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‘Haciendas and Plantations’: History and limitations of a 60-year-old taxonomy

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journals.sagepub.com/home/coa**Marc Edelman** 

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Abstract

In 1957, Eric R Wolf and Sidney W Mintz published ‘Haciendas and Plantations in Middle America and the Antilles’ in the Jamaican journal *Social and Economic Studies*. This article discusses the production of the Wolf and Mintz article, its analytical framework and the theoretical tensions it contains, and its subsequent influence, mainly though not exclusively on anthropological and historical scholarship about large landed properties in Latin America and the Caribbean. ‘Haciendas and Plantations’ appeared at a time when anthropologists such as Elman Service, Charles Wagley, and Marvin Harris were trying to make sense of agrarian Latin America by developing typologies of labour relations, rural populations, and forms of property. These efforts never successfully resolved the inherent tension between ethnographic or historical content, on the one hand, and Weberian ideal type definitions, on the other, although Wolf and Mintz’s article came closer to doing this than the other works in the typological genre. In part, this was because it analysed discrete dimensions of large landed estates – capital, labour, land, markets, technology, sumptuary patterns, and so on – in a manner intended to stimulate cross-regional, cross-national, and trans-historical comparisons. ‘Haciendas and Plantations’, however, saw these elements as largely determining local-level outcomes on the ground and left little analytical room for contingency or rural class struggle in driving historical processes or shaping property relations and land use. Despite the article’s scant historical content, it nonetheless continues to serve as a point of departure in early twenty-first-century agrarian studies and the analytical tensions it embodied are still significant in comparative social scientific research.

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Sidney W Mintz, Eric R Wolf, land tenure, agrarian studies, haciendas, plantations, history of anthropology, Latin America, Caribbean

Introduction

In a pioneering 1957 article on large landed estates in Latin America and the Caribbean, Eric Wolf and Sidney Mintz defined hacienda and plantation ‘types’ or ‘social systems’ distinguished by low versus high levels of capital investment, small- versus large-scale market orientations, and a preoccupation with status or consumption versus a concern with capital accumulation on the part of owners, which, in the case of the plantation, were likely to be a corporation rather than a ‘dominant land-owner’ (1957: 380).¹ Both haciendas and plantations were, Wolf and Mintz argued, ‘products of the expansion of the world economy. . . geared to the sale of surpluses produced into an outside market’, though that ‘outside market’, in the case of haciendas, tended to be ‘small-scale’ and often local or national (1957: 381–388).² Their aim was ‘to define each type as an operational model which would account for differences in behavior observed in the field, and yet would possess utility in making predictions about situations yet unstudied or unknown’ (1957: 408).

Wolf and Mintz (1957: 381) emphasized that the hacienda and plantation types were not polar opposites nor were the two types necessarily inevitable ‘sequential stages in the development of modern agricultural organization’.³ Even though they located plantations in coastal regions, with easy access to international markets, and haciendas in inland, highland zones, they seemed to imply that haciendas could eventually be supplanted by plantations:

[T]he two types do seem to represent responses to different levels of capital investment and market development, and the differences between them are – at least in large part – determined by differences in the kinds of market which they supply and the amounts of capital at their disposal. (1957: 381)

For several decades, Wolf and Mintz’s (1957) hacienda-plantation distinction continued to serve as a point of departure for analyses of large landed estates in Latin America, because its heuristic usefulness and rich discussion of labour control, land use, capital, and markets stimulated comparisons and discussion (Duncan, Rutledge, and Harding, 1977: 6–7; Grindle, 1986: 30; Keith, 1977; Mörner, 1973). In the 1970s, the article enjoyed a second life when it appeared in Spanish in a widely read anthology edited by Mexican historian Enrique Florescano (Wolf and Mintz, 1975).⁴ It also had echoes in much of the subsequent work of each of its authors, even though their interest in and theoretical

approaches to haciendas and plantations, perhaps especially in Mintz's case, evolved considerably.

Scholars, policymakers, reformists, and revolutionaries long viewed Latin America's extremely skewed land tenure patterns and the persistence of *latifundios* (large underutilized properties) as major obstacles to the region's development and to the pursuit of more equitable and just societies (Edelman, 1992). In the last decade, a global upsurge in 'land grabbing' has captured attention and generated new agrarian crises and, at times, significant grassroots opposition (Hall et al., 2015). The problems that Wolf and Mintz began to tackle in 1957 are thus of more than merely historical or academic interest.

Anthropologists, ideal types, and intellectual genealogies

In 'Haciendas and Plantations', Wolf and Mintz's discussion and language evidence tensions between particularism and generalization, between Weberian abstraction and Marxian historicism, and between a strong appreciation for historical change and an ahistorical functionalism. Regarding the latter, consider, for example, their statement of the paper's objectives:

Our main purpose... is to view the hacienda and the plantation as two kinds of social systems. In each case, we shall attempt to analyze and discuss the variables which we believe to be essential to the maintenance of the system. These variables combine in complexes which recur in similar combination in different parts of the world. Since such systems occur in more than one instance, we shall refer to them as 'types'. (Wolf and Mintz, 1957: 381)

This functionalist tone, with its reference to 'variables... essential to the maintenance of the system', was not an anomaly in 'Haciendas and Plantations'. On the same page, Wolf and Mintz wax positively Durkheimian when they comment that 'markets and capital formation are functionally related to other aspects of the society of which they form a part, and depend on these other aspects for their maintenance and growth' (1957: 381).

Perhaps these functionalist musings were unconscious reflections of the near-total hegemony of Parsons, Merton, and Radcliffe-Brown over the social sciences of the day (at least in the United States). Certainly, they derived to some degree from their reading of Edgar T Thompson's 1932 University of Chicago PhD thesis which – in the tradition of Chicago sociology – defined a 'generic' plantation type and then applied it, with an exhaustive empirically based analysis, to the historical case of colonial and early independence Virginia.⁵ But in considering Wolf and Mintz's functionalist undertones, we also need to remember that in *festschriften* and memorial collections, such as this one, we tend to venerate our intellectual heroes and to airbrush or Photoshop out elements that might complicate our memories of illustrious and beloved ancestors and their ideas. We rewrite our own disciplinary history, remembering, for example, Mintz and Wolf as stellar

senior scholars or, as young men, among the ‘closet Marxists’ of the Mundial Upheaval Society, while downplaying or forgetting the uncertainties they faced in charting a new course as early-career academics at the tail end of the McCarthy era, in an anthropology still burdened with functionalist, culturalist, and particularist methodologies and forms of inference and explanation (Palerm, 2017).⁶ We must also acknowledge that in the 1950s, the scholarly bibliography on Latin American haciendas and plantations was scant. As I will argue in more detail below, Wolf and Mintz’s (1957) paper predated the florescence of hacienda and plantation studies in the 1970s and this relative absence of comparative material limited the extent to which they could develop a genuinely processual view of agrarian conflicts and outcomes.⁷

While ‘Haciendas and Plantations’ contains much functionalist and ‘systems’ language, this existed alongside a clear historical sensibility. Haciendas and plantations, the authors argued, could only arise when

the larger society affords both the motives and the means for wealth accumulation based on mass production and sale of agricultural produce. It must be recognized that all social systems have histories. No social system is the ‘same’ at birth as it will be in its ‘mature’ phase. The conditions which initiate a system often differ markedly from those necessary to keep the system operating in its established form. (Wolf and Mintz, 1957: 382)

Wolf and Mintz therefore distinguished between ‘general’, ‘initiating’, ‘operational’, and ‘derived cultural’ conditions. Their analysis of the hacienda and plantation ‘types’ may be summarized in Table 1.

Two interrelated projects or currents are worth briefly examining to reconstruct the intellectual context and understand the approach of Wolf and Mintz’s ‘Haciendas and Plantations’ article. The first is the famous (among anthropologists, at least) ‘People of Puerto Rico Project’, which was directed by Julian H Steward and counted Mintz and Wolf among its participants (Steward et al., 1956). The second – more diffuse, less coherent, and rarely analysed as such – was the 1950s fascination of so many US anthropologists concerned with the Caribbean and Latin America with constructing typologies that purportedly demarcated and explained key features of society and culture in the Americas.

The People of Puerto Rico Project is the subject of an extensive literature and will not be analysed in detail here (e.g. Godreau, 2011; Mintz, 1978, 2001, 2011; Roseberry, 1978; Silverman, 2011; Wolf, 1978). Importantly, for the first time in US cultural anthropology, the Project linked community ‘subcultures’, economies, and histories to broader national and international processes and laid the basis for a conception of culture rooted in changing material conditions. In 2011, Mintz observed that the book *The People of Puerto Rico*

surmounted two barriers that had been created between anthropology as it was and anthropology as it would later become. First, it turned its back on the long-defended

Table 1. Hacienda and plantation 'types': General, initiating, operational and derived cultural conditions.

Conditions	'Hacienda type'	'Plantation type'
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology adequate to produce a surplus • Class stratification • Production for a local or regional market • Diversified production for self-consumption and as fallback during market downturns • Capital accumulation based on low but safe returns • Political-legal system • Inland, highlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology adequate to produce a surplus • Class stratification • Production for a large-scale market • Emphasizes one major cash crop • Capital accumulation • Political-legal system • Coastal, lowlands, good access to foreign markets
Initiating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital scarcity • 'Traditional' credit sources • Limit or destroy workforce's alternative sources of employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale investment, usually including foreign capital • Foreign markets, secured against over-supply by international agreements, tariffs or quotas • Improvements in transportation
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-cost land, incompletely utilized • Monopolization of land to deny workers alternatives • Low capital needs • Labour-intensive, 'traditional' technology • Few technicians, specialized personnel • Restricted but stable market • Animal transport • Workers 'bound' to hacienda through economic (e.g. debt, company stores) and non-economic mechanisms (e.g. ritual kinship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist personnel, often including foreign financiers and managers • Widely divergent cultural orientations between management and workers, and between owners and management • Specialized tasks or operations • Efficient use of land, labour and capital • High levels of risk, mitigated through exercise of political influence • Workers increasingly rely on wages and not subsistence production • Worker discipline through firing

(continued)

Table 1. Continued

Conditions	'Hacienda type'	'Plantation type'
Derived cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private system of law and order, physical punishment of recalcitrant workers • Family ownership • Mobilization of wealth through kinship ties • Source of funds for owners' prestige needs • Owners' conspicuous consumption assures lenders of economic viability • Resident labour force • Reinforcement of labour force's traditions • Dominance and deference behaviours • Hacienda owners as symbolic 'father' • Some non-money remuneration (e.g. services, access to land) for resident workers because capital is scarce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate ownership • Profit maximization, 'rational cost accounting' and efficiency, not conspicuous consumption, main goals • Production of only one crop • Labour may be 'imported', i.e. foreign • Managers and technicians may claim racial or national superiority over workers • Plantation zones culturally heterogeneous • Labour not 'bound' to the plantation • Land obtained by dispossessing previous users • Owners seek to protect their stake by influencing politics • As little paternalism toward workers as possible • Workers have new consumption choices, which modify their cultural values • Workers' new social relations include unionization

Source: Elaborated by the author on the basis of Wolf and Mintz (1957).

division between the 'primitive' and the other segments of human society. Second, it was one of the first serious attempts to get at the study of a whole modern society, using anthropological methods. (Mintz, 2011: 244)

The book's most glaring shortcoming, subsequently acknowledged by Mintz and other Project participants, was the failure to analyse the history and impact of Puerto Rico's colonial status on the communities that were studied or on the island

as a whole.⁸ In the book's discussion of agrarian structures, it is possible to discern the broad outlines of Wolf and Mintz's later analysis of haciendas and plantations. The project's conception of 'subcultures', its selection of study communities and its theoretical arguments relied on a kind of geographical or spatial determinism which, as we shall argue in more detail below, tended to give short shrift to historical dynamics such as the role of class conflict in shaping agrarian outcomes. Juan A Giusti-Cordero succinctly describes these assumptions about space and their subsequent impact:

These social spaces include agrarian 'subcultures' (e.g. sugar and coffee) and geographic zones (highlands, lowlands, hinterland, foreland, etc.). These social spaces underlie the paired opposites of plantation versus hacienda and rural proletarian versus peasant and incorporate a selective, dichotomous methodology of typology construction. The significance of these paired opposites extends to the continental regions of the Americas with which the respective concepts are associated and remain powerful, if usually unacknowledged, conceptual territories in contemporary social science and culture (Caribbean vis-a-vis Mesoamerica, Plantation America, or Afroamerica vis-a-vis Indoamerica)... The highland-lowland distinction underlies and 'naturalizes' the opposition between plantations and haciendas, and between rural proletarians and peasants, as these concepts were developed chiefly by Mintz and Wolf in their later work in the 1950s and 1960s. (Giusti-Cordero, 2011: 204, 207)

It was not just Mintz and Wolf who 'naturalized' these oppositions in their contributions to *The People of Puerto Rico* and in their 1957 article. This taxonomic approach was part of a broader trend. In 1955, for example, the *American Anthropologist* published three influential essays that contributed to solidifying these distinctions. Wolf's (1955) article on 'Types of Latin American peasantries' suggested that 'haciendas' were associated with 'highland' peasantries living in corporate communities, while 'plantations' were associated with 'lowland' peasantries who lived in 'open' communities and produced cash crops for market. Although Wolf remarked that 'we must remember that definitions are tools of thought, and not eternal verities', his argument foreshadowed the schematic analysis of large property forms elaborated in the 1957 paper with Mintz. Elman Service pursued a related – though more 'racial' than 'structural' – approach in an essay on 'Indian-European relations in colonial Latin America' (1955). This article posited a division of the American continent into 'Euro-', 'Mestizo-', and 'Indo-American' zones and contended that plantations were a phenomenon of lowland regions where indigenous populations had been destroyed. Wagley and Harris's article, 'A typology of Latin American subcultures' (1955), lambasted the failure of 'numerous anthropological community studies' to specify the relation of localities to 'national culture' and argued for a distinction between highlands and lowlands which in turn determined the presence of 'subcultures', including *engenho* and *usina* lowland plantations.⁹ Nine years later, Harris's *Patterns of Race in the Americas* (1964), while shedding new light on the comparative study

of ethnic relations, equated even more explicitly and deterministically ‘highlands’ with haciendas and ‘lowlands’ with plantations. Harris (1964: 44–45), who suggested that the difference between the two ‘systems’ was ‘the respective amount of capital invested’, nonetheless acknowledged that ‘plantations and *haciendas* should probably be thought of as the polar extremes of a taxonomic continuum’.

What was left out and what does it mean theoretically?

Anthropologists’ taxonomic approach to understanding large landed property in Latin America and the Caribbean relied on a very small case study literature. It tended to infer general patterns from the authors’ particular research experiences.

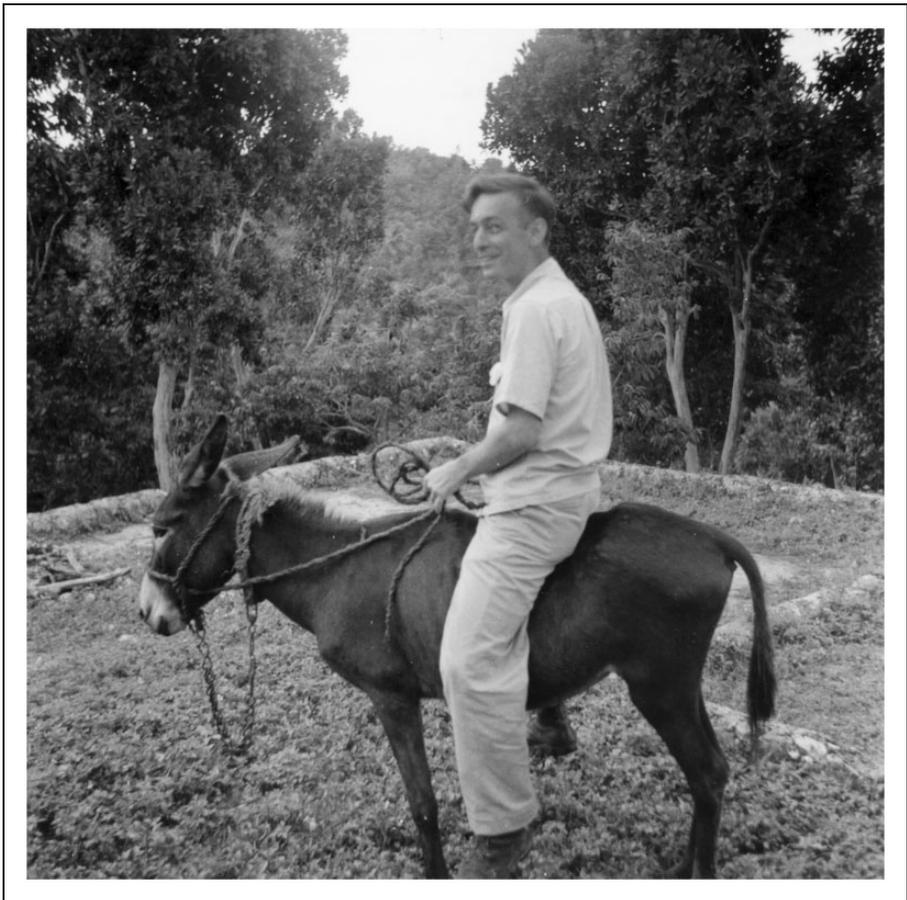


Figure 1. Sidney W Mintz doing fieldwork in Jamaica in 1952 (Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Wei Mintz).

Thus, Mintz's work on a coastal sugar plantation or Wolf's on highland coffee haciendas in Puerto Rico seem to have become prototypical models, writ large, and augmented by some post-PhD thesis research for Mintz in Jamaica and for Wolf in Mexico, where François Chevalier's (1952) magnificent book on the colonial-era great estates of the north already had an outsize influence in agrarian studies. Harris, similarly, drew heavily on extended fieldwork in Brazil and a much briefer stint in highland Ecuador.

The 1950s anthropological predilection for inferring wholes on the basis of a few parts began to look less compelling once a larger body of hacienda and plantation studies was published in the 1960s and after. Anomalous or atypical cases – inland, highland sugar plantations in northwest Argentina (Rutledge, 1977), or coastal lowland livestock haciendas in southern Mexico and Central America (Parsons, 1965), for example – might have served as cautionary notes and checks on the taxonomic ambitions and geographical determinism of mid-1950s anthropologists had they been better known at the time. Moreover, the focus on large properties had often obscured the diversity of tenure forms and sizes and production units that existed even in zones where haciendas or plantations were dominant, what Alexander (2003: 5) termed 'the rural agrarian mosaic' and Roseberry referred to as small farmers who 'remained relatively invisible partly because they did not fit into prevailing models of "seigneurial regimes"' (1993:356).

The highlands-haciendas/lowlands-plantations formula presupposed that enterprise types – with their associated class relations, ethnic configurations, 'subcultures', and technologies – could be largely predicted or derived from geographical location, population density, or gross environmental features. Had anthropologists recognized that haciendas arose outside the zones predicted by geographic determinist models, they might have shifted their attention to the factors – cultural, political-economic, and demographic-geographical – that influenced the outcomes of struggles over land and labour (and more broadly, over related state or private-sector development efforts). Their inattention to cases that would have complicated their typologies can likely be attributed to the very limited number of studies available at the time. But this same limitation, when combined with the profession's preoccupation with taxonomies, also produced a certain shortsightedness about historical process.

Cardoso and Pérez Brignoli (1979) pointed out the fundamental problem that typologies like these represented for genuinely historical understanding:

The lack of a sufficient sensibility for structural transformations can lead to categories that, because of their formalism, are devoid of historical content. 'Four centuries of latifundio' in Brazil; the long trajectory of the Mexican hacienda, from the seventeenth century to 1910; the eternal latifundio/minifundio binomial. These are continuities that deserve explanation. But are they not obscuring, on the other hand, essential changes in the socioeconomic content of the large agricultural production units? Terms such as hacienda (or *fazenda* [in Portuguese]) and plantation easily become ideal types empty of historicity. (Cardoso and Pérez Brignoli, 1979: 46)

Wolf and Mintz were not, of course, entirely unmindful of this problem. In their 1957 article, they indicate in a footnote that Raymond Smith had commented on an earlier draft, pointing to British Guiana sugar plantations that had many ‘hacienda’ characteristics and medium-sized banana farms in Jamaica that resembled the ‘plantation type’. Smith suggested that it might be useful to think not so much of two models, but rather in terms of ‘a range of types of economic organization varying from the medium-sized farm to the plantation’ (Wolf and Mintz, 1957: 408).

Wolf and Mintz responded to Smith’s concerns in the same lengthy footnote, remarking that

This criticism cannot be gainsaid if type construction of the present sort is to be ruled out until we have adequate data for all world areas, or even for all of Latin America. In the view of the writers, the utility of the present paper may lie in part in the stimulus it provides for the re-examination of data on a variety of agro-social systems in different settings. Hopefully, many more ‘exceptions’ to the types will be reported upon by other critics in the future. We are aware that specific farming systems are



Figure 2. Cutting line, Colonia Destino, Barrio Jauca, Santa Isabel, Puerto Rico. Sidney W Mintz conducted his PhD fieldwork here in 1948–1949 (Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Wei Mintz).

'real', while our types are merely abstractions from a limited number of cases. If critical reporting of cases deviating from the abstract 'norms' we have constructed leads to a better understanding of process, and of the interrelationship of different characteristics of agro-social systems, our purpose in writing this paper will have been served. (1957: 408)

Perhaps not surprisingly, given that a fundamental historical sensitivity existed alongside the ahistorical typologizing of Wolf and Mintz's (1957) analysis, the article on haciendas and plantations anticipated several aspects of large estate social relations that only much later became subjects of inquiry. These included the basically instrumental nature of landowner paternalism, which aimed to secure scarce labour, and the possibility that employees' indebtedness to employers might reflect a seller's labour market rather than the subjugation of classical debt peonage (Wolf and Mintz, 1957: 390, 399). But this oblique recognition of class dynamics did not translate into a coherent theory of how the balance of forces between agrarian social classes might shape agrarian outcomes.

Significant conceptual, institutional, and personal connections linked Wolf and Mintz's (1957) taxonomy to a broader series of plantation and hacienda studies sponsored by the Pan American Union, the research division of the Organization of American States (OAS), and directed by anthropologists Ángel Palerm and Vera Rubin, collaborators, respectively, with Wolf in Mexico and with Mintz in Caribbean studies. Shortly after the publication of the Pan American Union's *Plantation Systems of the New World* (Research Institute for the Study of Man, 1959), the Inter-American Committee for Agricultural Development (ICAD), a consortium financed by the OAS, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, and the Inter-American Development Bank, launched a massive study of land tenure in seven Latin American countries (Hewitt de Alcántara, 1984, 123–125; Roseberry, 1993: 322–325). Strongly influenced by ECLA and other dependency theorists, as well as by the recent studies by anthropologists such as Mintz and Wolf, the ICAD team developed its own largely static typologies of farm size categories, based on whether they could support a domestic unit at a culturally acceptable standard of living ('subfamily', 'family', 'multi-family medium', and 'multi-family large') (Barraclough and Domike, 1966). While the ICAD researchers viewed this taxonomy as facilitating intra- and cross-national comparisons, it suffered from some of the same limitations as the hacienda/plantation dyad of Wolf and Mintz, notably a lack of historical content that contributed to an overly structural and insufficiently processual view of land tenure dynamics. At the same time, however, the broad scope of each of the ICAD country studies and the profound immersion of at least some of the researchers in these complex national and local realities did contribute to the rise of more complex and historically informed approaches to large landed property (Baraona, 1965; Kay, 1977).

Studies of large landed estates proliferated in the late 1960s and 1970s and waned in the mid-1980s (Van Young, 2003), an agrarian history boom and bust

(Duncan et al., 1977; Keith, 1977; Mörner, 1973) that paralleled a simultaneous rise and decline in the related field of peasant studies (Bernstein and Byres, 2001; Borrás, 2009; Buijtenhuijs, 2000; Edelman, 2016; Warman, 1988). More detailed and often local or regional agrarian histories made increasingly clear that the heterogeneous forms on the ground – and often within the same small areas – were products of contention between agrarian social classes and that this in turn was shaped by demography, geography, markets, technologies, and the histories, expectations and aspirations of subaltern groups, as well as the repertoires of social control and repression of landowners and national states.¹⁰ In addition, particular historical and contemporary cases reflected not just class struggle in its crudest forms – for example, land occupations, physical evictions, or violent conflict – but competition over land, labour, and markets between two kinds of enterprises.

A few examples should suffice to make the point that typologies could still be useful if they incorporated a processual dimension. Rafael Baraona (1965) was among the first scholars to propose a ‘multi-enterprise’ understanding of the hacienda. In a paper that was part of a broader ICAD study of Ecuador, he proposed a typology in some respects similar to Wolf and Mintz’s, though with a greater emphasis on process and change that went beyond the static ICAD categories of ‘subfamily’, ‘family’, and ‘multi-family’. In highland Ecuador, Baraona noted that haciendas suffered from ‘external sieges’ carried out by surrounding peasant and indigenous communities that sought to seize land and other resources and ‘internal sieges’ by their own workers. He distinguished (1) the ‘sub-traditional’ (*tradicional-infra*) hacienda, in which the owner is purely a rentier, does not engage in entrepreneurial activities, and is under ‘external siege’ by surrounding small producers who have taken over part or all of the hacienda’s lands, leading in some cases to the hacendado’s abandonment of the property; (2) traditional haciendas in a process of disintegration, where the landlord enterprise is nearly inoperative due to the ‘internal siege’ of its workers and nearby peasants; (3) the common traditional hacienda (*tradicional corriente*), characterized by the coexistence of ‘external’ and ‘internal sieges’ but still able to tolerate the development of either or both; and (4) the modern-emergent hacienda, in which the landlord enterprise manifests greater interest in the resources it possesses and engages in production, often of higher value-added commodities, such as dairy products, and with more advanced technologies (Baraona, 1965). The notion of ‘external’ and ‘internal’ ‘sieges’ obviously introduced considerable dynamism into the model, allowed for contingent agrarian outcomes, and highlighted the roles of historical protagonists who belonged to contending social classes. The ‘multi-enterprise’ component of the model suggested that it was not simply ‘sieges’ and competition for resources that accounted for different agrarian outcomes, but also the relative economic success of landlord and peasant businesses.

Kay (1974: 69), following Baraona, suggested in one of the foundational works of the post-1970 wave of hacienda studies:

The manorial or hacienda system is a complex socio-economic unit which is composed of two closely interrelated social classes: the landlords and the peasants, who through their enterprises constitute two interlocking economies: the landlord economy and the peasant economy. Three types of land tenure could exist in varying proportions in this territorial unit: the demesne, the peasant tenures, and the communal land such as forests and pastures. A variety of conflicts arise between the two types of economy, especially over the control of the economic resources of the landed estate and the type and amount of rent payments. The conflict between the peasant and the landlord economy implies the development of one and, sooner or later, the disappearance of the other.

Kay argued further, drawing upon categories from German agrarian history and an in-depth study of Chile, that the European manorial system and the Latin American hacienda system could each be understood as consisting of two main forms:

Grundherrschaft, in which the landlord practically did not undertake direct cultivation and leased out all or part of the estate to peasants who paid rents in kind or cash. . . [and] *Gutsherrschaft*, in which the landlord economy, the demesne, was the predominant agricultural enterprise which administered and cultivated the territorial unit, largely drawing on the cheap labour of the labour service tenancies. (Kay, 1974: 70)

Katz's (1974) masterful synthetic analysis of existing literature on Porfirian-era haciendas in Mexico painted a similarly complex picture of rural land tenure and social relations, with major contrasts between the north, centre, and south of the country. A fundamental problem, from Katz's perspective, was that demand and supply of labour 'were not concentrated in the same areas' (1974: 3). This meant that the variety of production, tenure, and labour forms – from casual or contract wage work to resident peons, sharecropping, tenantry, and outright slavery – had to be understood in relation to the ease or difficulty in different zones of recruiting workers. And this in turn was connected to population density, sharp increases in international and domestic demand for tropical goods, the proximity or absence of communities that retained access to land and of indigenous *caciques*, mining and railway enterprises, and US employers north of the border who competed with large landowners for labour.

Conclusion

Wolf and Mintz's article on haciendas and plantations both contributed to subsequent research (and to policy, as an outgrowth of the ICAD studies) and was soon superseded by more nuanced processual models based on a wider range of empirical referents. Their original schema nonetheless had echoes in their later work, as did their occasional caveats about historical specificities and viewing the two types as polar extremes on a continuum. Wolf, for example, in a paper written in 1972

and first published in English as 'Phases of rural protest in Latin America' (2001: 241–251), suggested, rather like Baraona, that three phases characterized Latin American hacienda systems: a phase of expansion, a 'phase of stabilization and coexistence with other ways of organizing the mode of production', and a phase of dissolution, weakness, and decline. In 'The second serfdom in Eastern Europe and Latin America', published in the same collection, he took up a comparison similar to that analysed by Kay (see above), although without acknowledging the latter's work (Wolf, 2001: 272–288). His ambivalence about the role of population density or 'purely demographic factors' as an independent variable that explained the use of free or coerced labour is not unlike that of the controversial Europeanist historian, Robert Brenner (Aston and Philpin, 1995; Brenner, 1976), although notwithstanding his fascination with Germany east of the Elbe and the second serfdom, he did not engage this debate. In the justly famous *Europe and the People without History*, the discussion of Latin American haciendas is highly generic, the old and dubious highlands/lowlands distinction is invoked once again, and only in the analysis of plantation economies elsewhere in the world is there a developed treatment of variability across space, time, commodity, and class relations (Wolf, 1982: 143–145, 157, 335–343).

Mintz's post-1957 *oeuvre* on plantations and large estates is substantially larger and more nuanced than Wolf's and cannot be considered in all of its complexity in this brief article. What is perhaps most notable, however, in looking back to the hacienda and plantation taxonomies of 1957, is how Mintz's subsequent work thoroughly transcended the framework of that earlier effort. His magisterial *Sweetness and Power* (1985) is no doubt the most famous and celebrated example, so I will briefly mention here two less well-known interventions in discussions of plantations that have great contemporary resonance. In a 1987 essay in a memorial volume on Ángel Palerm, Mintz recalled that decades earlier Palerm had pointed out that Wolf and he, in their 'Haciendas and Plantations' article, had neglected ecology and the biophysical characteristics of the plants that plantations grew (Mintz, 1987). Interestingly, he noted the 'urgent need' for researchers to develop a 'hierarchy of delicate-ness' of plantation crops, since one feature of late-twentieth-century plantations was the possibility of growing fragile, perishable products (Mintz, 1987: 470). He then, as if to make amends to Palerm, developed an analysis of African palm as a plantation crop, noting its tolerance for low and high precipitation, its extraordinary productivity in terms of oil yield as compared to other oilseed crops, and the multiplicity of uses to which it could be put. He predicted that 'oil palm will gain, with near certainty, a growing importance in the world's diet' (1987: 465), a claim amply supported by more recent research (Alonso-Fradejas et al., 2016; Edelman and León, 2013; Zuckerman, 2016).

More recently, Mintz et al. (2008) collaborated on a very timely and significant, if unfortunately somewhat neglected, edited volume called *The World of Soy*. The collection is fascinating from several angles, not least because it shows that 'the Ethnographic Marxist Mintz' and 'the Foodie Mintz', as Antrosio (2016) termed them, were not separate spirits, coexisting uneasily in a single body and intellect,

but rather parts of a seamlessly integrated and analytically coherent project. The title of Mintz's chapter on 'Fermented beans and Western tastes' might suggest that the 'Foodie' is dominant, but the analysis actually includes an erudite discussion of the global distribution of fermented legumes and some astute speculation on why such foods are historically pervasive in Asia and completely absent in the West (Mintz, 2008). In the introduction on 'The significance of soy', Mintz et al. (2008) highlight the versatility of this crop and its speedy rise to the top of the list of internationally traded commodities. As with his earlier discussion of oil palm, this analysis anticipated a more recent discussion in agrarian studies of 'flex crops' and the 'soy-ification' of the *pampas* of Argentina and the *cerrado* of Brazil (as well as similar ecozones in Paraguay, Bolivia, and Uruguay), surely the fastest and most massive hacienda-to-plantation transition anywhere in the world (Borras et al., 2016; de Sousa and Vieira, 2008; Lapegna, 2016; Oliveira and Hecht, 2016). In the end, it was not only the 'Foodie' and the 'Marxist' or the young and the old Mintz that were inextricably bound to each other, but also the lifelong scholar of agrarian worlds linked to newer generations of scholars and the most contemporary of agrarian problems.

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Notes

1. This paper draws in part and expands on ideas that I first developed in detail in *The Logic of the Latifundio* (Edelman, 1992). The current discussion benefited from a large secondary literature, only a small portion of which is analysed here, on haciendas and plantations and on the place of Mintz's and Wolf's ideas in the larger history of anthropology.
2. Although Wolf and Mintz developed their model without directly referring to Weber, their pursuit of 'ideal types' is quintessentially Weberian and it was he who first explicitly distinguished between 'hacienda' and 'plantation' types based on the juridical condition of the labour force, levels of capitalization, and relations with local or distant markets (Weber, 1942: 82–109). Weber applied his model to Europe, North America, and parts of Asia, as well as to Latin America.
3. In *The People of Puerto Rico* project (Steward et al., 1956: 508), which provided the primary empirical referents for 'Haciendas and Plantations' and in which both Mintz and Wolf participated, the authors developed a 'diachronic typology' that described the 'developmental sequence' of types.

4. By late 2016, according to Google Scholar, the English version of the paper (Wolf and Mintz, 1957) had received 267 citations in the academic literature, while the Spanish translation (Wolf and Mintz, 1975) had received 71.
5. Thompson's work, belatedly and posthumously published, at Mintz's insistence, almost eight decades after it was written (Mintz and Baca, 2010; Thompson, 2010) manifests interest in a 'generic' model of 'plantation' and occasionally lapses into functionalist language. But it also had an astute analysis of the semantic evolution of the term and of the shift in Virginia from what Thompson called the 'trading plantation' to the 'industrial plantation' (Thompson, 2010: 3, 35, 56, 71–74, 105). He also distinguished the plantation' from what he called the 'ranch', a livestock enterprise very similar to Wolf and Mintz's 'hacienda' (Thompson, 2010: 4).
6. 'Closet Marxists' is my phrase. The Mundial Upheaval Society was a storied reading group of leftist Columbia anthropology graduate students during the late 1940s and early 1950s (Baca, 2016; Mintz, 1994; Peace, 2008). These were not the only tensions, of course. In a provocative analysis of Mintz's later work, Antrosio observes that

[T]wo versions of Mintz emerged. To put it too crudely, it was the Gritty Ethnographic Marxist Mintz versus the Wine-and-Dine Foodie Mintz. For the Wine-and-Dine Foodie crowd, the Marxist Mintz provided just enough grit and ethnographic gravitas to make it palatable without choking. But the admirers of Marxist Mintz worried that either Sid had lost his way or that his message was being lost in the trendiness of ethnic gastronomy. (2016)

7. Mintz's own comment about *The People of Puerto Rico* is equally germane to the paper on haciendas and plantations:

To evaluate a book written long ago, one must constantly keep in mind that everything that has happened since then was not known to the people who wrote the book when they were writing it. What is more, the people who wrote it were not the people they have become, but rather they should be seen as much as possible as they were *then*. (Mintz, 2001: 76)

8. Another frequent critique was that the book portrayed Puerto Rico as a collection of discrete 'subcultures' and as lacking a national culture (Godreau, 2011).
9. Both Brazilianists, Wagley and Harris, used the Portuguese term *engenho* to refer to 'a small sugar factory containing a mill driven by hand, by animal traction, or by water power' (1955: 434). The *usina*, on the other hand, was the modern, industrial sugar mill and its associated fields. They incorrectly indicate that *ingenio*, the Spanish cognate of *engenho*, was also its synonym, when in fact *ingenio* – at least in the twentieth century – almost always refers to a large industrial sugar mill. *Trapiche* is the common Spanish term for what Wagley and Harris called *engenho*.
10. Analyses of post-2007 land grabbing have only recently come to recognize this complexity (Borras and Franco, 2013; Hall et al., 2015).

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