

**“THE BOTH OF US HAVE BATTLED”: THE PRACTICES
AND POLITICS OF FEMALE PARTNERS IN THE
CANADIAN SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS
PROGRAM**

by

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ABSTRACT

Through an analysis of qualitative, ethnographic data, I locate the narratives of nine Mexican women married to migrants within the context of capitalist globalization, state policies, and local gender ideologies. In doing so, I advocate for a theoretical approach to migration which combines elements of structural theories of migration and network theoretical approaches. These women's narratives position them at the juncture of capitalism and other social relations, and show them to be active agents in migration. Not only is their labour critical to the maintenance of migration patterns and the capitalist relations into which migrants and non-migrants are incorporated, but women's labour is also imbued with social meanings.

Keywords:

Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program; Gender and migration; Social aspects of migration; Temporary foreign worker programs; Non-migrating women and globalization

Subject Terms:

Mexico – Emigration and Immigration – Social Aspects – Case studies; Women – Mexico – Social Conditions; Canada – Mexico – Migration; Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (Canada)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Table of Contents	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Literature Review: Migration and Gender	5
Theoretical Framework	13
Methodology	16
Chapter 2: The Mexican Context of Migration	23
Mexico, Land, and Migration	23
The Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program	25
Chapter 3: Women at Intersections and Borders	28
Migration Linking Local with the Global	28
Women as Actors in the Migration Decision	34
Sites of Contest, Conflict, and Mediation	39
The Role of the State in the 'Public' and the 'Private'	46
Women, Social Networks, and Migration	55
Chapter 4: Discussion & Conclusions	65
Appendices	79
Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview Guide	79
Appendix B: Community Profiles	81
Reference List	88

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Mayra: I feel like we're getting a little further ahead, and now that I have my baby, I want us to make the effort so that he can grow and we have a little more to provide... My husband wants to go there to work so the baby has a bit of something.

Lupe: We are going to make the very most of this work right now, so it will be worth all of the sacrifice, so that when he is here again and he doesn't have work, we'll put up a stand to sell food or clothes, and we'll at least have a little money coming in, at least to pay for the tortillas, and we'll be together- we want to make the most out of his work now so that he doesn't have to go year after year.

Each year, nearly 12,000 Mexican workers, the majority of whom are men, come to Canada to work in agriculture through the Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP). The SAWP is an example of a state-managed temporary foreign worker (TFW) program, or 'guestworker' program, which brings workers temporarily into the country on a work permit or visa to fill a specific labour 'need'. The workers come in hopes of earning income for their families and communities in Mexico and spend up to 8 months of the year in Canada, often returning multiple years to reach their goals. The wives of the men who migrate through the SAWP look after the households and family members, maintaining a home to which the men return at the end of each season in Canada. With a few exceptions (Hennebry 2006; Preibisch and Santamaría

2006), non-migrant women's accounts have been noticeably absent from analysis of the SAWP, in spite of the theoretical approach employed by many researchers which focuses on the function of the SAWP (as with other temporary foreign worker programs) in separating workers' productive labour from the site of the social reproduction of the labour force. Within the theoretical perspective, women are characterized as being at the centre of this separation because of their roles as mothers who raise future generations of workers, and as wives, with the de facto role of maintaining migrants' households while men are away. This thesis aims to address this gap. At the same time, I advocate for a theoretical approach that goes beyond simply bringing women back into the discussion. Reducing the role of women, and gender relations, to a question of 'productive' and 'reproductive' activities obscures women's contributions to migration decision-making and household strategies of survival. Greater attention to the work of women in migrants' communities of origin means avoiding the moniker of 'wives left behind,' which connotes passive subjects reacting to processes of migration beyond their control. Instead, I will look at the active participation of women in these processes, and the sites of mediation and contest.

In this thesis, I locate the accounts of nine Mexican women who are married to SAWP workers, within the gendered structures of immigration and labour policy in Canada and also within gender roles and ideology at home in Mexico. This study falls within the category of 'gender and migration' research, but also incorporates the perspectives offered by theories of gender and

development because of the necessity of understanding Mexican migration in context of the economic development paradigm in Mexico. Two lines of questioning guide the research. First, how are the lives of the wives of Mexican SAWP migrant workers structured along the intersection of class, ethnicity, and gender, and how specifically does the SAWP shape gender relations within the home in Mexico? Next, I pose the question in reverse; in what ways have relations of gender roles and ideology in Mexico contributed to the functioning of the SAWP and what roles do Mexican women play in their partner's migration to Canada?

The narratives of the Mexican women in my study speak to the ways in which women actively shape the nature of labour migration. Including their experiences in the analysis is crucial to understanding how temporary foreign worker programs (TFW) such as Canada's SAWP function. The narratives offered by these nine Mexican women illuminate the points of convergence and divergence between state policies, local gender norms, and women's own aspirations.

Using the SAWP as a case study for unravelling the intersection of gender, migration and state policies is useful in that the SAWP embodies migration that is gendered, temporary, and state-managed. Non-migrant women play a crucial role even in the selection process of workers, in that married men— rather than women and/or single men— are recruited for the program. The SAWP is coordinated bi-nationally by Canada and Mexico and is touted as beneficial to Canadian agricultural employers (*Globe and Mail* 2006a), beneficial

to Mexico through providing employment opportunities for some of its poorest citizens (*Globe and Mail* 2006b), and beneficial to the migrants and their families by providing income opportunities. Through this case study and my analysis, I hope to advocate for an approach to the debate around temporary labour migration which considers the impact such migration has on non-migrant women, and the roles women play in facilitating this process. Furthermore, I argue for an acknowledgement of gender relations as key to understanding the design, function, and maintenance of temporary foreign worker programs during the current period of neoliberal globalization.

I will answer my research questions through a reading of the relevant literature, and an analysis of data I collected during field research in Mexico. The thesis will progress as follows; first, I lay out the major debates in the literature on Mexican migration to the United States and Canada, and the location of gender and migration research within these debates. Next, I provide the theoretical framework guiding my thesis research, and the methodology I employed to answer my research questions. In Chapter 2, I present my case study. I discuss the Mexican context of migration and the design of the SAWP in order to later situate the narratives of my interview participants alongside gendered state institutional frameworks. In Chapter 3, I present my data and findings regarding the role of women and gender relations in shaping the SAWP and migration patterns. Finally, in Chapter 4, I discuss my conclusions and the contributions of my research to the debate on gender and temporary foreign worker programs, avenues for further research, and some initial policy implications.

Literature Review: Migration and Gender

Three major theoretical streams compete within the debate on international labour migration: economic theories of migration, structuralist or world-systems theories of migration, and network theories of migration. These perspectives differ in the unit of analysis and the methods of study, and have incorporated gender in different ways. I will briefly outline these three theoretical perspectives and some of the major literature, and discuss the major contributions and some of the difficulties of each.

Economic theories of migration, such as the “push-pull” theory, “rational choice” theory, and the “new economics of migration” theory take the individual or family as the unit of analysis and emphasize migration as a rational strategy employed by individual migrants to obtain economic benefits for themselves or their families. Within neo-classical theories of migration, unemployed workers in the non-capitalist sectors of the economy move to the capitalist sectors because of the wage differential between the two sectors (Truong 2000; Wright 2000). The earliest economic migration theory borrowed from theories of modernization and characterized the im/migrant as he who could ‘project himself’ into the model of the ‘western male’ to pursue modern life in the cities (Pessar 2003). These theories have attempted to explain why people migrate, and tend to employ models to predict migration behaviour and motivations across populations (Brettell and Hollifield 2000). In an attempt to model migration patterns through economic rationale, economic theories tend to conceptualize migration as a

gender-blind phenomenon and define the 'migrant' as male, young, and driven by wages (Pedraza 1991).

However, while economic motivations do often drive migration decisions, other factors influence individuals and families when they decide to migrate and to where they decide to migrate. Moving even further, economic realities leading up to the migration decision are not gender neutral. Like any human behaviour, migration is the result of a decision made within a complex set of social relations, and it is questionable whether economic models can adequately represent or predict the situation. The neo-classical theoretical perspective has downplayed the extent to which women migrate and gender differences within economic motivations for migration (Pedraza 1991; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2005).

In response to earlier economic theories which focused solely on individual-level decisions, a number of scholars working in economic theories of migration in the early 1980s suggested that migration decisions were not individual, but were made in context of the household; this became known as the 'new economics of migration' theory (Harbison 1981; Massey 1990; Wood 1981). While this theory begins to remedy the noticeable lack of discussion of women by acknowledging the presence of non-migrant family members in contributing to the migration decision, the major flaw of this theory is its lack of attention to relations of conflict within migrant households, and stratification within household based on gender and age. Women migrants are generally stereotyped into 'dependent' roles, as wives or mothers, and the question of how gender relations

at various levels (at home, in communities, in the nation-state and in the global economy) influences migration is simply not captured by the theory.

A second, distinct theoretical stream in migration research is based on social theories of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber (Brettell and Hollified 2000). Structuralist, historical-structuralist, and functionalist theories of migration attempt to situate migration within the economic and social relations at the global level. They borrow from Latin American dependency theory elaborated by Raúl Prebisch and Andre Gunder Frank, and also from world-systems models, and use the idea that the economic development of the 'core' capitalist countries conditions the development (or underdevelopment) of the 'peripheral' countries. Within this context, the transfer of labour from the 'periphery' to the 'core' through labour migration is the result of uneven capitalist development between countries, and/or the existence of a segmented global labour market (Piore 1979). These theories have lent particularly well to analyses of temporary labour migration, or guestworker programs. Within these theories, temporary migrant labour benefits the advanced capitalist countries through separating the processes of production, in the labour-receiving context, from the processes of reproduction and maintenance of the workforce in the migrants' communities of origin (Burawoy 1976; Wilson 1993). Isolated from their social networks of support and familiar institutions, foreign temporary workers lack the labour mobility rights of other workers, making them the perfect globally-competitive post-Fordist workforce in that they are highly productive, flexible and 'reliable' (Basok 2004; Hahamovitch 2003; Sassen-Koob 1978; Sharma 2006; Stephen

2003). Perhaps even more importantly, labour-receiving countries receive 'rents' from migrants' nations and communities of origin absorbing the social reproduction costs of the workforce (Meillasoux 1981). In pointing to these mechanisms, theoretical perspectives in this group recognize the centrality of women's unpaid social reproductive labour in context of migration and capitalist development. Claude Meillasoux (1981) and Carmen Diana Deere (1976) highlight the articulation of subsistence production of female members of households within global capitalist production. Deere writes:

the articulation between modes of production in the periphery, and the corresponding division of labor— with women agriculturalists on subsistence production units and male semi-proletarians— results in a male wage insufficient for familial maintenance and reproduction. (Deere 1976: 9)

Simultaneous to pointing out the role of women in non-capitalist modes of production, migration research in this stream also looked more closely at women migrants than previous economic theories of migration. The rapid incorporation of young, immigrant women into the global assembly line during the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s became impossible to ignore by research, and radical studies by María Patricia Fernandez-Kelly (1983), Saskia Sassen-Koob (1984), and Diane Wolf (1992) sought to bring attention to both the internal and international migrations of young women and their incorporation into the global labour market.

More recent studies have adapted the basic tenets of this theoretical trajectory to frame the SAWP and Canada's other TFW programs (Basok 2004; Sharma 2006; Preibisch 2004). Gender has been incorporated through the fact that it is one of the basic selection criteria in the Canadian SAWP, and in many

other temporary foreign worker programs throughout the world; it is an example of a 'masculinized' migration stream. Selection of workers on the basis of age, gender, work history, health, and other criteria through formal and/or informal screening processes mould specific workforce profiles suited to specialized labour needs. While the selection criteria of the Canadian SAWP has led to approximately 98% of the workforce being male, the 2%- 3% of the workforce that is female is also selected on the basis of gender; Kerry Preibisch and Luz María Hermoso Santamaría (2006) found that the Mexican government has strategically matched female strawberry harvesters from Guanajuato with strawberry growers in Canada through a screening process based on the criteria of gender, age, and work experience, thereby reinforcing the gendered stereotypes of female Mexican agricultural workers. Selecting male workers based on their family obligations in Mexico and on having little-to-no land and/or employment opportunities in their home communities creates even more pressure for workers to successfully finish their assigned work contracts in Canada under the SAWP, to send remittances back to Mexico, and to leave Canada when their contract is finished (Basok 2000a, 2000b; Binford 2002).

Structuralist theories of migration are useful in recognizing that age and gender stratification within the division of labour shape migration. However, by reducing the analysis of gender to a discussion of the mode of production, 'Third World' women are essentialized, relegated to a role of household reproduction and typified as 'oppressed'. Chandra Mohanty (1997) advocates for a breakdown of the monolithic category of the Third World woman, in favour of a

perspective which examines women “as socioeconomic political groups within particular local contexts” (83). Taken out of the social, historical, and political context, women are construed by structuralist theories of migration as passive subjects of subordination experiencing one universal form of exploitation— in spite of the diversity of experiences, local meanings, and forms of resistance or acceptance practiced by women themselves.

Part of the difficulty of this theoretical framework is the preference given to larger state and global relations over local contexts and micro-level processes. Ayse Kadioglu criticizes previous studies of women and migration in “Third World” contexts that conceived of Western ways as the standard, and ‘emancipatory’ for non-Western women;

what follows is a perspective that clings to colonial ideology in stating that wage work is a gift offered to the migrant women of the Third World by the West in their struggle against oppressive traditions in their home societies. (1994: 537)

This conception of non-Western European, non-North American societies was criticized by scholars for the decades following the 1980s, and the resulting critique of western liberal feminist theory in gender and migration studies continues to serve as a reference point for research (Ariza 2000; Benería and Sen 1997; Mohanty 1997). While structuralist theories of migration were critical in pointing out the presence of non-migrant and migrant women in the processes of migration, they bypassed women’s agency and the existence of multiple sites of negotiation and contest. It is not enough to point out gender subordination without also questioning the *origins* of gender difference and subordination.

The third theoretical stream in migration research adapted some of the framework of the structuralist/ functionalist theories of migration, and is even more heavily influenced by cultural anthropology (Brettell and Hollifield 2000). Network theories of migration employ the concepts of networks and transnationalism to look at various aspects of migration in terms of cultural identity, migration patterns, changes in the communities of origin resulting from migration, and social relations in the destination communities of migrants. These theories, including Douglas Massey's (1990) cumulative causation theory and theories of transnational migration (Kearney 1995; Portes and Bach 1985), focus primarily on how social networks shape where people migrate, the ties they maintain with their communities of origin after they migrate, and the processes of negotiation of their identity during the migration experience. This theoretical stream incorporates gender in an analysis of the 'social processes' of migration, particularly at the levels of the individual, the household, and the community of origin and/or destination. Gender roles and ideology underlie both a) the decision to migrate and b) under what circumstances people migrate (Kanaiaupuni 2000). Network theories of migration have also illuminated the work of women in creating, maintaining and strengthening the important transnational family and community ties of migrants and their families (Salaff 2002). The concept of 'transnational motherhood' and the economic and social outcomes of prolonged familial separation are also a focus of this theoretical approach to migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 2003; Pratt 1999).

A recurrent question in gender and migration studies in this theoretical stream is the impact of migration on gender roles within households, and how individual men and women re-conceptualize notions of gender based on their experiences migrating, or having a migrant partner (Ariza 2000; D'Aubeterre 2005; Stephen 2001). Furthermore, these shifting notions of gender held by individuals or within households are sometimes in conflict with the community and social norms organizing individual's lives (D'Aubeterre 2005; Dreby 2006).

The focus on the informal networks and transnational community ties of migrants in this theoretical stream places the role of institutions in creating the conditions of migration in a secondary position in the discussion. In response to this, a number of scholars attempt to 'bring the state back in' without diminishing individual agency, social relations, and other factors of influence. Some network theories of migration have also incorporated aspects of sociological theories of migration to account for the "masculinization" or "feminization" of migration flows at the level of the nation-state (Stephen 2001; Wilson 2000). A gender analysis of government policies recognizes that changes in gender relations in migrants' communities at home and abroad are connected to institutional structures at the national and international levels (Chock 1996; D'Aubeterre 2005; Dreby 2006).

Lynn Stephen argues that:

Bringing the state back in does not mean putting it center stage and ignoring the importance of human agency in manipulating the new sites and spaces created by processes of globalization. Rather it means looking at the interactions among local sites of daily living, identity and human relationship construction, and the changing networks of power linked to national and global sites of resources, governance, and information concentration. (2001: 209- 210)

Building a suitable theory of migration and gender to frame the SAWP means adapting the attention placed by structuralist theories of migration on state policies, and the focus on social relations employed in network theories of migration. This is the task that I turn to next.

Theoretical Framework

For this thesis, I propose a theoretical framework which incorporates an analysis of gendered state policies, migration as the linkage between local contexts and global capitalism, and women's centrality and agency within all of these sites. This theoretical framework builds upon elements of structuralist theories of migration as well as network theories of migration. The case study of non-migrant women in context of the Canadian SAWP lends particularly well to an illustration of the fits between migration, capitalism and non-capitalist social relations, and women.

In terms of an analysis of the state, TFW programs such as the SAWP represent a good site of examination of the intersection of gender relations in the household and in state immigration and labour policy. States determine the criteria for selecting workers through temporary foreign worker programs. Subsequently, temporary foreign workers are differentiated in the labour-receiving context within a hierarchy of ethnicity, gender and class which results in real material consequences in the lives of workers and their families. In selecting who migrates, for how long they migrate, and under which circumstances, state immigration and labour policies also reconstitute gendered divisions within the household.

Without disconnecting household relations from larger institutional processes such as immigration and labour policies, a gender analysis of migration from the level of the household is worthwhile. Temporary labour migration functions as a mechanism which separates 'productive' activities from the social reproduction of the family. The site of this strategic separation is the household (Benería and Sen 1997), and has led Rhacel Parreñas (2001) to refer to state-facilitated temporary labour migration as "split-family migration patterns". State immigration and labour policies separate households along the lines of imposed, gendered notions of 'breadwinner' and 'dependents.' Waged-work of the migrant family member, the 'breadwinner,' is conceived of as providing a family wage which maintains the rest of the family. By the same logic, the wives of migrant workers are treated as dependent 'housewives' when, in fact, both paid and unpaid family labour of non-migrant household members contributes a great deal to the survival of many migrant households (Aysa and Massey 2004; Wilson 2000). In this way, the state is operating on and reconstituting the spheres of 'public' (the migration of men) and 'private' (the non-migration care work of women). However, the distinction between 'public' and 'private' breaks down when looking at women's lived experiences.

The relation of capitalism, gender, and the state is the next element in the framework. As noted in the literature review, feminist development and migration scholars have pointed to a problematic causal relationship in some theoretical perspectives between gender subordination and capitalism. In this equation, the way in which capitalism has reified already-established gender ideologies and

further entrenched or reconstituted others is glossed over. In rural Mexico, the status of women, as Lourdes Benería argues, cannot be attributed solely to capitalist development:

patriarchal forms, gender inequality, and women's oppression can be intrinsically embedded in different forms of capitalist institutions, but they also exist in other economic and social formations. Gender-related hierarchies have often been reconstituted with institutional and systematic changes. (2003: 15)

In her study of the lace makers of Narsapur, India, Maria Mies (1982) points to gender-based exploitation within capitalist relations, but sets this in context of the historical and social relations of the region. It was the local gendered meaning of women's work and their status not of 'workers' but as 'housewives', which created the particular conditions of exploitation of their labour within the global capitalist system— a process Mies terms 'housewifization.' At the same time, individual women and groups of women contested, challenged and also perpetuated the 'housewife' ideology creating the conditions of their work. By grounding her analysis of this particular instance of capitalist relations in the local socio-economic context of the women, she demonstrates the complex relationship between gender, capitalism, and other social relations.

In order to address my research questions, two concepts are especially useful in framing the testimonies of the women. I will refer back to these concepts in order to link the details and experiences of the women's lives to the theoretical framework presented here. First, the notion that *capitalism co-exists with other social relations* is important in understanding how migration and the

women in my study are often situated between these. Instead of viewing migration as the inevitable outcome of capitalism 'replacing' non-capitalist social relations in communities and the nation-state, we can begin to see migration as a strategy employed by individuals and communities to mediate between capitalism and other social relations— especially in the Mexican rural sector (see Otero 1997: chapters 2 and 3). Further, migration *links* capitalist relations with non-capitalist relations like subsistence production, community social networks, and gender.

In focusing on those who do not migrate, a clearer picture emerges of the ways in which gender, class, generation and other factors intimately structure who migrates, where they migrate to, when they migrate, and how they frame their experiences (Ariza 2000; D'Aubeterre 1995, 2005; Dinerman 1982; Marroni 2000; Sharma 2006). The second concept useful for this framework is that *women and gender are active agents* mediating capitalist relations and other social relations. Women shape the way changes play out in their households and communities and, in turn, shape how larger institutions and social relations manifest. Examining the gender relations guiding and shaping migration at different levels within society illuminates other intersecting relations of power such as class and ethnicity (Hoodfar 1996; Kadioglu 1994; Mohanty 1997; Pedraza 1991; Pessar 2003; Tienda and Booth 1991).

Methodology

I collected data for my thesis during a two-month research trip in Mexico during January and February 2007, in which I visited families with whom I had

been in contact in British Columbia. I selected these families through non-random sampling. I met workers in British Columbia who were in contact with a Vancouver-based community group, and I met workers through assisting them in filling out applications for parental benefits within Canada's Employment Insurance (EI) system.

Although I attempted to locate workers from a single general geographic area in Mexico, I found that the workers arriving in British Columbia are drawn from scattered regions across the country. Through informal conversations with workers prior to my fieldwork and interactions with workers during the course of my participation in two research projects directed by faculty at Simon Fraser University, I have met workers from states in northern Mexico (Sonora, Baja California del Sur, and various others), central Mexico (including Estado de México, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí) and southwestern and southeastern Mexico (Guerrero, Oaxaca, Veracruz, Campeche, Yucatán, Chiapas, and Quintana Roo). I selected families to visit based loosely on their geographic region, and also on the relationships I had established with certain workers. I arranged to meet workers and their families from two general regions: central Mexico (communities within 6 hours of Mexico City), and the southeastern coast of Mexico (Campeche, Quintana Roo, and Veracruz). Out of fifteen families originally contacted in British Columbia about the research, I ended up with a sample of 10 families in Mexico, out of which I was able to conduct 9 interviews with women.

I called each of the workers after I arrived in Mexico, and asked to speak to their wives regarding arranging a time to meet. In four cases, I was able to visit with the family more informally first, and then arrange for a second meeting at a later date to conduct an interview. These four families were located relatively close to one another geographically, making it possible for me to visit them twice. With the remaining families, I visited them once, for an extended period of time (six hours to two and a half days) and interviewed the women towards the end of the visit. In two of the nine cases, the husband had already left Mexico for Canada. In all of the cases, the workers (with whom I was in contact in British Columbia and prior to my arrival to their houses in Mexico) had discussed my visit with their wives and they were expecting me, and had prepared food for my arrival. All of the nine women I contacted received me warmly and agreed to do an interview with me. My visits with the families lasted much longer than the actual interviews; in every case, I spent a considerable amount of time speaking with the extended families prior to doing individual interviews with the women themselves. This gave me time to observe details of the living arrangements of the families, to gather some information about the local communities, to speak with other members of the family who had migrated, and to develop some degree of rapport with the women before beginning the interviews. I spent between six hours and two and a half days visiting the families, and then additional time conducting the individual interviews with the specific women. I stayed in the houses of two of the families I visited, and sought nearby accommodation in the rest of the visits.

I conducted all of the interviews in Spanish, although in one case a woman requested some help from her sister-in-law to translate some of my questions from Spanish into the local Maya variant. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes and 2¼ hours, and I was interested in how each interview presented a richly distinct case. I began the field research with a set of *variables* based on earlier studies of wives of migrant workers, gender and migration literature, and literature on temporary migration in general. These variables included 1) the decision to migrate and the pre-migration experiences of the men, women, and the family and community context of migration, 2) the composition of the household (including relations with in-laws and/or parents, and number of children and their ages), 3) women's paid and unpaid work in and outside of the home, 4) the division of household labour, 5) the management of the family income (including the work of daily budgeting of family expenses and the decision-making of purchasing or investing opportunities), 6) and issues around parenting.

My conversations with the women often strayed from my interview questionnaire. I asked the women questions that corresponded to my variables, and left room for the women to elaborate further or move on to the next question. In spite of some possible apprehension on the part of the women as to why I was asking my questions and what it was that I might want to hear, each woman told a story that was unique. In all, the research consisted of 128 hours of participant observation, and 9 in-depth interviews.

There are both advantages as well as limitations to my research methodology. Although my sample was not random or large enough to produce generalizable results, my data provides a look into how larger forces of migration, gender, and state policies play out in individuals' lives. Selecting potential interview consultants on the basis of having a pre-established friendly relationship had advantages; I feel that the depth of the qualitative data that I obtained during the interviews and participant observation was the result of the women themselves feeling comfortable in speaking with me.

Other fieldwork limitations I encountered were related to time and financial constraints. A longer fieldwork period would have allowed for the possibility of following up the qualitative data collection stage with a wider survey of a random and/or stratified sample of women from different locations. This survey would provide a means to examine the individual women's experiences against a background of regional, economic, and educational-level variations (among others). In addition, time constraints prohibited me from doing second visits with many of the families. These second visits would have provided me the valuable opportunity to do subsequent interviews with the women, or to interview other generations of women in the family (the women's mothers or mothers-in-law) who had also experienced the migration of their spouse through the SAWP. In spite of these limitations, the data I collected offer a perspective on the SAWP which is not generally captured through research in Canada with the migrant workers themselves. I see my initial data here as an invitation for further research which looks at temporary foreign worker programs within the context of

workers' households and communities, and considers the role of (and/or impacts on) non-migrant individuals in such programs.

My position as a white, young female academic also posed potential barriers between me and the families I hoped to speak with. I anticipated the women to be somewhat suspicious of me and possibly uncomfortable with my knowing their partners from the Canadian context, where the men are living for up to 8 months of the year. To mediate some of these barriers and acknowledge the misunderstandings that could arise if I were to travel alone while doing my research, I arranged for my mother-in-law, who is from Oaxaca, Mexico, to accompany me. Her presence during my trip made the research possible; not only did she provide invaluable support while we travelled, but she often played the part of a non-threatening observer with whom the women, and especially their mothers-in-law (who often lived in the same house or next door), had certain things in common. Like the various generations of women I met and spoke with, my mother-in-law has experienced the effects of rural underemployment and the migration of a family member (her son). Her presence with me also reaffirmed my married status to both the women and the extended family members. One woman told me that her mother was upset and suspicious when she heard about me and that I was going to visit, but when I arrived to the house with my mother-in-law, she warmed up; upon our departure, this woman's mother expressed one of the most heartfelt requests for us to return the next time I visit Mexico.

The research trip directly and indirectly involved numerous border crossings; as an American living on a temporary permit in Canada, I then

crossed national borders to do my research in Mexico. In my study, the men participating in the SAWP make a yearly border crossing from Mexico to Canada and a handful of them had crossed into the United States illegally one or more times prior to entering the SAWP. In turn, the women married to the workers feel the impacts of international borders within their households, as their husbands leave for Canada each year under the various conditions of migration imposed by the SAWP and Canadian immigration law. In turn, these border crossings are felt by other family members, like the mothers and mothers-in-law of the men and women and other community members. Travelling with my mother-in-law added another dimension to this migration research, as our evening conversations often turned to a reflection of her own thoughts about the migration of two of her four children to the United States. We spoke about the changes in her life because of this, and her initial insecurities at the time of their migrations as to whether or not she would ever see them again. Lastly, my experience of living in a country where I do not hold citizenship, my experience living briefly in my husband's community in Oaxaca (which has seen many young people leave for the United States and Canada), my past volunteer work with undocumented Mexican farmworkers in my hometown in Oregon, and my more recent volunteer/advocacy work with Mexican SAWP workers in British Columbia all contribute to my motivations for pursuing this research, and also shape my perspective on the themes I explore in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: THE MEXICAN CONTEXT OF MIGRATION

The case study I have chosen, the SAWP, illustrates the relationship between the state, gender, and migration. My theoretical framework acknowledges the influence of the state in shaping gender roles and ideology, as well as the agency of women and men to reinterpret and contest larger structures. Before presenting my data and findings in Chapter 3, it is important to briefly establish the economic and political context of Mexican migration north and Canada's SAWP. This chapter will set the data of Chapter 3 within larger forces to better interpret the ethnographic details.

Mexico, Land, and Migration

Current migration patterns from Mexico north to the United States and Canada must be understood in terms of the structure of land ownership and agriculture in Mexico, state economic development policies in Mexico since the 1980s, and Mexican integration into the North American economy (Hinojosa et al 2000; Delgado Wise 2004). The current economic trajectory of Mexico stems from wide-sweeping neoliberal reforms implemented in the middle of the 1980s that radically changed Mexico's formerly protectionist stance towards its rural producers (Otero 2004). The new Agrarian Reform law of 1992 dismantled the protections of *ejido* lands (Mexico's traditional communally-farmed agricultural sector) and opened this area to market forces (Otero 2004). The Mexican economy was opened to foreign capital investment and agricultural markets were

de-regulated during this period, and then further with the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Although flaws existed in the Mexican state's support for small rural producers even prior to the economic liberalization of the 1980s and 1990s (Bartra 2004; Otero 2004), the changes to legislation implemented under neoliberal reforms had a devastating impact on rural livelihoods and communities. Mass migration from Mexico to the United States has not only endangered Mexico's labour sovereignty, but has far-reaching implications for the cultural, social, and environmental organization of Mexico's rural communities (Bartra 2004; Delgado Wise 2004).

Pointing to Mexican agrarian reform as the origin of the social and economic organization of rural communities in Mexico, Lourdes Arizpe and Carlota Botey (1987) argued 20 years ago that agrarian planners failed to "consider the various ways that women participate in farm and agro-industrial production, their access to income, and their role in social organization" (68). Mexican economic development policies since the 1980s have therefore had particularly adverse impacts on women, and have arguably worsened in some respects since Arizpe and Botey's 1982 analysis. Young, rural women were the first to migrate during the rural to urban exodus of the 1970s and 1980s because "discrimination against women in agricultural, commercial, and service activities in rural areas mean that male children had better local employment opportunities than female children" (Arizpe and Botey 1987).

Simultaneous to this exodus, rural families are earning less for their crops as a result of having to compete with low prices for products in the world market,

and women who remain in rural communities often face heavier workloads because of the out-migration of family members, both male and female. Women migrating from rural to urban contexts for wage work face low wages, insecure, and unprotected work. These issues are linked:

They do not affect women as isolated individuals nor are they derived from subjective issues. The fundamental problem is the larger process of subordination and exploitation of the peasantry, which is superimposed on women's gender subordination. Thus, the situation of rural women cannot be analyzed exclusively in terms of gender—the fact that they are women—nor can they be treated only in terms of their socioeconomic role—the fact that they are peasants. (Arizpe and Botey 1987: 75)

State policies of both the Mexican and Canadian government impact individuals in gendered ways. These policies shape the decision to migrate and the gendered constructions of migration work.

The Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program

The Canadian Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) is a federal program negotiated between Canada and various participating countries, which brings workers from Mexico and certain Caribbean nations to work in Canadian agriculture for a period of between 6 weeks and 8 months. In the case of Mexico, potential workers are selected on a number of criteria, including their gender (mostly male), their experience in farm work, their lack of access to farmland in Mexico, their age (25-44 for first time participants), their health, and their attachments and obligations to 'dependent' family members in Mexico. Researchers studying the SAWP generally agree that these criteria translate to most male SAWP participants being married (Basok 2000; Binford 2002; Colby

1997; Hennebry 2006; Preibisch and Santamaría 2006). Although I was unable to obtain official documentation of the eligibility requirements, my informal conversations with SAWP workers in British Columbia prior to conducting my field work support previous studies' findings of men being 'required' to be married with children in order to be selected to participate in the SAWP.

Mexican women do migrate through the SAWP, albeit in much smaller numbers than their male counterparts. Statistics of women's make-up in the program Canada-wide indicate that they constitute only 3% of the total (Verduzco and Lozano 2004). Before and after my field research trip, I was able to speak informally with a number of Mexican women arriving through the SAWP. These conversations provided me with information on the selection criteria and decision-making process of the women coming to Canada through the SAWP; although there were exceptions, women recounted that they were selected on the basis of being single mothers (with their youngest child 3 years of age or older), having experience in agricultural work, and not having finished more than a middle school education. In addition, all of them mentioned that they had been admitted into the SAWP because they had relatives already in the program. Women's participation in the SAWP is gaining the attention of more researchers in Canada and Mexico (see Alemán and Preibisch 2005; Barndt 2001; Becerril Quintana 2003; Hennebry 2006; Preibisch 2005; and Preibisch and Santamaría 2006).

The temporary migration pattern experienced by SAWP workers is more often than not a routine yearly occurrence, rather than a one-time trip. Tanya

Basok (2000a) and Leigh Binford (2004) found that numerous trips to Canada were needed to accomplish the families' goals; one season's worth of remittances did not result in any significant 'productive' investments, both because of workers' prior debts, rising expenses in Mexico, and lack of access to land and infrastructure needed to support alternate income-generating activities in Mexico. While not all of the families I visited were interested in using the Canadian earnings for 'productive' investment purposes, all of the women, and all but one of the men (the migrants themselves), told me that they hoped that the migration would last only so long as to accomplish certain foreseeable goals and then discontinue the trips to Canada. These goals were varied, such as house construction, purchase of transportation, and/or paying off debts.

Participation in Canada's SAWP in economic terms, however, appears to provide greater benefits than undocumented migration to the US, which tended to be workers' second option (Colby 1997). My own research supports this claim; both the former US-workers themselves as well as their wives mentioned repeatedly that they had been able to accomplish more in less time, by going to Canada— in terms of paying off debts, supporting themselves and their extended family, purchasing land and/or building a house, and paying for their children's schooling. Other women told me that although their partners had considered crossing into the United States illegally to work, they had asked their partners not to do so or their partners had decided against it at the last minute, because of the danger of the border crossing and the insecurity in finding work once in the United States.

CHAPTER 3: WOMEN AT INTERSECTIONS AND BORDERS

In this chapter, I will present qualitative interview data around five themes: Migration as the link between local and global contexts, women as actors, sites of mediation and conflict, the role of the state in shaping the spheres of public and private, and the local social networks existing within migration processes. Running through these themes are the two concepts presented in the theoretical framework, that of the co-existence of capitalism alongside other social relations, and women's part in shaping migration.

Migration Linking Local with the Global

I will first deal with my initial question of how to locate women's experiences within the intersection of gender, class and ethnicity. I asked the women about their partners' decision to participate in the SAWP and, along with this, the circumstances in Mexico leading up to this decision to migrate. Women's accounts of why their partners migrated to Canada were varied, but most focused generally on two things: the lack of secure and sufficient wages in their community, and the need to provide for their children. Increasingly, the only migration routes available to Mexican families such as those I interviewed (racialized, poor, with varying access to education during their childhood) are undocumented migration to the United States, or through temporary foreign workers programs to the United States (such as the H-2b), Canada (such as the

SAWP), or elsewhere, which dictate the terms of their migration with little room for input from the workers or their families.

Lupe and her husband live in the state of Tlaxcala, in a town of 2,500 close to the border with Hidalgo state. The older generation in their town maintains their parcels of land and cultivate wheat, beans, corn and barley for their own consumption, and also to sell small amounts in the market in the nearby municipal seat. Lupe told me that 'they just don't want to give it up.' The major income-generating activity for the younger generation in town is garment manufacturing, mostly done out of home-based workshops. These workshops each produce pieces of garments, such as t-shirt pockets or collars, and then sell these pieces to a 'seller' who transports these to other workers who assemble the final articles of clothing. The seller then collects the items and sells them at a higher price in the nearby commercial city of San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla, or up to 6 hours away in the markets in Mexico City. Many families have at least one member working in the United States and sending remittances, but only two men from the town are currently going to Canada through the SAWP, including Lupe's husband. Although Lupe's partner had work in Mexico, it was not a secure source of employment. While I visited, he and Lupe laughed as they recounted to me the recent battle in the local municipal town council on whether or not to raise the minimum wage— from 32 to 33 Mexican pesos per day, which was approximately \$3.60 Canadian dollars at the time of my research. Lupe's partner laughed and said, "that will buy me two bottles of Coke! What can I do with those wages?!?" Lupe told me that when information about the SAWP

arrived in the form of a letter to the municipal president, her partner was working hauling boulders from the mountain to sell in town, for approximately 300 pesos per week (approx. \$33 CAD at the time of my research), and this did not meet their basic expenses; “that is when he asked me if he should sign up for the Program.” Lupe and her husband have used the Canadian earnings to build their house, to loan money to his parents to invest in his father’s fields, and are also saving a portion in hopes of purchasing industrial sewing machines. They feel that if Lupe’s husband has his own workshop with his own machines, he will be able to earn more money doing garment work and will no longer need to migrate to Canada.

Lupe’s narrative articulates the decision to go to Canada as one made through balancing the relative benefits of the various options available to families, within a constrained set of choices. Individuals and families are using migration to mediate coexisting economic relations; Lupe and her husband are applying the money earned in Canada to both support the subsistence agriculture of Lupe’s father-in-law, and also to expand Lupe’s husband’s involvement in garment production. Both goals have social attachments as well as economic or material bases. When I visited Lupe and her family, they organized a picnic on a nearby mount overlooking the valley, close to the family’s land. We cooked food over a wood fire and they explained to me that this is the customary way that families spend the major holidays. Every year, the entire community plans a week-long Easter celebration on the hill with food, religious services, and gift-giving. Even though Lupe and her husband characterized the older generation as those most

concerned with preserving the attachment to small-scale agriculture, they also expressed that it would be unfortunate if families discontinued farming, or if the town's hillside was opened to building. Social meaning and pride is also attached to owning a garment workshop in town, since many individuals are involved in producing items, but only a few have control over the production, sale, and distribution of these items. According to Lupe, her husband wanted to be self-employed himself, rather than being dependent on a boss to give him hours or wages.

During the time her husband is in Canada each year, Juliana continues to farm the land that she and her husband own. They grow corn, beans, or squash on the land for their own consumption. This pattern is similar to other families in the town, many of whom have a family member who is in Canada or the United States. The 8,000 person town of Juliana and her husband is well-entrenched in migration. It is located on the far western border of the state of Tlaxcala, and the community is supported through migration, wage-work in nearby San Martín Texmelucan, and farming of wheat, corn, squash and beans. When I arrived in town, I was stopped on the street by an older gentleman who had spent many years in Canada during the 1970s and 1980s. Juliana is originally from another town, located just five minutes away by car, on the Puebla-side of the border. Both her father and the father of her husband also are/were going to Canada through the SAWP; when I visited, Juliana's father had just recently left for the season. When I asked Juliana about how having her husband in Canada each year impacted her life or her work, she said that it was minimal, although it did

become more difficult for her to get the work done when she had both the farming and the housework to do. Juliana alluded to certain differences between her situation, and that of her mother-in-law. When her father-in-law was still migrating to Canada through the SAWP, her mother in law communicated through him by mail because telephone service had not yet been installed in town (late 1970s- mid 1980s). Letters arrived to her one month after her husband had written them, and she then had to take the letters to a friend or relative to read them to her, as she never attended formal schooling and could not read. She would then dictate her own words to a family member to write a letter back to her husband, which he would receive after another month had passed. No form of communication was possible within this system to contact the men in the SAWP in cases of urgent family situations. Much, says Juliana, has changed. Juliana's work as a farmer maintains the agricultural production on their land during the long periods of absence of her husband, and helps maintain her husband's link to agricultural production in their community.

Ana and her partner live in the state of Hidalgo, in a medium-sized commercial city of 39,500 people. At the centre of the town is a large church, a park, and the buildings of the municipal government. In contrast to Lupe's town, Ana's town acts as the commercial hub for the surrounding smaller agricultural communities. The town used to boast two large factories, which processed some of the agricultural products grown in the area and shipped them by train to other parts of Mexico. The factories have closed and Ana told me that many people in the older generation lost their livelihoods when the factories closed; Ana

explained that the workers went on strike for a raise in wages and the factory owners moved their operations elsewhere. There is still commercial agriculture in the area, but it has shifted from the traditional crops of corn, beans, and barley to hothouse tomatoes and broccoli. Ana's husband had secure employment in his hometown prior to participating in the SAWP, working in his brothers' large tomato greenhouse a quick walk from their house. However, the money was poor and they felt that it would not provide them with enough to cover the cost of building their house. Ana told me that it should not be the case that people have to migrate out of their town to work; there are able-bodied people there and rich farmland, year-round water sources for irrigating fields, and infrastructure to support agricultural exports from the town: the town had cargo trains passing through it until the factories were closed. But, she said, "the owners just don't want to pay the wages." When Ana's husband returns to Mexico each year, he raises a few dairy cows which he keeps in back of their house, and works part-time at his brother's greenhouse.

For Ana and her husband, the wages, not employment opportunities, were insufficient. The option of going to Canada was a way, in their eyes, of covering household expenses and their children's school fees during the coming years. Once some of these major expenses were out of the way, Ana's husband planned to stop going to Canada and would find work in town— although *she* thought that their expenses would not decrease and neither would her husband's participation in the SAWP. Her husband had also made two trips to the United States prior to migrating, but she said that her husband was unable to send

money home during these trips. This was difficult for them, and she told me that she was not sure that they would have remained together if this employment opportunity had not arisen; they would not have had the resources to start a family together and the emotional toll of the constant lack of adequate household income was negatively impacting their relationship.

Women as Actors in the Migration Decision

Contrary to an image of women passively responding to men's migration decisions, many of the women actively encouraged their partners to migrate, to stay in Canada, and some would like to migrate themselves, although the current structure of the SAWP bars them entry.

In some cases, the migration decision was initiated by the women. In fact, women's own family connections led to their partners' knowledge of the SAWP and their participation in the program. In the case of one young mother, it was her family connections which would facilitate her husband's opportunity to go to the United States or to Canada. She said to me,

Elena: he had work here (in Mexico), but after looking hard at the situation here, that our baby was going to be born, and sometimes he worked and sometimes he didn't and the small amount he earned was just enough to keep us eating... after the baby is born, he'll keep growing and will need more things, and so we decided between the two of us that he would go— that we would be apart for some time, but it would be for the well-being of all of us. We decided between the two of us, this was the way to go, because the kids are going to grow and when they ask us for something,

we would have to answer them with our hands tied, just as when we were young and we wanted things we didn't have, it was because of this...At first when he went, I cried to myself, and thought, 'why did you have to go if we can do it here?' but the next day, I started to think that if he had stayed, we wouldn't be able to do anything, we would be stuck in the same thing.

Elena lives in an agricultural community of around 2,000 people situated outside the district seat of Calpulalpan, in the northeast corner of the state of Tlaxcala. The local economy is centred on migration, small-scale agriculture of beans, corn, and barley, and some continued *pulque* production; pulque is an alcoholic drink made from the maguey cactus, which grows widely in the area and farmers plant bordering their fields. Before entering the valley where the community is situated, one passes a large *hacienda* that once owned most of the flat land close to the town. Although it no longer owns the land surrounding it, the hacienda is still operating a pulque distillery which produces the drink to sell locally and in Mexico City. The community has around 120 men in United States, some women there, and two men in Canada, in addition to Elena's husband.

Sara and her partner are currently living in a dense urban suburb of Mexico City, culturally and geographically far from the Mixtec-speaking community in Oaxaca from where they both originate. They live in two rented rooms, surrounded by neighbours who also come from communities scattered throughout a number of Mexican states. 15 years ago, Sara was widowed very young and left her home community with her small children to look for employment in the city. On one of her trips home, she began to spend time with

her current partner, and they eventually married and he followed her to Mexico City where she was living. She has three daughters from her first marriage and now three young children with her current husband. Later, her husband's brother joined them, to pursue educational opportunities not available to him in their hometown. She said to me, her brother-in-law laughs when he thinks that he studies more and more in order to follow his brother to the city, just so that his brother, who has very little formal education, can move even farther away to Canada— to another country in fact.

Sara: Only God knows why, perhaps because he is such a good person (her husband), that is what I say. (Laughs.) One has to search for the way to earn a little more, because here it doesn't stretch; the costs are rising, rising.

Although it was Sara's family connections which opened up the opportunity for her husband to go to Canada, she was very concerned about the appearance of his decision to the rest of their family, and explained that she never obligated him to go to Canada. Sara's partner contacted Sara's brother to get the details as to how to submit the paperwork to be considered for the program and where to go, and Sara said that "it was an overnight decision" for her husband to present his papers. While Sara characterizes the decision for him to migrate as a joint husband-wife decision, she told me that she was the one who decided where he migrate.

Sara: He had the idea to go to the United States 'como mojado' but there have been so many problems with Mexicans crossing like that, they die or they are murdered. He had

even arranged his affairs to go with my brothers to the United States- I have a number of relatives in the United States, and so my husband decided that he would go to the United States but I told him NO, it is better to arrange your paperwork to go to Canada, and so that is what we did- at that time, our eldest child was just one year old, and thank god, my husband was admitted into the Program.

With her husband's participation in the SAWP, Sara and her husband are building a house in their home community in Oaxaca, where the plan to go to as soon as the house is completed. Sara would be giving up the community she has built in her Mexico City suburb and many of the income opportunities that she says she has enjoyed as a result of being on her own, away from the norms of conduct imposed on her by her extended family. But, she says that she wants her younger children (born in Mexico City) to also know their community.

In the cases of Lupe, Ana, and Sara, they and their partners were using migration as a strategy to accomplish certain things. They spoke of their plans and the decision-making process that led to migration. While they expressed their initial reservations of their husband's participation in the SAWP, the narratives of the women also show ways in which they supported or even initiated their partner's decision to migrate. The women were framing their narratives in terms of family relations, gender, and their values. In Lupe's town, migration is linked to both the community's agricultural identity, through the older generation, and also to the numerous home-based, piece-work garment workshops connecting their community to the markets in larger urban centres. In Ana's case, the family is using migration as an income strategy alongside local

farm work income and her husband's dairy cow investments; the multiple strategies have improved their situation and have eased some of the emotional strain in her relationship with her husband. Sara's narrative talks to the gendered relations surrounding the migration decisions of men; while it was Sara who 'opened-up' this route to her husband, she felt it was inappropriate for others to speculate that it was her impetus, rather than of her husband. Sara's values also motivate her and her partner's relationship to the SAWP; they see it as more than just a way to build their house, but as a way to permanently return to the community that Sara left 15 years ago.

Sara and Lupe, like some of the other women I spoke with, became the emotional support for their migrant husbands, and encouraged them to continue on in the SAWP.

Sara: Sometimes he calls and tells me that he wants to come home... but I tell him not to worry, that he only has a little time left in Canada and he'll be home with us soon. If I complain about how sad it is in Mexico without him, it would be worse for him in Canada. I'm the one who has to encourage him.

Lupe: If he didn't go this year, he would lose his opportunity to return to Canada, we talked about this, so this year he would go but that it would be the last time... because it is difficult to not have your partner close, and for the children as well... but that's the way it is, it is unfortunately not possible to have good work here, and you have to sacrifice to have something better...we would both get very emotional while we talked on the phone. And I asked myself, 'where is the mutual

support?' He told me that he wanted to come home, but I told him to think about it, that if he were to come home, where would the work be? And later, he would lose the opportunity forever. So I told him, 'give it your all, you know that we are here waiting for you' and it was very hard for me to say that, because he had already decided to finish his contract early, but we needed to keep going to build a house because we didn't have anywhere to live... we want to make the most of this work that he has, to the maximum, because he won't always have work like this.

Women were shaping migration at various points in the process: in making the decision, in facilitating their partner's entry into the SAWP, and some through encouraging their partners to finish their SAWP contracts.

Sites of Contest, Conflict, and Mediation

Once the migration decision is made, individuals continue to reflect on the nature of labour migration and their position as 'migrants' in the processes of production. Women spoke to me about their frustration that the terms of the contract which their husbands signed in Mexico were not always applied once their husbands arrived in Canada. Women wove an analysis of gender, class and national origin into their narratives. Two major themes emerged from their critique of the SAWP: Canadian employers breaching parts of the SAWP 'contract' and the restrictions imposed by the program on the women's own possibilities to migrate.

Reyna and her husband live in a city with a population of 136,800 people on the east coast of Mexico in the state of Quintana Roo, close to the border with

Belize. The economy of the city is based on tourism and many of the people living on the outskirts of the city have migrated from the Maya-speaking communities scattered throughout the states of Quintana Roo and Campeche. The city has museums, shopping centres, big-box stores and two universities. It is also home to a growing community of Canadian retirees. Reyna and her partner are both native to the city, and both have held professional jobs, although Reyna's husband also had experience working in the nearby fruit plantations when he was very young. In addition to the clerical work she acquired after finishing secondary school, Reyna also worked throughout her childhood and adolescence selling the snacks that her mother prepared at a local market. They now rent her mother's house, after having lived for many of their married years in a room in Reyna's husband's mother's house. They have three young school-age children, but also try to help support their younger siblings' educational costs from time to time.

Reyna and her husband heard about the program from their friends. While she says that it was his decision, she did not oppose it because they did not feel like there were other opportunities to support their family. Unfortunately, the work in Canada did not go as planned. They were told by their contact in the local municipal government who had helped them through the paperwork that Reyna's husband would be working in greenhouses. But her partner arrived in British Columbia to find out that he was to work in outdoor blueberry fields, without having brought the proper protective clothing with him. There was often a lack of work, and he was unable to send money home, and sometimes unable

to buy groceries in Canada. On top of things, Reyna said that the work environment was unfavourable, that “he found himself at a farm where they would give certain workers preference over others... they weren’t treated all as equals.”

Berta lives in the same city as Reyna, but in a different suburb. They live in a house they own, in a suburb on the outskirts of town. Berta and her husband have three teenage children and have been married for almost 20 years. They told me that her husband and she had always been able to find ways to support their family, and, as with some of the other couples, both of them had worked throughout their time together. The first time he went to Canada he did not go through the SAWP, but on a tourist visa and worked for around a month and a half. Although he was not able to send money back to her until a month had passed, the money earned in Canada stretched ‘further’ and they decided that he would go again. Berta said that she thought the idea of the SAWP is alright, in that people could go to Canada, to work, and that their food, lodgings, and paperwork would be arranged in advance. But, the reality that her husband had experienced was not what they expected;

Berta: If it were like the contract says, that their food is taken care of, that everything is fine, and that they would be provided with everything important, like proper equipment, we would go happily to work in Canada and return to Mexico, if that is what their fear is, that we will pass the time there so wonderfully that we won’t want to leave Canada at the end of the contract, but one always knows where his roots are and the Mexican doesn’t forget his roots ... there (in Canada),

they treat us like a joke— they believe that because we are *campesinos*, that we are ignorant or who knows? Who knows what their mentality is? But the Mexican is not stupid, he is just like everyone else. He wants to live a comfortable life and provide for his children. This past time with the contract, no. Not again. They don't fulfill their obligations; the Mexican, he is fulfilling his obligations, because the Mexican will work comfortably, without problems... they want to treat you like work animals there, and I ask, 'if there weren't Mexicans working there, there wouldn't be production and profits'... so why do they treat us like animals?

Berta told her husband to quit the work in Canada when the conditions at the farm became severe. In spite of his experience in the SAWP, she says that he wants to return to work in Canada, but not through a program which ties the workers to a single employer or location. In addition, she asked me rhetorically why, if Canada needs workers, the Program does not allow the wives of workers to go to Canada also to work?

Berta was not the only women I spoke with who expressed a desire to go to Canada to work, some with or without their husbands, and who felt the structure of the program to be prohibitive and gender-biased. Some of the women said that their husbands rejected this idea on the basis that 'women could not do this,' or that the program was 'only for divorced women,' a point that is supported by the selection framework of the SAWP.

In order to finish their house more quickly and move back to Oaxaca sooner, Sara says that she would like to be able to arrange her documents so

that she could also go to Canada to work, but her partner asks her what their children will do; she replies, "oh you— everything is about your son!" She says that they would be able to accomplish more if she were to also go to Canada. She laughed and told me that she was as strong as many of the men that go to Canada, and she knows how to work in agriculture.

Because of her worries about her husband's unfaithfulness, Ana has also wanted to go to Canada: both to look after him, and also to earn money and be more independent economically. She says that he rejects her ideas of going to Canada because she is a woman, because women do not go to Canada to work, because she should dedicate herself to staying home with the children.

Only in one case did a woman tell me that her partner was supportive of her idea for them to go together to Canada to work. Now that her children are older, Berta from Quintana Roo told me that she would like to go along with her husband to Canada, not necessarily through the SAWP, but through some route which would allow them to save money to send their children to university. She told me that because her children are older now, they would understand that it is not that their parents "are leaving them, but rather that they are leaving to do something which will benefit them in the future."

Many of the women I visited were already participating in the economic maintenance of the family prior to their husband's migration and felt that their parents and siblings would support them if they were able to migrate; for them, it was the program's structure, not social pressures, which was the barrier. They did not agree with their husbands' rejection of their interest in going to Canada,

and the institutional structure of the SAWP reinforced a specific gendered division of labour amidst a reality of shifting gender dynamics within the women's lives.

While migration through the SAWP may not be an option for these women, four of the nine women I spoke with were migrants within Mexico. Their moves had ranged from distances of approximately 25 to 600 kilometres, and had involved adjustments such as learning a new language, learning new occupations, and leaving their communities and families of origin behind. These women do not present an image of 'dependent' wives of migrant workers, but as migrants and workers in their own right. The way in which they mediate migration and work is dependent on local social relations *as well as* the larger institutional frameworks: state immigration and labour policies.

While excluded from migrating in the SAWP, married women are still engaged with the process of migration. The women in my study recounted unique and diverse experiences of the changes felt in their own lives as a result of their partners' migration. Some analyzed their contributions (and sacrifices) to their family in terms of a gendered division of labour between the men who migrate and the women who stay home and take care of the household.

Ana did find herself with certain new responsibilities; she had to deal with paperwork relating to their house, make numerous trips to the centre of town, and had to juggle this and caring for her children. She also said that she felt the weight of managing the money; in her case, she had the full responsibility of managing the finances of the routine expenses, as well as some of the expenses

relating to the construction of their house. In spite of her increased responsibilities, she also felt lacking in authority over household decisions and felt the need to turn in records to her partner of all of the expenses incurred during his absence. She said to me that although he had not asked her to do so, he had criticized her in the past and now she turns in the accounts 'to avoid problems'. In her opinion, many household responsibilities are felt more intensely by the women. Ana said that 'the workers in Canada only have to worry about themselves and are able to relax and talk with their friends at the end of the day, but the work of their wives never stops.'

Lupe told me that since her partner began going to Canada, she has started to get used to doing everything on her own:

Lupe: Yes, it is difficult. Wherever I would need to go, I would go with him. There in town, there are doctors and when he is here with us, we would go together to the doctor. But alone, I didn't know where to go, in spite of living here for 5 years, I still don't know my way around all that well... he tells me I need to learn, because later the kids get sick and I have to react on my own... it made me all but want to pack up my things and take my children and go stay with my parents in my hometown.

For Lupe, the most difficult responsibility is being the person ultimately responsible for managing the family's finances. All of the women I spoke with told me that their workload increased during their partner's absence because they were managing the household affairs as well as taking care of their children. The role of the state in defining who migrates and who does not simultaneously

impacts the division of household work. Women were reflecting on these changes in their own work and also their partner's work.

The Role of the State in the 'Public' and the 'Private'

Lupe: I would like to work without neglecting my children... or some sort of economic contribution at least... when you have children, you don't want them to be missing anything... he told me that he suffered poverty with his parents... it is my idea that we can say one day that we did this between the two of us... now, he tells me that we are doing this together, 'you don't help economically, but emotionally you help me keep going'... and yes, it feels good to hear that, but I say that it would feel even better to have the economic help!

While their responsibilities at home increased, women's participation in paid employment sometimes changed as a result of their partners' migration. Based on a family-wage ideology, the SAWP negates women's economic contributions to the family and negates men's non-economic contributions, such as parenting. In women's testimonies, I found evidence that a breadwinner ideology was being reconstituted and reified in the TFW program; women found it more difficult to seek wage work or contribute in economic ways, and simultaneously, the women felt that their partners were finding it more difficult to contribute to the social and emotional work of the household. Another aspect of women's participation in the paid labour market is social. Although the participation of migrants' wives in the local labour market is based on the economic needs of their households, the participation is not free of conflict and

pressure from family or community members, and is not widely supported by state-institutional structures. Although some women wanted paid employment outside their homes, they felt that the lack of adequate childcare options prevented them from doing so.

Sara was accustomed to working outside of her home throughout her life. However, when her youngest child was born, she stopped working in paid employment. Because her partner is going to Canada each year and she is the sole caregiver, she expressed that she felt unable to go back to work outside the home until now. Now that her child is older, she would like to return to a job, but says that

Sara: Right now, he doesn't let me work. But I tell him, 'if I don't work, how are we going to get ahead? When you go, I spend more because I am only here in the house all day, and for everything I have to use your money.' I like to have my own money... to manage it by myself... when I was working, I never told him how much I was earning, nor did he ask. But he tells me, 'don't work— the kids suffer more if you are working' but it's just that I don't like to be stuck all the time in my house, without leaving... I like to get out, at least for a little while, to talk to people.

Sara told me that her partner uses the children as a pretext for her not to get a paid job, but she feels his position is based more on not being comfortable with her spending so much time away from the house alone. She feels that her relatively constant, continued paid employment throughout their marriage is what helped them to get ahead as a family, and she explains to me that she has set an

example to her daughters that they can work for themselves, and they do not need to depend on husbands to support them.

In these cases, men's employment in Canada reinforced a "family-wage" ideology in their households, and the women in my study accepted or rejected this reinforcement of the division of paid and unpaid labour to varying degrees. Many of the women expressed that although they would like to have paid employment, it is too difficult to do so while taking care of their children in the absence of their partner. Conversely, many of the women also stated that if they were able to find paid work (in spite of some of the difficulties this would present), their households would be able to save more money more quickly and their partners would not need to continue to migrate to Canada.

Other motivations for women to seek waged work existed. Although the SAWP appealed to many of the families because of the security of the income (relative to going to the United States undocumented), the SAWP limits workers to a single employer and so prevents workers from seeking alternate employment if their stipulated employer does not have enough work for them. As a result, workers are unable to send money home, and families, often the women, must find ways of supporting themselves until the worker in Canada begins to earn more money again or is sent home.

Berta was working as a secretary when she first met her partner. When they got married and started a family, he asked her to stop working outside the home and wanted her to stay with the children. But ever since they were married, she has earned some sort of income, whether it was at home or outside of the

home. She has worked in restaurants, for the local city government, has sold food items from a stall in front of her house, has sold ice from their home, had a small grocery store, and they have raised pigs. She says that the money she has earned has always helped them meet their needs, which is why she feels it is important that she continue her employment in some capacity. She said:

with what I earned, we paid the rent and the expenses of the house, and with what he sent, we paid the children's school expenses. He was not given much work by the employer in Canada, and was able to send only a very small amount home, sporadically, until he finally decided to return to Mexico, without finishing the contract. (Berta)

This default of the contract in Canada created significant hardships in Mexico. Berta returned to working outside of the home, began selling food from home, and went to their church to ask their pastor for a loan to cover their needs.

Through the SAWP, state policies interact with local-level gender norms to reconstitute women's role in the home, and act against men's contributions to 'care work'. Men often migrated on the basis of wanting to provide income to raise their children, but many of the men and women questioned the consequences for their children of their husband's extended absence.

Sara: The motivation for my partner to go to Canada was the desire to build a house, so that his children would have the security of always having a place to live, no matter the employment or income situation in the future.

Elena: He also wants to help me with the education of our children, because he says 'I'm going to be away from them for a lot of the time and they won't respect me... it will be just you with

the children, and they will ask you why I am scolding them, or restricting them from doing this or that'... so his idea is that he will go for a few years while they are young, and we will do the most that we can then, and when we feel like we have enough he'll be with his children.... That is his idea and what we have talked about together as well— to be with the children and provide them with guidance, because that is the only thing our parents leave us with: *education*, and we decide if we will accept or reject it.

Some of the women described the absence they felt when their partners left for Mexico because the men were not at home to help with the domestic activities. Many women focused their discussion especially on their children, whom they felt suffered during their fathers' absence.

When Elena's partner returned to Mexico in December, he stayed just under a month before returning to Canada to start another work season in January. While SAWP workers normally spend three to four months in Mexico, Elena's partner decided to change the dates of his employment season in Canada in order to work during the first part of the year. This allows him to be home with his family during the last few months of the year in which the town held its festival and, more importantly, his son has his birthday. Because of the short time they would be able to spend together before he would again have to leave for Canada, Elena requested her husband not to get a job during his time in Mexico, and he complied with this request.

The ways in which children responded to their fathers' absence was a source of concern for all of the women I spoke with. Children of different ages

reacted in different ways. Some young children simply did not recognize their fathers. The women described changes in their own relationships with their children that were the result of their husband's absence.

A recurrent issue in the women's narratives was the problem of discipline with their children; almost all of the women said that their children became more angry as a result of not having the presence of their fathers during extended periods of time. Reyna feels that her children disobeyed her more while her partner was in Canada, because "he spoils them so much when he is here, because he is not with them very much, and so when he is around, he wants to give them everything and he spoils them...".

Berta explained to me that the children felt their father's absence because he was very involved with raising them prior to migration. He would carry them, cook for them, feed them, bathe them;

Berta: Here there are no machistas, so when he left, he left a big hole to fill. When I'm sick, he comes and cooks, and my boys see him doing this, and this is why my eldest son is so good in the kitchen and this is why both of my boys know how to do things around the house, because they have a father whom they see cooking, cleaning, washing dishes, sweeping the floor... everything... now that they are older, we tell them to clean up after themselves or to help around the house, that they can't leave everything for their mother to do for them... because here there are no machistas. When he left for Canada, they changed. They got lazier. My husband is stricter with them, and I'm not so much like that. When they came home each evening and saw that he was

not here, they got sad and were very quiet. It was the worst for my eldest son- to the point where he failed a year in school, he got very bad marks. He wouldn't tell me what was wrong, but I knew that it was because he missed his father. And my youngest son became very aggressive- do you know what he would tell me? 'Why did my father go if now we are doing even worse?!'... Sometimes I would be embarrassed to tell them about the problems their father was having in Canada, and they became very rebellious here.

Lupe: He is missing out on many good things with the children. We talk over the phone about our children, such as when our daughter could sit up on her own, when she started kicking, and like when she started walking— he was not here for any of that... he tells me 'I am missing so many things with my children' and I tell him that he is, it is true... when our son's first teeth appeared, we made tamales... but this year, with our daughter, we didn't do anything because he wasn't here with us... the truth is that you lose out on a lot of good things with the children... they may not sound like such big things, but for parents, these are very important and beautiful experiences... He was in charge of taking our son to the bathroom in the middle of the night, of bringing him bread before he slept, and when he left, our son didn't come to me to take him to the bathroom, and instead just did it in his bed... because he said that his father was supposed to take him to the bathroom... I asked myself 'what do I do?!'... I tried to console him, but he would tell me that I always tell him that his father will be returning, but he never comes back... when we were having dinner, he would start to cry and because he would cry so much, I would begin to cry as well and no one would finish dinner. He also became more

aggressive... and he wouldn't let anyone hug him. Before he was so tender, so respectful- he liked to play with his cousins, but that changed, and I knew that it was because he was missing his father. But one moves forward in spite of this, because there is no other option than to put effort into it and build the house and take care of the children.

In their small Maya community, Dafne walks to the community telephone line to receive a weekly call from her partner. Although she is originally from a small city in central Campeche, she is currently living in her husband's community which is close to the Campeche-Yucatán border in the northeast of the state. The town is a Maya-speaking community of around 4,000. Of these, many work as construction workers in nearby Calkiní, a larger town to the east, or migrate to Cancun to work. During the past four to five years, the number of men who go to Canada through the SAWP has grown from two to 32, while only four or five men are migrating to the United States. Families also have land where they plant beans and corn or raise livestock. When her husband is scheduled to call home, Dafne waits at the phone booth and holds the phone up to her infant daughter's ear so she can hear her father's voice. When her husband returned after his first trip to Canada, her daughter did not recognize her father, but Dafne told me that she warmed up to him after about a week, and she felt that it had helped that her daughter had heard her father's voice over the telephone.

Two women preferred the SAWP over having their partners cross into the United States without papers specifically because the SAWP avoided the long-term separation of an undocumented migration to the United States;

Elena: The problem that they have, is that they are gone for so much time and they leave their children very young... now when they come back and they want to reprimand or scold their children, their kids don't let them. They don't take their fathers seriously... this is what I don't want happening to us: that he should come back and try to teach them things or send them on errands or take them along to work with him, and they don't want to go because they don't recognize him as a father, as they should.

In this way, Elena describes her partner's decision to participate in the SAWP as mediated by family relations in addition to the economic motivations. Many of the accounts of the women created a discourse around migration and respect towards fathers in migrant households. While the SAWP provides the men with a means of supporting their families economically, it lessens their ability to be present in the life of their family. A tension arose within some households due to different understandings of parenting as well as different understandings of the household finances. Since the women were left to deal with both raising their children as well as maintaining financial solvency in the household, some of them felt that they had a more intimate knowledge of the realities of both familial separation and the household budget than their spouses because of this. Two women mentioned that their husbands felt that it was more necessary for them to be with their children when their children were entering into adolescence or

young adulthood than their early development years. However, these women thought that the early years were most important for children to be with their fathers. In addition, in many of the families I visited, the women felt that it was unrealistic for their partners to think that they would be able to stop migrating to Canada after three to four years, as many were planning to do. The women argued that in three to four years, their children will be entering middle or high school and the school fees and other needs will be most expensive. Hence, the Canadian earnings will be even more critical to covering the household expenses. The women also felt that, by this time, their children will have already grown-up semi-fatherless throughout their critical early development years. The women were feeling the impact of international borders within their households.

Women, Social Networks, and Migration

Elena: Things have changed, or rather, we have changed- on their part and my part as well. My mother-in-law has a certain side to her, and I also have a side of me... we were clashing a bit... to the point where we did fight a little. But now it is different... and now that he (her partner) has gone, we have to live with each other better, without disagreements, because I need their help and they need our help, so I try to help them out to we can all live well.

That social networks maintain, further, and shape migration is already the subject of network theories of migration. However, with a few exceptions (Hennebry 2006; Kanaiaupuni 2000; Salaff 2002), the work of women in maintaining these networks is overlooked by much of the research not

specifically gender-based. Non-migrant women in the SAWP were engaged in extensive patterns of family support and reciprocity. These social relations existed as the backdrop to the insertion of families, through migration, into relations of global capitalism.

Ana and her partner live in close proximity to both her parents and his parents, but she has very little interaction with his parents. While her partner is away, she moves between her parent's house and her own house, although she told me that she prefers to live in her parent's house while her partner is gone, because she feels less lonely and safer in her parent's house, which is the centre of town and where she and her children are surrounded by her sisters and her children can interact with their cousins. Her partner and her parents do not always get along. This is a source of concern to her because of the large amount of support, both emotionally and economically, she receives from her parents while he is away.

Ana: My parents don't ask us for anything. But sometimes I notice, because my mother is ill... and my parents have always helped us out in everything. He (her partner) doesn't accept this. He tells me that he doesn't work for other people, he is just working for us. Later, for example, the electricity bill arrives and I tell my father that my husband sent this money to pay for our share of it, even though my husband didn't say that at all, and I take a little money from what he sent us to pay for the food... but I do this without [my husband's] knowledge because he gets upset about it.

Dafne has little contact with her own parents, her extended family, and her community. She lives in a town far from where she grew up and learned her husband's language when they began their relationship (her language is Chol, his language is Maya), which she now uses to communicate to her husband and to the rest of his family. She and her husband live on the same family plot of land as her husband's siblings. She gets along well with his sisters, and this was very important during her partner's absence. She told me that "they helped me very much, with the children" and while she was recovering from the birth of her child during her husband's absence.

As mentioned earlier, Berta called upon her relationship with her mother-in-law, as well as her pastor for monetary support when they were having financial difficulties during her husband's trip to Canada. Both Berta and her husband felt more desperation in this situation because they were attempting to manage the financial problems while being separated.

Berta: my mother-in-law helped me, as well as our pastor, but he (her husband) was there alone and was getting sick often... when he went to Canada we suffered a lot, but him even more than the rest of us... there wasn't work there for him, or else they didn't pay him, and later he would ask them (the employer) 'what am I going to do?' they (the employer) would simply tell him not to worry about it, but he said 'how?!?', my wife and my family there need the money!

Providing unpaid labour for extended family income-generating activities was a direct way that some of the women maintained the mutual support between them and other family members. Reyna spends the majority of each

day assisting her mother-in-law prepare light snacks to sell in a nearby market. She does not receive wages for this, but continues to contribute over 40 hours of work each week because she feels that it benefits her and her children in other ways.

Reyna: Just as I helped her out regularly, she helped me— she has helped us so much... because there were occasions when he couldn't send any money to us, and my mother-in-law would give us groceries or food, because I was going to her house to help her. She is the person who has helped us out the most...sometimes she does get a little protective of me when he is not here, but in general we get long well, but yes—when he is not here, she is a bit different, but because I help her, she doesn't insert herself too much into our lives.

In this way, the unpaid labour Reyna offers her mother-in-law helps maintain the family relationships that allow them to get through difficult periods economically and emotionally.

Mayra lives in a community located in the mountains of Mexico state. They both are originally from the small community, which has seen heavy out-migration to the United States and Canada during the past two decades. The community is located between larger Villa del Carbon, where many middle- and upper class families have purchased land and constructed large summer homes, and San Jeronimo Zacapexi, an indigenous community with a large weekend market. Most families in the community were *ejiditarios* at one point, producing vegetables (corn, chilies, squash) for themselves and for sale. Now, it is the older generation who continues to farm, while younger people search for work in

nearby Villa del Carbon. Mayra said to me that there is 'little employment in town' and when a job is available, one must know someone to get the job. While members of the community are scattered between here and jobs in the United States and Canada, the town maintains its cycle of yearly events and undertakes communal projects, soliciting 'cooperations' from each family. Mayra felt that the odds that her partner would migrate seem high, as he has brothers in both Canada as well as the United States; the motivation simply came once their child was born and they felt they needed more space for their growing family. Each of the seven brothers in the family has a part of their parents' sub-divided land, where they are building houses within range of one another; the wives of the brothers live in the houses year-round, while the men return between seasons in Canada or between trips to the United States.

Mayra found a great deal of support both from her partner's side of the family and also from her own mother and sisters, during both of her partner's trips to Canada. Mayra gave birth to their first and only child 8 days prior to her partner leaving for Canada, and the help her mother and sisters provided during her recovery was substantial. During a period of time in which her daughter was ill and in need of costly medicines, Mayra went to her mother's house to eat on a regular basis in order to stretch the remittance earnings further.

In some of the experiences recounted by the women, there was evidence of a lack of "institutional" support or recognition of the difficult role of women in becoming single mothers in these situations. All of the women relied on some sort of family or community network for support, although this manifested in

different ways in each case presented. In some cases, in-laws or parents provided significant help out of recognition of the difficult situation. In other cases, the woman's experience of her partner's migration was seemingly treated as another inevitable stage in life by the extended family. These were cases in which the majority of the family members (and the community) had experience with migration, such as was the case with Juliana in Tlaxcala state. The women responded to the amount of help offered to them in various ways: some wanted more involvement from family, some wanted less, some were happy with the status-quo.

When her baby became ill, Mayra's worry was compounded by her feelings of insecurity around being a new parent and not having her spouse with her to work through the problems. While she received substantial informal support on one hand from her family and in-laws, she described a lack of support from her local doctor on the other hand. She recounted to me her reluctance at taking her baby back to the doctor when an earlier illness returned, because the doctor had scolded her and questioned her parenting the last time she visited the clinic:

Mayra: it was very cold during those weeks and everyone was catching cold, but the doctor did nothing but reprimand me... he said to me 'why are you bringing her back to me when I just recently cured her?!'... but how can he say that when he doesn't know the situation of the family, of the women... he has no right to think these things or to judge me in this way.

Being the sole person responsible for doing housework and cooking, as well as caring for her infant daughter was difficult to juggle, and Mayra told me that she also had added stress at times thinking that something would happen to her child because she was unable to attend to her as ideally as she would have liked and this would reflect badly on her mothering skills:

Mayra: Because it is so cold outside, I brought the comal indoors to warm the tortillas, and I put my daughter in her walker here with me in the kitchen while I am heating the tortillas or cooking dinner, but I am careful not to let her out of my sight because she is capable of sticking her hands where the tortillas are warming and she could burn herself, and then that looks badly on me, and people will ask, 'doesn't she take precautions with her child??!'

Women were using their informal networks of support to help mediate points of conflict between their experiences, and the institutional structures which did or did not support them. However, the informal support networks could also be a point of conflict; relationships between the women and their husband's families were strained in some cases. The majority of the women with whom I spoke had moved from their parents' house into their in-laws house upon marrying their partners, instead of moving into a separate house or instead of their husbands moving in with their [the wife's] parents. The only case in which this did not occur was the case of Sara in Mexico City who married her partner and he joined her in the room she was renting.

Elena relayed that her partner told her that her decision to marry him was also a decision to accept his parents' home as her own home. Because of this,

he feels that his parents' home is where she should stay while he is away in Canada. While she appreciates the support she receives from her in-laws, she also feels that she needs to maintain regular contact with her parents through visits and phone calls. This, she says, has not been easy for her husband to understand, and he has become upset with her at times after finding out that she has taken the children on her own to visit her parents. They have been going through a period of adjustment and negotiation during his initial years participating in the SAWP as a couple and vis-à-vis both sets of parents; compromise was especially important for them to get through this difficult period of his migrations to Canada. She explained to me that she tried to change and accept his desire for her to remain at his parents' home and not visit her parents, while he is in Canada. At the same time, she has requested that he make time for them to go and visit her parents during the time he returns to Mexico, so she can maintain her connection to her own family. Elena's relationship with her in-laws is not always peaceful, and some friction has arisen as the result of differences over how to manage the money her husband is earning in Canada.

Elena: They do get upset sometimes, because we do spend a bit of money at times, and they tell me that there is no reason to spend so much money when the money is needed for other things, like building a house. But I say yes, we do need the money for those things, but there are other things we would like, and if we have the possibility of purchasing these things, we should go ahead and do it.

For her, building a separate house would further delineate spheres of responsibility and authority; "we would like to build our house, because in our

own house we would be able to do as we wanted... if we don't feel like cleaning, we can leave it as is and no one will say anything to us." Until then, Elena is in the position of managing the relationship with her in-laws, with her parents, and with her partner in order to maintain the networks that support her young family financially and emotionally.

Even in some cases where the women expressed tension, they regarded their in-laws and parents as indispensable in helping out economically, emotionally, and with the work of taking care of children, running errands, doing housework, and a number of other activities. More often than not, the women told me that their in-laws/ parents asked for nothing in return.

In terms of institutional support, women suggested that families should receive more economic help from the Mexican or Canadian governments to cover their expenses during the time the men are unemployed and in Mexico. Some of the families were receiving parental benefit payments from the Canadian government, which provided the families with welcome additional income during the husband's time in Mexico.

Lupe: One wants to invest the money in a house so that the trip is worth it, but now (2 months after he returned to Mexico), we have none of his earnings left... but we are content knowing that we have another room of the house built, but he also wanted to purchase a pickup truck... there isn't sufficient public transport here in town, so that way if there is an emergency, we won't need to ask for a ride. If he teaches me to drive, I'll just grab my children and drive us into town.

Lupe told me that she and her husband recently learned of a program administered by the local government offering small home-improvement loans to families of men participating in the SAWP. They submitted paperwork to receive money to build a water tank since they were without water storage facilities at their house, and receive water only every third day. However, they had not heard anything from the administrators of the loan program, and had been waiting for over a year when I visited them. Lupe said that it is important for participants in the SAWP to have a source of income during the time they are in Canada because the Canadian earnings do not generally meet all of the household subsistence needs during the off-season. She felt that either the Canadian or Mexican government should provide SAWP workers with income while they are in Mexico.

Women were finding ways of building and maintaining informal support networks during their partners' migrations to Canada. Some of the women expressed the desire to see more institutional support on the part of both the Mexican and Canadian governments in recognition of their increased (and unpaid) workloads, as well as a greater recognition of the sacrifice fathers, mothers, and children were making to pursue this employment opportunity.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

Women's practices show them choosing a course of action for themselves and their families within a framework shaped by state policies and gender norms. The idea of multiple locations is important to situate the accounts of the women. The women exist as 'wives of migrants' and as migrants themselves, waged-workers and unpaid workers, mothers, daughters, producers, farmers, supervisors, employees, household heads and also household partners. They cannot be labelled as 'wives left behind,' nor neatly identified within a proletarian/peasant (or capitalist/ non-capitalist) duality. The diversity in their backgrounds and simultaneous location within capitalist relations and other social relations points to different ways that women have found to mediate, accept, and/or contest the production processes and social relations shaping their lives. Running through these women's experiences is the Canadian SAWP; running through their households is global capitalist production, and the global inequalities in who can migrate, where they can migrate, and under what circumstances. The non-migrant women who are reconstituted as 'housewives' within institutional frameworks such as the SAWP are the same women who are actively engaged with the migration that links their local context to global relations of power.

While structural and network theories of migration are useful in examining different aspects of migration, in their purest forms they both fall short of a

comprehensive treatment of the relationships between gender, state policies, capitalism, and migration. I will briefly provide a recapitulation of the basic tenets of structural and network theories of migration in relation to my findings, and some arguments for an alternate theoretical path to approach migration studies. Following this, I will discuss some final conclusions and promising areas of further research.

The SAWP is a “split-family” migration pattern, to borrow the term from Rhacel Parreñas (2001), and is gendered in both its design and its implications on household relations within migrant families. Through selecting workers on the basis of age, gender, national origin, and prior work experience, temporary foreign worker programs such as the SAWP attempt to mould the workforce to the specific needs of labour-receiving countries. Temporary work permits with restrictive conditions make workers tractable, flexible to the needs of employers, and highly productive at low cost through denying workers many of the benefits afforded to native-born workers and permanent resident immigrant workers. Structural theories of migration posit that temporary foreign worker programs separate the workers from their social context, which alienates and isolates workers from traditional networks of community and institutional support, and also separate the cost of the maintenance and reproduction of the workforce from the cost of production. The costs of maintaining and reproducing the workforce are partially pushed back to the workers’ home economies.

The specific site of separation of these costs is the household and the process of separation has a specifically gendered impact. While structural

theories of migration bring attention to this, less articulated is the degree to which women are negotiating gender roles within the division of labour reconstituted, and sometimes imposed, in their households because of their partner's extended absence. The women in my study spoke about numerous ways in which they are actively engaged with and/or facilitating their partner's migration, through providing the family connections to secure a spot in the SAWP, through the ways in which they are managing the organization of the household, and through managing family and community support networks. Many of the women directly reflected on their position within a framework structured along the lines of ethnicity, class, and gender. Ana in Hidalgo discussed the work of her husband and her own work during the time her husband is away in Canada; while the men work long days in the farms, the work for their wives at home never stops and is done in the isolation of their houses.

Network theories of migration emphasize the local as the central site of study, but in context of international ties linking migrants and their communities of origin and the ties that shape identity, culture, and social dynamics. Local level social relations in the communities of origin and destination play a part in shaping 'transnational' migration patterns.

Researchers applying a gendered lens to the study of 'masculinized' migration flows have pointed out that significant barriers towards women's migration exist in contexts where women's roles are characterized as relegated to the domestic sphere (D'Aubeterre 1995, 2000; Kanaiaupuni 2000; Preibisch and Santamaría 2006). Preibisch and Santamaría's (2006) research supports

the conclusion that the social norms of many rural Mexican communities discourage women's participation as international migrants, and hence make it more difficult for women to participate in programs such as Canada's SAWP. Although their roles as wives and mothers may pose barriers to their international migration, it may in fact be the motivating factor for their 'internal' migrations within Mexico (Aysa and Massey 2004). This movement, Maria Aysa and Douglas Massey (2004) point out, is highly embedded within the social and economic context of the women's families and communities. The internal migration of some of the women in my study presupposed the migration of their husbands, and established a different context of extended family support than that of the women in my study who married locally and continue to live in their communities of origin. The extent to which the women in my small study were internal migrants within Mexico points to women as also being 'migrants' and 'workers' and makes the label of 'wives left behind' problematic.

Network theories of migration also highlight the women's work in maintaining and strengthening the social and familial networks that facilitate migration. Women create transnational ties that benefit migrants and their families in both social and economic ways (Salaff 2002). The roles non-migrant women play in the "social processes" of migration vary and often are overlooked by traditional migration research focusing solely on migrant men. Kanaiaupuni (1995) argues that non-migrant women's household organizational strategies play a significant role in the migrant sending process and cannot be ignored. My own data support the argument that women's participation in extended-family

networks and managing the household has facilitated their husbands' continued trips to Canada. Some of the women described the careful processes of social negotiation they undertake to maintain mutually beneficial relationships within family networks— generally vis-à-vis in-laws and their own parents even when these relationships are strained.

Responding to the need to complement quantitative analyses of migration patterns with descriptive qualitative data, Joanna Dreby's (2006) examination of gender roles and ideologies of motherhood and fatherhood in the transnational context found that while the migration experience shifted gender roles in ways which led to women's increased authority within their families, gender ideologies were not so permeable and continued to determine the ways in which parents responded to the emotional and economic needs of their children back home. My research supports the dialectic between gender roles and gender ideologies proposed by Dreby, insomuch as fathers negotiate their economic and social roles within the structure of the SAWP and the culture of migration which separates these spheres. Furthermore, the interplay of gender roles and ideologies does not exist outside of pressures of larger state and economic policies.

Adapting elements of both structural and network theories of migration creates a theoretical framework for migration which incorporates the context of global capitalist relations, the influence of state policies and other social relations, and the agency of individuals and communities. In sum, state policies shape migration in gendered ways, while individuals and households employ migration

as a strategy to mediate between capitalism and other social relations. To frame this analysis, it is useful to return to the two concepts presented earlier on in the thesis. First, there is the concept that capitalism co-exists with other social relations; migration links capitalism and these other social relations.

Migration is a social process as well as an economic one. For migrant workers themselves, Sylvia Guendelman and Auristela Perez-Itriago (1987) posit that the social function of seasonal migration is the compromise provided by such arrangements between migrants' obligation as "household heads" to maintain their families within the context of a depressed rural economy, and migrant workers' need for family life and emotional support rooted in their home community. Subsequently, men decide to make a "trade-off" and migrate seasonally, which allows them to both provide for their families and retain emotional and cultural ties in their community of origin. While my data support this, I would argue that further discussion is warranted of the origins of male migrants' obligations as head of the household. The way in which the SAWP reinforces ideologies of 'breadwinner' and 'housewife' can be interpreted, similar to Mies' (1982) explication of the lace makers of Narsapur, *as the local and global interacting to the benefit of capitalist relations*. Migration is the force linking local contexts with the global context, and linking capitalist economic relations with other non-capitalist relations such as subsistence production, gender relations, and family and community networks of reciprocity and support. At the same time, the state policies and local gender norms in each context were shaping the face of migration; state-imposed migration frameworks like the

SAWP are gendered, and local gender roles and ideologies of marriage and motherhood conditioned the choices and options the women in my study saw available to them.

The women in my study were not participating in international migration streams because of local gender norms discouraging this, local socio-economic contexts which did not support their leaving behind their children, and also because of the state policies which design gender bias into the SAWP. The SAWP discourages them from participation on the basis that they are married, but, ironically, recruits their husbands partially on being married to them. The Canadian state designs the SAWP in such a way as to fill specific labour needs with the most productive (or exploitable) workforce available to it. At the same time, the program is designed to discourage these workers' families from accompanying the workers to Canada. This feature of the program is particular to the SAWP and other programs filling forms of low-wage, insecure employment, while the conditions for other immigrant and migrant categories in Canada are different vis-à-vis the families of migrants. Sara, from Mexico City/Oaxaca, felt that if she could migrate through the SAWP, the family goals could be accomplished sooner and her family could remain together. Instead, her role in the process was connecting her partner to the SAWP opportunity through her brother, who was already migrating to Canada.

In line with Arizpe and Botey's (1987) critique of the gender-bias in Mexican agrarian reforms and economic development programs mentioned earlier in this thesis, the argument can also be made that men and women

experience different relative opportunities of employment and wage-earning potential in both the rural and urban sectors. However, the women were inserting themselves into the process of migration and in doing so, were mediating the linkages between capitalist economic relations and subsistence production in their communities. Lupe's and Juliana's cases support this assertion; Lupe is situated in a community with one foot in subsistence agricultural production and one foot in the production line of garments for central Mexico. Her work in facilitating her husband's migration is supporting the source of income to be later invested into both pursuits. Juliana farms her land all year round, but while her partner is away, she has to do this on her own in addition to caring for her children. Her work in managing these various positions is allowing her husband both to migrate, but also to farm when he returns to Mexico because the work on the land has not halted while he is away. Her partner is thus able to retain his identity as a producer in Mexico, while pursuing the waged work in the commercial agricultural sector in Canada.

Finally, in the case of Reyna we see the articulation of various junctures of capitalist relations and other relations of social organization. While her background as a food vendor in the local market and her training as a program analyst provides her with a foundation to go out and seek paid work to maintain her family, she chooses instead to support her mother-in-law's food stall at the market with her *unpaid* labour. Without understanding the social meanings attached to her work, her choice does not appear to follow an economic 'rationale'. This assistance provides her mother-in-law with the ability to sell

more items and earn more profits, and she, in turn, provides Reyna with in-kind assistance of groceries, medicines, and other items when Reyna's budget is constrained. Reyna is participating in various notions of 'work' simultaneously: subsistence work, care work, housework, and work in a small business. Each of these is imbued with social meanings and support Reyna's facilitation of her husband's migration. The migration of her husband further links her work in the home context to capitalist relations of production in the global context.

Understanding the position of these three women in terms of global structures of capitalism and power, in the vein of structural theories, allows for a critique of the ways global economic development policies during the latest round of neoliberal globalization has benefited some and disadvantaged others. But, it does little to help us understand the social meanings the women give to their work, and their reflections on and engagement with the various production and migration processes. Berta was not prepared to resign herself to the notion that her husband and other migrant workers in Canada had second-class status as workers for being from a 'poor' country relative to Canada; she did not accept that a signed work contract could be disregarded at the whim of the employer. She asks us, "if there weren't Mexicans working there, there wouldn't be production and profits.... So why do they treat us like animals?" Focusing first on the social processes and informal relationships shaping migration, as is the call of network theories of migration, helps attach this social meaning lost by a purely structural theory. But, we are left with the question of why the women are

forming these social networks and maintaining these ties, and what forces are conditioning migration in the first place.

The second concept of use is that of women and gender as active agents shaping migration. Not only do pre-migration experiences influence how households renegotiate the division of household labour and gender roles during and following migration (Khaled 1995; Hoodfar 1996), but migration in itself is impossible to isolate as a stand-alone variable (Ariza 2000; Aysa and Massey 2004; Kadioglu 1994; Tienda and Booth 1991). Researchers in gender and migration studies are attempting to shift theories away from a conception of non-migrating women as passive subjects responding to the migration of their male partners, and towards a framework which recognizes the pre- and post-migration processes of negotiation and practices of individuals, households, and communities within the options they see as available to them (Kadioglu 1994; Khaled 1995). Four of the nine women I interviewed were migrants themselves. They had experienced learning new languages, taking on new roles within the household, seeking out new jobs and adapting to different local norms of behaviour. They gained this experience years prior to the migration of their husbands to Canada.

Not surprisingly, studies examining the increased responsibilities of non-migrant women in the household, political, and economic spheres as a result of male out-migration find a high degree of diversity in the meanings ascribed by women to any changes in roles that they may experience (Ariza 2000;

D'Aubeterre 1995, 2005; Dreby 2006; Hoodfar 1996; Khaled 1995; Marroni 2000; Salaff 2000).

In previous studies of non-migrant wives, men's international migration has been found to lead women to seek wage employment, but various other non-economic factors condition non-migrant women's participation in the labour market (Aysa and Massey 2004; Bever 2006; D'Aubeterre 2005). Women's employment is a strategy to maintain the family during periods when the male migrant cannot remit funds to the family or in case he abandons the family altogether (Aysa and Massey 2004; Wilson 2000).

My research findings diverge from these earlier findings on the relationship between women's waged work and male out-migration. The women in my study found it more difficult to participate in paid work outside of the home and in some cases, decided to decrease their participation in paid work. Although more research is warranted, it is possible that differences in the nature of male migration are contributing factors in women's participation in the labour force; previous studies of non-migrant wives were based on Mexico-US migration in which male family members were absent from households for years rather than months, and/or abandoned their Mexican households altogether, making women's participation in paid labour more critical for the survival of the family.

Catherine Colby's (1997) research on differences between Mexico-US and Mexico-Canada (SAWP) migration found that SAWP migrants remitted a substantially higher amount to their families back home, which may also contribute to whether or not women decide to take on paid work. Although the

women in my study who expressed interest in paid employment had a number of different reasons for not seeking work, some alluded to constraints placed on them by their husband or his family (the wives' in-laws) discouraging them from working. Perhaps because of the routine-but-short migration trips, men participating in the SAWP were able to exert more control over their wives' mobility than in the case of their US counterparts who are potentially a) absent from their households for much longer periods of time, b) remitting less money or remitting money more sporadically, and c) live with greater uncertainty of household cohesion.

Women themselves may feel internal conflict in challenging norms of gender embedded in their cultural identity (Bever 2006). But, women such as Berta and Reyna were engaging in other work which maintained the household economically during times when their husbands were without work. These women devised creative solutions which mediated their economic needs and local scripts of gender roles.

Refocusing the discussion onto non-migrant wives of migrants allows us to see the ways in which gender, class, generation, and other bases of social organization intersect and underlie migration processes. Rich qualitative data provides a basis for highlighting the diversity of experiences and intersecting relations, and helps demonstrate the continued need for a multi-layered, non-linear approach to migration research. That said, a great need exists for quantitative data on non-migrant wives of migrant workers to complement the qualitative studies already done.

Comprehensive studies incorporating both qualitative and quantitative analyses lead well to policy recommendations and implementation, and policy attention to wives of SAWP workers is overdue. The Canadian and Mexican governments are working to expedite and 'improve' the SAWP through restructuring the bureaucratic process in both countries and/or investing more money in running the program (HRSDC 2007; Secretaría de Trabajo y Previsión Social 2004). Local state and municipal level programs in Mexico supposedly aimed at better supporting migrants involved in the SAWP are being implemented, such as economic support to SAWP migrants for home construction projects (*Síntesis* Jan. 8, 2007). However, some of these policies appear to go further in reconstituting gendered relations of power through reinforcing a 'breadwinner' ideology; one woman recounted to me her frustration over the fact that she was taking on the responsibility of managing the construction of the house while her partner was away in Canada each year, but that he refused to put her name on the title of their new house. Finding herself less able to support herself economically because of her added unpaid labour resulting from her partner's absence, she felt more obliged to remain with her partner. This woman was critical of the lack of support for women in her position within a migration scheme which accepts men into the program on the basis of being married, but rejects married women.

The lack of research attention to the contributions of non-migrant women in much of migration literature prevents us from developing more sophisticated theoretical frameworks for the questions of why people migrate, how they

migrate, and what happens when they migrate. But more importantly, leaving an analysis of gender relations and women out of the policy discussion is having negative consequences on women and on families.

Finally, while pointing out the gendered structure of institutional frameworks, it is imperative not to overlook the constant negotiation and contestation practiced by individuals within the framework. If we are to bring gender relations and women back into the discussion, researchers and policy makers must be willing to see women as active participants of processes of migration rather than simply passive respondents.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview Guide

Demographic Questions	
1.	Age
2.	Education (and other languages)
3.	Marital status/ marriage or civil union
4.	Number of children
5.	Members in household (parents, in-laws, siblings...)
Decision to Migrate	
6.	Can you describe to me how the decision was made for your partner to go to Canada to work?
7.	What were your thoughts on this?
8.	Had you and/or your partner migrated before? Internal Mexico (from and to where?)/Internationally (from and to where?) For how long? When did this occur?
Experience of Migration	
9.	What are your thoughts on your partner working in Canada now that you have experienced this?
10.	(If there are children...) How do you feel that your children experience their father's migration?
11.	What do you hope to accomplish through your husband's participation in the Canada-Mexico program? (Probes: financial/ investments, social, other...)
Work	
12.	Can you describe to me your work in the family? (Probes: social/emotional, economic, unpaid, etc...)
13.	Can you describe to me your partner's work in the family? (Probes: social/emotional, economic, unpaid, etc...)
14.	What is your daily routine when your partner is home?
15.	What is your daily routine when he is away?
16.	Have you noticed any changes in the ways you and/or your partner contribute to the household since he has been migrating to Canada?

Social/ Family Networks	
17.	How would you describe your relationship with your relatives/ in-laws?
18.	In your opinion, what do they feel about your partner's migration to Canada?
19.	Do you feel that you and your relatives'/ in-laws' relationship changes while your partner is away?
20.	Do you feel like your partner's participation in the Canada-Mexico program has changed your relationship together in any ways?
Family Resources	
21.	Has your husband's participation in the Canada-Mexico resulted in what you had hoped? Do the remittances and savings meet the needs of your household?
22.	Does your husband work during the time he is in Mexico?
23.	Did you earn (cash, in-kind, etc) income prior to your partner's participation in the Canada-Mexico program?
24.	To earn that income, were you required to work at another location besides your home, or did you do the work in your home?
25.	Do you continue to earn this income/ participate in this work?
26.	Do you feel like your work (cash, in-kind, other...) has been affected by your partner's participation in the Canada-Mexico program?
Future and Alternatives	
27.	How many more seasons do you expect that your husband will continue to go to Canada?
28.	Are there ways that the program could be changed to better support the workers?
29.	Are there ways that the program could be changed to better support the families of the workers, and specifically the wives of workers in Mexico?
30.	Are there things that you would like to see change in Mexico?
31.	Have you ever considered migrating to the United States or Canada?

Appendix B: Community Profiles

Participant	Individual	Community
Ana	<p>Ana and her husband have recently built their own house and live there while her husband is in Mexico. During the time he is away from Mexico, she spends her time divided between her house and the house of her parents just down the street. She was born and raised in this neighbourhood and finished school through grade 9 locally. She met her partner when she was 16, and they have three children together.</p>	<p>Ana's city has 39,500 people and is the commercial hub for many surrounding smaller agricultural communities. The city is situated in southern Hidalgo state and has a railroad line running through it which connects the town to Puebla and Mexico City, although trains no longer pass through town. Two large factories provided a major source of employment for people from town until a decade ago, when the workers went on strike for improved wages and working conditions and the factories closed. Ana's father was one of these workers, and has not been able to find work as secure as his former job since the factory closed. Many families, including Ana's and her husband's, are involved in agriculture of varying scales. The brother of Ana's husband has a tomato and broccoli greenhouse operation spanning the horizon at the entry to Ana's neighbourhood. Other families are involved in other types of medium- to large-scale commercial agriculture, raising livestock, or small scale agriculture of beans, rice and potatoes for household consumption.</p>
Berta	<p>Berta was raised in the town she and her husband still live in. She tells me that one side of her family is from Belize, and the other side is Maya. She finished high school before she and her husband met, married, and started their family, and they now have three high-school aged children. She is</p>	<p>Berta and her husband live in a suburb in a tourist destination city of 136,800 in southern Quintana Roo, close to the Mexico- Belize border. Their neighbourhood is a mixture of locals and families who have migrated from other parts of the Yucatán peninsula to find work in town. The city has two universities, numerous museums, a busy shopping district downtown, and big-box supermarkets just outside of town. A growing population of</p>

	<p>currently working as a project manager in the civic works department of the local city government, and her husband is working as an electrician; both she and her husband have earned income since they were married, aside from times she stopped work in order to care for her children.</p>	<p>Canadian retirees are also arriving in town to build houses, and there is a constant influx of tourists from other parts of Mexico, Canada, and the United States who arrive to visit the beaches, archaeological sites, and shopping (including the 'free trade zone'- the duty free area located just inside Belize's borders). A growing number of casinos are also popping up on the Mexico-Belize border, and she explains that the growing tourist industry has brought some jobs, but also growing problems of prostitution (what she characterized as being especially as young girls from impoverished rural Maya communities farther inland) and drug trafficking. See also the profile of Reyna; Reyna and Berta live in the same city.</p>
<p>Dafne</p>	<p>Dafne is from a community in central Campeche. Her parents sell products from their community in different regional markets, and so Dafne grew up knowing various communities around Campeche. She completed school through 3rd grade and has low-literacy skills in Spanish, but she is tri-lingual. Raised speaking Chol, she learned Maya through her husband and his family, and she speaks an intermediate level of Spanish.</p>	<p>Dafne lives in her husband's community of origin, a Maya-speaking town of 4,000 people close to the border of Campeche and Yucatán. The town is situated on the edge of a biological preserve, which employs a portion of the population. The majority of the population, however, works as construction labourers in nearby Calkiní, the district seat, or in Cancun. 32 men from town were in Canada during the 2006- 2007 season, while Dafne said that she knew of only 2 men who were in the United States. The older generation maintains small plots of land to feed themselves and their families, and/or to raise livestock. Some of the women in town crochet yarn doilies to sell in Calkiní, including Dafne's sister-in-law. The architecture of the town combines colonial government offices and churches, with the very basic bamboo and thatch homes of older individuals or young families, and the 3-4 room cement block houses (most of which are under construction) of the families who</p>

		have members working as construction labourers, or who are migrating.
Elena	Elena was raised and completed school in Mexico city. She was trained in pharmaceutical sciences and worked as a laboratory assistant until she and her parents decided to leave Mexico city for a smaller town. She then met and married her partner and moved to his town, which was nearby.	Elena's community is located in northeastern Tlaxcala state, in a small valley 8 kilometres outside the town of Calpulalpan. The families of the community have houses in town and many have plots of land, many of which were formerly part of the landholdings of the large hacienda located a few kilometres outside of the current town centre. The community has just under 2,000 people, but many of the working-age population is in the United States working. Elena told me during our interview that 120 men were there at the time. Two men were working in Canada through the SAWP. The community has traditionally relied on agriculture and produces barley, corn (hominy, for the Mexican soup 'pozole'), and beans. The area also used to be heavily involved in the production of pulque and mixiote, both products from the large maguey cactus. Pulque, a thick, white alcoholic beverage produced from the juice of the maguey, is still produced in small quantities by individuals, and also for sale by the still-operating hacienda.
Juliana	Juliana is from originally from a town across the border in Puebla state, but only 5 minutes away by car. She finished secondary school, partly because of the income her father was earning as a SAWP worker in Canada. He still goes to Canada, and was in Canada during the time that I visited. Her mother-in-law also is married to a SAWP worker. Juliana has 3 children and comes from	Juliana lives in a town on the far eastern border of Tlaxcala within view of the volcanoes Popcatéptl and Iztaccihuatl. Her adopted community has a population of close to 8,000 people, and is heavily involved in migration to Canada and the United States. Generations of community members from the town have migrated to Canada through the SAWP since the program was opened to Mexico in 1974. The community is also involved in agricultural production of squash, corn, and beans, and enjoys a continuous year-round supply of water from natural springs located

	<p>an agricultural background. While her husband is away in Canada, she works in their fields and says that this is nothing new- she has known how to farm all her life.</p>	<p>on the edge of town. The town is full of newly constructed and under-construction cement block houses of US and Canada- bound migrant workers. Situated close to Mexico City, Puebla, and San Martín Texmelucan, many people in town travel bi-weekly or monthly to purchase household items from those cities' larger stores and markets.</p>
Lupe	<p>Lupe grew up in a more affluent household in Tehuacan, Puebla- a few hours drive from her current home in her husband's town in Tlaxcala. She finished secondary school and was working in a clerical job after she finished her studies and prior to meeting her husband. They met when he was in the Mexican army and stationed close to her town- they dated for a number of years and then married and moved to his community of birth. They have just finished the construction of their house, prior to which they were living in rented rooms or with his parents.</p>	<p>Lupe and her husband live in the state of Tlaxcala, in a town of 2,500 close to the border with Hidalgo state. The town is around 15 kilometres outside the town of Calpulalpan, Tlaxcala, a busy small city of 21,500. Calpulalpan has a university, two garment factories (one producing jeans, another producing shirts) and serves as a stopping point on the railroad thoroughway from Puebla to northern Mexico state. In Lupe's town, nearby, the older generation in their town maintains their parcels of land and cultivate wheat, beans, corn and barley for their own consumption, and also to sell small amounts in the market in the nearby municipal seat. Lupe told me that 'they just don't want to give it up.' The major income-generating activity for the younger generation in town is garment manufacturing, most done out of home-based workshops. These workshops each produce pieces of garments, such as t-shirt pockets or collars, and then sell these pieces to a 'seller' who transports these to other workers who assemble the final articles of clothing. The seller then collects the items and sells them at a higher price in the nearby commercial city of San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla, or up to 6 hours away in the markets in Mexico City. Many families have at least one member working in the United States and sending</p>

		remittances, but only two men from the town are currently going to Canada through the SAWP, including Lupe's husband.
Mayra	Like her partner, Mayra was born and raised in the community. Her widowed mother lives up the hill from Mayra's house, with two of Mayra's younger sisters. Mayra has one small child with her husband, and receives a great deal of help from her mother, sisters, and sisters-in-law. She finished secondary school in town, and she and her partner have lived together for the past 5 years.	Mayra lives in a community located in the mountains of Mexico state. The community has seen heavy out-migration to the United States and Canada during the past two decades. It is located between larger Villa del Carbon- where many middle- and upper class families have purchased land and constructed large summer homes, and San Jeronimo Zacapexi- an indigenous community with a large market on weekends. Most families in the community were <i>ejiditarios</i> at one point, or still have <i>ejido</i> landholdings (as in the case of Mayra's parents-in-law) producing vegetables (corn, chilies, squash) for themselves and for sale. Now, it is the older generation who continues to farm, while younger people search for work in nearby Villa del Carbon as professionals, labourers, or merchants. Mayra said to me that there is 'little employment in town' and when a job is available, one must know someone to get the job. While members of the community are scattered between here and jobs in the United States and Canada, the town maintains its cycle of yearly events (including the annual town Saint's Day celebrations) and undertakes communal projects, soliciting 'cooperations' from each family.
Reyna	Reyna and her partner are both native to the city, and both have held professional jobs, although Reyna's husband also had experience working in the nearby fruit plantations when he was very young. In addition to the clerical	Reyna and her husband live in a medium-sized city with a population of 136,800 on the east coast of Mexico in the state of Quintana Roo, close to the border with Belize. The economy of the city is based on tourism and many of the people living on the outskirts of the city have migrated from the Maya-speaking communities scattered throughout

	<p>work she acquired after finishing secondary school, Reyna also worked throughout her childhood and adolescence selling the snacks that her mother prepared at a local market. They now rent her mother's house, after having lived for many of their married years in a room in Reyna's mother-in-law's house. They have three young school-age children, but also try to help support their younger siblings' educational costs from time to time.</p>	<p>the states of Quintana Roo and Campeche. The city has museums, shopping centres, big-box stores and two universities. It is also home to a growing community of Canadian retirees. Reyna and her partner are renting Reyna's mother's house in one of the new subdivision developments outside of town. The houses each have separate yards, kitchens, washrooms, driveways and patios in back, although the houses are very compact and the walls are much thinner than the houses built over time in the centre of town. Hurricane Janet, in 1955, passed through this town and destroyed the majority of the architecture of the town, which was the traditional British-influenced raised wooden clapboard construction. A handful of these historic houses were salvaged and relocated to the centre of town for preservation and tourist value. See also the profile of Berta; Reyna and Berta live in the same city.</p>
<p>Sara</p>	<p>Sara was married first when she was 13, and had 3 children with her first husband before he passed away suddenly and she became a widow. Following this, she moved from her community to find work and start a new life in Mexico City, where she could feel removed from some of the pressures she felt placed upon her by her parents and deceased husband's parents. She has been working outside of her home as a housekeeper, in semi-clerical jobs, and has sold tamales and other snacks on the street close to her home. She told me that she</p>	<p>Sara and her children live in two rooms in a dense urban suburb of Mexico City (the suburb is a city in its own right). She has been renting these rooms from an elderly woman, who lives close, ever since Sara left her community in Oaxaca 15 years ago. Sara feels that her area is not as safe as her quiet rural community in Oaxaca, but at the same time, she has gotten to know her neighbours and has not had any problems running her errands, working, or raising her children because of the sense of community that has developed among some of their neighbours. Their neighbourhood sits on a hilltop overlooking the vast expanse of Mexico City to the south.</p> <p>Sara's community in Oaxaca is 'traditional' in her words, and she describes it as still maintaining some forms of 'traditional' dress and</p>

	<p>completed little formal education and her literacy skills were low, but Sara is bilingual in Spanish and Mixtec and has a wealth of knowledge gained through her experiences of marrying young, raising her children on her own after her first husband passed away, and remarrying.</p>	<p>practices. The older and working-age populations continue to speak Mixtec in daily use, and the children have access to bilingual Mixtec-Spanish teachers/schools. The community is located on the northern coast of Oaxaca, in an area famous for pineapple production. Sugarcane and other agricultural products are grown there, both for sale and for household consumption. Sara and her husband are building a cement-block house there, which they return to every year between her partner's seasons in Canada, to oversee the construction progress. Sara told me that the women in her community are known for the woven skirts that they produce; they are distinguishable in the recurring pattern of bright purple and red bands of colour.</p>
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