008; Estabrook 2013). The Coalition of Immokalee Workers' justice work shows that labor abuse is an every-day practice, linked to systemic issues of inequality – an everyday issue of pay and

workers' rights, and more of a common, naturalized (even socially accepted) practice than some of the headline stories would make people imagine.

Many of the corporate tomato farms in South Florida are not publicly owned – meaning that they are family-owned (and in part family-operated) farm enterprises. Yet, the area is "big business. More corporately run only because the industry got more concentrated over the last twenty years," according to Arnold, one agricultural research station economist. Corporations like Del Monte are definitely present, along with approximately five corporate-sized tomato companies that dominate the industry. Interestingly, most of these tomato farming-enterprise families claim "immigrant" ancestry, with many claiming Italian heritage and sharing histories linked to the northeastern U.S. Workers travel with these companies as they move sites for the harvest seasons.

According to Arnold, one of those companies – and many of their workers – "go between here and Virginia and then they come back through the hills of Eastern Tennessee, North Carolina, and even Kentucky and a lot of them do that. Most farm up and down the East Coast." For all these farms, regulation like food safety, logistics, and other paperwork have become the most important facet of the operations. As another industry actor told me, this is especially true for "when you sell up in the food supply and in large volumes which is what South Florida is all about."

Most often, tomatoes vines are grown up stakes in the fields. Enterprises also grow other farm season vegetables like peppers and "backup crops" like squash when the weather and tomato production labor schedules require it (Griffith 2000:147). Tomatoes, though, are the most important crop for them – especially in January and February when

they are the only domestic microregion that produces (in the fields). Thus, they only have to compete during this time of year for market supply with other nearby countries, like Mexico where tomatoes are field-grown in Sinaloa or Ontario where they are produced in greenhouses – though the energy cost for this has lessened this form of competition with Florida growers during particular winter months. Tomatoes emerged in the North American realm as a fruit that acts as "codes for broader social processes and debates" – made visible during trade disputes like the "tomato wars" of the 1990's which will be discussed more in chapter seven (Barndt 2002:44).

To ensure access to domestic winter tomato market share, a group of field-grown tomato producers in South Florida created the Florida Tomato Committee and Exchange which acts as a growers' association of approximately twelve producers. They work with the Florida Tomato Committee to regulate the marketing order. As a group, they lobbied for and were granted Federal Marketing Order 966 in 1955 which "uses quality restrictions to provide orderly market conditions for producers and consumers" (VanSickle and Alvarado 1983:109). A marketing order is a political tool used to draw boundaries around a market, or control who can buy, produce, and sell what within the market. To document transactions in and out of the microregion, the tomatoes must go through packing houses to be sure that the boxes are counted and inspected. This procedural step and the marketing order itself is said to promote "orderly marketing" – meaning that supply, demand, and/or price of a particular commodity are shaped by collective participation which is required by the marketing order. This also provides the organizational mechanisms for collectively pooling finances to fund research and promotion.

What this means is that the marketing order defines the characteristics (or qualities) that a particular kind of tomato – the Florida Round – must have to be sold out of this microregion's jurisdiction (east of the Suwannee River) during their particular harvest season, October 10 through June 15. These tomatoes "like most agricultural products, are segregated for marketing purposes within defined size and/or grade guidelines, giving a specified et of sizes and grades for the product. These grades and sizes are established prior to each season" (VanSickle and Alvarado 1983). Any tomatoes imported during this time must also meet those requirements. "The marketing order authorizes quality regulations, research and promotion programs, and container and pack regulations for Florida fresh market tomatoes" (USDA 2014). Marketing orders act as trade policy mechanisms in that they create regulations to put order to capitalist markets.

This marketing order is administered by the Florida Tomato Committee which has five districts within it. Boundary (district lines) are used for accounting purposes (i.e., keep up with what is sold in each district) and for political organization, in that there is at least one director from each area so that there is representation from across the microregion. This tomato committee and its proponents argue that the South Florida tomato winter crop is key to their political economy because large-scale tomato enterprises in South Florida still supply much of the eastern U.S. tomato markets during the winter. This is true still, in part, because much of the Mexico produce still goes westward. However, now with the "NAFTA superhighway" – which connects Mexico, the U.S, and Canada and runs through Laredo, Texas and thus, the port of entry – import-export flows and channels are altering. For this reason – and more which I will discuss in

chapter seven – Florida growers and grower-shippers wanted to secure market share through a marketing order.

In this microregion, the production schemes are set up so that the harvesting crews pick “Florida Rounds” as “mature-greens” meaning that they will turn red in the box from either gassing them with ethylene or from the natural ethylene omitted from the boxes. These tomatoes are popular with chain restaurants because they can be efficiently sliced and maintain their form as thin slices, on dishes like hamburgers. However, over the last decades, many companies (especially the few mid-scale companies that still produce) have diversified and now grow other types and varieties of tomatoes like vine-ripened tomatoes, grape, cherry, and especially Roma tomatoes which are popular with the processing plants, like ConAgra processing plants where they make Heinz products. An agricultural extension agent described the South Florida changes in this way:

> There are two dynamics happening. First the big growers are getting bigger but its leaving room for smaller guys who are getting into the market. A lot of Hispanic folks are getting into the market [and more] ethnic production. This is because of the diversity of folks in markets like Miami, Hispanic and Asian. These guys aren’t competing with major operations. They are filling niches. The third dynamic, actually, is the pinhooker market. The folks that come in after and kind of clean up [the unharvested crop].

Harvesting crews travel north to harvest fields in microregions that lie between South Florida and the Carolina Hill Country – the two regions where they spend most of their year. This six-week season usually starts at the end of May and lasts until about the first week of July. Later in the fall from about October to November harvesting crews also travel through this area. It should be mentioned that most of the established crews from South Florida will skip this stop and head to South Florida where – unlike central

Florida – they are already preparing for harvest season. Harvesting crew members may also work for particular growing enterprises during the field preparation stages, like transplanting and staking.

During this six-week timeframe, many harvesting crews arrive in northeastern Florida and southern Georgia microregion for a month, after stopping off in Quincy, Northwestern Florida for about a two-week window. Since this season is so short in this region, I do not devote as much time to them in this chapter. From southern Georgia, there is a longer journey north to the Carolina Hill Country. Some people may travel to eastern North Carolina to harvest there during their "window of opportunity" or they may come straight to the Carolinas Hill Country. Their decisions depend on their contacts, their living situations, their families, their enterprise/contract commitments and their financial needs that year.

July to October: Western Carolina Hill Country

While driving north to southern Appalachia from southern Florida, I passed numerous tractor-trailers, or "semis" advertising their company names that usually implied speed and reliability. These names included Right Time, Fresh to You, and U.S. Express Enterprises, just to name a few. When there is a refrigerator unit (mostly produced by Knight Transportation) attached to the back panel of the tractor, these semi-tractor trailers act as part of the "cold chain" and can transport perishable goods, from production and distribution sites to marketplaces. This technology is part of the reason why production continues as it does in the southeastern U.S.

Harvesting begins in the southern and eastern Carolina Hill Country in early July and, by mid-July, the whole microregion is harvesting until the mid or end of October, when the first frost often hits. There is steep competition for the local-regional markets during this season. The Carolinas are known today for the hog and poultry industry as well as sweet potatoes, tobacco, melons, and berries. The average farm size gets bigger as you move from western east towards the coast. One industry actor explained farm size categories in this microregion by equating ten or more acres in the west with 100 acres in the piedmont. This calculation, of course, also depends on the crops being cultivated. Row crops are more prominent in the hotter, eastern flatlands. Fruits and vegetables are higher value crops (meaning that you earn more money for less volume) than row crops. Mobile tomato industry workers talk about enjoying their time in the mountains, away from the Florida heat while others say they miss their houses in Florida.

The agricultural political economy in this microregion is still seen as developing; though, tomatoes are not the main focus. Peppers have taken more of a center stage for now as well as food commodities which come from alternative production schemes. For instance, hydroponics greenhouses have recently opened in the area where they will grow vegetables almost year-round. Some of these high-tech operations are funded by investments from enterprises based in other countries, like Israel and Italy. Since the area does not get as hot as it does in the Carolina flatlands, the company preferred to operate in the Hill Country for lower energy costs. Some are also in the microregion to contribute to and benefit from the emerging organic produce industry.

The supporters of a local food movement and a farm marketing non-profit campaign also contribute to the agri-food system with tailgate markets, CSA (community

supported agriculture), trainings, certifications, and lobbying (Perrett 2013). There are a few agri-food system co-ops in the microregion – including consumer and producer marketing co-ops. However, the marketing co-ops are not as prominent as they once were, as is discussed in chapter three. Many of these co-ops and organic alternative food movement focus on heirloom variety tomatoes, like Zebra or Cherokee Purple[23].

Tomatoes used to be one of the most popular family farm products to commercially grow in the 1950's and 1960's. As chapter three shows, this changed due to the transition to determinate seed varieties and the new demands on labor schedules which shifted enterprises to the practice of subcontracting migrant workers. They still grow a variety of tomatoes in the area. Tomatoes called "Slicers" are the basic conventional, field-grown tomato and are packed in twenty-five-pound boxes in two layers. The largest scale growers switched to growing "mature green" tomatoes in the 1970's, following Florida's example.

Due to disease issues and educational trips to Florida, growers in the area also switched to plastic mulch and staked tomatoes with drip irrigation in the 1990's. This is now the norm for commercial tomato production in the southeastern U.S. (Ivors 2010). In the 2000's the number of grower enterprises and acreage decreased greatly, and many of the remaining mountain tomato farming enterprises diversified to vine-ripened tomatoes and other warm season vegetables like squash, beans and especially peppers. The tomato market price took another hit in 2008-2009, causing many to drop out of the industry.

[23] The Cherokee Purple heirloom tomato was named at a NCSU tomato seed breeding laboratory, where the scientists named it after the Cherokee people since the seed was found in southwestern North Carolina (Barclay 2015).

These days the tomatoes are usually of the Grape (which largely replaced the Cherry), Roma, Plum and "Large Round" varieties.

The topography of the Carolina mountains and surrounding Hill Country limit the amount of tillable farmland which some credit as a principle reason behind why more corporate fruit and vegetable farming enterprises have not set up shop in the microregion. The inability for those fresh-market wholesale produce enterprises to buy large tracks of land – like those hundreds of acres of flatland found grouped together in southern Florida –creates the opportunity for small- to mid-scale operations to buy and/or lease farmland. With the end of the Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP)[24] in North Carolina in 2014 and the retirement of another generation of farmers, patches of farmland are available to buy and/or lease in the Carolina mountains.

Many small- to mid-scale tomato and vegetable growers in the microregion utilize a patchwork of production sites, with maybe one field here and another two fields across the county line often in another micro-climate. This patchwork strategy is prevalent due in part to farmland availability. However, it is also seen as a way for farmers to spread risk through the diversification of production sites. This strategy aids in protecting their enterprises from losing all of their potentially marketable crops to one unfortunate weather event like hail, flooding or early frost, which vary in the Hill Country. This patchwork strategy of geographically diversified production sites is one that also allows for a longer harvesting season over the microregion when coordinated correctly. As I will show, Mexican-American tomato growers are the ones who are honing this strategy, according to a variety of industry actors.

[24] It is commonly referred to as the tobacco buyout.

Since climates vary within mountain regions, harvest seasons can slightly vary too. Adam, a corporate tomato and vegetable enterprise owner, worked at various sites throughout the Carolina Hill Country-Florida tomato circuit. From his farm office which was decorated with numerous miniature tractor models, he explained that in the Carolina Hill Country,

> The cool nights give use the opportunity to grow tomatoes, that is part of the good window. The other thing we see with bigger Mexican growers is that they not only grow here in the higher elevations, they will go down into South Carolina off the mountains where they can get earlier production. They'd be harvesting over a long period of time, early July to October. We do this too, but we plant most our fields sequentially up along the river. With all our sites combined, we supply tomatoes year-round.

This means that the tomato grower enterprises that diversify their production sites merely within the microregion can "stretch" their production season, access more product and supply more customers or consistent customers for a longer period of time. If an enterprise can replicate this same pattern over a region or continent (as transnational agricultural corporations do), that farming enterprise can gain control over that much more production and thus, acquire that much more power in the game of fresh produce supply and demand.

These practices appear to be related to strategies found in central Mexico. Many of these Mexican-American families of the tomato industry in southern Appalachia – like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group – trace their heritage to villages in central Mexico where their relatives utilize a patchwork production organization scheme to access more agricultural production as well. Combining knowledge from their agricultural context in Mexico with knowledge they gained working as tomateros in various microregions in the

southeastern U.S., they aptly design their seasonal tomatero routes and orchestrate both simultaneous and sequential production sites throughout the southeastern U.S. Their enterprises access more “windows of opportunity” (or harvesting seasons) which allow for the potential acquisition of more market share. With relatives and family friends coordinating harvesting enterprises, they have the reassurance that their fields will be harvested in a timely manner at each production site within the industry circuit.

According to industry actors, many if not most of the year-round growers are Mexican Americans farming family enterprises. As one industry actor described, “They were working for people here in the 1970’s and then by the early 1990’s they were growin’ on their own” on pieces of land, some of which they lease and less which they own. Some act as grower-shippers, growing on 100 acres or so of land and buying from smaller volume producers – as was discussed in chapter two. They or their relatives work and live in the Carolinas and in Florida. Their histories of working in various positions within the southeastern seasonal industry circuit supplied them with contacts in all locations.

Another significant dynamic at play are the redistributive practices taking place in the fields, by farmers who grow the crop and troqueros who buy it on the vine and then work with their crews to pick and pack the produce. They then sell it for their own profit. Often the Mexican-American growers and troqueros are related, or at least can find a relation between them since they are often from the same microregion in west-central Mexico. I, the following section, I focus on these redistributive practices – and the political economic relations they make possible.

Tomato Fields: Production-Exchange Relations and Emerging Redistributive Practices

The following section presents data exploring the shifting political economic identities and corresponding production-exchange relations of troqueros acting at and between seasonal circuit sites in the Carolina Hill Country and various sites in Florida. Troquero is a term that many FLCs use to describe themselves. It is a Spanish-English amalgamation used in farm worker communities in the southeastern U.S. and northern Mexico. It references a worker whose livelihood basis is a "truck" (or troque). A worker can be both a troquero and a tomatero if she or he owns a box truck and largely dedicates his or her livelihood to tomatoes. Workers can go from being a tomatero to being a troquero. While one does not have to be a FLC (contratista*)* to be a troquero, one must be a troquero to be a FLC. The vast majority of troqueros working in southern Appalachia and South Florida are of Mexican descent. Behind every mid- to large-scale tomato grower, there is at least one FLC.

Troqueros are especially important to small to mid-level grower enterprises because they can "field pack" meanings they can pack tomatoes into boxes while in the field and directly transport them to customers and/or marketplaces – skipping over the costly packing house activities. The skill and knowledge of both the harvesters and the troquero make it possible for a tomato – which is a highly perishable commodity – to reach marketplaces. The troquero networks with growers and farm managers to coordinate harvest, recruiting and managing harvesting crews in accordance with growers' schedules and market timings. This section will describe various political

economic identities that troqueros perform as they negotiate production-exchange relations and migrate back and forth between the Carolina mountains and South Florida.

Troquero as FLC Enterprise

The farm labor contractor (or FLC) position is one element of the tomato and vegetable farming equation that is often left out of the public's collective imagination and when it is included, it is presented in a negative light. This identity is complex and crucial to the organization of wholesale tomato and vegetable enterprises. As David Griffith points out, these farm labor contractors work to "organize the daily dynamics of the farm labor market" and many of them work for multiple growers along the east coast, and "increasingly throughout the eastern U.S." (2000:173). Thus, they occupy critical positions and perform significant tasks for various sectors of the regional agricultural industry.

Commercial fruit and vegetable agriculture is a tense work environment and the political economic position of a FLC is often the one framed as the originator of farm labor problems. FLCs are often understood as unnecessary middlemen who abuse workers and take advantage of them by garnishing their wages[25]. People who conduct "farm labor contractor activities" apply for a FLC license through the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division. The legal definition of a FLC is "someone who, for money or other valuable consideration paid or promised to be paid, recruits, solicits, hires, employs, furnishes or transports migrant and/or seasonal agricultural workers or,

[25] Serious abuse by labor contractors is an issue that is found in the agricultural realm (Smith-Nonini 2005, 2013; Benson 2012; Horton 2016) and in many industries beyond as groups like the International Labour Organization have shown (Kuptsche 2006).

provides housing to migrant agricultural workers" (U.S. Department of Labor FS-49 2008). FLCs are often blamed by farmers and agricultural industry officials especially when accusations surface concerning the hiring of workers who do not have authorization to work in nor be on U.S. territory. Scholars in labor studies, legal studies, and various social science domains have documented the contemporary and historic labor abuse (e.g., human trafficking and wage theft) by people who work as labor contractors throughout the world[26] (Kara 2017).

Since FLCs in the U.S. are considered as subcontractors – often in the legal form of limited liability companies (LLC) – who manage the harvesting stage of production, they are considered as legal entities separate from the growing enterprises. Thus, many growers assume that they themselves are not liable for the hiring of unauthorized workers[27] even if these workers labor in their fields and bring in their harvest. FLCs mitigate many of the responsibilities growers struggle to overcome. This chapter, however, puts these questions to the side for now to focus on the political economic identities that troqueros perform in tomato fields in addition to working as FLCs as they move from place to place and season to season. In many studies, due to a focus on stages of production, there is a disarticulation of the harvesting activities from distribution and marketing activities and thus, the agri-food system. Labor exploitation exists and is in fact systematically build into the perishable crop agriculture system in the U.S. However, there are variations in work relations amongst those who manage harvesters and the

[26] In Latin America, mobile labor contractors are called enganchadores and infamous for labor abuse especially in rural areas.
[27] Growers are trying to distance themselves from liability but are liable due to dual responsibility and reporting which is stated in the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA).

harvesters. When the person acting as the FLC also works as a harvester, a question emerges as to how they as a group organize their pay and the work process.

The Truck: Harvesting and Hauling Enterprise

The box truck is a symbol of independence in fresh-market fruit and vegetable farm working communities. One tomatera and troquero wife explained to me, "the truck is the basis of our livelihoods". With a truck, a person can potentially construct an enterprise. With a truck, a person who was a harvester can become a harvesting crew manager and even a marketer and/or distributor. Generally, men work as troqueros in the tomato industry, driving and owning their own trucks[28].

Often, the troquero personalizes his or her truck with hand-painted images of tomatoes[29] above or to the side of his or her last name and the town where the enterprise is registered. This is all grouped together almost like a logo on the back right-hand corner of the truck box or on the doors of the truck cab. For instance, one enterprise may advertise Harvesting and Hauling, Florida. Somewhere on the outside of truck the DOT-issued number is also displayed. These same trucks travel to and from southern Appalachia and South Florida, often sighted on highways and country roads, driving slowly up and down hills, loaded with filled tomato boxes on their way to packing houses right before dusk. The larger grower companies who also own these trucks often have a design similar to these, but instead use computer-generated stickers.

[28] However, this may be changing. More women (most of whom are relatives of other troqueros) are attending the FLC training courses offered in South Florida according to course records.
[29] They may have images of tomatoes and peppers painted on their truck, depending on their specialty.

Box trucks are also called produce trucks and troques, in Spanish while smaller personal trucks are called trocas, like camionetas in Spanish. There are three common sizes, sixteen feet long, twenty-two feet long, and twenty-six feet long. Many of the harvesters who acquire a truck and became troqueros did so through family loans. The new troqueros will pay back multiple relatives in pagos (*payments*) over an agreed amount of time or take out a formal loan with the truck dealership. For some families, the buying or gifting of a truck is an important rite of passage into adulthood and signifies that this worker will be able to provide for his or her family. Workers could also become socios (*partners*) and pool money to buy a truck to share between them. According to *troqueros,* you can buy the largest box truck for around $75,000, but you can only get around $15,000 for it on the resale market. Trucks wear out quickly in Florida sand and Carolina mud and have to be replaced every few years. To move up in work stature and pay, a troquero re-sells his current box truck and buys a bigger box truck. The larger the truck, the more produce you can potentially transport and thus, the more harvesters you can hire and manage. Moving from one size truck to another sounds simple enough but difficulties arise when the season is bad, as is often the case. To move up from the largest truck, a troquero buys another truck and begins to create a fleet.

Workers say that crews in Florida are often bigger than the regional traveling crews. In southern Appalachia, one troquero could manage a crew of about four to seven harvesters, or even less. In Florida, crews are usually at least ten harvesters per truck and there you will find the largest produce trucks. Many FLCs there own a fleet of trucks and pay a few harvesters to work as their choferes (*drivers*) and tomato graders while others are harvesting. Some FLCs travel as a group and work on corporate grower enterprises

throughout the southeastern U.S. which are owned and operated by the same produce grower corporation. In this scenario, there is an FLC who coordinates and organizes the harvesting process with the trucks in the field.

This figure is known in this specific corporate, large-scale context as the mayordomo[30]. This individual may not even drive a produce truck, but he will still be present at the fields overseeing the harvesting operation from inside of his air-conditioned personal truck. A group of troqueros, maybe ten or more, will travel from field to field together, from state to state working as one large coordinated team. These troqueros and harvesters say they prefer this arrangement because they know they will have steady year-round work. If you are a troquero, you can also choose to work as a pintero (*pinhooker*).

Troquero as Pintero Enterprise

A pintero is most often translated as a pinhooker in English. However, this political economic identity varies from place to place as many cultural categories do. A pinhooker in southern Appalachia is not exactly doing the same work as a pinhooker in South Florida. The cultural category of pinhooker in southern Appalachia carries with it a negative connotation. A pinhooker in the Carolina mountains is a person who comes into a spot market early in the morning (for cattle) or mid-afternoon (for produce) when the farmers are either arriving or "fed up" with the lack of sales and departing. In the case of produce, a pinhooker pays attention to who is leaving with a lot of perishable

[30] This is a Spanish word which in contemporary west central Mexico refers to an elected rancho official who serves a role somewhat like a mayor of a small rural area. However, the term came from the hacienda system era and referred to the hacienda chief administrator (Wolf 1955).

commodities left to sell. Then, the pinhooker offers them (what people perceive as) a very low price to "take all their produce off their hands," as Pamela, one local farmer-vendor, described. The shame in this is supposed to lie in the "undercutting nature" of the practice and the idea that, "It's not really the pinhooker's [because] he didn't really grow it." While "pinhooking" has a different social meaning in southern Appalachia, in Florida it pertains to a particular arrangement between the owner-operator enterprise of wholesale tomato fields and pinteros.

"The pintero is a different creature" who is part of "a different game," according to one Florida agricultural economist. Tomato pintiando (*pinhooking*) came about in the large-scale Florida Round "mature green[31]" growers' fields after the main harvests. As many explain it, the pinteros are "let into the fields" by the corporate farm manager or mayordomo; they may be the farm manager or mayordomo themselves. They bring a crew and glean the fields, or pick whatever viable crop they can find left on the vine[32]. In Florida, pinteros pick the "pinta," or tomatoes that are already changing from green to red or "breaking in color" (in industry terms)[33] and thus, further along in maturation. Industry actors say pinteros are "cleaning up the fields" by picking what is considered as "trash" to these particular corporate tomato growing enterprises because these tomatoes do not

[31] If a tomato is picked before it enters the "mature green" ripening phase it will not continue to mature. However, once the color begins to "break" or change from green to pink or yellow the fruit can be harvested and continue to mature. The Florida tomato industry is based on of "mature green" tomatoes that fall under their branded "Florida Rounds" qualifications, defined by the Florida Tomato Committee and the Florida Tomato Marketing Order.

[32] It is interesting to note that scholars like Barry Lyons argue that gleaning was a custom practiced by peasants on haciendas, like in the potato fields of Ecuador and that this "can be considered another type of redistribution" (2006:135) – though it did at times cause conflict (2006:154).

[33] The USDA provides a chart to explain the various ripening stages of tomatoes and to align this with market price. "Breaking in color" is often described in the industry as when a star of pink or yellow (depending on the variety) begins to form on top of the tomato, covering around 10% of the surface with the stem as the star's center.

qualify for the “mature green” market. Therefore, they do not fetch the high prices received from geographically distant, counter seasonal markets. A South Florida industry actor described the pinhooking practice in South Florida in the following way:

> After going through two rounds of harvesting the mature green tomatoes, there are still tomatoes in there. But it’s not worth putting a crew in there and quality is starting to suffer. And, you know, if I took you to a tomato field and you saw the amount of tomatoes that are left after the commercial harvest is down. Its criminal. Its more than the average gardener would get off of a tomato plant. So, these people will go in there. Some of them are rotten and some of them are scarring but they will pick out the good ones and go sell them and the grower… it’s a cash deal. These days, [there are] again Mexicans that have moved up the ladder a little ways.

Pinteros pay the field owner-operator enterprise for every box they pack. The pinhookers who are also farm managers are sometimes given the chance to pinhook as their bonus payment for the year. The money made by the tomato enterprises from the pinteros goes to “petty cash” funds in corporate offices. As one industry actor explained, “You know the money that you spend for company parties and other extra-expenses, office supplies like donuts, coffee, entertainment. They do it because it is cash money. Hard to turn that down.” According to an agricultural cooperative extension agent, the practice of pinhooking channels tomatoes to “outlets for produce that might not have a market elsewhere.” These alternative “outlets” or markets include, “smaller restaurants, especially mom and pop groceries, roadside produce stands, um you know you go to farmers and flea markets”. They are not seen as competitors to large-scale growers in Florida because they are supplying alternative markets with smaller volumes of produce

that is farther along on the ripening spectrum and considered as a different commodity from the "mature green" tomatoes.

As is the case with most agricultural enterprises, pinhookers do not work alone. They bring harvesters with them to glean the fields and also work with produce vendors. Pinteros work with marketeras (*produce vendors*) who from day to day, season to season "push produce" (sell produce) at farmers' marketplaces. Sometimes spouses work together, with the wife selling and the husband pinhooking their product. The marketera either earns a commission from what she or he sells or buys the crop and sells it as her or his own. Extended family members will also ally their enterprises, like Rosa, her husband and her cousin. Since this is a majority cash economy, trust is a crucial element of these production-exchange relations.

In South Florida, there is even a "pinhookers' market" formally known as the Immokalee Farmers' Market, which is distinct from the state farmers' market in Immokalee where larger companies wash, pack, receive and ship their produce. The open-air marketplace is busy with passing cars and trucks, and other customers on foot. It is organized so that semi-permanent stands sit side-by-side outlining a path for vehicles to snake through the large parking lot where the produce stands have set up shop. Some stands have walk-in coolers in the back to store their perishable products. The stands offer shade to the vendors, customers and the products on display. The produce selection is thoughtfully displayed, colorful, fresh and diverse – boasting imported products like papayas and coconuts which first arrived in the U.S. via the Miami port or the Nogales port of entry on the U.S.-Mexico border. Almost every vendor there looks to be of Latin American heritage.

It should not go unsaid that the pinhooking practice is frowned upon by some people in the industry, even by the corporations who pay the pinteros. This practice and corresponding production-exchange arrangement first became controversial in Florida over twenty years ago (Griffith and Kissam 1995) with the controversy resurfacing in the 1990's (Griffith 2000). The cultural practice continues, and it is still being worked out, contested by some[34] and morphed by others into new forms in new sites.

Established FLC as Troquero Enterprise

This is a story of a savvy, mobile troquero. José started off as a harvester, a picker. "He first came to the U.S. when he was sixteen-years old," his mother, Ester, told me. "He got his residency and he worked picking. He saw that these other guys who ran the workers were really making the money," she said as she rubs her pointer and middle fingers and thumb together and looked at me with a serious stare over the rim of her glasses.

> And so, he was smart and decided to enter [the profession]. He bought a truck in payments and started with a small crew. They would pick and pack their own boxes and he started to sell them. He realized that he could make $1 or $2 or even sometimes $3 a box [when selling them counter-seasonally]. He takes care of a lot of people, myself included. He works hard, all day out in the sun. He leaves home at 5am until 8pm or until he returned home from dropping all the workers off at home. He works every day of the week and now owns a good amount of farmland in Mexico.

[34] Tomato growing enterprises within a certain jurisdiction in Florida (largely central and South Florida) which grow tomatoes classified as "Florida Rounds" must comply with the Tomato Good Agricultural Practices (T-GAPs) which do not permit the field-packing of tomatoes. These regulations require tomatoes to be washed before being packed and shipped for market sale.

In the Carolinas, he had a production-exchange relationship with a grower who specialized in “mature greens.” The tomato grower enterprise gave José the option to pick all the tomatoes “breaking in color” (or pinta) to sell for his own troquero enterprise as commission for working as their FLC. He owned a fleet of produce trucks and manages a significant number of harvesters. During the summer harvest season, he rented a bodega *(warehouse*) in North Carolina. He was allied with a marketera at the Farm and Flea market. He shipped her the pinta tomatoes that his crews pick in the Carolina mountains to sell. He worked as a FLC for other corporate grower enterprises in southern Appalachia as well, bringing workers in via his relationships with other troqueros. He started working with his kin and people who knew from his ranch in Florida twenty years ago. His decades of industry engagement as a mobile worker in various sites along the circuit allowed him the opportunity to build his network with people organizing FFV enterprise harvesting for enterprises throughout the year and taught him how to find and treat reliable workers.

In southern Georgia, he invested in the planting of tomatoes since he does not have equipment, time, or knowledge to do it himself. He and his crews stop for about three to four weeks in South Georgia to coordinate the harvesting, hauling and sale of the tomatoes that he partially owns. While working as a FLC in South Florida, he picked in the tomato fields and drives a school bus of workers. In southern Georgia and the Carolina mountains, he coordinated and managed workers from his truck, ensured he had a market lined up for his tomatoes (like a farmer would) and organized the logistics between the field, the trucks, the packing house and the buyers. He had developed a trans-state network of tomato growers with whom he subcontracted his harvesting and

hauling services, and sometimes his marketing connections too. People said that his success comes from “treating his people well,” from understanding the way markets work, from knowing how to be loyal to grower enterprises and from assuring steady year-round work for his harvesting crews.

Troqueros as la Mata Enterprise

Up until this point, much of the discussion of troqueros has offered a characterization of the pintero production phenomenon that is found throughout South Florida, mostly in large-scale “mature green” tomato production sites. In southern Appalachia, there are distinct production-exchange practices taking place in tomato farming enterprises. One such practice is called “comprar la mata” (*buying the field*). Troqueros who buy “la mata” are buying the tomato crop while still in the fields in southern Appalachia somewhat like the pinteros[35]. It is like a professional, invitation only “U Pick” enterprise. However, unlike the pintero context in South Florida, most wholesale tomato producers in southern Appalachia mostly produce vine ripe tomatoes, meaning you harvest and market them when they break in color on the vine. For this reason, to most of the tomatoes produced – meant for the open market (meaning not previously sold) and available to troqueros – will not be seen as “trash” by the growers in southern Appalachia but will be seen as a marketable product.

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[35] The troquero in this instance can be compared with the “bird dog” political economic identity in South Florida. “Bird dogs” buy the citrus crop on the trees in the family owned and operated small-scale orchards, harvest it with a small crew of workers and take what they can pick and pack to a marketplace. However, in southern Appalachia, the “buying the field” strategy is also practiced between growers in tomato and vegetable fields; although it does not happen often, and normally only takes place if one grower’s crop does not produce well or fails and their market has grown to where they need to access more product.

The practice of “buying the field” varies in the microregion in terms of how the grower is paid. The amount the troquero pays the grower is determined by the number of plants in the field or boxes harvested, depending on the particular arrangement. The grower prices out the crop so that the price covers the enterprise’s expenses and provides a reasonable profit to do it again next year. One farmer in western North Carolina, Jack, believed,

> Mexicans are already set up. They are coming in and doing the labor. They are self-sufficient. The other thing that has been hard on growers here is that the prices are not stable for tomatoes. Huge difference from year to year and different times of the season. Some have been hard-pressed to make any money. Growing tomatoes is what they know how to do. Some don’t know how to sell em’. This way grower does all the growing. Mexicans come in and run their crews. Pick and pack. My goal was to get 100% back so for each plant that costs me $1. I would charge $2. That’s his crop. I’m just growin’ it for em’.

The farming enterprise’s viability, too, rests on the pre-determined, predictable price that the troquero will pay. This is a way for the troquero to access and market the product and a solution for smaller grower enterprises who do not have the workers to come harvest, or do not want to worry about finding and/or training harvesters every season. As one retired southern Appalachian grower, Robert, said

> It kept me of out the market. I didn’t have to find a market and more importantly the labor. The labor was their kin, another factor that come in. Tomatoes have to be harvested every other day. Cucumbers didn’t; peppers didn’t. The window was like you could wait. Maybe on cucumbers four or five days. Peppers you could wait ten days. That’d all come into the decision of it. Since we was also growing peppers and cucumbers, it would have been too difficult to find the workers to harvest the tomatoes every other day. So when I quite growing tomatoes to pick, I cut my labor force in half.

Since Robert no longer devoted his time or the time of his harvesting crew to those enterprise activities, he and his crew could focus on other tasks like harvesting his peppers and cucumbers which demands less resources and less skilled pickers. If a grower could not promise a certain amount of work for harvesting crews, they would not come and he would have to watch his crop rot on the vine. But, if he sold his field, he could recover all the costs and make a profit without the risk of a labor shortage. Chuey, a troquero who traveled between South Florida and the Carolina mountains, believed that the tomato enterprise in Florida was different from North Carolina where you can buy the field. He evaluated the comparison,

> It is better in North Carolina because it is no else's business. You can field pack and sell it and in Florida you pinhook and now have wash them, send them through a corridor [*runner, washer conveyor belt system*] in a packing house which you have to pay for. You see 100 acres of tomatoes is what it takes to get workers to come. You can't have five, or even 30 acres. It's not worth it for the farmworkers. Each mata [*transplant*] costs $2. Florida you have to use three times the fertilizers than in Carolina. So you can make more money in North Carolina if it all turns out! Since all that went down in 2008 everything got really tight in Florida. All the feds came, and all the rules had to be followed real closely even though the salmonella came from another country. In North Carolina, you can field pack.

This practice does not take place in the Florida tomato fields due in part to the difference in economies of scale. Fresh-market tomatoes are a highly capitalized cash crop no matter where you grow them in the southeastern U.S. However, Florida is one of the most expensive production sites. To cultivate 100 acres of tomatoes in South Florida you will need to spend approximately 1$ M, at $15,000-$17,000 per acre with $8,000 or so of that

total accounting for labor cost. This compares to the Carolina mountains where field packing is far more common, and production costs are typically approximately $10,000-$12,000 per acre or less.

Like most production-exchange arrangements in tomato and vegetable farming, there are variations on this practice. One retired picker and his daughter, Cristina, a picker and packer herself, explained how their relatives coordinate their enterprise. Pablo's cousin Eddy bought the transplants somewhere in Columbia, South Carolina for about $1.50 a plant. He had a "probador" (*tester*) who worked at the greenhouse and assists him in selecting varieties. He bought the transplants that will work on the farmland in the Carolina mountains along the North Carolina-South Carolina border and the ones that Pablo's enterprise can sell.

Pablo paid Eddy for these plants early in the growing season. Eddy planted them, sprayed fertilizer, staked them, and cultivated the tomatoes. Eddy also grew lots of warm-season vegetables for the enterprise he and his brothers owned and operated. These vegetables would go to a packing house his brother owned about an hour over the mountain. When Eddy said that the tomatoes are ready to harvest, Pablo paid Eddy for the chemicals, materials, and trabajos (*his labor*) and then continued to pay Eddy in pagos (*installments*) throughout the harvesting process. This arrangement takes both enterprises' resources flows into account. Once Pablo had paid Eddy in full, it was his crop to sell. He brought in harvesters to pack the tomatoes into boxes in the field and to haul them to a local market, or to a packing house to be loaded up into a semi-trailer truck for a long-haul delivery.

Pablo handled the North Carolina production part of the enterprise with his cousin Eddy and coordinated the distribution and marketing process with his brother, Arnulfo. Arnulfo stayed in South Florida all year managing their produce stand at the pinhooker market (i.e., Immokalee Farmers' Market). Pablo sent semi-trailer truck loads of tomatoes to Arnulfo to sell. Arnulfo and Eddy decided together what to plant. During the winter and spring, Pablo came back to Florida to work the harvest seasons there as a FLC and pintero. Other pinteros would come to Pablo's fields with their workers to pick too. They would pay Pablo per box for what they pick and then, they would sell those boxes of tomatoes as resale continues down the line to packing houses or marketeras, and/or possibly distribute them to restaurants and tiendas (*convenience stores*). Farmers like Eddy said that is a risk management strategy.

Another troquero, Alejandro, started "planting in Tennessee with a bulio" (*American*) as his "socio" (*partner*). Alejandro was originally from central Mexico and started working in the U.S. as a harvester, traveling around with members of his wife's family. He bought a truck and started to follow the same southeastern U.S. route he would travel when he picked as a farmworker, but this time he worked for himself as a pinhooker. He would sell the produce to marketeras or produce vending enterprises like Primos Produce in various farmers' marketplaces around the region like Atlanta, Jacksonville and Columbia. He learned which buyers would follow up with their payments on time, late or never. He would drive produce from one state to a farmers' marketplace in another if he found out the price was high enough for that strategy to earn him more profit. Then, one day a small-scale tomato farmer, Joshua, was at a marketplace in the Carolina mountains "buscando precio y trabajadores" (*looking for price*

information and harvesters). He came up to Alejandro and said he wanted to "encargarme de vendor él su tomate" (*to put me in charge of selling his tomatoes*). That is how it all got started. He mixed buying the field with pinhooking and made his living as a troquero that way. His personal best year, by far, was 2004.

In 2004, he had the same arrangement with Joshua as described above. He went to eastern Tennessee, bought the tomatoes that Joshua grew for him, picked and packed them. Then Alejandro drove down to Columbia, South Carolina to sell them. No one wanted them there because the market was low and they were a bit small. Then he drove to Plant City, Florida to another marketplace, farther away from that particular harvest season area. On the drive, he resigned himself to selling the tomato boxes for as low as five dollars a box. That was his only "salida" (*way out)* because he still needed to cover his investment. No one wanted them. So, he put the boxes of ripening green and breaking tomatoes in his house. Then Hurricane Charley, a category four, hit Florida in November and the price per box of tomatoes soared. He went back to the Plant City market and sold each box for $45 each! There were no other tomatoes available to buy.

His binational tomatero relatives called from central Mexico where they were on a trip visiting family and inquired, "¿Y cómo está el tomate?" (*How is the tomato market?)* "No one wanted to believe me!" he joyously recalled. "They all wanted to come back and work." He paid off his box truck and bought a house that year. But of course, tomato markets are volatile and on December 3rd of that year the markets were flooded and boxes plunged to $3 a box. This happened because the grower enterprises whose seeds flooded out rushed back in to replant which created overlapping harvesting "deals" (in industry terms) and inundated the market with supply.

Troquero as Grower Enterprise

Recognizing their clutch positioning as labor recruiter and manager, allied troqueros practice another strategy to gain power and options within the produce industry. Relatives work together to build tomatero enterprises. For instance, there is the story of the Dominguez family. They are a set of three brothers (Diego, Raul and Carlos) and a brother's wife (Beatriz). They have organized their enterprises so that they share the responsibilities as an allied industry group. In southern Appalachia, they grow peppers and specialty chilies.

Raul works as the planter, farm-manager and tractorista (*tractor driver*). Raul and Beatriz come to the Carolina Mountains in March to prepare the fields and then again in May for their first planting. Beatriz assists with field work, but her main job is to handle the paperwork for the certifications like Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) audits by the USDA. Diego works as a troquero coordinating the labor and Carlos helps to pick, market and truck the produce. In between picking and cultivating their crop, Diego and Carlos also buy tomato fields that other small-scale enterprises grew and then pick, pack and sold them along with the peppers and chilies their Raul and Beatriz cultivated. Their networks in Florida helped them to sell their southern Appalachian produce counter-seasonally. Depending on the crop and the market price, they also had the choice of turning in their product to a cousin's packing house in southern Appalachia. Before they began their growing enterprise in southern Appalachia, they went to southern Georgia to work as FLCs in between traveling to the Carolina mountains and South Florida. Now they could afford to skip this site on the circuit, which they were happy to do because of

the expensive motel-housing and muggy, hot and bug-ridden work conditions in the fields. This enterprising group also collectively owned a tractor in their village in central Mexico where they paid their uncle to plant, cultivate, and harvest basic grains on their separate allotments.

Conclusion: Changing Production-Exchange Relations, Altering Possibilities

"Mexicans changed the world in the United States. That's the ones who was doing it, buying the field. Mexicans." From the perspectives of many produce industry actors in southern Appalachia, this farmer's statement is undoubtable. While production-exchange relations are shaped particularly in each political economic context, agricultural industry actors like troqueros in southern Appalachia draw on knowledge from multiple political economic contexts to gain production power and access market share. Through harnessing the power of coordination across geographic distance and production-exchange arrangements, tomatero enterprises access mobility, shifting their political economic identities from worker to buyer and/or owner-operator. Thinking about tomatero enterprises allows for the recognition of the contributions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to the agricultural industry and the emerging redistributive practices they construct and reconstruct as they negotiate their work and industry policies.

Stories of class process within regional agricultural realms vary, but the assumption persists that minority groups will forever be marginalized within the farming sector. This does not have to happen. Researchers have pointed out in cases in California that despite deterministic predictions – and the fact that farmworkers are marginalized through racialization (Kingsolver 2007) – some have accessed economic mobility in

agricultural industries (Du Bry 2007), and some become fresh-market fruit and vegetable farmers (Wells 1990, 1996). This chapter argues that a similar though distinct class process is also evident in southern Appalachia, and there is knowledge to be gained from the study of the organizational strategies of tomatero enterprises and the perspectives of people who strategically construct and maintain them. Gaining ownership over a cash crop can be considered a victory in a political economic struggle over agri-food production.

Some may argue that the redistributive cash crop practices discussed here (e.g., buying the field) are comparable to sharecropping. I am not suggesting that these practices are ideally equitable as they are practiced today, nor that exploitation is not present. However, I do propose that they are and should be treated as distinct from sharecropping for multiple reasons – with the main reason being that the troquero does not cultivate the cash crop but ends up as its owner once the production process is complete. Studies of strawberry sharecropping in California (Wells 1996; Figueroa Sanchez 2013) serve as comparisons. As Miriam Wells argues, "Strawberry sharecropping was a response to distinctly contemporary political pressures: it was a means of dealing with a shift in the balance of class power occasioned by changing political constraints on the labor market… In this context, sharecropping enabled growers not only to share, but actually to reduce their exposure to politically generated costs and risk" (1990:230). Many tomato industry actors see the advent of FLC (and what I call the troquero enterprise) and the continuation of this production-exchange relation in a similar light.

While most industry actors believe that grower enterprises utilize these practices to subcontract out the harvesting portion of the production process, they fail to take into account the risk grower enterprises are reducing from the “marketing and exchange side” of their enterprise equation, as John mentioned earlier. In southern Appalachia, many growers’ most significant worries are that they will not have the harvesters they need to pick and pack their tomatoes and that the market price will be too low to make a profit once their harvesting “window” comes around. Thus, their potential as a marketable cash crop can be lost at two significant moments – both of which troquero enterprises can absorb. To cover their costs, tomato grower enterprises are willing and often happy to sell their product before the production phase is complete.

Each party in this equation understands the importance of the other’s work. The recognition of mutual dependencies and the shifting of political economic identities that takes place – and is enacted through enterprise transactions – may help in the re-evaluation of the possibilities for a more equitable regional ago-food system in the southeastern U.S. Kin-based networks show possibilities of other kinds of collectives. These possibilities could include alternative organizational strategies built around sites for potential redistribution of resource flows found throughout the workings of the fresh-market produce industry. The analysis of enterprises – and the production-exchange relations that make enterprises possible – allows for the recognition of alternative organizational practices. It leaves one to ask why more coordinated farming, and crop-sharing enterprise arrangements are not developed and supported by state policies and programming.

This chapter began by contextualizing production at and between sites along a seasonal tomato industry circuit in the southeastern U.S. Then, I analyzed two redistributive practices found in conventional tomato fields in southern Appalachia. Pinpointing the instances at which a resource flow such as a cash crop is distributed, encourages a closer look at when, how and who could harness more power in the agri-food production and exchange arenas. The data presented in this chapter questions the thoroughly presupposed understandings of Mexicans' and Mexican Americans' contributions to the produce industry in the southeastern U.S. and the power dynamics which accompany the production-exchange relations they negotiate as enterprise actors. As long as government regulation over food production-exchange practices permits, tomateros and other produce industry workers will be able to exercise their right to access the fruits of their labors, the cash crops they help to transform into perishable commodities. The next chapter will discuss marketeras and their comercio mētis which "moves" produce through small- to mid-volume distribution channels and enables members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group to act as FFV farming enterprisers.

Enterprising Women of Mexican-American Farming Families in Southern Appalachia

Part II. Chapter 5

"We were just agriculturalists and now we do agribusiness. Our parents were campesinos. Our husbands are agriculturalists, but we have turned our work into agribusiness."

In this chapter, I present ethnographic data that counter-construct Latinas' roles in agriculture in southern Appalachia to support a re-conceptualizing of (typically racialized) women as part of binational (Mexican-American) farming families who contribute in diverse, significant ways to the agri-food system. I offer stories from enterprising women like Liliana who is quoted above and examples of how women from these families negotiate temporalities, manage resources, organize tasks, and collaborate in their enterprises. I argue that through these creative socio-economic practices they cultivate comercio (*commerce*) mētis, or practical commerce skills and wisdom which they apply to their work in the fresh fruit and vegetable industry in southern Appalachia. First, I discuss marketeras (*female marketers at terminal produce markets, also known as regional farmers' markets*) and their comercio mētis in the fresh-market realm of the fruit and vegetable (FFV) industry in southern Appalachia.

Gendering practices in both the "public" workplace and the "private" workplace (at home) influence and are influenced by both capitalist and non-capitalist ideologies. This is apparent when one uses a time lens to think through the political economic questions of how kin relations relate to enterprises and to temporalities, as I discussed in chapter one and two. This chapter shares on perspectives, challenges, and comercio mētis of Mexican-American vegetable farming women and pays particular attention to their conceptualizations of how gender difference has changed in regard to their work

activities and the cycles and flows that they create and manage for their kin-based enterprises. The chapter contributes to the analysis of the interaction between practices of kin relatedness, class process, and the modes that mediate political economic tensions, which range from democratic to coercive.

This chapter analyzes ethnographic data to make sense of the links between kin relations, intergenerational gendered work, and temporalization in the fresh-market tomato and vegetable industry in southern Appalachia. In it, I show how enterprising farming family women of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group conceptualize and draw on kin relations to cultivate and practice comercio mētis which enables their collective rural livelihoods, and their mitigation of barriers to producing and marketing tomatoes and vegetables in southern Appalachia. First, I discuss tomato and vegetable industry exchange (i.e., marketing and distribution) in terms of temporalization, which "views time as a symbolic process continually being produced in everyday practices" (Munn 1992:116). Then I share women's stories of how their work, lives, and families have changed as they have developed their enterprises in southern Appalachia. They share their descriptions of their enterprises in terms of the social organization of responsibilities, and the challenges or barriers they have overcome when accessing marketing "outlets" (or channels) in the U.S. regulated, globalized-local agricultural economies in southern Appalachia. The ethnographic data illustrate the seemingly subtle importance of time in the larger process of value creation when managing the complexities of exchange relations, cooperative practices, resource flows, paperwork and nested multiple cycles (e.g., shelf life of a tomato) of fresh-market produce enterprises.

FFV Farming Family Enterprise Women: Comercio Mētis and Temporalities

The term comercio mētis refers to the practical knowledge and skills that agri-food system actor-subjects – like these family FFV farming enterprise women – develop while managing distribution and marketing for their family's farming enterprises. Mētis is a Greek term introduced by Aristotle to differentiate "know-how" from "know that." This term points to the significant difference between practical wisdom and skills learned from experience in a community, in contrast to technical expertise learned through application and memorization of scientific rules. Mētis is practical wisdom, meaning that it requires insight and ethical consideration. Mētis affords the ability to make decisions, keeping long-term accomplishments in mind as well as immediate tasks.

Following other anthropologists, I suggest that mētis is culturally produced and critical to the functioning of agri-food systems. For anthropologists like James Scott, mētis as a kind of "local knowledge" which "is contextual and practical" which peasants utilized and created to survive (1998: 320). Susanne Freidberg recognized mētis of "global green bean" trading women in Burkina Faso who managed critical segments of the globalized "commodity "paths" (2004). In the context of the global sushi trading that happens at Tokyo's Tsukiji market, Theodore C. Bestor found that, "women appear mostly in seemingly supporting roles, as clerical workers in traders' back offices and cashiers sequestered in tiny booths" (Bestor 2004: 84). Though this work seems to be done in the "backroom," the comercio mētis needed for (and created through) these creative socio-economic activities sustain enterprises and agri-food systems. As such, they should neither be underestimated nor understudied.

Family farming enterprise women like Liliana and Yaneli are not typically recognized as innovators, long-term food economy contributors, nor as the creators of comercio mētis – which they are. This is because, as Latina Appalachians, they are racialized and stereotyped as "migrants" symbolically marking them as "other" (Fabian 1983) as "short-term" workers. And as such, they are reified as "cheap labor" for and of the globalized FFV industry enterprises (Collins 1995). Though in some places, Latinx farming families suffer from discrimination by USDA agencies (Minkoff-Zern and Sloat forthcoming), it is also true that some even racialized farming community women and men access political economic mobility, despite the numerous structural obstacles (DuBry 2007).

In the perishable crop world where managing time and exchange flows is essential, the success of farming enterprises depends on what many people refer to as "women's work." In this context, "women's work" constitutes activities that create value for their enterprises in both the short- and long-term. These women create and call upon comercio mētis. They "work with initiative" (Scott 1998: 311) in various sites like the farm offices and produce marketplaces where they manage their family fresh fruit and vegetable farming enterprise through activities like negotiating purchases and sales, regulations and recordkeeping. Robert – a tomato farmer in southern Appalachia whose wife does the enterprise recordkeeping – explained it this way: "The financial part is just as big as the work. More so nowadays. That is the single thing that will get a farmer: He can't handle money. If he can't handle the finances, it will get him on anything. He can do the work. Used to, you could make a living with your back. If you don't manage it

now, you can't." The examples of comercio mētis shared here show how these women manage exchange relations and flows of capital, information, and commodities.

Clearly there are many ways to theorize time in relation to political economic processes. For this dissertation, I am concerned with the nexus of social time, power, kin relations, political economies, and agricultural livelihoods in a binational group context. Instead of being understood as a fixed natural uniform temporal truth, social time is theorized here as culturally constructed and thus, can be considered as temporal logic and thus, part of cultural logics (Ong 1999). Social time, as culturally constructed and multiple, can be understood as a dialectic between structure and agency. For this reason, temporalization – the relation between everyday practices and social time (Munn 1992:116) – seems to be an apt approach for analyzing power and gender difference within agricultural industries and farming community contexts. In certain conditions, people must negotiate the obstacles created by social time while in other instances, people can use temporal logics to further their capitalist projects and de-marginalizing efforts.

Time and the FFV Industry

This chapter shows how kin relations and collectivizing strategies articulate with the various temporal structures and logics found in – and pulsing through – the agri-food industry by mapping how kin-based social relations and strategies are entwined with strategic timings, nested cycles, continuous circulations, and gendered work rhythms. Using social time as a lens to make sense of kin relations and their organizational strategies offers a fresh look at how farming families negotiate our globalized agri-food

industry, and the temporal logics it imposes. Additionally, it shows how a binational context influences their strategies to overcome obstacles to political economic mobility and reveals alternatives to a purely capitalist imaginary.

The term “fresh” did not gain its power in the U.S. food market until after WWII. During this era, agriculture was restructured in places across the globe so that wholesale fruit and vegetable suppliers could increase market share by “meeting” – some may say producing – U.S. consumers’ year-round demand (Friedland 1994). William Friedland refers to the resulting order of this transition as the “global fresh produce system” (1994). Over the lifespan of the oldest generation of consumers in the U.S., the popular consensus has shifted from thinking that processed food sold in cans is the best consumption choice to thinking that fresh whole foods are far more advantageous for consumers’ health. This shift in eating habits of the middle and upper classes to cutting out grains, some call it a postmodern diet (Cook 1999) has further influenced the importance of the “fresh-market” – valuing the nutrition of raw foods over that of canned and processed foods popularized during and after WWII – and increased the likelihood of high fresh-market food commodity prices (Cook 1990). However, there is also a lot to lose when investing in highly perishable commodities which do not guarantee even “breaking even” market prices.

The FFV (produce) industry has fetishized “freshness” (Cook 1999). The various symbolic meanings of agri-food commodities or raw materials even are not neutral, but instead imbue and are imbued by power (Mintz 1986). The quality of the produce is judged by buyers for many factors (which I discuss later) but one of the principle factors is “age” or lack of freshness. In this sense, “freshness” can be understood as a

contemporary example of Malinowski's notion of "time-reckoning" except that the "time" of the object (in this case perishable produce commodities) is being determined and used to assess market-value. In the food industry, "fresh-market" is a term for fruits and vegetables sold – usually in lesser quantities – at regional farmers' markets from the growing enterprise to a buyer who then may put the produce towards household consumption, distribute it to local restaurants, or re-sell it to a corner store or at a roadside stand. A multiplicity of marketing channels (and this type of exchange) supports diverse, community food economies and allows more producers to gain higher market-value and potentially use-value of their products. This was the norm. But, today the majority of the fruits and vegetables sold in the U.S. are sold through wholesale brokerage firms which will be discussed more later in this chapter.

Timing is a critical factor in food production, distribution and marketing at every scale of commerce. Seasons frame the temporal maps – or timescapes (Bear 2016) – that farming community members use to navigate their livelihoods. The southern Appalachian region has a vegetable and tomato harvesting season that runs from late June to early November. As I explained in chapter four, this time period is referred to as their "window of opportunity" – or time period when production is possible. Enterprising work – like recordkeeping and marketing – constitute year-round work activities. These temporal "windows" set up the regional industry rhythms and organize people's year-round work schedules. Cycles – like shelf lives of highly perishable merchandise – and other timings within "windows" are critical to manage and difficult to coordinate. These practices and strategic timings all point to people's attempts to manipulate resource flows and

temporalities of modern capitalism (Bear 2016) with hopes of gaining an advantage in terms of resources flows (Miyazaki 2006; Bolt 2014).

In this sense, time can be viewed as both economic and political in that time can be used for both resource-making and resource-claiming (Ferry and Limbert 2008). Bourdieu theorizes exchange as an example of a strategic act (1990[1980]). This is especially obvious in the food industry where the coordinated timings of the circulations of food, cash, and information can make or break an enterprise. The most obvious timings are of maturation or life-cycles of fruits and vegetables. The quicker you sell "fresh" produce the more chances you have to make a profit. The older the fruit or vegetable, the less value it commands on the marketplace, which is why "freshness" is fetishized by the industry. For this reason, marketeras have to develop and rely on comercio mētis to "move" the waves of produce that are "coming off" the fields and into the marketplaces. The speed and pace at which unprocessed food is circulated and exchanged matters greatly to the sustainably of a fruit and vegetable farming enterprise. This is why people in the FFV industry talk about "moving" fresh-market produce, and this also explains why some marketeras excel in the farmers' marketplaces. This is but one more reason why these farming enterprise women – and their comercio mētis that allows them to manage timings and exchange relations – are so important to their family farming enterprises and the food economy in southern Appalachia.

While kin relations and social time are alluded to in GCC studies, they are not the focal point of analysis. Fischer and Benson, for example drew some attention to temporal logics of the agri-food industry with their study of the commodity chain for broccoli which is considered a "desired" and "healthy" good by U.S. consumers (2006). They

found that Mayan farmers in Guatemala strategically produced broccoli within a "window of opportunity" or a season during which they could supply the year-round demand when there would be less competition for the U.S. market from U.S. producers and thus, a chance at a better market price and a livelihood (Fischer and Benson 2006). While this study does cogently make sense of moral "limit points" of consumers and culturally specific "desire," it does not explain much about the kin-based social relations which organize these farming enterprises nor the temporal logics which shape the producers' lives and livelihood projects.

"Fresh-market" in tomato industry terms means that tomatoes are red which signifies that they are ripe. As I mentioned in chapter four, the wholesale industry primarily buys green or "breaking tomatoes" – this is when there is a bit of a pink star formed at the base. This color spreads from there and slowly but surely the entire tomato turns to its "matured" color. The maturation (distinguished by color) is one of the key factors that determines where and to whom to market your tomatoes. Many tomato and vegetable farmers are packing their tomatoes into the produce box in the fields as they pick, as described in chapter four. If this is done correctly and under a certain volume with a food safety certificate, then this can be sold directly to the grocery store or consumer, or "straight into the market stream" as one industry expert described it.

Most wholesale buyers want tomatoes which are classified as "green" though they were picked just as soon as they showed the sign that they would continue to mature once picked from the vine. They are all picked and packed together into cardboard produce boxes, and then (once packed one on top of the next) they are shipped as pallets – or the usually wooden board that secures the stacks integrity and allow for forklifts to pick up

the stack at one time and move it from place to place, like out of the trailer and into the cooler. Due to the natural emission of ethylene, the tomatoes will turn red, hopefully according to the "ripening scheme" of the shipper and be red (but not too red) when they arrive at grocery stores to be sold at a retail price that is approximately four times as much as the farming enterprise receives. As I mentioned in chapter four, the industry refers to the technology that makes this kind of ripening manipulation possible as the "cold chain" (or industry organizing metaphor for refrigeration technology that is used from the packing houses to the shipping containers into the point of sale). If the tomato is picked green before this point of maturation, then the tomato cannot command a market value because it will not turn red. Time (as timings and temporalities) significantly affects this value creation process and critically organizes overall food system possibilities.

This chapter pays attention to circulations and cycles within seasonal agricultural commodity circuits within the global agri-food system (Gerreffi 1993). I also pay attention to gender difference in terms of work demands (e.g., activities and responsibilities) and the temporalities (e.g., work rhythms and schedules) they create for particularly situated people in the kin network. These agri-industry temporal logics shape particularly situated persons' daily lives; their rhythms of work are shaped by marketing circulations, coordinated harvesting circuits, natural death-life cycles, and bureaucratic deadlines for multiple crops. Rhythms are predictable, following Malinowski's conceptualization (1927). Within these there are temporalities (that must be managed) and temporalizations of particularly positioned workers' lives. This temporalization exists at least in part due to the commodification of labor and neoliberal logic of efficiency

which devalues human labor. Work rhythms of this neoliberal agricultural industry regime shape agri-industrial livelihoods, and logics of practice (Bourdieu 1980).

Work rhythms that do not align with the rest of society's daily schedules can produce unifying conditions under which kin relations – and their linked gendering practices – are mapped onto industrial work crews (Rolston 2014). The power to organize and define activities (and thus social time) for others brings with it the power to accumulate capital. I see temporalities as embedded in social time, influenced by work rhythms shaped by industry cycles and circulations. In the case of the FFV industry, a marketera has a livelihood that involves a seven-month season when she sells at a produce terminal market for upwards to 18 hours a day, seven days a week. Within her daily life, she manages multiples interrelated cycles and the temporal logics that come with perishable crop production, distribution, and marketing. As a marketera, she "mueve el producto" (*moves the product)* making sales and sometimes, rebuying what they do not grow, to stock at a steady rate. The idea is that the quicker this is done, the more one can "push" or "move" to create capital, rendimiento (*yield, output).*

Durkheim theorizes time as linked to activities which shape diverse "rhythms" of human life. Guyer takes the concept to "rhythms" to make sense of the relation between work activities, gender, and economic cycles when focusing on "female farming" in African history (1991). Agricultural work activities involve work schedules and these schedules are demanding in our current era of neoliberal logic. Work rhythms are structured around a combination of natural cycles and industrial temporal logics which often come in conflict with "normal" societal temporal order and gendered work expectations and time commitments. Kin relations set the foundation for gender

difference seen through the gendering practices that carry into the work place and gendered work schedules that organize activities and coordinate enterprise. These kin relations seem to mitigate the temporal demands creating gendered activity spheres and thus, gendered work rhythms which help produce temporalities.

Mexican-American Farming Enterprise Women and Alternative Visions

Farming families – and the women who make them possible – are realizing an alternative vision of themselves and for themselves as Mexican Americans in the capitalist U.S. agri-food system. With their transnational knowledge of agricultural markets and exchange networks, they create wealth and employment for their kin, agri-food community, and regional economies. Their cooperative economic activities are organized in ways that are both capitalist and non-capitalist, as will be shown this chapter. These women see their family-based fruit and vegetable farming enterprises as collective projects, where both women and men make decisions about their enterprise and family. They apply an alternative logic which may prove to be more sustainable for community economy development (Gibson-Graham 2006).

Kin-based enterprises are sites where people develop capitalist (Yanagisako 2002) and non-capitalist ethics, logics, and practices which represent "alternative visions" – possible when people have "lived experience or recent memories of alternative practices on which to build alternative visions" (Rothstein 2007:11). These women show how exchange relations and enterprise strategies do not have to follow the negative exchange logic implicit to market capitalism. They also express alternative visions of how economic activities are/might be organized and alternative visions for themselves in

terms of what constitutes women's work as they adjust to new responsibilities and new gendered work identities (Sachs 1996). These are alternative to agrarian ideology that supports patriarchy (Sachs 1996:133-34). Through this practice of both reflecting and defining, they act as generational change-makers.

These Mexican American women are agents of change on a societal level as job creators and farming enterprise sustainers. They are Carolina farming women whose work is organized by a combination of multiple rhythms; their work of managing their farming enterprise goes beyond the space of the farm. The gendering work practices within their kin group articulate with the fresh-market produce industry and in turn produce gendered and generational work rhythms and responsibilities. Liliana, a farming family enterpriser, sees her enterprise (and other enterprises) as dependent on their collective, full-time contributions:

> Somos por decir dos partes: nosotros hacemos todo lo de los pagos de la gente, todo [lo] de la oficina y ellos se encargan de todo [lo] del field… Somos 100% agricultores. No hacemos otra cosa. Hay mucha gente que es… lo usa como trabajo de medio tiempo."
> *We are, you could say, two parts: we do all the employee payments, everything in the office and they are in charge of everything in the field… We are 100% agriculturalists. We do not do anything else. There are a lot of people that are… they use it as a part-time job.*

While Liliana and many of the other farming enterprise women I spoke with use the verb ayudar, or "to help" (in both English and Spanish conversations) – and while they give their husbands and male relatives credit for much of the production portion of the farming enterprise – they see themselves as integral to the success and continuation of their enterprises. They do not see valuing their male relatives' work as reason to devalue their own. They are proud of their kin-based collaboration. Liliana and others believe that

some women are better suited for this type of work, while others get more "stressed" by it. When speaking with daughters, I found that they see both the "ventajas and desventajas" (*advantages and disadvantages*) of working as a marketera for their family farming enterprise. They can be burdened by the time commitment (often 16-hour days at the marketplace during the season); however, they also see it as a way to "help" their family and a pleasant way to work in that they do not have to "work for someone else." They can establish their buyer networks and interact with people outside their family on a regular basis and even practice English. They can make money while also taking care of their obligation to their family's collective economic well-being.

From "Ama de Casa" to "Agribusiness Manager"

Within a household in rural southern Guanajuato, women are expected to be in charge of particular gendered tasks, or practices like quehaceres (*household chores*). This organization of household work was especially the norm in the sixties and seventies when the older generation of the women interviewed were growing up. In the U.S., these women created alternatives to harvesting someone else's crop and to staying at home unemployed. They created and used alternative practices – which I discuss as critical to their mētis – as they navigated a new rural political economic landscape. Isabel is one of these women whose stories reflect a changing perspective on what women need to learn beyond the quehaceres that she was taught:

> Yo nací en 1960. Entonces mi mamá era de allí. Conocía [a] mi papá de un rancho vecino… se enamoraron y todo. Fuimos cinco hermanos. Pero mi papá la dejó. Entonces mi mamá tuvo que ir a trabajar, entonces yo me quedé en mi rancho con mi abuelita. Mi mamá se fue con otros hermanos para la capital porque allá había más trabajo.

> Entonces yo me quede allí y fue donde me case con él, y no tengo mucho que contarle porque [a] la escuela fui poco, porque [en] aquel entonces, casi no te educan. Para limpiar la casa, que te vas a casar, que hazte ésto, a uno no [lo] prepararon para otra cosa más que casarse. Entonces el, lo que viene ahorita al caso [es] que ahorita ya estoy con mi esposo en el trabajo. Por eso se me dificulta porque no fui a la escuela. Si fui, fui a la primaria y fui a dos años de la secundaria, pero uno se casa y nunca piensa que vas a hacer … Entonces me casé y me vine, el me arregló. El arregló por medio del campo. Él se venía y me case con él, y me esperó. No como no arreglo.
> *I was born in 1960 so my mom was from there. She knew my dad who was from a neighboring town… They fell in love and everything. We were five siblings. But my dad left my mom. So my mom had to go to work and then I stayed in the village with my grandmother. My mom went with my other siblings to the capital because there was more work [there]. So, I stayed there and that was where I got married to my husband and I don't have much to tell you about because I went to school very little, because back then they really didn't educate you. To clean the house, you are going to get married, do this, they don't prepare you for anything else but to get married. So, what comes in this case now is that I am with my spouse at work. For this reason, I have a hard time because I didn't go to school. Yes, I went to primary school and I went for two years of middle school, but when one gets married, you never think in what you will do…. So, I got married and came here. He fixed my status. He got papers by way of working in the country (as a farmworker). He would come [to visit] and I got married to him [in Mexico] and he said, 'Wait for me'.*

When they moved to the U.S., their work expectations, responsibilities, and routines changed. This was true for the men and the women in the binational kin group. Not only did women take on new roles, but some of the men began to share in some of the household tasks that are seen as "women's work" in their village in Mexico. Janet takes pride in how her husband has changed. After we have a lunch of hot dog tacos, she asks me in English, "You like my husband's cooking? Want to hear something funny? My father prefers my husband's cooking. I would offer him a taco and he would act like

he wasn't hungry and then ask if Chuey cooked it and then when I said yes, he would eat 6!" While this re-organization of household work does not seem to be the norm for the group, most of the couples do express the fact that their perspectives on gendered spheres of activities and shared responsibilities have shifted since they immigrated to the U.S. and gained their positions in the FFV industry as family farm managers, marketeras, rancheros, and the like. Some women would prefer not to spend so much time working on enterprise activities, because they like cooking and would prefer the chance to avoid the stress that comes with farming family enterprises, as we will hear later.

To farm for the FFV industry, enterprise flows – in the fields, in the farm office and between them – must be well managed. This coordination of enterprise activities requires that multiple people stay in constant communication. Yaneli linked her arrival to the beginning of her family's farming enterprise in southern Appalachia:

> Yo me vine en los 90's y él ya había hecho una aplicación por mí, e hizo el proceso y todo. Por entonces, ya mi esposo empezó a traer más dinero y entonces decidimos hacer una compañía. Cuando vino, él no [lo] hacía por su propia cuenta, no hasta que yo llegue. Después fue cuando el empezó a hacer sus cosas por su propia cuenta, sembró él solo y yo empecé a manejar el negocio.
> *I came in the 90's and he had already done an [immigration, LPR] application for me and did the process and everything. By then, my husband had started to make more money so we decided to create a company. When I came, he wasn't working for himself, not until after I arrived. That was when he began to do things by himself, he grew things by himself and I started to manage the business.*

Notice the critical phrase, "we decided." Yaneli and her husband developed their farming livelihood enterprise strategy together. Collectively as a kin-based group, Yaneli and her kin organize their farming enterprises through coordination and gendered work realms,

yet do not consider their cross-gender relations as asymmetric, or hierarchical. They characterize their enterprises as group work and assert themselves as equal contributors. Their work is critical to value creation for farming family fresh-market produce enterprises.

"Moving" Fresh-market Produce: Value Creation of Marketeras

Andrea Torres González and her sixty-year old mother, Beatriz – whom everyone on the market knows as tia (*aunt*) – were successful Mexican-American marketeras in southern Appalachia. They managed the sales and other enterprise logistics for their family's produce enterprise. During the harvest season, they rented three stalls at the regional (terminal) spot market. They have been growing here for twenty years and their enterprise now grows on approximately 70 acres of leased land. They sold from this farmers' market produce stall and sell wholesale from their packing house, about an hour south of the market. As far as she knew, her family grew in Mexico but mostly to eat, not on the commercial scale they grow today. When I asked Andrea if farming was a family tradition, she replied, "I guess. Brought up doing it."

As the birds sang from the rafters above in the metal shed, Andrea drove the forklift, re-arranging the pallets stacked eight high, moving them from one section of the stall to another. Meanwhile, Beatriz opened white boxes of bright yellow straight-neck squash and then – once the boxes of yellow squash were opened and set up at an angle so that buyers could see inside them without bending over – she moved on to organizing the boxes of plump, red tomatoes which, Andrea told me later, they needed to sell soon or they would lose all their market value. At the marketplace, Beatriz spent much of her

time on the marketplace culling out the produce “with age” or the decaying pieces from the boxes while Andrea managed the exchange relations and transactions.

Marketeras like Beatriz are skilled produce graders. Grading (also called sorting and “quality control”) is an economic activity that helps determine value for a produce farming enterprise. Often tomato and vegetable harvesters pack produce boxes in the field while harvesting or after harvesting at the packing house. There are various strategies for this in terms of grouping produce by size, shape, and color. The marketeras must maintain their perishable merchandise as best they can, since their income depends on it. To do this, they “cull” decaying produce from the boxes that fieldworkers have packed. The longer a box of produce sits on the marketplace, the more often a marketera must look through the box and pull out any decaying produce since that decay will quickly spread to the rest of the produce, rendering the whole box worthless. Once this happens, the enterprise loses money attributing to the already narrow profit margins of small- and mid-scale capital-intensive conventional FFV farming enterprise. If the marketeras cull too much produce, the enterprise also loses money. Grading (or sorting) produce is one example of a creative, productive action that reflects comercio mētis – a practical knowledge and skill they improve at only with time. Buyers will not purchase from enterprises that they believe are bad at grading, and some even link lack of quality grading practices with immoral enterprise dealings.

Often daughters are put in charge of marketing, due to language difficulties for the immigrant parent generation (as native Spanish speakers) and the ability of young mothers to bring their children to the marketplace with them. Depending on the enterprise strategy, daughters or wives will make sure the perishable commodities are sold either

from their homes or "on the market" at marketplaces like state-run farmers' markets or flea markets. The responsibility and job of figuring out how to "get rid of" or sell their perishable commodities at the best price possible – so that they can sustain their enterprise year after year – can be the most difficult task of them all.

This is a difficult task these days especially since they (as low- to mid-volume fresh-market produce suppliers) have to compete with corporations who are supplying high volumes and working precisely within the logics of the industry. The FFV industry is said to be a "buyer's market." Small- to mid-scale fresh fruit and vegetables farming enterprises are called "price takers" as opposed to price negotiators. The widespread use and acceptance of this term is both a social critique and yet, subtly naturalizes the unequitable marketshare arrangements.

At the marketplace during harvest season, Andrea was on her feet, attending to customers as they drove down the "local farmers' line" of produce stalls from before sunrise to after sunset, throughout the spring, summer, and fall. The produce buying customers had to buy in bulk in this section of the market, so they came in large trucks and vans of various styles. FFV industry actors admired the proclivity of marketeras like Andrea for "moving" produce or selling produce quickly so that they get the best market price, putting value back into their family-based enterprise. Her ability to "move" (sell) produce and "read" the marketplace circulations was possible because of the comercio mētis she and her mother developed over the course of their fifteen years of experience.

Enterprises as sites of redistributive flows can create the conditions necessary for value creation. To create value for and through an enterprise, marketeras must manage trade relations and timings to successfully complete their work and keep their family-

based enterprises sustainable. Janet has worked as a marketera for so long that she began to sell FFV for other farming enterprises. They tell her the price they want and she gets paid commission, maybe two dollars or three dollars a box. For example, she gestured to a pallet with about 25-pound tomato boxes stacked on it. “A diez dollars cada caja. Pero jugamos con el precio” (*At twelve dollars each box, but we play with the price*). Having an early harvest can be quite an advantage in her marketplace that gets saturated with fruits and warm season vegetables in July, August, and September. She told me that playing with the prices when selling produce can mean that you offer package deals. She does this on a smaller basis for instance when she sells sunflower bundles to her produce buyers for less than she charges everyone else. These little gestures maintain exchange relations.

She explained that being able to offer a variety of produce is what allows venders to control the market. To offer a diversity of products to her customers, Janet also took a few walks around the marketplace to buy produce to resell at her stall throughout the day. Marketeras buy and sell from each other mostly in cash and through informal credit – or as David Graeber would call it “virtual money,” or a running tally (2011). That year, she was selling for everyone in her family. In past years, she was able to maintain a separate inventory to make money from re-sale for her own use. But her family needed her to pool all the money from sales to continue since they had two bad harvesting years in a row. Marketeras constantly pay attention to “como va el movimiento” (*how the movement or sales are going).*

Another example of comercio mētis involves market prices. To “move produce” marketeras have to “read” the market, find out the “going rate” and “line up” buyers.

Managing the circulation of resources is key to any enterprise but, especially, to those which buy and sell highly perishable products. “Reading the market” is part of how they make sense of market cycles and assess their risk as enterprisers, assessing when and what to sell and buy from and to whom for how much. The fruits and vegetables that their family enterprise produce enter the marketplace at different times during the season since the enterprise attempts to plant and harvest their crops sequentially. They do this so that they can continuously supply their buyers throughout the season and improve their chances at a reliably positive revenue flow.

Communicating with the harvesters as well as customers is key to a marketera’s job. She must consistently manage supply and demand, coordinating timings of delivers and shipments. As one farmer in southern Appalachia said, “You have to have it sold before you put the seed in the ground.” This means that during the “off season” marketeras have to arrange their harvest season sales. The FFV customers either come to pick up pre-orders and to pay, or to check out what potential merchandise they could buy. Many of these customers buy produce at wholesale prices on the marketplace and then, resell it at stands or in corner shops, or to restaurants to whom they distribute. This is one of the reasons why selling produce quickly is important, as well as why trustworthiness (reputation) is a crucial element for these marketeras to maintain for their farming enterprises. According to Carmela, a farming enterprise woman, “I think it’s like a mutual respect. It has to be like that between the vendors and the farmers. People will take advantage of you not being there.” This is Carmela’s understanding of a fundamental exchange practice that she believes must be present when leaving one’s produce with a vender at a marketplace where they will sell it on commission. Without trust and reliable

communication, no one will buy perishable commodities from you or ask you to sell theirs.

Virginia smiled from ear to ear when she looked at her five-year old daughter, playing by her feet. Virginia was a marketera I met while doing fieldwork. She wore the market attire for women and most men: pants, sneakers and a baseball cap. Her husband arrived as Virginia and I talked in her farmers' market produce stall. She told me he was only thirteen when he first moved to the U.S. and had been here at least twenty-five years. She was in her late thirties and had been in the U.S. for almost fourteen years. She liked this job, as a marketera, because she could manage a lot of it from anywhere on the phone. She gestured to her daughter when she said this. I realized in this moment that her enterprise and livelihood schedule allowed her to – almost simultaneously – both work for an income and do "kin work" – like caring for her daughter, for instance.

This moment of organizing a sale and delivery tomatoes involves management of multiple roles, responsibilities, and enterprise flows. As she worked to make a financial gain – on what most would describe as a capitalist enterprise of selling tomatoes for more than she bought them – she contributed to nonclass projects and to relations that are not valued by monetary gain or social capital. What was most important to her, she told me with a smile, was that she could work for herself and set her own schedule, at least as much as the enterprise activities permitted.

They used to be "ambulantes" (*mobile*) at the farmers' market – meaning that they would sell from "la linea" (*the line).* With this comment, she pointed in front of her to the dirt lot where people had umbrellas and trucks and were selling there instead of the booths. She said that those folks (if they are like she was) picked and sold seasonally. She

was now "estable" (*stable*) and rented her "puesto" (*market stand*) all year. Her only expenses for the "negocio" *(enterprise)* were the product which she bought from farmers – who sent it over in semi-tractor trailers or they would pick up in their "camioneta" (*truck*) – and the rental cost of the puesto which was $140 a week. She brought food from home every day which saved her a lot of money, she added. She explained that you could rent space on la linea for about $10 per day but you would not sell as much product.

From what I observed, trailers routinely came to the Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Florida farmers' markets from those same southeastern states, as well as other states like Michigan, Mississippi, Virginia, and Kentucky to both buy from and sell to produce venders. The marketeras like Virginia may buy one or two pallets of produce, depending on the market price. At Virginia's market, the work rhythm is distinct. She believed that the market activity came in waves. As she explained, commerce started up as early as four in the morning. This was when a lot of the larger volume buyers came through. She believed they received the best quality at that time of day, and they could drive back to where they came from to sell the produce that same day. Then, it died down around seven or eight in the morning, and it picked up for a few hours. Some days she would be gone by one in the afternoon – especially if she sold out of her product.

She bought early too. This was one of her strategies. Another strategy she practiced was diversifying her offerings, like Janet. She bought from growers and venders sometimes, especially the potatoes, zucchini, and squash she sold along with tomatoes. She used this diversification strategy even though most of her contacts were in the tomato industry. She explained that she did this because the growers she planned to buy from were not harvesting yet and she must continue to make sales. She and/or her husband

would travel to other markets in the region to buy produce to resell when it was not in season in their area. This was a common practice. These are the ways that commodities circulate and exchange relations shape circulations of the fresh-market produce industry.

Virginia said when the market price was good enough (i.e., demand was high) then she would sometimes buy a whole trailer of tomatoes. Normally, it was "una venta lenta" *(slowly selling).* Supply was high when we spoke so the "encarga" (*the load)* had been one or two pallets. The "duenos" (*owners of the crops in the fields)* called them with a price, and they decided how much they wanted to buy while they were talking over the phone. She told them to bring this much or that much for her. Or she called them to ask about their crop to see if they (her and her husband) could buy some to then re-sell it at her stand or to ship out to buyers via her stand site. She said that once they made enough money in the linia and a booth became available, they started to rent and establish a more year-round enterprise. She credited their consistent exchange relationships with buyers.

They moved up from the linia to where they were by watching the trucks and seeing who bought what and for how much, she explained. She was reading the market through the traffic. Then they would approach the trucks and say something like, "Look I've got this product." Most of the buyers at this market came in and bought boxes to repartir (*distribute or break up into smaller retail unites*) and sell retail at "estandas" (*make-shift vending sites on the side of the road)* or sell to restaurants or use in restaurants or take and sell to tiendas. They had been in their market stall "estables" for five years or so now.

They also sold "paletas" (*pallets*) when they had them to sell. Pallets are used to transform a large number of boxes (the number depends on the size of the box) into one

unit (a pallet to sell or buy). People then can buy large volumes as pallets, or tractor-trailer loads, which are equivalent to a certain number of pallets, which are equivalent to a certain number of boxes of a certain weight and grade. There was a pile of them in the back-left corner of their market stall. The back-right corner had a small enclosed room with air-conditioning where there was a window for seeing out front. This was where they keep a small refrigerator and she would leave her daughter to nap. What you did not see was her cooler space which she rented elsewhere on the market property. The tomato boxes were stacked on pallets, and on the front left they had their tomatoes on display – and behind this display angled so that people could see into the boxes. There was a small table where they had a small cash register that she later told me they did not use. Also, on the table, there was a really big calculator, a notebook, and a receipt book. She used this calculator to do some calculations for me as we talked.

She told me that a pallet has 72 long boxes or 70 short boxes. The short case (or box) pallets would be 1,750 pounds and the long would be 1,800 pounds. They used boxes as their price unit though. This was instead of pounds, because they "move" higher volumes. This is unlike folks who sell from roadside stands or more temporary spots like that because they sell "retail" or by the pound. Here in the market, she told me, it was "pura caja" (*just boxes, or wholesale*). They make about $1 or $2 on each box. I asked her what her highest sale and highest purchase price have been. This is really hard to say, she responded. Then she explained the market (experienced through the market price) goes up and down, and you have to call most buyers on the phone to see what the price is.

For Sara, being a marketera means being part of a marketplace community – a community of enterprisers with roughly the same schedule and similar "ag" lifestyles.

Many farming families think that sustaining their enterprise necessitates constant availability for customers and enterprise operations. For this reason, working in perishable commodity production means that workers will be called upon for overtime schedules (but not pay) for large chunks of time during the harvesting season when there is something to sell. This is why enterprisers at the marketplace know each other and their customers so well and marketplace communities and cultures exist. Vendors are present at their marketplace stall almost all day, almost every day for the entire harvest season, and sometimes longer if they do re-sale to supplement what their family grows. This is, of course, then accompanied by "down time" which most families identify as a month or two at the start of the year when they actually spend a lot of time playing "catch up" on paperwork and regulation requirements.

This demanding schedule helps explain why relatives are the ones who continue working in farming enterprises and sustain the demanding lifestyle of the livelihood. Work time is an obligation to kin. Maribel was a daughter to immigrant parents who had continued their tradition as a farming family but had begun to grow and market a diverse variety of vegetables instead of grains and animals. She was born in a rancho in the Bajío and came to the U.S. when she was fourteen years old, about eighteen years ago. She spoke to me in Spanish and to most customers in English. Working as her family's marketera meant "más responsibilidad" (*more responsibility)*, according to her.

Her schedule was from four am until eight pm, and it took her about thirty minutes to drive to the marketplace from her home. During the harvest season when her family needed another "picker" she came to the marketplace at four am to make some sales, "line up buyers," and set up the display. Then around eleven am her sister came to

the marketplace to take over sales. Her sister brought her daughters if they were not in school, and Maribel headed about an hour east to where her family rented farmland. There she picked until around 4:00 pm. She ate with her family who was also there harvesting and then went back to the marketplace to relieve her sister who then went home with her daughters to make dinner. Maribel then closed up the produce stand for the night and drove home to arrive around 9:00 pm. She would be awake by 3:00 am to do it all again the next day.

Maribel said that they just planted a small amount that they could eat and definitely sell at the marketplace, nothing more. Due to health issues, her father and brother could not do the manual labor they would need them to do to grow a higher volume. Her mother and her would pick into the night sometimes with flashlights. They would get dizzy from spending so much time bent over in the fields. It was just two years ago when they were growing a lot. But they had to down scale, because they had a few seasons (years) of low market prices – of just four dollars or five dollars a box which is well under production cost – and they could not find any workers. And even if they did find the workers, they would have lost the money if they were to have paid them. She told me that she thought most of the farm work crews that came from Florida came to work with particular rancheros (*farmers*) and did not want to work for a low volume enterprise like theirs, because the farmworkers would not have a chance to make as much money. The more produce that must be picked the more harvesters stand to make on the piece rate system. She said to me with a serious face in English, “We’ve been planting less and less every year and now we plant the least possible. No one wants to work in the fields. No one.” She then looked up at me, after inspecting a crate full of cucumbers that

are supposedly all a bit too big for the buyers' desire and said, "Imagine, spending all that time growing this and packing it and not being able to sell it."

Marketera Work on the Farm: Farm Offices and Packing Houses

As many of the marketeras indicated in the section above, not all marketera work has to be done on the marketplace. Women in fresh-market produce farming families work in many sites, like the marketplace possibly, and/or on the phone, in the farm truck, farm fields, farm office, home office, or packing house. This chapter does not discuss women working in packing houses, or re-pack facilities. After the globalized feminization of labor (Mills 2003) and reorganization of the globalized agri-food system (Watts and Goodman 1997; Bonanno et a. 1994; Bonanno and Cavalcanti 2011), women tended to work in fruit and vegetable packing houses and repack facilities (Collins 1995; Barndt 2002; Bain 2010). Their other extensive contributions to the globalized agri-food system need to be reimagined and re-examined (Sachs 2010).

Most of the women who work as marketeras in marketplaces are not the wives of the persons farming the produce. They are somehow related as daughters or nieces, for instance. They are part of the larger kin group. Many of the women who are partners with their husbands in their farming enterprise work from a variety of locations on a variety of tasks, as is common in "farm women" studies (Barlett et al. 1999). This section continues with the topic of marketera work by focusing on women's work experiences that take place outside the physical marketplace where they are also managing enterprise flows and negotiating enterprise relations.

These women's work activities are critical to the existence of their kin-based farming enterprises. In fact, some of these women see their collaborative work with their husbands as the reason why their vegetable farming enterprises exist and continue. They, as industry actors, are part of the social changes taking place in commercial conventional agriculture in southern Appalachia, as chapter three showed and this chapter supports. Hermalinda, a marketera and farming family mother, explained her take on this social change:

> Primordialmente no considera que tiene… Es parte de agro-business. Y eso es lo que quiere uno hacer, la transición nada más del arado. Sino que todo eso de lo que hacemos, la oficina, la computadora, todo es parte de lo que es ser agricultor. Pero la gente de antes no lo ve así. Nosotros éramos cinco, seis años atrás. Decir no hay que aprender todo, pero hay muchas cosas que tienen que ver con la operación afuera del campo. Si la operación, todo lo que es la agricultura, si quiere tener eso, tiene que tener un componente afuera … de no… si no… No.
> *Basically, they don't consider that they have… It's part of agro-business. And that is what someone wants to do, the trasition of the plow only. All what we do, the office, the computer, all is part of being a farmer. But people from before don´t see it like that. We were five, six years ago. You can say that you don't have to learn everything, but there are lots of things that have to do with the operation outside of the field. Yeah the operation, all of it is agriculture. If you want to have this you have to have an outside component. If not, then no. (You can't have a farming operation.)*

Running a contemporary FFV farming enterprise is complicated, as Hermalinda explained above. Carmela, a cousin of Hermalinda's, told me about what she had been doing this week at their packing shed and in the farm office, during a busy part of the tomato season as a family FFV farming enterprise woman in southern Appalachia.

> They just come… I don't know if they are unloading right now. Just count the boxes and then… If its tomato, we have 5 or 6 different pallets. We have green, red, orange, light pink, and then the sizes, los ponemos todos separados (*we separate them*) and then whenever, una pallet se llena *(when a pallet gets full)* we put tape around and put a label on it. What it is and the size. Then my nephew mete al (*sticks it in the*) cooler… Then depending if the trailer is going to come and pick it up. We just leave it más pa' alla (*over there*), near the warehouse. Then, se lo subimos a los semis. *They are put into the semi-tractor trailers.*

Along with managing the packing house and some of the farm recordkeeping, one of her jobs was to find a buyer for the matured tomatoes they could not ship off to a buyer outside their microregion. This was her reflection on one of the first times she went on her own to sell the tomatoes that did not make the long-distant shipment.

> I haven't picked up the pallets yet. Martin (my husband) told me to go around to los restaranes (*the restaurants*) and I mean it's good tomato. It's good Roma, big jumbo. Pero el problema es que está bien (*But the problem is that it is really*) like pink not roja (*red)*, but … and nobody wants it. So, I went and sold them for $6 and so one restaurant bought me 30 (*boxes*) and the other one 15. I just had one box que les enseñe (*that I would show them*). I'm going to go get them later. I went to Cinco de Mayo and Fiesta ("Mexican restaurants") around here. I don't go far. And then that money, if I sell boxes to los restoranes, I get to keep the money. Well me and my brother-in-law, the one over there fixing the ATV. It's because we work on the warehouse together. We count boxes and move pallets. We do all the work me and him. Well, I was supposed to do that, but I don't know how to drive the forklift, yet. And, I told him to do that and I would give him half the money, so he is happy. He is still in high school and doesn't work off the farm or nothing.

Carmela was a niece of Celia. Carmela was just beginning to work in her family farming enterprise since she married her husband whose parents began it. Celia was another farming family woman of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group. Celia

taught Carmela some about recording inventory, like the shipping/receiving logs. Carmela also did the payroll. Since she was fluent in English and learned Quickbooks, she taught this software program to Celia. Celia told me, "Sé Quickbooks, pero no del computador, no." (*I know about Quickbooks but not computers.*) Celia was like Carmela (or Carmelita, as Celia called her), in that she also managed the warehouse for their mid-size tomato and vegetable farming enterprise in southern Appalachia. She explained the large-volume exchange process to me, or what happened when they sold their produce.

> They come here. We are selling to some people from Florida, Best Time Tomato. And viene un trailer (*a trailer comes*). We also sell to J. Graham and this other guy a few hours east and we llevamos (*carry the load to them*). The connection with Prime Time in Florida came from my uncle. I don't know. He talked to Charo, my husband. You can make some money sending it to Florida. I didn't know before we started. The trailer que viene (*that comes*), we have to pay for it not them. I didn't know that either, but it's their trailer (*truck*). But we pay for it. I guess because its far but I mean it's going to be their product. That's weird. I found out because the other day, I guess Jorge (her brother-in-law) le dijo a uno de los (*told one of the*) owners, 'Yeah tell your driver to come over here. We are going to have a full load.' This and that, and we didn't. We only had half a load porque (*because*) it rained. That's why. So, then Charo, was like no. We lost like $500 allí (*there).*

These women manage market relations and assess exchange relations and distribution practices. These enterprise activities require a wideranging set of knowledge and skills, comercio mētis that changes as the FFV industry evolves. They also are often in charge of the enterprise accounting, or the paperwork and computer work that is necessary to comply with regulations (e.g., GAP and Food Safety) necessary to maintain farming enterprises. I will discuss these regulations – and the enterprise work that they require – later in the chapter.

Food Commodity Paths and Grooved Channels: Value, "Specs," and Market Access

Within a food commodity system, producers organize their livelihoods so that they can "move" produce "from farm to table" as quickly as possible to receive – what they believe to be – the highest possible market-value. In Marx's terms (1867), actors must transfer the tomato (in this case) from the production sphere to the circulation sphere – what I am thinking of here as distribution-marketing – to the realization sphere, or consumption in global commodity chain terms. In venders' minds, as they watch produce "age," their perception of that food commodity shifts from prioritizing market value to use-value. This is clear in the practice of farmers giving away their "aged" produce at the end of their marketing shift, because they perceive it as constantly losing market-value while the use-value still remains – to a temporal point.

Anthropologists like Stephen Gudeman argue that economy can be understood as a whole made of four distinct, yet interacting, "value domains" (2001). While I do not believe the analytic separation of this action, meanings, and subject-actors is fruitful for this study, I do follow him in believing that "economic practices are always situated in a value context" which is complex and interacting (Gudeman 2001:5). In this study, I am also utilizing the ideas of market value (or exchange-value, price) and use-value to encourage a reimagining of equitable agri-food system practices and policy that would increase marketing-distribution channels, not minimize them. In many studies and much of the public discourse, value is reduced to market value, which is understood within a short-term timescape that does not suite a more diverse, dense, nor equitable agri-food system.

Nancy Munn studied the values of – and made by – the kula chain in Gawa showing how value changes as objects circulate to create a kind of spacetime (1977, 1983, 1986, 1992). In this case, the chain itself is a generator of social institutions, exchange relations, particular timespace, value creation practices, and logics (Munn 1992). Importantly, her work challenges the "gift/commodity dichotomy" (Graber 2001:45). In this gift-based exchange – and thus, value – system, food (as a perishable good) was considered as part of a lower "level of value" than nonperishable items. This perceived temporal limit or "shelf life" of food plays a role in how societies judge, value, produce, and trade food, especially when treated as a commodity. When food is judged just as another "timely asset" to extract (Ferry and Limber 2008), the recognition and possible operationalizing of multiple, simultaneous values is obscured by a form of capital-centric thinking (Gibson-Graham 2006).

Transactions or exchange relies on systems of value, and logics to justify those values and the power relations that come with them. The story of the tomato in the U.S. is a prime example of a food defined by multiple cultural meanings and changing symbolic value (Mintz 1986; Cook 1991; Watson and Caldwell 2005). It went from being regarded as "sour trash" in the early 1800's to becoming one of the highest value food commodities in the 2000's. This story shows that collectives decide value. In the context of our now thickly globalized agri-food system, social scientists have shown that food safety regulations are now a deciding factor in terms of perishable food commodity market-value (Nestle 2003; Busch 2004). U.S. fruit and vegetable industry actors use a certain logic of value represented in "specs" or regulatory speculations. These are enforced (in market terms) by both the state (through agencies like the USDA) and by

produce buyers, who occupy a power position within most asymmetrical relations between produce sellers and buyers, as food commodities move through exchange systems made up of "corporate trails" (Barndt 2002), "paths" (Freidberg 2004) or "grooved channels" created by infrastructure (Geertz 1978; Bestor 2004).

Andrew, an industry actor, shared his frustrations with the industry certification process, offering ever more support for a continued search for new possibilities for redistribution within the agri-food system:

> Had to pass a certain amount of standards of food safety on a point score. Non-education, non-research driven, only driven by the industry to cover their ass to be honest. What I do is help the farmers pass their third-party inspection according to what hoop the industry wants the farmers to go through. There are like five 3rd party auditing groups. Most of them are going through the USDA it's called enhanced harmonizing group. The cost is around $1,300. Limiting where building industrial agriculture and not helping the smaller farmer. That is a big barrier. The way that the NS department of ag and extension have dealt with that is that we have come up with templates for farmers so they can write their food safety plan easily and there is a $600 stipend to reduce the cost. "You are looking at annually $1,000 before they even start farming. Everyone wants a piece of the pie. Everybody wants the farmer to put a little dab of money in there to keep their jobs going on the marketing end of it. So, you wind up… You have to decide, is the fifteen-different people want to charge me to market local foods… oh we are helping the farmers. Yeah as long as the farmers pay you. That causes road block for small farmers because your big large farmers are getting all the advertising because they can afford to pay for that marketing and all those tail markets. Yeah but you are diluting the farmer's ability to get to a market if there are six tailgate markets in every little tiny community. Nobody thinks about that. Oh, we are helping the farmers out. I had a man calling me insisting that I find him a farmer to come to his flea market. Then you have to pay for that [chance to access a market]. Most of the farmers that are doing that are diluted. Now they are having to pay somebody to go to a tailgate market. Gas, they are not getting a premium except

> retail instead of wholesale. They have to pay someone to go, the market fee and it's a risk, are they going to sell?

It seems that in the current agri-food system, farmers are setup to take every cost created along the "commodity chain" with losses by both the shipper and the buyer being taken out of the farmer's pay.

These produce buyer "specs" are based on capitalist logic of externalized costs which in part can be seen though the (unethical) creation of food waste built into this exchange system. Many produce farming families find ways to make use of the perishable produce they grow – utilizing "paths" that are alternative to dominant distribution-marketing channels. For instance, they use the produce to provision their relatives, or gift their relatives with the produce to support their food service enterprises, like loncheras (or *food trucks)* – some of which are mobile traveling field to field and others which are stationary in operation only on the weekends. Local market actors – dealing in lesser volumes – can, however, recognize the use-value of perishable foods which have been (deemed by the industry) as hollowed out of market-value.

Enterprising farming family women seek out and create distribution-marketing channels that can be thought of as alternative to the dominant industrialized capitalist agri-food system channels. With these activities, these women thicken local food economies (Gibson-Graham 2006). They think of themselves as practicing both capitalist trading and food provisioning which creates more and more diversified exchange relations and a bolstering of community economies – resulting in dense and more sustainable exchange networks. Even when "fresh-market" produce is as perfect as it can be in terms of value determined by "specs," the market value still may be low due to the volatile, high supply-low demand capitalist system moments. At these times, marketeras

will tell you that the commodity market, “No tiene precio” (*It doesn’t have a [good] price*) or simply, “No hay precio” (*There is no [good] price*). However, it is important to notice that they do not say that the food commodity has no value. They or others can still eat the food.

I believe this is also the point of alternative food movement practices like “farm to table” marketing campaigns, the practice of realizing tailgate marketplaces, and community supported agriculture marketing-models. Though the farming families with whom I studied mostly did not participate in these forms of community economy – due in part to the fact they are conventional not organic producers – they practiced alternative distribution-marketing thinking as well. They figured out how to sell their “aged” produce direct to customers and create distribution-marketing paths that would benefit the rural community economies which they were engaging in within the global agri-food system. These enterprising farming family women – and the practices and relations they cultivate – could contribute to a new logic for the global agri-food system, and new possibilities for redistribution.

The underbelly of the cultural politics of food (and for that matter eating) are diverse and complex in a globally integrated, agri-food system like the one we all participate in (Watson and Caldwell 2005). Though neoliberal agricultural inequities seem insurmountable today, there are structural reasons why smaller volume fruit and vegetable producers (like farming families in places like southern Appalachia) face market access barriers. One might imagine that the large-scale distributors (also called produce brokers, or packing, re-packing or processing facilities) meet their supply quotas (set by their buyers) through the aggregation of produce from numerous small-scale

farming enterprises. When discussing this assumption with one fifth generation tomato grower and agricultural industry consultant in the Carolina Hill Country, he told me that this was no longer the case, and pointed to which barriers we could target to improve this:

> Not at all. Not any more. That is what we were doing in the 60's and 70's. For various reasons, nonsupport by the government, nonsupport by the community particularly. But the big issue is that a lot of the smaller farmers now are having to sell to a big commercial person that are set-up … like the local re-pack for instance. They have their processing facility. They are processing tomatoes from Florida trucked up here, or from Alabama. Or whatever because they have a facility that has been inspected and they are depending on whatever the re-pack house wants to pay them for that. Most everybody are learning how to field pack on their own. Because there are 1 million ways to sell the product. The grocery stores, some of them are trying to break down the barriers. So if you call our regional grocery store chain, you have it packed correctly and a food safety inspection, then they will buy straight from the farmer.

Women in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group strategically market their produce by creating distribution-marketing channels so that they can sell at least a portion of what their family farming enterprise produces direct to the consumers. In doing this, I would argue, they also strengthen community economy. Gabriela, for example, has a strategy that is both familiar to rural families of the Carolina Hill Country and of the Mexican Bajío. She is in her twenties and been in the U.S. for six years. She has a five-year-old and a one-year-old for whom she cares while her husband works outside of the house. For this reason, she is busy much of the time with their car though she expected to take on more responsibilities once they got older. She described her current part in their enterprise like this:

> Soy ama de casa. Me dedico a ama de casa y [a] ayudarle mi esposo en lo que puedo. Luego [él] vende tomates o

> chiles, o pepino, cajas, y yo me voy luego a la pulga a venderlas. A veces voy no tan seguido. [La pulga] es cada semana. Hay una que se abre los jueves, todos los jueves [de] cada semana, y otra que se abre [los] viernes y sábado en diferente lugar. Pero casi nada más iba como una vez a la semana, pero no era a diario. Esta semana para él, la otra no. Era como cada vez que tenía harta caja. Así las vendía en vez de que se echaran a perder y [hubiera que] tirarlas. *I'm a stay-at-home mother. I dedicate myself to this and I help my spouse with what I can. Later, he sells tomatoes or chilies, or cucumbers, boxes, and I will go later to the flea market to sell them. Sometimes, I don´t go that often. [The flea market] is every week. There is one that opens on Thursday, every Thursday each week, and another one that opens on Fridays and Saturdays in a different place. But I was only going like once a week, and I was not going daily. This week for him and the next no. It was every time we had a lot of boxes. That way I was selling them, instead of letting them go bad and throwing them out.*

Women like Gabriela told me that they only sell about five to fifteen percent of the produce that their family farming enterprises produce. This five to fifteen percent is what will not "pass" for the USDA grade A standard at the packing house where they sell the majority of their produce. Since they grade their produce in the field, they put the lesser quality tomatoes (according to produce buyer industry specs) all into the same boxes. They also hold on to boxes full of graded produce (especially in the case of tomatoes) if the market-price at the packing house is very low. Gabriela and her cousin – like most of the enterprising farming family women I conducted research with – work together on the recordkeeping for all of these transactions and then find ways to sell the produce (mostly tomatoes) at a higher price than they could get from the packing house. Her cousin, Ruth, told me, "The most important part of this is that if it doesn't pass the quality for the warehouse then you don't throw it away. You sell it outside your house."

Ruth explained when and why accessing markets for produce is difficult for lower-volume, seasonal producers:

> Ya lo hicimos. Antes de vender allí, tratamos de que el rojo no se echara a perder. Vendía en los restaurantes. Pero nos dicen que ellos tienen sus compradores, año redondo, todo el año. Pero dice que "usted me puede vender ahorita. Me lo podía dar más barato, e iba estar mejor y fresco, pero en el tiempo en que usted tiene, ¿quién me va a vender? Cuando ustedes no tienen, quien me va a vender". Ese es el problema porque no podemos venderle nada más. El señor le puede comprar a los señores cuando nosotros no tengamos. Ya tiene el suyo quienes les venden todo el año. No íbamos a la ciudad, la capital del estado, a los estands. Si, porque no salía mucho rojo. Yo y Lupe, Lupe manejaba un troque grande y le ayudaba. Nos íbamos y vendíamos. Pero ya lo que pensamos, el tomate rojo es muy delicado. Si no vendes pronto…
> *We already did that. Before we would sell there, we tried so that the red wouldn't go bad. I sold to the restaurants. But, they told us they have year-round buyers, the whole year. But, they told us they have year-round buyers, the whole year. But he says, 'You can sell to me right now. You could give it to me cheaper, and it would be better and fresh, but in the time that you don't have any [to sell]. Who is going to sell to me? When you all don't have it, who is going to sell to me.' That is the problem why we cannot sell him anything else. He can buy from the other guys when we don´t have any. He's already got his who sells to him all year. We wouldn't go to the city, the capital of the state to [market] stands. Yeah because we didn't have that much red [left in the field to sell]. Me and Lupe, Lupe drove a big produce truck and I helped. We would go and we sold. But we were thinking, the red tomato is very delicate. If you don't sell it soon...*

This is now a classic problem for low- to mid-volume, stationary produce farming enterprises. This temporal limitation in terms of production (and thus supply) limits their access to markets in our globalized, year-round agri-food system. However, local, regional, federal, and/or international ("harmonization") policies also limit market access

for farming families – families like Lupe's who is Ruth's sister-in-law, and whom she mentioned above. A local official attempted to block Lupe's ability to sell her farm's produce from her house. The local official claimed that local ordinances forbid that kind of marketing in her area, since her farmland was not directly connected to her home property. After a year of negotiations with local officials, a search for local allies, and the construction of a paved road, Lupe was allowed to sell from outside her house. She told this story when she was in the middle of navigating this local barrier to market access:

> Ahora, yo vendo aquí, en la casa. Mira. El tomate no es contrato. Lo que vendemos al señor es verde. Rojo no. Entonces cuando mi esposo está piscando chile o algo y no alcanza piscar, se alcanza [a] hacer roja, unos cuantos. Entonces, antes se quedaba en el field. No le hacíamos nada y ahora pensamos diferente. Lo pensamos, le dije a mi esposo, "tráemela aquí". Yo pongo mi letrero, dice tomate fresco, local. Y viene mucha gente [a] compararme. Casi pura gente de edad que lo embota [embotella] y yo se los doy. Se imagina si yo le doy una caja de 25 libras, se la [voy] bajando a los 10 dólares. Usted sabe que en la tienda sola una libra [cuesta] 90, 99 centavos. Entonces mucha gente en este tiempo consume, y me compra todo de lo que tengo, y no se echan de perder. Lo vendo. Pero ahora tuve un problema porque me echaron el condado. El condado [me dijo que] ya no puedo vender ahorita porque según, me dijo la muchacha, que esta área está restringida. Según, no puedo vender. Le dije que yo sabía que si se permite cuando vendes menos de seis meses al año. Tú puedes vender en tu casa, afuera de tu casa, porque no es un negocio que vende mucho y no es un negocio en donde todos los días vendo. No, porque yo [solo] vendo cuando hay rojo. Fui a hablar con ella. No me quiso. No sí, se portó grosera, muy grosera conmigo. Entonces no pude arreglar nada con ella. Me hablaron de nuevo porque me dijeron que querían cosas … que me dijeron que en la casa no estaban bien. Arreglé lo que me pidió y vino a chequear que todo está bien. Me dijo que podía aplicar, pero no me garantizaba que pudiera. Entonces yo le dije, "es que, este… yo hago a la Food Safety". Me dijo no nos interesa eso y yo le dije "es mi forma de vivir." Tampoco nos interesa, me dijeron. Pues ahorita lo bueno es que ya había

terminado, ¿Verdad? Cuando ya sea junio, tengo un permiso o algo para vender. Entonces ya me dice que yo puedo vender.
Now, I sell here, at my house. Look. The tomato is not contracted. What we sell to the guy [broker] is green. Not the red. So, when my spouse is picking chile, or something and he can't pick all [the tomatoes] they become red, some of them. So, before they would just stay in the field. We didn't do anything with them and now we think differently. We think about it, I said to my husband, "Bring them to me here." I put up my sign, that says Fresh Local Tomatoes. And a lot of people come and buy them from me. Almost all elderly people who can them, and I give them to them. Imagine if I give you a twenty-five-pound box [of tomatoes], it would be coming in around ten dollars. You know that in the store just one pound will cost you 90, 99 cents. So, a lot of people right now consume [them] and they buy everything I have and they do not go bad. I sell them. But now I had a problem because the county threw me out [of business]. The county [told me] that I can't sell right now because according to a girl, who told me that the area is restricted. I cannot sell. I told her that I knew that it was permitted when you sell less than six months a year. You can sell in your house, outside your house because it is not a business in which I sell a lot and it is not a business in which I sell every day. No because I sell only when there are red [to sell]. I went to talk to her. She didn't want to see me. Yeah, she was mean, really mean to me. So, I couldn't fix it with her. They contacted me again because they would tell me they wanted things… they told me that the house wasn't good. I fixed what whe asked me for and she came to check that everything was okey. She told me that I could apply but she wouldn't guarantee that I would be able to [sell]. So, I told her, 'The thing is that I do Food Safety.' She told me that they aren't interested in that and I told her 'this is my way of [making a] living.' We aren't interested in that either, they told me. Well, now it is good because that has all finished, right? When it is June, I [will] have permission or something to sell. So, she tells me that I can sell.

Policy barriers can (and do) block market access leading to food waste and financial insecurities for farming families. U.S. agricultural policy is a variegated landscape with overlapping jurisdictions due to local ordinances, regional regulation,

national oversight and even international governance. Food Safety is the new regulatory (and marketing) issue for farming enterprises engaging in the global agri-food system and FFV industry "specs". In the U.S., Congress passed the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) on January 4, 2011. It constitutes the biggest change in terms of FDA-USDA regulation of the produce industry since the Cosmetic Act of 1938. It is the first "preventative" measure. FSMA set of laws and regulations includes the Produce Safety Rule (PSR) which concerns growers and packing enterprises. This is being phased in for three different size-based categories: small businesses (with $25,000 to $250,000 produce sales a year) need to be in compliance by January 27, 2020, small businesses ($250,00 to $500,000 in produce sales) need to be in compliance by January 28, 2019, and all other businesses (with sales over $500,000) need to already be in compliance by January 26, 2018[36]. Any enterprise that makes less than $25,000 a year and enterprises that sell direct to consumers are exempt.

Though these dates are set by the USDA, I found in my research that many buyers began to demand compliance (and the paperwork that proves it) in 2017. Complying with this regulation is far easier for large-scale enterprises who already have the staff to take care of this additional paperwork. Certain large-scale enterprises – like those who are part of the Florida Tomato Committee – have already "come into compliance" with Food Safety regulations of this type through investment in more industrialized "wash lines," high-tech measurement tools, and recordkeeping systems. Members of the Florida Tomato Committee were already "in compliance" by 2017, because these types of regulations were part of their T-GAP (Tomato-Good Agricultural Practices and

[36] There is also a set of on-farm water regulations that is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Management Practices) standards which are tied to the marketing order they created. Small to mid-volume producers face a lot more financial and logistical difficulty complying with these regulations. It may also mean for smaller volume producers that they must sell to packing or re-pack facilities instead of straight to their wholesale buyers. The results of this regulation suggest that there will be a further consolidation of the fresh-market produce industry. Industry actors believe there will be a narrowing of distribution-marketing channels which may ironically result in more food security and food safety issues.

This consolidation-inducing policy is distinct from GAP (Good Agricultural Practices), though some believe it is similar in particular ways. Here are some differences and similarities: GAP audits are believed to be buyer-driven while the PSR is a federal law that illustrates a new "risk-based approach" that aims to prevent food borne illnesses and is governed by inspections. The PSR is based on GAP. Private third-party companies conduct GAP audits, companies like Primus Labs as well as federal agencies like the USDA, Andrew mentioned earlier. The FDA and state departments of agriculture will conduct PSR inspections. GAP certification takes place when the farming enterprise chooses while the PSR inspection can take place at any time, unannounced.

For both GAP and the PSR, farming and packing enterprises must keep notebooks that document compliance and for the PSR this must include a complete "Food Safety Plan" that includes recall protocol. Both GAP and PSR require that a farm representative attend yearly trainings. For GAP, any crop can be audited while the PSR inspects the production and packing of raw agricultural commodities (RACs) that are not commercially processed further. There are contractors that will create the documentation

needed for farming enterprises to comply with both sets of these rules. The cost is usually a few thousand dollars. The enterprises, of course, also have to prove that they are doing what the notebook (documentation) has recorded. For the farming families with whom I conducted research, keeping the GAP and the FSMA records are responsibilities that the enterprising women manage, and not without difficulty.

As one may imagine, this level of documentation requires a certain fluency in English. Many of the women in the Guzmán- Ortega-Torres kin group do not consider themselves as conversant nor fluent in English. For this reason, they seek out help from agencies and kin to assist them with the creation of protocol, the documentation of this protocol, and the implementation of plans that these regulations require. Some of them have a decade or more of experience with GAP, however FSMA is causing them difficulties, as Miriam described below:

> Lo que pasa es que yo antes, Lupe y yo pasábamos. Yo le ayudaba con los "fieldes" [y con] los papeles no. Yo miraba que hacia eso... 'Oh es horrible eso.' Ella sabe el idioma y todo pues ella [lo] hacia, y yo me encargaba más del *field*… de que estuvieran limpios… y todo eso. Pero cuando se registraba la compañía y la mía ¿si me entiende? Entonces ya último me dijo "tienes que poner la tuya y yo voy a poner la mía". Y entonces fue cuando se me hizo bien difícil, entonces un año. Yo miraba a Lupe y entonces, me dijo "esto tienes que hacer.' Una muchacha me ayudó, me hizo el libro, pero nunca me explicaba. Yo le pagué y ella me hacía las cosas, pero quiero saber más. El estudiante de la universidad me lo explicó. Me iba explicando el libro y todo lo hacíamos juntos. Y fue cuando me pegó poquito más. Él estaba acabando su carrera con una visa y se venció su visa, y se tuvo que ir a México. Para mí, el problema es el idioma. Y fui a la escuela, pero no me pega. Dice que a lo mejor yo tenía que haber tenido [educación] cuando no tengo tantas preocupaciones en mi mente. Si porque te voy a decir una cosa. Este trabajo es muy estresante. En primer lugar, a veces está lloviendo todos los días y tú te preocupas. Y a veces que se enferma o

> hace demasiado calor. Hay tantas cosas que, si te estresan y tú sabes, a veces si se me hacen los días bien pesados.
> *What's up is that before, Lupe would do it and we would pass. I would help her in the fields and with the paperwork, no. I would watch how that was done. 'Oh, this is horrible.' She knows the language and everything so she did it and I put myself more in charge of the field… that they would be clean … and all that. But when the company was registered and mine, do you understand? So finally, she said to me 'you have to do yours and I will do mine,' And so that was when it became hard for me, so one year. I was watching Lupe and s, she she said to me 'this is what you have to do.' A girl helped me, she made me the book but she didn't explain anything to me. I paid her and she did things for me but I want to know more. The university student explained it to me. He would explain the book to me and everything we did together. I did it once I learned a bit more. He was here finishing his degree with a visa and his visa expired and he had to leave, to go to Mexico. For me, the problem is the language. And I went to school, but nothing stuck with me. They say that the best would have been if I had [done it] when I don't have so many worries in my mind. Yeah, because I am going to tell you something. This job is very stressful. In the first place, sometimes it is raining every day and you worry. And sometimes the plants get sick or it is way too hot. There are so many things that, if they stress you and you know it, sometimes they do weigh down my days.*

Clearly, more regulations cause many farming families stress. Many industry actors believe that with these regulations, more farming enterprises will exit the industry. Most agricultural community members wonder if the gaze of these regulations should be only farmer-focused. They know – and it has been proven – that food borne illness, contamination can take place anywhere along the "chain" as this industry expert attested:

> [The farming enterprises] know ahead of time, not necessarily a contract. But I'll buy from you. That is primarily because of the food safety issues. I don't care if it's on tape or not that the world is trying to blame the farmer. The real problem is not the farmer and the migrant workers, but when it leaves their farm. We are focusing on that, but we need to be focusing on… If you have ever

> walked into the back of a grocery store and saw how they're packing, you'd be more concerned about that than the farmer. Most of produce is field packed and sent in bulk like apples in big boxes or in bushel boxes depends on what industry they are selling to.

Corporate entities of the agri-food system are not taking the blame for food-borne illness. They look to their contracted farming enterprises to blame, to take on liability. People in the tomato industry believe that the Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc. E. coli and Salmonella outbreak of 2015 – and all the media coverage it received – is a major cause for this new regulation. According to various state health departments, the "most likely cause of the outbreak" was believed to be produce which included bell peppers, tomatoes, and other raw items (Beach 2015). The industry media seemed to highlight the "local produce pledge" that Chipotle had in place, as if to blame small-scale farming enterprises for the whole incident (Karst 2015). In at least one case, the Salmonella was traced back to a southeastern U.S. field-grown tomato company which is a large-scale farming compnay that sources from mid-volume producers as well. After this years-long investigation and public health outcry, the farming enterprises that want to sell tomatoes (and particular other produce) to brokers who then sell to Chipotle must pay for another inspection. Once again, the farming enterprise not the distributors nor manufacturers nor the brokers must pay this new fee to keep the FFV supply chain going.

Conclusion: "Rancheros de antes" *(Farmers from Before, Old-fashioned Farmers)*: Market Access and Farming Families in the Long-term

Women in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group agree that their enterprises cannot be like those of "rancheros de antes" (*farmers from before, old-*

fashioned farmers). Rancheros de antes did not have to do the paperwork and keep up with the regulations that these women do today. They did not have to use the computer or make sense of complicated contracts. Many of these women recognize that the rancheros de antes in the U.S. are retirando (*retiring)* because of the policies and regulations discussed in this chapter. Janet told me, "Te piden eso de la "Food Safety" que pases. Te piden hartas cosas para el field para poder piscar. La regulaciones están cambiando." (*They ask you for this for Food Safety so that you would pass. They ask you for so many things for the field to be able to pick. The regulations are changing."*). This transition has been tough on most small- to mid-scale producers. Janet believed, "Por eso a lo mejor muchas personas se están retirando" (*It is because of this that so many people are retiring.)* Agri-food farming enterprisers feel that they must adapt or will be pushed out of the industry or adapting. Janet continued by describing one agricultural extension agency meeting she attended where there were,

> Puros viejitos. Cuando se cambió la regulación, tuvimos que bajar la aplicación de internet. Estos conceptos son ajenos para ellos. Y eran ajenas para nosotros hace cuatro, cinco años… La gente no quiere hacer la transición, de *farming* a *agro-business*. Y la industria está moviendo a ese … *trend.*
> *Only elderly folks. When the regulation changes, we had to download an application from the Internet. Those concepts are unfamiliar for them. And they were unfamiliar for us too, four or five years ago… People don't want to make this transition, from farming to agro-business. And the industry is moving towards that… trend.*

Janet and other members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational group contribute to the agri-food system from southern Appalachia. Their reflections can help inform a re-imagining of agri-food system relations and redistribution possibilities. These possibilities would support a re-imagining of immigrants in the rural U.S (Haley 2009)

and women in industrialized agriculture (Sachs 2010) – all of whom are crucial to the future of rural community economies and food security. These women's comercio mētis is manifest in their navigation of political economic landscapes and management of multiple timings, cycles, and resources. A social time lens allows for the recognition of exchange relations, and cultural meanings and how economic politics make temporal claims or demands on particularly positioned persons lives. The perspectives and comercio mētis shared in this chapter also enables readers to think about potentialities for the North American food system: how to not only localize it but re-organize it so that more alternative channels are open and more small- to mid-volume producers can continue to create rural livelihoods, but within a more equitable playing field. The trend that Janet described, of regulation, is also one of consolidation. As Marx argued, monopoly power works by defining and preventing market formation. To create diverse and sustainable economies, policy needs to foster more marketing-distribution channels, not less.

As part of binational farming families, family members contribute across genders, generation, class, and nationality border to coordinate their rural livelihoods. However, this does not mean that all members are equal, just as we've seen that not all claims on time are equal. Hierarchical relations do exist which I explore more in chapter six. There are also examples of non-capitalist practices which members of this binational kin group use even within the U.S. and global capitalist system. These are existing alternatives. These practices – and temporal claims made on particularly positioned kin members – can be detected when analyzing the relation between the Mexico to U.S. immigration process and gendered kin relations. The next chapter shares im/mobility stories that

explore some of these practices and the temporalities of waiting that individuals experience due to the U.S. immigration system and family-based decision-making.

MX-U.S. Binational Kin:
Everyday Violence and Temporalities of the U.S. Im/migration System

Part III. Chapter 6

One afternoon, Louisa, a tomatera, and I sat in her den in a rented farmhouse built in the early 1900's in the Carolina Hill Country. We sat on dark brown couches – furniture she was still making payments on. She told me about how she and her children were experiencing fear of (and produced by) the U.S. immigration policy context.

> Me da tanto miedo, tanto tanto miedo que me toque una de deportación. Siento que… me muero de miedo. Me, me, me aterra pensar que nos pudiéramos separar como familia por esta situación… y ellos, los niños… ellos de solo imaginarse lloran. Ellos… estamos, por decir viendo la televisión, y pasa un caso que una mamá la separaron de su familia, está en México y ellos me voltean a ver. "A nosotros, ¿nos va a pasar eso?" Yo les digo, "No no no no se apuren. Nosotros no nos va a pasar eso." ¿Qué les dices? No les puedes decir, sí. Pues… y mi hija que tiene 12 años, me dice, "mommy es que, ¿si te deportan, ¿yo qué voy a hacer?" Ellos tienen mucho miedo, mucho mucho.
> *It makes me so scared, so, so much fear that someone from deportation would knock at my door. I feel that... I would die from fear. It terrifies me to think that we could be separated as a family due to this situation... and the kids, they cry from just imagining it. They... let's say, we are watching television and they show a case in which a mother was separated from her family. She is in Mexico, and they turn their heads and look at me 'Is this going to happen to us?' and I tell them ´no, no don't worry. That isn't' going to happen to us. What do you say to them? You can't say, yes. Well... and my twelve-year-old daughter says to me, "mommy it's just that if they deport you, what am I going to do?" They have a lot of fear.*

In these private moments, children and parents make sense of intense fear produced by the U.S. government's immigration enforcement policy, and programs like Prevention Through Deterrence. U.S. immigration policy positions families like Louisa's in a kind of "social and legal limbo" (Chávez 2008) – a precarious position of "legal nonexistence" (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017). I argue in this chapter that this is a kind of time

politics that is intimately linked to the politics of fear. The U.S. immigration system produces varied temporalizations that people – positioned differently within the system and society – experience differentially as they navigate the legal and social environments that they find themselves within. Particular individuals' presence is being policed.

The terror that Louisa and her family experience is intentional and a product of the everyday violence that underlies contemporary U.S. immigration policy – and the public discourse that justifies it. While racialized immigrants are publicly scapegoated as the cause of terror, many U.S. law enforcement agencies use fear to create insecurities for these racialized immigrants, as a matter of policy principle on the federal level (Bigo 2002). Racialized immigrants are the people whose human security is being threatened, not the other way around. This is an example of inversion, a tactic of the culture of terror (Taussig 1984). Within this context of the culture of terror, thinking of the varied temporalizations that binational kin members experience – shaped by the time politics that help characterize anti-immigrant policy – shows how differentially positioned members of binational kin groups (like the Mexican-American families discussed in this dissertation) experience varied forms of everyday violence in the form of "waiting" temporalizations produced by the U.S. immigration system. Scholars have argued that waiting is a form of state violence in Latin America countries like Argentina (Auyero 2012).

Much of the literature on the contemporary U.S. immigration system argues that the framing of racialized immigrants as a security threat is a way to promote fear politics and an unjust society (Bigo 2002; Kanstroom 2007; Chávez 2008). In this chapter, I contribute to that conversation by emphasizing the link between time politics and fear politics within the context of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational extended family. Though some of the members have legal status in the U.S., as a group they still suffer – though not equally – from the fear (and some from the temporalities) produced by the U.S. immigration system. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) "Deterrence Through Prevention" policy is meant to inflict structural violence upon (de León 2015) – and incite fear in – people both in the U.S. without authorization and those who may consider crossing into the U.S. without authorization (Bigo 2002; Kanstroom 2007).

I argue the policy (and the context it generates) achieves this end, in part, through the production of temporalities for particular persons in both Mexico and the U.S. – even persons who are legally going through U.S. immigration processing procedures. Now "entrapment" policy also targets people without authorization in the U.S. (Núñez and Heyman 2007; Coleman and Kocher 2011). As Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz writes, "Between border policies that hem them in and immigration policies that keep them 'illegal,' there are more undocumented people living in the United States as members of mixed-status families – families that have undocumented legally resident and/or U.S.-citizen members – than ever before" (2017: 3). This policy limits unauthorized persons' movement to the degree that people say they feel that they can never leave the U.S. unless they plan never to return. They cannot leave even to visit a dying relative because their immediate family is in the U.S., and they have U.S. citizens (children) to raise. This limiting of mobility produces particular kinds of temporalities.

Certain people can access movement across borders at particular times. I argue that this access is governed by the state and, in part, a (gendered) family decision-making process. Together, kin relations and the state produce temporalities. From both the U.S. and Mexico, differentially positioned members of binational kin groups (often collectively) mitigate these varied individualized temporalities as they navigate the bureaucratic immigration process. During this process, they become binational political subject-actors. In this chapter, I share perspectives and im/mobility stories from members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group to show how differentially positioned members experience and perceive the (often gendered) temporalities produced dialectically by the U.S. immigration system and the family-based decision-making process. I consider the story above shared by Louisa as an im/mobility story, or a personal story that reflects the power of immigration policy and family-based decision-making to generate or hinder movement and, thus, the power to produce individualized temporalities. I also discuss the navigation of the bureaucratic immigration process as a form of gendered kin work and as a collective project amongst kin.

To begin, I put time politics literature into conversation with social science analysis of the fear politics of contemporary U.S. immigration policy and anthropological migration literature. Then, I discuss the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of

1986 in the context of agricultural communities. IRCA and its various amnesty programs allowed for many rural working Mexican families to begin the binationalization process. To access amnesty, working families had to navigate the bureaucratic "legalization" process which, I found, many of them did (and do) collectively, despite the individualizing logic of the U.S. immigration system. This was true in the late 1980's when members of this kin group first achieved Lawful Permeant Residency (LPR) status, and – as the stories I will share show – this is still true today as families work together to assist particular members in accessing "papers" to be lawfully "present" in the U.S.

In immigration terminology, legalization is accessing a legal status through a bureaucratic process while "normalization" is accessing citizenship. The term my study participants use in Spanish is "arrreglar" (*to fix or arrange*) the papers. The way of talking about legal, or "lawful" status in this context is quite different when comparing Spanish and English phrasing. Spanish phrasing does not create a social category, as "illegal" as the U.S. legal text as the related English-language public discourse does. To have documentation that represents U.S. state-sanctioned presence, permission to be in a place and time – and permission to more easily circulate, or access mobility across U.S. borders. Possessing that circulation documentation is a condition that is not as morally linked to worthiness as it seems to be in English, as illegal or legal indicate. In this particular Spanish language choice of "arreglar papeles," there is a recognition of the power of the state to categorize people and to decide which persons will be granted the opportunity to do the documentation paperwork, to be granted lawful presence through well-done paperwork to become legible to the U.S. state (c.f. Scott 1998).

This bureaucratic navigation constitutes a kind of kin work which is often naturalized as a kin obligation and thus goes unrecognized as work, or a form of value creation. I discuss this navigation through ethnographic im/mobility stories, since some of them highlight how particular people access mobility while others highlight the immobility particular members of the kin group experience. These im/mobility stories reflect the temporal "limbo" (or period of waiting) that people go through and live within while they navigate the immigration system as members of binational MX-U.S. families. These im/mobility stories – and the temporalizations that they illustrate – attest to the everyday violence inflicted by the U.S. immigration system in the case of binational MX-

U.S. kin groups. Finally, I close with a conversation that links this chapter to the next by discussing the limits of simultaneity, the question of human in/security, and the importance of the right to access human rights – even temporal ones.

Binational Families in Rural Places: Produced Temporalities and Im/Mobility Stories

All violence is not the same. I draw on Philippe Bourgois' typology of violence to make sense of the varied types of violence members of this binational kin group mitigate in the U.S. and Mexico to link time and fear politics in a binational context of the U.S. immigration system. Bourgois differentiates violence as direct political violence, structural violence, and symbolic violence and theorizes that everyday violence comes from a combination of any of these three types (2004). I follow Bourgois in this understanding of everyday violence, and I investigate the ways in which the structural and symbolic violence of the U.S. immigration system produces temporalizations as fear-based governing forces in this chapter. In other words, I show how the U.S. immigration system makes temporal claims on subject-actors who attempt to navigate the system. It is clear that direct political violence plays an important part in the enforcement of the immigration system – and the linked dangerous environments in places like the U.S.-MX border (de León 2015) and rural Mexico today (Botello 2008). But, I limit this chapter to a focus on everyday violence – a combination of structural and symbolic violence – experienced as im/mobility and restricted temporalities by Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin members.

Many contemporary anthropologists studying the relation between migration and the state call upon structural violence as a concept to make sense of power relations between subject-actors, cultural groups, and social institutions. Looking through (perhaps) a more agentive lens, many scholars now use the term transnational to theorize the processes that people who live and contribute to multiple social fields engage in through traversing nation-state borders (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Basch et al. 1994; Goldin 1999; Hopkins and Wellmeier 2001). This theory accounts for what a national framework cannot and attempts to reassess methodological approaches to "transitional connections" that prove to be more relation-based (Hannerz 1996) and practice-based

than space or territorial-based (Faist et al. 2013). Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller theorize the participation in multiple social fields as a form of "simultaneity, or living lives that incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in a destination country and transnationally, [as] a possibility that needs to be theorized and explored" (2004:1003). But this simultaneity is not equally accessible by all members transnational or binational groups. Members experience restricted temporalities and imposed immobility as a form of everyday violence.

Scholars concerned with transnationalism are beginning to recognize the role of temporal logic in the marginalizing of newly arrived persons who are categorized as "migrants" and therefore, defined as short-term. Just as scholars have critiqued the use of the term slave and suggested that instead we refer to people who are enslaved, transnational migration scholars are examining the use of "migrant" and reverting their analytic gaze to the relation between the social category, exploitative logic, and social time. Attempting to avoid the reproduction of marginalizing social categories when theorizing the lives and roles of mobile persons who live in and between nation-states, scholars have called upon the concept of simultaneity (Schiller et al. 2003). They are doing this through a social fields perspective to take into account the ways in which people engage in multiple places and participate in multiple geographically dispersed communities.

While I agree that the notion of simultaneity combined with a social fields approach is helpful in explicating the lives and experiences of people who move between nation-states and geographically dispersed communities, it is important not to rush past the nuances of asymmetrical power relations that take place in a mixed nationality status group as in the case of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group. I argue that while these people act transnationally, they cannot be defined as "transnational" in terms of power relations. They do not engage in the world in the same way as privileged "transnationals," as say global jetsetters might (Ong 1999). People with binational legal status are like many with "transborder lives" (Stephen 2007) in that they differentially experience multiple axis of power (Collins 1990), as was discussed in chapter two. For these reasons, here, I look at the limits of "simultaneity" – the sense of belonging "neither here nor there" (Zavella

2011; Pérez 2004; Striffler 2007) – for particularly positioned kin members through a temporal lens.

The role and power of the state – in this case the U.S. and Mexico – to assign a particular level of membership status to particular persons matters in substantial ways for people's livelihoods and relations. States claim the right to label a person with the temporal legal category that stigmatizes them and places them in limbo – as Saakshi Joshi found with the Indian government's use of the Hindi word "visthapit" to categorize people and even settlements as "uprooted" and "displaced" due to dam construction (2016, 2017). This can be found around the world, within and between nation-states. Using the term binational allows me to point to the challenges and privileges of being "kin" to nation-state members, in terms of a state's cultural and bureaucratic process. Asymmetric nationality statuses matter and the nation-state which grants you that status also matters in terms of geopolitical power relations. To have a U.S. passport is not valued the same as having a Mexican passport in the international sphere.

In addition to bringing together literature on migration, state violence, and time, this chapter also contributes to conversations concerning transnationalism, migration, and kinship with the use of a binational lens. As I explained in an earlier chapter, I use the term binational in addition to the term mixed-status to indicate the fact that these families are members of both the Mexican and United States nations and must cope with the power and actions of both states with which they are affiliated, the U.S. and Mexico. When I use this term instead of mixed-status, I am emphasizing that state membership status can fall along a continuum (between full citizen and unauthorized by the state) – as Aihwa Ong shows with her study and concept of the graduated citizenship (2006). This term may not be applicable to other cases, but it suites this case concerning the U.S. and Mexico which are inextricably linked in terms of nations and state relations. Public discourse in the U.S. often elides this variation with the (unstated) assumption that people are either citizens or unauthorized. National membership should be understood on a continuum rather than as a polarity.

State membership can determine access to livelihoods, especially in terms of legal ownership, mobility, and market practice – all of which are key to agri-food enterprise ownership and day to day operations. I believe that the term transnational is helpful

contexts when addressing activities and relations such as describing knowledge networks, but not when describing persons. Dual nationality is also not appropriate for the context which this dissertation explores because members of this kin network have various membership statues in both the U.S. and Mexico, as citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and unauthorized residents. They as a corporate group are binational in the sense that they are simultaneously part of and contribute to two nation-state contexts. Some of them however, do so with U.S. state-sanctioned belonging which allows them to be lawfully present in the U.S. and affords them circulation documentation so they can also engage directly in Mexico by traveling there. Others do not have this status nor option, and do to this, they experience an imposed immobility – and related restricted temporalities – as a form of everyday violence.

Social scientists deal with time in various ways, focusing on "time practicality" (Bourdieu 1990) and "periodization" of calendars in sync with lunar cycles (Malinowski 1927). The temporal logic of the uncertainty of the immigration system is central to the everyday violence it provokes. The production of uncertainty – a kind of continuous crisis of belonging – for certain people is the purpose. "Precarity" is the policy, as Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz has shown (2017). In this chapter, I show how temporalities of "limbos" are key to this uncertainty as a kind of liminality (Turner 1966; Van Gennep 1960) that is a fearful state which positions people as vulnerable to expulsion. Leo Chávez sees immigrants in the U.S. without legal authorization as in "perpetual limbo," which is both "legal and social" (2008:182) and of course, economic as well. I theorize "limbo" as a kind of waiting period in the context of navigating/mitigating the barriers imposed by the U.S. im/migration system. I present various examples of "limbo" for particularly positioned members of a binational kin group to show how people experience this particular kind of uncertainty, governed by both the state and family-based decision-making. These various examples of "waiting" illustrate the structural inequalities that are linked to temporalities produced by the U.S. immigration system.

This kind of temporalization of waiting can be understood as an example of structural violence. Structural violence is a form of indirect violence. It is defined as "chronic, historically entrenched political-economic oppression and social inequality, ranging from exploitative international terms of trade to abusive local working conditions

and high infant mortality rates" (Bourgois 2004: 426). John Galtung introduced the term to draw attention to the ways in which human potential is constrained due to political economic structures (1969, 1975). Paul Farmer popularized the term with his analysis of the political violence and AIDS epidemic in Haiti which he saw as "extreme suffering" that resulted from "violence exerted systematically—that is, indirectly—by everyone who belongs to a certain social order..." (2004: 307).

The structural violence concept is helpful in explicating the link between personal suffering and societal power to inflict a kind of indirect suffering that can be due to produced temporalities and im/mobilities. It allows people to discuss the less apparent (often less visual, or explicit) forms of violence that shape a person's life chances and mobility (socio-economic, political, geographic, etc). One example of how this form of violence is manifest in people's lives can be explained through the notion of ambiguous loss (Falicov 2002) which I will discuss later and is illustrated in perspectives like Oscar's. International trade policies (like NAFTA) – which embed inequalities through inequitable trade agreements between countries with incomparable currency rates and im/mobility restrictions – are also examples of structural violence that cast human security into question. I will return to this in my final chapter.

The power of "symbolic violence" is also evident in these im/mobility stories. Symbolic violence is defined as "the internalized humiliations and legitimations of inequality and hierarchy ranging from sexism and racism to intimate expression of class power" (Bourgois 2004: 426). Symbolic violence plays an important role in U.S. anit-immigration policy of Prevention Through Deterrence, and the overall fear politics promoted by policy and public discourse. Symbolic violence re-enforces the fear politics of the U.S. immigration system in terms of the "unwitting consent of the dominated" (quoted in Bourgois 2004: 426; Bourdieu 2001; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In this context, the actor-subjects of the U.S. immigration system constitute the dominated and the domination they feel is constant due to the temporalizations and im/moblities produced by the U.S. immigration process. Racialized immigrants in the U.S. are under attack. They are characterized as criminals and portrayed as security threats – all due to the logic that their past act of crossing over the U.S.-MX border without authorization is

now defined as a federal crime. Their presence is policed and this perpetual threat to their human security is internalized.

Waiting in "Limbo" on the U.S. Immigration System in Mexico and the U.S.

Ambiguous loss (Boss 1991, 1999) "describes situations in which loss is unclear, incomplete or partial" (Falicov 2002: 275) and constitutes part of the everyday violence that binational kin groups mitigate. In particular, scholars have looked the solitude and isolation that women experience when their male partner migrates (Kandel and Massey 2002). Migrations involve ambiguous loss for all members of the kin group in the sense that, "beloved people and places are left behind, but they remain keenly present in the psyche of the immigrants. At the same time, homesickness and the stresses of adaption may leave some family members emotionally unavailable to others" (Falicov 2002: 275). This chapter adds to this by suggesting that the temporalizations (or differential social time) produced by the U.S. immigration system – and the gendered kin-based decision-making process that people use to mediate it – contribute to ambiguous loss as a form of structural violence, suffered as a form of inequity.

Social time can be understood as time politics when de-naturalized and understood as contested and culturally categorized within political economic contexts. When social time is categorized, it in turn "reproduces codes of selection" –an act which is done by elites and constitutes a claim to the right to define temporal representations and orderings (Greenhouse 1996; 233). With this temporal "code of selection" comes a "cultural grammar of time" (Greenhouse 1996;13) which allows for the linking of categorization of social time, particular persons and activities in everyday life. Scholars have shown that elites use temporal representations to legitimate exclusive power claims (Greenhouse 1996) via legal systems (Greenhouse 1989; 1996), national collective memory (Boyarin 1994; Herzfeld 2012), and myths (Attali 1985).

To control the social time of others is to exercise power over them. As Henry Rutz argues, "A politics of time is concerned with the appropriation of the time of others, the institutionalization of a dominate time, and the legitimation of power by means of the control of time" (1992:7). Different social relations determine how social time is categorized for differentially positioned persons and thus, plays a part in producing a

representation of time that serves to exclude certain people from claims to power and include others, like elites (Greenhouse 1996). Temporal representations can be used to create social distance, to "other" people by displacing them temporally and denying them coevalness (Fabian 1983). For instance, this is taking place in countries like the U.S. and Canada (Díaz Mendiburo 2014; Hari et al. 2013; Sánchez Gómez and Lara Flores 2015) via the immigration system with the use of "temporary" or "guest worker" visas which define people as "temporary workers" and justify their exploitation (Bauer 2008) and their presence. This is a naturalized temporal logic of exclusion. Scholars dislodge this reasoning through analysis of how marginalized workers "produce permanence" and "practice placemaking" within precarious livelihood contexts (Bolt 2013).

The temporalities produced by the U.S. immigration system, and the temporal logic that underlies it, are often assumed as natural and unchangeable. Various categories of "temporary legal status" governed through visas, and other state technologies, are critical to the power and functioning of the immigration system. The state claims the power to define time horizons, to police presence, and to produce temporalities. The social constructs produced by the U.S. immigration system define temporal characteristics of presence and are linked to fear politics which naturalize the idea that a person could be "illegal" or "temporary."

Waiting in Mexico to be Visited

Some Guzmán-Ortega-Torres relatives will never go to the U.S. Many of the people in the rancho who expressed this sentiment to me were elderly. Oscar, a man in his late sixties, told me that he would have had a tractor if he had gone to work in the U.S. when he was younger. He further pondered that maybe he would even have been able to visit his three children who resided there, two of whom do not have U.S. authorization. People like Oscar saw themselves as having missed their chance to make the decision to go. They discuss what it must be like in the U.S. for the children – many of whom are there. They share photos and videos they receive from binational relatives who circulate between the nodes of the rancho community – in the U.S. and the rancho. For those who can only imagine visiting their relatives in the U.S., what is often thought of as good news is also filled with sorrow. This includes weddings and births, which are

joyful life-cycle events when relatives can share in them with you. They joke about making trips. They imagine aloud what their grandchildren are like – some of whom they have never met. They ask each other when passing in the road, "When will your children come to visit?" Some have no answer, and some have no hope for a visit. This is a temporality produced by the U.S. immigration system.

Moments like these – and goodbyes – are when Celia Jaez Falicov's concept of ambiguous loss is most palpable (2002). Relatives who could not access the U.S. imagined aloud about what they thought the U.S. would be like. Some of them will find out soon and some may never travel to the U.S. to see for themselves. These are moments – kinds of affective ripple effects – when the inequalities within binational kin groups shine through and create interpersonal discord. These are also moments produced by gendered, kin-based migration decision-making processes and the temporal logic of the U.S. immigration system – characterized as inefficient, yet central to certain modern state-capitalist processes.

Waiting for Access to Temporary Rights

The Obama administration created DACA or "deferred action for childhood arrivals" through a memo from Janet Napolitano written on June 5, 2012. Temporary work visas were already accessible for judges to grant before DACA. DACA was meant to serve as a "temporary solution" – as a legal status alternative for particular young people who were living "illegally" in the U.S. due to the fact that their parents brought them to the U.S. without legal documentation. DACA granted awardees a pseudo-social security card that had to be re-applied for every two years and served as a work permit and as permission to attempt to obtain a drivers' license. Recipients would fill out the paperwork to update this "temporary relief" from deportation for the following two years. Approximately 800,000 people were granted DACA.

"Temporary solutions" in the U.S. immigration system can themselves cause prolonged insecurity that amounts to a kind of everyday violence and temporality. As one member of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group member and DACA recipient told me, "I plan my life for two years." The power of the fact that a chance to access legal status can "time out" – as Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz discusses – is fear-inducing (2017). It seems

arbitrary that a person could be moved from one legal category to another due to time passing which is inevitable. Some potential DACA recipients had to rush their paperwork through the processing because of impending 21st birthdays.

DACA recipients are also aware that their parents' in/security depends on them. Not only could their unauthorized status be deduced from the fact that their child is documented as a DACA recipient in the immigration system, but also, their children plan to apply for legal documentation for their parents once they turn 21 years of age. Some members of Congress have tried to pass DAPA (or Deferred Action for Parental Accountability, the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents). The goal was to temporarily protect these youths' parents from deportation. It was expected to pass in a Senate vote in May 2015 and then again in May 2016 but was stopped by the House.

As is evident now in 2018 as I write this chapter, these temporal limits to these youth's secure presence was a seemingly good gesture by the Obama administration, but short-sighted, and, as a result, now contributes to the culture of fear – and insecure temporalities – being promoted by the Trump administration. One immigration lawyer I spoke with in 2015 was quick to point out that if DACA or DAPA "goes away," then the state "has your information and you are in a kind of purgatory." For this reason, some people were hesitant to sign up for DACA. Now with the Trump Administration's attempts to rescind DACA, many people are fearful that they should have never trusted the U.S. immigration system with their private information. Many believe, this could have put their entire family in danger.

The uncertainty that this process created for mixed-status binational families continued over the years as they waited for a policy that would allow them and/or their relatives to live in full legal presence in the U.S. – the home they know. A DACA recipient's sudden appointed right to access the opportunity to get a driver's license seemed to be one of the most impactful changes in terms of suffering from everyday violence as a Latinx in the rural southeastern U.S. If this young adult could drive legally, they as a family could more easily travel around and "vivir sin miedo" (*live without fear*). However, DACA recipients, like Alexandria, still faced barriers to accessing this state-sanctioned document at the DMV offices.

In 2014, I arrived at Marielena's house. Her sister Juana's youngest daughter, Isabel, was there and offered me something to drink when I arrived, as was their custom. Isabel was staying with her aunt, uncle, cousins, and grandfather while her mom took her older sister back to Florida to sign up for school as a high school senior. Alexandria is Isabel's slightly older cousin in high school in western South Carolina. She excitedly interrupted Isabel, as she was telling me about how she did not want to be a nurse. In her southern Appalachian accent, she told me, "I have papers now…from the Dream Act." She and her cousin received DACA status and when they turn twenty-one, she continued, they could apply to "become permanent" and then "get papers" for their parents. I did not realize why Marielena and Alexandria wanted me to come over that day until Alexandria then asked me if I could go to the DMV office with them so that she could get/apply for her (driving) learner's permit. Marielena (Alexandria's mother) greeted me as she walked in the side door of the home with her two-year-old son. Marielena said that we would need to leave son since we had to drive to a city nearby instead of visiting the local DMV office in the small town where they lived since they were told that this DMV had limited services and only served citizens.

As we rode into town, she commented on how far away this city was from her town and how it had a lot more Latinx than in her small town down the road. As we drove through the city, I noticed tire stores and auto mechanics with the same kinds of signs and names as I saw while driving country roads outside of cities in central Mexico. This was a city where Latinx have revitalized the economy and their enterprising expertise was apparent as we passed numerous tiendas, taquerias, and even rental shops with all the essentials necessary for a large family gathering. We arrived at the DMV after driving through a neighborhood full of square brick homes and pine trees. The DMV was a small brown brick building with a parking lot circling it. We walked inside and up to the counter to get a number from a DMV representative seated on a stool in front of the counter spaces at the "greeting" desk. We expected her to give us a number just as she did with the person who approached her in front of us in line. However, with us, she looked up and asked, what we were doing there.

Alexandria spoke up and said that she was there to get her learner's permit. She had all the necessary paperwork and told her about taking the driving course at her high

school. As we stood there, and I spoke with the attendant, Marielena stood to the side with her toddler son. She did not speak English, so she did not join in on this conversation. She told me later that she used to think that she should not come into official buildings with Alexandria – fearful that her presence would harm her daughter's prospects – but she realized that she needed to be present as Alexandria's mother at times like these. The representative then looked at me and Alexandria and asked a bit exacerbated, "Well who is the girl's parent?" Alexandria responded, "Well, my mom is right here, but she doesn't have a license." The representative looked at her mother then at Alexandria and then at me, and responded, "Oh. Then who are you?" Alexandria jumped in and said, "She is a close family friend. Family." The representative then told us that the law had changed, and now only a parent or guardian could help a fifteen-year-old get a license or sign for them.

When we heard this news, we all went back into the lobby to discuss, in Spanish, what just happened and what to do next. Alexandria said that her grandfather was a citizen and had his license, but he could only drive from ten in the morning until five in the evening because of his eyesight. He had cataracts and so he could not come with her to get her permit because of this limitation. This is what a person at school told her. But, she continued, she thought there would be no problem today with me there because her cousin came with his brother just a few weeks ago and he passed the test and received his learner's permit. We stood there thinking, wondering what was going on. What could we do to get past this roadblock? It was Alexandria's right to access the chance to drive as a DACA recipient.

I then decided to go back in and asked for documentation of this change in the law. The representative told us that she did not have any documentation of this, but I could speak with a manager about it. I waited a moment and then I was called up to speak with a manager at the counter. From behind the plastic divider – a Euro-American woman who appeared to be in her mid-50s – stared at me as if I were a serious disturbance. I waved to Alexandria and her mother to come up to the counter with me. The DMV manager pulled out the form you must sign for a fifteen-year old to take the test to attemp to access her/his learner's permit. As she pointed to the sheet, she said, "You see here... this part." I leaned forward, bending over the counter to read it and, to

me, it read as if a person with a driver's license must sign for the child who is less than eighteen years old, and that person could be a parent and/or guardian. It seemed to me that what was written implied that anyone who signed had to have a driver's license, and not that the only person who could sign was a parent and/or guardian. She told me, "You see the law never changed; we were just mis-interpreting the law. You see that and now let's look in the handbook. In the handbook, it states parent or guardian." Then I asked to see the form that she was referring to in the handbook, and she showed me DMV Form 447. I started to take notes to record the wording and she said, "You don't have to write this down. I will print it out for you."

She walked to a back room and then returned to the counter where we were waiting. She said, "You see how this is titled Emancipated Youth. Well before, just about a month ago, this 'Emancipated' wasn't there. It was just a form for youth who would get their permit with the consent of a person who is family and 18 years old or older." I continued to discuss this with her. Her argument was that to get access to the chance to apply for a learner's permit you had to either be an "emancipated youth" or have a parent with a driver's license. This would mean that Alexandria would have to emancipate herself from her parents to get access to the chance to get a learner's permit. This learner's permit would offer her whole family some security with her as a licensed driver behind the wheel as they traveled country roads to live their daily lives. Without one, she will have to wait until she is eighteen to get her license – wait until after two more rounds of DACA renewal. If she were to emancipate herself from her parents so that she could access this security (that she was supposed to be able to access through DACA), she would then in the future not be able to petition for her parents to access documentation. I looked back at Alexandria as we all took this in and asked the DMV manager, "Do you have any documentation stating that this change in interpretation and procedure has occurred?" She told me, emphatically, "The law is the law."

I challenged this idea by telling her that she just told me that they were mis-interpreting the law, probably for decades, as she had said earlier. She replied, "Well not for decades." This seemed to be the end of the debate. As we walked out of the DMV, I got the full realization of what just happened. The "Dreamers" in states like South Carolina have to wait until they are eighteen to get their drivers' licenses. They were

supposed to be given the right to drive and to work. Now we see that there is a technicality at play that local DMV agents can call upon to deny DACA recipients (and their families) from accessing their rights to drive with legal documentation.

Back in the car, Marielena explained to me that you must have a car and a phone to be able to work in rural places, like western South Carolina. Her husband had been working in agriculture in the U.S. for eighteen years. She told me that he worked year-round for $9 an hour, and usually twelve to fourteen hours a day, except December when there is no work at all. We left the DMV that day "desilusionadas" (*disappointed*), but Alexandria was still thinking about how to get around this technicality, this unjust barrier to accessing her new "right." As Alexandria scanned the possibilities, she switched back and forth between English and Spanish with ease. She wondered out loud if maybe her uncle could come with her. Maybe they would just think he was her dad. The only issue that could arise with this, she surmised, was that while he happened to have the same last names, his last names are in the opposite order than hers. And they pay attention to this now, she added. Maybe her cousin could come with her next time, she wondered aloud. But then again, he looked to be around her age. That would never work, she decided.

Maybe they should go to North Carolina or to Florida where she had also lived. There the DMV agents may not be as tough on her. Marielena joked that nobody had a license anyway, but her fear was apparent. This fear is why access to legal driving documentation is so important for DACA recipients and their whole families. The fear that mothers and fathers will be deported is constant for children like Alexandria. In the car, as we ride, Marielena said to me that she could not go back to Mexico now. Her life, her children are here, she explained. After we discussed this, she seemed to reorient and said that now we must eat. She and Alexandria had not eaten anything all afternoon. She asked me: what do you feel like, Chinese or Mexican?

The "temporary relief for minors" proved to be more temporary than most believed it would be and less of a relief than most hoped. The U.S. President Donald Trump rescinded DACA March 5, 2018[37]. After the election results came in, many of the immigrants (especially those racialized as Latinx) became even more vulnerable to the

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[37] This, however, was blocked (for the first time) on February 13, 2018 by a judge in the second federal court.

culture of fear and fear politics. While visiting with another segment of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family, a father in the group told me that people in their community were telling each other not to leave their homes. His wife then said that people were telling her to do all of her shopping one time a month, but, she exclaimed in Spanish, “I can’t stay inside all month like a prisoner in my own house.” To this, her husband and her sister nodded. She leaned forward and continued her explanation with a nervous smile, “I have to pick up my children from school.” She then shook her head and looked down at her feet. There was no resolution.

Waiting for Everyday Acceptance, Societal Recognition of Belonging

Uncertainty and fear produced by the U.S. immigration system are not suffered solely by the unauthorized population in the U.S. They also plague their kin and friends who are citizens, and those who have LPR or “green card” status. Many individuals and families are uncertain of their security in the U.S. and now feel that they must question their belonging and fear their neighbors. These families find themselves living in fear with hope of acceptance. The following stories are those of women from the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin-based network who have “green card” legal status, yet do not trust or have certainty in the U.S. government or the long-term commitments of U.S. immigration policy and U.S. society’s loyalty to them. After the 2017 U.S. election, many LPR community members rushed to apply for citizenship, hoping that citizenship would provide them with (long-term) human security – what all people need. One of these people was Silvia who told me a story her daughter told her about a day at school in November 2016.

Silvia was very worried for her eight-year-old daughter and the potential for bullying because where she lived in a part of North Carolina that was considered “very racist area” and their family group are the only Latinx children at their school. She told me that her daughter came home from school and told her that the kids at school were talking about the building of a wall between Mexico and the U.S. Her family was going to Mexico for most of December for Elena’s daughter’s wedding. While at school, her daughter said she was going to Mexico for Christmas break. A little boy in her class said to her that maybe she would not come back into the U.S. if there was a wall there. Then

her daughter said, “But people are murdered in Mexico,” and the little boy said to her, “Please don’t go.”

Even before the elections, many racialized women shared their human insecurity concerns with me – concerns that were present but different in the U.S. and Mexico. Gloria, a mother of four in her early forties, believed that she could still be deported, even though she was in the U.S. legally. I conducted interviews with her at her house. During our first interview, her sister – whom I had met in their rancho – was in North Carolina visiting. Her sister had LPR status and lived mostly in Mexico. She sat in the living room with the kids while Gloria and I did an interview in another room. We talked about Mexico and what she thought about her new home, having arrived in Florida about seven months before.

Gloria got emotional throughout when discussing how she wanted to return to Mexico. She missed her sisters, her family, her house, and her animals – her lifestyle. She told me that she knew that it is a privilege to be here [in the U.S. with U.S. state authorization] and that she wanted to follow all the rules carefully so that she could stay. She thought that she would have to go to Florida to get her drivers’ license once she worked up the nerve to learn to park. She thought Florida was a better place to do the driving test since she did not speak very much English. They moved between the Carolinas and Florida every year. She thought her lack of English would disqualify her in North Carolina. She had heard about her kin’s experience. They gave her advice on all this.

Gloria’s cousin, Marta, told her about her experiences, having lived in the western Carolinas for about a decade. She and her husband, Diego, believed that she faced discrimination at two DMVs in the area. Diego told me this story as if to pose the question. The first time they were in western South Carolina. They went to the DMV to get a license and they told her that because she was a resident and not a citizen she had to go to the city DMV an hour and a half south. Later, after my conversation with Diego, I accompanied Marta to the DMV to re-new her license.

After we arrived, she drove every day to work at the hospital and had driven for a few years now, but she was still nervous. She, her daughter (Veronica), and I went inside and waited in line. She spoke to the attendant and then sat down to wait. Then a DMV

representative who looked to be in her thirties, walked outside with Marta. Veronica and I went out to the car to wait. Within about two minutes, we watched as Marta and the DMV agent got out of the car. We went to see what happened. Marta just shook her head and I turned to the attendant who said, "A law just changed and you have to speak English well enough to pass…" Marta, Diego, and Veronica knew she was a capable driver and spoke enough English to do everything else in the U.S. over the last decade, including working various jobs. They also suspected that local DMV representatives would discriminate against Latinx.

Marta's niece – Yasmin who also has LPR status – told me about how she faced discrimination at her community college. She went into the academic counseling office to figure out her schedule for the next semester. When she went up to the desk, the advisor asked her for her social security number and she told him, "I can't remember it. Can I just use my student ID?" He said something to her about "referred action." She asked, "Well, can I register?" He responded that she would have a really hard time getting a license to practice cosmetology here and acted, to her, as if he thought she should just change her major, or stop classes, or something. Then he said, "Well, I mean you are illegal, right?" She responded, "No, I am permanent. I am legal." And he then said, "Oh sorry." But Yasmin, told me, that she could tell he did not mean it. She realized that he was discriminating against her, stereotyping her. She said she knew this because she did a paper on it in college. Yasmin then told me that you cannot even take nursing classes, if you are illegal. The U.S. immigration system's influence even on a person's career trajectory is a particular kind of structural violence, and temporalization.

As each individual works his/her way through the U.S. immigration system, s/he transitions from socio-legal constructs produced by immigration policy. These socio-legal constructs produce a kind of temporality, temporal frame that people then have to take into account as they live their daily lives. As Nicholas DeGenova has shown, the term "alien" (and the linkage to "illegal") became a socio-legal construct, a type of person who is an outsider, "other" to be feared (2005). The irony is that the person who is then designated as the "other" (in this case "foreigner") is in fact the person in this ethical relation who suffers on a daily basis from the fear politics and culture of terror that introduced and popularized this marginalizing social construct. The temporal

characteristics of the immigration system are linked to the politics of fear in that they are a form of both symbolic violence – as an unbelonging, temporary member of a nation, or as being perpetually unlawfully present. "Post-entry" U.S. immigrants and potential U.S. immigrants seem to sense that they are living with a kind of uncertain presence – uncertain of being accepted by the U.S. nation and state, uncertain of how long they will suffer from this.

The U.S. only recognizes one citizenship at a time. In 1998, the then-president Ernesto Zedillo changed the Mexican policy so that Mexicans could have dual citizenship, which many now have in the U.S. and Mexico. Nationalism – or the "principle of homogenous cultural units as the foundations of political life, and of the obligatory cultural unity of rules and ruled" (Gellner 1983:125) – promotes an exclusionary vision of the imagined nation (Anderson 1983). With the underlying belief that a person can be loyal and thus a just member of one nation-state at a time, it is clear how the evocative concept of a "threat" to human security in the U.S. was empowered after the 9/11 attacks in the U.S. in 2001. After this event, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) became part of the Department of Homeland Security and was transformed into Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – institutionally pairing immigration policy with "security threat."

Didier Bigo argues that since 2000, migration has been framed as a security problem, thus making immigrants into security threats to be seen and treated as security risks (2002). He argues that this is one of the central techniques of securitization, the transformation of "structural difficulties… into elements permitting specific groups to be blamed… simply by categorizing them … and projecting them… to the risk category" (Bigo 2002:81). In other words, the security discourse is being used as justification for targeting and scapegoating a certain "unwanted" portion of the U.S. population. U.S. nation-state membership is purportedly based on merit and thus, endows the enforcers of the system with the power to dictate worthiness of individuals – worthiness that tends to depend on economic resources. Immigrants (and potential immigrants) without this financial status are framed as a threat to the well-being of the U.S. nation-state. This financial threat is then elided with the notion of a human (U.S. citizenry-specific) security threat. As Bigo suggests, the securitization of migration proves to be a strategy employed

by state institutions to hide the fundamentally unjust actions by the state against certain (racialized) immigrant populations (2002).

Of course, this kind of framing is absurd to members of binational kin groups in which state membership and kin membership do not always equally coincide between members. These binational kin group members know the so-called "threats" or "illegal immigrants" as their loved ones, their relative(s), contributors to society. The nativist logic promotes temporary immigration status, but only in the form of certain visas for certain persons for certain amounts of limited time – in other words, only if they will not become (long-term) "locals." The U.S. immigration system produces legal categories that dictate state membership status and lawful circulation (or geographic mobility, esp. across borders). These legal categories produce varied temporalities for particular members of binational kin groups, as these im/mobility stories of "limbo" attest.

When people are structurally marginalized, and deemed as not belonging to a nation, they are victims of symbolic violence (constituted by "othering" discourse amongst other mechanisms) and must confront violence on an everyday level, or "everyday violence" in Philippe Bourgois' language. Everyday violence is understood as "daily practices and expression of violence on a micro-interactional level: interpersonal, domestic and delinquent" (Bourgois 2004: 426). This term was first introduced by Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1992, 1996) to explicate the "individual lived experience that normalizes petty brutalities and terror at the community level and create a common sense or ethos of violence" (Bourgois 2004; 426). Everyday violence – evident in the im/mobility stories – is characterized (or given power) through the politics of fear and temporalizations produced by the U.S. immigration system and imposed on its subject-actors, including their relatives. Everyday violence is empowered by the localizing of the enforcement of federal immigration policy and anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Waiting on the U.S. Immigration System as an Individual in the U.S.

Some people cannot access an opportunity to go through U.S. immigration processing; they and their circumstances do not qualify. Many of these people do not qualify due to the changes which took place in 2001 with the combining of immigration and security issues in U.S. law (Winders 2007) and the resultant criminalization of

immigrant communities (Coutin 2005). Exclusionary, anti-immigrant programs – like 287g and Secure Communities resulted from this process (Nguyen and Gill 2011; Capps et al. 2011). These programs convert local law enforcement agents (such as police officers, sheriff deputies and even state troopers) into federal immigration law enforcers. This means that the spaces of immigration governance and policing have become multi-scalar and variegated (Walker and Leimer 2011). The targeted area for these practices expanded from the borders to include the interior (Coleman 2007) as anti-immigrant discourse and policy expanded, moving from the U.S. West Coast to the eastern states (Kingsolver 2010).

These federal immigration enforcement practices include streamlining databases and detaining people who do not have proof of U.S. legal status at traffic stops, work and home. In the counties and cities where these polices were put into place through local Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), unauthorized immigrants believe themselves to be most vulnerable while driving. These programs have created a culture of terror around driving – what for many is a routine daily chore (Stuesse and Coleman 2014). The roads are vulnerable places for racialized Mexican Americans in the rural U.S. For parents like Liliana – whose story opened this chapter – they have come to symbolize a site of everyday violence. Parents feel that they are waiting in ambush, while trying to make a living and raise their children.

Some members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group – who did not do the binational paperwork in the 1980's or 1990's – came to the U.S. without legal status. Sometimes women in the kin group felt that they could not wait in the rancho as a married woman without her husband. They may have also decided as a family that they should move together at the same time, as a couple and/or with their children. This means that now, parents live in a kind of legal limbo as "ghosts" of the U.S. immigration system (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017) while fearing they will be taken away from their children who are often U.S. citizens and know no other home. These are women like Susana:

> Para mí no sería tan difícil, pero para mis niños, sí. Para ellos sería muy difícil acostumbrarse a una vida allá. Para mí no, porque yo ya sé como se vive. ¿Cómo?, yo ya sé. Pero para ellos, sería muy dramático el cambio, muy, y con este 'orange man.' Pues, sí tengo temor. Sí tengo temor. Si me da miedo. Pensar que... Mira, vivo a gusto con deudas,

> con lo que sea lo de cada día. Pero vivo a gusto. Tengo mi familia. Como familia, estamos juntos, estamos unidos. Estamos bien. Me da tanto miedo, tanto tanto miedo que me toque una de deportación, que me toca una cosa así, y que por eso se me acabe…Yo le digo pórtate bien porque cuando el cumpla 18, él me puede reclamar. Él puede reclamarme a mí; él puede pedirme mi residencia, y es por lo único que le digo [a] diario… Pórtate bien. Mira, hazlo por mí. Si vas a hacer una cosa, piénsalo … habría consecuencias.
> *For me it wouldn't be that hard, but for my children, yes. For them it would be really hard to get accustomed to a life there. For me no because I know what life is like there. How, I already know. But for them, it would be a very dramatic change, very much, and with this* 'orange man.' *Yes, I am afraid. Yes, it makes me afraid. To think that... Look, I live well, with debts, with whatever comes every day. But I live well. I have my family. As a family, we are together, we are united. We are good. It makes me afraid, so so afraid that deportation would get me one day, that something like that would happen to me and for that, it ends... I tell [my son], behave yourself because when he turns eighteen, he can [legally] claim me. He can claim me; he can ask for my residency and that is the only thing I ask him daily... Behave well. Look, do it for me. If you are going to do something, think about it...there would be consequences.*

As a mother who is unauthorized and raising her children in the U.S., Susana encouraged her son to behave as well as he could so that he did not obtain a "bad record" before he turned twenty-one when he could petition for her authorization processing. In the meantime, Susana fears detention and deportation. While being deported is a fear for some U.S. citizens' parents, the detention process is also feared and with good reason. If a judge gives an unauthorized immigrant twelve months of jail time, or confinement for immigration purposes this translates into felony and a person even with LPR status can be deported due to felony charges. This is true even if a local judge issues a twelve-month sentence for a misdemeanor. Once detained, these persons have no rights in terms of knowing when they will be deported.

People get caught in a detention center "limbo" when they have no power over their time nor their ability to plan with knowledge of when they will be released. This

detention is temporally limitless (before death) and feeds into the industrial prison industry that is growing in rural high unemployment areas like South Carolina (Kingsolver 2016b). U.S. immigration courts are known for their "backlogs," as if this kind of delay – and demand on persons' lives – was unavoidable, even commonplace and acceptable. Their temporal rights are not recognized. This aspect of the detention merits further investigation in terms of systemic human rights abuses.

Zulima, a successful marketera, had been in the U.S. for twenty-two years, but still had "no papers" when I spoke with her even though her daughters were both born here. She went back to her hometown in Mexico in 2006 to visit her mother who was sick and ended up dying. Then she tried to come back and got caught at the border three times. She went with her now twenty-three-year-old daughter to "get papers," but she got turned down because of those three attempted crossings which are on her federal record. She worried she would never get access to legal documentation. She told me that she felt that her binational relatives (and especially, the ones with U.S. citizenship) did not understand the fear and vulnerability she faced every day.

As a binational kin group, certain members are far more vulnerable than others. But as a kin group, they are collectively fearful of family separation which I theorize as a form of everyday violence. Daily, Zulima, Oscar, Gloria and their relatives – and other binational families like theirs – negotiate unequal im/mobility within their kin group which is dialectically produced by the U.S. immigration system, and the ways in which families collectively navigate the system. Later in the chapter I discuss the IRCA and how these families beceme binational or obtain legal status in both the U.S. and Mexico from the perspectives of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group. The im/mobility stories shared – in the next segement of the chapter – show how bureaucratic paperwork constitutes a kind of kin work (di Leonardo 1984, 1986) which is gendered work that family members take on collectively to mitigate the risks of the individualizing U.S. immigration system. This is a bureaucratic process – a process of political economic becoming (Connolly 1995; Gibson-Graham 2006) that involves community formation (Hakyemez 2016). The stories also illustrate the various temporalizations or "limbos" – produced by socio-legal "limbo" of state status (Chávez 2008) – that differentially positioned members of the binational kin group endure and the ways in which these

examples of “waiting” can be understood as state violence (Auyero 2012). Even though as a group they work on particular members’ “papers,” ultimately as individuals many of them must live out the temporality produced by their decisions and the U.S. immigration system.

Binational: IRCA, Kin, and Political Process

U.S. immigration legal documentation process is linked to transnational class process. Kin can collectively boost the chances of accessing naturalization or U.S.-sanctioned immigration status for individuals in their group through various practices. In U.S. immigration law, the term is “family unification.” However, neoliberal rhetoric now negatively refers to this as “chain migration.” While they wait on U.S. immigration processing, they share advice on lawyers and knowledge on how to navigate the immigration system and other governmental agencies as a person who fills out and signs paperwork within their kin network. In this sense, they are not unlike Kurdish kin waiting on the Turkish court system to decide on the fate of their kin while becoming political actor-subjects in the process (Hakyemez 2016). As the stories show, Guzmán-Ortega-Torres members discuss strategies for overcoming obstacles that are due to bias by attempting to access certain documentation services – like acquiring drivers’ licenses from particular state jurisdictions in the southeastern U.S.

How did binational families become a MX-U.S. cultural group? How did four million mixed-status families (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017) get some form of state membership in both Mexico and the U.S.? The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family became a MX-U.S. binational kin group through the naturalization path made possible by the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. U.S. immigration policy has historically been based on two key issues: family reunification and temporary work visas. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 was the result of a decade long conversation that started with the Carter Administration’s Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy in the 1970’s. IRCA reflects these two pillars. Many consider IRCA as a “carrot and stick” neoliberal policy, or a compromise, a mixture of pro- and anti-immigrant policy that was created through confidentially (Kanstroom 2007:227). As such, it was described by politicians as a “three-legged stool” with one leg

being the employer sanctions, one being legalization of unauthorized U.S. residents, and one being border enforcement (MPI 2005). IRCA was intended to curb unauthorized immigration to the U.S. However, as history shows, human migration phenomena do not depend solely on state policy nor intervention.

IRCA is remembered for its legalization or "naturalization" component. The first step on this pathway involved application for a temporary work permit which would issue each recipient an "alien number" or A-1 number, conferring a kind of U.S.-state authorized, temporary legal existence. This number is also given to people as they are put into detention and go through the deportation process. There were two groups of unauthorized eligible applicants for this process. One group were residents who had lived in the U.S. territory since before January 1, 1982. The other group went through the seasonal agricultural workers (SAW) program to access a temporary work permit that would then allow them to access lawful permanent residency (LPR), or "green card" status. The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group first became binational through the SAW program. Then over the course of the last three decades, members with U.S. legal status applied for family members so that they too could access some form of U.S. legal status. Many of these applications were done by LPRs in the U.S. for relatives still residing in Mexico.

To qualify for SAW, applicants to provide proof that they worked at least 90 days of seasonal agricultural labor in particular crops (perishable crops like tomatoes) during the previous year, from May 1985 to May 1986. Applicants did not need to meet civic or language requirements. They paid nominal fees to file their paperwork, and the overall process took less time than the other IRCA options. While only 250,000 applicants were expected to file through the SAW program, 1.3 million filled paperwork (Newton 2008). The publicized idea behind the SAW provision was that this would produce a domestic farm labor force, especially in places like California which relied so heavily on the circular migration of agricultural workers from Mexico[38].

[38] In addition to SAW, there was the Replenishment Agricultural Worker Program (RAW) in the case of a shortage of labor but this was never implemented. SAW and RAW show how U.S. immigration policy is based in a logic of "supply management" and acts as a foreign policy.

The last provision that IRCA enacted was the expansion and revitalization of the H-2A "guest worker" visa program which issued temporary work visas to agricultural workers.[39] The H-2 visa program was created in 1943 under the Immigration and Nationality Act specifically for sugar cane farmworkers in Florida. Then it was revised in 1986 with the Immigration and Reform Act and divided into two sections: H-2A for agricultural worker visas and H-2B for all other worker visas. Mostly, workers from Jamaica, Guatemala, and Mexico come through this visa program with about three quarters of the total H-2A visa-holding workers coming from Mexico (Baur 2008:5). The "guest worker" visa program worked through private labor brokerage firms to match workers from other countries with farming enterprises in the U.S. Farming enterprises pay for each worker they "import" to work seasonally. Though the H-2A program does not exclusively contract males, the vast majority of workers who receive visas are men (Smith-Nonini 2009).

Scholars argue that the outcomes of IRCA symbolize the power of the agricultural lobby. This is illustrated by the creation of SAW, the RAW program (which never went through) and the expansion and revitalization of the H-2A "guest worker" program (Newton 2008) that got its starts in practice after the passage of IRCA. All of these "exceptional" programs were strongly opposed by Alan Simpson, one of the principle architects of IRCA. He condemned the creation of a temporary "guest worker" program because he purported that these workers would "become permanent," cause issues in terms of foreign policy and engender "illegal immigration" (Baur 2008; Newton 2008). In terms of the actual amnesty granting process and the paperwork it would require, Simpson (and ultimately the bill) supported the use of existing Mexico and U.S. state-sanctioned documents possessed by then unauthorized residents for this amnesty process.

The history of how the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres MX-U.S. kin group became binational reflects a portion of the unique Mexico-U.S. relationship – a relationship between two states and nations which have interwoven over time. This is clear in the case of the "binational agricultural production system" which depends upon and encourages the mobility of Mexican workers (not families) between Mexico and the U.S. (Palerm

[39] The previous "guest worker" visa program was known as the Bracero program, discussed in chapter two and ended in 1965 after outrage expressed by civil society.

and Urquiola 1993). Palerm and Urquiola argue that IRCA was an attempt to "uncouple the relationship" with employer sanctions which would make hiring unauthorized migrants illegal (1993:348). Many employers (especially in the agricultural sector) attempted to circumvent this employer of unauthorized workers sanction through triangular work relations, or subcontracting enterprises to manage their workers for them.

After more than 30 years without an immigration reform, the U.S. has approximately eleven million unauthorized residents and is considered to be a "broken" immigration system (Massey and Sánchez 2010) that some scholars believe needs better "management" (Massey 2002). These estimated eleven million unauthorized residents are part of families, and they make up an estimated four million MX-U.S. mixed legal status families (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017:4). Legalization creates mixed-status families. Legalization is a process produced via temporalization, and it is not a neutral process. U.S. legal status (and the gradation of these statuses) create asymmetrical power relations within kin (cultural) groups. Those who arrived in the five years between the January 1, 1982 cutoff date for the general IRCA-backed legalization and the law's 1987 implementation were ineligible for the program.

Many of these people were the immediate relatives of people who did qualify for legalization. The INS originally held that legalized migrants should wait until receiving permanent residency and then apply to sponsor family members for immigration through normal channels. Because this policy left a large number of families in a mixed legal-illegal status, the INS eventually provided "indefinite voluntary departure" allowing many families to stay together in a quasi-legal status immigration advocates criticized because it was yet another limbo status and arbitrarily applied (MPI 2005). It also led to mixed, uneven access to U.S. state sanctioned circulation and with it, human security.

IRCA began a legalization or binationalization process for many Mexican American families in the southeastern U.S. today. Within kin groups, particular members take on the bureaucratic navigation work, time commitments, and responsibility involved in the bureaucratic process of applying for U.S. state-sanctioned circulation documentation. Only certain people are given access to this U.S. "naturalization" and "legalization" (of presence) process. Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz offers a flow chart that is helpful in making sense of how often difficult the process is and how the majority of

people in the U.S. without state-sanctioned permission (or documents) are denied access to the opportunity to "legalize" (2017: xii-xiii). The flowchart shows the varied "routes" that only some immigrants can afford to explore with the aim of accessing legal U.S. status. What the flowchart does not illustrate is the indefinite time horizon for some nor the fact that most people seeking "legalization" are doing so through the "family reunification" or "family sponsorship" programs and thus, must begin with a privileged "nuclear" family members (spouse, parent, or child, and currently a sibling) who has U.S. legal status as a citizen or LPR. Many of these persons gained their status through either birth or (if traced back) through the 1986 amnesty program, the opening to an opportunity to gain state-sanctioned status or "legal" presence in the U.S. territory. These mix-status families resulted from this amnesty program and kin members assisted in the long-term bureaucratic work of navigating the documentation process.

A temporal lens on the U.S. immigration system is instructive in that it reveals the injustices that immigrants face during the bureaucratic process of accessing U.S. legal status. Immigration backlogs – whether in the court system or through the administrative processing – produce temporalities. The system slowed even more so with the increased backlogs of the court systems after IRCA passed in 1986. Even though there was an existing backlog for family reunification applications, the number of people receiving lawful permanent residency through IRCA increased. Thus, the number of family reunification applications increased which revealed INS's insufficient resources. One of the sticking points during this process was the definition of "continuous presence" (MPI 2005:5). IRCA resulted in more deportations and detentions, and a slower U.S. immigration system.

Collective Navigation of an Individualizing System

Even though U.S. immigration policy can be characterized as individualizing, members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres Mexican American kin group tend to navigate the bureaucratic system collectively. They are an example of how binational (Mexican-United Statesian) families came to be a socio-legal, cultural group. These im/mobility stories and the temporalities that each circumstance produce illustrate the varied process of "binaturalization" (or "legalization") that differentialy positions members of a network

of Mexican American families, like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres. This is a process of navigation which shows "the myriad encounters (people) grapple with in globalized contexts and efforts to exercise agency within constraints" that often result from neoliberal policy (Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007:5). The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group began their binationalization process after the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

I agree with Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz when she states that, "immigration processing is a family affair" (2017:10), and I would add a bureaucratic one. Weber sees bureaucracy as central to modern capitalism, as a way of legitimizing domination through rationalization – to keep social order as it is (1968[2006]). Bureaucracy is a dehumanizing set of regulations, procedures and rules that are used to mark private from public, and legal from illegal. In the case of the U.S. immigration system, it plays the role of the mediator between people the state deems as belonging and those deemed as other – and as such, potential enemy threat. State-sanctioned or legal "permanence" comes not from crossing the border nor from contributing to the collective well-being of a community – as does cultural citizenship which is a "process of self-making and being-made in relation to nation-states and transnational processes" (Ong 1996:37) – but instead from successfully passing through the bureaucratic process of documentation and legitimization, claim-making through paperwork.

The unexamined use of 'transnational' obscures this process – this relation to and interaction with the state that can be theorized as a process of becoming – that is necessary for the creation of MX-U.S., mixed-status families. Engaging with the state through this process produces varied temporalities for members of the same family, and these temporalities are an important aspect of their experiences of inequitable access to U.S. legal statuses. People access legal status through paperwork which requires payment and particular communication skills and bureaucratic knowledge. They can and often do pool (or collectively gather) money to pay relatives' legal fees. However, who goes through the process and which members attempt to obtain legal status depends on which members already have binational status (U.S.-MX) and the resources (financial, temporal, and intellectual) to take on this type of political work.

Often women in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group assist with or are completely in charge of completing the paperwork that other kin members need to gain access to U.S. circulation documentation – the documentation needed to legally travel between the U.S. and Mexico. These women navigate the bureaucratic system – make the appointments, transport their relatives, gather and fill out the appropriate paperwork, and often translate and interpret. In fact, in this case, mostly binational women in this kin group navigate this process of binationalization – meaning that they do the "kin work" required by the bureaucratic U.S. immigration system.

I follow feminist scholars who define "kin work" as entailing "the conception, maintenance, and ritual celebration of cross-household kin ties, including visits, letters, telephone calls, presents, and cards to kin" (di Leonardo 1992:248) and I would add bureaucratic navigation. Kin work is diverse and through this work (and other forms of work) "women play role in creating, maintaining, and reproducing transnational practices" (Pérez 2004:162). Gendered relations affect kin-based decision-making practices in migration contexts in varied ways (Boehm 2012), sometimes resulting in a renegotiation between genders (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2006). For the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres, (often transnational) kin work includes organizing and participating in life course rituals, care taking for children and elderly, and property management (for their homes and sometimes farmland and equipment, in both Mexico and the U.S.). This follows another pattern of gendered work spheres in that intergenerational groups of women in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin network take up the task of organizing and coordinating the funds for life course ritual events. All kin work entails affect, which is important but not the focus of this dissertation. There are clearly gendered (and gendering) and generational responsibilities within this mixed-status U.S.-MX kin group with younger generations of women doing most of the bureaucratic labor for the group.

Grandmother Waiting for a Tourist Visa

When I first visited the rancho in southwestern Guanajuato, María Luz – a grandmother in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family – had just begun the U.S. tourist visa acquisition process. Her binational nieces –who are Mexican citizens and U.S. lawful permanent residents – were guiding her through the process, making appointments in

agencies and explaining to María Luz what she needed to do. One late summer day, I was at María Luz's house sweeping the kitchen floor after a meal. Julia was washing the plates in the outside sink; and Manuela was tending to her two children who had just run out of the kitchen into the traspatio, we heard someone using a moneda (*coin*) to knock on the transpatio gate. It was Consuela, one of the nieces. After she made her presence known, she came in through the gate. Consuela is in her twenties and travels – as a U.S. permanent resident (LPR) and a Mexican citizen – rather freely between Mexico and the U.S. for a young, single woman in this kin group. She prefers driving between the U.S. and Mexico. But, these days, she usually takes a plane instead and uses her family car (which they keep in their garage in their house in the rancho) while in Mexico. She tells me that unlike her younger sisters, she feels more at home in Mexico than in the U.S.

We all gathered in the living room to discuss what María Luz needed to do to get a tourist visa to go visit her husband who was in the U.S. and at risk of dying from cancer before she gets her permiso (*permission*) from U.S. immigration to cross the U.S.-Mexico border to see him. He was too sick to travel. Consuela explained that María Luz would be interviewed, and they would want to know why she wanted to visit the U.S. but mostly, she told her, they would want to know why she would want to return to Mexico – instead of remaining in the U.S. and out-staying her visa limit of six months.

At the interview, she would need to show proof (like seed receipts) of her agricultural investments in Mexico. She needed to tell them that she had to return after three months in October to manage her maize harvest. María Luz jumped in and said, if she didn't come back people would rob them of their harvests. Consuela also advised that as long as Alberto agreed, she should say that she is in charge of harvesting his land as well since he owned so much land and his mother already had U.S. legal status. This, she thought, the officials would understand. Alberto was also the relative who is said to be the one financially sponsoring her trip because he could prove his wealth in the U.S. with his bank account and assets. María Luz had to give one particular relative's name even though six of her nine adult children would pool their funds to cover her bills.

Consuela continued by saying that this next step in the documentation process would cost around $350, adding to previous expenses incurred due to lawyer and application fees. María Luz was concerned and thought she may need to have something

to study to be sure she would pass the interview. After Consuela was done relaying the information on how to go through this next stage in the U.S. immigration process, she left. Daniella, the younger of the two nieces, turned to me and said in Spanish, "Oh Maria how hard it is to go to your country." Three years later, after a second trip to Juarez, María Luz's mica arrived in the mail and luckily, she was able to visit her husband in North Carolina before he died three months later.

Married Women Waiting on LPR Status

In most ranchos in west-central Mexico, you could probably find women and men discussing the U.S. immigration system – conversations full of hope and fear. Some of them may even be in the middle of their immigration paperwork process. In the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho, I met married women with children waiting on the U.S. immigration system. There were probably men waiting as well, but I did not meet them. They work in their homes, in fields, in factories, businesses, offices and schools in Mexico while their husbands and many of their relatives live and work in the U.S. They see their kin-based collective strategy as simple, as their contemporary cultural norm used to mitigate individualized risks for particular kin members who otherwise would not be able to afford or access it. Before the 2000's, many men from these villages would practice circular migration. They'd travel to the U.S. to earn a living – in dollars – during agricultural work seasons to then return to their rancho to live and farm with their wives and families. Some would travel with U.S. documentation and some would not. Like in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres family, many of these men (and a few women) who were working in agriculture in the 1980's gained LPR status through the SAW amnesty provision of IRCA.

After receiving U.S. "green card" status and the material circulation document (called *la mica* by these families), these (mostly) men filled out the LPR paperwork for their wives and children to join them in the legally in the U.S. – often with help from bilingual members of younger generations in their kin group. Often, these bureaucracy navigators were wives of their nephews and sons. Most of the women (whom I spoke with) who received LPR through this process via their husband's legal status waited in their rancho in Mexico with their children for nearly a decade before moving to the U.S.

to reunite. While in the rancho, these women worked in their homes, caring for elders and children and often, managing the household and farming resources. During that decade of waiting, the men visited during the holiday season from late November to January, a season that has become known as the migrant season in places like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho.

Women wait on the U.S. immigration system, on the bureaucratic process as subject-actors, in the process of becoming. They act while they wait with their relatives and neighbors who may never access U.S. documentation. While I sat with these women in the evenings before dusk on the cement stoop outside the corner tienda just up the hill off the highway, we watched their children play in the empty, dry, dusty street. All the children would move off to the side of the road, out of the way when the occasional red New Holland or green and yellow John Deere tractor, truck or sedan would roll through – workers on their way home. One of these evenings, I sat and talked with a group of "waiting" mothers and their children, after we as a group made a batch of green and red tamales. After an hour the group slimmed and Diana, a young married woman about my age in her late twenties, asked me about how people would racially perceive her and her daughter in the U.S. She was considered as a prieta (*dark-skinned)* mestizo in Mexico. "Will people think I'm am an indigenous person?" she asked me in Spanish between sips of orange Fanta. She did not know how she would be seen because she had never been to South Carolina where Diana was going to meet her husband who worked as a tractorista on a grape farm.

Interest peaked with this turn of conversation for her friend, Ofelia – another woman who was waiting on her mica (*U.S. legal documentation card)* to arrive – who then opened her shoulders to face Diana and me. These questions pertained to Ofelia as well, but in a different way because it was her son and her husband who would potentially be racialized in the U.S. in this manner, not her. She was freckle-faced with blue eyes and chestnut brown hair. She would not be racialized in the same way as Diana in the U.S. Ofelia's husband was in Dalton, Georgia working in agriculture and carpet factories, she told me. "We are waiting for the paperwork to go back," she said in Spanish as she gestured towards her son, a four-year old U.S. citizen. They were staying with her aunt in her rancho while they lived in Mexico. She was uncertain of when or if

her paperwork – her circulation documentation – would arrive in the mail but said that they would wait for it and then move back in with her husband in Dalton, Georgia.

The temporalities of their everyday lives were organized around the fact that their mobility who was currently limited by the U.S. immigration system, which deems their "presence" in the U.S. as "unlawful." Diana lived with her mother in the rancho, in the casita (*small house*) that she grew up in. She felt that her life as a married woman and mother was on hold as she waited to be reunited with her husband, and for her U.S. state-sanctioned documentation. She and her sibling were married, but she was the only one living at home. She told me that during "migrant season" when her husband came to Mexico, they lived together in "her" house in a rancho that was about a ten-minute drive from the rancho where she grew up – and where mostly resided with her mother and daughter while her husband was in the U.S.

This was similar to the residential norm for families in is area: once married, the bride moves in with the groom, and usually into his family's house. In kinship terms, this is a patrilocal arrangement, in the sense that the bride moves into the groom's parents' house (where he already resides). This could be looked at as an example of "new family units" in the sense that they go through a process of fragmentation and reintegration (Torrealba 1989). Since circular migration has become a norm for many of the men in these ranchos – and the kin groups of which they are a part – this residential pattern has shifted in the migration context. This is one of the many results of migration that are evident in the kin realm in Guanajuato (Lamy 2013).

Women (and their children) waiting for U.S. legal authorization often stay in their parents' house, some citing the financial need with elderly parents relying on the remittances sent by their children or sons-in-law. Others cite security, believing that women and children should not live alone in a house: the more people the better. Others said this allowed them to care for their parents as much as they could before they moved to the U.S. Whatever the reasons, these relatives tended to express tension when allocating daily chores and sadness when discussing the U.S. as if they were "left behind" by their loved ones to be forgotten in Mexico.

For Diana, the holiday (or migrant) season was a stressful time because her in-laws also came to Mexico and lived in "her" house in their rancho down the road from

her hometown. Her in-laws had LPR status and lived in the same town as her husband in South Carolina. She felt more welcomed in her rancho but loved her house and was happy to live domestically in their house with her husband and daughter, at least for that short period of the year. Diana did not live in "her" house in his rancho when he was not in Mexico. Instead, she lived with her mother and struggled with the dual (seemingly contradictory) role of being both a child to her mother and a mother to her child. Though she had the physical house, she was still not the matriarch of a home of her own. She was anxiously awaiting her papers so that she could join her husband in South Carolina and live and act as a wife and mother year-round with her family in her new home.

Of course, children are waiting on the U.S. immigration system too. Deborah Boehm argues that the U.S. state interjects itself into "family life" and thus, family organization and decision-making processes (2008). It seems that this kind of interjection can be theorized as a kind of everyday violence. Though I did not conduct interviews with children, while washing dishes outside in the pillar at her house, Adelita – Diana's cousin – would talk to me about her daughter and discussed how – when her father came home from the U.S. for the holiday season – she would not leave his side. She reasoned that her daughter was old enough to not understand why he must leave and why they could not go with him. Adelita and her daughter, like Diana, were also waiting on circulation documents from the U.S. immigration system.

Waiting for a U.S. Harvest Season

Since the late 2000's, some women and men with LPR or binational status who live part-time in Mexico have begun to migrate seasonally to the U.S. to work for their kin's farming enterprises. The Carolina FFV harvest season offers these LPR another season to earn an income while they subcontract out their labor to their relatives in Mexico and wait for their grains to grow and pigs to fatten. Once the Carolinas' FFV season is over, they return to harvest season and holiday festivities when lots of families celebrate with carnitas. LPR status allows them and their relatives to legally bypass the expense and complicated bureaucratic process of the H-2A agricultural "guest worker" visa which other relatives without U.S. status attempt to obtain. A few members of this binational kin network who live and farm in the Carolinas have recently brought relatives

to the U.S. on H-2A visas to work with them for the harvest season. This clearly injects a power dynamic, since relatives are then both employers and immigration system navigators. Some men worked as contracted H-2A workers with agricultural enterprises that were not owned by their kin.

Potential recipients of U.S. H-2A agricultural "guest worker" visas live in their rancho waiting to hear from the U.S. government while working on farms for themselves, for relatives or for others. Their situation is distinct from that of many indigenous migrants working as mobile harvesters in Mexico (Lara Flores 2011). These "temporary guest workers" are young men and can be considered as another cultural group waiting (while acting) in their rancho in the Bajío. Some of these men imagine their futures with the visas. They talk about waiting for it to arrive and how their lives will change, while others are past H-2A "guest worker" visa recipients, working in agriculture in the rancho and hoping not to have to return to that way of life – though often pressured by relatives to do so. This is a kind of perpetual "return migration" which differs from return migration as an act of finality (Levine 2016) – that has been discussed in transnational literature as a Mexican migrant's dream of return (Striffler 2007). They express the desire to practice circular migration (Rouse 1991) that is not "managed" by public-private entities. The H-2A option is always present, but this work "option" is not often not a good one from the worker's perspective.

On one of our numerous enterprise errands around the rancho, María Luz and I stopped in to visit one of her comadres, Beatriz, who was in her late sixties. Beatriz told me that she had "nada más que tres hijos" (*just three children*), two sons who she said went to El Norte but had come back. One was there for five years and the other only lasted two years, she said. But since they didn't have "papers," they decided not to cross the border again because it had become more expensive and dangerous. It was especially expensive if you got caught and sent back. She said for those who could go, they went and the others, well, they just stayed. One of her sons lived with his family in another rancho up the road. The son that lived with her (Pedro) used to migrate between North Carolina and Florida and worked in tomatoes, amongst other crops. She was very proud that he could speak English. She said that he used to talk on the phone with his patrón (*boss*) at her house, but she had no idea what he was talking about. With this comment

she laughed and Pedro, his sister and his wife drove up in an early 1990's Ford truck, covered in mud.

Pedro's mother mentioned that they heard that there was a program where people go to work in the U.S. for six months at a time, and she thought that it would be a good idea for him to sign up. At this idea, Pedro looked down at his feet. He later told me that he mostly had negative memories of the U.S. He did not want to leave his wife in Mexico to work in the conditions he endured during his last few trips to work in the U.S. He wanted to stay in his rancho, raise a family, and farm his family's land. But, earning a living in dollars seemed necessary if you wanted a successful farming enterprise in Mexico – and the whole family (group) could use that work and U.S. income.

Conclusion: Binational Kin, Policing Presence, Fear, and Belonging

Members and friends of binational Mexican-American kin groups are waiting on the U.S. immigration system, waiting for access to human security, to long-term U.S. legal status certainty. They work together to navigate the very individualizing process and the temporalities of those different relations and positionalities within the U.S. immigration landscape. To be a migrant, today in a globalized world, is to live in at least two worlds at once, to have a kind of bifocal lens (Rouse 1991). Migrants' experience and make sense of multiple contexts from varied political economic positions. Scholars like Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller call upon the concept of simultaneity to make this point. Simultaneity allows for the analysis of varied ways of belonging in a (transnational) social field that extends beyond the space assumed to be linked to the nation-state (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). I do not find fault with this as my final chapter will show. I do believe, however, that scholars must also recognize the limits of simultaneity and who suffers – within a binational kin group due to the inability to access simultaneity – and how.

It is important to acknowledge the varied and unequal access to simultaneity and circulation as a form of everyday violence produced by the state. It is important to also show the way that this approach – of "precarity as policy" (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017) actualized as a policing of presence – produces everyday violence that takes away from migrants' ability to benefit from or share their diverse and valuable perspectives. The

limits of simultaneity shine through when multiple temporalities (and vantage points) are brought into conversation together. Then, the everyday violence of those temporalities can be recognized as ambiguous loss, as an inability to plan your own life in the long-term due to uncertainty, and as a perpetual feeling of belonging “neither here nor there” (Zavella 2011).

Immigration entails a process of becoming which includes social questions concerning belonging to multiple (sometimes competing) cultural groups. Belonging has a temporal dimension and some socio-legal categories label certain people as temporal others – as “migrants” who are perpetual newcomers (Çağlar 2016). Group identity – as a binational kin group for instance – can challenge this marginalizing construct and assist people marginalized as “temporary migrants” in resisting the fear produced by anti-immigrant policy and programming.

Today, there are limits to simultaneity for many Mexican Americans and their kin; there are unjust limits to the family rights and mobility they can access. While they have achieved cultural citizenship (Ong 1996), they have not been granted national citizenship, and the everyday security of state-sanctioned belonging that comes with it. Without state authorization and acceptance, many racialized Latinx in the U.S. will continue to live in fear. This fear is due to the U.S. immigration system and their use of local law enforcement agents to police the presence of people without U.S. authorization and even those with it. With the convergence of the anti-immigrant “deterrence” policy with “entrapment” policy, many Mexican American families are blocked from accessing a path through the U.S. immigration system to long-term belonging and towards human security. Temporary status produces and normalizes uncertainty and precarity.

The U.S. immigration policy decides who gets to be “reunified” with loved ones in the U.S. The policy along with the family decision-making process determines who is not included in legalization projects. This creates internal inequalities among kin that when played out illustrate the everyday violence of U.S. immigration policy. Family separation is a form of everyday violence that severely effects all members involved, and communities. Many kin members who live in Mexico and cannot visit the U.S. and those in the U.S. who are too busy working and yet do not make enough money to visit Mexico feel that they are not understood by their kin on the other side of the border. Many people

without U.S. authorization expressed this when they told me, “They don’t understand us” – as people (their relative) without U.S. authorization. Some complain about money matters and others about chores they are asked to do by binational relatives. Their belonging and bonds are strained not because of the physical distance but because of the social distance that unequal U.S. legal status has created within their kin group and the insecurity and fear that the U.S. immigration context has embroiled them in. The next chapter discusses cooperative practices that members of this kin group use to collectively organize farming enterprises in the U.S. and between the U.S. and Mexico – practices that overcome the social distance created by the U.S. immigration system and the market inequities created by NAFTA. It links this discussion to the insecurity crisis that many families are experiencing in rural Mexico – a crisis that is causing binational farming families to consider abandoning their dreams of building farming enterprises and long-term livelihoods in Mexico.

NAFTA-TLCAN: Farming Livelihoods and Human In/Securities

Part III. Chapter 7

In April of 2016, I went to visit Hernan at his home in southern Appalachia. When I arrived, he and his grandson were building a shed next to his vegetable fields. I found a spot to park my car where I could in their dirt driveway which was filled with cars, trucks, and various pieces of farm equipment. After greeting each other, Hernan told me with a concerned look that a lady called to tell him about what he would have to do to be able to sell his produce that season and every season after. She explained that these production regulation changes were due to FSMA. He said as a "mini-ranchero" life is really hard and getting harder with these regulations. He was seated to one side on top of a corrugated metal shed with a green grass-covered Appalachian hill behind him in the distance – just beyond five acres or so of tractor-set lines of white plastic mulch ready for vegetable transplants. His grandson (Gabriel) was standing below him. Hernan, then, said to me that with the possible new president (Mr. Trump) he might have to pack his suitcase and leave all of this behind.

There he sat among potential future harvests and centuries-old Appalachian hills behind him. He built this place with his family members – many of whom were U.S. citizens. He was building for the future and contributing to society, the rural economy, and the agri-food system. But, there he sat, questioning his future – worrying that he would be pushed out of his home, deported and separated from his family in the U.S. His insecurity was apparent in his eyes as he looked up at me from under the bill of his baseball cap. He then, half-jokingly, asked if I would plant for his family when I went to

Mexico later that year. He reasoned aloud that then if the worst happened – he was deported and they had to move back to Mexico – they would be able to harvest and have some source of livelihood when they arrived in Mexico. Unlike the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres group, Hernan is not part of an established, transnational farming kin circuit. He could not call upon relatives to work with him collectively to secure a livelihood in Mexico while still in the U.S.

Within the NAFTA-TLCAN context, farming families – like Hernan's – face livelihood insecurities in the U.S. – especially if they are not part of binational farming families whose members act as part of kin-based farming collectives in and between the U.S. and Mexico. Hernan left Mexico due to livelihood insecurities as a basic grain farmer and due to human insecurities; he was fearful that his family's lives would be defined and unjustly limited by narco-state violence. Human and livelihood insecurity are the most pressing problems facing rural communities in Mexico today. This chapter shows how the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres – a binational kin-based group of farming families – uses collective strategies to negotiate the in/securities of their multiple North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)-shaped agricultural political economic contexts and positionalities. Here, I refer to NAFTA as NAFTA-TLCAN (Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte) to re-enforce the consistent need to consider the multiple positionalities, contexts, and perspectives involved in the trade liberalization process in and between the U.S. and Mexico – as many have done before me (Correa and Gazol 2015; Klahn et al. 2000; Adler Hellman 1994; Kingsolver 2001).

The chapter begins by discussing "dumping" (or illegal competition) in the context of NAFTA-TLCAN. "Dumping" is the alleged exporting of commodities at

excessively low market price for a short period to eliminate competitors and monopolize the market in the long-term. I discuss this through the lens of the two principle cash crops of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational group: fresh-market tomatoes in the southeastern U.S. and white corn in the Mexican Bajío. Then the chapter explores the ways in which these binational kin use collective strategies (organized by cooperative arrangements) to create alternative livelihoods – alternatives to working for the transnational corporations that dominate globalized production and market share. The second part of the chapter shares ethnographic accounts and im/mobility stories of binational farming families' experiences of human insecurity in Mexico as targets of narco-state violence. The chapter concludes with a short discussion of the link between farming families' human and livelihood insecurities and inequalities produced by the NAFTA-TLCAN process.

NAFTA-TLCAN: Binational Farming Families

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin-based farming group organizes their varied, year-round livelihood schedules around two principle cash crops: fresh-market tomatoes in the U.S. and white maize in the Bajío. These are global crops (Kingsolver 2011) which gained particular recognition within the trade liberalization debate. Families like these mitigate insecurities characterized by uncertainties, high risk, and market price volatility produced by NAFTA-TLCAN. Varied perspectives and interest groups see the treatment of each of these crops as threats to their livelihood security which determine if they will be positioned as the "winners" or "losers" of NAFTA-TLCAN, the privatization process, and the zero-sum global capitalist logic that guides this "free market" ideology. Despite

their lack of "competitive advantage," farming families mitigate the livelihood insecurity through collaborative projects – solving the collective action dilemma through kin relations – as flexible producers who call upon alternative logics and practices (Rothstein 2007) to sustain their farming livelihoods from one season to the next.

As a binational kin group, the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres maintain a transnational kin circuit in that they create and tap into circulations across regions and state lines to coordinate activities through kin relations. Their kin relations support their socio-economic organizational practices (and vice versa) as allied groups of capitalist farming families who utilize collective strategies (like cooperative production arrangements) to spread risk transregionally. In and across the U.S. and Mexico through kin relations, they diversify their farming portfolios by engaging in multiple cash crop farming enterprises and by acting creatively through redistributive practices within their kin network. They pair the less complex production system of basic grains (e.g., white corn, sorghum, and wheat) with the more complex production system of tomatoes and other warm season vegetables in a binational, multi-sited context.

NAFTA-TLCAN: "Dumping" White Corn and Fresh-market Tomatoes

NAFTA-TLCAN negotiations began in 1986, the same year that Mexico entered GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). The foundation of GATT was first developed during Bretton Woods Conference in 1944 after the end of WWII as part of efforts to finance the reconstruction of Europe and economically integrate nation-states on a global scale. This conference resulted in the creation of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, amongst other supranational institutions. These efforts

continued over the next half century and culminated with the creation of the World Trade Organization in 1994.

During the mid-1980's, Mexico was not a member of GATT, nor considered to be a democracy. The 1980's in Mexico became known as the "lost decade" due to a sovereign debt crisis and severe currency devaluation, linked to the petroleum boom and later bust of the late 1970's (Smith-Nonini 2015). The Mexican peso was vastly devalued against the dollar for the first time. In the 1980's, the IMF and the World Bank loaned Mexico funds to manage their state financial crisis, under specific structural adjustment conditions including the stipulation that Mexico enter GATT.

At this point in 1986, NAFTA-TLCAN negotiations began. The then-presidents of Mexico (Carlos Salinas de Gortari) and the U.S. (George H.W. Bush) first signed NAFTA-TLCAN in 1992. NAFTA-TLCAN began on January 1994 – inaugurated by an uprising and global protest centered in Chiapas organized by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN). The implementation of the deal was set up in phases so that certain commodity producers and industries could adjust to the restructured market conditions within the economic block. "Free Trade Agreements" were proliferating around the world as part of a growing "fast policy" trend which globally spread policy texts (Peck and Theodore 2015). For this reason, the 1980's marked the start of trade neoliberalization on a global scale for many countries.

The chief claim of the neoliberal "free trade" ideology is based on the following concepts: privatization, economic integration, economy of comparative advantage, economy of scale, efficiencies, contributions to the state by social welfare recipients, and, many would argue, externalization of costs. As many social scientists have argued (and

many economists have rejected), when these are guiding concepts, economic development is inequitable and uneven (Harvey 2005) due to a deteriorating redistribution of wealth and resources (Laurell 1995). The outcomes do not result in financial benefits for all parties involved – as the case of basic grain farmers in Mexico proves (de Ita 2007). However, neoclassical economics promoted the notion that more foreign direct investment (FDI) would "lift all boats" and push people from working in the informal sector into the formal sector and, in turn, raise a country's GDP.

In Mexico's case, this somewhat took place prior to 2001 – with some people in specific regions with specific skillsets acquiring jobs in sectors like the auto industry in the Bajío for instance. However, overall twenty years later, severe global inequalities have resulted from this trade liberalization process which proved to be especially injurious to small-scale primary producers and farming communities (Correa and Gazol 2015). In the agricultural sector especially, global comparative market exchange advantage is only possible for particular kinds of enterprises, in particular regions and states, and at particular times of year, or market cycles (Flores Mondrágon 2000). An economy of comparative advantage is not neutral. To promote policy and conduct analysis of this context as if it were neutral is to be dangerously reductionist.

The elimination of tariffs under the umbrella of NAFTA-TLCAN began on 1994 and finished in 2009, fifteen years later. Euphemized in neoliberal terms as "opening markets," each of these phases ushered in changes for particular commodities. For instance, "free trade" regulations (i.e., elimination of tariffs and subsidies) began for automobiles in 2004 and, then – at the fifteen-year mark in 2009 – for "sensitive products" corn, dry beans, and powdered milk in Mexico and peanuts, sugar, and orange

juice from concentrate in the U.S. In Mexico's case, these products were deemed "sensitive" due to food in/security concerns. However, the protectionist trade mechanisms that are part of the NAFTA-TLCAN that could have benefited rural grain producers (e.g., tariff-rate quota) were not called upon by the Mexican government because of their concern for the cost of tortillas in urban areas. This meant that livelihood security of grain producers – which had long been supported by the Mexican government and economic system – was put into jeopardy to protect urban, industrial groups. Long-term food security necessitates farming livelihood security, and human security for farming families.

Within this context, supply management involves the policing of "dumping," and the allegation of "dumping" is quite serious. The power to accuse producers in a particular country "dumping" reveals significant power dynamics in terms of agricultural relations between countries and the geopolitics involved in those relations. In the context of international trade, dumping refers to when enterprises from one country will "dump" or flood a foreign country's market –intentionally oversupplying the market with excessively low market prices to severely lower the overall market prices and put domestic producers at a disadvantage. Companies do this so that they can "drive out" competitors, with unsustainable prices in the short-term so that in the long-term they can raise prices and monopolize the market. For this reason, anti-dumping provisions are included in "free trade" agreements. Food, especially fruits and vegetables, have been treated as "sensitive" or exceptional for various reasons and in particular ways – such as the seasonal production limitations and their high market values on a wholesale level. There are provisions within the International Trade Commission (ITC) that allow for the

exception of particular foodstuffs from “free trade” agreement stipulations, as long as they are proven to be central to food security.

Exceptionalism within free trade arrangements is manifest in mechanisms used for what one economist described to me as “putting order to the market” or what some may call stabilizing market exchange. Here, I will cover two pertinent mechanisms to the MX-U.S. agricultural NAFTA-TLCAN context. First, I will discuss the agricultural marketing order used by Florida winter tomato growers and shippers in the U.S. – which was discussed briefly in chapter four – and the trade dispute with Mexico that it began. Then, I will discuss the absence of a tariff-rate quota (TRQ) for white maize, which is a “sensitive product” due to food security issues in Mexico.

The idea that highly subsidized white corn grown in vast quantities in the U.S. would “fairly” compete with white corn grown by campesinos in small volumes in less developed regions of Mexico (like southern Mexico) is absurd (Flores Mondrágon 2000; Barta 2003, 2008). U.S. corn flooded Mexican markets in 1994 and caused a severe drop in market value – so much so that many scholars and activists alike correlate this with a surge of emigration from rural areas in Mexico to the U.S. in search of wage labor. Then in 2009, subsidies for Mexican corn producer (and much of the credit that was previously made available to them through Banrural) ended. Many of these corn farming families were once marketing within a food self-sufficiency program of the Mexican state, called SAM (Sistema Alimentaria Mexicana) and orchestrated by CONASUPO (Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares). These agencies and programs were dissolved at the bequest of the IMF and World Bank, as part of cuts to domestic social spending due to structural adjustment programs and “free trade” agreements.

Following what NAFTA-TLCAN proponents call an "economy of comparative advantage" approach, these supranational institutions encouraged a restructuring which involved increasing state spending in export agriculture of fruits and vegetables – an industry with at least a half century history of heavy U.S. investment and proven capital accumulation in the Mexican Bajío (Borrego 2000). It also seems that these global financial institutions influenced the switch in the corn import-export ratio for Mexico before NAFTA. In 1982, Mexico suffered a severe devaluation of the peso and Mexico's farm policy began a three decades long process of privatization of the rural economy. The Mexican state-enterprise agency CONASUPO organized market share distribution prior to 1982, but it's influence was phased out over the next two decades. CONASUPO's total corn imports constituted about 83 percent in 1983-1988 and then fell to 38% in 1989-1993 and fell again to sixteen percent in 1994-1996 (Yunez-Naude and Barceinas 2000). Worsening purchasing parity for Mexican enterprisers in the NAFTA-TLCAN context, the Mexican peso dropped in value against the U.S. dollar again in 1994, 1998, 2009, and 2015.

Under NAFTA-TLCAN and World Trade Organization provisions, Mexico could have claimed that white corn was a special food security item or "sensitive product" – one that was disproportionally important to hunger prevention. If they have done this, they could have enforced the NAFTA-TLCAN tariff-quota rate (TQR) market tool. However, the Mexican state chose not to use this tool and instead, prioritized urban consumption, assuming that the cheapest cost of tortillas would come from imported corn. This meant that domestic producers and their rural livelihood security was forfeited by the Mexican state via the NAFTA-TLCAN. "The estimated cost to Mexican producers of dumping-level prices …[have] exceeded $11 billion since 1990, with the highest losses in 1993, and in 1999 and 2000 when dumping margins exceeded 30 percent"

(Wise 2010:169). Since the financial crisis of 2008-2009 – which was experienced as a food crisis in Latin America (Daniel 2008) – grain growers' access to sustainable market prices has worsened.

Fresh-market Tomatoes

Fresh-market tomatoes grown in the winter in Florida are a different story. The tomato supply out of Florida during the winter season falls under a federal marketing order, as part of the U.S. 1937 Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act. Since the 1960's and the start of the U.S.-sanctioned embargo on trade with Cuba at the same time as the end of the bracero program, Florida and Sinaloa (Mexico) have dominated the winter fresh-market vegetable industry in the U.S. "In 1968, Florida growers used this order to keep smaller-sized Mexican tomatoes off the U.S. market" (Mares 1987:192). This maneuver resulted in the first "Tomato War," which was not resolved until seven years later when U.S. distributors of Mexican tomatoes went to court and forced the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to modify the use of the marketing order. The USDA describes the tomato marketing order as "moderately powerful" because it requires imported tomatoes to be a minimum grade and size (Mares 1987).

This began what is now called (by the media) a U.S.-Mexico "tomato trade war" (Strom 2013). This continued through the 1970's, 1980's, 1990's and 2010's with the renegotiation of NAFTA-TLCAN. Mexican producers were supposed to be positioned with the "comparative advantage" since this kind of farm work paid in pesos that were approximately $4.50 dollars a day (in the early 1990's) in Mexico and paid $5.00-6.00 dollars for an hour of work in the U.S. – with much of the data coming from California

(Barndt 2002). Though wages vary, in southern Appalachia, tomateros report making approximately $100 a day during peak season when they are able to work all day. Usually, they make less than this because conditions are not optimal or due to more exploitative labor relations. According to David Mares, the political scientists quoted above, “Were production carried out solely on the basis of efficiency, Mexican producers would be competing with Caribbean producers for the U.S. market. But politics is an intimate part of the trade relationship” (1987:198). However, this is not the current presumably “free trade” market dynamic due to the tomato-marketing order.

During the 1990’s, the Florida Tomato Committee – the social institution created along with the Florida winter tomato-marketing order – petitioned the USDA to take Mexico to the WTO’s International Trade Commission (ITC) to impose disciplinary tariffs and argue that field-grown tomato producers in Sinaloa were “dumping” in the U.S. fresh-tomato market. In 1996, the ITC decided not to impose tariffs, but it did find that “dumping” was occurring and ordered that Mexican tomato exports be set at a floor price (or minimum price) of $5.17 for a twenty-pound box of tomatoes sold in the U.S. Then again in the 2010’s, the U.S. Department of Commerce and Mexico amended the agreement which set a higher minimum price for Mexican tomatoes sold in the U.S. This occurred even after Mexican growers allied with companies like Walmart to defend their claim to market share and ability to set their market price (Strom 2013). I learned through interviews that this trade dispute is tied to the drug trade as well in that some industry actors believe that the “tomato dumping” is funded by black market profits. The cultural and political economic power of growers and shippers in Florida (and now Georgia perhaps due to Sonny Purdue’s position as the head of the USDA) is evident in the ways

in which this type of "protectionist" policy is understood by many in the U.S. as patriotic instead of harmful to global trade relations.

In this case, like many others found in global supply chain studies, "standards are neither impartial nor value free…standards [are] strategically [used] to advance certain interests and preferences and not others" (Bain 2010: 366). The elements of this tomato supply-demand equation for the U.S. market are shifting with changing diets and technology in both transportation and production – which is especially evident with the case of the anti-dumping case brought by U.S. growers against greenhouse-grown tomato enterprises in Ontario, Canada (VanSickle et al. 2003).

The Florida winter tomato-marketing order is an example of a (collective) political economic strategy within the neoliberal agricultural trade context in North America. It relates to the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres farming livelihoods in the U.S. because of the southeastern circuit described in chapter four. This tomato marketing order in Florida influences the entire industry and the areas in which the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres work. Though this kin group's strategies do not have the political economic power to design the market exchange conditions for the industry as the tomato marketing order does, the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group acts within this context and uses their own collective strategies to gain power in the market.

White Corn

Members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group also navigate the NAFTA-TLCAN context as white maize producers. White maize is the principle ingredient for processed tortillas in North America. As moderately capitalized basic grain producers,

these farming families once thought of themselves as campesinos and/or campesinos acomodados (*financially well-off, accommodated*). But these livelihoods now appear to be insecure due to inequitable global trade conditions and unequal purchasing parity between the U.S. and Mexico. Though many of the farming (or potentially farming) families migrated elsewhere, some remained and others have returned to Mexico from the U.S. to farm. Many of their relatives who still commercially grow basic grains are elderly. This is, in part, due to the fact that farming is no longer seen as profitable, nor sustainable due to the market price decline brought about by NAFTA-TLCAN. Many of the middle-aged to younger generations who do still farm use cooperative production arrangements with their U.S.-based relatives.

Like most policy, NAFTA-TLCAN should be described as a process rather than an event. The "opening" of markets (or elimination of tariffs and other "trade obstacles") took place in various commodity sectors over the course of fifteen years, from 1994 to 2009. While the 1970's marked the end of Mexico's exportation of corn surplus, the 1990's marked the state's retreat from subsidizing even domestic supply (i.e., food self-sufficiency), which was a priority for programs like SAM (Sistema Alimentario Mexicano) in the 1980's until the structural adjustment programs of the IMF and World Bank shifted Mexican policy priorities. In 1989, the Mexican state eliminated the guaranteed floor price for agricultural products except for beans and maize, due to the acknowledgement of the importance of these crops for national food security (Acuño Soto and Alonzo Calles 2000). By 1990, floor prices were no longer guaranteed for most agricultural products, and they were severely lessened for food critical to food security – food commodities like dry beans and corn.

CONASUPO was the state agency that regulated the supply-demand equations of import-export relations and guaranteed pricing and commercialized certain primary foodstuffs in impoverished rural areas of Mexico. It was critically important in terms of food security for low-income families. Maize market share was supposed to be protected until a later "opening" or phase of tariff eliminations, but the tariffs were dropped in 1994 as part of the first-year of food supply NAFTA policy changes. By 2000, CONASUPO was completely liquidated. Journalists, activists, and scholars alike saw this policy transition as exposing millions of farming families (throughout Mexico) to global market volatility and unequal competition with more developed countries (i.e., Canada and the U.S.). This left granjeros (*farmers*) of Mexico unprotected and brought about a process of descampesinización (*unmaking of the campesino social class*) (Otero 1999; Bartra 2002).

After the Mexican state-trading enterprise (CONASUPO) stopped buying from producers, grain producers had to sell to the few transnational corporations that acted as the principle U.S. exporters: Maseca, Archer Daniels Midland, Minsa, Arancia, and Cargill (de Ita 2007). In 1991, the Mexican state created ASERCA (Apoyos y Servicios de la Comerialization Agropecuaria or *Support Services for Agricultural Marketing*) to broker the imports and exports of maize and wheat (Yúnez-Naude and Barceinas 2004). ASERCA acts as a marketing support agency arranging marketing contracts with commercial-level basic grain producers and buyers. Its counterpart was Procampo (Programa de Apoyos Directos al Campo, or *Direct Farming Subsidy Program*), another state program for agriculturalists that was created in 1993-1994 to ease the transition into the NAFTA-TLCAN market landscape with direct subsidies to corn producers. To integrate grain growers into the global market, wholesale corn is now brokered by

ASERCA which tries to work with small- to mid-scale growers but cannot solve the main problem of unsustainable market prices. This question of integrating Mexican corn producers into the global economy still serves as a pivotal political economic talking point for revolutionary causes in Mexico (like the EZLN) and transnational groups like Via Campesina, which lobby and organize across nation-state lines for rural livelihood security.

Of all the basic grains, it seems that maize was the “net loser” in terms of the agricultural negotiations of the NAFTA-TLCAN (de Ita 2007). This is in large part due to the U.S. subsidies which allow for high levels of technology and large-volume production (Fox and Haight 2010). There was no transition time period for Mexican producers – the majority of which were small-scale producers. From 1996 to 2006 (with the exception of 1997), the amount of maize imported into Mexico was approximately double the NAFTA-TLCAN quota. Maize was prohibited as a feed grain before 1990, but after that, imported maize was a principle source of livestock feed. Ana de Ita argues that Mexico “dumped” on its own maize producers through the implementation of these “free trade” policies (2007). Between 1991 and 2006, the price of corn in the U.S. fell by 59 percent, supporting the growth of the poultry industry (de Ita 2007). In 2007 after the state had dismantled CONASUPO, the price of the tortilla in Mexico rose between 42 and 67 percent, causing a food security problem called “the tortilla crisis” and proving the “cheap tortilla” to be a “falacia macabra” (*macrabe fallacy*) of the NAFTA-TLCAN for Mexicans (de Ita 2007).

Due to the government’s decision to prioritize urban tortilla consumption (in the name of food security) over rural livelihood security, they did not attempt to defend corn

with the use of a tariff-rate quota (TRQ) – a trade policy tool that offers protection to domestic producers of critical commodities like those that pertain to food security. This meant that basic grain growers experienced another serious jolt to their livelihood and market share access in 2009 – when their subsidies ended and NAFTA-TLCAN was out of the news and deeply integrating the political economies. However, as many scholars have argued the "Mexican peasantry" (campesino class) has and continues to contest neoliberal policy – with many continuing to produce agricultural goods (Barta and Otero 2005). The next section shows how MX-U.S. families mitigate the varied food trade policy contexts that marginalize particularly positioned farming family enterprises in the U.S. and Mexico.

Binational Kin Collectives as Scale-making Projects in NAFTA-TLCAN Contexts

The exchange relations within market economies could be transformed if cooperative enterprise structure were written into market policy design (Marshall 2012). There is no simple answer to the necessity of "scaling up" for food producers in trade liberalized contexts. Food hubs are not the final answer to the local-global food dilemma (Perret and Jackson 2015) which was caused largely by consolidation of the agri-food industry. A "local food movement" must offer alternatives to the zero-sum, "economy of scale" assumptions of our current neoliberal capitalist agri-food system. The distribution of wealth, the logics that guide the system, and the exchange relations that this process entails must change to improve rural places and promote diverse and resilient economic communities.

Distributive enterprise stories can teach us how to debunk approaches to the agri-food system that center on capital accumulation and do not allow for (nor recognize) alternative arrangements. This section shares perspectives and distributive enterprise stories from women of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group to show how coordination can take place amongst small- to mid-volume food producers working within a capitalist agri-food system. These allied farming families realized that through collective strategies "gains large and small can be built into the linking of one scale to another" (Guyer 2004:94).

Researchers of empirical and evolutionary studies have argued that kin relations are central to the organizing of exchange activities – with most people preferring close kin to non-kin relations (Cronk and Leech 2013). Though kin relations form groups, they can also be hierarchical. Within the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, generation and political economic identity influence this hierarchy and thus, decision-making powers. Here, political economic identity concerns the person's relation to the U.S. state, Mexican state, and his/her multiple economic positions in and across the places and communities they engage with in North America. The inequality between the Mexican peso and the U.S. dollar re-enforces asymmetric relations within the binational kin group and the globalized agricultural industries in which they participate. This stark difference in purchasing parity creates unequal market conditions for producers. This kin group's global commodity enterprise arrangements involve a variety of relations and require collaboration that crosses over regional, national, class, generational, and gender categorical boundaries. The binational kin lens enables a recognition of this transnational class process and the role of kin-based, collective strategy within it.

These factors are embedded within the everyday practices necessary for an industry like fresh-market produce to function and can be seen through a kin network like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres. Kin ideology and the linked gendering support practices organize enterprises by designating which responsibilities (work and time commitments) are done by whom. This results in gendered work rhythms that articulate with their sector of the globalized agri-food system, as was shown in previous chapters. Importantly, however, it also lays the groundwork for operationalizing a collective strategy which can involve scale-making projects. These are made possible through cooperative practices of farming family group members working within the present (systemically inequitable) globalized agri-food system. For these binational kin, these scale-making projects are orchestrated in large part by women.

Women in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group organize their tomato and vegetable farming enterprise coalition as a scale-making project, although they would not discuss it in this way. They discuss is as a united family group, as their quotes will show later in the chapter. To theorize this reality, I draw from family firm scholars like Larissa Adler Lomnitz and Marisol Perez-Lizaur who offer concepts like organizing women and entrepreneurial action groups[40] (as nested within wider kin groups) – as I mentioned in chapter two. Larissa Adler Lomnitz and Marisol Perez-Lizaur argue that kinship and ritual as central to the political economic realm of enterprise (1987), which is most often analytically treated as separate but in practice is intertwined (Yanagisako 2002).

[40] Larissa Adler Lomnitz and Marisol Perez-Lizaur describe the latter (entrepreneurial action groups) as organized around one entrepreneur (1987:119). Of course, entrepreneurial activities carry (and are affected by) cultural meanings imparted through kinship as well. To emphasize the coordination amongst members in the group, I use the terms collective strategy and coalition instead, but see this work as building on theirs.

I follow them in this argument. However, I do not conceptualize these enterprisers as entrepreneurs because this term tends to individualize work that is truly part of collective efforts and projects. It also tends to highlight capitalist values, as if they were the only ones at work for the person who acts in that political economic role. These farming family enterprise women recognize that they are more vulnerable when they have to act alone in the fresh-market produce industry. For this reason and others, they organized a coalition of enterprises and act as "centralizing women who gather and disseminate information about their branches both within the branch and with centralizing women of other branches" (Adler Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur 1987:103). They facilitate redistribution of resources (Povinelli 1991) and enterprise collective projects, management of multiple cycles, and enhance kinship solidarity especially across geographic distances (di Leonardo 1986; Pérez 2004).

The members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group work as allied farming families to manage events, social time, exchange, flow of resources, relations, and everyday life. These families utilize their kin-based network to collectively cultivate alliances, circulate information, mitigate bureaucratic obstacles, and access economic resources over the short- and long-term. Through strategic coordination, they organize the redistribution of resource flows, channel commodities, and manage cooperative exchange relations. As a community of allied producers, these farming enterprise women act as innovators in creating value (Gudeman 2001) by using cooperation strategically within the globalized agri-food system to accumulate wealth and generate employment for themselves, their kin, and their food economy communities. I follow Alejandro González Villaruel in conceptualizing my study of this collective creative action as a

process, a relation between power and strategy (2008:148). Studies of the alternative collective strategies that small- to mid-level producers use within global agri-food commodity chains can support a re-imagining of the roles of and potentialities for these producers within the multiple political economies in which they engage.

The critical role of cooperation in food provisioning seems to be implicit in global commodity chain (GCC) studies, but not fully acknowledged. Cooperation takes place when people overcome the "collective action dilemma" or "situations in which the production of some group benefit is limited or prevented by the temptation [of an individual] to free ride" – or taking without equitably giving (Cronk and Leach 2013:9). The recognition of the potentiality of social cooperation is even more important in our current era when "insidious capitalist individualism" (Davis 2016) seems to be such a powerful organizing force for U.S. society. Domestic farm industry rights movements – like the Barzón movement in Mexico (Grammont 2001) – have developed largely within national, middle-class boundaries. But, there is a need for farming families and rural development agencies to re-imagine the possibilities for transnational cooperation.

Managing circulations and cycles as a group of allied farming families is not a simple task. Women and men work together as couples to maintain their individual farming enterprises. They work with allied kin group members who produce the same perishable commodities, and some people may think that they would consider their kin simply as competition. But, instead, these women and men organize coordination amongst the farming family enterprises to compete better as a group within the industry. This is not exactly a co-operative model and it's not exactly a corporation either. They work as a coalition of FFV enterprises. They share certain machinery, information, and

resources. And, they strategize as a group to sell under one brand. In this sense, comercio mētis (discussed in chapter five) is illustrated through their collective, scale-making project which allows for value creation and is made possible through kin-based solidarity in practice.

U.S.-based Fresh-market Tomato Coalition

This kin-based coalition is more than a safety net. It is an innovative collective strategy within an industrialized, neoliberal capitalist system. This level of trust and cooperation depends in part on metaknowledge, or the cultural knowledge that lies beneath the “coalition identities [that] help shape individuals’ social lives in important ways, and individuals, in turn, contribute to the strength of coalitions” (Cronk and Leech 2013: 122). To gain production power and buying power, these farm enterprise women organized a kin-based coalition of nine produce farming families. Silvia, one member of the coalition, explained:

> El propósito de la cooperativa es marketing, vender el producto. El comprador que nos recibe casi todo el producto. Nosotros comenzamos trabajando con los 2 compradores que nos reciben y hemos ido incorporando. Nos van pidiendo más producto. Entonces todos pueden beneficiarse. Todo el producto se vende por el medio de la cooperativa. Somos socios.
> *Marketing is the cooperative’s objective, to sell the product. There is a buyer who receives almost all of our product. We [as a group of enterprises] started to work with two buyers that received our product and we have been incorporating. They have been asking us for more product. So, we can all benefit. All the product is sold through the cooperative. We are partners.*

The women in these separate enterprises manage their paperwork together as a group and sell a large percentage of their produce as a group. They market themselves as

a Latina-led immigrant group of family-based farming enterprises. As one member, Juana described, “Se da publicidad porque somos hispanas y somos mujeres. Minorías en tres partes: mujeres, hispanas, y agricultores.” (“*It gives publicity [to their buyers] because we are Hispanic, and we are women. Minorities in three parts: women, Hispanic and agriculturalists*.”) Juana later told me that women in agriculture today must look for these kinds of opportunities, just as their female relatives in Mexico received subsidies from SAGARPA – the Mexican government’s equivalent to USDA – to buy tractors for their families’ grain farming enterprises.

These farming enterprise women work together, but they do not pool their product. They understand that there would be too much risk involved if they did, as Guadalupe explained:

> Cada quien tiene su propio establecimiento, pero todos van al mismo comprador. Somos juntos, pero no revueltos. Ella trae su trailero. Yo traigo el mío. Ella y su esposo lo lleva. Al mismo lugar, no se “mixtea” (mezcla). Entonces cada quien lo suyo y le paga depende de la clase o la calidad de lo que mandes.
> *Each person has their own establishment but everybody goes to the same buyer. We are grouped together but not mixed up. She brings her trailer (guy). I bring mine. She and her husband take theirs in. To the same place, [the product] is not mixed together. So, for each their own and [the buyer] pays each person depending on the type or quality of what you send [to the buyer].*

Juana later added to this explanation in English, saying, “Because if they went together they could both be rejected instead of splitting them up and not risking that chance. Each person brings their product and each person receives their check. I just put it all in QuickBooks for everyone and reconcile the bill at the end of the year.” Through this

model, they leverage their resources as a collective and, yet, maintain their capitalist objective. They gain both buying and selling power, or production parity.

One example the women gave of their increased buying power as a coalition centered on purchasing tractors. Together, they explained that all companies want to sell their inventory quickly. So, if any of the members of the coalition want to buy a tractor, they should time it so that at least three of the farming family enterprises buy a tractor at the same time. This means that they will be able to access better prices as one unit buying three tractors, instead of three units each buying one tractor. Patricia, explained,

> Andamos, a ver si tres de nosotros podemos comprar tractores. Si nos dan buen precio, si comprarmos juntos …para ver si nos dan buen precio, bueno, para [que] sean tres… Cada quien lo suyo. Así trabajamos mejor porque siento que juntos es más fácil que hagan problemas. Mejor cada quien lo suyo. A que estén juntos, pero no revueltos. *We go around to see if three of us can buy tractors. If they give us a good price, if we buy them together... to see if they give us a good price, well, for the three... For each one their own. We work best that way because I feel like we are together, it is easier if there are problems. Better, for each their own. To be together but not mixed up.*

In this way, the coalition is a scale-making project (Tsing 2005). Following an "economies of scale" logic, many people believe increasing scale is the key to surviving in farming today. The more volume a farming enterprise produces for market the more power the enterprise has in terms of negotiating price and accessing markets – or customers like grocery stores who buy the majority of their produce from wholesale FFV brokerage firms, sometimes called "aggregators." This is similar to a new FFV brokerage firm organizational model called a "grower-network" which is becoming more prevalent in the organic produce industry. In this case, the broker sells produce from various mid-scale farming enterprises under one brand and each enterprise is paid a percentage of the

final sale for the quality and quantity of produce they "turn in" to the "grower-network" brokerage firm. The brokerage firm sells that produce wholesale for a fixed commission, which can vary but seems to range between ten to twenty-five percent of each sale.

Like this corporate model, the coalition of binational farming families discussed here pools their reputation, not their product which allows them to maintain traceability. Of course, the corporate model of this "grower-network" aggregator strategy requires corporate-level investment. These farming family women create and enact alternative modes of enterprise, such as this coalition. Owning and operating farming enterprises in the contemporary neoliberal U.S. agri-food system is otherwise unattainable for most families because of the incredibly high expenses involved in both starting and sustaining fresh-market produce farming enterprises that comply with contemporary regulation standards, like FSMA.

Exchange relations can be difficult to navigate as a single grower in the FFV industry. Selling together as a coalition means that together these FFV family farming enterprises have more power in demanding payment if they are not paid in a timely manner by the buyer. Payment in the "fresh" produce industry is not as simple as one might think. Buyers often keep a line of credit with the farming enterprises, and some never pay their debt. Fresh produce brokers can (and often do) claim that the produce was "bad" (or decaying) when it arrived at their warehouse, using cell phone photos of a few opened boxes as proof. According to farmers, however, it is common knowledge that brokers may hold onto your crop for too long because they are unable to sell it quickly.

When this happens, an enterprise must "swallow" the loss. Often, brokers will not pay a farmer for produce that decays in the brokerage firms' coolers before they are able

to sell it. These shipments can be worth tens of thousands of dollars, and sometimes more in just one tractor-trailer "load" or shipment. As one family FFV farming enterprise woman told me, "They pay you within the month or maybe six months later, depending on the buyer. My husband had to drive down to Florida last season to demand a $30,000 payment. They ignored our calls and everything."

The coalition sells most of their produce through this avenue to two wholesale brokerage firms (or buyers). These buyers are not always trustworthy. When the shipment is not sold quickly, the crop loses all of most of its market value, and the farming enterprise "takes the hit" (in industry terms). When this happens, farming enterprises suffer a complete loss – losing all the money they invested into the crop to develop it. And, their next season (and livelihoods) are put in jeopardy. Laura offered an example of this:

> Los compradores que nosotros tenemos nos dicen que nos van a pagar *two* mil pesos. Nosotros sabemos que estos *two* mil pesos van a llegar. No es que no nos paguen. Es una de las cosas más importantes, tener [un] comprador, pero tener [un] comprador que te pague *two* mil pesos. Tú ya puedes hacer planes con esos *two* mil pesos porque tú sabes que *no matter what,* esos dólares te los van a pagar. Y hay otras personas que venden y no saben o venden a *consignment*. Y siembran sin saber… Es una inversión, bien grande.
> *The buyers we have tell us they are going to pay us two thousand pesos [meaning dollars]. We know that those two thousand pesos are going to arrive. It isn't that they wouldn't pay us. To have a buyer is one of the most important things, but [you must] have a buyer who would pay you the two thousand pesos. You can already make plans for those two thousand pesos because you know that, no matter what, they are going to pay you those dollars. And there are other people that sell and do not know, or they sell on consignment. And they plant without knowing…It is a big investment, quite big.*

To develop, through experience, the comercio mētis to judge that a buyer is or is not trustworthy is clearly a critical skill in creating a successful fresh-market fruit and vegetable enterprise. Outsiders to the FFV industry may wonder why these women representing low- to mid-volume farming enterprises sell to wholesale brokerage firms at all. The reason is that large-scale buyers – like grocery store chains and fast food restaurant distributors who follow an "economy of scale" logic – purchase almost exclusively from brokerage firms instead of directly from farming enterprises. To access these markets, these women use their coalition strategy, negotiating the risk as a group because they know that marketplaces – like where Andrea from chapter four works – do not currently offer reliable prices or comparable sales opportunities when it comes to large quantities of perishable commodities that have a definite shelf life linked to their market value.

Additionally, sometimes buyers offer to purchase some of the inputs needed at the start of the season for the FFV farming enterprises that supply them. This is important because the farming enterprises often buy these inputs on credit which they pay back only after they receive payment for their harvested crop. If the production materials (like seeds and plastic mulch) are paid for by their buyers, these women and their farming enterprises do not have to pay as much interest at the end of the season. By aggregating their enterprise efforts, they are able to access more advantageous marketing options and create more sustainable enterprise practices.

As a group, they act as a resource sharing network. They share information and knowledge about production and enterprise opportunities, and act as a kind of farming enterprise support network. One example of this is the way in which they engage with

state recourses, like grants. Patricia, one of the bilingual centralizing women, successfully applied for a USDA grant. Patricia explained, "es un grant pero tiene dos componentes. Tiene el planning grant y la segunda fase es el working capital. Que es para implementar la primera parte." *(It is a grant but it has two parts. It has the* planning grant *and the second phase is the* working capital*. That is used to implement the first part.)* The second phase of this grant allows farming enterprises to implement the "value added" components they map out in the planning grant. Later, Patricia pointed outside and asked, "You see all that? And the website too…" As she pointed to the sign and the packing house next door to her house, she said, "It is from the marketing grant work. I gave you a business card right?" Other women in the group tell me that Patricia informed them of this opportunity, helped them fill out the paperwork, understand the process, and successfully apply for the grant. Then she continued,

> Of us nine, four have gotten grants. Two have gotten the two parts and Julia is about to get the first one. They haven't done it because they are traveling back and forth, so there is no time to focus yourself in the grant… Nosotros, como estamos ya asentadas… Es otro de los beneficios de estar ya asentadas en un lugar aparte de que uno anda conociendo…
> *We, as we are now settled. It is another benefit to being settled in a place apart from a person who goes around getting to know [people and resources].*

Grant programs like these are meant to help smaller farmers with infrastructure projects like building concrete pads to pack their produce boxes on[41]. This type of investment is crucial because every fruit and vegetable box has to meet a certain quality standard to be sold on the open market. Women in this coalition also share resources and

[41] Producers must take the field heat out of the vegetables which happens when it is packed in the shade, in a packing shed that could be partially funded by a grant like this.

bureaucratic work when it comes to formal (state) financial resources, like Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans. Patricia continued,

> But yeah FSA by way of the workshops we've participated in we have met people and they have guided us. If I just found out about a USDA grant, I wouldn't know how to do it or the right people to guide me. The FSA loan is 1% and that is pretty much working with money without any interest… Pero antes cuando éramos trabajadores migrantes no sabía ni que era la USDA, FSA, NRCS. Todo eso que hay en la USDA. Te prestan como tres *times*, nada más…. Pero tiene que ser como para una emergencia, por un desastre…. Allá lo tenga … Puertas abiertas para una emergencia.
> *But before when we were migrant workers, I didn't even know what USDA, FSA, NRCS were. All that is the USDA. All that that is the USDA. They lend to you like three times, nothing more… But it has to be for an emergency, a disaster…There you would have it…Open doors for an emergency.*

Another critical cooperative practice that this collective strategy formalizes is informal money lending. Each of these women values this practice and describes it as one of the reasons their enterprises still exist today. With the endless financial risks involved in growing fresh-market produce (e.g., flooding, bacteria, decay, and volatile market prices), this cooperative practice offers these women a life-line when the season or month goes poorly for their particular enterprise. When I asked one of the members, Diana, about why they organized this group and what the most important aspect of the group was, she told me:

> [Hay] que estar unidos. [Hay] que, ayudarse uno a otro, aunque estemos separados. Si por decir yo me atoro, yo no tengo bolsillo para el pago del tractor este año. Vamos a suponerlo. No tengo. Me fue súper mal. Ellas me ayudan a pagarlo. Ya sea de dinero de uno, o si no tiene tampoco, con el dinero otro. Estamos en esta unión… ayudarse mutualmente. La unión hace la fuerza. Si no me hubieran ayudado cuando tuve este año malo, no pudiera seguir

> adelante… Me ayudaron hacer la lucha. Y de allí nos servíamos todas...
> [We have] *to be united. We have to help each other, even though, we are separate. Let's say I got myself into a jam, I do not have money to make my tractor payment this year. We are going to suppose this…. I do not have the money. [The harvest season] was really bad for me. They help me pay it. It could be money from one or, if she doesn't have it either, then with the money from another [member]. We are in this union…mutually help each other. The union makes the force. If they wouldn't have helped me this mad year, I wouldn't have been able to move forward… They helped me fight through it. That served all of us…*

As I continued to talk with Diana about this form of informal money lending, she told me that the women from her rancho that come around to the fields and offer lonche (*lunch*) to the workers through their lonchera (*food truck*) enterprise also keep running tabs, like she did with her coalition members. According to her, this is not an uncommon practice amongst farming enterprises in her rancho. She told me that this practice (when referencing the lonchera enteprise) is a norm, even a tradition at tiendas in Mexico. Diana explained,

> Es una de las tradiciones que hay en México en la tienda. Si tú no tienes [dinero] ahora, a la señora [de la tienda] le dices, 'Fíame. Me apuntas… Quiero jitomates, chiles. Mañana, paso [y] te los pago.' Y te dice 'ok, te apunto.' Y así se los pagas y eso ya viene de México. Viene como … dice 'me fías… me fías, luego te los pago.' Para el trabajo que es, tienen que comer bien.
> *It is one of the traditions that there are in Mexico in the corner stores. If you do not have the money now, you say to the woman [working in the store], 'Trust me (sell on credit). Write my name… I want tomatoes and peppers. Tomorrow I will pass by and pay you for them.' And she says to you, 'ok you are noted.' And like that, you pay for them and that comes from Mexico. It comes like… one says "trust me, trust me, later I will pay you for it.' For the work that it is, they [as the field workers in the U.S.] have to eat well.*

Assumptions about class categories within the U.S. food economy realm obscure the power of existing alternative approaches to value creation – alternatives that can teach us about class process (Resnick and Wolff 1989) and create viable paths towards a transition to a more just agri-food economy. Instead of thinking of the U.S. agri-food economy in terms of its deficits, I advocate studying the existing assets and empowering the industry actors who are positioned to use collective strategies to transition the current neoliberal, global agri-food system from corporate-owned to collectively-led. The coalition strategy that these farming families practice enables them to sustain their rural livelihoods, from season to season. Members of this binational kin group rely on each other and engage in a mixture of positive, neutral, and negative exchange relations within the group and as a group within the larger FFV industry.

These women prove that alternative practices and exchange relations are possible when U.S. capitalist logic is challenged, and collective enterprise is valued. Additionally, these kin also collaborate with their relatives who farm basic grains in the Mexican Bajío where most of these women and men were born. They organize farming enterprise agreements during their annual trips to their rancho (*village*) over the holiday season. I briefly discuss these binational family farming arrangements below. Collective strategies like these – paired with supporting policy – may present potentialities for improving the now inequitable globalized agri-food system.

MX-U.S. Grain Growing Arrangements

Mexicans in rural regions throughout the country experienced societal transformations throughout the 1990's and 2000's which results in what many Mexican

scholars are calling “nueva ruralidades” *(new ruralities)* (Salas et al. 2011). The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group are some of these people. New ruralities are the result of neoliberal policy and the local-global shaping forces, industrialization and livelihood responses that result from it – all of which have impacted ways of life in regions that were deemed “rural” and now seem to blur the lines between dichotomies like rural and urban, and undeveloped and developed. Due at least in part to the (changing) culture of cooperatives and collective ownership in Mexico (King et al. 2013), the ways in which Mexican “sending communities” negotiate their changing rural realities – characterized by varied meanings of migration and collective responses to the (at least temporary) loss of contributing members – are linked to shifting cultural politics and collective agency (Mutersbaugh 2002).

Some farming families in western Mexico are negotiating “reverse leasing arrangements” and other forms of contract farming which shift production power relations and political economic landscapes (Bowen and Gerritsen 2007). In agricultural states like Sinaloa, some of the fruit and vegetable export-oriented farmers vertically integrated to retain power over their distribution (Sandoval Cabrera 2013). Newcomers to fruit and vegetable production (in states like Guanajuato) are largely working through contract farming regimes (Steffen Riedemann and Echánove Huacuja 2003, 2005). Many of the grain farming and cattle raising families with irrigated land in the Bajío found that their new (globalized) rurality depended on pooling “off-farm” incomes and negotiating grain contract farming through state agencies like SAGARPA, ASERCA, and FIRA (Steffen Riedemann and Echánove Huacuja 2003, 2005). Often, new strategies are

attempted collectively – and binationally in the case of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group.

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group adjusted to their new rural, NAFTA-TLCAN contexts strategically through collective farming enterprise arrangements as a binational group. Since many of the kin group gained legal status in the U.S. during the 1990's and 2000's, the kin group developed particular strategies to sustain their rural livelihoods in Mexico as well as the U.S. The tomato and vegetable farming enterprise coalition was one such strategy. This strategy connects with their year-round, seasonal harvest strategy that spans Mexico and the U.S. Particular members of the kin group organize their maize (and other complementary basic grains) harvests, and particular members invest in these arrangements. According to grain growers in this microregion, they can yield the most profits (on average, year to year) from maize, but it is also the most capital-intensive crop – making it an enterprise risk that is more easily financed with dollars rather than pesos.

The maize harvest takes place in November, just before the migrant or "holiday season" in the Bajío. This seasonal timing is also considered by women raising animals, like pigs which they hope to sell during peak demand when "migrants" are "home" and life-cycle rituals and holidays are to be celebrated. When members of the tomato farming coalition in the U.S. also invest in maize farming in the Bajío, they have more chances to manage their capital flows via diversification of both crop investment and harvesting payment periods. This binational and diversified portfolio allows them to spread their harvest-specific cash flows out across regions and the year, managing their risk and sustaining their (and their kin's) operations.

The local saying, “tiene que irse para sembrar” (*someone has to leave in order to plant*) illustrates the commonly held belief that investment for farming most come from other enterprise pursuits. Today, much of the small to mid-scale agricultural enterprise investment in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho in the Mexican Bajío comes from migrant remittances or investments. Though these enterprise strategies are not connected to “hometown associations” (Orozco 2004), they do constitute binational collective strategies that engage the Mexican state. Some basic grain producers in the Mexican Bajío created coalitions to collectively mitigate their now marginalized political economic position in the NAFTA-TLCAN agriculture context (Steffen Riedermann and Echánove Huacuja 2000). The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group have not organized to this degree of collectively in their rancho. They do, however, commonly use arrangements called medieros *(halves)* and tercios (*thirds*) for binational farming enterprise arrangements.

Medieros and tercios arrangements are examples of kin-based cooperation and constitute a kind of crop-sharing practice in this area in west central Mexico. Crop-share arrangements – though they vary greatly – are understood as the practice of leasing farmland and sharing the harvest between the grower-tenant (or operator) and landowner. Crop-sharing for the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group is understood as a form of labor subcontracting in one sense but, importantly, is often viewed by practitioners as a mutually advantageous land-labor arrangement. To sembrar a medios (*to plant via halves*) or a tercios (*thirds*) seems to be a cooperative practice that allows for the continuation of farming livelihoods – most often as an alternative to contract farming for corporations. In J.K Gibson-Graham’s terms, these crop-sharing arrangements can be

considered as “alternative market transactions” in that they are an example of when “goods and services are exchanged and commensurability is socially negotiated and agree upon” (2006:62).

I do not use the terms “grower-tenant” or “landowner” to distinguish the medieros (as they are called in this microregion even if the arrangement is tercios) because the landowner v. laborer positions are not fixed. As I mentioned above, within the medieros or tercios arrangement, the “local” enterpriser is in-charge of the crop production and harvesting, as well as marketing. The “local” mediero stays current with the prices, weather, grain development, and seed variety purchasing trends in their area.
The investor often owns the land or invests half (or a third depending on the particular arrangement) of the funds needed to for the labores (*field work*, which the “local” enterprise does and/or manages) and the inputs, like seeds and fertilizers. The “local” enterpriser (or mediero) does the bureaucratic work of filling out paperwork and possibly navigating contracts with large-scale foreign and domestic buyers through ASERCA. This is also a kind of livelihood strategy. However, scholars characterize it as “out-grower schemes” and argue that these kinds of contract farming arrangements transform the family-based farming enterprises into a pool of exploitable primary producers for transnational monopolies like Cargill because they continue to lack access to markets and other avenues for financialization and technological assistance (Steffen Riedemann and Echánove Huacuja 2003, 2005). This lack of access is largely due to neoliberal, market-shaping policy that did not define prior generations’ farming livelihood contexts.

The labores (*labor*) of the “local” mediero includes planting, fertilizing, fumigating, and harvesting – much of which is done by a tractorista (*tractor driver*), who

is often the “local” enterpriser or another subcontracted relative who owns a tractor. The other work – such as the fertilizing and fumigating – is done by local peones *(field workers),* whom many say are hard to find because so many young men go to the U.S. to work instead of working for their neighbors and kin for pay in pesos. Though medieros and tercios arrangements do not solve grain farming families’ livelihood insecurities, they do constitute collective organizational strategies to mitigate the NAFTA-TLCAN context in the Mexican Bajío.

Falling to the pressures from the state and international financial institutions, other previous grain growing enterprises have transitioned to export agriculture, growing fruits and vegetables for (largely U.S.-owned) transnational corporations (Steffen Riedermann and Echánove Huacuja 2005) which export the produce and/or process it in plants in the Bajío region (Borrego 2000; Zavella 2000). This shift in cash crops was part of a larger global agricultural restructuring process in which developing countries – aimed to increase their GDP through export agriculture, instead of focusing their programming on domestic food security, self-sufficiency, or sovereignty (Steffen Riedermann and Echánove Huacuja 2005) – which was (in part) the mission of programs and agencies like CONASUPO.

It seems that this process has, overall, benefited the highly capitalized producers in the Bajío who were preparing for the transition in the early 1990’s (Hellman 1994) and plantation-like operations in northern Mexico where largely migrant indigenous workers (Torres 1997; Lara Flores 2009) endure culturally produced political economic vulnerabilities as field workers (Martínez Novo 2006). But, as impunity and uncertainty continue in Mexico, many of these farming communities are finding themselves fighting

narco-state groups to not only retain power over their operations, but also to stay alive. Due to the narco-state violence context that these farming families mitigate in their rancho, I was not able to collect additional data on farming resources.

Ariana, a young mother in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, linked NAFTA-TLCAN to the exodus of the younger generations from her rancho and the surrounding area – a phenomenon connected to the spread of narco-state violence which will be discussed in the next section. One winter morning in the Carolina Hill Country, I asked Ariana, "¿Sabes algo del TLCAN?" (*Do you know about TLCAN*?) And she responded:

> La gente del rancho no habla de eso… la caída del precio. [Con] el Tratado de Libre Comercio fue cuando les empezó a ir mal, a los productores, a los agricultores en México… Pues, cuando yo era niña, [tenía] como ocho, no mucha gente se venía acá (a U.S). Me recuerdo el rancho lleno de gente, lleno de niños, de muchachos. Como por allí por los 90's y adelante, fue cuando el rancho empezó a quedar sin jóvenes. Empezaron a venirse, los jóvenes. Y muchos de ellos ya no regresaron. Hicieron vida aquí. Entonces, este, se va viendo la gente joven y los ranchos se van quedando solos. No más con los viejitos. Yo digo que toda la gente trabaja en sus parcelas y criaban muchos animales. Había mucho trabajo, criaban muchos animales, vacas, puercos. Había mucho trabajo, vendían mucha leche. Ya todo eso ya se acabó. Como en mi rancho, en mi rancho casi no hay mucha gente. Esta difícil para estar allá. Por eso toda la gente busca. Todo se cambió en los 90s, toda la gente empezó a venirse.
> *The village people don't talk about that… the fall of the price. The Free Trade Agreement was when it started to go bad for them, the producers, agriculturalists in Mexico… Well, when I was a child, like eight, not many people would come here (to the U.S). Still there weren't, still I remember the village full of people, full of children, lots of them. Around then, from the 90's and forward, was when the village began to remain without young people. They started to come, the young people. And a lot of them have not returned. They made a life here. So, you started to see the young people go and the villages began to remain alone. Nothing more than the elderly people. I believe that all the*

> *people work in their parcels and raise animals. There was a lot of work, they raised a lot of animals, cows, pigs, there was a lot of work. They'd sell a lot of milk. Now all that is over. Like in my village, in my village there are almost no people. It is hard to be there. For that reason, everyone looks. Everything changed in the 90's. All the people began to come.*

One of the principle issues for farming families in Mexico today is human insecurity. Ariana did not feel that she could go back to live in her rancho. Her husband's rancho is bigger, but this is also what makes it more dangerous, in her opinion. Her fear of going back is due largely to livelihood insecurity and human insecurity from narco-state violence. Over the last five to ten years, her relatives who remained in their ranchos have experienced a sharp change to their everyday lives due to the normalization of violence and the human insecurity that comes with that process. The next section discusses the link between agricultural trade liberalization process, livelihood security, and human insecurity in Mexico.

Human Insecurity in MX: Narco-state Violence and Farming Families

Human insecurity is one of the most influential contemporary aspects of many Mexicans' daily lives, especially in rural areas. During the NAFTA-TLCAN era of neoliberal capitalism, many farming families experienced an increase in livelihood and human in/security issues, as their market share access disappeared, and their physical well-being came under attack due to increased narco-state violence. Many rural areas that have not experienced this violence in the past are having to face it due disputes over shifting territorial claims (Correa-Cabrera 2017). Farming families – in places like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres microregion in the Bajío – are questioning their livelihood choice

and shifting their strategies due to what many experience as a threat to their lives due to kidnappings, extortion, robbery and overall impunity that allows this violence to continue. Farming families I spoke with in the Bajío said that, "Los tiempos bonitos ya se acabaron" (The good times are over) in their rancho. Farming families are financially burdened by the unsustainable market prices they receive for their products due to NAFTA-TLCAN, as well as the cuotas (*quotas*) or derechos de piso (*forced protection fees*) they have to pay organized crime groups to continue to operate.

Contexts vary throughout Mexico, and in some places, farming enterprises have been taken over by these narco-state, organized crime groups. This has not yet happened in the Alavarez-Ortega-Torres rancho or the surrounding microregion, but many of the farming families have been extorted and targets of narco-state violence. Often, this will take place during the harvest while farmers are in their tractors. Some farmers have resorted to subcontracting this portion of work to avoid the extorters. Others are attempting to change careers. Grandsons in the Carolina Hill Country grimaced when they told me that their grandfather still farms there, but "He's crazy. He said he'll risk it (his life) to farm."

This section of the chapter brings together the issues of human insecurity contexts defined by farming livelihoods and narco-state violence within the context of NAFTA-TLCAN. Writing on the anthropology of security, Daniel Golstein argues that within neoliberal times – as precarity becomes the norm – "security" continues to be defined as "safety from external attach or internal destabilization and freedom from fear of terrorism or violence" despite the United Nation's widening of the definition to include issues like "employment, health care, and education" (2010:491). Like the U.S. immigration

Prevention Through Deterrence policy and programming which produces human insecurity on purpose (de León 2015), narco-state groups also use fear politics to gain power through the creation of uncertainty, impunity, and insecurity (Correa-Cabrera 2017; Paley 2014). In Mexico, the death rate during the last ten years or so of the U.S.-backed "war on drugs" was higher than the death rate during the Mexican revolution (Paley 2014). Whether they are mass killings of migrants like "San Fernando" or of rural students at the Ayotzinapa normal school, massacres illustrate the reason why I hyphenate "narco-state" when discussing the current context of violence in Mexico – in that the violence is committed by both state and narco group agents. Narco-state violence is central to Mexico's neoliberal era, humanitarian crisis, and national discourse.

The following im/mobility stories share the perspectives of members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational farming kin group to show how they discuss everyday narco-state violence in Mexico. The im/mobility stories center on fear, lack of freedom of movement, robbery, kidnapping, extortion, and murder. Here, Ariana continued her reflection on the social transformation that her binational kin members (and people in and around her rancho) are experiencing:

> La gente tiene miedo. Tiene harto. Tiene mucho mucho miedo de no saber si el día de mañana… porque los extorsionan por teléfono. Eso se usa mucho ahora. Se roban el ganado. Si llegaron a robarse animales, y en los ranchos donde no hay gente. A mi mamá le robaron también. Le robaron, este, seis borregas. Lo que si, no había violencia. Ahora pues hay violencia…. Ojalá que termine eso porque… Y a uno de ellos, si le tenía muy espantado porque le decían, 'Tu esposa sale a tales horas, maneja tal carro, lleva tus niños a escuela, los recoge a tales horas, va visitar a su papá el domingo, se va a las 9, llega a las 4… Y, o sea, todo, todo. Él estaba aterrado, el esposo de esa señora. Y los que tienen un poco más, le pedían más. Porque no se escapaba nadie. Lo que cuentan…

> *People have a lot of fear. Tons of fear. They have a lot, a lot of fear that, they don't know if tomorrow…because they extort them on the phone. This is used a lot now. They rob them of their cattle. Yeah, they came to rob animals, and in the villages where there are no people. They robbed my mother also. They robbed her of six lambs. At least, there was no violence. Now, there is violence…I hope that this ends soon because…One of them, they had him really scared because they said to him, "Your wife leaves at these times, drives this car, takes your children to school, picks them up these hours, goes to visit her dad on Sundays, she leaves at 9, arrives at 4…" And it would be everything, everything. He was panicked, the husband of that woman. And those who have a little more (money), they asked for more (money). Because no one would escape. This is what people says...*

This story illustrates the human (and livelihood) insecurity farming families confront in certain places in rural Mexico, like the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho. As is true in many places around the world today, farming families depend on mobility for their livelihoods. This seems ironic to some who imagine farming as stationary, but even farmers who are not mobile beyond their geographic region are mobile within it. Their livelihoods often depend on their transport vehicles, their personal work trucks, and the trucks they contract to deliver their harvested goods. When their mobility is threatened, their livelihoods become insecure. This happens when trucks are stolen, as Ernesto explained to me one afternoon in the rancho.

Ernesto said that when famous bands, like Mi Rancho Viejo, would come to the area to play the yearly ferias (*fairs, or festivals)* lots of people's trucks were stolen all at once. This happened to many of the members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group, members who live in the rancho full-time and those who come for just a few months a year for vacaciones (*vacations, or holidays*). In November 2014, two couples went to a

local town's "baile" (*dance, music concert*) when a popular musical group came to play. Their truck was parked close to the front, on the second line of parked cars closest to the entrance to the concert. They were only a distance of a soccer field away when it happened. They reasoned that this was all orchestrated by naro-state groups. The wondered outloud as to how it couldn't have been an "inside job." Raul, a cousin, walked in during the conversation and said that they needed a cell phone that showed them video of their trucks and houses. But then everyone replied that this may be good, but what are they going to do even if they knew who did it? They speculated that the police are in on the robberies and will kill anyone who tries to stop them.

Javier has had two trucks stolen from him: one from the street during the day and the other from his house, inside the gate when no one was home. He told me that the state police (the ones who drive the black cars) are in on it all. He said that los malos– (*the bad ones*) as they are called by many in and from the rancho – and the police are one in the same. One cousin told them that after his truck was stolen, the police came by his house to tell him that it had been found in Guadalajara, and he could buy it back. "Qué casualidad," (*What a coincidence*) Javier added sarcastically.

Women's mobility in particular is a human insecurity issue within the current Mexican narco-state violence context that created the now global term femicide. Some women in the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho would drive, but they only did so if it was a necessity. And when they did, many of them were criticized for this by older relatives. Families used to feel comfortable walking to each other's houses, but today they drive if they have to walk along the highway for fear of being kidnapped. While I was in the rancho in 2015, news spread by word of mouth that a grandmother and her grandson were

abducted while walking from a neighboring village to a nearby town. The rumor was that people in the grandmother's ranchito somehow knew that she was going to town to get remittances from the bank. Mercedes – the woman who told me this – causally blamed chisme (*gossip*) for their abduction. She questioned if that was even true and told me that this was why you cannot tell anyone anything any more.

They were kidnapped and los malos demanded 5,000 pesos from the family for their safe return. They were only able to get 2,500 to the kidnappers, but they were freed anyway. Everyone in the rancho discussed the fact that los malos used to kidnap rich people, but now they kidnap poor people too. Anybody they can get money from is a target. Several people told me that everyone is frightened of this. This meant that many women had to travel in groups or request rides from male relatives to complete their everyday errands.

Binational farming family members deliberate for months as to whether the will go to their rancho for the holiday season. In the case that I studied, those who have accessed political economic mobility in the U.S. sense that they are in more danger now when they are in their ranchos in Mexico because people there are aware of the wealth they have accumulated in the U.S. Often this wealth is also visible in the form of large, newly-built U.S.-style houses and new trucks, driven over from the U.S. with license plates and stickers on the windshield that show the car has been registered in Mexico.

One of the farming family fathers decided not to travel to the rancho for the holiday season even though it was one of his favorite times of year and, in the past, was the only place he could relax. His family made this decision together because that year they hosted an extravagant quinceañera (fifteen-year-old birthday party which is an

important life cycle event) for his daughter in South Carolina where a famous singer performed. Hundreds of people were in attendance and videos made their way through WhatsApp and Facebook to residents in their rancho. Binationals sometimes talk about how migrants need to be careful not to be echantes (*showy*) because this can make them targets in Mexico. For this reason, some families are trying to limit their children's use of social media in the U.S.

When families organize life-cycle ritual events (like weddings) in their rancho, they pay police to attend the events. Binational kin who reside mostly in the U.S. rely on their kin in Mexico to figure who to pay for this service since paying the wrong person could have mortal consequences. For these reasons, many of the families are deciding to organize these events in the U.S. instead of Mexico – where their money would go further and many of them would prefer to have (what they consider to be) traditional, cultural celebrations.

Members of farming families often work in complimentary jobs in fields such as transportation or auto mechanics. Take for instance Guillermo who is binational and a member of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group. Unlike his father and much of his kin group, he chose to work as a semi-tractor trailer driver. In December 2014, I went with his niece, Joselyn, to meet him and hear his story. We rode to his house, on the other end of town, got out of the Ford Explorer, and entered into a wide yard where a small, old white horse was tied on a long rope to a tree. There was a huge garage tall enough to be one used at a small airport – where a deceased relative's out-of-use tractors were stores – and a fairly large-sized bright yellow house inside the gates. Inside the house an older woman (Guillermo's sixty-eight-year-old mother) was standing over a boiling pot on the

stove and asked us if we would like to eat tamales and lentil soap. Her kitchen was much like a huge kitchen in a middle-class suburban home in the U.S. As we ate, Guillermo showed me pictures of his family. He explained in English how, “Everything is different here.”

He was a truck driver and transported his friends’ cars from the U.S. to various places in Mexico along with other subcontracted agricultural industry deliveries. But, because of the narcotraffickers, he had to stop and he became a physical therapist. He loved driving between the U.S. and Mexico because he could travel to all kinds of beautiful places in Mexico, but his father asked him to stop doing that work when Mexico became so much more dangerous in the mid 2000’s. In his father’s memory, he decided not to go back to that job. He is a citizen of both the U.S. and Mexico. He used to come to Mexico about twelve or thirteen times a year, and now he could only come back three or four times a year. “Mexico has everything but security,” he said. People feel like they are in danger of being robbed or hurt in some physical way. He said that los malos even go around with knives and just stab people in the crowds at the ferias (*fairs*) to incite fear. The ferias are for families, he explained with his arms opened wide in an expression of a loss for words. At one feria in a town nearby, he continued, five people were shot dead during the musical performance. Some of them were children.

Human insecurity can be due to threats to livelihoods and/or threats to human safety. People will seek livelihoods in new places if their human security is threatened in the place they were raised. Marisol told me one afternoon – over sweet corn and mayonnaise in the Carolina Hill Country – that she was so afraid for her sister in their rancho that she could not sleep at night. She was scared for her sister Elena because she

was home alone a lot in a big house and believed that los malos could hurt her and her husband, Fernando too. They had tractors and other things that made them look rich because they were rancheros. They did not have a lot of money. They invested it. Fernando was a livelihood fuente (*source*) for the people he employed and their five families. She told me that if he was hurt, they all would suffer. These are the ripple effects of narco-state violence.

Marisol also said that her father was threatened. They (los malos) told him to bring the money on a certain day at noon, or they would kill him. They even listed all the names of his children. Elena thought that they should all go and pay them. But her father said no. He left town and took Elena and her other sister with him to D.F. (Mexico City) for five days. Then, he went to live with his relatives in another state. He never went back to his house again. He sold all his land and everything. Marisol explained that her father was also a fuente for a lot of people in her rancho, but not now.

The final im/mobility story shared in this chapter speaks directly to why people in these ranchos and their relatives in the U.S. are fearful. This is not simply due to their livelihoods being threatened due to property theft or derechos de piso (*forced protection payment*) but also due to the imminent human insecurity: the difference between life and death. This is a story about a binational farming family from a neighboring rancho. The story spread through the ranchos in the microregion and to the U.S. The story acted as a warning to people, a lesson to not trust anyone they do not know well. This is a story of a grandmother, Rosalba, who was tortured and murdered in her home by strangers who came to rob her.

Antonia began the story by telling me that “algo bien feo pasó en el rancho vecino” (*something really ugly happened in the neighboring village*) called Manzanita. She explained that her great-aunt Rosalba – an elderly woman who lived alone in the large two-story house right on the corner of the highway – was murdered. The rumor was that a young man and woman came to her house probably to rob her and ended up murdering her too. Everyone was discussing how this was done, for weeks after the incident. The details were even shared in the newspaper in the market town nearby. Antonia said that they bound Rosalba at her wrists and ankles and put tape over her mouth and nose. This meant that she suffocated. They found the body in this state, badly beaten the next morning.

Antonia said that Rosalba was helping the woman with the little tienda on the highway paint and fix her windows. Rosalba cut herself and the woman who owned the store was helping her with the cut when they realized someone had come to Rosalba’s door. The woman sent her daughter to see who it was. She said it was a couple (man and woman), but she did not know who they were. So, Rosalba went back to her house to see what they wanted and let them in. Everyone believed that they must have been the murderers, and someone must have told them that she lived there alone because it was at 7:30 in the evening when they arrived. When the tienda owner closed her shop around 9:30 or 10:00 at night, she usually yelled up to Rosalba to let her know that she was going home and then Rosalba would yell down, “Órale, hasta mañana” (*Alrighty, until tomorrow*). But that night, Rosalba did not yell back down. The tienda owner said that all the lights were on the second floor. Rosalba’s sons – who live and farm in the U.S. – tried

to call her, like usual, around 9:30 pm, and she did not answer. They were worried. So, they kept calling, and there was no answer even at midnight.

People believed that they must have beaten Rosalba because she did not have money hidden in the house, as they were suspecting. They must have gone through the house looking for money and thought that she was lying about not having cash or valuables hidden somewhere. The forensics police agent got in touch with her children in the U.S., and they and their spouses traveled to the rancho in their trucks for the funeral. One daughter had to stay in the U.S. because she did not have U.S. legal status and another's wife had to stay for the same reason. While their parents were at the funeral in Mexico, Antonia took care of some of the children who could not go.

Antonia said that when she would tell people this story in the U.S., they told her it sounded like a movie. But, this gruesome story is real life – the real life that people in that rancho, and others have to face on a daily basis. People around the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres rancho were shocked and believed that the lesson was that no one should live alone. Los malos used to only kill people involved with narco-state groups, but now they kill anyone, even an elderly woman in her seventies. From that point forward, people began to spend the night with relatives (whose children were in the U.S.) as a safety precaution.

Antonia said that los malos are ignorant. She said that people in Mexico are in danger and the good police could not do anything about it because they would be killed. She said that murderers lose something inside of them; they lose the "valor de humanidad" (*value of humanity*). It is a life worse than a dog's life, she told me, because a dog responds and gets scared. Murderers like these do not.

Conclusion: In/Securities of MX-U.S. Farming Families and Long-term Agri-food Systems

Agri-food system consolidation is a growing threat to livelihood security, food sovereignty, and rural employment in North America and around the world. Neoliberal agricultural trade agreements produce inequitable access to market share for less capitalized primary (food) producers. This can be considered as an element of market economy design (Marshall 2012). Due to this, farming communities and food economies have been, and continue to be, devastated by farm loss (Barlett 1993) and the "social trauma" of a large-scale rural dispossession process (Dudley 2000). Many farming families in the U.S. and Mexico are fearful that they too will soon have to sell their assets, quite farming, and create a new livelihood source.

Fear is a kind of structural and symbolic violence incited by insecurity. For many scholars in Mexico, the everyday violence of the neoliberal era is part of larger political transformation (Castro Domingo 2008) – one which should be understood by a conception of human rights that goes beyond discourse and into the realm of social practice (Estévez and Vázquez 2015). This chapter links "free trade" market design to human and farming livelihood insecurity by bringing together multiple perspectives from agricultural industry actors who are also members of a binational farming family group in both Mexico and the U.S. The binational Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group mobilize kin relations to collectively access market share through cooperative livelihood strategies – despite their marginalized positions within the NAFTA-TLCAN market economy – as small- to mid-scale white corn producers in Mexico and fresh-market tomato producers in

the U.S. The experiences and im/mobility stories of farming families of the NAFTA-TLCAN illustrate the link between human insecurity, multi-scalar agri-food system policy, inequitable geopolitical relations, and livelihood strategies.

Binational Families Farming Global Crops: Possibilities for Agri-food System Futures

Part III. Chapter 8

Doing research in rural Mexico with enterprising grandmothers like Luz – who I introduced in chapter one – reveals much about the contemporary challenges of farming families in North America. While acting as chofer (*driver)* with Luz as my guide*,* we traversed the globalized agricultural industry landscape of the Bajío – a landscape evident in both her farming enterprise activities and the transnational corporate advertisements along the roads, like those of Pioneer, AsGrow, and SWISSMEX. The narratives and strategies of Luz and her kin members in Mexico and the U.S. teach us about how farming families navigate the processes of the political economic transitions that have come about due to globalized trade policies like NAFTA-TLCAN. While her children in the U.S. see her rural livelihood (i.e., growing grains and raising animals) as yesterday's farming, they pursue farming endeavors in the fresh-market fruit and vegetable industry in the U.S. and simultaneously collaborate with their kin on enterprises in the Bajío with hopes that these endeavors will enable them to create secure livelihood futures for their children. All of their stories and perspectives render visible the dynamics of rural change in neoliberal North America and suggest avenues for achieving sustainable livelihoods within a globalized agri-food system.

As a rural-rural migration story of farming families, this dissertation contributes to analyses of global food commodity chains studies through an approach that considers temporalities, binational status, cooperative strategies, gender and kin relations. I attempted to show that diverse dimensions of power relations and their effects – ideology,

influence, exchange, practices, limitations, opportunities/structures – coexist within, and between, cultural groups to argue that rural kin-based agricultural producers continue to contribute to the global agri-food system despite their disadvantaged political economic positions in this era of neoliberal policy in North America. While neoliberal policy has quickly spread to various nation-states around the world (Peck and Theodore 2015), the local reactions and regional processes which result from these policies are not uniform, but instead diverse (Tsing 2005) and offer possibilities for change and redistributive alternatives. A combined political economics of time and kin relations approach can reveal relations between varied neoliberal policy contexts – and subject-actors within those contexts – as well as the potentialities for geographically dispersed collectives for creating a more sustainable, globalized agri-food system.

This study shows how power relations shift and transnational class process occurs within a binational kin group and agri-food systems. The "up, down, and sideways" (Stryker and González 2014) methodology allows for an analysis of this mobile group that takes multiple places, times, and scales into account to show how class process happens. By acting as a mobile researcher, I was able to trace how, when, and for whom economic identities and practices change and the strategies agri-food system contributors use to make this possible. This approach reveals the oversimplification of binary stereotypes that plague agri-food system analysis – class binaries like that of farmer v. farm worker and the gendered and racialized assumptions that these cultural categories carry. It also reframes questions concerning equity and the agri-food system in that it does not take agri-food system class categories for granted and instead, points to the strategies of agri-food system contirbutors who occupy these categories and the ways in

which they are positioned within a globalized, exploitative agri-food system. Tracing the changing relations and practices of this binational kin group, shows how women and men (together and separately) negotiate multiple temporalities embedded in agri-food systems (Tsing 2015) in the U.S. and Mexico and collectively mitigate individualized barriers that accompany inequitable access to legal status (Gomberg-Muñoz 2017) to create sustainable rural livelihood opportutnities.

Much research has found that various waves of neoliberal consolidating policy have put kin-based farming producers under erasure in favor of the highest volume, vertically-integrated (usually corporate and transnational) farming enterprises. I contribute to this conversation by offering an analysis of collective farming livelihood strategies and cooperative practices through the perspectives of the people who keep farming and working in agricultural industries despite the disadvantages that neoliberal policy imposes on them. In this way, this dissertation seeks to advance the study of transnational class processes and a "political economics of possibility" (Gibson-Graham 2006) in the agri-food system realm. I will discuss how this may be achieved in the second half of this conclusion.

Kin Relations and Enterprise Politics

I argue here that scholars need to re-examine the significance of kinship – as a form of relatedness which influences perspectives, creates redistributive practices, forges bonds and organizes transactions and work – in modern political economies (McKinnon and Cannell 2013), and re-conceptualize the role of farming families in shaping global agri-food circulations. The dissertation contributes to the study of kinship's relation to

modern political economies through a discussion of a network of allied, geographically dispersed, family-based farming enterprises and the ways in which they use gendered, kin-work relations and time strategically in, and across, political economic contexts. In turn, this research contributes to globalized agri-food system literature with a case which highlights the redistributive practices and gendered cooperative strategies of a kin-based group of enterprises in binational context. In particular, I contribute to this conversation by analyzing gendering practices embedded in kin relations in the context of farming families and the strategies they use to continue to farm in neoliberal environments.

The stories and perspectives of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group show that – although power disparities are apparent and family farms are not necessarily governed by equality or equity (Figueroa Sanchez 2013) – farming families are not necessarily organized via male dominance over women (Sacks 1975; Leacock 1981). These groups are also not necessarily models of the egalitarian ideal of social organization to be replicated. Instead, as this dissertation shows, they illustrate the complexities of exchange relations, the multiple interacting temporalities that comprise agricultural work, and collective rural livelihood alternatives practiced amongst farming families. Women collaborate with their male relatives as organizers of kin-based enterprise groups and as contributors to the globalized agri-food system. These cooperative relations can co-exist with gendered exploitative relations of production – exploitative relations which are found in the contemporary transnational fresh-market fruit and vegetable realm throughout the Americas (Collins 1995; Barndt 2002; Bain 2010).

Though not often recognized as such, women are leaders in agri-food systems in the most local, regional, and global ways. With their transnational knowledge of agricultural markets and exchange networks, Mexican American farming enterprise women are changing the agricultural landscape in southern Appalachia. They create wealth and employment for their kin, the agri-food community and regional economies. They organize logistics, maintain exchange relations, and contribute to rural economies in immeasurable ways in North America. These farming enterprise women's experiential knowledge and skills – manifested in the marketplace and in their collective strategies – offer examples of cooperative practices for small- to mid-scale farming enterprises to learn from. Cooperative practices that women make possible support the development of diverse economies – economies which prove more sustainable and reliable than non-cooperative efforts global market economy. Though the power of kin-based cooperation can be harnessed for neoliberal projects (Shever 2012), kin-based cooperative practices and collective livelihoods can be (and have been for some time) developed and perfected by families across the world through a mixture of capitalist and non-capitalist practices by acting as enterprise owner-operators – even in rural neoliberal policy environments (Rothstein 2007).

This dissertation aids in the debunking of frames that center on the dominant model of capital accumulation and purely exploitative relations – the grand narrative of capitalism that does not allow for the recognition of more ethical and equitable alternatives (Gibson-Graham and O'Neil 2001). As, J.K. Gibson-Graham and Phillip O'Neill argue, this reductionist ideological framework can itself have "a dampening effect on the politics of distribution" by making alternatives seem impossible (2001:76).

By exploring the everyday details of exchange relations and redistributive flows of kin-based enterprises, this study sheds light on the possibilities that gendered yet cooperative practices and collective strategies suggest for a more equitable agri-food system. The flows coming and going from enterprises within the agri-food system point to potential moments when exchange relations can be tweaked, and redistributive flows re-directed.

To do this, I have analyzed temporal aspects of the enterprise flows and creative activities of enterprisers within the agri-food system. Recognizing the link between time and kin relations, the narratives and analysis pay close attention to everyday rhythms and practices which are organized via and amongst kin relations (Rutz 1984, 1992). This revealed that everyday temporalities of gendered kin relations are not distinct from industry time (Rolston 2014) but instead are interwoven with it and experienced differently by particularly positioned kin members. The ways in which particular kin members navigate the (multiple and interacting) temporal logics and flows of agricultural industries in a binational context enables us to re-evaluate the circulations and exchange relations of a globalized agri-food system.

Temporalities and Globalized Circuits

My inquiry therefore argues that a temporal lens helps us understand the social organization of kin-based agri-food enterprises in globalized agri-food systems because it reveals how women and men use kin relations and collective strategies in a binational context to negotiate the multiple interacting temporalities that comprise agricultural political economies. Considering the political economics of time and varied temporalities is important to the analysis of the globalized agri-food system, especially since there has

been a prioritization of space and place within studies of how global systems facilitate the movement and creation of capital (Inda and Rosaldo 2002). Temporal systems – and the exchange relations (like kin relations) that order them – seem to be foundational to organizing human activity (Evans-Prichard 1939; Munn 1992).

Temporality is a social construct. To control the time of others is to exercise power over them (Rutz 1992). When social time is categorized, it in turn "reproduces codes of selection" – an act which is done by elites and which constitutes a claim to the right to define temporal representations and orderings (Greenhouse 1996:233). With this temporal "code of selection" comes a "cultural grammar of time" (Greenhouse 1996:13) which allows for the linking of categorization of social time, particular persons (such as migrants) and hierarchical activities in everyday life (such as work). This is evident in the rationalization of people as workers as temporary (or temporal others), and the reification of them as cheap, transient labor (Martínez Novo 2004). When people are considered as temporary workers, they are also considered as timely assets – or resources with specific temporalities (Ferry and Limbert 2008). As such, they are sites of power contestation within the globalized agri-food system and transnational class process. As I have shown, the members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group recognize that they are in marginalized positions and strategize collectively to claim power over their time and capital production as "flexible producers" (Rothstein 2007) with family-based farming enterprises.

The story of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres binational kin group offers insights in to the analysis of "flexible accumulation, [as the] new strategy that divides and controls by relying on many different sites of exploitation in many different places often over short

durations among many different workers" (Rothstein 2007:149). Their story does this by showing how a group of flexible agri-food producers makes use of binational state status to create rural livelihoods and organize their agri-food enterprises across state lines. A binational kin relations lens allows one to recognize the ways in which the state produces inequities through the linking of time and belonging, as I argued in chapter six. However, it also allows for us to understand the political economic relation between farming and simultaneity in neoliberal agri-food systems and enables us to re-imagine how strategic small- to mid-scale agri-food producers and marketers can make use of transnational circuits.

Binational Strategists

The focus on a binational farming family as a group of strategists engaging in globalized agricultural industries allows for the re-imagining of Latinx, in and their contributions to, the rural southeastern U.S. Through them, this dissertation reveals the social agency, the collective strategies, comercio (*commerce*) mētis, and cooperative practices that co-exist with exploitative relations and dominating forces within the globalized agri-food system. Though power disparities and inequities do still exist within the group – due in part due to access to U.S. legal status – those created among family members are not as severe due to the alternative logics of exchange relations that these families base their livelihoods on. Despite the fact that three decades of neoliberal policy and societal change in rural Mexico have resulted in dire conditions for rural families, cooperative practices, alternative visions, and long-term exchange relations that they

cultivated as "flexible producers" challenge the hegemony of capitalist modes of rural production (Rothstein 2007).

Scholars analyzing global socio-economic development, such as Vivek Chibber (2013), tell a now-familiar story. Families in rural places emigrate to find wage work and retain their farmland as a form of insurance, knowing that the wage jobs they seek in urban areas may not provide a sustainable livelihood. In case this comes to pass, they can always move back and farm their land. This is a common global story, suitable for many contexts produced by the varied incarnations of neoliberal capitalism. My dissertation offers an alternative which illustrates how kin groups collectively leverage resources to continuously farm both their farmland in their place of origin and land in their new place of settlement. In this way, it contributes to the politics of economic possibility in the context of rural livelihoods.

Farming in two places simultaneously through cooperative arrangements is advantageous in our globalized agri-food system. It also produces particular opportunities in terms of the political economies of time, and the temporalities of the subject-actors. Paying attention to the temporal aspect of this context reveals the need for study of actual social life and work to account for the fact that a "social-spatial frame derived from the image of community no longer serves to represent the local terrain" that many mobile people in and between the U.S. and Mexico "inhabit" (Rouse 2001:164). Cristina Núñez-Madrazo uses a "here and there" – or a Derridian "both/and" perspective (1992) which draws attention to the importance of translocal relations (Guarnizo and Smith 1999) – in her study of how Mexican migrants from Veracruz work in a "translocal social/cultural/geographic space" as farmworkers in the U.S. and farmers and

contributors in the communities in Mexico (2007:2). Through a similar labor migration circuit approach, María de Lourdes Salazar Martínez found that although transnational companies structure the political economies of global crops like tobacco (Kingsolver 2011), temporary migration of tobacco producers and their families connect production locations in Nayarit, Kentucky and Durango with the aim of building economic stability for their next generation (2013:184).

Kin-based groups (and farming collectives like these) can be seen as part of a larger "meshwork" – or collection of interlinked networks (Escobar 2003) – within the globalized agri-food system. Analytic framings like these – that reveal connections amongst geographically dispersed subject-actors – can allow for a more collective approach to rural livelihoods for the future and thus, can contribute to our re-imagining of agri-food systems and the power relations that shape them. This dissertation contributes to this wider anthropology of globalization scholarship (cf. Sassen 2001) by arguing that we need to understand the multiple, interacting temporal dimensions of the globalized agri-food system to re-imagine the political economic possibilities that mobile farming families offer – in terms of collective production-distribution arrangements which could provide more equitable access to agri-food market share.

Collective Strategy: Multiple Positionalities and Perspectives of the North American Agri-food System

Neoliberal agricultural trade agreements produce inequitable access to market share for small- to mid-scale farming enterprisers. These "free-trade" exclusionary polices promote U.S. agri-food system consolidation both with the U.S. and beyond. This

is a mounting threat to food sovereignty and rural employment, throughout the Americas. To understand the full impact of the globalizing of neoliberal policy, we analyze the circulations and relations of globalized, multi-scalar agri-food system and transnational class processes that it entails in a long-term lens that combines perspectives from multiple places and vantage points (Kingsolver 2001).

Perspectives from members of the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group in Mexico reveal the incredibly high level of insecurity that the current neoliberal regime has created. With what seems to be a challenge to a neoliberal philosophy of governance, the current Trump administration has increased this sense of insecurity and uncertainty for all of Mexico, with the fear that he will end NAFTA-TLCAN and cause inflation in a now neoliberal Mexico. Some people I spoke with believe that rural producers in Mexico may actually benefit if NAFTA-TLCAN is eliminated because they assume this would mean that they would access better market prices, which they need since their livelihoods are threatened by both the NAFTA-TLCAN market prices and the narco-state groups.

Some people I spoke with believe that rural families should make use of the U.S. H-2A "guest worker" visa program while others believe that rural workers should not have to leave to cosechar (*to harvest*) abroad. Scholars like Armando Bartra argue that agrarian policies in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America should support production for domestic food markets, allowing the smallholder capitalist producers to contribute to the market (2008), and remain in their home communities.

In the U.S., farmers of different crops have different perspectives on NAFTA-TLCAN and "free trade" agreements in general due to their varied contexts. In Florida and Georgia, fresh-market fruit and vegetable growers' associations are working to

extend their protectionist provisions in NAFTA-TLCAN through policies that would give them an advantage for winter production under a new seasonal provision (Karst 2017). However, corn producers are worried that they may lose much of their market share in Mexico which would reshape the globalized industry, supply-demand dynamics, and their livelihood possibilities. Additionally, many of the perishable crop growers are concerned about accessing enough workers this coming season (2018) to harvest their crops in time to get them to market so that they can get the highest market value for them. At this point in 2018, it seems that everyone is uncertain of how the Trump administration will alter the trade arrangements within the agricultural realm. It is certain, however, that changes to NAFTA-TLCAN in terms of agricultural goods would re-shape the past arrangements that advantaged the U.S. in terms of exporting corn and importing fresh fruits and vegetables.

Future Possibilities for the Globalized Agri-food System

The creation of “alternative food futures” (Le Heron 2003) that allow for equitable relations globally (across state lines) is central to the work of re-imaging futures and possibilities for our globalized agri-food system and the working families that make it possible. These futures must take multi-scalar political economic sustainability into account and the uncertainty that global economic integration and severing of the link between the U.S. dollar and the gold standard in 1971 caused for food producers and the world. This work “requires both an interrogation of multiple arenas of global governance and a recognition of the important role played by imagination and agency in galvanizing the outcomes of the processes we refer to as globalization” within the agri-food realm

(Philips 2006:48). The work requires re-imagining collective projects that will respond to "the new exclusions that global projects create through food." (Philips 2006:47). This work will include questions like: what possibilities are there for farming families attempting to access equitable market share in globalized agri-food systems?

The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres story contributes to a conversation that considers a politics of economic possibility (Gibson-Graham 2006). It also suggests that we must imagine the ethical futures of our agri-food system as coming about through multi-scalar processes. The Guzmán-Ortega-Torres story is an example of how geographically dispersed members of a binational kin group collaborate across regions and borders in a community economy to access market share in multiple crops and multiple political economies simultaneously. Though this dissertation does not take the financialization of food crops as its focus, it does offer insights into how to design policy and programming to promote alternative organizational strategies to create a more equitable globalized agri-food system. This analysis and the re-imaginings of globalized agri-food system future must include a transnational class process lens and farming families' perspectives.

This study shows that localized state-based and federally funded programming – like the agricultural cooperative extension programming – needs to be re-evaluated to recognize gender and the role of Spanish-speaking contributors to the agri-food system. The case study shows that Latinx are critically important contributors to the southeastern U.S. agri-food system and rural economies. These contributors – and their skills, knowledge, and perspectives – need to be considered as programming and policy is designed to create sustainable and diverse community economies.

A reimaging of how farming families are already contributing to the globalized circulations of food commodities is necessary to make sense of how their collective strategies could be supported by multi-scalar policy to gain more equity through a redistribution of market share via globally coordinated national policies and programming that create the conditions necessary for alternative transnational arrangements within the globalized agri-food system are possible and merit further investigation. Alternative cooperative arrangements could reshape regional agri-food systems on a global scale to support local food security through sustainable kin-based farming livelihoods.

My binational kin relations lens allows for a transregional study of the impacts of NAFTA-TLCAN on family-based enterprises organized around two cash crops (i.e., white corn and tomatoes) were central to public protests of the "free trade" agreement. This public protest concerns the equity of globalizing trade policy and its effect on rural livelihoods and decision-making by states in the name of their nations. Local "encounters" with global processes are varied as people "pick and choose" their "glocal" interactions (King 2013: 34; Robertson 1995) while navigating (often) marginalizing contexts which globalized policy places them in (Gunewardena and Kingsolver 2007).

However, as, Nadel-Klein (1991) and Ann Kingsolver (2018) argue, global commodity systems strongly influence the patterns of movement and political economic "placement" of workers around the world. The actor-subjects of global commodity systems engage in transnational class process, often as "mobile selves" traversing multiple political economic and symbolic terrains (Berg 2015). Since domestic policy has been globalized in terms of trade relations, global policy is now required to allow for

mobile people to access human rights and equitable work conditions which include access to “the right to stay home” (Bartra 2008; Bacon 2013). As Peggy Levitt writes, “The issue is not whether migrants should or should not belong, in some way, to two polities, but that, given that increasing numbers live transnational lives, how their rights and representation can be best guaranteed” (2001:206).

A key implication of my study is the need to work across borders and boundaries to re-imagine and craft policy that allows farming families (no matter their scale) access to an equitable market share within a globalized agri-food system with sustainable long-term market prices. Contrary to myth, market economies are made. They are designed through policy and programming. Policy draws boundaries around markets and programming decides who can act within those boundaries as decision-makers and commodity producers. They are not natural, independent of cultural process, nor neutral. They are also not as comprehensive as the popularized concept of “the global market” implies (Kingsolver 2018). Designing market economies must be part of democratic process.

The future of bilateral trade policies such as NAFTA are now being considered after twenty years of economic integration, along with environmental and social degradation which come into view when the humanitarian-migration crisis and climate change are considered (Gallagher et al. 2011). The making of bilateral policies that shape so many people’s livelihood possibilities should be more transparent and made public prior to the negotiations to allow for accountability (Kingsolver 2001) and a more democratic decision-making process. The renegotiation of policies like these must address the multi-scalar social inequities that the policies produced.

Trade agreements could include transregional programming designed to support small- to mid-scale food producers and food security. However, as they are enacted today, they are not substitutes for national development, especially in the case of agriculture which defines country's access to food security. Our current varied and inequitable contexts necessitate a re-imaging of the future as one which includes some level of collective ownership and a more equitable social organization of our globalized agri-food system. Collective strategy can be seen in scale-making projects which studies have invested through the relation between place and space (Dirlik 2001; Friedman 2001; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Tsing 2005). I argue that the temporal aspects of these projects – and kin relations that make collective strategies possible – can advance this conversation of the political economics of possibility. Following this line of reasoning, my next project will consider globalized routes, overlapping policy environments, and multi-scalar logistical practices that make food distribution possible in and across the Americas.

Anthropology can help make sense of the diverse possibilities of human relational existence and varied nature(s) of social power and contestations (Graeber 2007). Policy, however, is the instrument for change and should support the advancement of diverse community economies and alternative practices (Gibson-Graham 2006), rather than its current chief aim of supporting the consolidation of market share by transnational corporations that put alternative livelihood possibilities under erasure. By illustrating an alternative model of farming livelihood strategy and life, the Guzmán-Ortega-Torres kin group shows that agricultural neoliberal policies must be reformed, if we are to ensure the long-term security of families and economies in rural places. The agri-food realm is ripe

with potentialities for cultivating transnational collaborations that could reshape power relations, challenge capitalist hegemony, and advance a politics of economic possibilities which would take rural families and their livelihoods more adequately into account.

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