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***Mercados Campesinos: Food Sovereignty Construction and Peasant
Autonomy in Bogota, Colombia***

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Dedication

For my mother.

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Abstract

Mercados Campesinos: Food Sovereignty Construction and Peasant Autonomy in Bogota, Colombia

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This thesis documents the history and most recent events relating to *Mercados Campesinos* (MC), a farmer's market and short food distribution program that allowed peasants from Colombia's central region to sell their products directly to consumers and bypass Bogota's main food system. Broadly, the thesis explores the implications of food sovereignty movements aiming to provide alternatives for peasant autonomy, and state intervention in such movements. This thesis addresses the following questions: How do food, and under what circumstances do local food sovereignty movements arise? How do different actors participating in food sovereignty construction understand and articulate claims to influence and participate in domestic food systems in particular geographical settings? What practices of autonomy do peasants engage in to promote food sovereignty? The political efforts of peasant organizations, peasant farmers and international nonprofits introduce language and practices of food sovereignty and peasant economy within Bogota's Master Plan For Food Security and Supply [*Plan Maestro de Abastecimiento de Alimentos y Seguridad Alimentaria de Bogota*, PMASAB], and the debate between these groups and

the state over the PMASAB represents a process of food sovereignty construction. In part, the thesis focuses on the political interaction different actors over norms, discourses, and claims of how to best manage the production and commercialization of food to satisfy the needs of Bogota's population and rural peasants in the central region of the country. I argue that the arena of food distribution and commercialization demonstrates how political interaction between the state and other civil society actors, with different meanings and discourses over food security and sovereignty shapes policies and practices related to food systems. In the case of Bogota's MC, peasant organizations, and peasant farmers attempted to create autonomy through discourses and practices over livelihoods, improved food production and commercialization, and urban-rural integration, as opposed to industrial and centralized production, distribution, and commercialization processes. The MC program, however did not result in full peasant autonomy, as it was managed within the confines of a food policy controlled by District and regional authorities.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	1
State of the Issue	2
Classical Conceptions of Peasant Economies.....	7
Changes in the Peasantry	10
Food Sovereignty	12
The Peasantry and the State in Food Sovereignty	14
Alternative Food Networks.....	18
Research Framework	22
Methods.....	23
Positionality	26
Organization of the Project	27
Chapter 2: Bogota's Food System	30
From Colonial Market to a Modern Food System	30
Peasants Economy in Colombia.....	34
Peasant Mobilization and the rise of Food Sovereignty Discourses.....	35
Chapter Three: Food Sovereignty Construction in Bogota, Colombia.....	39
Peasant Organizations and Struggles towards Autonomy	39
Political Pressure and the Making of the PMASAB.....	44
Enter the PMASAB.....	45
Modernizing Bogota's Food System	49
Peasant Organizations: Between Autonomy and State Recognition	51
<i>Mercados Campesinos</i> , and separation of CICC members	53
Government Planning as a Contested Process	58
Peasant Discourses and partial autonomy.....	63
Conclusion	66
Chapter Four: Peasant Autonomy and District Demands	69
<i>Mercados Campesinos</i> and Peasant Practices of Autonomy	69

A Day in the market.....	71
Livelihoods	73
Improved food production and commercialization.....	76
Urban-Rural Integration.....	79
Limit to Autonomy – Transportation.....	84
Limit to Autonomy – Lack of Institutional Support	87
From Mercados Campesinos to Mercados Gourmet	88
A Peasant Market Without Peasants	90
Conclusion	92
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Research Implications	96
Mercados Campesinos in the Current Conjuncture	96
Research Implications.....	97
Bibliography	101

Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis documents the history and most recent events relating to *Mercados Campesinos* (MC), a farmer's market and short food distribution program that allowed peasants from Colombia's central region to sell their products directly to consumers and bypass Bogota's main food system. Broadly, the thesis explores the implications of food sovereignty movements aiming to provide alternatives for peasant autonomy, and the role of the state such movements, addressing the the following questions: How do food, and under what circumstances do local food sovereignty movements arise? How do different actors participating in food sovereignty construction understand and articulate claims to influence and participate in domestic food systems in particular geographical settings? What practices of autonomy do peasants engage in to promote food sovereignty?

The political efforts of peasant organizations, peasant farmers and international nonprofits introduce language and practices of food sovereignty and peasant economy within Bogota's Master Plan For Food Security and Supply [*Plan Maestro de Abastecimiento de Alimentos y Seguridad Alimentaria de Bogota*, PMASAB], and the debate between these groups and the state over the contours of the PMASAB represents a process of food sovereignty construction. In part, the thesis focuses on the political interaction different actors over norms, discourses, and claims of how to best manage the production and commercialization of food to satisfy the needs of Bogota's population and rural peasants in the central region of the country. I argue that the arena of food distribution and commercialization demonstrates how political interaction between the state and other civil society actors, with different meanings and discourses over food security and sovereignty shape policies and practices related to food systems. In the case of Bogota's MC, peasant organizations, and peasant farmers attempted to create autonomy through

discourses and practices over livelihoods, improved food production and commercialization, and urban-rural integration, as opposed to industrial and centralized production, distribution, and commercialization processes. The MC program, however did not result in full autonomy, as it was managed within the confines of a food policy controlled by the District.

STATE OF THE ISSUE

On November 9th 2004, over 200 peasants from 11 regional municipalities of the central region of Colombia came into Bogota's main square, Plaza de Bolivar. They arrived with baskets, bags and wooden crates filled with produce and traditional food dishes, and set up their tents to take part in what was to be the first peasant farmer's market in the Colombian Capital's recent history.¹

The market was as much an economic as a political statement: peasants traveled into the city to demonstrate that they had the capacity to supply citizens without the need of intermediaries, wholesale distributors, or retail sellers. They also wanted to hand administrative District authorities a political proposal aiming to guarantee food security and food sovereignty to the central region of the country (El Tiempo, 2004a). Debates over District plans about the direction of Bogota's food system allowed regional and national peasant organizations, alongside international NGOs to introduce language acknowledging

¹ A commentator described the scene as follows: "After 50 years, this place became dressed again with food and fruits of the field, between women with their coin purses, looking for deals, curious people who came to ask for samples of *fleijoa arequipe*, *arepa campesina* and *chicharron reventado*. They are those sellers that hide wads of money in between their breasts and provincials of *ruana*, *sombrero*, *alpargatas* (common traditional peasant outfit), red cheeks and one or more gold teeth in their smiles . . . Some dressed as civilians but with their hands marked with work with the land and the hoe, and others, men of the fields, with their common outfits, those that when you ask them their name they will respond with a marked accent: My name is Arcenio Guamán and I'm here to serve you, *Sumerced*" (El Tiempo, 2004b).

peasant economy practices and the notion of food sovereignty in the PMASAB, and to institutionalize peasant economy practices in other District decrees (See Chapter Three).

Concerns over the perceived inefficiencies of traditional wholesale distribution centers starting in 2003 prompted District officials to develop the PMASAB to modernize food supply, distribution, and commercialization chains in the region. In the case of Bogota, the wholesale market of *Corporación de Abastos de Bogotá*, CORABASTOS, and international supermarket chains control distribution food chains, while retail is divided through traditional stores (*tiendas*), market plazas, and supermarkets (See Chapter Two). Most of Bogota's food is produced in the surrounding rural departments of Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Tolima y Meta, as well as the rural areas of Bogotá. In 2006, thirty three percent of basic food products consumed in Bogota were produced within a forty-kilometer radius and close to eighty percent within a radius of 300 kilometers. The PMASAB estimated that peasants supplied 65 percent of the city's food (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006). However, at the time peasant organizations argued that early drafts of the PMAASAB had no mention of the importance of peasant economies that produced and most of Bogota's food.

Mercados Campesinos became one of the main economic and political means where peasants demanded recognition in Bogota's food system. MC began as a program led by peasant organizations, and collectively organized by peasants through Municipal Peasant Committees [*Comites Campesinos Municipales*, CCM] (See Chapter Three), aiming to reduce the unfavorable economic conditions of rural peasants. Through MC, yearly peasant farmers' markets have taken place in Plaza Bolivar since 2004, and from 2012 to 2016 smaller weekly markets have set up in different neighborhoods throughout

the city, benefiting over 3000 peasant producer-sellers from 80 municipalities in the central region of Colombia (Oxfam, 2015). Apart from weekly and the yearly market, MC expanded to include a wholesale distribution chain, “*canal corto*” (Short-Channel), in which small producers from different municipalities collectively aggregate food supplies in their respective CCMs to sell to market plazas and fruit-markets (*Fruvers*) throughout Bogota(Parrado & Gutiérrez, 2014). Beneficiaries of the MC have experienced an increase in net household incomes in between 15 and 20 percent through direct access to consumers (Oxfam, 2015) removing the chains of intermediary distributors and retail shops. Furthermore, women have benefited from MC as they make up about 70 percent of the participants directly selling products to consumers in the local biweekly markets(Parrado & Molina, 2014).

Apart from the commercial aspects of MC, groups organizing the program aimed to influence food policies in favor peasant productive and commercial autonomy, and to guarantee food security and sovereignty to Bogota and rural regions in Colombia’s central region. Peasant organizations, mainly the regional peasant Association, *La Asociación de Usuarios Campesinos*, ADUC, and the national peasant union, *La Federación Nacional Sindical Unitaria Agropecuaria*, FENSUAGRO, alongside international NGOs such as Oxfam and the *Instituto Latinoamericano para una Sociedad y un Desarrollo Alternativos* ILSA (See Chapter Three), managed to influence the PMASAB by amending the plan to recognize the production and commercialization of peasant economies as an essential factor against hunger and malnutrition in the city and the region, and to outline food sovereignty as one of its defining characteristics.

With the early success the farmers' markets, Bogota's City Council signed Accord 455 of 2010, which institutionalized the program as form of local, regional and rural economic development based on the alignments established in the PMASAB. This Accord the aim of MC explicit: "the participants of these intermittent markers will be able to commercialize their agricultural products, organic and traditional crops, and at the same time present their artistic expressions and other cultural values of their region"(Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá, 2006). The article recognizes a form of economy with distinct commercialization methods, variety of products, and unique cultural practices. The same accord, however, gave Bogota's Secretariat of Economic Development, the agency in charge of the PMASAB, jurisdiction over the bi-weekly markets, as well as the larger MC that takes place in June at Bogota's main plaza to celebrate the National Peasant Day. This section of the decree established the District's regulatory control over the MC program, with consequences that to this day are playing out to the detriment of MC's autonomous process, formerly led by Colombian peasants (See Chapter Five).

MC continued from 2004 until the end of 2015, with partnerships between peasant associations and District authorities, beginning Mayor Luis Eduardo Garzón's, and succeeding Mayors Samuel Moreno (2008 – 2011), and Gustavo Petro (2012 – 2015), all members of the progressive party Alternative Democratic Pole [*Polo Democrático Alternativo*, PDA]. However, beginning in early 2016, with Enrique Peñalosa as the new Mayor, a change towards a more conservative political administration questioned the role of MC, and hence peasant economic and political

movements seeking out alternatives to the current food system. With the new administration, the district allowed partnerships with peasant organizations managing MC to expire, temporarily halting local farmers' markets, as well as the yearly market in Plaza Bolivar (Cruz Roa, 2016).

This thesis analyzes the conditions that allowed regional and national peasant organizations, alongside international NGOs, and other civil society actors to intervene in Bogota's food policy. I am particularly interested in the attempts of Colombian regional and national peasant organizations to influence food policies informed by discourses of food sovereignty and autonomy. Furthermore, I am interested in analyzing the forms of economic, political, and social practices of peasants participating and benefiting from MC as forms of autonomy and reciprocity practices. Even though the District stopped providing necessary funds to MC peasant farmers' markets, four of the fourteen biweekly markets continued in neighborhoods throughout Bogota. Peasants, with aid of local communal boards, continued to travel from neighboring regions into the city, pooling funds to transport their goods, set up the markets, and find transportation to return to their respective municipalities after their work days. As will be shown, peasant autonomous efforts to continue with minimal institutional support demonstrate perceived benefits of the MCs, and peasants' sense of empowerment to continue selling directly to producers and work without mainstream intermediation channels.

Nonetheless, as the case also demonstrates the District plays a fundamental role as a main actor facilitating and deciding the fate of MC, as well as broader food policies, creating tensions between aims of autonomy of peasants, peasant organizations, civil

society actors, and objectives of District authorities. The following research thus falls within and aims to contribute to the wide literature of peasant studies, specifically with regards to Food Sovereignty construction in Latin America.

CLASSICAL CONCEPTIONS OF PEASANT ECONOMIES

Chayanov, in *The Theory of Peasant Economy* (1986) described peasant family units as different to capitalist farmers, and hence challenged prevailing concepts of classical economics of the 19th century. Standard theories of wage labor and profit seeking were insufficient to describe Russian peasant families in the late 19th century. That is, the economic behaviors of peasant families did not fall under preconceived notions of production and profit seeking in farming practices. Instead, these families functioned based on “self-exploitation of family labor”, the subjective evaluation of whether the families achieved their basic needs. Each family sought an equilibrium between family needs and drudgery of labor. Therefore, what peasant families in Chayanov’s case sought, as opposed to profits, was to meet their subsistence needs.

Similarly, Scott, in *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (1977), shows peasant economic behavior as a main factor explaining why peasants in Southeast Asia revolted against exploitation from landlords and the State. Scott argues that failure is such a constant aspect of peasant lives that the economic choices they make are based on seeking safety, as opposed to seeking profit, as rational economic actor theories would suggest. For example, through the ‘safety first’ principle, Scott demonstrates that

peasants, when choosing seeds and cultivation techniques, preferred options that decreased risk and losses as much as possible, rather than maximizing their return on investments (1977, p. 18). Even in cases where peasants had the opportunity to use farming seed technology that guaranteed increased yields, they still preferred to maintain traditional farming techniques.

The same applied to cases where peasants had to choose how to distribute their labor towards subsistence farming versus cultivation and sale of cash crops. Even though cash crops provided more profits, in terms of incomes, peasants only produced cash crops after their subsistence farming needs were met. The difference between the two types of crops lies in their respective risks; while subsistence farming guarantees peasants' food supply, cash crops are riskier, as they depend on outside factors such as price, and consumer demand.

However, the peasants in Scott's account do not only embody the safety-first principle through their economic practices, they also express it through a range of "choices, institutions, and values in peasant societies that make up the peasant "subsistence ethic" (1977, p. 29). This subsistence ethic translates into a broader 'moral economy' guiding peasants' relationships with surrounding institutions, as well as their notions of justice and rights. With regards to surrounding institutions, peasants' criteria of fairness are based on whether whatever outside parties claim from peasant resources infringes on peasant subsistence thresholds, including (1), ownership over means of production and (2), subsistence guarantees and obligations from patrons and the state. That peasants have notions of what is just and what is right departs from analyses that

point to hunger, lack of incomes, or resources as sources of peasant revolt. Rather, there is a strong legitimizing notion as to how states and those that peasants are dependent on should rightly act. Thompson, similarly emphasizes on the moral economy of the poor, stating that “men and women in the crowd were informed by the belief that they were defending traditional rights or customs; and in general, that they were supported by the wider concerns of the community”(1993, p. 188).

The analysis of grievances, and peasant revolts thus hinges on peasant, (or in Thompson’s case, the poor’s) conceptions of what is the legitimate use of power and obligation of states and landowners towards their subjects. Peasant notions of rights relate to the claims outsiders make upon peasants, in relation to exploitative versus non-exploitative terms. What landlords and the state infringed on, according to Scott, are two moral principles: norms of reciprocity, and rights to subsistence. Reciprocity, as Scott states, “means that a gift or service received creates, for the recipient, a reciprocal obligation to return a gift or service of at least some value at some future date.” (1977, p. 163). The author sees this exchange of means or services mainly at the village level in Southeast Asian countries, in the form of mutual assistance practices, such as communal meals, labor exchanges, and ceremonial obligations.

Along with reciprocity, peasants invoked the right to subsistence towards state and elites. Scott emphasizes that peasants operated under a logical assumption that all members in a community had at least minimal claims to survival as far as resources allowed, and that elite’s claims to peasant’s production and labor should have not infringed on their rights to subsistence. The state should provide the minimal level

conditions for their survival. However, this right ultimately depended on elite's sense of obligation or perceived need of peasant's labor and production. The conflict between peasants, elites and the state had to do most with shifts in previous traditional feudal-subject relations, and the peasantry's need to maintain previous relationships of reciprocity and maintenance of subsistence. As will be argued, modern peasant struggles continue to be based on interactions with the state, whereby peasant invoke guarantees and obligations that latter might respect, or completely disregard to the detriment of the former.

CHANGES IN THE PEASANTRY

Chayanov 's theory of the peasant family economy, and Scott's further contribution of moral economy of peasants are important to understand peasant farmers and their economic and moral rationality. But historical changes have substantially modified the economic, social, and political context of present day peasantry, leading to different debates about the peasantry's condition in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Debates about the peasantry in the Global South is often placed within broader discussions of political and economic shifts in the international agricultural economy and state modernization (Friedman & McMichael, 1989; Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McMichael, 2009; Van Der Ploeg, 2010). Rural populations, as well as agricultural labor forces have experienced a dramatic shift in depeasantization, meaning the transformation of peasants into capitalist farmers or laborers in urban centers. National development and land reform policies across the global south, although redistributing some land, have mostly benefited land concentration, with reform only applying to mechanized processes

of cultivation that favor land concentration. Reforms and state credits policies ensuring credit and marketing have benefited capital accumulation in the farming sector. Land reform policies in the 1950s throughout the Global South did contribute to a proliferation of small farm, family size, mostly remaining “petty commodity producers heavily dependent on state subsidies and public and private financing for their production, and increasingly, for their consumption needs” (Araghi, 1995, p. 347). However, policies in favor of small farmers have been undermined as governments have decreased protection of local agriculture in favor of industrial development policies. States have accepted international commodity relations of the emerging world food order, which favors U.S. agribusiness subsidized exports. “Global Push factors” have led to processes of rural poverty and large transfer of rural populations to “urban centers of capital accumulation” (Araghi, 1995, p. 352).

Depeasantization further accelerated in the Global South starting in the early 1970s. Araghi points to the breakdown of the Bretton Woods System as a period that reorganized capital on a global scale. From then on financial capital has detached from national regulation, and this has been particularly deleterious to the peasantry. The export oriented policies that international financial institutions have supported as a condition to structural programs throughout the Global South has led to drastic cuts in farm subsidies, land market deregulation, wage freezes and the devaluation of national currencies, affecting peasants’ dependent on state support. Furthermore, the export oriented strategies have favored cash crops, with a result in the declining reliance of farmers on subsistence crops and increased dependence on international markets (Araghi, 1995).

It is important to note that the interpretations above place world food systems within historical configurations of political and capital relations. This does not mean that

these relations are fixed. Rather these analyses allow us to conceptualize historical periods of crisis and transition whereby different actors contest power and capital relations. Debates surrounding current moment of crisis and transition point to tensions between emerging global agricultural complexes and local forms of agricultural production. As McMichael writes, “Just as the dynamics of the previous regimes centered on tensions between opposing geo-political principles – colonial/national relations in the first, national/transnational relations in the second, so the corporate food regime embodies a central contradiction between a ‘world agriculture’ (food from nowhere) and a place-based form of agro-ecology (food from somewhere)” (2009, p. 147). By focusing on forms of local agriculture, McMichael draws our attention to social movements of dispossessed small farmers, pastoralists and transnational counter mobilizations in the name food sovereignty.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Food sovereignty first emerged as a demand of *Via Campesina*, an international peasant movement network made up of about 164 local and national peasant organizations in 73 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas (*Via Campesina*, n.d.). Beginning in the 1990’s, *Via Campesina* started participating in debates and conferences relating to international agricultural trade and issues of food security. The movement was the first to criticize the Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) concept of food security, which has evolved from a concept about state concerns

to provide sufficient food supplies and stable food prices, to a term that although it includes participation of non-state actors, reflected the weakness and lack of commitments of international organizations to quickly achieve human rights goals (Patel, 2009).

The food sovereignty movement of *Via Campesina* aims to consider food as human right, as opposed to a commodity; prioritize local and national production of food, as opposed to export agriculture, and promote trade policies that protect local farmers and guarantee just incomes, as opposed to trade policies that promote food dumping (Desmarais, 2007; Edelman, 2005). As declared by the Nyeleni Declaration of 2007, drafted by “organizations of peasants/family farmers, artisanal fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, landless peoples, rural workers, migrants, pastoralists, forest communities, women, youth, consumers and environmental and urban movement”, 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.” (“DECLARATION OF NYÉLÉNI,” 2007)

Via Campesina’s emphasis on rights stands out for the purposes thesis. Peasant rights politics informed by ideas of food sovereignty relate to a “right to have rights”. *Via Campesina*, by leaving language over rights vague, open spaces for “mass re-politicization of food politics, through a call for people to figure out for themselves what they want the right to food to mean in their communities, bearing in mind the community’s needs, climate, geography, food preferences, social mix, and history. Part of what this thesis explores is the process of democratic deliberation, and peasant

involvement in Colombian food politics, specifically in Bogota and the central region of the country. Colombia's peasant organizations, representing thousands of small farmers, have influenced district food policies, engaging in discourses over rights demands centered in the recognition rural peasantries as integral to feeding Bogota's population (See Chapter 3).

For Edelman (2005) the rise of peasant transnational networks such as *Via Campesina* have not only resulted from the threats that international institutions posed to peasants worldwide, but also the globalization of moral economic norms. Food sovereignty aims to put decisions about food policies back into the purview of the state, in the form of state recognition of local food systems, and increased decision-making in the hands of food producers and consumers. Comparing these demands with Scott's moral economy, they relate to restoration of some forms traditional peasant norms of reciprocity, and balancing the unequal relationship between international institutions, powerful actors (agribusiness, and agricultural exporting countries), and small and medium landowning peasants. Furthermore, demands for livelihoods and autonomy, and just behavior of powerful actors bring us back to the concept of subsistence ethic, albeit within more complex discourses, invoking not only peasants' right to subsist, but their right to continue livelihood practices.

THE PEASANTY AND THE STATE IN FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Bernstein (2014) criticizes the food sovereignty conception of peasant g‘community’ as an essentializing notion in food sovereignty discourses, which are attributed to the cooperative, reciprocal, egalitarian aspects of food sovereignty practices. For Bernstein, this “strategic essentialism” of community discourses obscure tensions and contradictions for example, within gender or intragenerational differences within the community. Strategic essentialism also hides important questions about “who” makes up the peasantry. Furthermore, much of the food sovereignty literature amounts to “emblematic instances” of peasant practices, including agro-ecological production, small-scale farming, seed exchange among peasants, and surplus sharing, which highlight the virtues of these practices as “capital’s other” (Bernstein, 2014, p. 1049). Bernstein claims that these ‘emblematic accounts’ bundle small-farmers, poor farmers, medium scale farmers, indigenous communities as part of one, the “peasant” social category, whose continuation is endangered by capital processes. In doing so, many FS researchers disregard why many farmers still choose, or depend on conventional farming methods.

Another criticism Bernstein makes about the ‘emblematic instances’ of food sovereignty is that these hinge on specialized export and domestic commodity production. This is to say, the category of *peasant* as conceptualized by Chayanov, as those families living under subsistence rationality is an irrelevant one. Even within the *Via Campesina* movement, farmer’s organizations such as the Network of Farmers’ and Agricultural Producers’ Organisations of West Africa (ROPPA) in West Africa and the National Family Farm Coalition in the USA engage in commodity production and exports in international markets (Burnett & Murphy, 2014). Burnett and Murphy point out that

commodity production for international trade is an important matter for the livelihoods of millions of small-scale producers, underexplored by the food sovereignty literature.

McMichael (2015) responds to Bernstein's criticism of Food Sovereignty emphasis on 'capital's other' by stating that as opposed to seeing peasant movements as otherworldly, the focus should be on seeing these as a fundamental product of capitalism. For McMichael, the peasantry is not a pre-capitalist class that needs to disappear for the expansion of capital. Rather, peasants are formed as historical subjects, which through the movement represent an anti-systemic struggle for their survival. The food sovereignty movement thus takes place within capital "against and (hopefully) beyond capital and its food regime, and so, as stated at the outset, the movement matures and evolves through struggle on a changing terrain" (McMichael, 2015, p. 198). Furthermore, the food sovereignty struggle is one of "unity in diversity" against dominant agriculture, making "peasantness" a political rather than an analytical category. The emphasis on peasantness thus shifts from questions about who exactly makes up the peasantry to those related to power relations, who wields power, and how peasants and other actors compete within and contest the current agricultural system.

This Thesis, following McMichael, conceptualizes the peasants in the case of *Mercados Campesinos* as a political category, emphasizing the struggle of peasant organizations, and peasants from different municipalities of the central region of Colombia, alongside international NGOs to influence Bogota's food system, while nonetheless being subjects intertwined and historically transformed within the same system. Furthermore, seeing the category of peasant as transformed within a historical

process, we can see how peasants attempt to reshape themselves while maintaining some characteristics of the past and aiming to retain a sense of autonomy in their economic practices. It is difficult to see the peasant as a category fixed in time.

The differences between peasants and non-peasants represents a grey zone, a fluctuation of a process that shifts from de-peasantization to re-peasantization (Ploeg, 2009). In some cases, peasants constitute themselves as capitalist entrepreneurs by self-commoditization, or hiring of wage labor for their production. In other cases, non – peasants might shift to peasant subsistence and reciprocity practices. The peasant category as conceived by Ploeg also blurs the boundary between corporate (capitalist) farming and peasant farming, as well as different methods of food distribution.

Depending on the cases, some peasants have constituted themselves as capitalist farmers, through land appropriation and reliance on wage labor, while other have come to own small farms and distanced themselves from main markets, relying instead on their own production and distribution mechanisms. Peasants thus reconstitute themselves through a reshuffling of balance of commodity and non-commodity relations. This reshuffling of the peasantry is based on the “particular features that reflect the society in which it is embedded and the history upon which it is built.” (2009, p. 39).

Rethinking of changes in the peasantry, and of food sovereignty movements embedded in specific histories and geographies leads to questions regarding the continuing role of states as main actors interacting with peasant movements. Bernstein calls the question of the state the ‘elephant in the room’ of the Food Sovereignty literature. Peasant movement’s appeals towards the state would “encompass a range of

effective policies and practices, from regulating international (and domestic) trade in food commodities, to protecting and promoting small-scale farming, to ‘scaling up’ from the local to the national – and to subsidise both (small) farm incomes and consumer prices for food sourced from small farmers (above)? – in short, a list of demands that no modern state has satisfied” (Bernstein, 2014, p. 1054). Some Latin American countries, such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela, have become significant actors in the Food Sovereignty movement, each with varying degrees of invention (Cockburn, 2014; McKay, Nehring, & Walsh-Dilley, 2014; Schiavoni, 2015). As Schiavoni (2015, 2016) states, national state intervention is a key challenge for research on food sovereignty construction; national level food sovereignty politics implicate the state, and thus forces a return to questions of state obligations, albeit in a different historical conjunction (2015, 2016). Furthermore, the call for food sovereignty movements to allow nations, peoples, and states to craft food policy, as opposed to policies ruled by the international arena, is also a call to reconfigure policies in a given territory and space, in which case the burden of who implements these rights falls back to the state (Patel 2009, p. 668).

ALTERNATIVE FOOD NETWORKS

At the center of the thesis is the aim of peasants to redefine food policies and practices that resist intensive industrial agriculture and centralized commercialization by wholesale markets and large supermarket chains. MC’s commercialization methods, including the *canal corto*, and the multiple farmer’s markets throughout Bogota can be

described by an emerging literature on the experiences of Alternative Food Networks (AFN). Mainly centered on cases in rich European countries and the United States (Jarosz, 2014; Renting, Marsden, & Banks, 2003) (Jarosz, 2014; Renting et al., 2003), AFN (also known as alternative food chains) refer to the emergence of new or alternative food supply chains as part of wider rural development patterns. These new chains take the form of diverse strategies, including organic farming, quality production of food, community-supported agriculture, and direct selling through farmers' markets. Diverse interpretations of AFN exist, but researchers commonly define AFNs as those food networks with shorter spatial distance between food production and consumption; small scale and agro-ecological production, as opposed to large scale agriculture; the existence of food commercialization venues such as farming cooperatives, and their commitment to socially and economically sustainable dimensions of food production, distribution and consumption (Jarosz, 2008).

These AFN represent efforts to re-spatialize and socialize food production, distribution and consumption, focusing on the development of links between producers and consumers, and rebalancing the unequal relations between urban and rural development (Blasi, Cicatiello, Pancino, & Franco, 2015). For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to inquire over how the separation of the city and countryside has fomented abstract dichotomies of the city and countryside, and how peasant organizations in Colombia have sought to bridge that gap by employing political discourses and practices in favor of rural-urban integration. The growth of metropolitan cities represented for thinkers and writers in the 19th century a separation from nature, a

triumph of humans over nature. This human triumph implies a control over the earth, a domination over the resources that nature provides. Cronon (1992) encourages readers to move away from the human-nature dichotomy to understand how intrinsically connected city inhabitants are to the “non-human” nature. He warns, “[b]By forgetting those people and their history (those living outside of cities, in nature), we also wall ourselves off from the broader ecosystems which contain our urban homes (1992, 18). This abstract city-countryside dichotomy has the effect of neglecting people outside in nature which continue to sustain the growth of major cities around the world.

Discussions over human-nature, city-countryside and other dichotomies begs the following question: why the fictional separation between these different spaces? Cronon observes that commodity chains of wheat, lumber, and meat separated these commodities from their natural source and hid the processes of capital accumulation that stemmed from such commodification. Alienation from nature hides the environmental and labor costs that allow corporate and industrial agriculture to create profits and transform economic markets.

Gouveia and Juska (2002) in examining the U.S. beef industry, provide an example in which corporate and state actions have manufactured the separation between production and consumption in contemporary agro-food industries. For the authors, the U.S. meat industry has been a site for capital accumulation, aided in large by cheap labor of immigrant workforces. Corporate control has been supported by state regulations which have continued reproducing the separation between producers and consumers. Regulations of the meat industry, rather than protecting workers, has focused on food

safety standards for continued consumption of meat. However, resistance towards food standards and better working conditions relate to a struggle towards achieving unity, bridging the gap between producers and consumers, and hence it can be argued, a process that recognizes the value of workers as an essential component to food production. This resistance stems from tensions between unity and separation embedded in social and class relations characterizing different historical eras. The historical era of capitalism that we are living can be seen as one of disembedding relations between humans and nature to draw from labor and natural resources as cheaply as possible (Moore, 2003).

AFN and the MC program in Bogota aim to re-embed the peasantry, and hence city and countryside relations into Bogota's food system, by checking, challenging, and influencing it in favor of more regional urban-rural development and reciprocity practices (See Chapter Four). Alternative food systems reframing food policy in terms of food sovereignty also seek to propose a solidarity based production rationality, based on dignified and livable and fair wages, quality production, and local food production (Heller, 2011). The AFN attempts to link production, distribution and consumption with the aim of promoting solidarity amongst peasant populations and consumers. There is an emphasis on sustainable development, which seeks to benefit often excluded and impoverished producers by improving incomes, maintaining cultural food practices, and ensuring democratic participation of peasant farmers.

The conceptions and experiences of AFNs could also fall to Bernstein's criticisms of essentializing community. As will be shown, the MC program is more an attempt of associations and civil society groups with different goals to attain "unity in diversity".

Furthermore, questions about the role of the state in these AFNs arise. The multiplicity of actors in food sovereignty movements, and what happens to these alternative food networks once the state becomes involved becomes a focus of this thesis.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This thesis contributes to the literature of food sovereignty construction, which involves actors with different meanings and goals interacting to influence the direction of food systems in particular geographical areas. The work is as much a historical account of how and under what conditions sovereignty movements arise, as how the definition of and how food sovereignty is continually manifested according to competing meanings. Furthermore, the thesis focuses in part on the prevalence of the state as a main factor influencing and dictating efforts towards, and at times against food sovereignty and peasant autonomy. The thesis centers on a regional and local level (involving the District and surrounding department), rather than national level food policies, but it nonetheless touches on current debates of state involvement. Finally, it also highlights the challenges and opportunities of food sovereignty at regional levels and what this means to the advancement and resistance of autonomous, egalitarian, and democratically based alternative food systems. To achieve this analysis, the thesis draws on Schiavoni's (2016) historical-relational-interactive (h-r-i) framework to study processes of food sovereignty construction: how different actors, including peasant organizations, peasants participating

in *Mercados Campesinos*, civil society groups, and District authorities, articulate, implement, and contest food policies and practices in a given setting.

The (h-r-i) framework emphasizes food sovereignty construction first as a historical process, shaped by the history in which it arises, and that continues to change as it unfolds over time. Second, a relational approach to food sovereignty emphasizes the open-ended nature of food sovereignty construction, the different meanings and goals of food sovereignty that actors pursue. Third, an interactive approach helps see food sovereignty construction as not exclusively driven by the state or other actors, but coming from the interaction between these different actors. The unit of analysis in the third component of the h-r-i framework is the political interaction between the main actors influencing food sovereignty construction. As Schiavoni argues, “the actions of state actors with respect to food sovereignty can only be understood in dialectical relationship with the actions of societal actors (and vice versa)” (2016, p. 3).

METHODS

The analysis of the *Mercados Campesinos* program, based on secondary sources, newspaper archives, participant observation and interviews uses a critical case study method (Yin, 2014). I conducted semi-formal interviews with key members of the peasant organizations ADUC, and FENSUAGRO, and AGROCOMUNAL, the main organizations that helped coordinate and manage MC and the CCM, to understand how they rationalize the existence and continuation of MC and their roles in the project. The

interviews were also designed to understand how the peasant organizations understand and articulate the MC project through the lens of food sovereignty. The interview included the organization's perspectives on MC, their role in the political demands for peasant recognition in the district's food policies, and their relationship with other partner peasant organizations, international NGOs, and the District. To complement the information that organization members provided, I conducted interviews with Oxfam members and local activists to understand their role with farmer associations and the MC program. Although the data gathered from the interviews do not provide a statistically representative sample of actors participating in the program, they provide an impression of the current discourse and rationales that actors at the policy level employ in favor of MC within the overall food system of Bogota.

I was not able to interview many representatives from the District due to limited access and fieldwork research time. I engaged in informal interviews and conversations with staff from Bogota's Institute for Social Economy [*Instituto para la Economía Social*, IPES], a District agency in charge of 16 public market plazas throughout the city, which MC's short distribution channel supplied, and where some peasants sell during weekends. IPES, although not as influential as the Economic Development Secretariat, is involved in the planning of future MCs according to the new development plan of Mayor Peñalosa's administration (See Chapter Four). To further understand how the District conceives of MC within a wider food system, I drew information from newspaper articles related to MC, and interview articles with the former Secretary of Economic

Development of the city, as well as District decrees and legislations pertinent to Bogota's food system.

The interviews I conducted lasted from fifteen to forty-five minutes, depending on how available the informants were. The interviews varied from official to more informal tones. For example, meetings with organization member took place in their office, while conversations with other key informants took a more personal tone. A local community board president invited me to eat *Lechona* and *Tamales*, traditional Colombian dishes during his interview. Leaders of the organizations interviewed had many years of experience working in their respective roles, and were essential in the foundation of MC.

In Bogota, I also visited one of the four functioning MC farmers' markets. A main objective of conducting analysis at this level was to explore how alternative food commercialization venue of MC unfolded in relation to the broader District and regional politics, as well as to analyze the experience of peasants working in the market. The interviews conducted included questions regarding their business history, relationships with the locality, peasant organizations and consumers. Another set of questions were made to explore how peasants understood, participated, and made claims with the organizations mentioned at the policy level, and how policies the district implemented altered their work. Local community leaders were important stakeholders interviewed at this level, since they logistically supported local MCs, and allowed those standing to continue in their respective localities (See Chapter 4). To maintain anonymity, I changed the names of the interviewees.

POSITIONALITY

I came to Bogota to observe and understand a process that I was not a part of, a struggle for peasants from the central region of Colombia to directly provide the food they produced in neighboring municipalities to residents of the country's capital. My research did not come from the request of peasant organizations, international NGOs, or government authorities I interacted with during the field research. However, I consider myself as an ally of the wider struggle for democratic and egalitarian production and commercialization, and insertion of political deliberation into questions about how food is produced, distributed and sold. This means that I am dedicated to supporting the local alternative food markets and organizations I have worked with. My research was thus grounded in concerns for *Mercados Campesinos* to continue as they had for the past twelve years, as a collective practice benefiting the livelihoods of peasants and the nutritional needs of poor residents in Bogota.

The research seeks to better understand processes of food sovereignty construction between state, society, and community actors, with a particular emphasis on how they negotiate with each other to implement food policies meant to improve rural development and feed urban populations. This work, apart from being a contribution towards food sovereignty literature, attempts to contribute to the challenges of negotiating around not only competing visions of peasant organizations and the state, but also between peasant organizations themselves. As I observed, the “peasantry” and

members of different peasant organizations managing *Mercados Campesinos* exhibited tensions and contradictions within peasant movements and populations that are far from being homogenous. These findings in no way seek to discredit peasant movements, but to recognize the process of food sovereignty construction, the multiple discourses and interests, and the “unity in diversity” of civil society organizations in the interest of advancing the political and material goals of the peasants participating in *Mercados Campesinos*.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT

Chapter Two provides a brief history and of Bogota’s food system, and the role of peasants in it. The Chapter outlines the various distribution and commercialization chains that have traditionally made up Bogota’s food system. I will describe the rise of market plazas throughout the city from the 19th century to the mid-20th century, and the establishment of the Corporation of Supply Markets of Bogota, [*Corporación de Abastos de Bogotá*, CORABASTOS], Bogota’s largest wholesale market association, as the state’s attempt organize food marketing, centralize and rationalize food distribution throughout the city. The chapter introduces the increase of market-share of national and international supermarkets, starting in the 1980s’, which have managed to control all aspects of production and marketing, and food retail in Bogota. A historical glance situates Colombian peasants’ food sovereignty efforts within a broader food system. Transformation of food commercialization in the city demonstrates how an increase in

the number of actors in the regional food system (producers, intermediaries, wholesale markets, and sellers, regulatory institutions, regional, municipal, and state authorities), and the concentration of market power among a small number of wholesalers and supermarkets have posed a challenge for peasants seeking to participate in and influence food policy. This section points to the district's historical role in food systems planning. Furthermore, it introduces peasants surrounding the metropolitan core as a marginalized, but essential actors that have mobilized to present economic and political alternatives for Bogota's food system.

Chapter Three provides a contextual analysis of the recent debates over MC. Following Schiavoni's relational framework of food sovereignty analysis, I will identify and describe the main actors and institutions involved in the formulation of food policies of Bogota and the surrounding rural departments. This section explores the different meanings and claims that these actors pursue, analyzing the discourses and practices of peasant organizations, international NGOs, and District officials to understand the political interaction between the main actors influencing food sovereignty construction within the PMASAB.

Chapter Four describes the field work I conducted in a local MC in Bogota during the summer of 2016 to understand the efforts of peasants towards collective and autonomous organization to improve their livelihoods, production and commercialization, as well as to create urban-rural linkages between producers and consumers. I contrast the peasants actions with the most recent actions of the District to bypass peasant and international organizations to set up their own version of the *Mercados Campesinos*,

removing collective and associative aspects of previous years, and leaving it to municipal institutions to choose “entrepreneurial peasants”. This chapter provides implications over the difficulties of MC and other food sovereignty programs to maintain autonomy vis a vis more powerful actors shaping food sovereignty discourses and practices.

Chapter 2: Bogota's Food System

FROM COLONIAL MARKET TO A MODERN FOOD SYSTEM

One of the first things leaders in Colombia's peasant organizations mentioned about the MC program was the historical roots of peasant markets as part of the early commercial practices in the city. A spokesperson for ADUC stated that the project was as much an alternative to the mainstream food system as it is part of a historical tradition in Bogota. She commented, "In 1810, the Bolivar Plaza (Bogota's main city square) was an important scene for peasant markets; it was from there that compatriots of Nueva Granada gained their independence. Thanks to the peasant markets. This is a historical and cultural legacy for our peasants" (Angela, interview, July 28, 2016) This and other accounts refer to the foundational date of the Colombian nation's independence on Friday, July 20th of 1810. What the organization leaders emphasize is the importance of the weekly market in the main city plaza (known as *Plaza Mayor* prior to the independence) as a catalyst for the beginning of the revolutionary movement, and hence the creation of the Colombian nation-state.

During Colonial times, most the food that reached the city was commercialized in small grocery stores (*pulperias*), and in the weekly market in the main city plaza. The weekly market represented a break from the quotidian days and rigid social structures of Bogota's daily life, where peasant men and women came from the countryside to sell

their products. In the market, multitudes of people from different classes, sellers and consumers interacted regardless of social status. The market was a space in which city inhabitants could supply their food needs and maintain social and cultural orders established, such as dress codes and manners, that were reaffirmed with the trade interaction between residents and visiting sellers. This space also represented a series of established economic, social and cultural connections between countryside and Bogota (Ojeda, 2008).

In August of 1861, the governor of the Bogota, Tomas Cipriano de Mosquera, published a decree prohibiting the market in the main plaza, by the time referred to as *Plaza Bolivar*, moving it to other smaller plazas in the vicinity. The decree reasoned that the move was to improve the main plaza, enclosing it from the public and away from of public administrative offices and the main cathedral. For Mejia (2000), urban changes between the early 19th to the beginning of the 20th century represented a rupture from the colonial social system to a reconfiguration of urban spaces, best encapsulated by conceptions of order. The removal of popular market outside of the main plaza, dispersed in different areas of the city represented such reconfiguration. As Castro (1994) emphasizes, this signified the “triumph of the Republic”.

By January of 1864, city administrators inaugurated the *Concepción* market plaza, in an enclosed space in what used to be a convent, as the first of its kind in the city to provide spaces where the increasing urban populations could find quality food. The market was expanded in 1880 and again in 1893, with the addition of a building specifically designed for the sale of meat. Population in the city expanded from 20,000

inhabitants in the beginning of the 19th century to 112,000 in the beginning of the 20th century and the *Concepción* market was not able to supply such population growth, which forced city officials to allow other markets to stay open, and to create other market plazas (Mejia, 2000).

Nonetheless, *Plaza de la Concepcion* became the main space for food distribution and retail in the city until 1953, when it was demolished and wholesalers moved to a series of vacant lots in the Spain Plaza [*Plaza España*], still located in the center of the city. However, the change did not mean further planning or changes in the infrastructure of food trade in the city (Silva, 1976). The locality of *Plaza España*, previously a residential zone in the downtown area of Bogota became a complex mix of wholesale bodegas, congested with trucks bringing, cantinas, private and public offices, family homes, brothels, and street vendors. For city officials, the chaotic conditions of the plaza had to stop. In 1972, after extended negotiations between merchants, wholesalers, and city officials, *Plaza España* was militarized, evacuated, and moved outside the city center to the current facilities of CORABASTOS (Alvarez, Rudas, & Elcy, 1991).

The closure of *Plaza España* and the creation of the CORABASTOS wholesale market represents one of the main aspects of developmentalist thought put in practices throughout the 20th century in Latin America, as the government decided to sustain the dramatic growth of urban populations coming from rural areas (Guarin, 2009). Studies conducted by the Latin American Marketing Institute, ILMA (a division of FAO), and the Latin American Market Planning Center, LAMP, argued against the perceived inefficiencies of traditional markets in cheaply feeding the growing city populations. The

inefficiencies included the heterogeneous aspect of Colombia's agricultural sector; lack of standardization, grading, transportation and packaging, and conservative practices that avoided innovation and competition (Guarin 2009, p. 53).

The state did not achieve its desired goals to centralize food distribution, reduce food prices, and make food commercialization more efficient. Instead, the new conditions of the wholesale markets, including improved transformation, logistics, and information gave a small percentage of wholesalers (20 percent controlling 60 percent the volume of food traded) consolidated power and advantage to take part in economies of scale, improved their bargaining ability, and increased their profit margins (Guarin 2009, p. 55).

Despite the inefficiencies taking place, most trade in of fruits and vegetables still take place in CORABASTOS. Between 5500 and 7500 tons of food, mostly perishables, arrive at the wholesale center every day from all over the country to be sold in Bogota, and rerouted to other regional markets. The consolidated group of merchants, who buy and sell large quantities of food, largely determine the price of foods of most the products that are sold in Colombia. Apart from the wholesalers, the city is mostly supplied by thousands of smaller merchants who buy, sell and reassemble products for more than 120,000 corner stores, 2500 butchers, and 1500 retail points including market plazas like the ones mentioned earlier (Guarín, 2013). These traditional retail points mostly cater to poorer area of the city, while supermarkets sell to middle and high-income costumers.

CORABASTOS, while being of major importance to the trade of perishables such as fruits and vegetables, has lost much its importance in market share of food distribution to supermarkets. A radical transformation of the Colombian retail sector began in the

early 1990s through economic liberalization, receiving over US\$3 billion through direct investments into the retail sector between 1997 and 2007. One of the effects of the increase in supermarket has been in the wholesale (downstream) effects of market share, becoming substantial buyers of fresh produce. At the same time of expansion sales of supermarkets and hypermarkets jumped by 43%, and the number of stores nearly tripled. Foreign retail stores, such as *Carrefour* and *Exito* lead the supermarket retail market share, which mostly target their sales to middle and wealthy costumers. Supermarkets have achieved these increases by establishing their own procurement channels. Nonetheless, these large chains still rely on wholesale markets, sourcing a tenth of their fresh produce and a quarter of their produce (Guarin, 2013).

Although supermarket expansion has affected the retail sector, Guarin (2013) argues that the most important shift has been a movement away from market plazas. The author attributes this to the financial troubles of these state-owned markets, which many of which have shut down or fallen into disrepair since the 1980s, likely due to cultural shifts and the appeal of all-in one supermarkets or smaller retail stores. In 2005, the percent volume of tons of fresh produce retailed was 10 in public plazas was percent, compared to 39 percent in small retail stores, and 38 percent in supermarkets.

PEASANTS ECONOMY IN COLOMBIA

Peasant economies play an integral part in the city's food supply chain. As noted, a few but powerful wholesalers control the assembly and distribution of food, while a

multitude of retailers, including corner stores and supermarkets sell directly to consumers. The peasant economy forms the other part of the hourglass chain in the city's food system. Nationally, peasant farming, characterized by small-scale (less than three hectares) accounts for half of the volume of fresh fruits and vegetables produced (Guarin, 2009, p. 63). Regionally, according to the PMASAB, 2.8 million tons of produce entered Bogota in 2002, of which around 75 percent of the food was produced by peasant farmers, and 25 percent by capital intensive and technical farming (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006).

The MC program has as one of its goals to revive traditional structure of farmers' market, but market modernization through supermarkets, and the expansion of retail stores, as well as the strength of wholesale distributors poses challenges to alternative solutions for peasant farmers. The PMASAB as first conceived, placed interest the modernization of commercialization venues like public market plazas, focused on high public investment of public infrastructure, and on the control of private capital. Peasant organizations, alongside other civil society actors, argued that such plans would have the effect of excluding thousands of people tied to functioning of the current food system, mainly small landholding peasants. In this case we see the states' continual aim to 'develop' the peasantry, including food production and commercialization methods, in ways that peasant organizations found detrimental to peasant autonomy.

PEASANT MOBILIZATION AND THE RISE OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY DISCOURSES

Peasant mobilization in Colombia has historically been one of regional struggles against processes of land concentration and displacement of peasant populations to marginal areas of the main cities in the country (as well as the displacement of millions of indigenous, and Afro Latino Colombians) (Carvajal Sanchez, 2011; LeGrand, 1986; Tovar Pinzón, 1975). Peasants have been at the center of a history marred by war, violence, drug trade, and armed conflict over the control of land and resources. Alejandro Reyes Posada (2016) sees Colombia as offering “the image of a living museum of conflicts” in different regions of the country: continued colonization and expulsion of indigenous groups in the agricultural frontiers of the Amazonian region; conflict between landless peasants and a group of small, but politically powerful regional landowners in the Atlantic coast; and the conflict between guerrilla groups such as the ELN, the Farc, and contract companies of the oil industry to capture oil rents and control over oil pipelines in Barranca Bermeja, el Catatumbo, and Arauca in the northeastern region of the country.

Even so, the central region of Colombia, where many of the peasants participating in MC have come from, has not been exposed to the level violence of other parts of the country. As Posada explains, large scale conflict over land has been relatively absent in this region; the central problem, rather, is the unequal exchange between the urban economy and low inversion and returns to the rural economy, which has affected the economic conditions of the peasantry in the region. Apart from unequal land distribution, the main issue in the central region is an economic one, where although peasants have been an integral part of the economy, they have nonetheless been excluded and are at

great disadvantage from the food distribution and commercialization chains. Land transportation has been an issue for the rural communities, which have been marginalized from engaging in commerce because of the low quality of roads (See Chapter Four).

The issues peasant have experienced in the central region of Bogota prompted a group of peasant organizations to unite in Bogota. In 2003, 12 national peasant associations, two regional associations, Afro Colombian and Indigenous organizations, worker unions, and student organizations gathered in what became the first National Agrarian Congress. As a leader of the FENSUAGRO organization stated, there have been attempts at agrarian reforms, but none of these have been applied to benefit the needs of small to medium farmers in Colombia. (Carlos Julio, interview, August 22, 2016). As a result, the groups meeting in the National Agrarian Congress set of 14 issues of importance in the agrarian sector of Colombia, which included human rights, women's rights, land rights, and sovereignty, autonomy, and food security. Finalizing the Congress, the parties drafted and signed the *Mandato Agrario* (Agrarian Mandate). Of the fourteen points that make up document, the one on food sovereignty included a passage encouraging the autonomous and sovereign production, distribution, consumption through a production system meant to generate basic goods to fulfill the nutritional and cultural needs of consumers. This point laid out the basis for *Mercados Campesinos* as alternative commercialization venue whereby regional and peri-urban small farmers could produce, distribute, and sell their products directly to consumers in Bogota.

The following chapter continues with the recent history of peasant mobilization to influence food policies in Bogota, and their efforts to construct food sovereignty as one

of the main aspects of Bogota's food system. As the chapter explores, peasant ideas of food sovereignty were not one-dimensional; they contrasted and clashed against state notions of modernization and further efficiency of the food system. Even within peasant organizations, meanings of food sovereignty differed, leading to a separation of peasant associations.

Chapter Three: Food Sovereignty Construction in Bogota, Colombia

PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS AND STRUGGLES TOWARDS AUTONOMY

The following chapter demonstrates how key actors within Bogota's food system understand and articulate different sets of claims and discourses to influence food policy. Drawing on Schiavoni (2016), the chapter situates the interaction between different actors as a continuing process through time. The analysis therefore sees food policy as an open-ended process that is continually contested and defined by a different set of actors. That is, the very meaning and practices of food sovereignty are shaped by often competing paradigms and approaches.

The relational approach, as suggested by recent literature on food sovereignty (Shattuck, Schiavoni, & VanGelder, 2015), attempts to resolve contradictions within food sovereignty discourses. In the case of Bogota, regional and peasant organizations, District agencies, and representatives of local communal boards, were key players in the debates over the goals and strategies set forth in Bogota's 2006 Master Plan for Food Security and Supply [*Plan Maestro de Abastecimiento y Seguridad Alimentaria*, PMASAB] institutionalized through District Decree 315. Peasant organizations managed to introduce food sovereignty as one of the defining principles of the PMASAB, as "the rights of peoples to define their own policies and sustainable strategies of production, distribution and consumption of foods that guarantee the right to food for its population, based on small and medium production, respecting the cultures and diversity of agricultural

production, commercialization and management of rural spaces of peasants, fishermen and indigenous peoples, in which women play a fundamental role” (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006).

Furthermore, the PMASAB established *Mercados Campesinos* as a commercialization venue where regional and peri-urban small farmers would be able to produce, distribute, and sell their products directly to consumers in Bogotá. Peasant organizations hailed the MC program as an autonomous, and alternative commercialization venue where farmers could effectively bypass intermediaries and wholesale distribution centers, cutting out middlemen to raise their incomes through fair prices earned by selling directly to consumers.

The chapter explores the following problematic: peasant discourses for food sovereignty, and *Mercados Campesinos*, are formulated and interpreted within Bogotá’s PMASAB, a city and regional food policy based on different sets of discourses and practices on how to resolve pressing issues in distribution and malnutrition of Bogotá. Peasant organizations make claims for sovereignty and right to self-government and autonomy; however, while they call for autonomy and for separation from the state, they at the same time require the state to guarantee such rights.

The search of peasant organizations to gain autonomy, while relying on the state to institutionalize food sovereignty movements presents a contradiction that the food sovereignty literature has debated on the relation between food sovereignty and food policies that states adopt and implement (Clark, 2016; Cockburn, 2014; McKay et al., 2014; Schiavoni, 2015). For Ploeg (2009), a central aspect to the peasant condition

is the struggle for autonomy in a context of dependency relations that lead to marginalization and deprivation. Peasants aim to create and develop self-controlled and self-managed resource bases to allow co-production of man and nature that interact with the market, enlarge their resource production base, and thus increase autonomy and reduce dependency. However, how can peasants achieve autonomy while at the same time requesting access to markets, and state sponsorship? The case of peasant organizations in Colombia exemplifies this dilemma, where peasant movements have become entwined with the state, becoming dependent on District policies for access to market, monetary funds, and recognition, while at the same time making calls for political and economic autonomy. As opposed to separating themselves from the state, peasant organizations sought to interact within it, as well as dominant market conditions, and contest them at the same time.

At the heart of this chapter is the attempt to explore this contradiction. How do different actors participating in the food sovereignty construction understand and articulate claims to influence and participate in domestic food systems in particular geographical settings?

Focusing on the relationship between peasant groups, the state, and the market helps to resolve these binaries. As Shattuck et al state, “rather than regarding food sovereignty as being either ‘of the state’ or ‘of peoples/communities’, one to the exclusion of the other, understanding sovereignty as relational leaves room for different sovereign actors to coexist, with the terms of their engagement under ongoing negotiation, including which state agencies/powers are worth engaging with in any given moment” (2015, p. 425). In

adopting this line of argument, peasant movements simultaneously call for the state to recognize sovereignty rights of peasants while attempting to assert their own autonomy. It is therefore important to see how peasant food sovereignty movements fare by interacting with state and market actors, as well as how state agencies respond and relate to movements.

This chapter identifies and describes the main actors and institutions involved in the formulation of food policies of Bogota and the surrounding rural Departments. This helps show the different meanings and claims that these actors pursue and help answer how different actors view food sovereignty and Bogota's food policies; the respective roles of state and social actors that determine food policy; the values and principles driving different actors, and the commercialization models that result from different food policies.

One of the first actors to be understood is Bogota's District. More specifically, the chapter analyzes the District's PMASAB, a District effort aimed at guaranteeing food security in the city, and improving perceived inefficiencies within the regional food system. In the early 2000s Bogota's officials began to concern themselves with issues of food distribution and malnutrition in the city. In 2004, Bogota's Mayor Luis "Lucho" Garzon, concerned with poverty and exclusion called his administration's Economic Development plan 'Bogota Without Indifference [*Bogota Sin Indiferencia*]. The Plan expressed the city's social commitment against poverty, and promoted the articulation of policies and strategies to guarantee food and nutritional security. Alongside the Economic Development plan, Mayor Garzon created the program Bogota Without Hunger [*Bogota*

Sin Hambre] which focused on providing food to poorer areas of Bogota by implementing community and youth dining halls. Strategies to achieve food security, according to key sections of the plan, followed a modernizing paradigm based a neoliberal logic of state intervention that would allow proper market conditions to emerge.

A second set of actors to be understood are the regional and national peasant organizations. This chapter outlines peasant organizations' political interaction with the state, and how they became involved in debates about the outcome of the PMASAB. The food policy first promoted by the District, based on increased market efficiencies, improved transportation, and integration of distribution chains contrasted with peasant organizations' visions for an alternative production, distribution and commercialization chains recognizing peasant production and promoting peasant autonomy. Peasant organizations directly challenged a policy that would potentially threaten peasant livelihood practices, and thus sought to protect themselves by engaging directly with the state.

As the analysis of the PMASAB demonstrates, the outcome of food policies aiming to reform include within them a variety of meanings, with different perspectives that often conflict and contradict with each other. Although the District's main food policy includes within it the concept of food sovereignty and *Mercados Campesinos* as part of the plan, it is not clear how the plan has increased participation of peasant organizations in determining food policies. If anything, the government actions of the city

ultimately reduced the input and participation of peasant organizations in the MC program (See Chapter Four)

POLITICAL PRESSURE AND THE MAKING OF THE PMASAB

After the Agrarian Congress of 2013, regional and national organizations set up an assembly, made up of peasants coming from 53 municipalities from the departments of Cundinamarca, Boyaca, Tolima, Meta, Huila, Santander, Casanare, and Guaviare. During this meeting, the organizations established the *Comite de Interlocucion Campesino y Comunal* (CICC) as a broader association for dialogue and deliberation for the organizations.

Several regional and national peasant organizations participated in the establishment of the CICC and the debate leading up the final draft of the PMASSAB. These included the San Isidro Foundation, a peasant organization from the Department of Boyacá that focused on capacity building, peasant organizing and management; the National Association of Peasant Women, a women's union focusing on social service and defense of peasant women; the Colombian Peasant Association [*Asociacion Campesina Colombiana*], a peasant union made up of regional ,municipal, and local peasant organizations; the National Association of Solidary Help [*Asociacion Nacional de Ayuda Solidaria*], an association focused on attending and accompanying war victims, and advocating for international human rights; and the Confederation of Communal Action Boards [*Confederacion de Juntas de Accion Comunal*] which unites local communal

boards from the city in support of promoting solidarity and self-help practices of local communities in Bogota (ILSA, 2010)

The other main organization is the *Federacion Sindical Unitaria Agropecuaria*, FENSUAGRO, the largest agricultural workers union in Colombia. Founded in 1976, the union is present in 23 Departments in the country, with more than 80 thousand members (Semana, 2009a). Of the Colombian organizations mentioned, FENSUAGRO is part of Via Campesina, the international peasant organization calling for food sovereignty (See Chapter One).

FENSUAGRO's aim for agrarian reform has met with violence from paramilitary groups and persecution from the state. From 1986, more than 400 members of the organization have been killed (ILSA, 2010). Furthermore, the state has made claims about ties between FENSUAGRO and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrilla group, and has arrested members leading members of the syndicate ("Colombia," 2013; *Semana*, 2009b).

As the largest regional and national peasant organizations promoting food sovereignty practices, ADUC and FENSUAGRO would become the main organizations interacting with the District in drafting the PMASAB and organizing local MCs. They would work together alongside the international nonprofits of ILSA and Oxfam, but eventually separated because of organizational and ideological differences.

ENTER THE PMASAB

In 2004, leaders from the CICC found out about a draft of the PMASAB, a plan originally unknown to the public. Jesús Aníbal Suárez, representative of the Agrarian Program at ILSA, got a hold of a draft of the plan, and shared it with peasant organizations. ILSA, and peasant organizations thought that the plan was based on finding minimal prices for food supplies, without considering the need of producers, and it was not aware of the benefits of peasant access to markets to reduce rural poverty (Pesquera, 2011). As Efrain, one of the organizational leaders stated, the original drafted plan had no mention of the peasantries' importance of feeding the city. He also claimed that the plan had a neoliberal focus to it, claiming that it would hand over control of fresh agricultural products, processed and meat products to large capital interests. According to Efrain, the idea of the PMASAB began with previous mayors of Bogota, Enrique Peñalosa and Antanas Mockus, as part of a national Territorial Ordering Plan [*Plan de Organizacion Territorial*, POT] which aimed to create 12 master plans for municipal governments in Colombia organize their cities (See Government Planning as a Contested Process). According to Efrain, Peñalosa believed that the candidate he supported for the 2003 Bogota Mayor election, Juan Lozano Ramirez, would win to support his business-friendly food master plan, but the social democrat Luis Eduardo Garzon won the local elections. (Efrain, interview, July 26, 2016).

Concerns over draft prompted peasant organization leaders to establish a dialogue with the recently elected Mayor Garzon. The new mayor had demonstrated support for the agrarian congress of 2003 and was willing to speak with peasant organizations to allow peasant organizations to take part in 'Bogota Without Hunger' plan (Hernan,

interview, August 2, 2016). ILSA managed to assemble more than 100 people in a series of reunions to come up with proposals to pressure Mayor Garzon. Peasants formulated a series of demands tied to the Mayor's agenda: peasants wanted to be part of the solution to get rid of hunger in the city, and their production could solve the alimentary problems (Pesquera, 2011).

During this time peasant organizations started setting up small farmers' markets throughout the city, as well as the larger market in *Plaza Bolivar* in November 4, 2004. These markets, were initially funded by the Swedish Embassy in Colombia (Efrain, interview, July 26, 2016; interview, Carlos Julio, August 22, 2016). It was in these first attempts to set up farmers' markets, and to politically influence the PMASAB that peasant organizations began coordinating the Municipal Peasant Committees, [*Comites Campesinos Municipales*, CCM].

The CCM's first took form as a strategy for peasant organizations to include as many peasants in the conversation to include language of peasant economies in the food master plan. As part of the peasant organizations' focus on the right of peasants to participate in their own food policies, the CCM allowed peasants from different municipalities to become involved in the design, formulation and implementation of their demands for the PMASAB. The CCMs afterwards shifted their political goals to become the space in which participants of MCs sought to consolidate food supplies to consumers in Bogota: CCMs served as the first venue for logistical commercialization purposes, which helped peasants aggregate the food supply between participating members and organize the necessary logistics for peasants to participate in the farmers' markets. The

CCMs thus formed the basis for peasants to organize, have the necessary supply for wholesale, decide which members would travel to sell their products and the products of fellow members in the markets (ILSA, 2010).

ILSA began to expand their process of political participation to 50 food producing municipalities outside of Bogota. Of these municipalities, 42 of the mayors publicly supported the peasant's proposals (ILSA, 2012). ILSA also held conversations with CORABASTOS representatives in a tactical move to have the political influence of the wholesale distributors change the original plans of the PMASAB draft (Pesquera, 2011).

On March 17, 2005, a peasant leader representing CICC intervened in Bogota's Council, inviting the councilmembers to visit a peasant farmers' market that ILSA, Oxfam, and the CICC had set up in the building's plaza (ILSA, 2012; Pesquera, 2011). As a result, the Municipal Council made the compromise to ask the Mayor to open a public debate on the PMASAB. Bogota's Council also organized a series of public debates which started dialogues between the Mayor and producers from municipalities of the central region of Colombia. The Mayor's office eventually acceded to revise the PMASAB, changing the concept "lowest food prices" written in the first draft to "just prices". Furthermore, a Directive Committee was set up to implement the PMASAB, which included two representatives of the peasant organizations (Pesquera, 2011). After a year of deliberation between the Garzon's administration, peasant organizations, ILSA, and Oxfam, the Mayor signed the PMASAB, Decree 315, on August 15th, 2006.

Another important initial achievement was that with the Mayor's administration, peasant organizations, Oxfam, and ILSA established the first pilot project for MC. Oxfam

took on the role of mediator in the process between the peasant producers and the District, while the project was to be administratively managed by ILSA. This was to become the structure of future partnerships, with the international organizations administering the budget of the MCs, and the peasant organizations managing the CCM.

MODERNIZING BOGOTA'S FOOD SYSTEM

Even though peasant organizations, alongside international NGOs, managed to influence and change the language of the PMASAB, Decree 315 of 2006 set out a broader objective to promote changes in Bogota's food system, considering cultural, operational and territorial factors aligning with the planning goals of the POT. The PMASAB was separated within three main policy lines. The first was a social policy to guarantee food security, fair prices, and quality foods. The second was policy based on operational strategies to democratize and make the distribution system more efficient; and the third a policy of regional integration to improve distribution and economic activities in the region (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006).

In setting the plan, the District directly managed and regulated the food system of Bogota's and the central region of Colombia. Apart from the social policy aspects of the Decree, the plan saw a need to reorganize and decentralize distribution sources, claiming that the current food system, production, and distribution at the time lacked information, connectivity, credit, and proper logistical facilities to make it a more efficient system

required to mobilize large volumes of food needed for consumption (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006).

The PMASAB was also concerned with lack of access to technologies, problems with intermediaries, food wastes, and the low impact of market plazas. The goals, as stated through article 5 of the decree directly addressed those issues. These included eliminating inadequate manipulation of products, producing quality products, and guaranteeing sanitary conditions for production, distribution, and commercial facilities. Another goal was concerned with a “cultural” transformation, aiming for behavioral changes of good practices in production, manufacturing, and industry; changes in practice of food manipulation, storage, and transportation, and promoting cultural changes to improve eating habits, including balanced diets, based on the consumption of healthy foods. One important aspect of the cultural goals of the decree is that it was also meant to induce agroecological practices, something that peasant organizations themselves promoted, and criticized that the District was obstructing in favor of more industrialized agricultural practices (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogota*, 2006).

Furthermore, the text sought to promote organization and integration of peasants and producers to increase productivity, as well as better management to allow for “just” prices of products, and improving the integration of value chains. The emphasis of on the “just” prices demonstrates the achievements of peasant organizations in influencing the language of the PMASAB. As Pesquera (2011) writes, the initial language focused on achieving the “lowest” prices for consumers, whereas peasant organizations, ILSA, and

Oxfam pushed for “just” prices, which included the best prices for both consumers and producers.

Important strategies to achieve the goals of the PMSAB included integration, management, participation and communication strategies between different levels of government, regions, and actors in the food system. The operative strategies focused on connecting the system to facilitate small and medium scale producers, industry, and commerce to an information system based on supply and demand. The operative strategies also focused on transforming the culture of participants of the system. Another important aspect was the strategic plan to build and enforce “logistic platforms”, as a counterpart to the centralized wholesale market of CORABASTOS,. The platforms would be made up by a network of already existing market plazas, sub regional food collection and wholesale commercialization centers, AGROREDES, and NUTRIREDES (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006).

PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS: BETWEEN AUTONOMY AND STATE RECOGNITION

Through the process outlined above, peasant organizations, alongside international NGOs such as Oxfam and ILSA, managed to influence the PMASAB by amending it to recognize peasant economies, and food sovereignty as two of the main articles of the decree. The decree ended up emphasizing the importance of the production and commercialization of peasant economies as an essential factor against hunger and

malnutrition in the city and the region, and adopted food sovereignty as one of its defining characteristics.

The PMASAB recognized that most of Bogota's food is produced in the surrounding rural departments of Cundinamarca, Boyacá, Tolima y Meta, as well as the rural areas of Bogotá. In 2006, thirty three percent of basic food products consumed in Bogota were produced within a forty-kilometer radius and close to eighty percent within a radius of 300 kilometers. Of these, the PMASAB estimated that Peasants supplied 65 percent of the city's food (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006).

Article 10 of the plan laid out the management structure of the PMASAB. With the 2008 amendments to the plan, through Decree 040 of 2008, the Directive Council of the plan was made up by the Mayor of Bogota, and its delegate from the District Secretariat for Economic Development, The District Secretary of Health, Secretary of the Environment, the District Planning Secretary, the Director of the Institute for Social Economy, two representatives from Consulting Boards, a representative of peasant organizations, and a representative from District Local Communal Boards. Although the Economic Development Secretariat agency would manage the master plan, the directive council had the role to formulate objectives, set policies to guarantee participation of actors in the supply system, define strategies and programs to implement the PMASAB, strategies for public-private partnerships, determine use of funds, among other duties (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006). As conceived by the District, the master plan included participation and input from a variety of agencies and civil society groups

It was through the deliberation between the District and civil society groups that a political space opened for peasant organizations to participate, and influence food policies, institutionalizing the concept of food sovereignty. The PMASAB apart from its emphasis of on modernizing, integrating, and making production, distribution, and commercialization of food more efficient, at the same time contained language protecting and recognizing traditional peasant production. It also acknowledged *Mercados Campesinos* as one of the commercialization strategies of the plan. This seemingly contradictory goals of the PMASAB provide a glimpse into the different values and principles that peasant organizations seek as part of the future of their food system. However, even between peasant organizations, and the supporting NGOs Oxfam and ILSA, different values ideas on how to manage MCs and relate to the state emerged.

MERCADOS CAMPESINOS, AND SEPARATION OF CICC MEMBERS

From 2006 to 2011 the District's Economic Development Secretariat, ILSA, Oxfam, and the CICC executed a series of partnerships that allowed for the implementation and development of the PMASAB's goal of the commercialization channel for peasant economies, which resulted in *Mercados Campesinos*. ILSA and Oxfam presented the project outline, and oversaw the administration, and budget of the project. The length of the partnerships ranged from 6 months to more than a year. Project budgets also varied. The first partnership had a budget of 237 million pesos (around 125,000 US dollars) with the Economic Development Secretariat providing 220 million

pesos and Oxfam and ILSA providing the rest. The partnership of 2009, which sought to further consolidate commercialization strategies of MCs, resulted in a budget of more than 1.4 million pesos (around 50,000 US dollars). Again, the District provided most of the funds, while ILSA and Oxfam were left to administrate the funds (ILSA, 2012).

During this period 400 MCs took place in ten parks of eight neighborhoods of Bogota, and 7 larger markets in the Bolivar Plaza. MC organizers also began developing the *Canal Corto* distribution channel to fruit stores and market plazas in Bogota. In 2010, political incidence from the peasant organizations resulted in the signing of District Accord 455 of 2010, which institutionalized peasant markets for local, regional and rural economic development according to the alignments established in the PMASAB. The article made explicit the aim of MCs: “the participants of these temporal markers will be able to commercialize their agricultural products, organic and traditional crops, at the same time presenting their artistic expressions and other cultural values of their region.” (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 2010) The article thus recognized a different peasant economy, with its distinct commercialization methods, variety of products produced, and unique cultures. Furthermore, the accord stated that the Bogota’s Secretariat of Economic Development would play a role in organizing and coordinating bi-weekly markets, as well as a larger market once a year in June to celebrate the national peasant day.

Although the partnership between the District, ILSA, and Oxfam resulted in the accomplishments outlined above, leading peasant organizations began criticizing lack of control over the management of the MC projects. As Carlos Julio from FENSUAGRO

stated, the leadership of peasant organizations was very limited when it came to the management and administration of MC:

From 2007 to 2010 the execution of the program was in the hand of the NGOs. many times the organizations didn't consult us (peasant organizations) . . . they would say "Why would you want to administrate, if what you are is agrarian leaders, you are supposed to organize peasants." But if we prepare ourselves we are also capable of administrating (the MC). Peasants do not only farm, but also administrates what they have (Carlos Julio, interview, August 22, 2017).

Similarly, ADUC began challenging ILSA and Oxfam. The regional peasant association wanted to manage the budget of the markets. Andres, an ADUC leadership member stated thus:

What we did was say that we did not want Oxfam or ILSA, but the peasants themselves to manage the budget of the market. We think that the peasant organizations today are sufficiently mature, and structured, with the optimal professional levels to manage the money of the District, because that was the excuse that ILSA had. They (ILSA) said that we did not know how to administrate, how to contract, how to do this or that. But I said that peasants do know how to do that, and they demonstrated it, where the government made partnerships for three years directly with the peasantry (Andres, interview, August 17, 2017).

During the tenure of Mayor Gustavo Petro, the District ended the partnerships with Oxfam and ILSA, and established separate partnerships with FENSUAGRO and ADUC, from 2012 until the end of 2015. The organizations began executing the partnerships directly with the District, and Oxfam continued providing support for ADUC, but no longer held administrative control of the MC markets (Andres, interview August 17, 2016).

The separate partnerships between the District and the two major peasant organizations was the result of a breakup of the CICC. As Carlos Julio stated “ADUC, FENSUAGRO, and ALCAMPO were one process. But the organizations began to break up. There were ideological differences” (Carlos Julio, interview, August 22, 2017). It is difficult to have a single explanation of why the organizations separated, but the different goals, visions and relationships with the state point to possible reasons.

FENSUAGRO’s efforts for agrarian reform and food sovereignty center on class struggle and peasant identity. As Carlos Julio, spokesperson for FENSUAGRO stated that the union seeks to defend the proletariat the peasants who are having a difficult time. FENSUAGRO is one of Colombia’s most active organizations calling for land reform, and in doing so emphasize peasant identity politics. As part of their reform goals, FENSUAGRO conceives food sovereignty a right for peasant communities to develop their own agrarian policies. This implies on not depending on other countries for food, or food production, as well as the ability for peasants to produce their own regional seeds and products. Carlos Julio differentiated FENSUAGRO’s aims for food sovereignty with the FAO’s concepts of food security. He said “they (with food security) guarantee food, but

not where the food comes from, and what type of food” (Carlos Julio, interview August 22, 2016).

ADUC, on the other hand, provided a discourse aligning more with the goals of the PMASAB, including the District’s aim of achieving food security for the city. The regional association saw the construction of peasant economies as hinging on a relationship with the state, which varied was never stable throughout the partnerships forged since 2007. According to Andres, a member of ADUC, the peasant organizations in the beginning were essential for the District’s public policy to accomplish the PMASAB. The District sought allies like ADUC that allowed them to guarantee their obligation to provide healthy food for everyone in the city. For ADUC, therefore, the relationship with the state was a contractual one, with a set of obligations of both parties to accomplish a state plan (Andres, interview, August 17, 2016).

While FENSUAGRO sought to strengthen the economic and political independence of the peasantry, ADUC chose instead to continue forging alliances with Oxfam and local community leaders, as well as compromising with the District to continue the MC program. FENSUAGRO criticized ADUC’s willingness to make deals with the government and organizations that perhaps would not benefit peasants. As Carlos Julio stated, “before supporting a liberal or conservative candidate, we are defending the less favored classes. We won’t accept money if they offer it to us. If anything, we will first speak with the peasants.” (Carlos Julio, interview, August 22, 2016)

When CICC separated, a group of smaller organizations stayed with FENSUAGRO, including ACC, ANDAS, San Isidro Foundation, FENACOA, and the

Association of Peasant Markets of Tolima, ASOMERCAMP. Apart from the latter two organizations, the previous ones that stayed as part of the CICC were larger national associations and syndicates.

The rest of the organizations, ADUC, ANMUCIC, and a newer organization, the Mutual Agri-Food Mutual [La Mutual Agrocomunal Agroalimentaria, AGROCOMUNAL], united to form the association Peasant and Communal Alliance [Alianza Campesina y Comunal] ALCAMPO. This association sought to strengthen ties with communal leaders from different localities, and expand the reach of MC to allow local city artisans, as well as urban farmers of Bogota to participate in the local markets. The CICC and ALCAMPO, led by FENSUAGRO and ADUC respectively, made partnerships with the District, and established their own *Mercados Campesinos*, CICC keeping the initial name, and ALCAMPO renaming their markets Popular and Peasant Markets [Mercados Campesinos y Populares].

GOVERNMENT PLANNING AS A CONTESTED PROCESS

The historical outline of peasant participation in the city and regional food policy of the PMASAB demonstrates how different societal actors participating in Bogota's system understand and articulate a different set of discourses to influence food policies. Peasant organizations, NGOs, and the District interacted in a continuous process to establish the parameters and goals of the PMASAB, each with different ways of approaching the plan.

What can the goals and food system plan tell us about the vision, values and principles of the District? Ramirez Pascagaza (2013) writes about the limits and restrictions of the PMASAB. The plan, as the author argues, meant to overcome the “inefficiencies” of traditional commercialization that affects food distribution to Bogota. According to the author, the plan qualified the previous food system at the time as “chaotic”, “disjointed” and informal, which raises the prices of intermediation. Without going into depth about these qualifiers, the plan laid out sought to improve city access to food by strengthening urban-rural connections, reducing the costs of operation, optimizing efficiencies, and eliminating intermediation”. As Yepes et al (2005) argue, the District administration proposed an intervention that attempted to overcome what they saw as technological backwardness, a system of informal relations institutionalized in CORABASTOS, and the administrative budgetary issues of the wholesale market. The main proposition of the plan was therefore to modernize and make the system more efficient.

Looking at the PMASAB in a broader scale, the plan was created in accordance to a national policy of territorial organization, The Territorial Ordering [*Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial*, POT]. The PMASAB was created in accordance to guidelines of broader national policies of territorial organization. The Territorial Ordering [*Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial*, POT]. The POT functions nationally as a technical and normative instrument, defines how a city makes use of its land. Law 388 of 1997 defines the POT as “the set of objectives, guidelines, policies, strategies, goals, programs, actions and standards, aimed at guiding and managing the physical development of the territory

and land use.” (*Alcaldia Mayor de Bogotá*, 1997). The plan thus serves to guide and prioritize investments in the territory of both the public sector and the private sector. That is, it defines where parks, schools, hospitals, housing, offices, shops and industries are to be located. In the context of Bogota, urban growth and migration towards city in the twentieth century gave rise to urban planning in the city. Further integration towards globalization, and increased economic activity helped authorities adopt a neoliberal development model to properly position cities in the international arena (Beuf, 2016). At the urban level, neoliberalism has reformulated social and political aspects of cities. As Brand states, the city-region in Latin America has become a key scale in global economies and has led to increase in urban competition. There is an emphasis on urban governments as a point of intersection between local, regional, and national policies; a process of restructuring of local governments and introduction of administrative and business techniques; a promotion of entrepreneurial culture; a restructure of work markets; privatization of rights, and a rise of the service sector (Brand, 2009).

The spatial restructuring of cities, as in the case of Bogota, follows a specific logic in which power is decentralized from the state, but with continuing interference “at a distance” from those who exercise political power. Drawing on Foucault (2010), neoliberal policies are molded on principles of a market economy. As opposed to laissez-faire models of market economy under neoliberalism, in which the state is separated from the economy, neoliberalism is characterized by positive and intervening liberalism (2010, p. 133). Intervention is key under neoliberalism, but it abandons direct state intervention. Intervention under neoliberalism is based on (1) regulatory actions, and (2) organizing

actions. Regulatory actions do not aim to intervene on mechanisms of the market, but on the conditions of the market. Regulation, then takes the form of reducing costs, reduction of profits of the enterprise, and localized tendency to increase production, either through price reduction or improved production. Organizing actions make up what Foucault calls “framework” policies, as those that attempt to fully integrate economic sectors into the market, such as technical improvements, laws, and education, that are not directly economic but that allow different sectors to work as markets (Foucault, 2010, p. 138).

The POT, and in extension the Master Plans that the city created to can be seen as technologies which define the technical and operative parameters of a vision, what Rose (1996) calls a “political rationality”. As the outlined sections of the text demonstrate, the PMASAB works as part of a governmental program that outlines specific plans to reorder regional and urban distribution channels, implement technological improvements to modernize, and regulate the supply of food to the city, to guarantee availability, low prices for urban consumers.

However, territorial ordering technologies like the PMASAB are not so one dimensional. As Carvajal Sanchez (2011) argues, community participation complicates processes of territorial planning. Within this urban reordering plan, diverse actors appear, with different intentions visions, and practices. The role of the state as the main leader exercising a vision of modernity, efficiency, and economic development is diluted and challenged by mobilized actors with different visions of how to manage their territory. Thus, the dynamics of territorial ordering must take into account the political interactions that take place within the geographical spaces in question.

Miller and Rose state that in analyzing techniques, classical terminologies such as state versus civil society, or public versus private are of little use. Government technologies, such as the PSMSAB do not solely emanate from the state. As the author states, “[I]n particular, the capacities that have been granted to expertise – the complex amalgam of professionals, truth claims and technical procedures - provide versatile mechanisms for shaping and normalizing the ‘private’ enterprise, the ‘private’ firm, the ‘private’ decisions of businessmen and parents and the self-regulating capacities of ‘private’ selves in ways that are simply not comprehended in these philosophies of politics”(1990, p. 8) What is important to emphasize is that governing takes place beyond the state, as an arrangement of governance that includes horizontal association of networks of private, civil society, and state actors. In this sense, power is dispersed through wider governance at different geographical spaces.

However, while governance opens spaces for civil society to participate in governance processes, it “is the state that plays a pivotal and often autocratic role in transferring competencies (and consequently in instantiating the resulting changing power geometries) and in arranging these new networked forms of governance” (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 2001). In this sense, it follows that even though Bogota’s food system involves a wide array of actors, the state is still a powerful force determining food policies.

The multiplicity of ideas, and plans of implementation between different actors are present in the PMASAB. As the following section shows, alongside language promoting efficiency, technological improvement, and increased production, seemingly

contradictory language promoting food sovereignty, peasant production, and respect of cultural practices is present. This reflects the decentralized and participatory nature of governance under neoliberal framework, in which although it pushes for an organization of food systems based on market logic, opens spaces for participation of multiple actors in the planning and decision-making process.

PEASANT DISCOURSES AND PARTIAL AUTONOMY

What can the political participation of peasant associations in the policy-making process of the PMASAB and their successful introduction of food sovereignty language into District food policies? Peasant organizations first united to push claims of food sovereignty. The main peasant organizations, ADUC, and FENSUAGRO, separated because of differences in how they related to the District to promote MCs in Bogota. However, apart from their differences, they advocated for autonomous peasant production and commercialization, as well as and peasant rights and recognition in Bogota's food system.

This means, as demonstrated by the history outlined above that the political interaction between peasant organizations and District authorities is one of partial autonomy. The two main demands of peasant organizations, in relation to MC is one of state recognition on the one hand, autonomous commercialization of food products. As claimed a report co-produced by the peasant organizations, ILSA, Oxfam, and the Economic Development Secretariat of Bogota, "*Mercados Campesinos* is an autonomous

initiative of communal and peasant organizations promoted to strengthen peasant economies” (ILSA, 2012). The sentence emphasizes the “autonomous” differentiation of “peasant economies” from the current production and commercialization model, which makes both producers and consumers dependent on final prices, and which is characterized by a dominance of intermediaries, and a monopoly of distribution centers, which further increase food prices.

For example, a member of AGROCOMUNAL stated that by allowing peasants to sell their products to the final consumer, eliminating different chains of intermediation that makes the products more expensive, consumers acquire a just price and peasants improve their income. He stated the following

Mercados Campesinos is an important source of food supply that need to be recognized. Peasants keep sustaining themselves, and improving the quality of life, and health services. The young ones stay in the fields and evade the poverty belt of the city. Those that can’t work in the field end move to the city and end up in the service sector, as security guards, as construction workers. These are not jobs that create well-being (Efrain, Interview, July 24, 2016)

In thinking about the role of MC in furthering peasant economies, the argument of peasant organization leaders about autonomy is one of peasant independence to continue their livelihoods. For peasant organizations, large scale agriculture, and state management of food distribution networks that the District included in the PMASAB would undermine small landholding peasant practices. For example, the food master plan

attempted to set up the 10 of the district market plazas as logistic platforms that will be used to transform, pack and process food products. These would function as agriculture networks (AGROREDES) in the region, each specializing in a specific product (*Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá*, 2006). This would create specific areas of monocrop production, which would decrease the ability of peasant farmers to diversify their own production. One network would cultivate blackberries, for example, leading to mass production of one product versus the multiple foods that peasants provide. These plazas would thus allow for the construction of a new development model that would transform peasant production practices (Efrain, interview, July 24, 2016).

As peasant organization leaders mentioned, while the peasant organizations call for an autonomous production, distribution, and direct sale of food products to consumers, they see MC as a process of social repayment (*reivindicación*). That means, as stated by a communal leader “we have our own production. How is it that we need an intermediary, knowing that we can have direct relationship between the producer and the consumer? This does not mean that he or she (the peasant) is a trader, but that a space is established in which his labor will be recognized” (Gloria, interview, July 29, 2016). Angela, a spokesperson for ADUC also stated that “there is a social debt of the Colombian state towards our peasants, for feeding a nation, which has not been retributed” (Angela, Interview, July 28, 2016). With this language of social repayment, organizational leaders emphasized the recognition that they thought peasants deserved from the state, a social debt that the state needed to repay. Angela added that there is a

misrecognition of the importance of peasants, who continue to be segregated and displaced by Colombian violence.

The concept of social repayment resembles what Scott established as the “right to subsistence”. As stated in the introduction, peasant claims are connected to their survival needs, and that the state, in the case of Bogota, should not infringe but rather provide the base level rights for peasants to subsist. In this sense, peasants in Colombia called for a respect and valuation of peasant economies, peasant rights, and participation in the decision-making process. The organizations in this case promoted peasants as political actors with rights, not just producers meant to provide goods and services based on consumer demands. They called for recognition of peasants as subjects with rights to food, work, and proper living conditions.

CONCLUSION

With the new administration of Mayor Enrique Peñalosa, beginning 2016, the district let the partnerships with the organizations expire, temporarily halting the MC program throughout the city and putting in peril the continuation of the program (Cruz Roa, 2016). The Director of Bogota’s Economic Development Secretariat at the time, Freddy Castro, argued that there weren’t enough resources to implement the markets. Furthermore, he stated that administration had to revise previous partnerships related to inconsistencies in the handling of funds of the peasant organizations that have managed MC. He also said that District had to make sure that those people participating were “real

peasants” and that they were following sanitary and quality standards for the foods sold (Caicedo, 2016). By this he meant that the sellers in the market, instead of producing their own products, bought them at wholesale markets to resell them at local MC markets without proper food labeling or packaging standards.

However, peasant organizations, and peasants themselves argued against government claims and instead pushed for the recognition of genuine food practices based on small-scale peasant production, with specific cultural practices, and norms. In the political context of Bogota, progressive mayors before Peñalosa were willing to provide funds and political support for peasant organizations and peasant practices within the PMASAB. From 2004 to 2011, peasant organizations, partnering with the international NGOs Oxfam and ILSA, managed to sign 6 different partnerships with the Economic Development Secretariat to support the MC program (ILSA, 2012). With the shift District government administration, mayor Peñalosa established different priorities from the previous Mayors, and one of the targets of the administration was dismantling the MC.

The political shift shows the relational approach that exemplifies the limits of food sovereignty construction within urban and regional food policy. On the one side, the organizations that were part of the CICC did not want to negotiate with the District, since they thought whatever the compromise was to be would hurt peasants, and thus shut down operations of the MC markets they managed. On the other side, although peasant organization were claiming increased autonomy economic and political autonomy, members ALCAMPO also demanded recognition within the bounds of a food policy of

which depended on District management. ALCAMPO thus continued working with local communal board presidents to continue the farmers' markets in their communities, while they continued negotiating with the District to re-establish the partnerships.

Before continuing the discussion of the District's efforts to alter the MC program, the following chapter explores the experiences of peasants who continued participating in MCs after the District ended the partnerships with peasant organizations. These peasants negotiated with communal leaders to sell products in different neighborhoods in the city. Although ALCAMPO continued supporting these markets, the organization's influence was limited, and the peasants themselves continued to claim for autonomy by selling at the local markets.

Chapter Four: Peasant Autonomy and District Demands

MERCADOS CAMPESINOS AND PEASANT PRACTICES OF AUTONOMY

While the previous chapter focused on peasant organizations, international nonprofits, and the District as actors and institutions interacting food sovereignty formation, the following chapter will introduce my own observations and interview responses of peasant farmers, local community leaders, and artisanal urban sellers participating in the MC of a neighborhood in Bogota. By drawing on Ehlert Voßeme's (2015), this chapter provides an actor oriented approach to observe and understand the experiences of actors bypassing the mainstream supply chain of Bogota through their practices in the local MCs. Focusing solely on the organizational discourses about the MC can disregard the individual discourses and practices of resistance that farmers from different areas of the central region of Colombia engaged in to continue selling food in local markets. As the author states, an actor oriented approach helps to demonstrate "the empirically visible manifold, complex, and heterogeneous struggles of peasants encountering, negotiating, and enacting development politics and programs in their everyday lives of farming routines and consumption practices, and thereby leave concrete and fundamental questions of power relations and sovereign agency 'on the ground' untouched" (Ehlert & Voßemer, 2015, p. 22).

The question I explored when focusing on the local MC experience was the following: What practices of autonomy do peasants engage in to promote food sovereignty?

I extend the question of autonomy into the realm of the life experiences of these actors, the quotidian interactions between producers/sellers and consumers, and amongst peasants from different geographical areas selling their products in the same market. The peasants selling in the markets were not necessarily involved in the political process of organizing and directly challenging city food policies. Rather, they engaged in food sovereignty construction through their everyday practices which challenged the discourses and practices involved mainstream food distribution processes. Peasants, local producers, and artisanal sellers practiced diversified food production, bypassed food intermediaries, and sold their products at “just” prices to improve their livelihoods. By selling in the market, producers also aimed to establish direct connections with consumers that were not directly mediated by wholesale centers, supermarkets, or intermediaries. These connections help both producers and consumers reassess notions of food safety, freshness, and quality through direct reciprocity interactions. Consumers and producers interacted through impressions such as smell, shape, or color of products to determine the overall quality and safety at the time of selling and buying. Furthermore, limited funds and institutional support around the time of my field research had forced peasants establish strategies to find transportation aggregating enough supplies to afford to continue selling directly to consumers.

The interview responses of the questions asked varied from person to person, but existing participants of the MC shared common experiences of improved life and livelihoods, increased food production and commercialization, urban rural integration between producers and consumers. The farmers’ experiences were accompanied by

hardships, especially when it came finding transportation that would take them and their produce to the market, lack of government support and uncertainty about the future of the markets. Nonetheless, the hardships experienced to come to the market were offset by the perceived benefits that they gained out of the market, especially the perceived value to their labor, to the extent that most of them decided continue selling a large part of their products through the farmer's market, instead of relying solely on the mainstream distribution and commercialization chains of Bogota.

The experiences of the market was part of the District's refusal to continue dealing with peasant organizations to manage the *Mercados Campesinos*. This chapter continues the tensions demonstrated between the District and peasants that pervades the MC experience, contrasting the discourses and practices of peasants with the District's decision to continue the market, bypassing peasant organizations, and relying on institutional channels instead of the CCM associative process of peasants.

A DAY IN THE MARKET

The local MC I visited took place every two weeks. Peasants came from different municipalities in the departments of Cundinamarca, and Tolima, while two of those interviewed came from rural areas of Bogota. The market began in 2010 with the approval of the community board, specifically with the leadership of the community president. This market was only one of the seven continuing to function after Bogota's Secretariat of Economic Development decided to discontinue the partnership with

peasant, and international nonprofit organizations by the time I arrived to conduct fieldwork.

Peasants and other participants in the market, such as urban farmers and artisans from the neighborhood arrived at the neighborhood the night before the market, any time from one to three in from their respective municipalities. As Silvio, coordinator of ADUC's direct distribution program said, "they wake up at one in the morning, traveling terribly uncomfortable, surrounded by their food baskets, without sleeping, to come here and smile at their clients" (Silvio, interview, August 21, 2017). Sellers set up the market as soon as they arrived, unloading their food baskets and setting up tents, tables, and chairs that were stored in the communal board facility, which the peasant association of AGROCOMUNAL, and Oxfam had bought for the market. There were 14 tents in total which 2 to three families shared. Clients arrived as early as six in the morning, and the small venue, around the size of a basketball field quickly filled up with costumers early in the morning.

One of ADUC's members had put me in contact Alvaro, the communal board president of locality. He was the first person I met when I arrived. He let me know about the beginning of the market, the growth of it over the years, and their work with AGROCOMUNAL and Oxfam. He said that after the city halted funds for the market in the beginning of 2016, the communal board had to decide whether to discontinue the market or allow it to take place on the neighborhood grounds. Alvaro and communal board members talked with the people participating in the market, and they decided to continue the market. Farmers would pay the fee of \$35,000 pesos (around \$12 dollars)

and in exchange the communal board would store the tents, tables and chairs, and help them set up the markets every two weeks. Alvaro said that the market was as much a benefit for the communal board and residents of the neighborhood as it was for those who sold at the market, who with an end to government funding, and limited organizational support, decided to continue traveling to the market to sell whatever they came with from their respective municipalities or neighborhoods in Bogota.

LIVELIHOODS

When I asked the people I interviewed why they began participating in the local MC, they emphasized that selling their products through intermediaries did not provide them enough income for their subsistence needs. The markets, although intermittent, provided sellers an additional source of income. The increase incomes came from higher prices of their products when compared to when they sold to intermediaries in their districts. The prices varied by products, but the clients were willing to buy products at a higher price than was determined by CORABASTOS. They thus saw the market as an alternative commercialization venue where they could sustain themselves and improve their livelihoods.

Lucia had been working in local MCs for 11 years. She found out about the farmers' through someone in the district of Cáqueza, Cundinamarca, who had previously participated in an MC. She decided to travel and try out selling at a MC. She had worked in different markets in other neighborhood markets for 5 years. She said she always

worked in the fields (*el campo*), cultivating and fruits and vegetables, as well as raising chickens. Lucia also cooked food for laborers and cultivated plants and flowers to sell at the market.

Since the markets took place twice a month, Lucia had to rely on other sources of income, and sell what she couldn't sell in the local market to intermediaries. Nonetheless, when compared to intermediaries, MC offered her a better opportunity to sell products. She stated:

One doesn't make anything there (selling to intermediaries), so one has to work here, because one is left with a little bit more money for the subsistence of the family. It is harder (*mas berraco*) to sell to intermediaries because one has to sell cheaper. This doesn't mean that this is easy, one has to always rise early, get ready on Fridays, work to bring the best, harvest the best quality so that the client sees that one brings good products (Lucia, interview, August 20, 2016).

Oscar had also worked at the local market for two years, coming from the municipality of Une, Cundinamarca, with his wife and son. He had worked in another MC starting in 2012 but the one he moved to was easier to travel to, as it was closer to his municipality. Oscar stated that he decided to work in the MC because there were too many intermediaries, and that he received less from the products he sold to intermediaries than the products he sold directly to consumers. For Oscar, the intermediary is the one who takes the profit. He explained

Let's say the price of lentils traveling down. If the bag (*bulto*) sells for example at 50,000 pesos (around \$16 dollars), they over there (at the farm) are paying 30,000 pesos (around \$9 dollars). So imagine, the gains are for them. One does not get anything from what one cultivates, and works hard for" (Oscar interview, July 30, 2016).

For Oscar, the local MC was a benefit that has allowed him and his family to move forward, survive, and that even allowed his son to study.

As these passages suggest, participants of the MC perceived the project as a benefit and improvement of their livelihoods. They compared their experience to the alternative of selling to intermediaries in the traditional wholesale market, which made it more difficult to sustain themselves. Working for intermediaries was an option for some who didn't want their harvested products to go to waste, but participants saw working in the market an extra source of income, if not the main one. Furthermore, participants saw selling their products in the MCs as a worthwhile venture; they saw that the difficulties of finding transportation, traveling setting up late at night were offset by not only the income, but the opportunity to continue to produce and sell their products.

Peasants selling at the local MC sought to maintain autonomy by seeking to produce and sell their products outside of the traditional distribution and super market chains of Bogota. The main contention of peasants when deciding to come sell at the MC was the problem of intermediaries. They were aware of the unequal terms and prices that intermediaries offered to most of the peasants. Those that did sell to intermediaries point to the challenge of having to sell surplus produce versus the limited amount they could

sell in the farmer's market. The District has criticized MCs for being an inadequate venue to assure food security to Bogota's citizens (Andres, interview, August 17, 2016).

However, the peasants made a different argument. They had enough supply of food and only if more MC markets were available they would be able to sell even more of their produce at a fair price, instead of having to have their food either go to waste or sell it at too low prices for intermediaries.

Another important point is that that peasants did not sell to merely increase profits, as a purely entrepreneurial farmer would. Instead, as the language in the interviews suggest, peasants spoke in terms of subsistence, valuing their livelihoods the most. Sellers at the market did not believe the current set up of the food system ensured their subsistence, as demonstrated by their negative reactions to intermediaries.

IMPROVED FOOD PRODUCTION AND COMMERCIALIZATION

As I interviewed sellers in the market, asking them about the changes they had experienced by selling in the market, their responses centered on the variety of products they harvested in small land plots ranging from less than a hectare (*vanegada*) to several hectares. As participants mentioned, they started selling their products in small quantities, but eventually expanded their production, and hence the amount of food and other products they sold at the local market.

Yesenia had been traveling with her husband, daughter and son from the municipality of Cachipai, Cundinamarca to participate in the MC for the past six years.

Yesenia and her husband previously worked in an hacienda that shut down. She said that she was left in the field without income or work. They couldn't find employment until a municipality official offered the option to work in the MC, an offer which they accepted.

Yesenia and her family began small. They decided to bring a small amount of squash and plantain because they thought it would be easier to sell those products. They went to the bank to get a small loan and began to cultivate the land:

We started to cultivate the land, planting beans, and then little by little, lentils, but small things, not large cultivations but small ones, like passion fruit, and blackberries. I saw that the business was growing, because I started with 150,000 pesos. Then I was making around 400,000 pesos. I said this is not right. I brought everything, whatever I brought I sold. And that's how it went, and I kept working. I started working with chicken. The chicken pays. I started working with hens, 20 of them, then 50, and now I work with 200. So I realized that eggs were giving. I had another income. I had the income from chicken, and the eggs. I brought rabbits . . . I brought lunch, dishes made with cassava, with corn. We started to raise quail. I started cultivating something and brought small quantities, I realized that little by little I was seeing money while I was cultivating. I cultivated flowers, I also brought the flowers. (Yesenia, interview, July 30, 2016).

From this passage, we find Yesenia's opportunity to invest in her field and begin cultivating (*cultivar*) whatever she had at her disposal, or what she realized would sell in

the market. She diversified the products she sold. She planted fruits and vegetables and raised animals to sell at the market, and prepared foods to diversify her source of income. As I spent time in her tent clients passed by, and apart from getting fruits and vegetables, also asked for eggs and whether she had brought any live chickens for sale. Another important aspect of selling at the market, as the previous passage demonstrates was her ability to sell cooked meals. People passed by, asking what she had made and seemed more than happy to try her food. This was also the case for the food stands that sold the *lechona*, *tamales*, and the traditional soups.

Similarly, Rosalia said the market allowed her to increase the amount of food she produced and sold. She said, “the best times in the *mercados campesino* is when we sell the *masato*, the *chicha*, we sell everything, he empanadas, the *arepas* and everything . . . it has progressed because the community has learned and been taught to prepare the quinoa, work with it, and cook it to make other types of foods.” (Rosalia, interview, August 20, 2020).

With regards to productivity and commercialization of products, producer/sellers sought different methods to diversify their subsistence. For example, Yesenia demonstrated her ability to diversify her production by cultivating different crops, raising animals, and cooking foods to take to the market. Due to lack of time, resources, and focus of the research I was not able to visit these farms, and thus the analysis is reserved only to my observation of the output of products, the things they sold. Increased commercialization, the sale of these, is best explained.

URBAN-RURAL INTEGRATION

Producers/sellers at the MC established a strong client base, as well as bonds with local community leaders. Sellers and clients referred to each other as neighbors (*vecina/o*) and friends (*amiga/o*). Some clients spent time with their sellers, sitting with them at their tents, engaging in conversation and helping them sell products to other clients.

Lorena, for example, had been working in local MC for around four to five years. Before that Lorena and her husband sold fruit in the streets. She worked at the MC with the help of her daughter, while her husband worked at another MC location where peasants had been hit harder by the District's funding cuts. The peasants in the location her husband worked at did not have tents, or chairs, and they set up their markets in an open area. Lorena said her husband and others were exposed to the elements. When asked about the obstacles faced while working in the market, Lorena responded:

“Before there was a partnership and one had something. Here for example we have to pay to borrow the tables and the tent. Where my husband is he doesn't have to pay anything but either way he really needs the tent and the tables and everything. The weakness that we all have is because of the Mayor because he doesn't want to sign the partnership with us . . . like I tell you it is difficult for my husband who doesn't have help. Thanks to God we have the help and companionship of Mr. Alvaro, but they don't have anyone to help them.” (Lorena, interview, July 30, 2016).

Even though her husband had to work under difficult conditions, Lorena said it was better to be exposed to the elements than working for someone else. She said that even though her husband had to work in the sun and in the rain (*al sol y al agua*) getting wet and sunburnt it was well worth the hard work in the market.

For Lorena, local community support and the friendships made with clients are two of the main factors that have allowed her and her family improve their lives. She stated that even though they need support they nonetheless have improved themselves because of friendships found. She said:

“Well one learns to get along and not be ashamed with anyone and manage the culture with the people. I mean exchange ideas with one another and I think it is good because at least one gets distracted and comes to bring natural products, without so much chemicals. I think this is good because one doesn’t charge so much to people so that they can consume and at the same time one earns little by little” (Lorena, interview, July 30, 2016).

As this passage suggests, selling at the MC allowed Lorena to gain confidence and exchange knowledge with her clients. I observed an interaction between Lorena and a customer, where the customer was trying to get plantains at a lower price, arguing that the plantains were cheaper at a nearby store. Lorena explained to the customer the lengthy process of her trip, how much she had to work to get the produce to the city, and that the slight change in the price she asked for was for a fair price. The customer ultimately ended up buying the plantains.

Producers and consumers built strong bonds through repeated interactions whereby they determined the quality and price of products at the time of the transaction. I observed that clients passed by the tents and asked questions about what they sold. Sellers provided samples and allowed them to grab the fruit. Bianca, for example, laid out the soursops and avocados on her table for clients to see. Clients passed by, asked for the price of avocados, or guanabanas. Consumers would sometimes try to bargain the price to see if it could be reduced. If they asked about the quality of the product, she would grab a knife, and slice a piece off the fruit to show the ripeness of the fruit.

For example, Oscar stated that increased interaction between him and his clients allow him and his wife to easily sell what they produce. Clients already come expecting the quality and price of his products. He has an idea of the prices that other stores sell produce like potatoes and is thus able to bargain and sell it cheaper. He said he was the one that produced the good, so he knew what the cost was to him. This helped him sell comparatively cheaper than stores and earn some profit from the sale.

Instead of making their experience of one of buying, selling and leaving, the biweekly was also an opportunity for consumers and producers to integrate and make friendships. Working at the market was a transformative experience for Lucia. She said that in the field all she had to do was work alone. She said that working in the market allowed her to make many friendships, and that she thought of herself as being useful. Apart from this, she earned more money for her field and home. Even though she worked hard in the field, she had the chance to engage with people by working in the city. She

said she had met many good people. They would give her clothes and sheets she needed. To this she added that a lot of people in the city valued her.

The relationship between customer and client extended beyond the market, whereby peasants were not the only ones who traveled to the city; clients also visited their producer's farms to experience the lives of the people they bought from. Lucia stated that the friends she made had gone to visit her to see the process in the field. As an anecdote, she shared that one lady went to her farm during the days her journey to the city started. The lady found Lucia's work to travel to the city as a heavy one. Bianca added that she had become adapted to the work, which provided her with many good experiences.

As the findings suggest, producers and customers strengthened their reciprocity relations. Peasants and other sellers made use of non-market and cooperative mechanisms with local community leaders, and built friendships with clients to access a small but consistent market and thus increase their sales. Through continued interaction, peasants communicated with discourses of fair prices for both producers and consumers, and localized production to buyers who tried to buy at cheaper prices.

Peasants and other sellers also increased their chances of selling their products by challenging how food quality and price is commonly conceived in market transactions. In the market, sensorial dimensions of the products sold took the place of standardized quality measures. Buyers interacted with the sellers and the product, found out from where sellers and the food came. Consumers were able to touch and see the ripeness of the fruits as peasants opened them, to eat and taste the tangerines, or oranges that sellers

gave to their clients before they made their decision to buy. In this way, the market re-embedded producers and sellers, peasants and city dwellers, removing the alienation from nature common in industrial processes of production, which hide the environmental and labor costs, the value of people and nature that allow corporate and industrial agriculture to create profits and transform economic markets.

Another point of analysis with regards to improved commercialization is that peasants maintained cultural food practices. The peasants in the MC continued selling traditional foods such as *lechona*, *tamales*, and *ajiaco* soups that they prepared from scratch in the mornings. Clients would ask sellers if they had brought live chickens to later cook their own traditional chicken soups. These were not foods that the District would consider sanitary or safe. Nonetheless, sellers and consumers of these did not seem to perceive these foods as something unsafe or unsanitary to eat. Rather, I venture to add, it was something essential to their identities, an experience of Colombians throughout their history.

An important aspect of peasants' efforts to revive and maintain traditional food sales is the relations of reciprocity that emerged between urban citizens and those peasants who came to their locality. The bond between the client and producer, apart from one based on a purely monetary transaction is also an affective bond based on the exchange of knowledge and friendship. Clients spent time with sellers, protected them, and provided gifts. Furthermore, clients made the effort to visit peasants in their farms, to learn about their experiences and to see firsthand the hard work it takes for them to make it to the city. Through these bonds, producers and consumers were able to know and

recognize each other, and hence give value to an otherwise meaningless interaction based solely on the end commodity and the price the costumer was willing to pay. Consumers, by intimately interacting with producers, came to understand the value of the foods they bought, and were thus more willing to pay fair prices throughout the neighborhood.

These actions point to non-market and cooperative mechanisms with local community leaders. Through continued interaction, peasants communicated with discourses of fair prices for both producers and consumers, and localized production to buyers who tried to buy at cheaper prices. In this case, peasants and consumers went beyond market relations, beyond the price of the product. Apart from the value added of the product, peasants and consumers built lasting relationships.

As the passages above indicate, the local MC emphasizes what I conceive of as a process of rural-urban integration. This rural-urban integration is based on a sustainable development of both marginalized and often excluded peasants, and lower income urban neighborhoods. The market, through this integration, sought to improve peasant incomes through fair trade, to maintain Colombian cultural food practices, ensure collective participation of peasant farmers, and at the same time attend to the need of feeding citizens in lower income areas of Bogota. Alongside the direct political intervention that peasant organizations pushed for at the District level, peasants in the localities expressed and challenged mainstream conceptions of food distribution and commercialization through their quotidian practices in the market.

LIMIT TO AUTONOMY – TRANSPORTATION

Of the struggles that farmers have experienced the most common were issues of transportation. The District's funding cuts left a void where many of the farmers had to figure how to reach the city on their own. Peasants needed to find vehicles to contract and search for others to travel with to the city. Transport trucks only travel to the city if they have enough supplies to make the trip worth it, which complicated peasant's search for transportation. If peasants were to contract a car service on their own, many wouldn't be able to cover the cost of transportation.

For example, Lucia stated that transportation was difficult for her because transport charged too much. Another issue for her was that where she came from the cars would get stuck in unpaved muddy roads when it rained. To resolve the issue, she contracted a truck that brought her food and the food produced by other families to the local MC she worked, as well as other local markets. The trucks would arrive in the afternoon, make the rounds to other farms, and at around five in the morning the next day they would unload the cargo. Before they were able to contract the car driver, Lucia and her family had to first reach another town to find truck that would get her to the city.

Transportation from Tolima was the most expensive, costing Lorena \$450,000 pesos (around \$150 dollars) every time she traveled to the market. Similar to Bianca, their source of transportation was always uncertain. If it rained trucks could get stuck on the road and if a driver got sick she had to look for another person. To be able to afford the cost of travel she had to split the cost with 20 neighboring peasant families. To gather enough supplies for the driver to make it affordable to travel she also collected produce

from peasant families that she would sell along with what she brought to the market for a commission.

For Oscar, transportation was also the most difficult aspect of working at the MC. Since he and his family came from the Department of Cundinamarca, transportation was more affordable, at 100 thousand pesos (around \$32 dollars) round trip, but still it was the biggest part of their cost of production. It was cheaper whenever a car traveled to different parks with additional produce from other farmers. Whenever he had to pay on his own, transportation was more expensive, so he tried to split transportation costs with other farmers from the area he was from.

This was the case for other sellers. Some previously had support from the municipalities they came from, which used to provide them with buses. However, since the partnerships ended they had to figure out how to find transportation on their own. Oftentimes, they had to make multiple stops to find transportation that will take them to the city.

Difficulties with transportation was the first effect of peasant's loss of institutional support. At times, some didn't see it worth it to return to the city. What made the return possible for some was that they wanted to see their clients. To find enough money for transportation some had to sometimes charge at higher price for what they sold.

The cost of transportation presented a clear impediment to seller's autonomy. As Guarín (2013) argues, the minimal amount of food peasants produce has to be properly aggregated to be able to be transported in large quantities to the city. The chains of

intermediaries and transporters were created as a mechanism whereby scattered peasant producers can supply variable amounts of products can assemble their production for distribution. The inability to rely on consistent transportation thus poses for peasants participating in MC challenges that threaten their ability to build their own networks, and move away from mainstream transportation channels to sell their products.

LIMIT TO AUTONOMY – LACK OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

The transportation issue was for sellers at the MC the result of the District's cut of funds for the program. Lorena for example, blamed the Mayor of Bogota for making it difficult for her and her husband to come work at the market. She said:

Before there was a partnership and one had some security. Here for example we have to pay to borrow tables and the tent. But where my husband is he doesn't pay but he nonetheless needs the tent and the tables and everything. The weakness that we have is the fault of the Mayor because he doesn't want to sign the partnership (Lorena, interview, July 30, 2016).

Bianca similarly praised the benefits of the market to not only benefit the city but also peasants. She argued that by attempting to remove the farmer from the city, the District removes the value and importance of peasants. She said that peasants have been leaving their farms, including their younger members. She asked, "what do we do killing ourselves with hard work if they don't value us?" Furthermore, she said that the market did value the peasant:

This gives them value, and it raises the people spirits to go and cultivate, harvest, because we are going there to Bogota to the peasant plazas. It was good that they supported it, I thought it was excellent, but unfortunately the Mayor doesn't want to know anything about the peasant. The peasant there (in the farm), he doesn't care. But this does give peasants value." (Bianca, Interview, August 20, 2016).

FROM MERCADOS CAMPESINOS TO MERCADOS GOURMET

The markets did continue. However, the way that they would be managed contrast with the notions of peasant production, and urban-rural integration noted above. The District, through the Secretariat of Economic Development, The Institute for social Economy (*Instituto Para la Economia Social*, IPES), and other regional institutions eventually bypassed peasant organizations, and hence the way that these managed the markets.

In early 2016, peasant organizations once again began a process of political pressure against plans to end *Mercados Campesinos*. On April 5, Mayor Enrique Peñalosa was surprised by a group of peasant men and women selling fruits, vegetables, and traditional Colombian dishes in a makeshift market inside the installations of the district council. At the time the Mayor gave the peasants gathered his word: the farmers' markets were going to continue ("*La palabra de Peñalosa con los organizadores de los Mercados Campesinos*", 2016) However, moments before, Peñalosa had presented the proposal for his tenure's economic development plan, "Bogota Better For Everyone" [*"Bogota Mejor*

Para Todos”]. One of the proposal’s articles intended to derogate the council’s 455 accord of 2010.

Soon after peasant organizations found out that Peñalosa was trying to eliminate peasant markets, CICC and ALCAMPO united to mobilize peasants and take part in a peaceful sit in outside of the Economic Development Secretariat building. They also lobbied council members to leave accord 455 in the development plan. Peñalosa’s plans to derogate the legislation failed, and the peasant organizations managed to amend the development plan to include language regarding the sustainable rural development of peasant economies. Although the article of the development plan was not explicit in stating the protection of MC, the ambiguous language of the article amendment, however, has allowed the District to strengthen peasant economies as they saw fit.

Peñalosa, after failing to derogate the council decree protecting peasant economies, called for a peasant market to take place in June 24th, to celebrate the National Peasant Day that had taken place since 2010. But instead of *mercados campesinos*, they would be called *mercados gourmet*. The Special Administrative and Planning Region [*Región Administrativa y de Planificación Especial*, RAPE] a regional planning committee combining the central Departments of Colombia, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), announced a bidding process for 250 peasants to participate in the market. The conditions for those who wanted to participate included a series of sanitary requirements, such as having canned traditional dishes such as *sancocho*, *lechona* and *tamal*. Leaders from peasant organizations leading MC accused the development secretary of placing too much of a burden for peasants, who wouldn’t be able to afford the documentation or means to afford canning their products. Furthermore, the peasants would not be able to offer fresh, and traditional products for their customers.

The district's proposal to establish the market celebrating national peasant day on June 24th was postponed. A couple of weeks after the initial proposal of *Mercados Gourmet* the FAO announced that “considering the impartiality derived from its nature as a Specialized System of the United Nations, they [The FAO] see themselves compromised to execute this activity, and have thus opted to not continue with the actions related to the organization and implementation of the agri-food fair” (FAO, 2016) The Economic Development Secretary, Freddy Castro, announced that the market would take place in October, and that the city was continuing conversations with the stakeholders associated in the process to make it happen (“*Haremos El Mercado Campesino En Octubre*’: *Secretaría de Desarrollo Económico*” 2016).

A PEASANT MARKET WITHOUT PEASANTS

An MC took place in Bolivar Plaza once again in October 14th (two days prior to the World Food Day). News outlets reported that 325 participants (as opposed to 1500 to 2000 who participated in prior years) put on display their products, which included fruits, vegetables, as well as processed goods like honey, coffee and typical dishes. While less participants sold at the market, the District stated that the event was better organized. Furthermore, 50 of the participants were part of business talks with restaurant, plazas and hotel owners. As Freddy Castro, director of the Development Secretariat of the city of Bogota mentioned, “We want to work to help them open channels with clients” hoping that each successful deal represented incomes between two and 10 million pesos (“*Campesinos, de vuelta en la Plaza de Bolívar*,” 2016). The District also announced that biweekly markets

would continue and guaranteed that 420 local markets would take place in the next three years (*“Mercados Campesinos Llegarán a Toda Bogotá”*, 2016).

Afterwards, peasant organizations made an announcement that the District completely excluded them from taking part in the management of the MC, thereby excluding larger participation of peasants who had collectively worked the past twelve years to make sure they had sufficient supplies, find their own transportation to travel to the city, organize their own events, and sell directly to consumers. The District bypassed peasant organizations, instead working with regional state municipalities and the RAPE to choose the participants and manage the event. As Castro stated, “it was the Agriculture secretaries who chose the participants. They (peasant organizations) have all the right to protest, but that is how we planned this event” (*“Mercados campesinos llegarán a toda Bogotá,” 2016*).

The announcement that peasant organizations made also included statements and photographic evidence of what they said were inconsistencies of the market managed by the District and regional institutions. These included the sales of products made by large producers and landholders, industrial canned and processed products, empty stalls (meaning that less than the stated number of people participated), and sale of imported products. In all, the announcement called the event a failure to recognize local economies, and the failure to recognize collective organization of the MC.

The case of *mercados campesinos* shows how peasant organizations have become increasingly dependent of district authorities, the point where continuation of MC hinged on the District to provide funds and to reconfigure the program through the governments’ conception of how it should be managed, and who should participate. During the first years, the program was managed and funded in part through donations of international institutions and NGOs. Although peasant organizations managed to place language in district decrees

recognizing peasant economies, and the district's obligation to financially and administratively support the MCs, it also allowed the District to gain direct control over monetary and logistical aspects of the project.

Many peasant organization leaders, and peasants participating in *Mercados Campesinos* saw these rules as representative of a food system that threatened their own views of life, health, and livelihoods. They argued that the regulations favor larger scale agriculture and undermine the livelihoods and recognition of small-scale farmers. In contrast, those in favor of the regulations, like the Mayor and the city's development institution argued that the sale of produce and homemade dishes, without required food standard certification would expose consumers to health threats.

With the new Mayor's administration, and the changes in staff of government agencies, the District has bypassed peasant organizations, and enacted policies prohibiting the sale of fresh traditional dishes and certain produce, and requiring sanitary labels and standards of food packaging, imposing high cost of participation for small-scale producers. The District's decision to limit the number of peasants through contracts with institutional channels contrasts with the process of associative organization that the peasant organizations had established through the CCMs. Furthermore, the sanitary requirements, and the District's attempt to establish a "gourmet market" imply a shift from concerns from peasant rights and recognition, to that of standardized, sanitary production, and bourgeois demands of good food, instead of food availability and affordability for poorer city residents.

CONCLUSION

As was noted in the introduction, peasants participating in the local *Mercados Campesinos* cannot merely be described as showing characteristics of peasants basing their decision on moral reciprocity and subsistence ethics alone. The practice of peasants in the MC represents an interface between the peasant moral economies of Scott and entrepreneurial farming described in classic economics. In traveling to the city to sell their products, peasants stretched the limit of their peasantness, seeking ways to increase productivity and sales of their products for better incomes. However, in this case peasants were seeking to continue returning to the countryside to farm. It can also be argued that, the logic that governed the organization and development of the MC peasants' activities was distant from the mainstream markets, and therefore an attempt to gain autonomy from the main distribution and commercialization chains.

Peasants sought to maintain autonomy producing and selling their products outside of the traditional transportation, distribution and super market chains of Bogota. As the interviews show, the main impediments to autonomy were transportation and lack of institutional support. Peasants and urban farmers were aware of the unequal terms and prices that intermediaries offered. Those that did sell to intermediaries point to the challenge of having to sell surplus produce versus the limited amount they could sell in the farmer's market. The District has criticized MCs for being an inadequate venue to assure food security to Bogota's citizens. However, the peasants made a different argument. They had enough supply of food and only if more MC markets were available they would be able to sell even more of their produce at a fair price, instead of having to have their food either go to waste or sell it at too low prices for intermediaries.

The interviews and observations of the market also show the limits of the local MC. The peasants' struggle for transportation was a constant problem. It is difficult for peasants to efficiently collect, aggregate, and transport significant amounts of food to the city, apart from setting up the commercialization venue. Only through collective pooling of funds and food supplies were they able to contract transport. The irregular guarantee of transportation meant that peasants could lose the harvested food and not be able to sell raised animals because they were sometimes not able to travel to the city.

The relationship between peasants and local citizens was also not perfect. The ability that peasants had to negotiate prices with their clients was not always beneficial; peasants could sell at fair prices, but sometimes would also end up selling at lower prices. Clients could make an argument of lower prices in other tents, or at a local store, to reduce the prices that peasants were able to sell at. The end of the market posed a dilemma for sellers. After the *trueque* took place there was still produce and food left unsold. Peasants were thus forced to lower their prices as much as they could to sell what was left, to the benefit of costumers who went late to the market. The irregularity of prices is thus something that peasants and communal board leaders like Alvaro could not fully address.

The point here is to demonstrate that although the MCs offered benefits and improvements to peasants, the democratic aspects espoused by the peasant organizations previously in charge of managing the program were very limited. The MC program, although hailed as a cooperative and democratic process, was not completely organized by peasants themselves. As noted in the struggles the peasants faced, what mostly limited

their ability to directly sell to consumers was the District's decisions to end their partnerships with peasant organizations and international NGOs. Furthermore, the MC program was conceived within a District policy under the jurisdiction of District agencies to decide how the program would be managed.

These observations explored the main contention of the thesis: peasants were partially autonomous. Their goals and objectives were still constructed and decided by a broad of actors with various degrees of power and influence to configure and shape MCs. Furthermore, the presence of the government, and the institutional leverage they had over the construction food sovereignty practices ultimately prevailed.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Research Implications

MERCADOS CAMPESINOS IN THE CURRENT CONJUNCTURE

Although the District and the RAPE regional agency took control over the management of the *mercados campesinos* program, this was nonetheless part of a rising peasant movement throughout Colombia aiming to gain recognition of the peasantry and solve longstanding agrarian issues of misrecognition in the country. A larger series of peasant mobilizations has challenged the state's economic opening to international markets, and modernization of agricultural systems nationwide. State policies favoring capital expansion has become part of the productive and commercial aspects of the Colombian economy, threatening peasant livelihoods, control over the means of production and resources. The long history over failed land reforms in the 1960's has become a key aspect of peasant mobilization. Most recently, general agrarian strikes have effectively challenged the state apparatus, contesting the state's neoliberal policies, and effectively placed the smallholder agrarian sector in the negotiating table, demanding long sought reforms and reparations. The fight is over recognition, access to land, and the ability of peasants to be recognized as the appropriate source of the country's food supply, ideas wrapped around the broader concepts of food sovereignty and peasant autonomy.

The District's sanitary and food quality requirements to participate in the *Mercados Campesinos* managed without the input of peasant organizations reduced the

numbers of beneficiaries of the program, limiting it to farmers who could afford canning their products and obtaining the proper licenses to sell. Peasants trying to participate in the program, instead of relying on the organizational capacity of peasants through the CCMs now have to go through a contract process with either the Secretariat of Economic Development Agency, or the RAPE regional agency.

To apply, peasants are required to register formularies specifying what types of products they sell, whether they produce fruits, vegetables, or processed products, and whether they have required sanitary licenses. The program does not provide subsidies for transportation, and peasants have to comply with market operation hours (*Inscripciones Mercados Campesinos* 2017). The District, in attempting to create a “gourmet market” gave the MC program a different meaning. Instead of providing a space whereby peasants, through associations (and the aid of nonprofits) organized their own supply, transportation, and commercialization, and commercialization channels, limited the participation of peasants. They now have to apply as part of a contract, based on the requirements above, to be able to sell in the District’s *Mercados Campesinos*.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The fact is that the current *Mercado Campesinos* is that the District, through the Secretariat of Economic Development, and other agencies like Bogota’s Institute for Social Economy, is allowing some peasants to sell in farmers’ markets. Readers could argue that the market is the ultimate expression of what McMichael calls ‘food from somewhere’. The District still promotes the market as a space where peasants can sell

fresh products directly to consumers. The District also promotes this food as coming from these peasants, who produced the food they are selling with their own hands. The transformation from food from nowhere to food from somewhere is apparent, given that the peasants who were contracted to sell food met the criteria of 'peasant'. Nonetheless, what is of importance to note, is that the same notion of food from somewhere that McMichael states that peasant movements promote can be stripped of its identity associative meanings, removing any notion of peasant rights and autonomy.

The District's plan on how the MC program is to be managed, and who gets to participate in it, put into question the viability of food sovereignty movements seeking to gain autonomy, as well as demanding institutional rights and recognition. Apart from the institutional constraints, transportation and geographical constraints also threatened the viability of the market, as the previous chapter demonstrated. How can Colombian peasants establish alternative food networks when they are not able to influence the management or makeup of the participants in the market? How can peasants achieve autonomy when seeking transportation to and from the *campo*, to buy and sell their products, becomes risky and unaffordable?

The proposal that peasant organizations put forth through *Mercados Campesinos* is of specific importance in the context of post-conflict that the country faces. The unequal relationship between rural areas and urban centers, land concentration, and mass agricultural production could further threaten peasant livelihoods in the country. Colombian peasants could be forced into making the difficult decision to leave their land

and head to urban centers, to the poverty belts of the country, as Efrain and other peasant leaders called the informal settlements surrounding Colombia's cities.

Another option is for peasants to become rural wage laborers, or substitute their production for the production of illicit plants like coca, which would continue the drug trade in Colombia. According to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) of the United States, registered 188,000 hectares of coca production in the year 2016, an increase in 18 percent from 2015, and surpassing the 2001 record of 169,000 hectares of coca. As Carlos Julio of ADUC stated, the peasant organizations are not against quality food standards and other requirements of the District. They instead seek institutional support for peasants to be able to meet such standards, rather than benefitting the few peasants can do so on their own (Carlos Julio, interview, August 2, 2016).

The thesis, while providing some insight into the different meanings and practices that peasant organizations, and peasant families strived for when attempting to change food policies, also questioned the prospects of the *Mercados Campesinos* experience once the District bypassed them to manage the program. Nonetheless, Schiavoni's relational framework helps see peasant food sovereignty movements like that of Colombia's peasants as an open ended and historical processes.

Peasant organizations, such as ADUC and FENSUAGRO united once more to reconsider together to respond to the District's notion of the farmers' market. Those studying conceptions of food sovereignty can take heed to what can happen after food sovereignty is institutionally achieved. As the relational approach suggests, institutional recognition is only the first step of the analysis. After recognition, different actors

continually contest and challenge what it means to be a peasant with the right to continue subsistence and autonomous livelihoods.

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