

The de-agrarianization of the Mexican countryside

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Abstract: In this work we analyze the large transformations taking place among the country side's population, emphasizing the last 20 years. In the first part of the study we verify that rural population keeps on growing in spite of migrations. We see how countryside-city migration transforms because of an insufficient, precarious and flexible labor market. Thus, a new migratory model strengthens: non-peasant population in the country side tends to remain in their hometowns instead of permanently migrating to the city and searches for a short- or long-lasting temporary job. This accumulation of the population in the countryside not only causes an acuter poverty, but also accelerates the process of creation of new localities, disperse, isolated and marginalized. In the second part we analyze the rural households' dynamics from the National Surveys on incomes and Expenditures of the House holds from 1992 and 2004 (Encuestas Nacionales de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares). We observe that along the analyzed period, the peasant households decrease while those non-peasant increase their number and account for the most of rural households. We analyze those households' incomes, their poverty level and occupational rate. We draw two main conclusions: in peasant households salaried labor has displaced agrarian activities (pluri-activity), additionally the peasants tend to be poorer than those who are not farmers. We conclude with the need of rethinking the classical concepts we use both for analyzing the farming sector and the rural space, particularly the concepts of the countryside-city relation as well as that of peasant.

Key words: de-agrarianization, pluri-activity, rural households, rural incomes, labor market.

Resumen: En este trabajo analizamos las grandes transformaciones que ocurren en la población rural con énfasis en los últimos 20 años. En la primera parte del estudio constatamos que la población rural crece constantemente a pesar de las migraciones. Vemos cómo se transforma la migración campo-ciudad por la generalización de un mercado de trabajo insuficiente, precario y flexible. Así, se fortalece un nuevo modelo migratorio: la población no campesina en el campo tiende a quedarse en sus lugares de origen en vez de migrar definitivamente a la ciudad y busca trabajo temporal de corta o larga duración. Esta acumulación de la población en el campo no sólo provoca una mayor pobreza, sino también acelera el proceso de creación de nuevas localidades dispersas, aisladas y marginadas. En la segunda parte analizamos la dinámica de los hogares rurales a partir de las Encuestas Nacionales de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares de 1992 y 2004. Observamos que, durante el periodo estudiado, disminuyen notablemente los hogares campesinos, mientras los hogares no campesinos crecen y conforman hoy la mayoría de los hogares rurales. Examinamos los ingresos de esos hogares, su nivel de pobreza y tasa ocupacional. Llegamos a dos constataciones principales: en los hogares campesinos el trabajo asalariado ha desplazado la actividad agropecuaria (pluriactividad), además de que los campesinos tienden a ser más pobres que los no campesinos. Concluimos con la necesidad de repensar los conceptos clásicos que utilizamos tanto para analizar el sector agropecuario como el espacio rural, en particular los conceptos de la relación campo-ciudad y del campesino.

Palabras clave: desagrarianización, pluriactividad, hogares rurales, ingresos rurales, mercado de trabajo.

Introduction

Along the XX century it was considered that in the Mexican countryside lived peasants, small-family agriculturists, latifundistas and agricultural day laborers.¹ Those with no land were considered “peasants without land” or “peasants with right to salvation” as they were likely to receive benefits from the agrarian repartition. The importance of the agrarian revolutionary ideology nourished by the enormous capacity of the peasants to obtain the land, in spite of the fierce opposition of the latifundistas or local caciques, created the impression that the repartition was inexhaustible.² The impoverished farmers or those “without land”, who could not live in the countryside any longer, migrated to the city, where they managed to find a job, engrossing the marginal neighborhoods in the peripheries of the metropolises, or toward the U.S. The people who lived in the countryside and were not agricultural producers worked as pawns in small local factories linked to the primary sector, as well as in small cities in the whereabouts. There were not enough data to quantify this situation in a precise manner, however we can suppose this vision was close to reality; the first datum available at the level of households indicates that, in 1963, 72% of rural families were peasants (Banco de México, 1966).

Nevertheless, in the last two decades of the last century, it changed from an agrarian society, where the agricultural sector prevailed, to a rural society where this sector coexists with other economic activities and it

¹ In this work we use “countryside” and “rural” as synonyms; in order to limit this geographic and social space we adhere to the definition of rural population by INEGI (localities below 2500 inhabitants), since this allows us to use the censal sources by means of which we quantify the studied processes, make historical comparisons and with other countries, as it is the criterion commonly used in Latin America.

² One hundred and seven million hectares were distributed to more than three million peasants during the agrarian repartition that started with the decree issued on January 6th, 1915, which recognized the right to restitution or land repartition to the people; it was strengthened with the constitutional article 27 in 1917, which acknowledged three sorts of property: public, private and social; and it concluded with the amendment to the aforementioned article on January 6th 1922 and the Agrarian Law on February 26th the same year.

is the least important activity in terms of the workforce involved, the number of households and revenues. There was an accelerated process of de-agrarianization, understood as the “progressive diminution of the contribution from agricultural activities to generate revenues in the rural sphere” (Escalante *et al.*, 2008: 89; Bryceson, 1996: 99) not so because of the disappearance of the agricultural activity, as frequently stated, but because of the impressive growth of non-agricultural incomes at rural households. As we will see, in 1992 the agricultural income, monetary and for self-consumption, represented 35.6% of the total of rural incomes, and nowadays it represents only 9.8%.

In order to fully understand this transformation we must distinguish two complementary processes. On the one side, we have the transformation of peasant families that try to counteract the effects of low-priced agricultural products by means of diversifying the activities of their members, essentially salaried. Even if the activities adjoined to agricultural work have always existed in peasant economy, in particular with the salaried work outside the productive unit, it was recognized that agriculture was the ruling activity and the one that gave meaning to peasant household life. Currently, said centrality of the agricultural activities in farming lands has been substituted by salaried work: not losing completely their function as agricultural producers, peasant families essentially live on the salaries of their members; thereby, the strategies to survive are made from the conditions of the labor market rather than from the market for their agricultural products. This complex combination between agricultural and salaried activity, occasionally with small own enterprises and trades, is known as Pluri-activitive Economic Peasant Units (PEPU). Separately, we have non-farmer families which, due to the impressive demographic growth and the end of the agrarian repartition, currently represent most of the countryside households. These rural non-peasant families essentially live on salaried work which they may find locally, or via returning migrations at regional or national level or in the United States, nonetheless they can also live on own businesses or trades.

They are by definition plury-active, for their members carry out different activities;³ we call this families Rural Family Units (RFU).

The changes provoked by these new dynamics are so strong that rural society known by the current generation anchored in marginalized towns yet outwardly turned by migration, does not look whatsoever like the agrarian society of the previous generation which still saw in land and agrarian struggle the main means to improve its life conditions. The archetypes of rural life which parcela and milpa were are now substituted by precarious salaried work. Then, it seems justified speaking of the change from a farming agrarian world dominated by agricultural production and peasant families to a rural world where salaried work, migration and the non-peasant family prevail.

In the first part of this work we study the transformations in the countryside-city migration processes and their effects on rural population in the long term; we state that the traditional migration of peasants toward the city, which acceptably allowed them to enter the urban labor market, depleted both because of the scarcity of labor and the precariousness of the available posts. The new characteristics of the labor market limit the possibilities for a definitive migration from the countryside and propitiate more complex, multidimensional, new migratory processes in the long or short terms, either national or international, which do not provoke the abandonment of the rural towns and the “leftover” population stops being peasants and become what is known as “neighbors” in the ejidos. Then, we see how the growth of rural population, peasants or non-peasants, creates a great dispersion process of the towns in isolated regions linked to poverty and marginalization. We close this section verifying that in rural localities agricultural work is not any longer central as from 1970’s decade.

In the second part we analyze where the incomes of rural households come from and their evolution between 1992 and 2004; in order to so, we

³ In the time of agrarian repartition these people were known as peasants without land; now, to the extent that the last important agrarian struggles took place in 1975 and that agrarian repartition was cancelled in 1992, it seems to me that it is necessary to look for more appropriate concepts. In Brazil they are still considered peasants without land, basically because there is a solid agrarian movement and because the process of repartition is still carried out.

use the National Survey on Incomes and Expenditures of the Households (*Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares*, ENIGH) which provides utterly important data.⁴ From this analysis we discover that in the countryside not only exists the already known pluri-activity of the peasants, but also numerous households, nowadays the majority, which do not have other relation with agricultural activities but, if it is the case, as agricultural salaried workers. At first we see the evolution of peasant households and non-peasant households; then we analyze the evolution of their incomes to finish with the study of poverty and indigence level at both sorts of households.⁵ We conclude with some reflections on the current situation of the occupational structure in the countryside and the need to rethink our re-conceptualization of what nowadays both the countryside is and what the very peasants are.

In this work we make an effort to quantify the occurred changes from different statistical sources; we are aware of the risks of presenting the reader with an arid text, yet we deem it necessary so as to clearly state the transcendence of the transformations of the Mexican countryside, mainly during the last two decades.

The transformations of countryside-city migration and its effects on rural population

Countryside-city migration and changes in labor markets

In 1921 the rural population reached circa 10 million people and represented 68% of the total population, currently it is around 25 million people and represents 25% of the country population (table 1). Along the XX century urban population increases at giant steps: its annual growth rate is 2.2% in the 1920's decade, however it reaches 6.1% in the 1960's decade. From that moment on, it falls as rapidly as it grew, and by the 1990's decade it was 2.5%, the same level as early in the XX century. The turning point which

⁴ INEGI database for 2006 has just been disclosed, so we were not able to use it in this work. Nevertheless, we have run some tests and we verified that the tendencies are the same as in 2004.

⁵ We assimilated the household to the unit of family production, which is correct for almost the totality of the cases of the agricultural sector; this assimilation is incorrect only in the case of the very large companies, such as agro-exporters. However, these companies are not in the rural localities here studied, thereby our analysis is not affected.

marks the dominion of urbanization is to be found in the dawn of the 1960's decade, when the population is equally divided as rural and urban.

A large part of the urban growth is exogenous, mainly from the humongous flows of definitive migration from countryside to the city,⁶ we have to distinguish two stages in this process nonetheless: the first one corresponds to the inward industrialization process and stabilizing development; and the second to globalization and trade liberalization. The causes of migration as well as the sorts of migration and migratory flows are different in both moments.

In the first period the urban population grew much faster than the rural, but to a good extent from the effect of definitive migrations from the countryside to the city, which witnessed a boom from the 1950's to the 1970's decades, in particular toward Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey.⁷ In this period mass migration from the countryside to the city was due to the combination of several factors, among which three are distinguishable: 1) the severance of domestic industry, traditionally known as artisanship, from agriculture because of the industrialization process and substitution of domestic products by industrial products; this process, also known as specialization of the agricultural sector, took place as from the 1940's decade and cancelled numerous posts in the countryside. 2) The important demographic growth caused by the high birthrate in the countryside with the diminution of mortality from the improvement in healthcare systems. 3) The profitability crisis of farming economy started in 1957 with the control of maize price, yet it is worsened along the years with the fall of prices

⁶ During the 1930's decade, 2.8% of rural population migrates to the city; during the 1940's decade this proportion rises to 6%, while in the 1950's decade it falls to 4.3% (CEED, 1970).

⁷ According to Alba (1977), between 1940 and 1950 urban population grew in 2.8 million people, of which 1.7 million come from migrations, specially from rural localities (social growth); in the following decade (1950-1960) urban growth was 4.9 million people, of which 1.8 million came, mainly, from migrations from rural localities; finally between 1960 and 1970, urban population grows 8.4, of which 2.7 million are from migration. Nonetheless, Alba underscores that in these calculations the births of settled migrants are accounted for as natural growth when they are, in fact, an indirect effect of social growth (migration). He details that if births from settled migrants are accounted for as social growth (direct and indirect effects), 69% of demographic growth will be due to migration during the 60's.

of other key products in peasant economy, such as: henequen and coffee, whilst the supply prices sharply increase.⁸ An old phenomenon known as countryside-city uneven interchange.

Up to the 1970's decade, migrants from the countryside were basically young, more women than men; in time however, family migration increased.⁹ It is then, the children of poor rural families, peasant or non-peasant, those who composed the bulk of countryside-city migration for decades,¹⁰ to a good extent as a result of the deterioration of the production capacity of the peasant units. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that during these years, and in spite of the adverse conditions for the small familial economy, the number of productive units increased because of the agrarian repartition,¹¹ a process characterized as re-farming (Paré, 1977).

As from the 1970's decade and more clearly from the 1980's, the growth of urban population before the rural is reduced, it wears out; in time, the demographic growth of the city loses its dynamism to the growth of rural small towns. The breach which widened for many a year tends to stabilize; between 1930 and 1980 rural population changed from representing 66.5%

⁸ The price of maize was fixed between 1957 and 1973; during these period it decreased in 33% in real terms (Gómez Oliver, 1978: 727).

⁹ All the authors distinguish the young age of migrants, as well as the prevalence of feminine over masculine migration. For instance, Corona Cuapio *et al.* (1999) state that between 1965 and 1995 the average age of a migrant was 21.9 years; they also detail that in time familial migration increases. The Center of Economic and Demographic Studies of El Colegio de México (CEED, 1970) states that between 1940 and 1970 rural migration concentrated in ages from 10 to 29 years of age. Likewise, it points out that in the 1930's there were 53 migrant men per a hundred migrant women, in the 1940's there were 75 men per 100 women, and in the 1950's there were 83 men per 100 women. It also states that the more migration grows, the less migrants concentrate by age. De Oliveira (1976), on her own, calculates that in the case of Mexico City, between 1930 and 1969 the average age of migrant workers was 20 years.

¹⁰ By the 1960's more than third part of the migrants toward the metropolitan area of Mexico City came from subsistence agriculture regions. It is estimated that this tendency increased in the following decades (Stern, 1977).

¹¹ During the 80 years of agrarian repartition 101 million hectares were effectively delivered (52% of the national surface) to 4.2 million producers (www.sra.gob.mx); during these decades the balance between the peasant units that disappeared and those that appeared because of the agrarian repartition was amply positive.

to 33.7% of the national population, losing on average 6.5 percentage points every ten years, however with a yearly variation that decreases as of 1970 (table 3); it will change from representing 25.4% in 2000 to 21.1% in 2030 according to the projections by the National Council of Population (CONAPO); this is to say, on average it will only lose 1.4 percentage points a decade, and the yearly variation will continue regularly decreasing until 0.1% in 2030. In this year the rural population will be 26.7 million, while the urban 100.5 million people; if this projection is correct, we cannot expect a constant relative decrease of rural population, we rather face a new tendency, where the relation between urban and rural population might stabilize around an 80-20% proportion.¹²

During the second period there is a displacement of countryside-city migrations in favor of city-city migrations, essentially between intermediate cities as well as an increment in international migration. Between 1995 and 2000, almost half of internal displacements (47.5%) took place between cities, whereas countryside-city represented only 18.3% of the flows (Conapo, 2004). On its own, international migration becomes the great relief valve; it is estimated that in 1970 there were some more than five million Mexican residents, legal or illegal, in the U.S., and by 2005 the figure was 28 million (Delgado and Márquez, 2006). The rural fertility rate (3.6) higher than the urban (2.4),¹³ as well as the disappearance of rural domestic industry,¹⁴ are still important migration motivations; two factors, however, are added: the end of agrarian repartition and the new conditions of the labor market, insufficient and precarious, due to the deep transformations of the industrialization model.

¹² It is worth remembering that even in developed countries this relation is never definitive; the French case is interesting in this respect, the current tendency is a slow repopulating of the rural municipalities that included 24.9% of the total population in 1975, but 26% in 1990. After the historic rural exodus (countryside-city migration) an urban flow to the countryside began, the migratory rate in two thirds of the French rural municipalities is now positive (Fougerouse, 1996).

¹³ Figures calculated by Carlos Welti, from the 2003 National survey on reproductive Health, INEGI, Mexico.

¹⁴ In some indigenous regions crafts turned into “cultish” decoration objects (clothing, serapes, rugs, laces, furniture, jewelry, paintings, etc) for tourism and international market.

It is not but from the end of agrarian repartition, legally as from January 6th 1992, but *de facto* as early as Lopez Portillo's administration (1976-1982), and the coming into force of neoliberal policies during Miguel de la Madrid's administration (1982-1986), when the de-agrarianization process unavoidably deepened with the disappearance, as we will see in the second part of this research, of an important number of production units. Nevertheless, because of the current conditions of precarious labor, the migrants find it more difficult to definitively settle on the attracting regions; hence the combination of labor instability and more competence between the very workers tends to create temporary migratory flows instead of definitive. It is because of this labor precariousness that workers preserve their original residence to temporarily migrate (frequently very far and for periods that may last several years) searching for a job. Definitive migration does not disappear but now combines with these "temporary multiple migrations", often "long termed", which acquire a structural character framed in the generalization of poverty (Carton *et al.*, 2004). In the second part of the present text we will analyze the effects of these changes in the labor markets on the incomes of rural households.

The dispersion of rural populating, its social marginalization and labor in rural communities

An interesting phenomenon is the extremely disperse populating pattern with a small number of inhabitants per locality; in geographic terms, what we call the countryside comprises more than 196 thousand communities, where circa 25 million people live, with an average of 126 people per community (table 2).¹⁵ The growth of rural population in absolute terms together with poverty, which affects half of its population, provokes a tri-polar method of human settlement: on the one side, there exists high dispersion of rural population in isolated and marginalized "micro-communities" (Conapo, 1998); on the other side, we find megalopolises with very deficient urban development, from the bad quality of their services; in the middle we find the intermediate cities, which are the new regional centers of urban concentration, attraction poles for local migrations, with scarce urban development as well.

¹⁵ In 1930, with a total population of 16 million people, there were slightly more than 75 thousand localities (V Censo de Población, 1930).

As for the isolation of rural localities, Conapo (2004) indicates that 14.6% with a population of four million inhabitants are suburban, they are located surrounding the cities (more than 15 thousand people); 8.5% with a population of 2.4 million inhabitants are near intermediate cities (between 2500 and 15 thousand people); 44.3% with a population of 13.1 million inhabitants are far from localities and intermediate cities; 32.5% with a population of 4.9 million inhabitants are in a distanced situation, i.e., far from the cities and intermediate localities, as well as year-round usable roads. To sum up, more than 150 rural localities with more than 18 million inhabitants are isolated or far from roads and cities. Conapo data also show there is a relation between isolation and the degree of marginalization: only 13% of the suburban rural localities are very highly marginalized, while 54% of the isolated localities are marginalized.¹⁶ The more isolated localities are, the more marginalized; the opportunities of employment are lower and the number of dependants per person in working age increases, which makes the population poverty levels grow (Conapo, 2004).¹⁷

This populating model contrasts with the one we find in developed countries, where rural towns frequently work as peripheral localities of the cities, with public services and welfare levels similar to the urban (Linck, 2001).

The level of isolation and marginalization of localities seems to suggest that we face a poor self-subsistence peasant population, scarcely linked to labor markets; nevertheless, as we will see further in the text, a thorough analysis shows that this rural population is gradually less agricultural. Still in 1970 it was considered that rural population was basically assimilated into agriculture, since 76.9% of its workforce actively works in the primary sector, and only 9.1% in the secondary and 8.9% in the tertiary (table 3). We can say, sounding obvious, that in the countryside peasants lived; nowadays, the situation completely changed: near half the workforce in the countryside works in the secondary and tertiary sectors. In this same sense, the National

¹⁶ Suburban localities or those near a road have an average of 150 inhabitants; on their own, isolated localities (far from the city and roads) have an average of 77 inhabitants.

¹⁷ CONAPO (2004) estimates that in small localities there are 83 dependents per hundred people in working age; while in urban localities this relation is 56 per 100 employed people.

Agrarian Registration provides us with other datum on this population which lives in the countryside but does not work in the agricultural sector: 30% of the households in ejidos do not have land. Out of these households, 27% do not have any kinship with the ejido holders or commoners. It is a population younger than the peasant population, since their family heads are on average 42 years old, whilst the ejido holders and commoners are on average 54 years old (Procuraduría Agraria, 2003). Notwithstanding, the aggregated analysis at the level of the rural space is insufficient to understand the dynamic of rural incomes, for it does not allow learning to which extent non-agricultural incomes belong to peasant households, or whether they correspond to non-peasant rural households. As we will expose it in the following section, in both cases the dynamics of the incomes are different, and so is their relation with poverty.

From the agrarian world to the rural world

Some reflections on the Pluri-active Economic Peasant Unit and Rural Family Unit

The permanent transformation of peasant production units to adapt to the changing situations of the society wherein they live and their definition as production units are extremely complex topics. The works by very many authors have lead the way on the studies of peasant economy in capitalism, let us remember only some of the most important such as: Karl Marx (1972), Karl Kautsky (1974), Vladimir Lenin (1975) or Alexander Chayanov (1974) at first, and later: Daniel Thorner (1971), Boguslaw Galeski (1977), Teodor Shanin (1983), Eric Wolf (1971) or Robert Redfield (1963). In spite of the existing different theoretical stances, among social scientists certain consensus was established on the definition of peasant production unit.¹⁸ Under capitalism, peasant economy has been defined with a logic different from that of capitalism, from the following characteristics: 1) it is a (partially) merchant production unit which interchanges products in the market; 2) where there is no separation between production means and labor, therefore there is unity between production and consumption;

¹⁸ According to the trend of thought or the emphasis given, we used a varied range of concepts such as: small-scale commercial agriculture, simple commercial economy, peasant, familial or household economy, etc. Often these terms are used as synonyms.

3) it is a production form dominated by capitalism which determines its functioning, from here its relation with capitalist production is uneven; 4) it is (essentially) reproduced by familial workforce; 5) to the extent that familial labor force is a fixed resource, it can perform other activities outside the unit, particularly salaried activities; however, these activities are considered complementary, as they do not define the set of familial organization, but agricultural activities; 6) this production unit has a low technological level to the extent their own labor force is privileged.¹⁹

In Latin America this nomenclature was widely used for three decades, from the sixties to the eighties; nevertheless in the last twenty years two phenomena that appeared forced the scholars to introduce new nuances in the study of peasant economy. The first one is, in the context of peasant production crisis, for an important portion of poor peasants agricultural activity does not determine the organization of family activities any longer. This phenomenon is particularly important for subsistence peasants, who consume their own products; but as we will see further in the text, it becomes relevant among merchant peasants who obtain large revenues from the salaried work of their members. This combination of activities in peasant families is currently known as pluri-activity.

The second phenomenon refers to the presence in the countryside of a high proportion of households which have nothing to do with forestal or agricultural activities, not even with small local manufacture plants linked to the primary sector (crafts, small transformation industries, mining) as it was done in old peasant companies.

Strictly, this situation is not new; in Mexico by the end of the seventies the theoretical polemic of the production modes appeared, as well as the new processes of proletarianization of the peasants, when the concepts of de-farming, proletarians and semi-proletarians were discussed (Paré, 1979). To sum up these statements let us remember that: peasant was considered the family merchant producer (although partially) who can complement their agricultural incomes with artisanal or salaried activities; semi-proletarians depended rather more heavily on their wage as employees

¹⁹ A good review on the different analytical stances back in the 1960's and 1970's decades, as well as on the definition of peasant, can be found in chapters 1 and 2 of the book *Economía campesina y agricultura empresarial* (CEPAL, 1982).

than on their agricultural production for self-consumption; proletarian was an “ex-peasant” or child of peasant who only lived on their wage, or almost exclusively, as there was always the possibility for backyard activities. Even if there were stressed disagreements on the becoming of merchant peasants—for the scholars of farming it was a class which belonged to the very structure of capitalism as it was functional for capital accumulation via unequal interchange; while for the scholars of de-farming it was a pre-capitalist class in disappearance because of the effects of competence in the market of products—there was certain consensus on the fact that proletariat remained in the countryside since it had ties with peasant economy and rural community through kinship, yet their destiny was definitive migration toward the city from the lack of work posts in their hometowns. In any case, the disagreement was to determine the strength of these ties; on their own, a semi-proletarian was a poor peasant undergoing their complete severance with land as a direct producer. These proposals were variables of Lenin’s well-known stance (1975) on rich, mid and poor peasants.

Thirty years later we can verify the permanence of poor peasant households, though in lower numbers, as well as the impressive growth of non-peasant households. Following the statement of all the classical authors who studied the agrarian issue the explanation should not be sought in the very peasantry, but in its relation with the dominant capitalist society; nowadays the relation between both production ways has deeply changed, because capitalism has been transformed and thereby its relation with peasantry imposes new functioning rules at rural households. The persistence of peasant and non-peasant households does not only respond to the strength of community ties, as it was stated some decades ago, but mainly to the current situation of labor market, scarce and precarious, incapable of taking in the remaining labor force from the countryside.

Both sorts of households have different problems nevertheless, so we have to difference each situation clearly; we propose to speak of PEPU when we deal with peasant merchant units (partial or totally) and RFU when we deal with households without own agricultural activities or when these are exclusively for self-consumption; in the first case the activities of the household are linked to the sphere of the own labor, while in the second they belong to the sphere of salaried work (seldom from own businesses).

The evolution of Pluri-activity Economic Peasant Unit and Rural Family Unit

Even if we distinguish two household categories in the countryside: peasant and non-peasant, each one, on its own, can be subdivided in function of the origin or their incomes; we subdivided peasant and non-peasant households in two types. Peasant households have merchant agricultural activities (in addition to self-consumption) and besides have activities outside the family plot; they are pluri-active economic peasant units (PEPU). Nonetheless, a small proportion of them does not have activities outside their plots, they are exclusively agricultural, therefore peasant economic units (PEU). On their own, non-peasant households do not have merchant agricultural activities and we characterize them as rural family units (RFU); some produce for their consumption (RFU with self-consumption), yet most do not have any self-consumption activity (RFU without self-consumption).²⁰

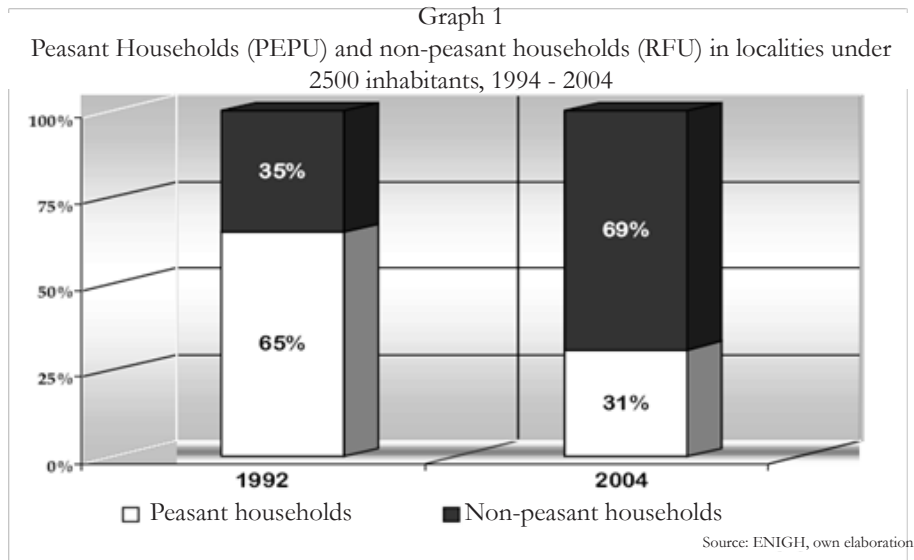
In 1992, 65% of the rural households were peasant, the rest (35%) were not (graph 1 and table 4).²¹ Out of the peasant households 89% was pluri-active (PEPU), whereas the rest (11%) did not have activities outside the family plot (PEU). Out of the non-peasant households (RFU) 28% had self-consumption (RFU with self-consumption), whilst 72% did not (RFU without self-consumption).

Slightly a decade later, in 2004, we verified that the situation dramatically changed, as only 31% of the households are peasants, the rest (69%) are not (graph 1 and table 5). This is due to a dual process: the sharp diminution of peasant households (at 1 002 798) from the agriculture crisis and the

²⁰ Self-consumption is scantily relevant; it includes both, production in the backyard and plot as well as gathering activities for family consumption. In 1992 RFU with self-consumption represented 28% of RFU and 10 % of the total of rural households. The amount of incomes from self-consumption represented 12% of their incomes. In 2004 they only represent 15% of the total of RFU and 10% of rural households. The amount of incomes from self-consumption decreases to 8% of the total incomes. It is noticeable that self-consumption is, by far, the least significant activity, that its importance is ever decreasing and it is essentially found in the poorest households.

²¹ In 1992 these peasant households represented 73% of the total of agricultural production units of the country (the other 27% was in towns with more than 2500 inhabitants), and in 2004 the proportion was similar (74%).

consequent concentration of production,²² together with the impressive increase in more than 1,5 million RFU, because of demographic growth and the definitive migrations wearing-out. We also see that now every peasant household has own non-agricultural activities (only 1.7% does not), all are plury-active (PEPU). On the side of RFU, self-consumption loses importance, as it is only found in 15% of the households.²³



Their incomes

Let us firstly analyze the incomes of peasant households, then we go on to analyze those of non-peasant.

Nowadays 42% of PEPU (758 722 units) sells all the production in the market (they do not practice self-consumption); twelve years ago only 15% was in this situation (graph 2) and tables 6 and 7). They are probably farms specialized in some particular product (vegetables, fruit, coffee, tobacco, milk, meat) and integrated in productive chains. We can also suppose they

²² To the extent that the cultivated surface has not varied in recent years, the hypothesis of a heavy concentration on heavily capitalized units becomes relevant; unfortunately, the agricultural census in 2001 was not carried out, so we do not have an update idea of the current agricultural structure.

²³ It is probable that there is a higher concentration of non-peasant households in isolated and marginalized suburban localities.

are the most successful and wealthy households. We also see that half of PEPU have monetary salaried work (53% in 1992), but 67% receives in-kind payments (51% in 1992), between both payment forms 82% of the households receives salaries (74 % in 1992); as well 28 % carries out some activity outside the plot (21% in 1992), 26% of the households receives remittances (19% in 1992), and 73% receives governmental subsidies (2% in 1992). Very few peasant household heads migrate (1%), and no woman head does so; if it is the case, children do. Even if the impact of own non-agricultural activities and the impact of remittances on the households grew in 12 years, notable is the increase of subsidies, which in 1992 were virtually absent, however currently they have presence in three quarters of the rural households.

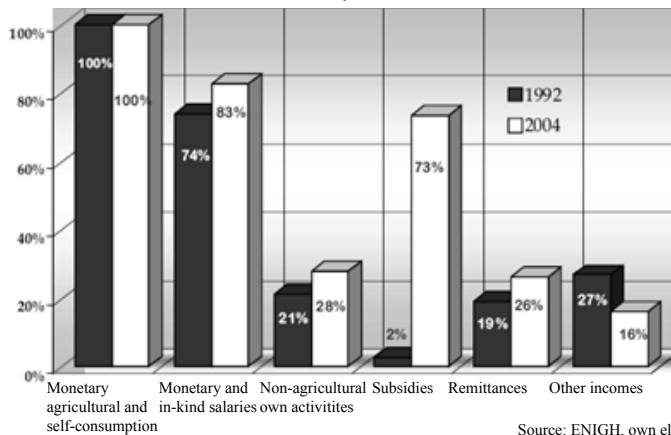
As for the amount of their incomes, we find that today 27% comes from the sales of their agricultural products, 5% from self-consumption, 24% from monetary salary, 7% from in-kind wage, and 10% from different entrepreneurial activities (commerce, crafts, diverse trades, etcetera), 13% from governmental subsidies, 7% from remittances (graph 3 and table 7).²⁴

Some data are specially distinguishable: agricultural, monetary and self-consumption activities only represent a third part of the total income; salary, monetary and in kind income is as important as the agricultural activity, but if we add remittances and own activities, which also come from wages, the salary amount of PEPU reaches 48% of the family income; on their own, governmental subsidies have gained a noticeable importance with Procampo, on the plot side, and Oportunidades, on the household side (13%);²⁵ non-agricultural own activities (corner stores, trades, crafts) are less relevant than subsidies.

²⁴ In 2004, 75% of the agricultural production units (1.8 out of 2.4 million) are located in rural localities, yet it is noticeable to verify that pluri-activity is similar both in the units in small and intermediate localities (2,500 to 15 thousand inhabitants) or cities (more than 15 thousand inhabitants) (Carton, 2008).

²⁵ There are other SEDESOL programs aimed at poor households, with a limited scope however: Temporary Employment program (in 2003 115 839 posts were created, with a salary of 43 MXN a week and a total income of 3708 MXN per person) and the Attention to the Elderly program in rural zones (in 2003, 200 thousand adults were supported, with a total expenditure of 2500 MXN per person).

Graph 2
Sort of incomes in the Pluri-activity Economic Peasant Units, 1992-2004

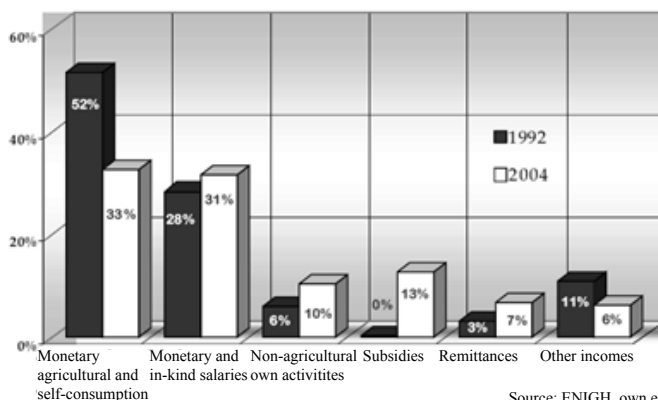


In comparison with 1992 (graph 3 and table 6) we verify that agricultural monetary income and self-consumption lose importance (41% and 10% in 1992); monetary earnings increase a little (21% in 1992), whilst in-kind salary remains the same (7% in 1992), own non-agricultural activities grow almost twice as much (6% in 1992), governmental subsidies become relevant (0.2% in 1992) and so do remittances (3% in 1992). The diminution of monetary incomes in the total amount of the peasant household, in many cases in spite of the increase in yields, is the result of the constant diminution of the market prices in real terms and the increase of production costs. In these conditions the other activities, even salaried work, allow obtaining a better income; a study demonstrates that a typical small producer of maize with two hectares harvests two metric tons, supposing they sell all his production in the market, they obtain an annual income of 138 USD per capita in the household (five members in total). This situation reflects the situation of more than a half of Mexican maize producers (Rosenzweig, 2005). In these conditions, the opportunity cost of other activities is a key factor to understand the dynamic of the incomes of peasant households.

In the case of Rural Family Units, salaried activity is more important: 76% of the households has a monetary income, but if in-kind salary is added almost the entirety of households receives a salary (95%) (91% in 1992) (graph 4 and tables 6 and 7). Self-consumption only exists in 15% of the

households (28% in 1992), around a third (31%) has own activities (22% in 1992), 28% receives remittances (24% in 1992) and 40% governmental subsidies (2% in 1992). In this case the heads, both men and women, take part in migration (3% of the heads). As for the sort of occupation developed, 41% of the male heads are workers, 35% day laborer, but only 19% work on their own; whereas 39% of the female heads are employees, 35% work on their own and 15% are day laborers.

Graph 3
Amount of incomes in Pluri-active Economic Peasant Units



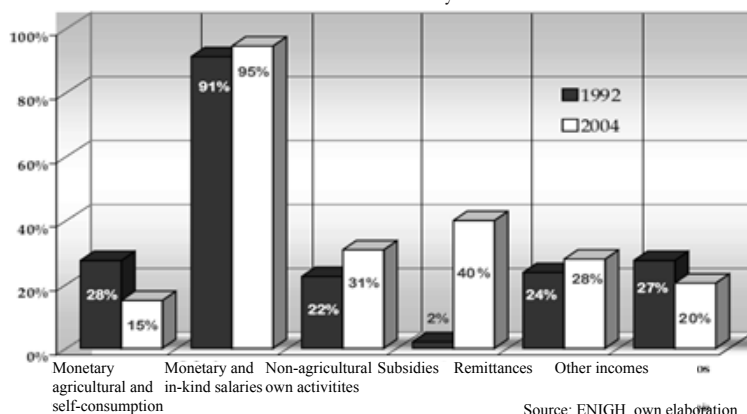
Source: ENIGH, own elaboration

In relation to their incomes, 57% comes from wages and 8% from in-kind salary, 15% from own activities, 9% from remittances, 4% subsidy essentially given by Oportunidades program; self-consumption is irrelevant (1%) (graph 5 and tables 6 and 7). Comparing with 1992 we verified a larger number of monetary salaries (52% of monetary salaries and 13% in-kind in 1992), a slight increment of own activities (13% in 1992) and of remittances (8% in 1992), a noticeable increase in subsidies (0.2% in 1992) and diminution of self-consumption (4% in 1992).

If we see today the set of activities of the household members, the two main activities of PEPU families are day labor in the countryside and pawn in the city, together with unpaid work in the family plot; then working as laborer in the manufacturing-industrial sector and employees in the service sector. In RFU clearly working as laborer and employee prevail, followed by day laborers and pawn, and, finally self-employment. We verified that among

peasants there is no stressed sexual division of labor in economic activities (save in services sector); whilst in non-peasant families this division is more stressed (women prevail in services and self-employment, however they have a notable presence among day laborers in the countryside and pawns in the city). Noteworthy is the higher specialization of work in RFU than in PEPU, schooling level is also visibly higher in RFU. It seems there is better capacity to enter the labor market in the case of non-peasant households, which is verified with data we will check poverty levels in the next section.

Graph 4
Sort of incomes in Rural Family Units 1992 - 2004

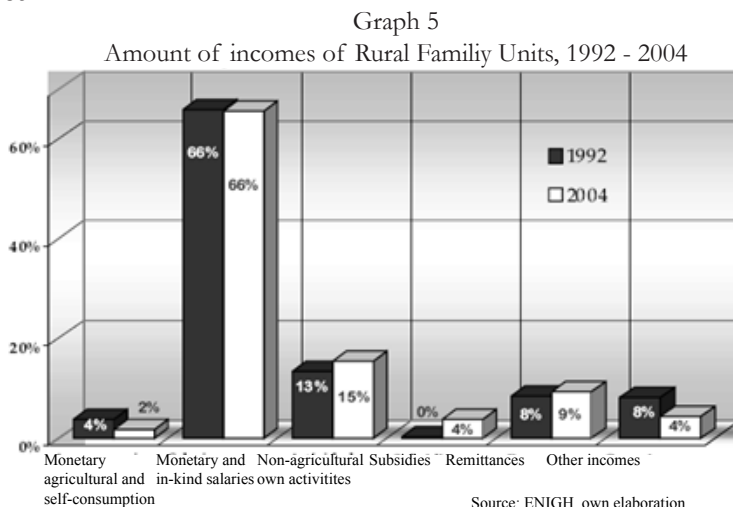


Incomes, poverty and employment rate for PEPU and RFU

In general terms, in 1992 there was a higher proportion of poor rural households (67%) than in 2004 (58%).²⁶ Rural poverty has decreased in 9% of the household in this period; nonetheless, it is necessary to emphasize that, in absolute terms, the number of poor households is larger than in the early 1990's. In both years the proportion of PEPU households is higher (70 and 66%) than the proportion of poor RFU (61 and 54%) (graph 6 and table 8).

²⁶ We adopted the per capita poverty levels defined by ECLAC (2006: 319) in order to determine the monetary poverty line in 2004, and for 1992 we deflated data on the base of 1994.

If poverty does not decrease in a noticeable manner among agricultural producers, despite their important diminution in absolute terms, is because the producers who disappeared were not the poorest, but also disappeared merchant producers who did not manage to resist the new rules of the market.²⁷

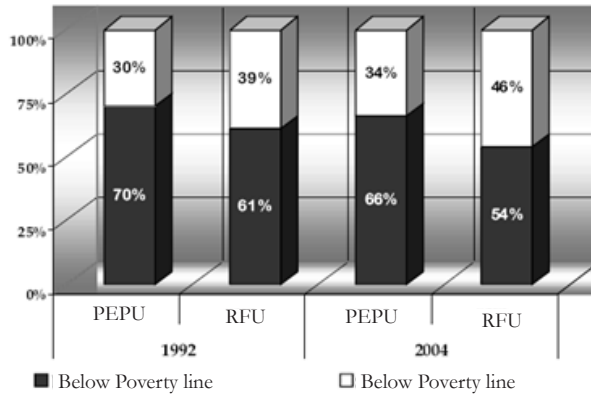


On the other side, if we disaggregate the households according to the main sources of incomes, specially from salary and entrepreneurial incomes (own activity or self-employment), we see that for both PEPU and RFU there is higher poverty when the main income comes from salary than from self-employment; this tendency is even clearer now than in 1992, because of salary deterioration. Indeed, for the specific case of salaried work in the cultivation of tomato for exportation, in the open field (sowing and

²⁷ In another work (Carton, in print) on the evolution of the primary sector between 1992 and 2004, we found that, by income stratum, 42% of the agricultural production units with an income below 2 minimal wage disappeared; in the stratum from 2 to 5; a 36% disappeared; in the stratum from 5 to 10, the figure was 28%; in the stratum from 10 to 20, 22%; and in the stratum of 20 and more 75% disappeared. We can consider that households with less than 2 minimal wages correspond to indigent or poor peasants, 2 to 5 are poor or with simple reproduction, from 5 to 10 are peasants with welfare, from 10 to 20 are peasants with welfare and accumulation capability, and those above 20 are producers with high accumulation.

harvest) in Sinaloa, in the period of great technologic development, from 1985 to 1995, we have calculated that while the productivity of work grew 65%, the real value of salary decreased 51%. Thus, the value of salary changed from representing 27% to 16% of the production cost in these dates (Carton, 2007).²⁸

Graph 6
Pluri-activity Economic Peasant Units and Rural Family Units, 1992 - 2004



Source: ENIGH, own elaboration

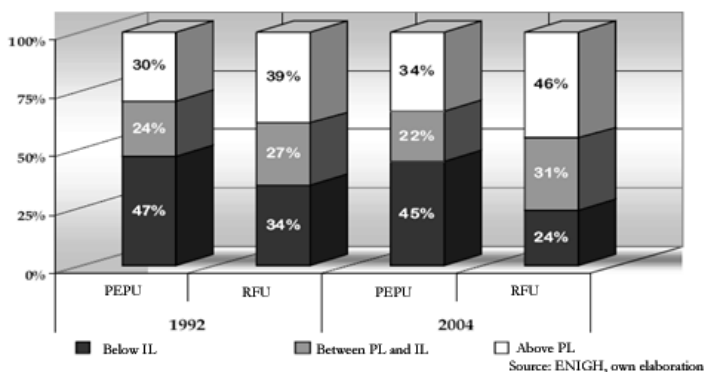
The differentiation between peasant and non-peasant households is even more stressed if we consider the indigence line; in 1992 indigent peasant households represented 47% of all PEPUs in 2004, this figure only decreased in 2 percentage points (45%). On their own, in 1992 indigent non-peasant households represented 34% of all RFUs, while in 2004 the figure decreased in 10 percentage points (24%) (graph 7 and table 9). These data indicate, once again, that not only peasant families tend to be poorer than non-peasant families, but also, whilst the poverty level is almost stable for peasants, it decreased in non-peasant households as from the 1990's decade.

In 1992 and 2004 the employment rate for PEPUs, both those below and those above the poverty line, is higher than the rate of rural family units (table 10); nevertheless, we have just seen that there tends to be higher poverty among the former than the latter. This indicates once again, that in

²⁸ According to National Accounts, national agricultural salary decreased in 45% during this same period.

the current conditions, the agricultural activity employs an important amount of labor force, yet in the worst payment conditions: in the year 2000, 60% of the agricultural employed population earned below two minimal wages, 88% percent less than three minimal wages; when it was estimated that in order to be above the poverty line a family needed to earn more than three minimal wages (table 11). Between 1992 and 2004, the employment level in rural households dramatically increased, both at peasant and non-peasant; however, only the households which attained high employment intensity managed to improve their welfare, because the increment of work could neither compensate for the fall of agricultural prices nor of the salaries.

Graph 7
Pluri-activity Economic Peasant Units and Rural Family Units by poverty line and by indigency line 1992 -2004



The analysis per decile of rural population reinforces this conclusion; self-consumption and subsistence agriculture prevail up to fourth decile, this is to say they propitiate poverty. We also see that peasant households are poorer than non-peasant households that live on salary and on own activities. On their own, at the highest deciles the agricultural producer households prevail, which are exclusively devoted to market production (no self-consumption and no pluri-activities); whereas in intermediate deciles we find the concentration of pluri-active producer households with incomes from salaries, own activities (small-scale commerce, repair shops, crafts, trades) and remittances.

It is usually stated that pluri-activity is a diversification strategy of the household activities to improve their incomes and, by doing so, it is supposed that the wider diversification the higher probability of overcoming poverty (Berdegúe *et al.*, 2001). In this sense, it would be expected that a peasant household which produces for self-consumption, sells something in the market, acquires temporary salaried work or has a small business, would be at a better position than a non-peasant household which essentially depends on its salary. For Mexico it does not seem to be the case, and the data we have allow us to identify this situation: 1) by and large, peasant households are poorer than non-peasant households and show a lesser capability to increase their incomes; 2) for both households their own activities are more profitable than salaried labor; 3) the pluri-active peasant households with a higher level of self-consumption are the poorest; 4) pluri-active peasant households with the best sales at the market are usually placed at intermediate income levels; 5) the agricultural producers who manage to specialize and live on agriculture only, probably from their insertion in productive chains, are placed at the best welfare levels.

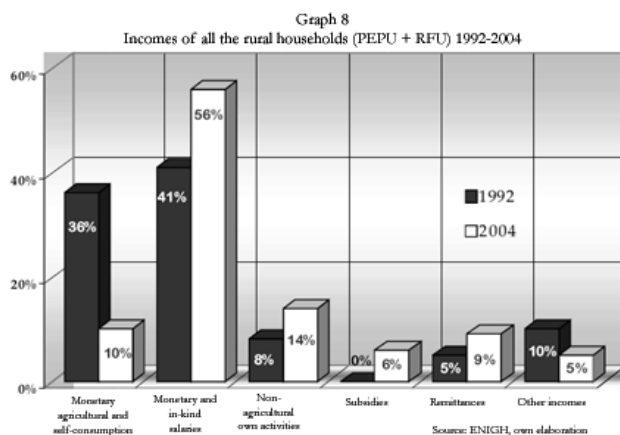
What does the countryside live on?

Although briefly, we consider it useful to provide an overview of the income composition of all the rural households (PEPU+RFU) to clearly state what the economic importance of each activity in the countryside is. We can affirm that in 1992 the de-agrarianization process had already started: peasant pluri-activity was already a blatant reality and non-peasant households represented 35% of the total of the households. Even if by then, most of the households were still peasant, the most important rural income was a salary (41%); while agricultural income represented a third part of the total rural income (graph 8 and table 12). Around a quarter of the households had non-agricultural own activities; however the income they generated only represented 8% of the total rural income.

In 2004, de-agrarianization had dramatically deepened: peasant households now represent only the third part of all the rural households, and agricultural incomes represent 10% of all the rural incomes, at the same level as remittances and below non-agricultural own activities. The most important income, by far, was salary: it represented more than a half of

the total rural income, ever present in almost all rural households. Finally, the impact of subsidies has to be reckoned, since half of the households received this support, which represented 6% of the total of rural incomes. It is very probable that nowadays some of these tendencies have become acuter: the salary will be increasingly important, agricultural incomes are likely to continue falling and that own activities gradually grow.

We reiterate that the relative diminution of rural agricultural incomes is essentially due the fall of the prices of agricultural products, as well as the impressive growth of non-agricultural activities, in particular salaried and entrepreneurial.



Some final reflections

During the period started by globalization, three phenomena are relevant for rural population. In absolute terms rural population still grows, despite the large leak migration means. What is more, by the end of the last decade of the XX century most households were peasant, even if part of the peasant family worked outside agriculture; nowadays only a third part of rural households are peasant households, the rest are non-peasant and salaried households or occasionally they have small businesses, artisanal activities or trades (bricklayers, mechanics, etcetera). Finally, pluri-activity has become widespread among the set of peasant families; in 1992, 11% of peasant households did not have activities outside their plot, in 2004 this proportion reached 17%.

The growth of rural population comes from the impressive growth of RFU, as countryside-city migration was restricted by the incapability of the cities to take in the excess of labor force from the countryside, due to the consolidation of precarious and flexible labor conditions from the current process of post-fordist industrialization. It is because of the change from a market which offered, to a certain extent, steady and permanent jobs, to another insufficient, precarious and flexible, that definitive migration to the city has eroded and now it is complemented with a new migratory schema based on temporary migrations, either short or long in duration. Because of this reason many a rural households which have nothing to do any longer with agricultural activities remain in the hometown, whilst their members look to enter into the labor market via complex migratory processes.

Even if part of the members of non-peasant households work as employees in the very agriculture, currently the main source of work for rural population, both peasant and non-peasant households, is to be found in the secondary and tertiary sectors.

This payrolling process among rural population has occurred so fast and brutally because of the impact of globalization that we cannot glimpse its real consequences; while the Mexican peasantry construction process lasted at least some seventy years, from the beginning of the agrarian reform to its effective end during the 1970's, the ingoing deconstruction process of the peasantry and the transformation of rural population took less than two decades. The noticeable diminution of peasant households is due to the agriculture crisis and the consequent concentration of production which we cannot measure with certainty, because the 2001 agricultural census was not carried out, but it is an unavoidable tendency whose consequences have not been taken seriously into account.

The countryside-city relation has drastically changed; the severance between the residence and the place of work for rural workers is a characteristic of the globalization and pauperization of labor markets. The old definitive migration is not an adequate resource for the countryside dwellers, for the cities do not offer any more the opportunity to enter their labor markets, not even in the informal sector. Because of this long-termed temporary multiple migrations tend to replace definitive migration; numerous rural people preserve their address in their hometown, as it is the

safest and cheapest place where the family can live, because it allows them to have certain solidarity links with the community and exercise backyard or gathering activities. It is basically the place where they can receive support from governmental programs to alleviate poverty, in particular Oportunidades. This phenomenon of population retention, in particular the non-peasant, in isolated and marginalized micro-localities is then due to the combined effect of poverty with the current condition of the precarious labor market; we cannot but expect a broadening of this process, should the economic conditions which propitiate it continue.

In many cases, the increase of other salaried activities of the peasant family did not foster the disappearance of the production unit from definitive migration, as some decades ago, but the displacement of the agricultural activity by salaried activities and the transformation of its organizational logic: without cutting the link with the plot, the peasant family equally values the other activities. With this, the peasant unit turned from a systematic organization, dominated by agricultural production complemented with additional activities, into a pluri-active systemic organization, where the most lucrative activity defines the dynamic of family work. It will be agriculture when it is the most profitable; yet it will be salaried work when the labor market offers higher incomes than the market of agricultural products. In this context poor producers are not necessarily undergoing a transition process toward their proletarianization, or non-salaried proletarianization, as it was stated by the end of the seventies, but they reproduce in the pluri-active unit. This situation somewhat brings to mind that of the “peasant-workers” (*ouvriers-paysans*) or “rural-workers” (*ouvriers-ruraux*) analyzed in France in the 1960’s decade (Rochard, 1966).

In theoretical-methodological terms we have differenced the Pluri-active Economic Peasant Unit from the Rural Family Unit from the following criterion: in the former a plot is combined with a household; while on the latter, there is only a household, even if this can have self-consumption activities to assuage the poverty it experiences. Nonetheless, the analyzed data make us see there is a humongous *continuum* of situations which blurs this analytical differentiation; in practice, poor peasant households are usually reproduced with the same logic of non-peasant households, to the

extent that salaried work amply prevails on the family work on the own plot. In both cases there are diversified activities which combine salaried artisanal work and manual tasks by appointment in the countryside or the city. In any case family work is not only related to different spheres of the economy, but its activities are placed at local, national and international levels by means of three possible ways which frequently combine: “home-made” when the worker does not leave their household; “multi-localized” when the worker temporarily migrates to different regions; “delocalized” when part of the family permanently settles outside the original family nucleus, but participates in its economic reproduction with regular money contributions.

Obviously, this situation has important consequences on the peasant social organization, both on the functioning of the peasant community and on the ejido as one of its trade associations. The absolute prevalence of these households on the households that keep peasant logic has deeply transformed the life of rural localities.

This situation allows us to state that in Mexico, and in general in developing countries as well, there will not be processes of “demographic desertification” as those witnessed by developed countries as of the 1960’s, with the consequential abandonment of agricultural regions and the possible beneficial effects on the recovery of ecosystems. A plain-to-see rather contradictory process, to the extent it implies heavier exploitation of lands which still produce. We are before a process of increasing pressure on nature, because numerous poor families are forced to settle at any corner of the country. As long as there are not enough job posts, this dual process, apparently contradictory, however, complementary in reality, of trickling colonization, together with migrations, will be unstoppable, and its implications on social marginalization and ecology are enormous.

Another outstanding conclusion is that peasant families with bad conditions to produce tend to be poorer than non-peasant families and besides, the latter have improved their situation as from the 1990’s. The production crisis of the small familial production from globalization is so strong that the land, formerly a hope for a source of wealth, has become source of poverty. It is worth wondering why, in said conditions, these poor peasants clutch their native land; a possible answer is that they do not

have the capability to enter a precarious, unstable, far and complex labor market, which renders them defenseless before the very labor market and an extreme social embrittlement.

Nowadays, all the peasant households in rural localities are pluri-active; this process has been analyzed as a peasant survival strategy to face poverty or to counteract the effects of the crisis in the countryside. The data in our analysis allow clarifying this situation; against the idea that diversification is a strategy to overcome poverty, it is rather the capacity of specializing in a single activity, or at least in a main activity, which allows the households to improve their incomes. Hence, the activity diversification is only a defensive strategy in poor households, particularly peasant, due to the lack of possibilities to concentrate on a single activity; it seems to be nonetheless, a not very favoring survival strategy to overcome poverty. In reality, the conditions of the agricultural and labor markets are once again the ones which pull working population to labor dispersion.

In any case, rural poverty cannot be explained any longer only from the agricultural economic activity, but we must bear in mind, and perhaps essentially, the new countryside-city relation which nowadays prevails.

It can be said the Mexican countryside of the XX century was an agrarian one; in the XXI century it will be fundamentally salaried; salaried indeed, but not so from capitalization, but because most of the rural households will not be peasant, whilst pluri-active peasant households will be basically salaried. They will be households with the same employment sources, or at least very similar to those of urban households; in this sense also, it can be stated that the countryside increasingly looks like the city.

The changes experienced in rural communities are so deep that we face the need to rethink the concepts we use; it is pressingly urgent to review at least two of them: that of the peasant and that of de-farming. The mutations of the peasant production unit because of its permanent adaptation to the new contexts where it enters pose new problems, unforeseen in the classical concept of peasant. If we remember the polemic of the end of the 1970's decade between the so called "campesinistas" and "descampesinistas", it is necessary to recognize that neither stance managed to glimpse the pattern of the current development of the countryside. This forces us to rethink,

not only the situation of the agricultural sector and the rural population, but also the ever changing relation of the countryside with the city. The data in this work provide us with at least two certainties: today the dynamic of the countryside cannot be explained from the problem of the agricultural sector, and the dynamic of agriculture cannot be explained without its relation with pluri-activity.

Annex

Table 1
Evolution of rural population, 1921-2030

Year	National population (1)	Rural population (2)	National rural % (2%1)	Average variation per decade	Annual variation
1921	14,334,780	9,795,890	68.30%	6.50%	---
1930	16,552,722	11,012,091	66.50%		0.18%
1940	19,653,552	12,757,441	64.90%		0.16
1950	25,791,017	14,807,534	57.40%		0.75%
1960	34,923,129	17,218,011	49.30%		0.81%
1970	48,225,238	19,916,682	41.30%		0.80%
1980	66,846,833	22,547,104	33.70%		0.76%
1990	81,249,645	23,289,924	28.70%		0.51%
2000	97,483,412	24,723,590	25.40%	1.40%	0.33%
2010	111,613,906	26,361,910	23.60%		0.18%
2020	120,639,160	26,792,028	22.20%		0.14%
2030	127,205,586	26,788,676	21.10%		0.11%

Source: INEGI. 1921 – 2000 General Census of Population and Housing, General summary, Conapo, 2010-2030 projections; own elaboration

Table 2
Rural localities according to size, 2000
(Rural = below 2,500 inhab, urban = more than 2,500 inhab)

Locality size	Number of localities		Inhabitants		Average number of inhabitants per locality
National	199,369	100	97,483,412	100	489
Rural	196,328	98.5	24,723,590	25.4	126
1 to 99	148,557	74.5	2,587,988	2.7	17
100 to 499	33,778	16.9	8,034,630	8.2	238
500 to 999	8,698	4.4	6,109,048	6.3	702
1.000 to 1.999	4,481	2.2	6,180,197	6.3	1,379
2000 to 2499	814	0.4	1,811,727	1.9	2,226
Urban	3,041	1.5	72,759,822	74.6	23.926

Source: INEGI. 2000 General Census of Population and Housing, General Summary, own elaboration

Table 3
Rural workforce evolution by activity sector, 1970-2000

Locality size	Activity sector	1970		2000	
		Population	%	Population	%
National	Primary	5,103,519	39.4	5,207,634	15.5
	Secondary	2,973,540	23	9,357,735	27.9
	Tertiary	4,130,473	31.9	17,971,417	53.6
	Not specified	747,525	5.8	1,009,938	3
	Total	12,955,057	100	33,546,724	100
Rural (1 to 2499 inhab)	Primary	3,889,318	76.9	3,673,913	55.7
	Secondary	458,095	9.1	1,319,012	20
	Tertiary	451,786	8.9	1,466,909	22.2
	Not specified	259,765	5.1	139,268	2.1
	Total	5,058,964	100	6,599,102	100
Transition (2500 to 9999 inhab)	Primary	753,698	36	8 850,045	26
	Secondary	541,852	26.4	943,155	28.8
	Tertiary	622,703	30.4	1,399,121	42.7
	Not specified	131,040	6.4	81,082	2.5
	Total	2,049,293	100	3,273,403	100
Urban (10000 and more inhab)	Primary	460,503	7.9	683,676	2.9
	Secondary	1,973,593	33.8	7,095,568	30
	Tertiary	3,055,984	52.3	15,105,387	63.8
	Not specified	356,720	6.1	789,588	3.3
	Total	5,846,800	100	23,674,219	100

Source: 1970 and 2000 Censuses of Population and Housing, own elaboration

Table 4
Peasant rural households (PEPU)
and non-peasant households (RFU), 1992

Sort of household	Households	% (total households)	% (sort of household)
Peasant household (PEPU)	2,821,311	65%	100%
Agricultural + self-consumption + other activity(ies)	2,090,339	48%	74%
Agricultural + other activity(ies)	423,763	10%	15%
self-consumption (PEU)	294,948	7%	10%
Only agricultural (PEU)	12,262	0%	0%
Non-peasant household (RFU)	1,533,950	35%	100%
No self-consumption	1,108,376	25%	72%
With self-consumption	425,575	10%	28%
Total	4,355,262	100%	

Source: ENIGH, 1992, INEGI; own elaboration

Table 5
Peasant rural households (PEPU)
and non-peasant households (RFU), 2004

Sort of household	Households	% (total households)	% (sort of household)	
Peasant household (PEPU)	1,818,513.00	31%	100%	
Agricultural + self- consumption + other activity(ies)	1,043,505.00	18%	57%	98%
Agricultural + other activity(ies)	742,911.00	13%	41%	
self-consumption (PEU)	16,286.00	0%	1%	2%
Only agricultural (PEU)	15,811.00	0%	1%	
Non-peasant house (RFU)	4,105,554.00	69%	100%	
No self-consumption	3,483,941.00	59%	85%	
With self-consumption	621,613.00	10%	15%	
Total	5,924,067.00	100%		

Source: ENIGH, 2004, INEGI; own elaboration. NB: in “Other activity(ies)” the incomes from monetary, in-kind salaries own activities, subsidies remittances and other non-defined sources are included

Table 6
**Incomes of peasant households (PEPU) and non-peasant
households (RFU), 1992**

Sort of income	Peasant household (PEPU)			
	Households	%	Income	%
Monetary agricultural	2,821,311	100%	1,377,346,151,170	41%
Self-consumption	2,385,287	85%	349,144,901,782	10%
Monetary income	1,495,478	53%	706,420,835,662	21%
In-kind salary	1,425,519	51%	241,254,642,915	7%
Non-agricultural own activities	593,367	21%	195,917,155,283	6%
Subsidies	68,628	2%	6,832,529,678	0%
Remittances	537,357	19%	105,885,929,011	3%
Other incomes	756,213	27%	362,268,753,704	11%
Total	2,821,312	100%	3,345,070,899,205	100%
Sort of income	Non-peasant households (RFU)			
	Households	%	Income	%
Monetary agricultural	0	0%	0	0%
Self-consumption	425,575	28%	63,436,266,011	4%
Monetary income	1,172,574	76%	876,192,105,868	53%
In-kind salary	919,004	60%	225,354,951,693	14%
Non-agricultural own activities	344,611	22%	223,473,754,608	13%
Subsidies	29,727	2%	3,252,900,023	0%
Remittances	365,749	24%	140,314,239,826	8%
Other incomes	419,790	27%	136,704,514,739	8%
Total	1,533,951	100%	1,668,728,732,769	100%
Sort of income	Total households (PEPU + RFU)			
	households	%	Income	%
Monetary agricultural	2,821,311	65%	1,377,346,151,170	27%
Self-consumption	2,810,861	65%	412,581,167,793	8%
Monetary income	2,668,052	61%	1,582,612,941,529	32%
In-kind salary	2,344,523	54%	466,609,594,608	9%
Non-agricultural own activities	937,978	22%	419,390,909,891	8%
Subsidies	98,356	2%	10,085,429,702	0%
Remittances	903,105	21%	246,200,168,837	5%
Other incomes	1,176,003	27%	498,973,268,443	10%
Total	4,355,262	100%	5,013,799,631,974	100%

Source: ENIGH, 1992, INEGI; own elaboration. NB: non-agricultural own activities: crafts, trades, repair shops, businesses, etcetera.

Table 7
Incomes of peasant households (PEPU) and non-peasant households (RFU), 2004

Sort of income	Peasant household (PEPU)			
	Households	%	Income	%
Monetary agricultural	1,818,513.00	100%	2,070,502,210.17	27
Self-consumption	1,059,791.00	58%	410,168,149.46	5%
Monetary salary	908,490.00	50%	1,860,504,840.83	24%
In-kind salary	1,213,382.00	67%	536,706,783.87	7%
Non-agricultural own activities	506,801.00	28%	790,250,469.00	10%
Subsidies	1,334,379.00	73%	955,848,941.33	13%
Remittances	473,666.00	26%	516,072,267.50	7%
Other incomes	291,595.00	16%	471,176,122.67	6%
Total	1,818,513.00	100%	7,611,229,784.84	100%
Sort of income	Non-peasant households (RFU)			
	Households	%	Income	%
Monetary agricultural	0.0	0%	0	0%
Self-consumption	621,613.00	15%	321,471,075.85	2%
Monetary salary	3,103,072.00	76%	11,924,889,394.17	57%
In-kind salary	2,867,983.00	70%	1,697,325,400.47	8%
Non-agricultural own activities	1,263,980.00	31%	3,206,626,754.50	15%
Subsidies	1,643,605.00	40%	792,644,523.67	4%
Remittances	1,152,789.00	28%	1,900,621,365.00	9%
Other incomes	833,149.00	20%	904,123,922.50	4%
Total	4,105,554.00	100%	20,747,702,436.15	100%
Sort of income	Total households (PEPU + RFU), 2004			
	Households	%	Income	%
Monetary agricultural	1,818,513.00	31%	2,070,502,210.17	7%
Self-consumption	1,681,404.00	28%	731,639,225.31	3%
Monetary salary	4,011,562.00	68%	13,785,394,235.00	49%
In-kind salary	4,081,365.00	69%	2,234,032,184.34	8%
Non-agricultural own activities	1,770,781.00	30%	3,996,877,223.50	14%
Subsidies	2,977,984.00	50%	1,748,493,465.00	6%
Remittances	1,626,455.00	27%	2,416,693,632.50	9%
Other incomes	1,124,744.00	19%	1,375,300,045.17	5%
Total	5,924,067.00	100%	28,358,932,220.99	100%

Source: ENIGH, 2004. INEGI; own elaboration. NB: non-agricultural own activities: crafts, trades, workshops, businesses, etcetera.

Table 8
Household above and below the poverty line by household type (PEPU and RFU) 1992-2004

Year	Sort of households	Peasant households (PEPU)		Non-peasant households (UFP)		Total	
		Households	%	Households	%	Households	%
1992	Below poverty line	1,987,646	70%	934,644	61%	2,922,289	67%
	Above poverty line	833,666	30%	599,307	39%	1,432,972	33%
	Total	2,821,311	100%	1,533,950	100%	4,355,262	100%
2004	Below poverty line	1,203,039	66%	2,237,213	54%	3,440,252	58%
	Above poverty line	615,474	34%	1,868,341	46%	2,483,815	42%
	Total	1,818,513	100%	4,105,554	100%	5,924,067	100%

Source: ENIGH, INEGI; own elaboration.

Table 9
Peasant households (PEPU) and non-peasant households (RFU)
below indigence line (IL), poverty line (PL)
and above poverty line (PL), 1992-2004

Year	PL and IL	Peasant Households (PEPU)		Non-peasant Households (RFU)		Total	
		Households	%	Households	%	Households	%
1992	Below IL	1,318,119	47%	525,225	34%	1,843,344	42%
	Between PL & IL	669,527	24%	409,419	27%	1,078,946	25%
	Above PL	833,666	30%	599,307	39%	1,432,972	33%
	Total	2,821,311	100%	1,533,950	100%	4,355,262	100%
2004	Below IL	809,995	45%	969,470	24%	1,779,465	30%
	Between PL & IL	393,044	22%	1,267,743	31%	1,660,787	28%
	Above PL	615,474	34%	1,868,341	46%	2,483,815	42%
	Total	1,818,513	100%	4,105,554	100%	5,924,067	100%

Source: ENIGH, INEGI, own elaboration.

Table 10
Employment rate of rural households (PEPU-RFU in %)
by poverty line, 1992-2004

Employment rate	Sort of rural Household	1992			2004		
		% Households below PL	% Households above PL	% total Households	% Households below PL	% Households above PL	% total households
Low (- 33%)	PEPU	14%	14%	14%	13%	8%	11%
	RFU	23%	23%	23%	27%	23%	25%
Medium (33- 66%)	PEPU	62%	52%	59%	53%	33%	46%
	RFU	62%	55%	59%	54%	42%	48%
High (+ 66%)	PEPU	24%	34%	27%	34%	59%	42%
	RFU	15%	22%	18%	19%	35%	27%
Total	PEPU	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	RFU	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: ENIGH, INEGI; own elaboration.

Table 11
Remuneration of employed agricultural population by income level, 1990-2000

Minimal wages	Employed agricultural population			
	1990		2000	
	Cases	%	Cases	%
Less than 1	1,366,297	26%	1,809,864	35%
From 1 to less than 2	1,644,497	31%	1,322,918	25%
From 2 to less than 3	1,429,938	27%	1,459,409	28%
From 3 to less than 5	298,377	6%	259,800	5%
From 1 to less than 5	138,280	3%	104,618	2%
More than 5	139,955	3%	76,129	1%
Unspecified	282,770	5%	192,999	4%
Total	5,300,114	100%	5,225,737	100%

Source: 1990 and 2000 General Censuses of Population and Housing, INEGI.

Table 12
Incomes of all rural households (PEPU+RFU), percentage,
1992-2004

Sort of income	1992		2004	
	Households	Incomes	Households	Incomes
Monetary agricultural and self-consumption	75%	36%	41%	10%
Monetary and in-kind salaries	80%	41%	91%	56%
Non-agricultural own activities	22%	8%	30%	14%
Subsidies	2%	0%	50%	6%
Remittances	21%	5%	27%	9%
Other incomes	27%	10%	19%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: ENIGH, INEGI. Own elaboration.

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Sent to dictum: October 10th, 2008

Approval: October 30th, 2008