

Neoliberalism and Social Response

A Preliminary Study
of the Peasantry in
Costa Rica

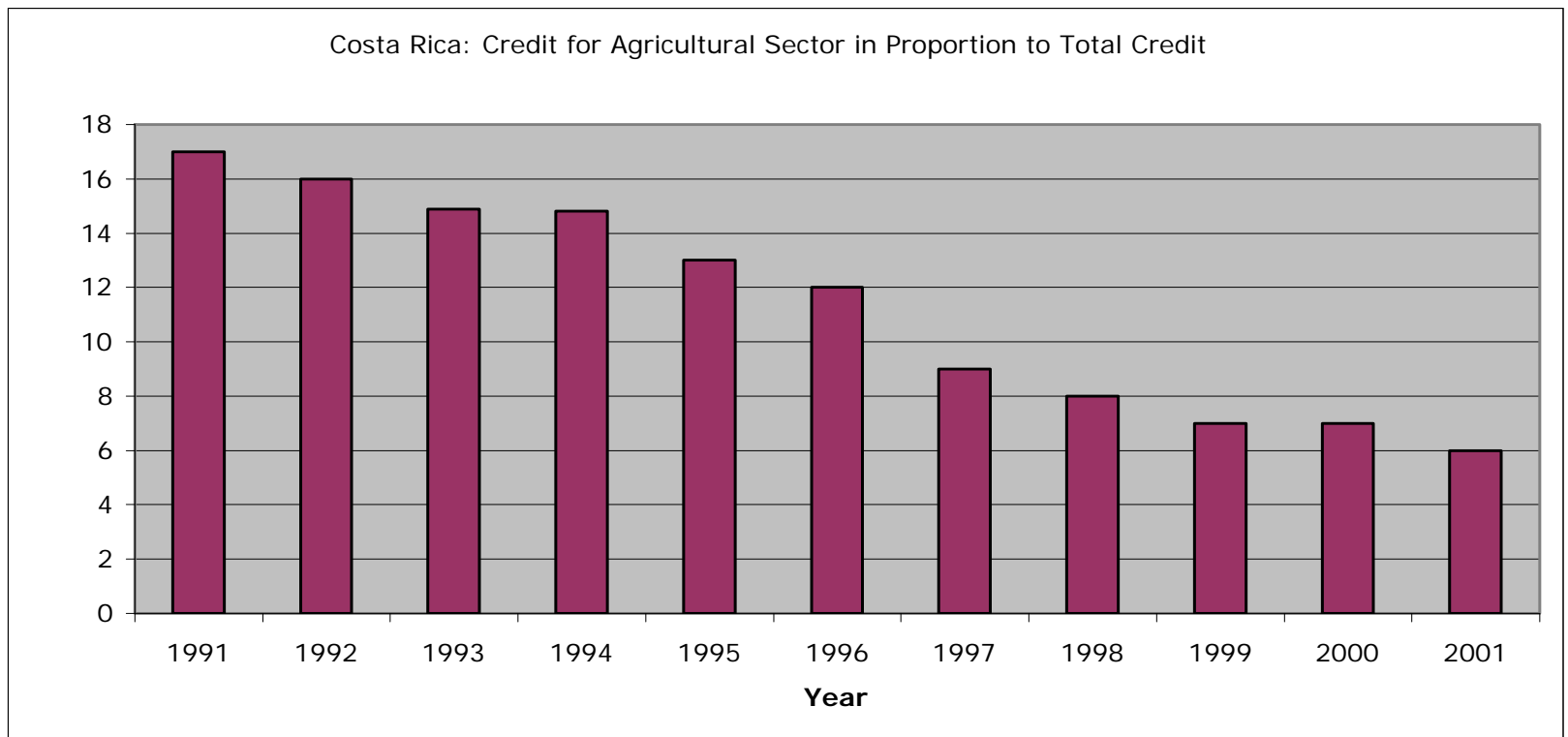




Historical Context

1. Overall reform of the state
2. Decreased price supports and credits
3. 1981 first peasant mobilization comes from the Tierra Blanca region
4. Central American Free Trade Agreement (ratified 2007 after national referendum)

Credits





Methodology

1. Where?

- Tapezco, Alfaro Ruiz

2. How?

- Interviews
- Participant Observation
- Secondary Literature

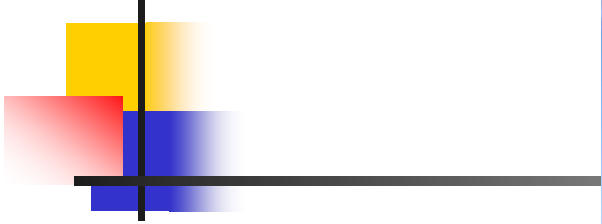
3. Initial research plan:

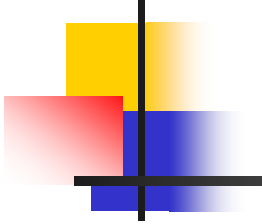
Political freedom as function of labor relation -



Research Question

- Role of peasantry under globalization
- How did the farming community in Alfaro Ruiz react to the various neoliberal reforms?
- Descriptive







Field Findings

- Two dominant farmer groups: APODAR, and UPANACIONAL
- Both strongly opposed to the CAFTA, but tried coping with the reforms in widely different ways



Asociación de Productores Orgánicos de Alfaro Ruiz

“I don't depend on the politicians or on the government for my capacity to produce, all of that is me. Why? Because they don't have one clear policy to the benefit of the *campesino*... I am an enemy of the state. ”

- Outright reject CAFTA and national politics
- Strengthen producer-consumer ties
- Attempt to eliminate the intermediary



Unión de Pequeños y Medianos Productores Agropecuarios Costarricenses

“I think that the agricultural sector around here feels abandoned by the political system. It has been like this for many years now. The agricultural sector does not receive any help from the government...”

- Market rhetoric
- English and computer lessons in the community to help the *campesino*.
- More complacent with the intermediary



Conclusion

- Globalization: lens through which we can understand a social landscape
 - Divide between government and peasants
 - Animosity between UPA and APODAR
- Further Research