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Feminism, Food Sovereignty and Cross-Movement Mobilisation Against Neoliberal Globalisation in Latin America: Intertwined Genealogies

Abstract

Under conditions of neoliberal globalisation, feminisms have been increasingly engaged in cross-movement mobilisations with non-feminist others around common struggles. In this article, we document the emergence of cross-movement mobilisation in Latin America around a new political axis: that of food sovereignty, and its specifically feminist aspects and effects. Deploying Foucault-inspired genealogical studies anchored in the World March of Women (WMW), we situate the feminist embrace and resignification of the discourse of food sovereignty within two larger historic processes in Latin America since the 1990s: (1) re-orientations in Latin American popular feminism; and (2) intensifying cross-movement collaboration, and connect both to an emerging transnational counter-hegemonic project of the 'global left' in the region in which food sovereignty became a central plank with significant feminist content. Conceptualising food sovereignty as a discourse reveals it as a site of power/knowledge and resistance in ways that do not appear in conventional social movement approaches nor through activist auto-ethnographic accounts. Throughout, we argue for the value of a genealogical approach and consider its implications for the field of social movement studies, including for the concept of cross-movement mobilisation.

Keywords: *cross-movement mobilisation; food sovereignty; Foucault; genealogy; global left; popular feminism; transnational feminist networks; World March of Women; coloniality; decolonial; discourse/counter-discourse*.

Introduction

In the context of ongoing contestation over neoliberal globalisation, feminisms have been increasingly engaged in cross-movement mobilisations with non-feminist others around common struggles. In this article, we document the emergence of cross-movement mobilisation in Latin America around a new political axis: that of food sover-

DOI: 10.13154/mts.63.2020.13-39 Moving the Social · 63 (2020) · p. 13–39

eignty, and its specifically feminist aspects and effects. Through genealogical studies anchored in the World March of Women (WMW), we situate the feminist embrace and resignification of the discourse of food sovereignty within two larger historic processes: (1) re-orientations in Latin American popular feminism under conditions of globalisation; and (2) intense cross-movement collaboration against neoliberalism in Latin America since the 1990s, and connect both to an emerging transnational counter-hegemonic project of the 'global left'[1] in the region. We introduce the discourse of food sovereignty, after which we discuss how and why we employed a genealogical approach and argue the merits of a Foucault-inspired genealogical approach in movement studies. We then present our genealogical studies. We conclude by summarising some key insights and implications of this work.

As a mobilising discourse with specific content, food sovereignty crystallised in the context of the consolidation of the transnational peasant network, Vía Campesina (VC), and contestation by its constituent members of the commodification of agriculture in free trade agreements in the 1990s.[2] Food sovereignty was deployed to counterpose the World Bank's discourse of 'food security'[3] and the latter's legitimation of corporate control of the global food system. Through food *sovereignty*, Vía Campesina centred peasant agriculture and invoked collective rights: to self-determination, to development, to resource sovereignty, and thus to citizenship. In the food justice movements, food sovereignty is a dynamic and open-ended concept that is adapted in light of ongoing movement praxis. Edelman calls it "a free floating signifier … at once a slogan, a paradigm, a mix of practical policies, a movement, and a utopian aspiration".[4]

1 Here we are borrowing the concept of 'global left' from Boaventura de Sousa Santos. The author analyses the role of the World Social Forums in the re-composition and reinvention of the 'left' in what he terms the 'global left'. See: Boaventura de Sousa Santos: The Rise of the Global Left: The World Social Forum and beyond, London/New York 2006.

2 Priscilla Claeys: From food sovereignty to peasants' rights: An overview of Via Campesina's struggle for new human rights, in: La Via Campesina's open book: Celebrating 20 years of struggle and hope 2013; Philip McMichael: Historicizing food sovereignty, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 41:6 (2014), pp. 933–957. On Via Campesina, see: Saturnino M. Borras/Jennifer Franco: Transnational agrarian movements struggling for land and citizenship rights, in: IDS Working Paper 323 (2009); Annette A. Desmarais: La Via Campesina: Globalization and the power of peasants, Halifax 2007; Rajeev Patel: International agrarian restructuring and the practical ethics of peasant movement solidarity, in: Journal of Asian and African Studies 41:1/2 (2006), pp. 71–93.

3 Food security refers to a population's reliable access to sufficient, safe nutrition, without reference to its provenance.

4 Marc Edelman: Food sovereignty: Forgotten genealogies and future regulatory challenges, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 41:6 (2014), pp. 959–978, pp. 959f.

As defined at the 2007 International Forum on Food Sovereignty in Nyéléni, Mali:

> Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.[5]

The cross-movement constellation of oppositional social forces assembled in Nyéléni, peasant movements together with the WMW and other allies, constituted, then and since, a discursive space for the ongoing production of 'food sovereignty.' As the discourse was assumed by allied movements, its content expanded and mutated, as this genealogy demonstrates. By the discourse of food sovereignty then, we are referring to an expanding and mutating set of connected claims that has demonstrated surprising mobilizational force in the durability and breadth of its appeal.

A Genealogical Approach to Food Sovereignty in the WMW

In our research project, we were intrigued with the emergence of food sovereignty as an internationally-affirmed priority by a predominantly urban transnational feminist network.[6] The World March of Women is a large and complex network, active on every continent and operating at multiple scales. It was founded in the late 1990s to protest increasing poverty and violence against women in the context of deepening neo-liberalisation. Originally enacted as a punctual international action, it reconstituted itself in 2000 as a permanent mobilisation and a self-identified feminist presence in the surging world-wide anti-globalisation movement. It is constituted by localised women's groups organised in autonomous National Co-ordinating Bodies (NCBs). The March has had particularly strong take-up in Latin America, where there are currently 14 NCBs.[7]

5 Nyéléni: Declaration of Nyéléni, Sélingué, Mali 2007, retrieved from: http://nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290 (accessed on 1 September 2016).

6 This project was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada. The authors thank their collaborators: Dominique Masson, Pascale Dufour, and Elsa Beaulieu-Bastien.

7 For background on the World March of Women, see: Janet Conway: Geographies of Transnational Feminism: Place and Scale in the Spatial Politics of the World March of Women, in: Social Politics 15:2 (2008), pp. 207–231; Pascale Dufour/Isabelle Giraud: Dix ans de solidarité planétaire. Perspectives sociologiques sur la Marche mondiale des femmes, Mon-

We set out to trace the presence of food sovereignty in various places and at different scales of the network, to specify localised histories, meanings and practices, and to chart how feminist solidarity has been constructed around food sovereignty. We initiated this in 2013–14 through 42 interviews with activists from 36 countries, coupled with a review of their organisational websites and documents pertaining to food sovereignty provided by our interviewees.

What we encountered was a persistent tendency to naturalise, or treat as obvious, the basis for women's solidarity globally. The official discourses of the March treat women as unified by their shared subordination in a global gendered division of labour, around which it is possible to build a collective identity and mobilisational power. In terms of relations among women within the March, there was no evidence of internal struggle, uncertainty, contest or conflict over food sovereignty. Food sovereignty was tacitly understood as an obvious good to be embraced by feminists. Food sovereignty appeared as a quasi-universal value, without precise historical or geographical co-ordinates. It was simultaneously fully-formed and virtually contentless, global and placeless. Precisely "as a means of undermining any discourse that tacitly or overtly presents itself as transcending the arena of power and resistance,"[8] we then pursued a geographically-informed genealogy of food sovereignty in the March.

From the initial research, we had identified Latin America as the epicentre of food sovereignty activity within the WMW. The key initial sources for the construction of the genealogy were the documents and interviews provided by the NCBs of six key countries (Chile, Peru, Brazil, Mexico, Paraguay and Guatemala) and with members of the WMW's International Secretariat, then based in Brazil. We drew on additional in-depth interviews, documents, and findings from field work in Peru and Brazil.

Methodologically, we began with study of the sources provided by the International Secretariat, because they were the richest and most coherent in terms of our inquiry (Winter-Spring 2014; completed January 2016). This investigation uncovered several channels by which the discourse of food sovereignty had intersected with the WMW. These were through: the agency of rural women's groups in the March concerned about land rights; a history, pre-dating the March, of feminist engagement in Brazil on issues of land and rurality and collaboration with rural unions and the landless movement; an inter-movement alliance incubating through the World Social Forum process between the WMW and Via Campesina; and women in mixed-gender

tréal 2010; Pascale Dufour: Pour une analyse comparée de la transnationalisation des solidarités. La Marche mondiale des femmes comme "objet" transnational complexe, in: Revue internationale de politique compare 23:2 (2016), pp. 145–173; and the WMW website: http://www.marchemondiale.org/index_html/en. Last accessed on 6 April 2020.

8 Fred Evans: Genealogical Approach, in: Lisa M. Given (ed.): The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods, Thousand Oaks/CA 2008, pp. 369–371.

peasant and Indigenous organisations looking for feminist allies for their gender-based concerns.

We next re-coded the documents and transcripts from the initial phase of research using thematic codes derived from these findings, while allowing additional codes to emerge from our re-reading. Our approach was to attend to each country-based account in its own terms, temporarily suspending what we had concluded from the others, but using a system of coding that would allow us to read across contexts. In detecting the presence and tracing the development of the discourse of food sovereignty across place and scale, we noted key organisations, networks, events, and mobilizational processes occurring in relation to coded passages. Each of these prompted further research, which led to more websites, documents, publications and secondary scholarship. What eventually emerged was a montage of key scattered, overlapping actors, events and processes through which the larger context of ongoing regional cross-movement mobilisation came into view—along with the persistent intrusions of a feminist counter-discourse, and a fainter, more fragmentary decolonial counter-discourse—genealogies of which we present below. The analysis that emerged through this research was supplemented by companion studies undertaken specifically on the WMW's genealogical lineages in relation to Latin American popular feminism in 1980s; the nascent anti-globalisation movements through the 1990s; and the World and regional Social Forum processes through the 2000s.[9]

Although the provenance of food sovereignty as a syntagma can be traced to a Mexican government program in the early 1980s[10], our research on food sovereignty reaches back to the mid-1990s, to the point at which it gained currency as a discernible discourse among international food movements, notably through the 1996 World

9 See: Janet M. Conway: When food becomes a feminist issue: Popular feminism and subaltern agency in the World March of Women, in: International Feminist Journal of Politics 20:2 (2018), pp. 188–203; Dominique Masson/Janet Conway: La Marche mondiale des femmes et la souveraineté alimentaire comme nouvel enjeu féministe, in: Nouvelle quéstions féministes 36:1 (2017) pp. 36–47; Janet M. Conway: Transnational feminisms building anti-globalization alliances, in: Globalizations 9:3 (2012) pp. 379–393; Janet M. Conway: Popular Feminism: Considering a concept in feminist politics and theory, in *Latin American Perspectives* (2021) Accepted and forthcoming. Janet M. Conway: The Nyéléni effect: Alliances for food sovereignty and the remaking of feminism in the World March of Women. Gender, Development, Resistance International Workshop, Rovaniemi 2015.

10 Marc Edelman: Food sovereignty: Forgotten genealogies and future regulatory challenges Edelman traces the term 'food sovereignty' back to a Mexican government program of the early 1980s. The term was recuperated by Central American food activists in the late 1980s in the context of their resistance to U.S. food dumping. Central American organisations were central in the founding of Via Campesina.

Food Summit in Rome.[11] Because our interest was primarily in the feminist appropriation of food sovereignty, we relied on genealogical studies of food sovereignty by prominent food studies scholars to establish a tentative temporal frame for our initial study. As discussed below, we subsequently reached back further to trace specifically feminist antecedents in Latin American popular feminisms in the 1980s. Both the scholarship on food sovereignty and our interviews attested to the centrality of Via Campesina in the production and dissemination of the discourse, and to the intersecting memberships of the March and VC as central to the feminist appropriation of food sovereignty in the WMW, and to the feminist transformation of the discourse more broadly.

Arguments for a Genealogical Approach in Social Movement Studies

In social movement studies, recent attempts to develop a genealogical approach aim to uncover historical lineages and linkages among practices, persons, organisations and networks that contribute to the making of a particular protest event. A genealogical approach is invoked to advance beyond a flat presentation of the present, beyond attention to protests seen as isolated incidents, and beyond reading them off structural conjunctures.[12] Genealogical approaches have also been deployed to problematise claims of newness and spontaneity commonly attributed to episodes of mobilisation.[13] They are a critique and response to a perceived "myopia of the present" and "myopia of the visible"[14] in prevailing approaches. Minimally, they situate specific mobilisations in cycles of protest. More amply, they excavate long-standing trajectories of critique, pre-existing actors and identities, and continuities between waves or cycles, and how these condition protests in the present.

While historical sociology of social movements, such as the seminal work of Charles Tilly, has been foundational for the field, it differs from a genealogical ap-

11 Philip McMichael: Historicizing food sovereignty, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 41:6 (2014), pp. 933–957, p. 935; P. Nicholson: Via Campesina: Responding to global systemic crisis, in: Development 51:4 (2008) pp. 456–459.

12 Lorenzo Zamponi/Joseba Fernández González: Dissenting youth: How student and youth struggles helped shape anti-austerity mobilisations in Southern Europe, in: Social Movement Studies 16:1 (2017), pp. 64–81, p. 65.

13 Ibid.

14 Cristina Flesher Fominaya: Debunking Spontaneity: Spain's 15-M/Indignados as Autonomous Movement, in: Social Movement Studies 14:2 (2014), pp. 142–163, p. 159; following Alberto Melucci: A strange kind of newness: What's 'new' in new social movements?, in: Enrique Laraña et al. (eds.): New social movements: From ideology to identity, Philadelphia 1994, pp. 103–130.

proach. Tilly's work focused on reconstructing the past and explaining origins and causality structured by the unfolding of larger-scale historical processes. He uncovers the origins of the modern social movement as a political form and explains its emergence in relation to a meta-narrative of political modernisation and the development of the modern state.[15] In contrast to Tilly's historical structural approach and the political process model inspired by it, "a genealogical approach adopts the perspective of social movements from the inside out, paying close attention to their latent activity during periods of abeyance or less visible mobilization, and recognizing processes of movement continuity between peaks of visible mobilization."[16] It renders activist agency more present and continuous, if also uneven and dispersed, and thus foregrounds questions of movement culture and its everyday practices—in contrast to approaches that focus on highly public manifestations and institutional outcomes. While the everyday practices that constitute movement cultures have been the focus of work by anthropologists and ethnographers, such insights are regularly side-lined by the dominant approaches in social movement studies.

We share these orientations, but we also note that these accounts understand genealogy rather generically—as a call for historically-informed research in a field that remains stubbornly 'presentist'. Beyond an appreciation of continuity in movement cultures across episodes of protest, we aimed to discern a more complex interplay of power, including complicities with regimes of modern power-knowledge within movements and on cross-movement fields. Inspired by Foucault, we invoke a more precise and theoretically-informed usage of genealogy—one centrally concerned with power, and the relationship between power and discourse.

Even a selective embrace of Foucault is disruptive to mainstream social movement studies. Its anti-humanist focus on discourses and practices over actors and agency unsettles conventional conceptions of social movement. As it is frequently operationalised, the concept of social movement is coterminous with formal organisations or networks thereof, which are treated as coherent collective actors—an understanding that is also constitutive for the notion of cross-movement mobilisation. In dealing with complex decentred movement networks that are imbricated with multiple other networks, in varying ways and intensities that shift over time and according to place and scale, as is the case here with the World March of Women, the inadequacies of the

15 Janet M. Conway: Modernity and the study of social movements: Do we need a paradigm shift?, in: Jackie Smith et al. (eds.): Social Movements and World-System Transformation, Paradigm, 2017, pp. 17–34. See also: Elisabeth S. Clemens/Martin D. Hughes: Recovering past protest: Historical research on social movements, in: Bert Klandermans/Suzanne Staggenborg (eds.): Methods of Social Movement Research, Minnesota 2002, pp. 201–230; John Markoff: Historical Analysis and Social Movement Research, in: Donatella Della Porta/Mario Diani (eds.): The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements, Oxford 2015, pp. 68–85.

16 Cristina Flesher Fominaya: Debunking Spontaneity, p. 149.

conventional ontology quickly become apparent.[17] Focusing on lineages and discourses was productive for us in shifting the analytic focus away from putatively bounded and unitary actors to the mutually-constitutive relationships among porous entities on a complex movement field. Concretely, it allowed us to deconstruct the discursive unity of the March that appeared in the documents and interviews at every scale.

Similarly, a Foucauldian view of power and resistance as mutually-constituted disturbs the hegemony/counter-hegemony ontology that underpins many critical analytics of social movements. A genealogical approach is centrally concerned with power, particularly the relationship between power and naturalised ways of thinking and being. Focusing on food sovereignty *as a discourse* helps render visible the power of key actors, rooted in particular places but speaking and acting 'globally', in the service of a particular political imaginary. Both the sedimented power of particular actors and the motivational force of a shared political project are routinely obscured in such networks, along with the affinities they cultivate and the exclusions they effect.

Food sovereignty is more readily conceptualized as a *counter-discourse* in that it has emerged through the global political resistance of peasants to the eradication of their livelihoods and lifeways through modern regimes of power/knowledge. In Foucauldian thought, counter discourse is an expression of resistance produced through practical engagement in political struggle. It appears when the formerly voiceless articulate their own perspectives in the face of a prevailing authoritative discourse.[18] In Foucauldian genealogy, resistance is not itself the object of inquiry, rather a consequence of it.[19] Because our interest is in the power dynamics in and among oppositional social movements rather than on modern regimes of power as such, we have adapted Foucault's notion of genealogy to focus on food sovereignty as itself a discourse that has accrued meaning and power, that structures ways of thinking and acting beyond itself, and thus generates its own counter-discourses. We thus contend that critical social movement fields such as those discussed here, although oppositional to hegemonic power, are themselves sites of power/knowledge and resistance. To attend to this, and because we were interested in the specifically feminist aspects, we found it productive, indeed essential, to construct multiple genealogies of food sovereignty, and explore their inter-relation.

17 For a discussion of the complexity of conceptualizing the WMW, see: Pascale Dufour: Pour une analyse comparée de la transnationalisation des solidarités.

18 Gilles Deleuze/Michel Foucault: Intellectuals and Politics, in: Donald F. Bouchard (ed.): Language, Counter-Memory, and Practice: Selected essays and interviews, Oxford 1977, pp. 205–217. For discussion, see: Mario Moussa/Ron Scapp: The Practical Theorizing of Michel Foucault: Politics and Counter-Discourse, in: Cultural Critique 33 (1996), pp. 87–112.

19 Benjamin C. Sax: Foucault, Nietzsche, History: Two Modes of Genealogical Method, in: History of European Ideas 11 (1989), pp. 769–781.

As discussed, we began tracing food sovereignty in the March. This led us to pursue two intertwining histories: first, to genealogies of the feminism of the March in Latin American popular feminisms; and second, to genealogies of its politics of alliance with popular mixed-gender movements, specifically with Via Campesina, and more broadly to the history of cross-movement mobilisation in the region and the emergence of a counter-hegemonic societal project. A decolonial genealogy of food sovereignty came into view as a spectre of the second, as a fragmented alternative, a counter-discourse in tension and resistant relation with it. More work remains to be done to excavate this genealogy, its relation to the other two, and its implications for the analysis.

To analyse the feminist embrace of food sovereignty in this way is to trace its descent and emergence as a discourse rather than treat it as a fixed essence or a universal good. To follow lineages and linkages over time, with sensitivity to place and scale, is to show the historical contingency of 'food sovereignty' as a feminist priority, and as a now central pillar in the anti-capitalist imaginary emerging in the region (and globally). What we found was that the feminist embrace of food sovereignty in the World March of Women is not primarily about feminism, nor about food. What we uncovered was a story of intense cross-movement mobilisation at the regional scale in Latin America, sustained over more than two decades following the fall of the Berlin Wall, around the development of an anti-capitalist societal project in which food sovereignty became a central plank with significant feminist content. This kind of genealogical exercise thus provoked a critical re-valuing of movement practices and discourses, and with it, new interpretations, new problems and new possibilities, both political and analytic.

Food Sovereignty and Popular Feminism: Genealogy 1

By 2010, there appeared to be a well-established discourse of food sovereignty in the World March of Women, with "common goods, food sovereignty and access to resources and biodiversity" identified as one of its four global fields of action.[20] While food security had been listed in the March's global demands in 2000, rural women's groups proposed the inclusion of food sovereignty as part of the March's 2005 Women's Global Charter for Humanity,[21] which marks its first official appearance. The March's 2005 International Action had involved a relay of the Charter across national frontiers. Many of these cross-border actions were in remote areas, involving rural

20 World March of Women: *Marcha Mundial de las Mujeres: Una década de lucha internacional feminista 1998–2008*, Sao Paulo, 2008, p. 25. http://www.inmujer.gob.ed/publicacioneselectronicas/documentacion/Documentos/DE1196.pdf. Accessed 13 April 2020.

21 Miriam Nobre: Skype interview with author, 18 November 2013.

women's groups' organising local actions. This lent impetus to the inclusion of food sovereignty in the ambit of the March.

> [S]mall rural towns proved to be important stopping points and protest zones. Local groups from these areas were responsible for organising activities… This shattered the traditional image of the feminist movement being led by urban women living in large urban centers. The new dynamic was reflected in the [Charter's] demands, which emphasised rural women's concerns.[22]

This account reinforced our initial intuition but did not help us understand why and how a transnational feminist network seemed so receptive to these concerns, and on a global scale, or more precisely from whom or where such an impetus had originated.

Engaging in a geographically-informed genealogy, in which we undertook to trace discourses and practices of food sovereignty through interviews with National Co-ordinating Bodies (NCBs), it became apparent that Latin America was the global epicentre of food sovereignty in the March. The expansion of the March in Latin America in the late 1990s maps onto the pre-existing REMTE (Red Latinoamericana de Mujeres Transformando la Economia—Latin American Network of Women Transforming the Economy). REMTE was founded in Lima, Peru, some months following the 1996 Latin American feminist *encuentro* in Chile. REMTE is comprised of feminist and women's organisations from 10 Latin American countries, most of which are comprised of or work with women from popular sectors.[23] REMTE's main focus has been to articulate a feminist economics (*economía feminista*), in which women's reproductive work is recognized as intrinsic to the economy. In arguing for the centrality of gender relations to the reproduction of capitalism, REMTE insists that overcoming gendered hierarchies is central to any progressive alternative to capitalism.[24] REMTE has generated feminist critiques of structural adjustment programmes and free trade agreements, agitating simultaneously to mainstream these issues within women's movements, and to insert feminist perspectives into the mixed-gender cross-movement mobilisations against neoliberalism, which at that time were converging against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

REMTE's anchorage in the popular sectors, its project of *economía feminista*, and its orientation to alliances with mixed-gender movements have since come to perme-

22 Miriam Nobre: Women's Autonomy and Food Sovereignty, in: Eric Holt-Gimenez (ed.): Food Movements Unite: Strategies to Transform our Food System, New York 2009, pp. 293–306.

23 REMTE Bolivia website: Misión. Retrieved from: http://www.REMTEbolivia.org/ (accessed in February 2016).

24 REMTE: Las mujeres contra el libre comercio. Una historia de resistencia y lucha, Sao Paulo 2015, p. 32.

ate the World March of Women throughout Latin America.[25] With these political orientations, REMTE, and subsequently the WMW, represented a critique and alternative to mainstream Latin American feminism.[26]

Our genealogical research also pointed more specifically to developments within the World March of Women itself, *particularly in Brazil.* In Brazil, Sempreviva Organização Feminista (SOF), a national-scale Brazilian feminist non-governmental organisation (NGO), was the host organisation of both the Brazilian National Co-ordinating Body of the World March and, from 2006 to 2013, also of the World March's International Secretariat. SOF, whose leaders were also active in REMTE, had a history of engagement in Brazil with rural women's groups and with questions of land and rurality that pre-dated the March. SOF had, for example, supported the March of the Margaridas, a national-scale mobilisation of rural women organized by CONTAG (Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura — National Confederation of Agricultural Workers). This mobilisation became part of the World March's inaugural international action in 2000. CONTAG and the MST (Movimento Sem Terra — Landless Workers' Movement) have been formal allies of the March in Brazil since that time. The MST was an influential member of CLOC (Coordinadora Latinoamericana de Organizaciones del Campo — Latin American Co-ordination of Peasant Organisations) and of VC. These Brazil-based alliances would prove decisive in the March's global embrace of food sovereignty.

In her studies of SOF and the World March of Women in Brazil, Nathalie Lebon has situated both in a longer-standing tradition of 'popular feminism' in the region.[27] Popular feminism is commonly defined by its demographic composition of poor and working class women, its anchorage in the lifeworlds and concerns of the 'popular sectors', and its often close relation to broadly progressive mixed-gender organisations and social movements, including unions, *comunidades eclesiales de base* (CEBs), peas-

25 Interviews with activists of the WMW from Peru, Brazil, and Guatemala; see also: REMTE: Las mujeres contra el libre comercio. Una historia de resistencia y lucha.

26 Carmen Diaz Alba: Building Transnational Feminist Solidarities in the Americas: The experience of the Latin American Network of Women Transforming the Economy, in: Pascal Dufour et al. (eds.): Solidarities beyond Borders. Transnationalizing Women's Movements, Vancouver 2010, pp. 200f.

27 Natalie Lebon: Taming or unleashing the monster of coalition work: Professionalization and the consolidation of popular feminism in Brazil, in: Feminist Studies 39:3 (2013), pp. 759–789; Natalie Lebon: Brazil: Popular feminism and its roots and alliances, in: Richard Stahler-Sholk et al. (eds.): Rethinking Latin American social movements: Radical action from below, Lanham 2014, pp. 147–165; Natalie Lebon: Popular feminism at work: Redistribution and recognition in the Marcha Mundial das Mulheres in Brazil, in Emelio Betances/Carlos Figueroa-Ibarra (eds.): Popular Sovereignty and Constituent Power in Latin America: Democracy from Below, Basingstoke 2016, pp. 159–182; see also Janet M. Conway: When food becomes a feminist issue.

ant organisations, and human rights groups.[28] Popular feminism has also denoted a praxis among left-wing feminist activists who sought to articulate the struggles and concerns of the popular sectors to the feminist movement[29] and link both of these to the broader left. Through the 1980s, left-wing feminist activists of the middle classes, including those from SOF, forged groups to work with women of popular sectors, especially in urban peripheries, in a political effort to link class struggles to those against women's subordination. Lebon, speaking of SOF and subsequently of the March, characterises their practice as socialist feminist, aligned with mixed-gender organisations of the popular classes engaged in redistribution struggles.[30]

The appearance of feminist formations like REMTE and the World March of Women in the 1990s signalled both the trans-nationalisation of popular feminism under conditions of globalisation, and its transformation. These feminist initiatives were part of a larger recomposition of the left in the region in a new geopolitical and economic conjuncture marked by the fall of the Berlin Wall, the defeat of armed struggle, democratic openings in the wake of dictatorships, and intensifying neo-liberalisation. At the same time, they were expressive of contestations within Latin American feminism. During the 1990s, feminist movements had prioritized an agenda around democratisation and citizenship. In the view of REMTE, this "translated into fragmented demands for public policies addressing specific social categories… (to) minimize/reduce the negative impact of neoliberal policies" without questioning the economic model as a whole.[31] The new popular feminist formations sought to overcome the "fragmented" approach, advocating, on the one hand, a more structural and systemic critique and, on the other, a new approach to economic questions grounded in the principles of *economía feminista*. This stance placed them unequivocally at the heart of cross-movement mobilisations against neoliberalism, specifically against the FTAA.

28 Sonia E. Alvarez et al.: Encountering Latin American and Caribbean Feminisms, in: Signs 28:2 (2003), pp. 537–579, p. 544.

29 Gisela Espinosa Damián: Cuatro vertientes del feminismo en México, México 2009; Gisela Espinosa Damián: Feminismo popular y feminismo indígena: Abriendo brecha desde la subalternidad, in: Labrys, études féministes/estudos feministas, s.l. 2011, retrieved from http://www.labrys.net.br/labrys19/mexique/espinosa.htm. Last accessed 6 April 2020; Elizabeth Maier: Accomodating the private in the public domain: Experiences and legacies of the past four decades, in Elizabeth Maier/Natalie Lebon (eds.): Women's activism in Latin America and the Caribbean: Engendering social justice, democratizing citizenship, New Brunswick/New Jersey/London 2010, pp. 26–43.

30 Natalie Lebon: Popular feminism at work: redistribution and recognition in the Marcha Mundial das Mulheres in Brazil, in: Emelio Betances/Carlos Figueroa-Ibarra (eds.): Popular sovereignty and constituent power in Latin America: Democracy from below, New York 2016, pp.159–182.

31 REMTE: Las mujeres contra el libre comercio. Una historia de resistencia y lucha, Sao Paulo 2015, pp. 10f.

New forms of popular feminism were also appearing within 'non-feminist', mixed-gender movements. Female leaders of the CLOC organised its first Women's Assembly in 1997 with a formal women's network being instituted in 2001. CLOC defines itself as a continental network of peasants, workers, Indigenous, and Afro-descendant movements, and is VC's regional coordinating body. Member groups of rural and peasant women within the World March tend also to be members of CLOC-VC. Our genealogical study revealed that it was *these* Latin American organisations of peasant and Indigenous women who argued for food sovereignty as a priority within the March. The Women of CLOC-VC with REMTE and the World March of Women have been consistent feminist collaborators in the World Social Forums, the continental campaign against the FTAA and other such spaces of cross-movement mobilisation.

Uncovering this lineage in Latin American popular feminism, its renovation in the context of the 1990s in interlocking networks and transnational form articulated to the anti-globalisation movements, with its particular practices, ideological commitments, and geographies of power in Latin America and Brazil, put the March's global embrace of food sovereignty in a far more complex light. It made visible the protagonism of particular peasant women's organisations articulated to VC, as allies and eventually members of the March, as the primary carriers of food sovereignty within the March. It made sense of the *kind* of feminist discourse of food sovereignty that the March has produced over the last decade—its puzzling wholesale appropriation of VC's gender-blind discourse of food sovereignty, onto which it grafted *economía feminista*: overcoming gendered divisions of labour, valorising the paid and unpaid work performed by rural women, including care work, and making these central to anti-capitalist alternatives, including food sovereignty. It also foregrounded the politics of alliance-building with mixed-gender movements on the left to the March's feminism. What eventually came into view was the larger alternative societal project underpinning the March's embrace of food sovereignty. Via this genealogy of food sovereignty, myriad other issues and actors, and contestations among them were rendered visible, along with bigger political stakes.

By way of illustrating this, we briefly outline both the content of the March's food sovereignty discourse and the processes through which it was produced.

In the March's emergent discourse on food sovereignty, Vía Campesina's understanding of food sovereignty appeared foundational. It requires: (1) agrarian reform; (2) agroecology; (3) no GMO (genetically-modified organisms) seeds; (4) the right to water; (5) the decommodification of agriculture.[32] The March's appropriation of this discourse appears in conjunction with its accepting VC's invitation to co-organ-

32 Marche Mondiale des Femmes: Souverainté alimentaire: Terre, eau, semences, et nourriture, 2006, retrieved from: www.nyeleni.org/spip.php?article66. Last accessed 13 April 2020.

ise the 2007 International Forum on Food Sovereignty in Nyéléni, mentioned above. The March collaborated with the Women of VC[33] to successfully pressure for an equal number of female delegates in the Forum; for equal pay for female (cooks) and male (builders) workers whose labour supported the Forum; and to organise a women's assembly that met before and during the Forum to analyse food sovereignty from a feminist perspective. Two prominent issues emerged: women's access to land[34] and the affirmation of women's essential knowledge of food production and preparation[35]—both crucially linked to "women's autonomy as a condition for food sovereignty."[36]

Paying attention to the descent and emergence of food sovereignty *within* the March as a putatively global discourse, we saw that VC's discourse of food sovereignty was laid over an exceedingly uneven geography, within and between countries, of diverse pre-existing practices enacted by the March's constituent groups. What got re-signified as food sovereignty were practices related to: food preparation, production, consumption, and marketing; rights and access to seeds, land, water, and oceans; and protection of local ecological resources, whether from extractivism, commodification/dispossession, or effects of climate change. Through "discursive practices of articulation" at the international scale of the March, these were resignified as part of an international and cross-movement political project for food sovereignty aligned with VC.[37]

Following VC, the March consistently defends small-scale family agriculture and views it as favourable to rural women in that both their agricultural and care work is so central to its viability.[38] However, the March also observes women's subordinate status in rural households and communities and discrimination against women farmers by laws and public institutions. With the Women of VC, the March has made visible the work assigned to women in a gendered division of agricultural labour and

33 See Annette A. Desmarais: La Via Campesina: Globalization and the power of peasants, p. 161.

34 Key issues here include gender bias both in land reform legislation and customary rights which favour a single male as holders of title and prevent women from holding land via inheritance, in widowhood, or after separation. Women likewise cannot access credit or technical assistance independently, etc. With increased corporate land grabbing and privatisation, women's subsistence production and access to the commons is further restricted. These conditions force rural women to migrate to cities to search for alternative livelihoods.

35 Women produce 80 per cent of food in poor countries; but their knowledges extend beyond food production narrowly conceived to include: saving seeds; medicinal plants; animal husbandry; and the protection of biodiversity. These knowledge traditions challenge vertical systems of technical support.

36 Nyeleni International Steering Committee: Nyeleni 2007: Forum for Food Sovereignty, Selingue/Mali 2008, p. 23, retrieved from: www.nyeleni.org. Last accessed 6 April 2020.

37 Dominique Masson et al.: Struggling for food sovereignty in the World March of Women, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 44:1 (2017), pp. 56–77.

38 Miriam Nobre: Desafios para soberania alimentar desde as mulheres, Sao Paulo 2006.

valorised their unrecognised and unpaid care work as essential to the reproduction of the agricultural unit. Over time, these feminist concerns and claims have stretched the meaning and scope of food sovereignty as a political project.[39]

Feminism, Food Sovereignty and a Counter-hegemonic Societal Project: Genealogy 2

Over the decade since Nyéléni, food sovereignty has been progressively incorporated as a shared demand of the popular movements arrayed against neoliberalism, in and beyond Latin America. Concomitantly, through the sustained efforts of popular feminist formations like the March, REMTE, and the Women of CLOC-VC in the context of cross-movement mobilisations, a feminist discourse of food sovereignty has also steadily gained traction.

In Latin America, these processes were inextricably interwoven with the continental campaign against the FTAA, which was coalescing in the mid-1990s as these transnational anti-globalisation networks were forming. Following the defeat of the FTAA in 2005 and the rising pink tide[40] public episodes of contention became more discontinuous as activists focused on articulating an alternative political and economic vision to more receptive governments. In this context, a genealogical approach reveals important continuities in cross-movement mobilisation between orchestrating protest and generating alternatives. Tracking the emergence and descent of food sovereignty as a discourse throughout this period, we see it re-signified with increasingly feminist and anti-capitalist content.

A FTAA to create the "biggest economic bloc of the planet"[41] involving 34 countries of the Americas (excluding Cuba), was first proposed at the official Summit of the Americas in Miami in 1994. To collectively confront the FTAA, a Hemispheric Social Alliance (HSA), was created in 1998 in Santiago, Chile. This coalition became the main convenor of Peoples' Summits–counter-events to official inter-governmental summits that were

39 See also: Bina Agarwal: Food sovereignty, food security and democratic choice: Critical contradictions, difficult conciliations, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 41:6 (2014), pp. 1247–1268; Clara Mi Young Park et al.: We are not all the same: Taking gender seriously in food sovereignty discourse, in: Third World Quarterly 36:3 (2015), pp. 584–599; Shahra Razavi: Engendering the political economy of agrarian change, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 36:1 (2009), pp. 197–226.

40 The 'pink tide' denotes the wave of left governments elected in key countries in the region between 1999 and 2010: the elections of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela in 1999, Lula in Brazil in 2003, Nestor Kirchner in Argentina in 2003, later followed by Evo Morales in Bolivia in 2006, Michelle Bachelet in Chile in 2006, Rafael Correa in Ecuador in 2007, and Jose Mujica in Uruguay in 2010.

41 REMTE: Las mujeres contra el libre comercio. Una historia de Resistencia y lucha, p. 12.

also occasions of mass protests. The Peoples' Summits have been crucial cross-movement sites for the production of counter-discourses to the FTAA. Key to articulating a feminist/gender perspective within the resistance to the FTAA was the Women's Committee of the HSA, created in 1999 by several women's groups and feminist NGOs, including REMTE, the World March of Women and the Women of CLOC-VC.[42] A series of landmark convergence events occurred under the auspices of the HSA. Notable were the anti-globalisation Peoples' Summit in Quebec City in 2001, the launch of the Continental Campaign against the FTAA at the 2002 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as well as the *Jornadas de Resistencia Continental*, in Quito, Ecuador, in November 2002.

Although all feminist and women's groups involved in the protests were critical of the FTAA, there were divergent feminist positions *vis-à-vis* free trade. The 2002 *Jornadas de Resistencia* in Quito, Ecuador, for instance, saw conflicting positions, with some hoping that free trade agreements could be improved to advance women's equality, while others advocated outright rejection of free trade on the basis that neoliberal globalisation increased women's oppression globally. REMTE and the WMW took the lead in advocating the latter position, with Women of CLOC-VC, Women's Committee of HSA, and *Diálogo Sur Sur* LGBT. Together, they argued that the FTAA would depress wages, contribute to greater precarity and flexibilization of work, and aggravate gendered economic inequality.[43]

These groups also aimed to develop viable alternatives to free trade. By 2002, they were already advocating "*soberanía alimentaria de la comunidad y familia*"[44] as an alternative vision anchored in the life worlds of women of the popular sectors at the base of these organisations. Food sovereignty anchored in the household and local community was a concrete response to increased pressures experienced by women in their traditional roles—as responsible for the feeding and health of families, under conditions of increasing precarity of work and incomes and cuts to public services.[45]

Feminist organizing against the FTAA and for food sovereignty continued at the 2003 People's Forum on Alternatives to World Trade Organisation (WTO) held in Cancun, Mexico, and at the International Women's Forum held there.[46] In an increasingly explicit way, the March and its feminist allies argued for a political horizon for feminism beyond a capitalist and patriarchal system with its social, sexual and international divisions of labour.[47] The declaration of the International Women's Forum[48]

42 Ibid., p. 16.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., p. 25.
45 Ibid., p. 26.
46 Ibid., p. 31.
47 Ibid., p. 32.
48 Foro Internacional los Derechos de las Mujeres en los Acuerdos Comerciales, Declaración política, retrieved from: http://www.biodiversidadla.org/Documentos/Cancun-declaracion-

asserted that the WTO was a threat to human rights, and to economic, social and cultural rights, and would negatively affect the quality of women's lives, especially in its proposed expansion to include agriculture, services and intellectual property. In advocating food sovereignty as an alternative, the declaration notably recognized women's roles in food and agricultural production.[49]

Cross-movement mobilisation in these spaces represented for the WMW, REMTE, and the Women of CLOC-VC a unique opportunity to reinforce the feminist and women's leadership in the anti-FTAA struggles, to construct a feminist consensus denouncing and rejecting the FTAA, and to analyse the gendered impacts of free trade on women's lives.[50] It also showed that feminist analytics and alternatives were central and re-defining to any progressive alternative to neoliberalism, not an optional add-on to any pre-constituted programme.

Eleven years later, in 2005, at the Summit of the Americas held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, negotiations for the FTAA were halted, due to the massive popular resistance throughout the continent and to the new political conjuncture of the region with the election of many left-leaning governments.[51] The coming to power of multiple social democratic governments constituted a fertile environment for advancing the articulation of alternatives to neoliberalism, including food sovereignty. The sustained involvement of feminist and women's groups such as REMTE, the WMW and Women of CLOC-VC has been pivotal in producing a discourse of food sovereignty that was not only explicitly anti-capitalist in its core demands, but also increasingly feminist in its content.

The years between 2005 and 2010 were important in consolidating and refining these feminist and anti-capitalist dimensions of food sovereignty discourse, regionally and internationally. Cross-movement collaboration intensified among VC, the WMW and Friends of the Earth toward the Nyéléni Forum in 2007. As previously discussed, the Nyéléni forum was one of the first instances in which the international alliance between VC and the WMW evidenced a feminist effect in the evolving collective understanding of food sovereignty. The March's own deepening commitment was expressed in its choice of food sovereignty as the main theme for its 2008 International Meeting in Vigo, Spain. By 2010, food sovereignty had been entrenched as one of four domains of international action by the March.

In Latin America, the *Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América* (ALBA)—Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, a regional integration project and progressive alternative to the FTAA, was initiated in 2004 by the then

politica-del-Foro-Internacional-los-Derechos-de-las-Mujeres-en-los-Acuerdos-Comerciales. Accessed 8 April 2020.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., p. 24.

51 Ibid., p. 13.

presidents of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez, and of Cuba, Fidel Castro. The idea of free trade was replaced by a *Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos* (TCP)—Trade Treaty of the Peoples. Social movements were given a prominent role in the process through the creation in 2006 of the Social Movements Council (CMS) and the *Movimientos hacia el ALBA*—Social Movements towards ALBA initiative. The state-sponsored process fostered discussions among heterogenous actors around alternatives to free trade and contributed to the expansion of the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist content of alternative ways of integrating peoples and nations, based on principles of "solidarity, social justice… harmony with nature and real sovereignty."[52]

In 2010, Evo Morales, Indigenous President of Bolivia and ALBA member, convened a landmark event in Cochabamba, the World Peoples' Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth. In foregrounding struggles for environmental justice, it was an important pre-cursor to the mass cross-movement mobilisation around Rio+20[53] in 2012. The expansiveness of food as a political terrain, so readily linked to land, water, natural resources, biodiversity, energy, defence of whole eco-systems, and to peoples' sovereignty was instrumental in food sovereignty becoming a key focus in the mobilisations around Rio+20. This proved to be a watershed moment also for feminists' contentious embrace of food sovereignty. While neither women, feminism, nor gender were mentioned in the 2010 Cochabamba 'People's Agreement', by the 2012 cross-movement mobilisation around Rio+20, feminist economics was prominent in the documents on food sovereignty. Momentum around this continued through the Peoples' Summits of Chile 2013[54] and Peru 2014.[55]

Negotiations among the social movements in the organising around Rio+20 focused on the construction of a common global agenda for food sovereignty as one of five main thematics. The plenary report identified the structural causes of the crisis of the global food system, including the commodification of life and nature and the corporate control of the agricultural chain: from production to supply and consumption of food, the expansion of monocultures and concentration of land ownership. It re-

52 ALBA-TCP: Misión, retrieved from: http://alba-tcp.org/en/contenido/social-movements-council-alba-tcp, last accessed November 2015. Current access via Internet Archive's Wayback Machine. See: www.albainfo.org/links/, accessed 13 April 2020.

53 The 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro.

54 The March acted as the operational office for the People's Summit, organised as a parallel and alternative event to the European Union—Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) official summit held in Santiago, Chile between the 26 and 27 January 2013.

55 In December 2014, the WMW had a prominent role in the organisation, logistics and mass presence at the People's Summit on Climate Change, organised as a parallel and alternative event to the twentieth United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP20), held in Lima, Peru between the 8 and 11 December 2014.

jected as false "the promise to feed all humanity"[56] through strategies of green capitalism, such as the promotion of genetically-modified organisms (GMOs), the patenting of life forms, the expanded use of pesticides, and policy agendas focused on food security as opposed to food sovereignty.[57] It argued instead for agroecology[58] and agrarian reform to support peasant, family, Indigenous and urban agriculture, grounded in the recognition of sovereignty, self-determination and autonomy of peoples. The path to food sovereignty also involves the "protection, preservation and restoration of native and creole seeds" as well as respect for traditional forms of local organizing of farmers, peasants and Indigenous peoples.[59]

The counter-discourses at Rio+20 exposed the dangers of a neoliberal system based on practices, such as land grabbing and extractivism, that constitute a threat to family and peasant agriculture and lead to "the economic exclusion and the expulsion of peasant farmers, indigenous peoples, workers, women, youth and black people from their territories."[60] They also asserted that the neoliberal, patriarchal model relied on a narrow understanding of work, one that reified a sexual division of labour and the dichotomy between production and reproduction, and that failed to consider the workings of the "logic of care."[61] The alternatives emerging from Rio+20 were prominently informed by

> … a feminist economy, the de-commodification of our lives and our bodies, the separation of sexuality from motherhood and overcoming the sexual division of labour. For this, we propose real changes that redefine and broaden the concept

56 Santa Catarina Committee for Rio+20. Peoples' Summit: Final Documents, Plenary 3—Food Sovereignty, p. 10, retrieved from: https://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/PeoplesSummit-FinalDeclaration-ENG.pdf. Accessed 13 April 2020.

57 Rio+20: Comité Facilitador da Sociedade Civil Catarinense. Um Compromisso de Gerações: Documentos finais da cúpula dos povos na Rio+20 por justiça social e ambiental, Plenária 3—Soberania alimentar (pp. 12–18), Final Documents, Plenary 3—Food Sovereignty, retrieved from: http://riomais20sc.ufsc.br/files/2012/09/DOCUMENTOS-FINAIS-DA-CUPULA-DOS-POVOS-NA-RIO-20-POS-JUSTI%C3%87A-SOCIAL-E-AMBIENTAL.pdf. Accessed 1 March 2017.

58 The final declaration of the Peoples' Summit at Rio+20 understands agroecology as a set of sustainable agricultural and farming practices based on ecological principles of production, with key social, cultural and political dimensions. See: Rio+20: Documentos finais da cúpula dos povos na Rio+20 por justiça social e ambiental. Peoples' Summit: Final Documents.

59 Ibid.

60 Santa Catarina Committee for Rio+20. People's Summit at Rio+20 in defense of Social and Environmental Justice: Final Documents, Plenary 5—Work: For Another Economy and New Paradigms for Society, p.16, retrieved from: https://globalforestcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/PeoplesSummit-FinalDeclaration-ENG.pdf. Accessed 13 April 2020.

61 Ibid.

> of work, recognize women's work and the responsibility of men and the State in providing care.[62]

Two years later, at the alternative COP20 Peoples' Summit in Lima, 2014, feminist and women's groups successfully pushed for a separate thematic axis on Women and Sustainability of Life. The final declaration of the Lima Peoples' summit explicitly denounced the capitalist-patriarchal system that "sustains the oppression and control of women's bodies, work and lives", emphasizing the necessity of moving towards a new "social division of labour, which will eliminate the subordination of women's work, and which will neither make their care activities invisible, without which social reproduction would be impossible, nor subordinate them to the mandate of the market".[63] The declaration demands the recognition of reproductive work "as the basis of human sustainability and the sustainability of the relation between individuals and communities" and concludes that all alternatives put forward will have to include a feminist perspective.[64]

What emerges from the foregoing genealogy is evidence of the presence and effect of feminism as a counter-discourse through two decades of cross-movement mobilisation around food sovereignty in Latin America. A genealogical approach uncovered gendered power dynamics[65] that tend to be obscured or flattened out in the discourses produced in or about mixed-gender movement spaces. The 2014 Peoples' Summit in Lima, for instance, illustrates how the inclusion of feminist perspectives in mixed-gender spaces is permeated by power relations and conflicts. Even though the WMW was one of the organisers, after months of negotiations, feminist and women's groups remained unable to obtain any substantive space or recognition of their work within the mixed-gender spaces of the Peoples' Summit. For these reasons the *Grupo Mujeres y Cambio Climatico*, which coordinated the Peruvian efforts for building a women's agenda in the context of both the official COP20 and the Peoples' Summit, pressed for and obtained the inclusion of a separate thematic axis specifically on Women and Sustainability of Life.[66] Organising along a parallel rather than integrated track afforded women and feminists a space to advance concerns that were being shut down in the mixed-gender processes.

62 Ibid.

63 Peoples' Summit Lima: The Lima Declaration (published on 11 December 2014), at: Friends of the Earth International, retrieved from: http://www.foei.org/news/the-lima-declaration. Last accessed 1 November 2015.

64 Ibid.

65 For an in-depth discussion of gendered power dynamics, see: Grupo Mujeres y Cambio Climático: Sistematización Mujer y Cambio Climático. Una ruta de encuentro: Cambio climático, género y sostenibilidad de la vida, Lima 2015.

66 Grupo Mujeres y Cambio Climático: Sistematización Mujer y Cambio Climático, p. 5.

Cross-movement mobilisation thus comes into view as a contested and contingent process riven through with counter-discourses. Our genealogical study shows feminist perspectives produced within and against the counter-hegemonic discourses of mixed-gender oppositional movements. More significantly, a genealogical approach has shown how this contest over food sovereignty was embedded in a larger one over the contours of an alternative societal project. This has surfaced a further insight: that the stunning embrace of food sovereignty by the World March of Women and other non-peasant movements of the global left is more about its imbrication in an anti-capitalist societal project than an altruistic defence of the peasant way.

A Decolonial Counter-Discourse

As a final provocation, we now turn to the decolonial counter-discourse emergent in cross-movement mobilisation in Latin America around food sovereignty. Following the work of the modernity-coloniality-decolonial research group[67] the question of the decolonial has to do with recognition of coloniality as a present condition and of 'colonial difference' as that which has been systematically marginalized through coloniality. Colonial difference is simultaneously the source for alternatives to coloniality, which is understood as coterminous with Eurocentric capitalist modernity.

In this third genealogical study, we detect a deeply ambivalent relation to the decolonial in the evolving appropriation of food sovereignty by the constellation of popular movements under discussion. This, we suggest, reflects a larger tension in the region between movements of the left, including popular feminisms, and their societal projects for social transformation grounded in class-inflected discourses of the popular, with the decolonial life projects evident among Afro-descendent and Indigenous movements.

At the regional scale, the decolonial challenge is being mounted most cogently by Indigenous peoples' movements. An alternative genealogy of regional-scale cross-movement mobilisation, one which intersects with the foregoing but which has its own dynamic, could be proposed as follows: the 1992 regional mobilisation by Indigenous and Afro-descendent peoples around an alternative commemoration of 500 years of the 'discovery' of the Americas; the Zapatista uprising in 1994, its *encuentros* against neoliberalism, and its ongoing afterlife; the water and gas wars in Bolivia and the Indigenous uprisings and overthrow of multiple regimes in Ecuador in the late 1990s; the coming to power of Evo Morales in Bolivia as the first Indigenous president of the Americas; the re-writing of constitutions in the making of plurinational

67 For a review, see: Arturo Escobar: Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise, in: Cultural Studies 21:2-3 (2007), pp. 179–210.

and intercultural nation-states in the Andes; and the 2010 conference convened by Morales on the Rights of Mother Earth in Cochabamba.

We have begun to trace a decolonial counter-discourse of food sovereignty in the context of cross-movement mobilisation in Latin America, using the presence and positionality of Indigenous Peoples as a heuristic device to pose the decolonial question. In the documents of the Peoples' Summit at Rio+20, where Indigenous Peoples had the most visibility to date in discourses of food sovereignty, we note that food sovereignty is re-presented as "the peasant-*indigenous* proposal as the alternative for the multiple crises of capitalism,"[68] although Indigenous populations are only mentioned in passing in the document. Even in the founding declaration of the Latin American and the Caribbean Alliance on Food Sovereignty that emerged from the mobilisations around Rio+20 and which officially includes Indigenous peoples' organisations,[69] Indigenous peoples are positioned as *one* stakeholder among many including: fishers, environmental activists, agroecological producers and academics. This is consistent with their positioning in the 2007 Nyéléni declaration, which acknowledges the essential contribution of Indigenous knowledges to peasant agriculture. It further recognises Indigenous peoples as also having claims to land and articulates a position around the need to negotiate and share land among different stakeholders, but there is no evident recognition of the specificity of Indigenous claims to territory beyond their shared (class) status as peasants.[70]

Within the World March of Women, food sovereignty is instantiated primarily through the activities of organisations of rural, peasant and Indigenous women such as ANAMURI[71] in Chile, CONAMURI[72] in Paraguay, and CONTAG in Brazil. These are all member groups of CLOC-VC who advocate for food sovereignty in the WMW as allies, and who sometimes also become members. Important to note for the present discussion is that while a number of these groups are explicit about their Indigenous collective identities, *these remain muted* in the context of their engagement with the March and also within the cross-movement mobilisation around the larger societal project of food sovereignty.

As with the March's popular feminism, one can see in Vía Campesina strong traces of left genealogies in its peasant populism and understanding of the peasantry as a class. The political subject of VC's societal project of food sovereignty has been the

68 Rio+20: Documentos finais da cúpula dos povos na Rio+20 por justiça social e ambiental.

69 Coberturas 2013/Asamblea Alianza Soberanía Alimentaria América Latina y el Caribe. http://radiomundoreal.fm/asamblea-alianza-soberania?lang=es. Last accessed 6 April 2020.

70 Nyéléni: Declaration of Nyéléni.

71 Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Rurales e Indígenas: http://www.anamuri.cl.Last accessed 6 April 2020.

72 Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Trabajadoras Rurales e Indígenas: http://conamuri.org.py. Last accessed 6 April 2020.

peasantry, although as the movement for food sovereignty diversifies, this singularity is under pressure. This is evident in the increasingly lengthy and complex list of stake-holders identified in cross-movement declarations concerning food sovereignty.[73] Indigenous peoples are listed as part of an increasingly pluralistic vision of food sovereignty, but this does not appear to be informed by any decolonial critique, i. e. a critical appropriation of the history of colonial violence and dispossession; a critical awareness of race and racism; and an alertness to the colonial character of the modern political, among other aspects.[74] Nevertheless, food sovereignty is a site of encounter with the decolonial question as these actors on the global left (March and VC) interact with Indigenous peoples, within their own networks and in the context of cross-movement mobilisation.

With respect to a decolonial counter-discourse of food sovereignty, Indigenous difference has been most manifest in discussions over land, the meaning of sovereignty and the emergent audibility of an Indigenous concept of territory. Beyond the peasant conception of land as means for growing food, for subsistence and of livelihood, the Indigenous notion of territory involves a whole ecology and its relation to the reproduction of peoples, cultures and worlds, to the past and future, to contact with ancestors and access to millennial knowledges.[75]

While there has been an evolution in food sovereignty discourse from an affirmation of the sovereignty of nations to that of peoples and communities, the sovereign of food sovereignty remains ambiguous and problematic.[76] The discourse of food sovereignty is deeply reliant upon an older, powerful discourse of popular sovereignty. This is one of the reasons for its powerful resonance across the global South, where it articulates living memories of anti-colonial nationalism with contemporary popular struggles against both transnational corporations and rapacious and repressive 'post-colonial' states. The March, alongside other movements of the global left, vigorously defends the notion of popular (and national) self-determination as the right that precedes all other rights. However, discourses of popular sovereignty occlude Indigenous difference. In the settler- and capitalist-colonial societies of the Americas, they erase the originary presence of Indigenous peoples and the ongoing violence of coloniality *vis-à-vis* Indigenous survival as collectivities on their territories.

Indigenous peoples are present in the documents about food sovereignty. Indigenous organisations are present in the cross-movement convergences. Their *Indige-*

73 See: Rio+20: Documentos finais da cúpula dos povos na Rio+20 por justiça social e ambiental.

74 Janet Conway: Edges of Global Justice: The World Social Forum and its 'Others', London/New York 2013.

75 Peter Rosset: Grassroots voices: Rethinking agrarian reform, land and territory in La Via Campesina, in: Journal of Peasant Studies 40:4 (2013), pp. 721–775.

76 Marc Edelman: Food sovereignty: Forgotten genealogies and future regulatory challenges.

neity is noted; but it is a difference that makes little difference. They are ultimately subsumed as one among many agents of food sovereignty, where all are in a common struggle against 'neo-colonialism,' imperialism, neo-liberalism, and patriarchy. Such a discourse obfuscates any particular colonial encounter and equalises all subject positions. The specificity of Indigenous histories, claims and cosmovisions is thus effaced in a common popular struggle premised on sovereignty of the peoples, in which neither sovereignty nor peoples is specified.

This limited form of inclusion, which flattens difference, seems more motored by a drive to unity on the global left, than by a defence of Indigenous survival. This drive to oneness, to a single unifying counter-hegemonic discourse, is apparent in many quarters of the global left, even as they grapple with the counter-discourses constantly emerging in their midst. The increasing audibility of Indigenous claims within cross-movement mobilisation for food sovereignty disturbs this drive. The notion of territory now appearing in food sovereignty discourse is an open-ended response to that challenge, which exists in enormous tension with the ongoing commitment to the modern political[77] that also pervades these networks.

Conclusion

Many substantive insights woven into the accounts above consolidated through a genealogical approach to our question about the World March of Women and its feminist embrace of food sovereignty. Deploying a Foucault-inspired genealogical approach to food sovereignty as a discourse, rather than a self-evident moral good, reveals it as a site of power/knowledge in ways that do not appear in conventional social movement approaches nor through activist auto-ethnographic accounts. Our investigation of the feminist embrace of food sovereignty has situated it in relation to longer-standing contestations within feminism, between popular and 'mainstream' feminisms, within socialist feminism, among anti-free trade feminists, and within the World March of Women itself, where it maps onto particular geographies of power. In mixed gender movements and in cross-movement mobilisation, these feminisms persistently produce counter-discourses that trouble the prevailing consensus and stretch the discourse of food sovereignty to valorise women's labour and expand women's economic autonomy. Rather than a stable value, food sovereignty thus emerges as a contested and evolving terrain.

Likewise, cross-movement mobilisation around food sovereignty comes into view as a contested and contingent process in which there is a complex interplay of power operating within movement fields. This includes witting and unwitting complicities

77 Janet Conway: Edges of Global Justice.

with hegemonic regimes of power-knowledge, most evidently with patriarchal capitalism, its gendered divisions of labour and hierarchies of knowledge, in which women's perspectives remain precarious and feminism seems permanently positioned as a counter-discourse. Food sovereignty also appears as a site of colonial difference in which there are decolonial counter-discourses emergent that unsettle received understandings of the popular, the state, natural resources, and territory. These pose a deep challenge to the political imaginaries of popular feminism and other counter-hegemonic movements of the global left, and expose the complicities of their alternative societal project with regimes of modern power.

Counter-discourse is produced in practical engagement in political struggle. It appears when the formerly voiceless articulate their own desires in the face of a prevailing authoritative discourse.[78] As a product of transnational peasant struggle against the neoliberal commodification of agriculture, and on the plane of struggle in which popular movements are pitted against the World Trade Organisation, food sovereignty clearly is a counter-discourse. However, as our study makes clear, on the plane of struggle among the movements themselves, where an alternative societal project is at stake, food sovereignty is itself the target of counter-discourses, as women, feminists, and Indigenous peoples talk back to a consensus that reproduces their marginality. One of the political questions raised by our study is how can and do putatively emancipatory social movements cultivate non-domineering dialogues with their own alterities that do not simply efface difference in the service of constructing a collective counter-hegemonic discourse? How might critical movements keep their counter-discourses 'counter'?[79]

We leave these larger political considerations for future reflection. We will conclude by proposing some analytic implications for the field of social movement studies. Taking a genealogical approach ultimately recast our understanding of what we were seeing, that is, that the March's embrace of food sovereignty is less about food sovereignty *per se* and more about an articulatory practice in the service of *building counter-power* through broad, cross movement popular alliances around an alternative societal project in which food sovereignty is a major pillar with significant feminist content. This finding reinforces the utility of Santos' concept of the "global left"[80] to understand many contemporary social movements and their inter-relation. This is a particular lineage which, if overly privileged, can silence other plausible and illuminating genealogies, as the decolonial counter-discourse suggests. However, situating the movements under discussion in terms of the global left helps illuminate the centrality of the politics of the popular, and of popular sovereignty, and their continuities and

78 Mario Moussa/Ron Scapp: The Practical Theorizing of Michel Foucault, p. 88.
79 Ibid., p. 106.
80 Boaventura de Sousa Santos: The Rise of the Global Left.

departures from past practice. At the same time, it is critical to recognise that the history of the global left is not a single story, and even less a progressive accumulation of struggles proceeding according to some overriding logic. We have tried to instantiate this point by proposing multiple genealogies.

Our genealogical approach also provoked questions about the concept of 'cross-movement mobilisation', identifying problems rooted in its constitutive concept, 'social movement'. When the latter is imagined as constituted by formally organised and bounded entities, cross-movement mobilisation is, in turn, narrowly conceived as organisational collaboration across sectors. When the study of social movements takes the moment of public contention as its object of study, cross-movement mobilisation derivatively focuses on putatively discrete campaigns or protest events as the object of study. Longer lineages and trajectories of protest recede from view and with them critically important source material for understanding phenomena in the present.

Our study suggests an alternative conceptualisation, rooted in the Latin American experience but suggestive more generally. We propose that the last 25 years of resistance to neoliberal globalisation be considered a period of virtually permanent cross-movement mobilisation. This historical epoch has been one of intense contact and collaboration, unprecedented in scope and scale, among formerly relatively discrete and/or geographically-distant social movements. This has been facilitated by globalisation in its many facets, including new and cheap communication and transportation technologies and the multiplication of processes of convergence such as the World Social Forum process, as much as by the threats represented by global neo-liberalisation. Rather than punctual episodes of cross-movement mobilisations, we see a succession of convergences around campaigns, events, and protests linked through a tangle of multiple, intersecting, and non-linear processes that can be profitably studied as such.

This permanent condition of cross-movement mobilisation has demonstrably stretched social movements' self-understandings, including what they view as their proper domains of action and concern. We can see this in feminists' taking up food sovereignty. While the movements retain their historical specificity and political autonomy, they also become more porous to the concerns of others with whom they wish to cultivate affinity. They have new stakes in other movements' appropriating their own historic agendas. They grow up inside each other, yet they remain multiple. This (new kind of?) inter-relationality or co-evolution of movements has myriad implications for their study—how we construct and bound them for study. Our study therefore makes an important claim about the historical constitution of anti-globalisation movements and an analytical claim about how we conceptualise contemporary social movements, especially those arrayed against neoliberal globalisation, their putative boundedness, and their mutually-constitutive relationships.

The 1990s appears as a pivotal decade for cross-movement mobilisation for another reason, as the period immediately after 1989 and facing the consequences of the loss

of socialism as the hegemonic reference point for oppositional movements. This was decisive in Latin America but, we think, also beyond. This historic defeat opened a path for a new consensus around the centrality of democracy and the role of civil society, pluralism and diversity. Although these remain highly contestable in their neoliberal variants, the vast majority of movements on the global left embraced these shifts. This has occasioned a historically new and foundational recognition world-wide of the multiplicity of movements, issues, agendas, and perspectives, and the observable need to negotiate difference and to build alliances on the basis of mutual recognition and open-ended construction. In Foucauldian terms, it has made visible the ongoing production of counter-discourses on oppositional movement fields, and presented a permanent political challenge in keeping counter-hegemonic projects 'counter'.

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