of the Caribbean region of Colombia, specifically the tobacco-growing sub-region, Montes de María. In previous work I have identified that under the conditions of the late-nineteenth century European tobacco market, only those regions of Latin America where peasants had relatively free access to land, combining the cultivation of tobacco with subsistence crops, became competitive in those markets. However, this does not mean that the ‘tobacco-type’ agrarian structure configured a static landscape characterized exclusively by smallholdings. The main hypothesis of the paper is that in the case of Montes de María, the process of capital accumulation brought about by the export of tobacco was translated into a process of land accumulation by a certain class of prosperous peasants, traders and foreign merchant houses. I present new quantitative data on land holdings by different social classes, prices of the land, and distribution of incomes among peasants and traders derived from the tobacco business, in order to support this hypothesis.

5.8.2. Agro-climate suitability and comparative advantage in Mexico’s agricultural exports during the first export era (1870-1929)
Kuntz-Ficker, Sandra, El Colegio de Mexico, Mexico

During the first globalization, about 25 percent of Mexico’s exports consisted of agricultural products. Their importance was twofold. First, they represented a more profitable alternative to traditional agriculture, showing higher productivity and providing higher wages and spillovers upon the rest of the local or regional economy. Second, they were considerably diversified, including about twenty products that originated in as many regions within the country. Sometimes, their significance at the local or regional scale was higher than what it is represented by their overall share in Mexico’s export basket. By 1930, 67 percent of the Mexican population lived in the countryside; however agriculture contributed only 14 percent to GDP. Export agriculture represented a rather small share of total agricultural product, but grew at more than triple the rate of traditional agriculture (a yearly average rate of 4.7% against 1.5% between 1895 and 1910). Because of its slow growth and its backward technological traits, traditional agriculture was a huge burden for Mexico’s economic development. Had export agriculture expanded more than it did, the contribution of the rural sector to Mexico’s economic growth would have been larger than it was. The purpose of this paper is to assess, for a sample of agricultural export activities, the potential for expansion provided by the national resource endowment of the country, and more specifically, its agro-climate suitability (ACS) for the production of those crops with the technological traits prevailing at that time.

5.8.3. Tobacco exports and economic growth in Greece (ca 1900-1940)
Petmezas, Socrates, University of Crete, Greece

Oriental tobacco was a high value labour-intensive agricultural export from the Ottoman Balkans (1900-1912) and the basic export good from Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey (countries that divided the former Ottoman exporting provinces between themselves) in the interwar period. A large part of the total value of Greek exports and GDP of rural and urban employment and industrial processing was directly depending on the world demand of tobacco, and the 1929 depression heavily influenced social and economic equilibria in Greece and the neighbouring oriental-tobacco-exporting countries (Bulgaria and Turkey). Clearing treaties (with Germany) and the re-structuring of the commercial-export sector (both in terms of cutting down the cost of processing – i.e. wages – and squeezing profits/commissions of the commercial intermediaries) was part of the answer in Greece. In the long run changes in demand and side-constructed small-size and low-productivity producers. After 1945, tobacco never again resumed its place as prime export locomotive of the Greek economy and the large scale rural emigration wave towards Central and Northern Europe in the 1960s marked the end of the intensive oriental-tobacco production and exports.

Panel 5.8. Agricultural exports and economic growth during the first wave of globalisation, 1850-1929. Part II
Panel organiser: Kuntz-Ficker, Sandra, El Colegio de Mexico, Mexico // Pinilla, Vicente, Universidad de Zaragoza, Zaragoza, Spain

During the first wave of globalization (1850-1929), many countries participated in international trade mainly as exporters of primary products and importers of manufactured goods. The consequences of such participation have been the subject of much controversy in the economic literature over the past decades. Nowadays, the predominant although not exclusive view is that these countries had a favorable opportunity for economic development, at least from the middle of the nineteenth century up to the collapse of international trade following the 1929 crash. This opportunity consisted of developing an export sector that specialized in the production of primary products to supply the rapidly growing markets of the industrialized countries. The contribution of such specialization to their economic development varied greatly, depending on very diverse factors, with its overall effect being influenced by the relative importance of the export sector to the rest of the national economy. In this context, the purpose of this panel is to analyze cases of countries or groups of countries that fit into this typology.

5.8.1. The impact of export booms on the structure of land tenure: the case of tobacco in Montes de María (Colombia), 1850-1917
Colmenares, Santiago, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain

During the so-called first globalization (1850-1914), Latin American countries specialized in the export of primary products. One of the issues raised by this configuration of Latin American economies is the effect of commercial agriculture over land property and distribution of land. In this paper we seek to explore the connection between land ownership and agricultural exports for the case of Montes de María, a region of Colombia that exported tobacco to Europe. We will focus on the economic and social implications of the export boom for this region, particularly on land distribution and the impact of tobacco cultivation on land tenure in Montes de María. We will analyze the process of land accumulation by a certain class of prosperous peasants, traders and foreign merchant houses. We will present new quantitative data on land holdings by different social classes, prices of the land, and distribution of incomes among peasants and traders derived from the tobacco business, in order to support this hypothesis.

Chair: Brassley, Paul, University of Exeter, UK

Tuesday, 20 August 2013 // 1300 – 1500 // Session 5 – Room A 024

Bressley, Paul
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Colmenares, Santiago
M.A., Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona. Teacher Assistant at the University Pompeu Fabra and PhD candidate in Economic History at University of Barcelona. He recently received an honorary mention in the ‘Plan Nacional de Premios Premis Castanyer i Comín’ (2013) ‘Spanish Economic History Association’, with the paper “La inserción de economías regionales periféricas en el mercado mundial: América Latina en el mercado mundial de tabaco, 1850-1900.” He has translated into Spanish a book containing a collection of the most outstanding articles of Jeffrey G. Williamson (Prensa Universitaria de Zaragoza, 2012). He has published two books chapters on the economic history of Colombia.

Kuntz-Ficker, Sandra
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Petmezas, Socrates
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Participants