

PEASANTS

Eric Wolf's definition:

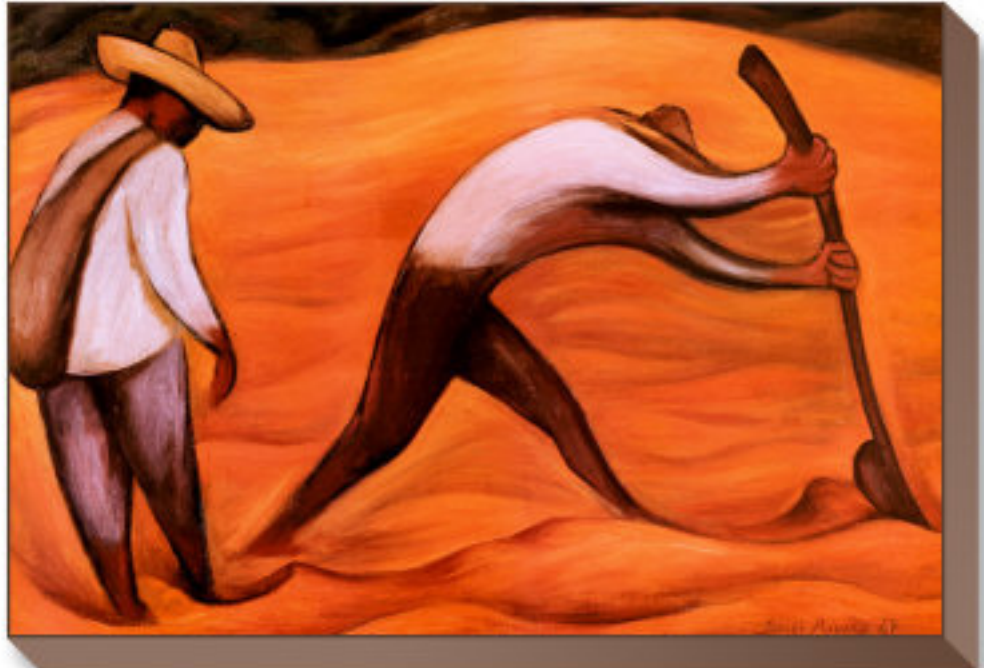
i. family-labor power

relatively 'low' levels of technology

indigenous technology

labor-intensive

factor-efficient: low capital & inputs per yield



Mexico: gender labor split common

gender-sequential: women perform different steps

gender-segregated: women grow different crops



ii. Self Sufficient in Subsistence Foodstuffs

simple commodity producer

consumes own produce



iii. Social Subordination

Patronage/Clientalism

**Internal versus External peasantries
surplus is extracted to elites/
peasants remain poor**

**multiple mean of extracting surplus from peasants: wage labor,
usury, rent, share-cropping, mediated gov't aid...
even Debt Peonage still persists to a limited degree (though not
legally!)**

Sharecropping (a medias)



Tienda de raya

The Mexican Debate: Will Peasants persist or disappear?

Pro-Peasant: Campesinistas/

**Peasant farming is factor efficient and environmentally sustainable
peasants may self-exploit their way into reproducing themselves**

Contra: few rural peoples, even in Mexico, are actively engaged in full-time farming:

Urban peasants: a HUGE number of rural peoples are integrated into the urban fringe of medium-to-large cities

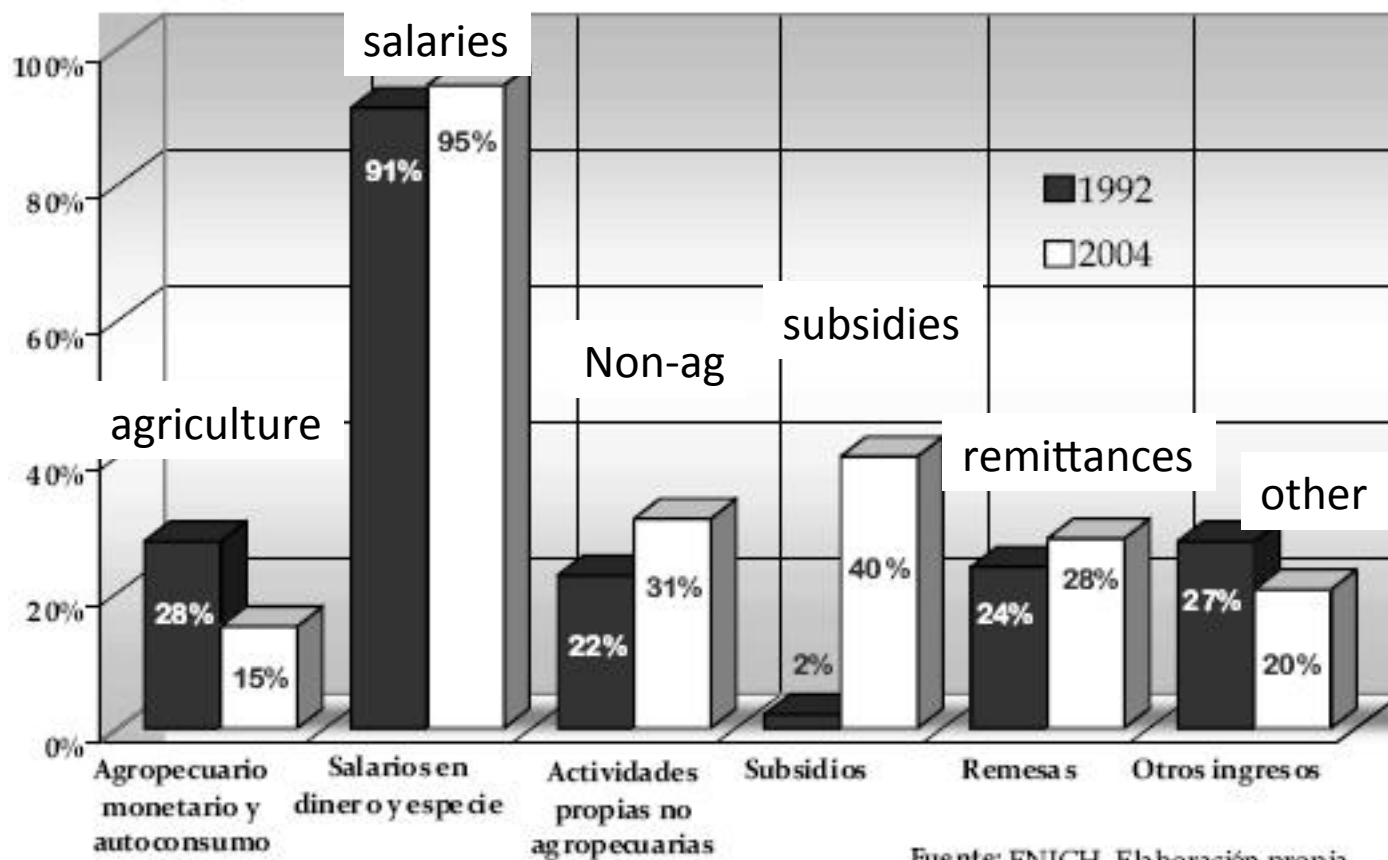
Contract Farmers: peasants produce under transnational contracts

Migrant Workers: peasants leave to work

Off-farm employment: really most are ‘allotment-holding proletarians’ who don’t have enough land to support their families



Types of income in Farm Households 1992 - 2004



Differentiation: The annual cycle of borrowing and poor yields causes peasant communities to 'differentiate' into poor versus rich peasants

Politics of the rural sector: Peasants persist because it is in the political interest of governments

1. **vota verde:** peasant vote is of electoral importance
2. **government transfers:** government pays peasants to avoid revolutionary action

**Rulfo: They gave us the Land
Transfers and Subsidies**

